



City of Alachua

Planning & Community Development Department

Staff Report

Planning & Zoning Board Hearing Date:
Legislative Hearing

June 11, 2013

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan consistency review related to an Amended Community Redevelopment Plan.

APPLICANT/AGENT: City of Alachua

PROJECT PLANNER: Kathy Winburn, AICP

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Planning & Zoning Board find that the proposed Amended Community Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan and transmit such finding to the City Commission.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: *This Board finds that the Amended Community Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the City of Alachua Comprehensive Plan and transmits such finding to the City Commission.*

SUMMARY

On February 12, 2013, the Planning and Zoning Board reviewed the proposed Community Redevelopment Plan for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. The Board voted 5-0 to make a finding that the Amended Redevelopment Plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan includes goals and recommendations related to: economic development, parks & open space, historic preservation, infrastructure, parking, streetscapes, wayfinding & signage, housing, marketing and public participation.

Since that time, the proposed Plan has been further revised to reflect certain requirements of Florida Statute and to include additional information requested by the County. These changes do not impact the Plan's consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan. In summary, the following changes have been made:

1. Inclusion of additional maps:
 - a. Map 4: Zoning Districts in the Community Redevelopment Area
 - b. Map 5: Parks and Open Space
 - c. Map 6: Existing Street Layout
 - d. Map 7: Location of public uses
2. Revision of the Community Redevelopment Area boundaries to remove portions that were previously adding, resulting in **NO EXPANSION** of the CRA boundaries.
3. A revised legal description to accurately represent the proposed boundaries.
4. Additional text (pages 8 and 9 of the Plan) to meet the requirements of Section 163.362 (1)-(10) Florida Statute.
5. A copy of the applicable LDR's pertaining to allowable uses and building limitations within the zoning districts that are applicable to the CRA (Appendix B, pages 33-44).
6. A listing of capital projects and projected costs (Appendix C, page 45).
7. Tax Increment Projections (Appendix D, pages 46-51).

According to Section 163.360 F.S., a community redevelopment plan must conform to the comprehensive plan of the county or municipality as prepared by the local planning agency under the Community Planning Act. Section 163.360(4) indicates that that the community redevelopment agency shall submit a community redevelopment plan to the local planning agency for review and recommendations as to its conformity with the comprehensive plan for the development of the municipality as a whole.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

The Goals, Objectives and Policies (GOP's) identified below provide a basis to establish consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. There may be additional GOPs which the Amended Plan is consistent with that are not listed below. An analysis of the proposed Community Redevelopment Plan's consistency with the below listed Goals, Objectives and Policies identified below has been provided.

Vision Element:

II. VISION STATEMENT

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 the 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. Alachua will become a leader in innovative techniques to ensure quality, well-planned growth and provide for a safe and convenient transportation environment. Alachua will be a place where housing choices are available to meet the needs of all citizens. 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.

Analysis: The proposed Community Redevelopment Plan's goals related to Economic Development, Parks and Open Space, Historic Preservation and Housing further the City's Vision Statement, as adopted in the Comprehensive Plan, along with the implementing goals of the Vision Element.

Future Land Use Element:

- Policy 3.1.5 The use of tax increment financing as a mechanism to promote the improvement of deteriorated designated historic districts shall be considered.

- Objective 3.5 Ensure that the City's land use, transportation, housing, and economic development policies and regulations are consistent with and adequately facilitate historic preservation.

- Policy 3.5.1 The City shall ensure that future development within the district is sensitive to the historic character of any historic district.

- Policy 3.5.2 The character of an historic district shall be protected from encroachment of incompatible uses.

- Policy 3.6.3 The City shall work with state and local governmental organizations and other interested parties to promote historic preservation.

- Goal 4 Infill and Redevelopment Standards: The City of Alachua shall encourage new development and redevelopment to occur within developed areas, such as the Community Redevelopment Area (known as the Downtown Redevelopment Area) and the Central City Area, to utilize vacant and abandoned properties, prevent blight, and make the best use of available resources.

Objective 4.1 Infill development: Infill development shall be encouraged in order to protect the unique character of existing neighborhoods and commercial developments, provide for a safe urban environment, increase densities in a manner compatible with existing uses, provide open spaces, and restore or maintain economic vitality and cultural diversity.

Objective 4.2 Community Redevelopment Area: The City of Alachua shall encourage development and redevelopment within the Community Redevelopment Area, known as the Downtown Redevelopment Area, in accordance with the adopted redevelopment plan.

Policy 4.2.1 The City shall include the Downtown Redevelopment Area on its Future Land Use Map as an overlay district.

Policy 4.2.2 The City shall establish standards and regulations for the overlay district in order to promote a vibrant mix of land uses, including commercial, residential and public spaces, establish design guidelines for building renovation and new construction, provide for increased landscaping standards, flexible parking requirements, pedestrian amenities, lighting, and requirements for stormwater management, including opportunities for off-site stormwater management.

Objective 4.3 Redevelopment: The City shall encourage the redevelopment of existing developed properties, vacant properties or buildings, or abandoned properties and buildings, particularly within the Downtown Redevelopment Area and the Central City Area.

Analysis: The Future Land Use Element contains many objectives and policies that are consistent with the proposed Amended and Fully Restated Community Redevelopment Plan. The City's historic district is located within the Community Redevelopment Area, and many of the goals of the proposed plan align with policies related to historic preservation within the Future Land Use Element. The proposed Community Redevelopment Plan in its entirety implements Goal 4, Objective 4.1 and Objective 4.2, Policy 4.2.2 and Objective 4.3 of the Future Land Use Element. The City has included a map of the Community Redevelopment Area within the Future Land Use Map series as part of the recent Evaluation and Appraisal of the Comprehensive Plan, in order to implement Policy 4.2.1

RECREATION:

Policy 1.2.c: The City shall encourage the development and operation of public pocket and neighborhood parks by non-profit organizations and private parties.

Policy 1.2.d: The City shall ensure the provision of parks, trails and recreation facilities, through the inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian paths, and vehicle and bicycle parking areas. All City parks shall conform to the requirements of

the Americans with Disabilities Act by providing barrier free facilities and safe, sufficient parking.

OBJECTIVE 1.5: Cultural Programs and Facilities

The City shall develop or improve park facilities that allow appropriate public access and use to recreational, cultural, historical and natural resources.

Policy 1.5.a: The City shall pursue acquisition of culturally, historically and naturally significant properties for inclusion in the parks and recreation system. Appropriate usage fees shall be determined to offset the cost of maintenance and operation. Wherever possible these sites shall be linked through bicycle and pedestrian paths.

Policy 1.5.b: The City shall create interpretive centers in parks with significant cultural, natural or historical resources.

Analysis: The proposed Amended and Fully Restated Community Redevelopment Plan supports parks and open space, cultural activities and recreation within the Community Redevelopment Area, and is consistent with the Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

ECONOMIC ELEMENT:

OBJECTIVE 1.7 Central City Business District (CCBD) /Historic Preservation

The City of Alachua shall encourage the preservation of its historic and cultural resources to strengthen the economic viability of Alachua's Central Business District and Downtown. In order to accomplish this goal the City of Alachua may, by way of illustration, but not by way of limitation:

Policy 1.7.a Enhance the economic vitality of the historic areas by considering incentives to locate diverse pedestrian friendly and culturally-oriented businesses in the historic district.

Policy 1.7.b Analyze the use of funds from a variety of sources to consider providing incentives for business location and expansion within the CCBD.

Policy 1.7.c Through innovate design encourage pedestrian friendly and culturally oriented events in the historic district.

Policy 1.7.d Prioritize investing in projects in the historic and downtown redevelopment districts.

Policy 1.7.e Encourage small business and entrepreneurial investors by providing promotional signs and materials that market the development of Alachua's downtown character. Funding sources will include Redevelopment district tax increment

funds. This may include uniform streets signage, marker plaques, or a welcome gateway sign.

Policy 1.7.g

Strive to preserve the stability of Alachua's historic charm.

Analysis:

The proposed Community Redevelopment Plan contains a goal related to marketing, and includes recommendations for the support of events, along with promotion and advertising to bring people into the community. The proposed Amended and Fully Restated Community Redevelopment Plan is consistent with Policy 1.7.e, and other policies of the Economic Element related to maintaining the historic character of the downtown area.

ATTACHMENT: Amended Community Redevelopment Plan