



Z23-000003

**County-Initiated Comprehensive
Plan Amendment:**

**Equity and Environmental Justice
Definitions and Policies**

Board of County Commissioners
Public Hearing for Adoption – December 12, 2023



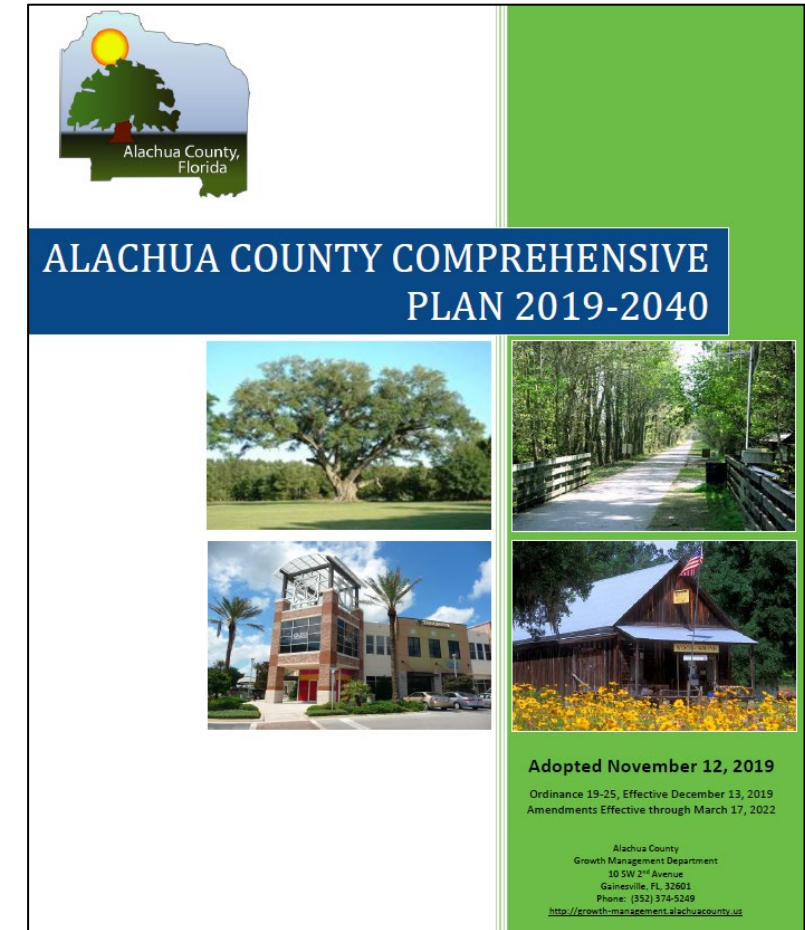
Proposed Amendments to Comprehensive Plan

1. Updated definitions of “Equity” and “Environmental Justice” in Future Land Use Element
2. Updated policies for consideration of equity, environmental justice and neighborhood character as part of the County’s decision-making process on industrial and institutional land uses



Equity in Alachua County Comprehensive Plan (as adopted)

- Promoting sustainable development that provides for a *balance of economic opportunity, social equity, environmental justice, and protection of the natural environment* has been a foundational principle of the Plan since the early 2000s.
- Equity is currently addressed within goals, objectives, and policies within several Plan Elements, including:
 - Future Land Use
 - Economic
 - Capital Improvements
 - Housing
 - Community Health



Proposed Amendment: “Environmental Justice” Definition

~~**Environmental Justice:** No group of people, including a racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic group, should bear a disproportionate share of the cumulative negative social or environmental consequences resulting from land use decisions.~~

Environmental Justice means that no group of people, including those from marginalized racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups or persons with disabilities, should disproportionately bear the cumulative negative social or environmental consequences resulting from land use decisions. Principles of environmental justice recognize historically that the largest proportion of environmental burdens come from industrial development, energy production facilities, disposal of waste, and transportation systems, and that these burdens often fall on the communities that are least able to withstand the impacts of them, i.e. poorer and marginalized communities. Environmental justice is a principle and practice that emerged historically from people of color organizing to protect their environments, community rights, lands, and health.

Proposed Amendment: “Equity” Definition

~~**Social Equity:** Principle of fairness, with attention to provision of opportunity to those portions of the community that are less well off; as applied to Comprehensive Plan, related issues include the provision of affordable housing, economic opportunity, and choice of living environments for all members of the community without regard to sex, race, age, religion, ethnicity, national origin, etc.~~

Equity means redressing injustices that were previously incurred, fully incorporating all segments of the community in the decision-making and planning processes and establishing measures to prevent future inequities from occurring. Such efforts include expanding opportunity and promoting equal access to public services, providing equal service quality, ensuring procedural fairness, and striving for equal opportunity in such areas as education, health, employment, mobility, and housing.

In the context of sustainability, equity refers to how burdens and benefits of different policy actions are distributed in a community. The more evenly they are distributed, the more equitable the community is, and this is reflected in economic, ecological, and social outcomes. Equity in sustainability includes putting forth efforts toward rectifying previous environmental injustices, avoiding environmental injustices going forward, and providing equal access to participate in sustainability activities and shape their development.



Proposed Amendment: Industrial Land Uses

Policy 4.2.1. Industrial land uses shall not be located adjacent to residential or agricultural areas without adequate buffering or integrating design and business practices to eliminate or minimize adverse impacts. Land use decisions concerning location of industrial uses shall take into consideration environmental justice, equity, and community, historical, and neighborhood character; this shall include consideration of the residents of the community, their relationship to the land, and the characteristics of the land itself. In considering community, historical, and neighborhood character, particular consideration shall be given to recognizing, protecting and preserving the resilience, collective desires, and resources of historically burdened communities. Historically burdened communities are those where the residents, often from racially or ethnically marginalized communities, face inequities and have disproportionate burdens associated with land use.

Language above would also be added to Policy 4.4.1 regarding “Heavy Industrial” land uses

Proposed Amendment: Institutional Land Uses

Policy 5.2.2 Institutional facilities shall be designed and located for integration into the surrounding community. Land use decisions concerning location of institutional uses shall take into consideration environmental justice, equity, and community, historical, and neighborhood character; this shall include consideration of the residents of the community, their relationship to the land, and the characteristics of the land itself. In considering community, historical, and neighborhood character, particular consideration shall be given to recognizing, protecting and preserving the resilience, collective desires, and resources of historically burdened communities. Historically burdened communities are those where the residents, often from racially or ethnically marginalized communities, face inequities and have disproportionate burdens associated with land use.

Proposed Amendment: Implementation Section

Policy 7.1.2 Proposed changes in the zoning map shall consider:

- (a) ...
- (b) ...
- (c) the relationship of the proposed development to existing development in the vicinity and considerations relating to environmental justice, equity, and redevelopment opportunities.
- (d) ...



Proposed Amendment: Implementation Section

Policy 7.1.17 The land development regulations shall provide for evaluation of certain land uses through processes by which special exceptions, special use permits, and temporary use permits may be granted. These certain uses include uses with intensities or characteristics that may create an adverse impact on surrounding neighborhoods or institutions which are evaluated on a case-by-case basis to ensure that the size, extent and character of that use is compatible with the surrounding uses. The regulations to implement this policy shall identify the general category of uses that will be subject to this process and the specific factors which will be utilized to evaluate whether or not a special exception, special use permit or temporary use permit should be granted. For special exceptions and special use permits, these factors shall include, but are not limited to, consideration of environmental justice, equity, and community, historical, and neighborhood character.

Planning Commission Recommendation (Aug. 16, 2023)

Recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve transmittal of proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment Z23-000003 to the State Land Planning Agency and other agencies for review and comment pursuant to Florida Statutes Section 163.3184. *

** Additional comment included in motion that a robust community engagement process is needed to ensure these amendments are applied in practice.*



State Agency Review Process

Reviewing agencies did not have any comment on the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment



Next Step

If the amendment is adopted and not timely challenged, it will become effective 31 days after the Florida Department of Commerce notifies the County that the plan amendment package is complete.



Staff Recommendation

Approve the ordinance to adopt Comprehensive Plan Amendment Z23-000003.

