



Alachua County Special Meeting Minutes

August 12, 2025, 9:30 AM

Present: Commissioner Mary Alford, Vice Chair Ken Cornell,
Commissioner Anna Prizzia, Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler

Absent: Chair Charles S. Chestnut, IV

A. Approval of Agenda

Chair Cornell called the meeting to order at 9:30am

Commissioner Alford moved approval of the agenda.

2nd Commissioner Prizzia

The motion carried 3-0 with Commissioner Chestnut absent and Commissioner Wheeler not present.

Commissioner Wheeler entered the meeting at 9:32am

To approve the Agenda.

B. Items for Discussion

1. Comprehensive Plan Evaluation & Update Workshop: Land Use and Development Topics - 25-00594

Growth Management Director Jeff Hayes introduced Ben Chumley, Principal Planner for Alachua County Growth Management Department who presented the above item to the Board.

Upcoming BoCC Workshop Schedule:

- August 12th – Land Use and Development

- September 2nd – Housing and Economic Development
- October 7th – Environmental Protection and Sustainability
- October 21st - Community Facilities and Services
- December 2nd – TBD

State Deadline:

- Must transmit Plan amendments for state review by March 31, 2026
- At a minimum, County must transmit those Plan amendments that are needed to reflect changes in state statute.

Future Land Use Element - General Strategies:

Minimize conversion of land from rural to urban uses

- Designate an Urban Cluster that sets a boundary for urban growth.
- Higher densities and mixed uses located in Urban Cluster. Highest densities in or near Activity Centers, and lower densities in outlying rural areas.
- Development timed to occur in conjunction with efficient provision of supporting community facilities.

Promote land development that maximizes the use of public investments in facilities and services, ensures a proper level of public services, and preserves existing amenities.

Promote spatial organization of neighborhoods, districts, and corridors through urban design codes

- Neighborhoods should be compact, connected to adjacent development, have limited mixed uses centers, and have interconnected, mixed-modal streets. Commercial, civic, and institutional integrated with neighborhoods.
- Promote diverse mix of land uses. Avoid large areas of single-use, similar densities and types of residential units.
- Corridor linkages including transportation, watersheds and greenways.
- Provide for infill where appropriate.

Future Land Use Element Sections:

- 1.0 - Urban Residential Policies
 - Residential Land Use Categories and Density Ranges
 - Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) and Transit Oriented Development (TOD)
 - Cottage Neighborhoods
 - Accessory Dwelling Units
- 2.0 - Urban Activity Centers
 - General Activity Center Policies
 - Policies for Specific Activity Centers
- 3.0 - Commercial Land Uses
- 4.0 - Industrial Land Uses
- 5.0 - Institutional Land Uses
- 6.0 - Rural Area Policies
 - Rural Subdivisions
 - Rural Commercial Uses
 - Rural Clusters
- 7.0 - Implementation
- 8.0 - Special Area Studies
- 9.0 - Transfer of Development Rights
- 10.0 - Recreation Land Uses

Population Trends 2010-2024:

48,977 countywide population increase since 2010.

Of that total:

- 52% in Gainesville

- 31% in unincorporated area
- 17% in Alachua, High Springs, and Newberry

Population Projections to 2050:

- 92,856 countywide population increase projected by 2050
 - 32,530 unincorporated population increase projected
- About 14,000 housing units would be needed to accommodate this increase

Development Trends: Residential Units, Acreage, and Density in Urban Cluster:

- Recent development activity is back near early 2000s levels
- Density has generally increased in recent years

Development Trends: Urban Cluster vs Rural Areas 2014 - 2024:

- Total Residential Units Approved Countywide: 6,691
- Residential Units Approved within Urban Cluster: 6,467
- Residential Units Approved Outside Urban Cluster: 224

Urban Cluster Land Availability:

Key strategy is to focus urban development in a clearly defined area known as the Urban Cluster.

- Boundary for urban growth in unincorporated area
- Maximizes efficient use of urban infrastructure, and minimizes costs of expansion
- Limits sprawl by promoting a compact development pattern
- Protects and preserves rural and agricultural lands

Urban Cluster Capacity for New Residential Development:

- 4,665 = acres of undeveloped residentially-designated land
- 14,055 = estimated number of new dwelling units that could be developed on that land
- 32,748 = estimated population accommodated in those new dwelling units*
- 32,530 unincorporated population increase projected by 2050

*Based on 2.33 persons per household

Other Considerations:

- 2,800 approved but unbuilt residential units within active approved developments.
- 10,000 approved but unbuilt units within preliminary development plans.
- 500 unbuilt lots in existing platted subdivisions
- Live Local Act allows for affordable residential development within commercial, industrial, and mixed-use areas which may provide additional residential capacity
- Policy calls for application of a market factor and residential vacancy rate to ensure market is not overly restricted by the Urban Cluster implementation.

TOD and TND Policies:

- Some Comp Plan revisions will be needed based on BoCC's January 2025 TND/TOD policy discussion. Most revisions will be in the ULDC.
- Recommended revisions/additions to Comp Plan:
 - Create an option for a "main street" designation
 - Adopt tiered allowance for drive-through land uses
 - Reduce specificity in design details for TOD and TND (general concepts in Comp Plan and design details in ULDC).

Activity Centers:

Issues:

- Challenges applying general activity center policies to redevelopment and small parcel infill situations.
- Some individual Activity Center policies have very specific land use categories that are overly prescriptive on allowable land use types. This can sometimes limit potentially compatible land uses in the Activity Center.

Policy Recommendation:

- Amend general Activity Center policies to provide more design flexibility for redevelopment and infill.
- For individual Activity Center policies, reduce level of detail about allowable commercial use types (less emphasis on the use and more emphasis on urban form and street network).
- Consider Activity Center master plans to focus on redevelopment and street design.

Commercial Land Use Policies:

- Commercial land uses are generally permitted in the Urban Cluster:
 - Activity Centers: Majority of larger commercial uses directed to these areas
 - Mixed-use TODs and TNDs: Required non-residential component
 - Commercial Enclaves: Small existing commercial parcels or clusters of parcels outside of Activity Centers – commercial redevelopment and infill permitted
- “Rural Commercial Agriculture”: Provides for limited types of small scale rural commercial land uses outside the Urban Cluster

"Commercial Center" Policies

- Descriptions of "commercial center" types are outdated and do not recognize mixed use development concepts.
- Staff recommends updating and simplifying these descriptions.

Commercial Land Use Policies - Tourist/Entertainment Land Use Category

Staff Recommendation:

- Add specificity and clarification about applicability and allowable locations for the Tourist/Entertainment land use category
- Some distinction may be needed in policies between typical interstate interchange businesses (e.g., gas station, restaurant, etc.) and natural resource or cultural resource-adjacent businesses (e.g., campground, RV park)

Commissioner Alford, Commissioner Cornell, Commissioner Prizzia, Commissioner Wheeler, and Ben Chumley presented comments.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Recommendation: If Board wishes to pursue removing homestead requirement for construction of an ADU, staff could bring back recommendations for specific areas or scenarios where this may apply:

- Urban Cluster
- New development vs. existing development
- Possible link to an affordability standard if property is not homesteaded

Summary of Conceptual Staff Recommendations:

1. Urban Cluster Capacity – Continue to refine the data and finalize capacity analysis
2. TND and TOD - Update policies based on BoCC discussion from January 2025
3. Activity Centers – Add redevelopment considerations into general policies and remove overly prescriptive commercial use detail in specific Activity Center Plans where possible.
4. Eastside Activity Center – Provide more land use flexibility in mixed-use land use categories, with overall Activity Center plan update to follow.

5. Commercial land use policies – Update and simplify policies regarding different scales of "commercial centers" and their permitted locations. Add specificity about locations where "Tourist Entertainment" land use may be considered

6. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) – Consider removing homestead requirement – staff to bring back additional standards for location and other factors to be considered.

Commissioner Wheeler exits the meeting at 9:39am

Commissioner Wheeler returns to the meeting at 9:41am

Commissioner Cornell exits the meeting at 10:15am

Commissioner Cornell returns to the meeting at 10:16am

Commissioner Prizzia moved to refer staff the updates and changes discussed and to bring back a comprehensive list of edits for the land use category.

2nd Commissioner Wheeler

The motion carried 4-0 with Commissioner Chestnut absent.

Public Comment

Chair recognized Story Lambert, and Grace B.(Document provided) who presented comments.

Receive presentation and provide any direction to staff on potential updates to the Comprehensive Plan relating to the Future Land Use Element.

C. Closing Comments

1. Public Comment

There were no comments presented.

2. Commission Comment

There were no comments presented.

D. Adjourn

There being no further business before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 11:06 a.m.

To adjourn the meeting.