



Agenda Item Summary

File #: 25-00597

Agenda Date: 8/26/2025

Agenda Item Name:

Adoption Hearing – Z25-000007 Comprehensive Plan Amendment for Water Supply Planning

Presenter:

Michael Castine, AICP, Senior Planner

Description:

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, incorporating by reference the updated Joint Alachua County/City of Gainesville Water Supply Facilities Work Plan 2025-2035.

Recommended Action:

Adopt the amendment to the Comprehensive Plan

Prior Board Motions:

Approve transmittal to the State Land Planning Agency and other agencies for review and comment.
Motion Passed 5-0

Fiscal Note:

N/A

Strategic Guide:

All Other Mandatory and Discretionary Services

Background:

Chapter 163.3177(6)(c) and 163.3177(4)(a), Florida Statutes, establish the requirements for local governments regarding water supply planning. The adopted Alachua County Comprehensive Plan contains a variety of objectives and policies addressing water supply, water conservation, intergovernmental coordination and associated capital facilities planning related to water supply.

In 2005, the Florida Legislature added requirements for water supply planning to the Florida Statutes, Chapter 163, Part II and Chapter 373, relating to Growth Management. In 2010 the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) performed Water Supply Assessments for areas within its jurisdiction and the results predicted unacceptable impacts to river and spring flows in the northeastern part of the SRWMD. The Water Supply Assessments in 2010 identified a need to designate within the region four Water Resource Caution Areas (WRCAs) which included Alachua County including the City of Gainesville (see Figure 1, Joint WSFWP). Designation of the WRCA identified the need to develop a Regional Water Supply Plan for the designated areas (per Sec. 373.709, F.S.). Subsequently, the St Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) and SRWMD engaged in a

collaborative public process to jointly develop the North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan 2015-2035 (NFRWSP), which was approved by the respective Districts' Governing Boards on January 17, 2017, and updated and adopted on December 12, 2023.

Chapter 163, Section 3177(6)(c)3., F.S., requires local governments to prepare and adopt a Water Supply Facilities Work Plan into their comprehensive plans within 18 months after final approval of the pertinent regional water supply plan or its update. Therefore, for local governments within the NFRWSP area the deadline to amend their comprehensive plans to adopt the Work Plan is June 12, 2025. The Work Plan must cover at least a 10-year planning period and identify water supply projects and conservation and reuse activities needed to meet the projected future water demands (see North Florida Regional Water Supply Plan, Appendix J-M). The Joint WSFWP adopts the water supply projects included in the NFRWSP (see Joint WSFWP Tables 5 and 6).

Alachua County is not a water supplier, therefore the County's responsibilities for water supply planning are to include data and analysis regarding population and water demand projections to ensure that the County's water needs for the 2025-2035 planning period will be met by GRU, and to include information from GRU that adequate water sources and infrastructure are available to serve the projected water demand. Because Gainesville Regional Utilities is the principal water supplier in the portion of unincorporated Alachua County within the urban cluster as designated in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan, County staff has worked with City of Gainesville staff and Gainesville Regional Utilities staff to develop the Joint WSFWP. The Joint WSFWP implements the NFRWSP by identifying and adopting the conservation measures and capital projects that will be constructed by GRU, provides for intergovernmental coordination, and provides for an update of the Joint WSFWP following the update of the NFRWSP. Several of the GRU capital projects identified by GRU in the Joint WSFWP are located in the urban cluster of unincorporated Alachua County.

The NFRWSP establishes a regional framework for water supply for the planning period by assessing water needs and projected demand based on projected population growth and water use and identify economically feasible water resource, water conservation, and water supply development options to be implemented to address future water demands. The proposed comprehensive plan amendments provide consistency between the NFRWSP and the Joint WSFWP. The effect of these Policies is to address the requirements for water supply planning by including Policies that refer to and incorporate the Joint WSFWP into the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan and provide for updating the Joint WSFWP into the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan when the NFRWSP is updated in the future. These Policies also provide for the coordination with the City of Gainesville/GRU and other water suppliers as appropriate to ensure that the necessary water supply facilities are in place at the time of development, as provided for in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments address the Statutory requirements for water supply planning that must be adopted by June 12, 2025, to implement the NFRWSP.

These amendments include:

- A revised policy incorporating the Joint WSFWP into the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan by reference. (PWSSE Policy 7.1.5). [Section 5.3.1]
- Amendments to policies related to intergovernmental coordination for water supply planning (COSE Policy 4.5.12 and ICE Policies 2.1.2.1 and 6.1.1). [Section 5.3.2, Section 5.3.3]