



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00083

Agenda Date: 6/6/2023

Agenda Item Name:

Presentation on Draft Amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan Regarding Equity and Environmental Justice Definitions and Policies

Presenter:

Ben Chumley, Principal Planner, Growth Management, 352-374-5249; and Dr. Diedre Houchen, Equity and Community Outreach Manager, Office of Sustainability, Equity & Economic Development Strategies, 352-384-3195

Description:

Staff will provide a presentation for discussion purposes on draft amendments to the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan regarding equity and environmental justice definitions and policies. This presentation is in follow-up to the Board's discussion on January 24, 2023 on comprehensive planning equity, community engagement, and best practices, and is also part of the ongoing implementation of the County's Equity Workplan which was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (Board) in 2021.

Recommended Action:

Receive presentation and provide any direction to staff.

Prior Board Motions:

August 24, 2021:

1. Adopt the Alachua County Equity Workplan Phase I
2. Adopt the Revised Enabling Resolution for the County's Equity Advisory Committee
3. Direct staff to develop a Community Outreach Management Plan for the County; and
4. Provide pay to staff for work as well as a stipend for advisory board members as part of the above actions.

In addition to the above motion, the Board has given general direction to Growth Management staff to evaluate and make improvements to its public notification and community engagement procedures for land use, zoning, and development matters.

January 24, 2023:

Refer to staff to review the mailing area and signage to notify the residents of impending (land use, zoning, and development) applications. * *This work is in progress.*

Fiscal Note:

There are no fiscal impacts associated with this Board discussion. If the Board decides to move forward with a Comprehensive Plan amendment, there will be advertising costs for public hearings at that time (those costs can be covered within the existing budget).

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 those short-term goals 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. These draft amendments are attached to the agenda item. Following this Board discussion, staff plans to conduct community outreach to get input from the public on the draft Comprehensive Plan amendments, and then the public hearing process will be conducted in accordance with Section 163.3184, Florida Statutes.

In addition to these short-term amendments to the Comprehensive Plan which are expected to be completed in 2023, staff also identified medium- and longer-term goals relating to equity and comprehensive planning which were presented to the Board on January 24, 2023. These include conducting a full equity audit of the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan as well as an overall update of the Comprehensive Plan to address equity matters more fully.