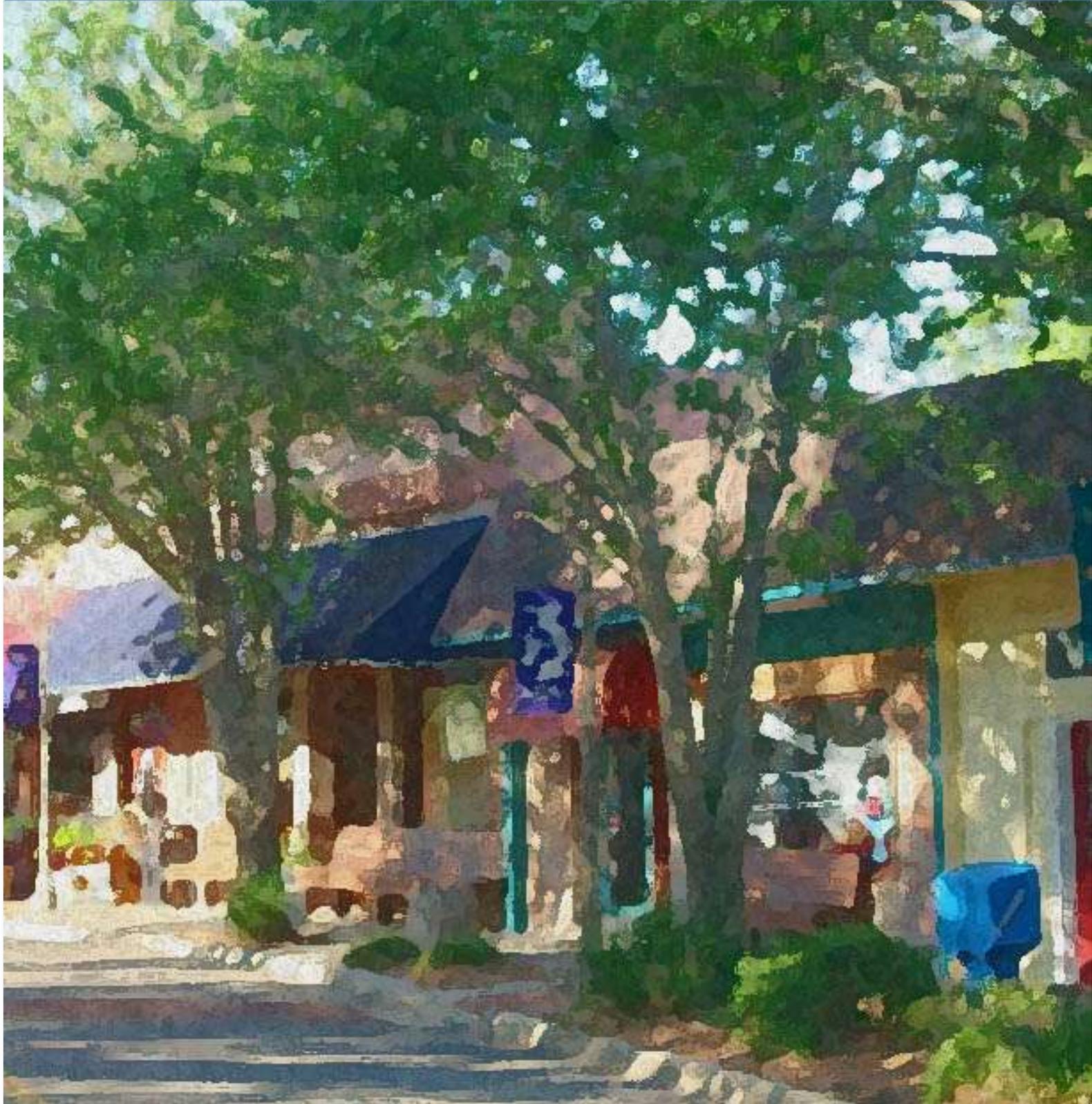




CITY OF ALACHUA

AMENDED
COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT PLAN



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State of Florida

INTRODUCTION

CITY OF ALACHUA

LOCATION

The City of Alachua is located in the northwest quadrant of Alachua County and is part of the Metropolitan Statistical Area of Gainesville. The incorporated jurisdiction of the City of Alachua is approximately 35.1 square miles. The City of Alachua borders the City of High Springs to the northwest and the City of Gainesville to the southeast, and is proximate to the City of Newberry to the southwest and the City of Lacrosse to the northeast.

OVERVIEW

Founded in 1905, the City of Alachua's humble beginnings was that of a farming community and railroad town. Area farmers hauled their produce by wagons to packing sheds, and from there to the railroad in Alachua for transport to hungry markets north, east, and west. As the town grew and the economy evolved, almost half of the town's workers were employed by the Copeland Sausage Company. In 1976, when Copeland Sausage closed, hundreds of people were out of work, and the local economy came to a grinding halt. The downtown Main Street area, the previous center of the bustling small town, all but closed its doors and rolled up the street.

Present day Alachua is a thriving community where residents have access to vital community services; modern healthcare facilities; emergency services; water, wastewater, electric, telecommunications services; affordable housing, and education. With its small-town charm and its prime location at the intersection of Interstate 75 and U.S. Highway 441, the City of Alachua has uniqueness like no other. Through economic development and job creation, residents now have a variety of employment choices locally. Investment in local housing rehabilitation has assisted in the availability of affordable housing for residents, in conjunction with rural rental housing for low income residents.

Alachua has a rich past in providing a community where residents can raise a family without the hustle and bustle that comes with living in larger cities. Alachua has a

diverse revenue stream with a \$34 million budget in Fiscal Year 2012-2013. Alachua is home to several major distribution centers that have broadened the tax base, provided tax revenue, utility revenue, thousands of jobs and furthered economic development in the area. Dollar General, Wal-Mart and Baugh Southeast (Sysco) have distribution centers in the Southwest Industrial Park of Alachua providing over 2,500 jobs to the area and accounting for an economic impact of over \$3.8 million dollars per year.

Since 2002, the City of Alachua has been aggressive in obtaining state and federal level grants to benefit residents and businesses in the community. Those funds have assisted in everything from the construction of new roads, to housing rehabilitation, to infrastructure expansion.

Several major companies are based in Alachua including Sandvik, formerly known as Driltech, and world renowned ship-building giant Marlow Hunter, formerly known as Hunter Marine. South of the center of town, Progress Corporate Park houses 30 companies and 850 employees within its 200 acres in addition to being the home of internationally recognized biotechnology firms specializing in world-leading research and discovery, including the University of Florida's Biotechnology Incubator. The University of Florida has also purchased 280 acres south of the Progress Corporate Park with plans to facilitate the development of additional corporate uses.

Main Street in Alachua is a winding vision of classic small-town America with businesses ranging from restaurants, beauty salons and antique shops to newspaper offices, real estate firms and hardware stores. In 1989, thanks to the City of Alachua Community Redevelopment Agency, Main Street was reengineered to promote economic growth and stability. The project was completed from the north to south ends of Main Street in 2000. Main Street is the center of events in the City of Alachua and is home to over 25 businesses.

The City of Alachua has also made strides in ensuring educational opportunities for its citizens. Santa Fe College's Alachua campus opened in Summer 2009. The college offers classes specializing in biotechnology. Santa Fe High School, located on the northern side of the city offers a curriculum for students interested in the



Alachua County



Main Street, Alachua.



biotechnology field, helping to create a pipeline to the college and then the biotechnology firms at Progress Corporate Park.

There are four public schools in the City of Alachua, including Irby Elementary School, Alachua Elementary School, Mebane Middle School, and Santa Fe High School, in addition to several other private and charter schools throughout the city.

Shopping in the City of Alachua is convenient, with grocery stores, business plazas, and the assorted offerings of Main Street. In addition, the City of Alachua has been of interest to major retail outlets interested in locating along the U.S. Highway 441 corridor. Alachua has its own recreation facilities with courts and fields for many sports as well as parks and courts throughout the city.

Alachua has its own community center, offering entertainment and resources for all ages. Bicycle and horse trails can be found in Alachua as part of the San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park within the southern region of the city.

Those who are new and old to Alachua have ample choices in terms of housing within the City. The City of Alachua prides itself on a variety of housing options, from luxury estates on rolling hills to modest income homes just a short distance from downtown. There are several subdivisions within the City of Alachua that provide housing on open acreage while still providing a neighborhood feeling. Many residents enjoy living near downtown shopping and area parks, thus taking advantage of sidewalk neighborhoods and Victorian style homes. Alachua also has several apartment complexes within its limits, offering units to those who may choose to rent.

While much has been accomplished, in order for the City of Alachua to thrive, the town will continue to work towards strengthening the community through job creation and small business development, investments in infrastructure and neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing, preservation of the natural environment and providing for alternative modes of transportation.

DEFINITIONS

WHAT IS REDEVELOPMENT?

Redevelopment consists of any projects or activities within a community redevelopment district to eliminate or prevent blight and rehabilitate or conserve areas of a community.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT?

A community redevelopment district consists of areas within a city characterized by blight or slum and/or insufficiencies in affordable housing, infrastructure, transportation, or parking. These insufficiencies pose a risk to the public health, safety and welfare. The term Finding of Necessity is given to the survey and documentation of such conditions by local government. Florida Law gives local government power to create a community redevelopment district after the Finding of Necessity. It is within this district that redevelopment efforts are focused. In November 1998, the original Community Redevelopment Area for Alachua was re-established and clarified through Ordinance O-99-03.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY?

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) oversees any activities or projects undertaken in the redevelopment district. A board is usually established to direct the Agency. For the City of Alachua, the [Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board \(DRTB\)](#) acts as the CRA and serves as the governing board for the community redevelopment district. The Board, made up of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members, is appointed by the Alachua City Commission. The DRTB was originally established by Ordinance O-82-5 in April 1982.

WHAT IS A REDEVELOPMENT PLAN?

The redevelopment plan should serve as the framework for any redevelopment efforts to be undertaken by the CRA. The plan addresses the insufficiencies of the redevelopment district by outlining goals, specific enhancement projects and an implementation outline to aid in improvements of the area. The plan must be consistent with the local Comprehensive Plan. Examples of projects proposed in the plan include streetscape and roadway improvements, building renovations, new building construction, flood control initiatives, water and sewer improvements, parking solutions, parks and open spaces, sidewalks and street tree plantings. The City of Alachua adopted an amended Community Redevelopment Plan in May of 2000 through Ordinance 0-00-18. The original Community Redevelopment Plan was adopted in April 1982 By Ordinance 0-82-5.

HOW DOES FUNDING WORK?

Funding for redevelopment projects is provided via a mechanism called tax increment financing (TIF). Properties within the redevelopment area are assessed on a fixed date, deemed the “frozen value.” Any increase in property value when compared to the frozen value is additional tax revenue and is considered “increment”. The tax increment is deposited to the CRA fund for further redevelopment efforts. Additional funding may come from redevelopment bonds and grants, land sales or leases, and loans.

REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

DESCRIPTION

The original boundaries of the community redevelopment district were established in 1987 and re-established in November 1998 through Resolution 99-02. The Area boundaries were amended and expanded to include additional parcels with the Redevelopment Plan of 2000. The redevelopment district contains the Main Street corridor and extends out to adjacent neighborhoods. As it stands currently, the area covers 256 acres, including public right of way. It is bordered primarily by US Highway 441 on the north, NW 137 Terrace on the East, NW 142 Avenue on the South, and NW 144nd Street and NW 147th Drive on the West. The reason for establishing the boundaries as such is to focus redevelopment efforts on an area that encompasses the downtown commercial core and surrounding area of residential and office uses.

The maps referenced within this section of the plan are located in Appendix E. The proposed CRA boundaries adopted as part of this Plan are shown on Map 1. An aerial view of the CRA boundaries is shown on Map 2. The Legal description of the area can be found in Appendix A.

EXISTING BUILDING LIMITATIONS ON TYPE, SIZE, HEIGHT, NUMBER AND PROPOSED USE OF BUILDINGS

Map 3 depicts the land use classification of the Future Land Use Map of the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan, and Map 4 depicts the zoning districts as contained on the City's Official Zoning Atlas, for all properties located within the Redevelopment Area. All development and Redevelopment within the Redevelopment Area shall be in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. Appendix B includes the building limitations and permitted uses for the corresponding zoning districts applicable to the Redevelopment Area, as contained in Article 4 of the City's Land Development Regulations.

OPEN SPACE AND STREET LAYOUT

Open space means undeveloped lands suitable for passive recreation or conservation uses. Open Space within the Redevelopment Area is shown on Map 5. The existing street layout is shown on Map 6 and is not planned to be altered within the Redevelopment Area.

DWELLING UNITS

There are approximately 186 dwelling units located within the Redevelopment Area.

PUBLIC USES

The location of existing public uses within the Redevelopment Area are shown on Map 7. No additional locations are proposed for the Redevelopment Area.

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT

Redevelopment within the Redevelopment Area will not impact the residents of the Area in terms of relocation, traffic circulation, environmental quality, availability of community facilities and services, school population, or any other factors affecting the physical and social quality of the neighborhood.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN SAFEGUARDS

All redevelopment work shall be carried out pursuant to this Plan.

PROVISIONS FOR RETENTION OF CONTROL

If any land is sold or leased for private use by the City, the sale or lease of such land shall include restrictions or covenants running with the land for such periods of time and under such conditions as the City Commission deems necessary to retain control of such land to effectuate the purposes of the Community Redevelopment Act and this Plan.

REPLACEMENT HOUSING FOR RELOCATED PERSONS

There will be no temporary or permanent displacement of persons from housing facilities located within the Redevelopment Area necessary to complete redevelopment projects. Therefore, there will be no need for replacement housing.

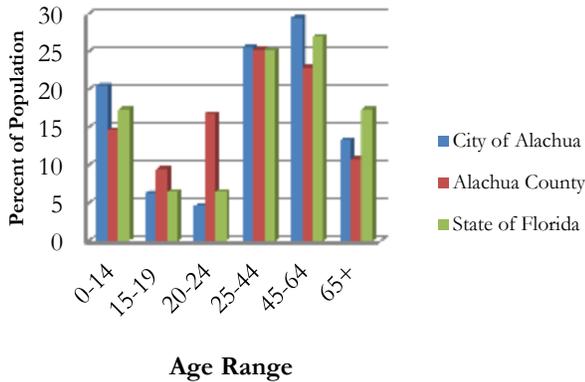
INVENTORY

The following inventory is intended to provide a summary of the existing conditions in the City of Alachua Community Redevelopment District. This section also seeks to establish a foundation for the following goals and recommendations.

LAND USE

Primary future land use classifications of the redevelopment district consist of residential and commercial uses. The historic downtown core is represented by the central business district classification. Isolated parcels classified for community commercial, public, recreational, and industrial use also exist. See the figure below for a graphic representation.

Age Distribution, Year 2010



POPULATION

The City of Alachua has grown considerably over the past twenty years. The U.S. Census population in 1990 was 4,529. By 2000, the population had grown to 6,098. Between 2000 and 2010, the City of Alachua grew to a population of 9,059. With a 48% growth rate over the past ten years, the City of Alachua grew at a rate nearly three times that of Alachua County or the State of Florida. These figures show the population growth and age distribution of the City of Alachua compared to Alachua County and the State of Florida. Even with such rapid growth, the City of Alachua was able to keep much of its historic charm and rural character.

Population Comparisons

	Population, 2000	Population, 2010	Population Growth (percent change: 2000 to 2010)
City of Alachua	6,098	9,059	48.60%
Alachua County	217,955	247,336	13.50%
State of Florida	15,982,378	18,801,310	17.60%



US Highway 441

TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS

The City of Alachua is located in Alachua County and is served by several major transportation arteries including Interstate 75 and US 441. To the west of the redevelopment district, Interstate 75 runs north-south connecting Alachua County to Columbia County, Interstate 10, and Georgia to the north; and Marion County, Orlando, and south Florida to the south. Along the northern end of the redevelopment district is US Highway 441, which connects Alachua to Gainesville and High Springs. Through the core of the redevelopment district is a combined section of County Road 235 and County Road 241 South, also named NW 140th Street. NW 140th runs north-south parallel to Main Street, the downtown core of the redevelopment district.

In addition to the vehicular transportation network, the CSX rail line runs through the southern portion of the redevelopment area, including spurs to local industrial parks. The Gainesville Regional Airport also serves the City of Alachua.

PARKING

Parking is often cited as a concern for communities, especially within their downtown core. The redevelopment area of the City of Alachua is no different. In 2009, the Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board commissioned a parking study to explore these concerns. The goals of the study were to evaluate existing parking conditions and identify problems and possible solutions. The study concluded the historic downtown core exhibits an overall parking deficit of approximately 200 spaces. This does not take into consideration that most of the parking identified is on private property. If property owners posted patron parking only, the overall parking availability would be significantly reduced, especially for small businesses with no on-site parking. From the proposed concepts, the Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board approved a new 89 car parking lot located in the rear of buildings on the east side of Main Street, connected to both NW 150th Avenue and NW 148th Place. At the time of this plan update, this parking project is already underway in the design and parcel acquisition phases.



Streetside parking on Main Street.

STREETSCAPES

A number of streetscape improvements have been completed throughout the Downtown Redevelopment District in recent years. Such improvements include the addition of sidewalks, street trees, crosswalk pavers, and improved lighting. These elements have increased the walkability in certain areas of the community redevelopment district by allowing for a safer, more enjoyable pedestrian experience. Despite these improvements to the pedestrian corridors, many streets lack sidewalks or adequate shade to accommodate pedestrians. Many parts of the redevelopment area would benefit from enhanced streetscapes.

Completed Streetscape Improvements:

- Along South Main Street, from NW 142nd Avenue to NW 154th Avenue
- Along NW 150th Avenue, from Main Street to CR 235
- Phase 2 and 3 of Streetscape and stormwater management improvements to NW 142nd Terrace & NW 150th Avenue



Street trees and pedestrian scale lighting provide a safe and pleasant pedestrian experience.



Current gateway signage for Main Street is outdated, hidden by vegetation, and nearly invisible from US 441. Signage throughout redevelopment area lacks consistency and visibility.



Skinner Field in Downtown City Park provides space to engage in active activities such as baseball, tennis and basketball.

WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

Currently, the City of Alachua does not have a comprehensive wayfinding system in place. By establishing such a system, it would allow for efficient and beneficial movement to, from and through the community redevelopment district. Signage throughout the City is inconsistent and lacks organization, leading to a missed opportunity to direct visitors to points of interest and the Main Street corridor. Though a sign exists at the intersection of Main Street and US 441, it is angled in a manner which caters only to those travelling east and is virtually invisible from the west. There are few signs calling notice to public facilities such as City Hall, the Library, and public parks other than directly adjacent these facilities. The City could benefit greatly from the development of a comprehensive wayfinding system and corresponding consistent signage.

PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Three parks exist inside Alachua's redevelopment district. Skinner Park, located at the corner of NW 150th Avenue and NW 142nd Terrace, is by definition a neighborhood park, thus providing park services to a half mile radius area. Downtown Theater Park is situated in the midst of the downtown Main Street in between NW 150th Avenue and NW 148th Place. The historical theater has been converted into a pocket park. In the southeast corner of the redevelopment district, at the intersection of NW 142nd Place and NW 138th Street is Feirmon E. Welch Park. Another pocket park, Welch provides service to a quarter-mile radius area. Taking into account the parks' service area, additional park space in the southern portion of the community redevelopment district may be warranted. Also, because most parks are devoted mainly for active recreation, additional park space devoted to passive activities may be warranted.

RECENT PROJECTS

The previous redevelopment plan listed a number of priority projects to be addressed within the redevelopment district. Multiple projects have been implemented since the previous redevelopment plan, including those in recent years, listed below.

RECENTLY COMPLETED PROJECTS:

2009:

- Acquisition of Theater Park on Main Street

2010:

- Phase 1 completion of streetscape improvements at NW 142nd Terrace and NW 150th Avenue Project

2011:

- Theater Park restoration efforts completed
- Streetscape improvements along South Main Street, from NW 142nd Avenue to NW 154th Avenue
- Streetscape improvements along NW 150th Avenue, from Main Street to CR 235

CURRENT & ONGOING PROJECTS:

The following projects were currently underway at the time of this plan update.

- Phase 2 and 3 of Streetscape and stormwater management improvements to NW 142nd Terrace & NW 150th Avenue
- Implementation of parking plan between NW 150th Avenue and NW 148th Place



Restored Theater Park on Main Street.



Streetscape improvements along NW 150th Avenue provide for an improved pedestrian environment with new sidewalks and street lights.



Main Street, Alachua.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

VISION & INTENT

The City of Alachua's Vision 2020 state that: the City of Alachua will be a vibrant, growing, economically and culturally diverse community, which takes great pride in the fact that it has maintained its strong sense of community, its small-town atmosphere, a strong recreation program, the charm of its downtown, and has preserved and protected its heritage and environment. It is proud of its state-of-the-art educational facilities, which work hand-in-hand with Alachua's employers to make certain that its young people have challenging career opportunities at home in Alachua. The City will become a leader in innovative techniques to ensure quality, well-planned growth and a safe and convenient transportation network. Alachua will be a place where housing choices are available to meet the needs of all residents. Alachua will strive to be continually recognized by its peers as an example of what can happen when citizens, business communities, schools, and government work together for the common good.

The Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board's goal to rehabilitate, conserve and redevelop areas within the community redevelopment district align with the overall vision of the City and should be manifested through the contents of this redevelopment plan. This plan is put forward to outline ways in which attributes of the City can be improved. Through attributes such as economic development, parks and open space, historic preservation, infrastructure, parking, streetscapes, wayfinding and signage, housing, marketing and public participation, redevelopment efforts should be pursued at a standard that allows Alachua to continue to thrive as "The Good Life Community."

This plan shall guide redevelopment activities in Alachua through 2043.

REDEVELOPMENT DURATION AND COMPLETION DATE:

The provisions of this Plan shall remain in effect and serve as a guide for the future redevelopment activities in the entire area designated as the City of Alachua

Community Redevelopment Area through 2043, which is thirty (30) years from the adoption date of this updated and amended City of Alachua Community Redevelopment Plan. All redevelopment to be financed by tax increment revenues shall be completed no later than thirty (30) years following the adoption date of this amended Plan.

GOALS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The following goals and recommendations seek to address the mission of the Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board to rehabilitate, conserve, and redevelop areas within the geographical boundaries of the redevelopment area of Alachua.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is a process that begins when a community makes itself ready to accommodate the retention, startup, location, or expansion of an enterprise. Economic development occurs when a local economy is vitalized by the creation of one or more jobs, an increase in community wealth, or the useful distribution of capital that arrives from outside sources. The primary purpose of the community redevelopment plan is to promote economic development within downtown Alachua and investment within the redevelopment district, reducing slum and blight, avoiding blight in the future by supporting and promoting business in the redevelopment district, and increasing the standard of living and quality of life within the community. For long term economic resilience, it is important to maintain a diversity of economic functions. Therefore, the redevelopment plan should encourage both public and private investment in a variety of economic opportunities. Attracting economic development to downtown Alachua also creates jobs and a healthy tax base allowing for the maintenance of the high quality of living present in Alachua.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Encourage a variety of economics opportunities, ranging from small scale neighborhood entrepreneurs to consolidated sites that would attract major tenants



Main Street Pie Company Pizzeria, one of the local businesses situated on Main Street.



Conestogas, a local Main Street restaurant.



Playground in Downtown City Park along Main Street.

- Utilize the social economic benefits inherent in the overlapping of differing user groups
- Downtown is uniquely a commercial center of the community life. Care should be taken to maintain the balance of places to shop, walk, meet and make acquaintances, to pass through and explore, and to live and work
- Encourage mixed land uses and variety of activities to strengthen downtown business
- Find the economically viable uses that will profit from and support the City of Alachua's uniqueness
- Encourage business opportunities that enhance the character of downtown
- Promote and support downtown business by attracting shoppers and patrons
- Support the development of additional cultural facilities and performance spaces
- Serve all parts of the community
- Identify the unique functions of downtown that can appropriately play in the greater region

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Natural amenities in Alachua complement the City's historic character. San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park is a regional amenity providing ample opportunity for nature-based recreation. Multiple parks located throughout the City allow for the enjoyment of the outdoors by participating in active recreation activities such as baseball, softball, and basketball.

Parks and open spaces provide valuable services to any community. Used for both active and passive activities, gathering spaces and locations for festivals; parks are a vital part of communities. Significant to a city's character, parks provide social benefits beyond building and infrastructure capabilities. Parks provide spaces for visitors and residents alike to socialize, further developing the community ties residents of Alachua take pride in. Furthermore, parks can serve as the foundation for redevelopment by encouraging the revitalization of surrounding areas, and serve as an amenity for residents and business owners, thus encouraging activity in the commercial corridor of downtown. Additionally, utilizing strong open space systems to develop bicycle and pedestrian linkages lead to enhanced connectivity throughout the city.

Within the redevelopment district, vacant lots can be assessed as to the feasibility for conversion into pocket and neighborhood parks. The addition of spaces allocated for passive activities is encouraged. Such spaces would not only provide for passive activities, but also, renewed life in the commercial corridor along with increased connectivity and pedestrian activity. Consideration should be given to the addition of greenways to allow for bicycle and pedestrian connections within and between the redevelopment area and the rest of the city.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Assess vacant parcels for use as designed public open space
- Support the development of additional spaces for passive recreation
- Encourage development of an open space master plan
- Encourage connectivity to the redevelopment district and Main Street from surrounding neighborhoods, parks and recreational facilities through the use of green networks
- Investigate integration of rail right-of-way for rail-trail usage
- Encourage the incorporation of flexible gathering space with possible use as a stage or outdoor performance area, farmers markets and festivals in the Main Street public open space



Feirmon E. Welch Park, located in the southeast corner of the redevelopment district.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION



A restored historic building serves as a host to local businesses on Main Street.

In 1999, the Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board commissioned a study of the architectural and historical resources in the Community Redevelopment Area. As a result, a historic district was mapped and established, and the district and surrounding area is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Through historic preservation, certain benefits within the City of Alachua can be achieved. Historic districts are identified primarily to recognize and protect areas of significance in a place's history. The preservation of the historic district and its structures can serve to maintain tradition, quality appearance and bring about economic benefits.

A rich cultural heritage present in Alachua serves both as a source of pride for local residents and a draw for outside visitors. Historical resources are valuable community assets serving as a reminder of Alachua's unique history. Such resources are irreplaceable and thus should be adequately cared for and protected. Further, historic elements provide a backdrop for local businesses on Main Street. Economic elements such as federal and state tax benefits and publicly funded grants provide means through which to pursue historic preservation.



A well-maintained historic home along Main Street.

Historic elements in the City of Alachua should be maintained and respected in a manner that upholds their integrity as cultural resources. Efforts should be made to explore options in which to appropriately preserve and enhance these cultural assets. Any changes, additions or new construction within the area should be considerate to its surroundings and maintaining the character of the district as a whole.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Encourage and support proper maintenance and upkeep of historical properties
- Respect the integrity of historically significant buildings and structures
- Provide recognition for quality restoration, maintenance and preservation of historic properties

- Review previously completed historical studies including “A Survey of Architectural and Historical Resources” by Murray Laurie and North Central Florida Regional Planning Council’s report, to properly identify and inventory Alachua’s historic structures, places, objects and sites to determine the appropriate level of recognition and protection
- Evaluate the implementation of the Main Street Program
- Incorporate historical elements into wayfinding and signage
- Ensure that future development in the redevelopment district is consistent with the existing architectural character of Alachua and the Historic District
- Encourage expansion of National Historic District and Historic Overlay Boundary to include nearby historic structures, where applicable



The Alachua Woman's Club building is part of the historic district.



Crews installing new sidewalks in Alachua.



Infrastructure improvements are encouraged along streets connecting to Main Street to provide better connectivity within the redevelopment area.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Downtown Alachua offers the unique ability for shared use of existing infrastructure, which in turn can result in an overall savings to the community. Past redevelopment has focused much attention to upgrading the infrastructure within the community redevelopment district through such projects as undergrounding power lines, installing sidewalks and street parking, and improving the overall streetscape. This work should be continued throughout the redevelopment area in order to increase accessibility, connectivity, and attractiveness for investment within Alachua.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support paving, resurfacing, and reconstruction of roadways and coordinate with the Public Services Department to facilitate such projects within the redevelopment area
- Increase multi-modal mobility
- Extend and enhance bike trails to lead into downtown
- Provide for or assist with streetscape projects
- Create viable physical linkage between the downtown core, Skinner Park, the post office, and adjacent residential areas.
- Plan location of transit signs to provide visual linkages between downtown, Skinner Park, library, and adjacent commercial and residential areas
- Provide visual linkages between downtown and nearby activity centers that will encourage visitors to spend more time within the area
- Review and revise the functional classification of streets and avenues within the designated area of downtown and its adjacent areas as needed
- Encourage access for people with disabilities
- Improve accessibility between downtown complexes: the library, Skinner Park, the recreation center, post office, retail areas, parking and residential area
- Support visible and pleasant connecting pathways within the area to encourage walking, biking, and wheel chairing
- Explore alternative transit methods

PARKING

Parking is an important element to any redevelopment plan because it is often viewed as a key to a successful downtown. Parking availability and proximity can be a determining factor for investment within the area because parking for patrons, employees, or residents is essential. Therefore, the provision of pleasant, easy to find, and convenient parking areas is an essential component of the infrastructure system and bringing people into the downtown core. Yet, despite the importance of parking, downtown should be predominantly a pedestrian place. Thus, parking should be developed to neither compromise the overall character and feel of downtown nor the safety of visitors to the area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support parking requirements which ensure that parking is convenient and will not be over built, and which encourages use and development of the redevelopment area
- Encourage the development and use of on-street parking where possible
- Continue to encourage the appropriate shared use of available parking spaces since this is a fundamental means for avoiding unnecessary expense and the proliferation of under-utilized or awkwardly shaped parking areas
- Continue to implement the results of the 2009 Downtown Parking Study
- Increase parking signage and wayfinding
- Explore a parking shuttle for special events to encourage more visitors to Downtown
- Enhance connectivity and landscaping to improve walkability to and from more distant parking lots
- Utilize street trees and other vegetation to buffer parking areas to reduce visual and character impacts from parking lots



Existing parking lot downtown.



An example of a parking shuttle implemented in Stuart, Florida.



Streetscapes along Main Street serve as an example to follow through the redevelopment area.



Ideal streetscapes include sidewalks, street trees and pedestrian lighting.

STREETSCAPES

The term streetscape generally refers to the pedestrian realm of a road's right of way. Included in streetscapes are elements such as sidewalks, street trees, crosswalks, benches, and lighting. Streetscapes should be designed to provide a pleasant and safe environment through which pedestrians can move from place to place in a community. Streetscape improvements can also lead to better connectivity between various points of interest such as the Main Street district or recreational facilities.

Alachua's Main Street provides a model for other streets within the City to follow. Tree-lined sidewalks with human scale lighting allow for pedestrians to move safely to and through the Main Street area. The streetscape environment not only provides a safe place for pedestrians, but also an aesthetically pleasing area that complements the surrounding historic buildings. By accommodating pedestrians, the spaces around Main Street become places people want to be, further activating them. Mirroring this design on surrounding streets would allow for enhanced walkability to and from Main Street and improve the visual appeal of surrounding areas. Finally, though there is adequate parking downtown for normal business days, community events and festivals often draw larger crowds, forcing people to park further away from Main Street. By improving the pedestrian environment between remote parking locations and the downtown destination, it improves the experience and diminishes the perception of the need for more parking downtown.

Streetscape improvements should be considered first on streets that connect Main Street with other points of interest in the redevelopment district such as the Library, City Hall and local parks. In doing so, this leads to an enhanced pedestrian network. Additional streetscape improvements should be considered that can draw people from points of interest outside of the community redevelopment district toward Main Street, such as the Hal Brady Recreational Complex.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Promote pedestrian friendly networks throughout the redevelopment district
- Encourage increased connectivity between streets within the redevelopment district and the surrounding context

- Continue to establish a unique visual character through consistent streetscape elements and plantings
- Install sidewalks where none currently exist
- Encourage the installment of street trees and pedestrian lighting where none currently exist
- Incorporate wayfinding & signage elements into streetscape design
- Regularly maintain street trees, plantings and sidewalks
- Provide trash receptacles at appropriate locations, designed for compatibility with the streetscape

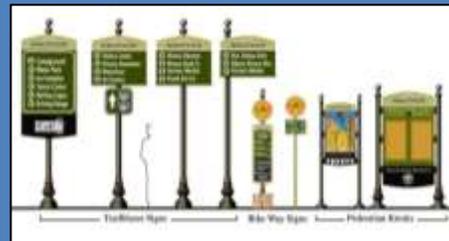
WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE

The use of a unified wayfinding and signage system can have a positive effect on areas within the district. Proper usage of wayfinding and signage can announce one's entrance to a destination, direct people to local points of interest, and finally provide information as to the goings on of a community. Additionally, it can complement existing features within the City and enhance the historic character of the area.

Wayfinding and signage should provide information for pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists in an equitable manner. By creating gateway features near Main Street entry points, the sense of identity can be strengthened and help draw people into the downtown corridor. Other points of interest within Alachua's redevelopment district should be incorporated in the wayfinding system including public buildings such as the Library, Post Office and City Hall. Flexible signage design would allow the inclusion of announcements of community events such as the Spring Festival, Fourth of July celebration, Trick or Treat on Main and Harvest Festival. Any signage implemented should complement the historic nature of Main Street and the surrounding context.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support the development of a multi-directional way finding system



The development of a comprehensive wayfinding system and flexible and consistent signage is encouraged to help draw residents and visitors to Main Street, public events and points of interest.



An example sign from Stuart, Florida.

- Develop a clear, consistent and attractive signage design to properly implement wayfinding strategies
- Strategically locate permanent and flexible signage and wayfinding elements in order to direct visitors and local residents to public buildings, Main Street, historic features, points of interest, public events and parking
- Utilize an equitable approach to pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists in the design of the wayfinding and signage.
- Create attractive gateway features at the intersections of Main Street and US 441, and Peggy Road with Main Street, and any other prominent entranceways to direct residents and visitors to the commercial areas of the central business district

HOUSING

Housing is essential to the character and economic vitality of Alachua. Housing throughout downtown and the neighborhoods of the community redevelopment district provide a ready market for business and services located along Main Street and the Alachua Town Center. Therefore, enhancing and preserving these downtown neighborhoods is one of the most important goals for the Alachua redevelopment program.



Single family housing in the redevelopment district.

Additionally, as Alachua continues to grow the demand for a greater variety of housing increases. Market rate and multifamily housing are important socially and economically to the community redevelopment district of Alachua. The redevelopment program should focus on encouraging a diverse housing stock, offering quality options for homeowners and renters at all levels of the market. Town homes and garden apartments in the downtown area would provide additional support for Main Street businesses and residents greater access to walk to jobs, shops, and parks. This type of small scale multifamily housing can be designed to blend in seamlessly with the surrounding neighborhoods, and is a viable strategy to preserving the historic character of Alachua through adaptive reuse. Within the district, vacant lots should be cataloged and analyzed for the potential of infill and housing development opportunities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Provide housing opportunities for residents of differing income levels
- Coordinate with the City for the provision of affordable housing for low income and elderly where available
- Encourage additional housing stock located within the redevelopment district to attract people to live downtown
- Enhance and preserve the existing historic residential neighborhoods within the redevelopment district
- Support infill and increased density of housing where appropriate, such as vacant, run-down, or non-conforming lots
- Support the enforcement of codes and development regulations to prevent the continuation of substandard housing
- Provide design or other assistance to redevelopment efforts such as façade grant programs
- Encourage the development of housing areas for employees, senior citizens, and low income single tenants that can benefit from the garden atmosphere and services provided in the downtown designated area and reduce the number of trips generated



Historic home along Main Street.

MARKETING

Marketing is a necessary component of the redevelopment program for the success of the City of Alachua's Central Business District and the entire community redevelopment district. Marketing, through support of events and promotion and advertising, brings people into the community, supports economic growth and success of Main Street and the City of Alachua, and avoids future deterioration and blight. These events can bring in first time visitors, create repeat visits and possible future residents, and foster interaction between local residents.



Ideas from citizens and city officials alike are brought forward in a visioning charrette.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Work with local organizations in developing promotional campaigns to attract businesses
- Continue working with other local organizations such as the Alachua Business League for the continued success of festivals and events
- Work with other entities to create brochures to be distributed throughout the city and surrounding area

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public participation enables the community to be a part of the visioning, growth and development of the redevelopment area. Through different realms such as community meetings, visioning sessions, and workshops, citizens can come together and contribute to the future of the community. The opinions of all the stakeholders are relevant to the decision making process and the redevelopment plan. Increased public participation opportunities encourage the discussion of opinions and ideas and provide a venue for to ask questions about the future of the redevelopment area.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Encourage public participation in all stages of the redevelopment process

- Encourage increased citizen participation through meetings and with volunteering efforts for improvements
- Continue active involvement of participating agencies, task forces and committees within the community
- Develop and offer workshops to educate and update citizens on redevelopment

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The City of Alachua Community Redevelopment Plan is meant to provide a guiding framework for the rehabilitation, conservation, and redevelopment activities within the redevelopment area and actions of the Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board. Successful implementation of this plan will require strong leadership and communication from both the public and private sectors, ensuring the support of the redevelopment objectives over time. To achieve the goals presented in this plan there must be a coordinated approach taken by the City of Alachua, the Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board, other government agencies, local businesses, community leaders, and residents alike.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The Downtown Redevelopment Trust Board, City Commission, and City Staff should coordinate redevelopment efforts, support the redevelopment mission, and insure implementation of scheduled projects
- Promote economic development, investment and redevelopment in coordination with public improvements outlined in the plan
- Explore incentive programs, such a façade improvement program, that encourage the rehabilitation and redevelopment of private property



Façade improvements needed along Main Street and other parts of the redevelopment area could be encouraged through a façade improvement program.

FUNDING/COSTS/BUDGET

CITY OF ALACHUA CRA TIF CONTRIBUTION ESTIMATES

CITY OF ALACHUA

<u>Tax Year</u>	<u>CRA Taxable Value</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
2001	\$12,531,570	
2002	\$16,353,510	30.50%
2003	\$19,327,280	18.18%
2004	\$23,248,130	20.29%
2005	\$29,428,680	26.59%
2006	\$42,090,580	43.03%
2007	\$50,127,000	19.09%
2008	\$59,619,630	18.94%
2009	\$43,212,310	-27.52%
2010	\$41,365,920	-4.27%
2011	\$39,978,860	-3.35%
2012	\$39,167,130	-2.03%

Projected Assessment Roll Values:

(1) Base Year (1987) Assessment Roll Taxable Value-Taxable Properties:	\$6,295,700
(2) Projected Taxable Value:	\$39,167,130
(3) Projected Incremental Value Taxable Properties:	<u>\$32,871,430</u>

Taxing Authority Liabilities; Calculations:

City of Alachua

(1) Projected Incremental Value Taxable Properties:	\$32,871,430
(2) Millage Rate:	5.5000
(3) Multiply Line (1) x Line (2):	\$180,792,865
(4) Divide Line (3) by 1000:	\$180,793
(5) Multiply Line (4) by .95	<u>\$171,753</u>

TOTAL TIF ESTIMATED CONTRIBUTION: \$440,175

ALACHUA BOCC

<u>Tax Year</u>	<u>CRA Taxable Value</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
2001	\$12,531,570	
2002	\$16,353,510	30.50%
2003	\$19,280,030	17.90%
2004	\$23,141,130	20.03%
2005	\$29,232,600	26.32%
2006	\$41,818,310	43.05%
2007	\$50,127,000	19.87%
2008	\$59,619,630	18.94%
2009	\$43,212,310	-27.52%
2010	\$41,365,920	-4.27%
2011	\$39,978,860	-3.35%
2012	\$39,167,130	-2.03%

Projected Assessment Roll Values:

(1) Base Year (1987) Assessment Roll Taxable Value-Taxable Properties:	\$6,295,700
(2) Projected Taxable Value:	\$39,167,130
(3) Projected Incremental Value Taxable Properties:	<u>\$32,871,430</u>

Taxing Authority Liabilities; Calculations:

Alachua BOCC

(1) Projected Incremental Value Taxable Properties:	\$32,871,430
(2) Millage Rate:	8.5956
(3) Multiply Line (1) x Line (2):	\$282,549,664
(4) Divide Line (3) by 1000:	\$282,550
(5) Multiply Line (4) by .95	<u>\$268,422</u>

CRA Contribution Estimates 2013

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT DISTRICT LEGAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The community redevelopment area is defined by the legal description and accompanying map provided in Appendix A.

RESIDENTIAL USE

This plan does not propose the conversion of residential uses to nonresidential uses. All existing residential uses within the redevelopment area shall be allowed to continue as residential use in conformance with the City's Comprehensive Plan. This Plan is not intended to remedy a shortage of affordable housing for residents of low or moderate income, including the elderly.

REPLACEMENT HOUSING FOR RELOCATED PERSONS

There will be no temporary or permanent displacement of persons from housing facilities located within the redevelopment area necessary to complete the redevelopment of the redevelopment area. Therefore, there will be no need for replacing housing.

REDEVELOPMENT COMPLETION DATE

All redevelopment to be financed by tax increment revenues generated within the redevelopment area shall be completed within 30 years after the fiscal year in which this plan (2043), which supersedes and replaces previous plans, is approved or adopted.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN SAFEGUARDS

All redevelopment work shall be carried out pursuant to this plan.

REDEVELOPMENT PLAN MODIFICATION

This redevelopment plan may be modified in a manner consistent with Florida Statutes 163.361.

PROVISIONS FOR RETENTION OF CONTROL

If any land is sold or leased for private use by the City, the sale or lease of such land shall include restrictions or covenants running with the land for such periods of time and under such conditions as the City Commission deems necessary to retain control of such land to effectuate the purpose of the Act and this plan.