



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00799

Agenda Date: 12/12/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Z23-000003: Public Hearing for Adoption of Comprehensive Plan Amendment on Equity and Environmental Justice Definitions and Policies

Presenter:

Ben Chumley, Principal Planner, Growth Management Department, (352) 374-5249

Description:

County-initiated text amendment to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Element to revise equity and environmental justice definitions and related land use policies. The Board of County Commissioners, on September 26, 2023, voted to transmit this proposed amendment for state agency review, and no comments were provided by the review agencies. Staff is recommending that the Board of County Commissioners approve the attached ordinance to adopt the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Recommended Action:

Approve the attached ordinance to adopt the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Prior Board Motions:

September 26, 2023: The Board voted to transmit the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment for state agency review and comment.

Fiscal Note:

No fiscal impact to the County is anticipated as a result of adopting the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Strategic Guide:

Social and Economic Opportunity

Background:

In August 2021, the Board of County Commissioners adopted the Alachua County Equity Workplan Phase I, launching the County's overall equity and community engagement work. As part of the implementation of that Workplan, the Equity Core Strategic Leadership Team identified the Growth Management Department for departmental goal setting relating to equity.

In June 2022, the County's Equity Core Strategic Leadership Team (Cohort 1) identified two specific short-term goals for the Growth Management Department, one of which is to prepare draft amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan that would:

1. Clarify up-front “social equity”, “environmental justice”, and other definitions, and
2. Clarify Future Land Use Element Objective 5.2, “Location and Compatibility”, Policy 5.2.1, to articulate a universal goal around “neighborhood character” for institutional land uses instead of protecting neighborhood character only “by design” (i.e., applying design strategies such as buffers, setbacks, building orientation, etc.).

Growth Management staff have worked collaboratively with the County’s Equity and Community Outreach Manager to prepare a set of draft amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to address the two specific items noted above. The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment language, as well as a summary and analysis of the proposed amendments, are provided in the attached staff report.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment draft language was presented to the Board of County Commissioners on June 6, 2023, and at that meeting, the Board instructed staff to move forward with the Comprehensive Plan amendment process.

A community workshop was held on July 31, 2023 to present the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments and receive feedback from the public. The public input received at that workshop is documented in the attached workshop summary.

The Alachua County Planning Commission/Local Planning Agency held a public hearing on August 16, 2023, and recommended that the Board of County Commissioners approve transmittal of the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment for state agency review. The Planning Commission motion included the additional comment that a robust community engagement process is needed to ensure that the proposed amendments are applied in practice.

The Board of County Commissioners held a public hearing on September 26, 2023, and voted to transmit the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment for state agency review in accordance with the expedited state review process in Section 163.3184, Florida Statutes. The state agencies reviewed the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment and did not have any comments.

In addition to the currently proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan which are expected to be completed in 2023, staff is also working on medium- and longer-term goals relating to equity and comprehensive planning, which include conducting an equity audit of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan as well as an overall update of the Comprehensive Plan to address equity matters more fully.