



# **Z24-000004: County-Initiated Text Amendment to Alachua County Comprehensive Plan to Address House Bill 1379 (2023) Requirements**

**Board of County Commissioners Public Hearing  
October 22, 2024**

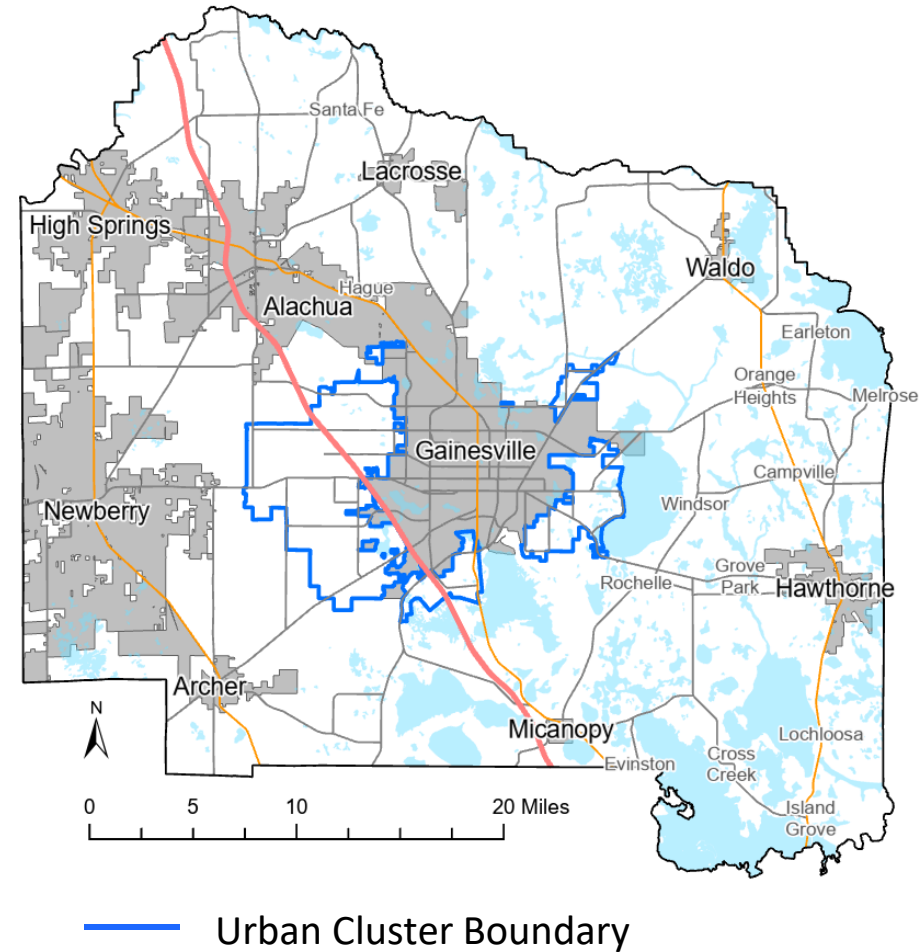
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# Florida House Bill 1379 (2023)

- Environmental protection bill that addressed various matters relating to water quality protection and funding; effective July 1, 2023.
- New requirements for local government comprehensive plans were added to Sec. 163.3177, Florida Statutes:
  1. By July 1, 2024, incorporate policies to *consider the feasibility* of providing sanitary sewer services within a 10-year planning horizon for any development of more than 50 residential lots, whether built or unbuilt, with more than 1 onsite sewage treatment & disposal system per acre.
  2. Include publicly funded capital improvement projects necessary to achieve pollutant load reductions identified in a Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) as part of the Capital Improvements Element.

# Background – Sanitary Sewer Connection

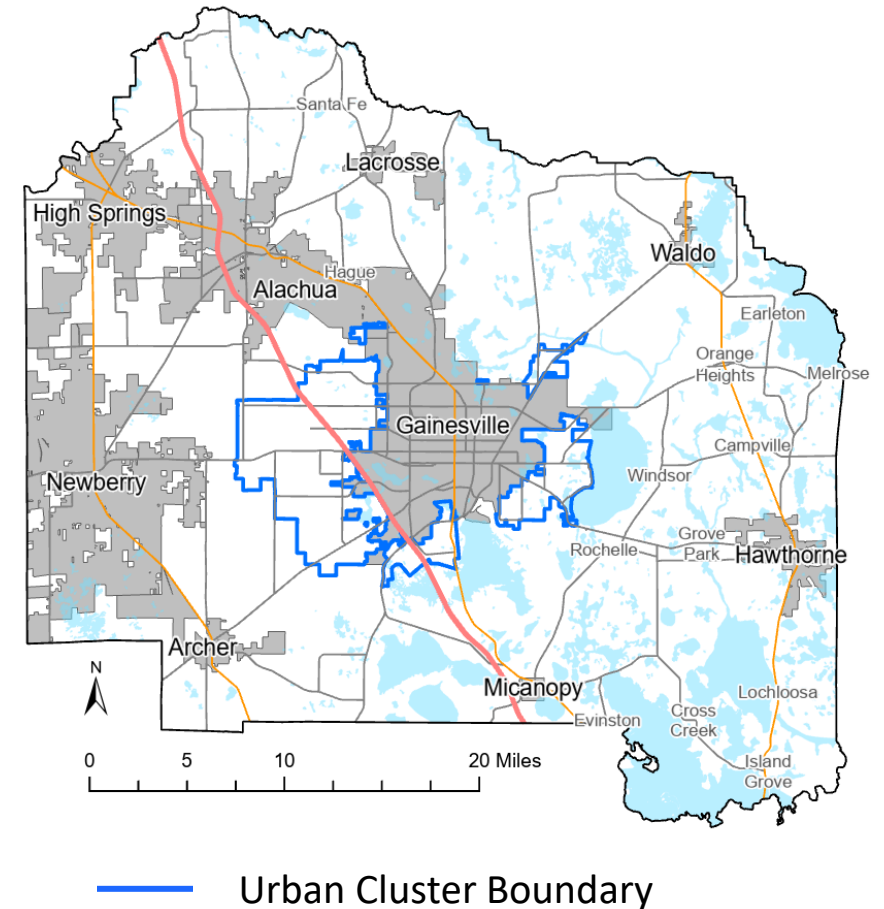
- Alachua County is not a provider of sanitary sewer services.
- GRU provides sanitary sewer services within the unincorporated area inside the Urban Cluster boundary.
- Some municipalities provide sanitary sewer services within their municipal boundaries.



# Adopted Comprehensive Plan Policies

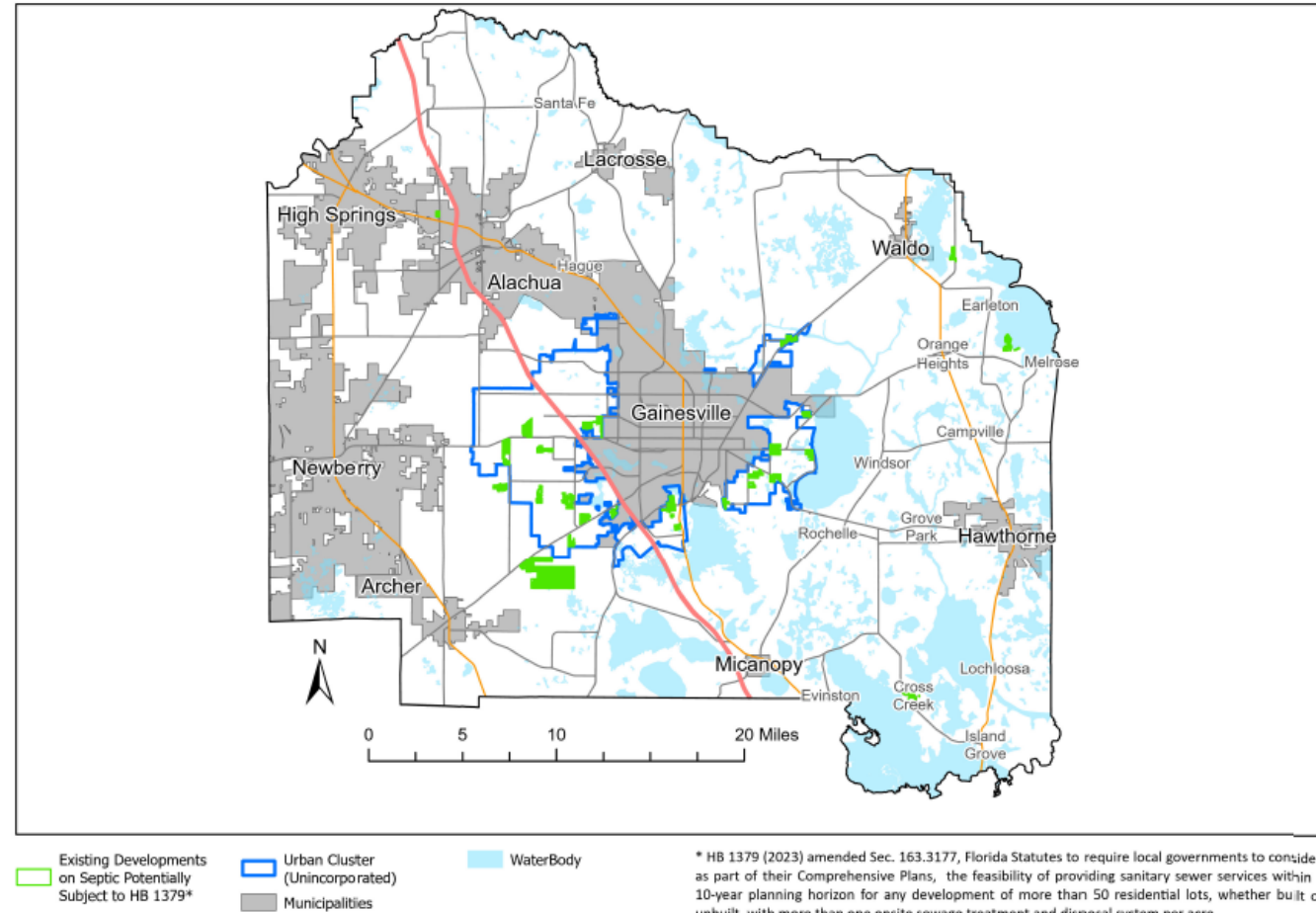
## Sanitary Sewer Connection

- New development in Urban Cluster is required to connect to potable water and sanitary sewer service, with limited exceptions.
- New residential development outside Urban Cluster is limited to a density of 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres.
- Potable water and sanitary sewer lines are generally not permitted to extend outside the Urban Cluster except in limited circumstances, and with BoCC approval.



# Existing Developments on Septic

- Preliminary GIS screening of existing developments on septic with 50+ lots, where lots sizes are around 1 acre or less
- Developments less than 50 lots were included if adjacent to others that added up to 50+ lots
- 67 existing developments within Urban Cluster and 38 outside Urban Cluster to which the statute may apply.
- Each development will be further evaluated as part of more detailed feasibility analysis to determine whether the statute applies.



# Proposed New Policy Language

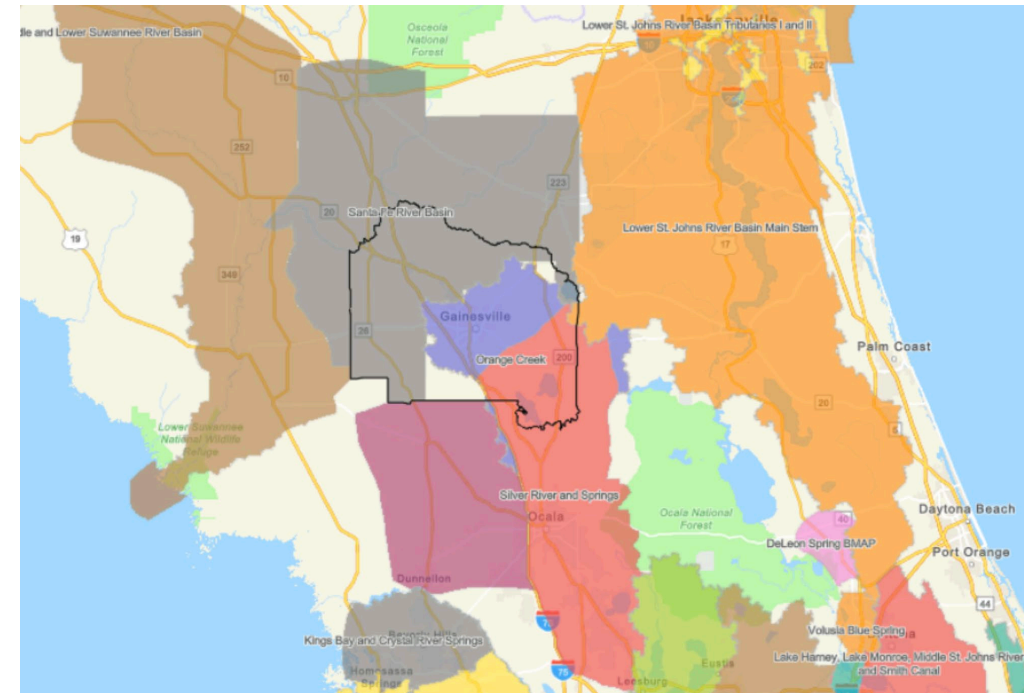
## Potable Water & Sanitary Sewer Element

Policy 2.1.8. Alachua County shall, in coordination with utility providers, consider the feasibility of providing sanitary sewer services to developments of more than 50 residential lots in the unincorporated area, whether built or unbuilt, with more than one onsite sewage treatment and disposal system per acre, within a 10-year planning horizon. By April 2026, and every ten (10) years thereafter, Alachua County will conduct a feasibility analysis identifying applicable developments and assessing the feasibility of providing sanitary sewer service to those developments. The feasibility analysis will include consideration of the following:

- (a) Potential costs to the County and property owners associated with infrastructure improvements and right of way acquisition necessary to convert lots to sanitary sewer.
- (b) Water quality risks associated with the continued use of septic systems.
- (c) All other applicable goals, objectives and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.
- (d) If the analysis determines that it is feasible and otherwise consistent with the Comprehensive Plan to provide sanitary sewer services to an applicable development within a 10-year planning horizon, then it shall also identify the following information:
  - 1. The name and location of the wastewater facility that could receive sanitary sewer flows after connection;
  - 2. The current capacity of the facility and any associated transmission facilities;
  - 3. The projected wastewater flow at that facility for the next 20 years, including expected future new construction and connections of onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to sanitary sewer, and
  - 4. An estimated timeline for the potential construction of any improvements necessary for connection to the sanitary sewer system.
- (e) If the analysis determines that it is feasible to provide sanitary sewer services to an applicable development, this shall not obligate the County or utility provider to undertake or fund any improvements necessary to connect the development to the sanitary sewer system. Such improvements may be considered on a case-by-case basis by the utility provider in coordination with the County with input from the residents of the area that would potentially be served by sanitary sewer.

# Background – BMAP Projects

- Basin Management Action Plans (BMAP) are management plans developed for a waterbody that does not meet state water quality standards.
- Developed by FDEP with local stakeholder input
- Goal of BMAP is to reduce pollutant loads to meet state standards. BMAP contains projects and action items to reach these standards.
- Alachua County is subject to BMAPs for Orange Creek, Santa Fe River, and Silver Springs.



BMAP Areas

# Proposed New Policy Language

## Capital Improvements Element

**Policy 1.9.5** The County shall propose for inclusion in the Capital Improvements Element a list of capital improvement projects necessary to achieve the pollutant load reductions attributable to Alachua County to meet the Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) as established in adopted Basin Management Action Plans for the Santa Fe River, Orange Creek, and Silver Springs basins pursuant to s. 403.067(7), Florida Statutes. This shall be completed initially as part of the Evaluation and Appraisal of the Comprehensive Plan in 2025, and subsequently reviewed annually and updated as necessary.



# Local Planning Agency (Planning Commission) Recommendation

The Alachua County Local Planning Agency held a public hearing on the proposed amendment on August 21, 2024, and recommended **transmittal for state agency review**.

# Staff Recommendation

Recommend that the Board of County Commissioners approve transmittal of Comprehensive Plan Amendment Z24-000004 to the state land planning agency and other review agencies pursuant to Sec. 163.3184, Florida Statutes.

# Questions and Discussion