Joint City-County Commission Meeting
Agenda
May 22, 2023

Mayor Gib Coerper
Vice Mayor Dayna Miller
Commissioner Jennifer Blalock
Commissioner Shirley Green Brown
Commissioner Edward Potts
Chair Anna Prizzia
Vice Chair Mary Alford
Commissioner Ken Cornell
Commissioner Charles Chestnut, IV
Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler

City Manager Mike DaRoza
City Attorney Marian Rush

The City Commission will conduct a
Joint City-County Commission Meeting
At 6:00 PM
to address the item(s) below.

Meeting Date: May 22, 2023

Meeting Location: James A Lewis Commission Chambers
15100 NW 142 Ter.

Joint City-County Commission Meeting

Notice given pursuant to Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes. In order to appeal any decision made at this meeting, you will need a verbatim record of the proceedings. It will be your responsibility to ensure such a record is made.

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

WELCOME

I. AGENDA

A. Interlocal Agreement - Tree Planting Program

B. Infrastructure Surtax

C. Fire Station Equipment and Trunk Radio System Update

II. COMMISSION GENERAL AND INFORMAL DISCUSSION

III. CITIZEN COMMENTS

(**Please Limit to 3 Minutes.**Any citizen who did not speak during the Citizen Comments period at the beginning of the meeting may do so at this time.)

IV. ADJOURN

City of Alachua
THE GOOD LIFE COMMUNITY

Commission Agenda Item

MEETING DATE: 5/22/2023
SUBJECT: Interlocal Agreement - Tree Planting Program
PREPARED BY: LeAnne Williams, Deputy City Clerk

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Discuss the item, approve, and sign the agreement.

Summary

An interlocal agreement is to be entered into between Alachua County and the City of Alachua for the purpose of allowing the County to plant trees on City property.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- Alachua County Tree Planting Program and Interlocal Agreements Update 23.05.22 - 23-00153
- Alachua County Tree Planting Program Operating Procedure
- Tree Planting Program Updates and Interlocal_Joint Meeting

Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00153 **Agenda Date: 5/22/2023**

Agenda Item Name:

Alachua County Tree Planting Program and Interlocal Agreements Update

Presenter:
Andi Christman, Alachua County Land Conservation Program Manager, 352-264-6803
Lacy Holtzworth, Alachua County Arborist, 352-548-1266

Prior Board Motions:
On 9/11/2018, the Board approved the Alachua County Tree Planting Program Operating Procedure, and adopted Resolution 18-78 establishing a Tree Sponsorship Policy.

Background:
The Alachua County Tree Planting Program, managed by the County Arborist, plants trees throughout the County. Since 2018, the program has planted and is maintaining 1,116 trees, including plantings in all 9 municipalities. Building on the successes of the program over the past 5 years, the tree planting program now enters into the next 5-year period, with continued focus on the following priority planting areas as established in the Board in the Tree Planting Program Operating Procedure, and assessment of longer-term goals for community:

- First priority shall be placed on road segments where traffic calming is most needed and multimodal transportation choices are most likely to be utilized such as approaches to schools, commercial centers, employment centers, and service centers including libraries, parks, churches and community centers.
- Second priority shall be locations that facilitate shade and buffering for pedestrians, cyclists, buildings, parking lots, and recreational amenities.
  To expand on program successes and further increase local community support and buy-in, staff recommends pursuing establishment of Interlocal Agreements between the County and each municipality, as well as with the Alachua County School Board to offer more comprehensive tree planning, planting and tree preservation assistance and guidance.

Alachua County Tree Planting Program Operating Procedure Date:

Approved by the Board of County Commissioners on 9/11/2018

Subject: County Tree Planting Program

Prepared by: Lacy C. Holtzworth, County Arborist

Objective: *The Alachua County Tree Planting Program shall establish High Value Trees, appropriate for site conditions on County owned right-of-ways, developed County properties, and properties directly influencing the public sphere.*

Implementation: Encompassing the goals of both the County's *Right of Way Tree Planting Program* (as outlined in the Public Works Operating Procedure ORB-17, July 26, 2002) and the County's *Comprehensive Plan*, The County's *Tree Planting Program* shall plant High Value trees in locations that include but are not limited to; County owned - road right-of-ways, building grounds, storm water facilities, parks and parking lots. This Program also allows Staff to request private properties owners and municipal officials access to plant and establish trees on properties that meet the following program priorities. Unless otherwise directed, the County Arborist shall be responsible for scheduling, planting and maintaining tree planting projects to facilitate the most efficient use of staff and resources. Tree Planting projects shall be implemented based on the following (2) priorities:

1. First priority shall be placed on road segments where traffic calming is most needed and multimodal transportation choices are most likely to be utilized such as approaches to schools, commercial centers, employment centers, and service centers including libraries, parks, churches and community centers.
2. Second priority shall be locations that facilitate shade and buffering for pedestrians, cyclists, buildings, parking lots, and recreational amenities.

Public health and safety shall be paramount. All tree planting projects shall follow the guidelines of the most current edition of the *Manual for Uniform Minimum Standards for Design, Construction and Maintenance of Streets and Highways*. All Projects will accommodate local utility setback and separation requirements. No trees will be planted where they will grow to pose conflicts with utilities, transportation or facility operations.

Only High Value tree species appropriate for site conditions will be selected. All trees purchased will be nursery grown; meeting or exceeding Florida Division of Plant Industry, Nursery Grades and Standard #1. High Value trees are defined as species with structural resilience and disease resistance, resulting in medium to large trees, in good health, requiring minimal maintenance. Species with these characteristics include but are not limited to Live Oak, Bluff Oak, Winged Elm, Magnolia, Bald Cypress, Southern Red Cedar, Holly, Long Leaf and Spruce Pines.

The County Arborist shall develop and maintain a list of proposed tree planting projects. The list of proposed projects for the coming year shall be provided to the Board of County Commissioners each year in conjunction with the presentation of the Department's budget. Accompanying project descriptions should include addresses or locations, estimated tree quantities, estimated cost and aerial photos. A completed project list shall also be compiled with actual tree locations, quantities, species, and final installation cost.

Funding: The primary purpose of the Arboriculture Division's operating expense shall be to administer the County's Tree Planting Program. $45,000 shall be appropriated annually for all cost directly associated with tree purchase, planting and establishment maintenance, up to 3 years after planting, on County maintained right of way. The County Tree Mitigation Fund, collected specifically to mitigate the loss of High Value Trees shall carry forward annually all new or remaining funds, to support all cost directly related to purchasing, planting and establishing new trees on any County owned property, as well as private or municipal properties where maintenance agreements can be arranged.

ALACHUA COUNTY
TREE PLANTING PROGRAM
Updates and Next Steps

Lacy Holtzworth and Andi Christman
Land Conservation and Management Program

1

TREE PLANTING PRIORITIES

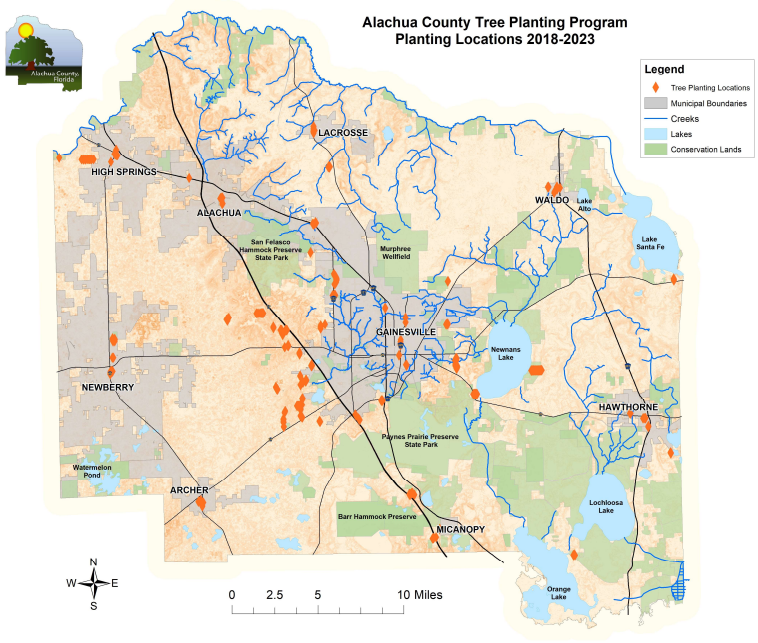
- **First priority** - Road segments where traffic calming is most needed and multimodal transportation choices are most likely to be utilized:
  - Approaches to schools, commercial centers, employment centers, and service centers including libraries, parks, churches and community centers.
- **Second priority** – Locations that facilitate shade and buffering for pedestrians, cyclists, buildings, parking lots, and recreational amenities.

2

2

Tree Planting Accomplishments 2018-2023

1,116 trees planted To date

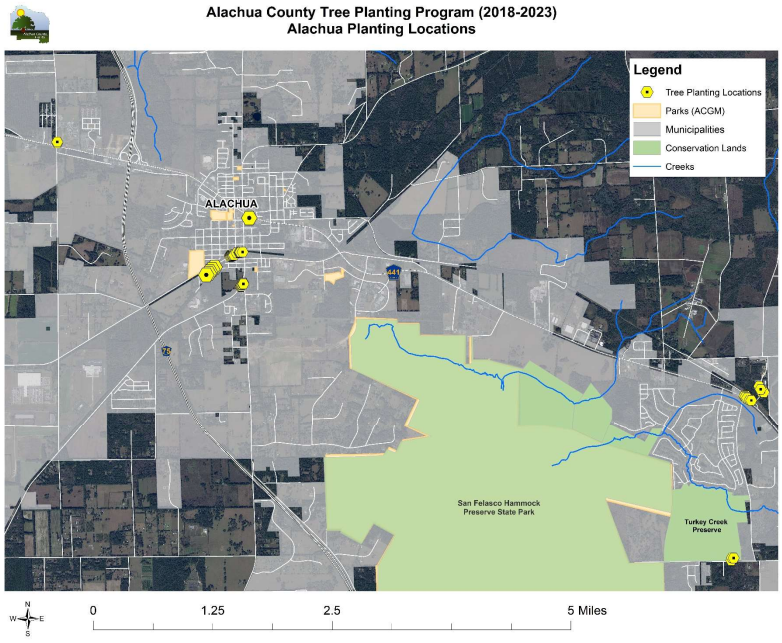


3

ALACHUA TREE PLANTINGS

57 trees have been planted:

- 27 planted in 2019
- 30 planted in 2023 for the Great American Cleanup



4

COMMUNITY PLANTINGS

5

5

NEXT STEPS

- Staff proposes development of Interlocal Agreements with each municipality and the School Board of Alachua County to facilitate ongoing and future tree-planting efforts
- BOCC planting priorities will be emphasized, and staff will seek opportunities to expand tree planting partnerships which benefit the citizens throughout the County.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

6

6

City of Alachua
THE GOOD LIFE COMMUNITY

Commission Agenda Item

MEETING DATE: 5/22/2023
SUBJECT: Infrastructure Surtax
PREPARED BY: LeAnne Williams, Deputy City Clerk

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Discuss the item.

Summary

County Commissioners to present updates on:
a. Conservation Lands
b. Parks and Open Space
c. Roads

Fiscal Note: Funding Sources include General Fund Transfer, Infrastructure Surtax (70% of 1/2), Grants, 5 cent Local Option Gas Tax(ELM Nickel), Impact Fees, and Multi Modal Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- 1. Conservation Land 23.05.22 - 23-00154
- 2 _ Resolution 22-066_ACF Process_
- 3 _ BOCC_Infrastructure Surtax_Ordinance 2022_08
- 4 _ 2023 Alachua County Forever 10 Year Plan_Joint Meeting_Updated 2023-04-19
- 5. Parks and Open Space 23.05.22 - 23-00155
- 6. 2023 Parks Master Plan1
- 7. Parks Presentation
- 8. 2023-03-20 Vision Map w_legend 24x36
- 9. Roads 23.05.22 - 23-00156
- 10. PRESENTATION 230412 PMP Meeting (rdg 230413) - Alachua County

Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00154 **Agenda Date: 5/22/2023**

Agenda Item Name:

Conservation Lands

Presenter:
Andi Christman, Alachua County Environmental Program Manager, 352-264-6803

Prior Board Motions:
On March 22, 2022, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) passed a motion adopting Ordinance 2022-088 levying a 1 percent local government infrastructure surtax effective only after voter approval at a referendum election, and authorizing the use of infrastructure surtax proceeds as follows:

1. Providing that 50.0 percent of the proceeds of the new surtax shall be used to acquire and improve lands for conservation, protection of natural resources, or public recreation, and to operate and maintain parks, recreational programs and Recreational facilities throughout the county ("Wild Spaces Public Places uses" or "WSPP uses");
2. Providing that 50.0 percent of the proceeds of the new surtax shall be used to repair roads and improve road safety, construct or renovate fire stations and other public facilities, acquire lands for affordable housing, and fund economic development projects pursuant to Florida Statute 212.055(2)(d)(3), Florida Statutes ("non-WSPP uses");
3. Providing that not more than 15.0 percent of the proceeds of the new surtax may be used to fund economic development projects pursuant to Florida Statute 212.055(2)(d)(3), Florida Statutes;
4. Providing for authorization and legislative findings; providing for a referendum election on November 8, 2022.
5. Providing for Alachua County's Non-Recurring Municipal Partnership Program (Section 5) with the City of Gainesville (i) and the nine municipalities (ii).

On 6/28/22 the Board passed a motion to establish BOCC Resolution 22-066, providing and amending the process for selecting and acquiring environmentally significant lands purchased using Wild Spaces Public Places local government infrastructure surtax proceeds.
On February 7, 2023, following presentations on the Alachua County Parks and Open Space Master Plan, and the Alachua County Land Conservation and Management Program 10-year Plan, the Board of County Commissioners moved the following:

1. Approve the implementation of the 10-year Land Conservation and Management Plan and strategies as presented.
2. Authorize funding, planning, and construction of the combined field support and office facility for the Land Conservation Program using WSPP surtax funds to the extent permissible.

3. Utilize an 80% Conservation and 20% Recreation split of WSPP infrastructure surtax proceeds to be dedicated to conservation lands and active parks for the 10-year surtax beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2032.
4. Allow staff to utilize the surtax for startup operations and maintenance costs and ask staff to bring back recommendations during the budget process that includes a cap, a transition to General Fund, and a yearly report process recommendation for the Board to consider.
5. Adopt the Alachua County Parks & Open Space Master plan as a visioning document and ask staff to develop for the Board to review and bring back in approximately 90 to 120 days the following:

a. An overlay of the County's Bike and Pedestrian Master plan to identify short and midterm opportunities for trail and walkway connectivity.
b. Add an equity lens as defined in our Comprehensive Plan and identify short and midterm opportunities to enhance this visioning document.
c. Identify existing lands owned by the County that could be utilized in the short term to leverage the implementation of this plan; and work with the Conservation and Management Program to identify future acquisition sites that could be utilized for both Parks & Open Space and Land Conservation 10-year Master Plans

Provide an overlay of municipal parks and county conservation lands, and open space available to the public and bring back recommendations for the visioning document.

Background:

The Alachua County Wild Spaces Public Places/Local Government Infrastructure Surtax referenda have supported the following programs goals, building on the foundation of the Alachua County Forever bond referendum passed in 2000:

- In 2008, Alachua County voters passed the Wild Spaces and Public Places surtax referendum, establishing a 2-year, half-cent surtax to be utilized by Alachua County and the municipalities within Alachua County to acquire and improve conservation lands and create, improve and maintain parks and recreational facilities within Alachua County.
- In 2016, Alachua County voters approved a renewal of the Wild Spaces and Public Places initiative with a one-half cent sales tax to be levied for eight years.
- In 2022, Alachua County voters passed a referendum to fund local infrastructure projects with a ten-year one-cent surtax. This surtax repealed and replaced the last two years of the 2016 surtax, dedicating one-half cent dedicated to Wild Spaces and Public places projects, and the other half cent funding to other County infrastructure needs including road safety, affordable housing, fire stations, and other public infrastructure needs.

The mission of the Alachua County Forever (ACF) Program is to acquire, improve, and manage environmentally significant lands that protect water resources, wildlife habitats and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation. Since the program's inception in 2000, Alachua County has protected 33,037 acres of environmentally significant lands through fee simple lands purchases, purchase of conservation easements, and generous landowner donations. The ACF Program was established in 2000 after the Alachua County Forever Bond referendum was approved by the voters of Alachua County.

On February 7, 2023, the Alachua County Land Conservation and Management Program presented a ten-year plan to the Board of County Commissioners, reflecting the strategy for continued pursuit of the ACF program mission and County Comprehensive Plan (2019-2040) goals; with emphasis on local conservation priorities, while considering state, national, and global conservation benchmarks. The

Alachua County Parks and Open Space Department presented the Parks and Open Space Master Plan to the Board of County Commissioners on February 7, 2023, providing a plan for the future of the County park system.

After discussion of county priorities for the projected WSPP portion of the surtax revenues, the Board moved to allocate 80% of the Alachua County surtax funds to Alachua County Forever/Land Conservation and Management program operation, and 20% of the surtax funds to the Alachua County Parks and Open Space Department operations. This allocation will be effective for Surtax revenue received by Alachua County from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2032.

Key priorities for the next ten-year period will include:

- Conservation Land Acquisition: protection of the Santa Fe River corridor, protecting a viable footprint of connected conservation lands within the Alachua County portion of the statewide Florida Wildlife Corridor, an increased emphasis on protection of a southern corridor between Paynes Prairie/Barr Hammock, and Watermelon Pond, and implementation of a more focused agricultural land protection strategy to be implemented through conservation easement acquisition.
- County Preserve Stewardship: Currently, 22 distinct preserves acquired through the ACF program have been opened for nature-based public recreational use. Emphasis in the coming years will include opening additional newly acquired lands to public use; and restoring and improving habitat through activities such as invasive species removal, prescribed burning, tree planting, and other techniques.

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RESOLUTION 22- 66

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, REPEALING AND REPLACING RESOLUTION 18-101, TO AMEND THE PROCESS FOR SELECTING AND ACQUIRING ENVIRONMENTALLY SIGNIFICANT LANDS PURCHASED USING WILD SPACES PUBLIC PLACES LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE SURTAX PROCEEDS; PROVIDING A REPEALING CLAUSE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Alachua County contains many treasured natural resources of significant environmental importance that contribute greatly to the quality of life enjoyed by our citizens; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the citizens of Alachua County that action be taken in order to protect for future generations the natural resources of Alachua County by acquiring, improving and managing environmentally significant lands; and,

WHEREAS, the acquisition of these environmentally significant lands will provide opportunities for both existing residents and future generations to enjoy wild and scenic areas and will provide opportunities for resource-based recreation and educational uses as well as opportunities to maintain good surface water quality by using appropriate lands for their natural stormwater cleansing abilities; and,

WHEREAS, it is consistent with the State of Florida Comprehensive Plan, the Strategic Regional Policy Plan adopted by the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan to acquire, preserve and passively use environmentally significant lands located in Alachua County, Florida; and,

WHEREAS, Article 2, Section 7(a) of the Florida Constitution states it shall be the policy of the State of Florida to conserve and protect its natural resources and scenic beauty and that adequate provisions shall be made for the adequate protection and conservation of natural resources; and,

WHEREAS, on September 28, 1999, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) adopted Resolution 99-110 establishing the Land Conservation Advisory Committee (LCAC), for the purpose of recommending policies guiding the prioritization of environmentally significant lands for acquisition and related topics; and,

WHEREAS, on July 25 , 2000, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Resolution 00-60, calling for a referendum on the question as to whether General Obligation bonds should be issued to fund the acquisition, preservation, and passive recreational use of these environmentally significant lands; and,

WHEREAS on July 25 , 2000, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 00-13 establishing the Alachua County Land Conservation Board (LCB), and as amended by Ordinance 01-23 on September 25 , 2001 ; and,

WHEREAS, said referendum was held on November 7, 2000, and the voters of Alachua County approved issuing the bonds; and

WHEREAS, on August 12, 2008, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 08-17, calling for a referendum on November 4, 2008, submitting to the qualified electors of Alachua County the question as to whether a 1/2-cent Local Government Infrastructure Surtax should be levied to

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fund the acquisition, preservation, and passive recreational use of these environmentally significant lands; and,

WHEREAS, a referendum on said surtax was held on November 4, 2008, and the voters of Alachua County approved said surtax; and

WHEREAS, on May 10, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Ordinance 16- 06 calling for a referendum on November 8, 2016, submitting to the qualified electors of Alachua County the question as to whether an 8-year, 1/2-cent Local Government Infrastructure Surtax should be levied to extend the Alachua County Forever Program to acquire and improve environmentally sensitive lands to protect drinking water sources, water quality, and wildlife habitat, and to create improve and maintain parks and recreational facilities in all cities and the County, and,

WHEREAS, a referendum on said surtax was held on November 8, 2016, and the voters of Alachua County approved said surtax; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners adopted Resolution 00-100 on October 10, 2000 to establish a process where environmentally significant lands may be acquired and managed using these proceeds, and as amended by Resolution 01-126 on September 25, 2001 and by Resolution 01-137 on October 23 , 2001 , and by Resolution 02-017 on February 26, 2002, and by Resolution 05-061 on August 9, 2005 , and by Resolution 05-094 on November 8, 2005 , and by Resolution 06-01 on January 10, 2006, and by Resolution 09-10 on January 27, 2009, and by Resolution 14-50 on July 8, 2014, and by Resolution 15-106 on September 8, 2015, and by Resolution 18-101 on December 11, 2018.

NOW, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA THAT RESOLUTION 18-101 IS HEREBY REPEALED AND REPLACED WITH THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE:

Section 1. Authority for this Resolution. This Resolution is adopted pursuant to the Alachua County Home Rule Charter, Chapter 125, Florida Statutes, as amended, the Code of Alachua County Section 310, and other applicable provisions of law.

Section 2. Applicability. These procedures apply to selection and purchase of environmentally significant land under the Alachua County Forever Bond referendum and the Wild Spaces and Public Places Referenda, and shall not apply to property acquisition completed for parks and recreational facilities or other purposes or property acquired using other funding sources.

Section 3. Overall Goals, Values and Policies of the Land Selection and Acquisition Program Established for Use of Funds Authorized by the Alachua County Forever Bond Referendum and the Wild Spaces and Public Places Local Government Infrastructure Surtax Referenda. The following goals, values and policies shall apply to Alachua County Land Conservation Program:

a. Alachua County's goals and values in establishing the Alachua County Land Conservation program to acquire and manage environmentally significant lands are to protect water resources, wildlife habitat, and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.

b. Alachua County seeks to maximize the effectiveness of local tax dollars by using them to leverage funds available from federal, state, municipal, private non-profit, and Water Management District sources. The County may own land in partnership with other agencies. The County may preferentially elect to designate Alachua County Forever bond and Wild Spaces and Public Places Local Government Infrastructure Surtax proceeds as matching funds for perpetual federal, state, municipal, private non-profit

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or Water Management District land acquisition projects if the LCB and the BOCC determine that any such project adequately meets the eligibility requirements established in the site ranking criteria or otherwise conforms with the above-stated overall goals of this program. The County may hold title in partnership with other agencies.

c. Mandated acquisition procedures for federal, state, or water management district (WMD) programs may be substituted in part or in whole for the provisions of these County policies and procedures when federal, state or WMD funds are available and will be utilized for the purchase of land, and qualification for such funds requires compliance with mandated acquisition procedures. The BOCC may waive any provision of the County's acquisition procedures when land is being conveyed to the County from another governmental entity.

d. The Board of County Commissioners recognizes that significant conservation goals can be achieved by alternatives to traditional fee simple acquisition. The acquisition of conservation easements is encouraged by the Florida Forever Program and can result in maximizing open space acquisition and rewarding good private stewardship of the lands, while keeping property on the tax rolls. Negotiations for acquisition of a conservation easement shall use appraisals based on the difference between the full fee simple valuation and the value of the interests remaining with the seller after acquisition.

e. The Board of County Commissioners shall determine the total amount of funding available for protection of environmentally significant land during any acquisition cycle or budget year. However, the Active Acquisition List will be maintained from cycle-to-cycle and year-to-year unless the property owner requests removal of a property from consideration.

f. All acquisitions under the Alachua County Forever Land Conservation program require the participation of a willing property owner. Alachua County shall not use the power of eminent domain (condemnation) to acquire property under this program, which has been presented as a voluntary preservation effort and shall not force the sale of property. If at any time the property owner of a parcel wishes to have that property removed from consideration, this request will be honored. If significant numbers of owners of keystone parcels wish to have their properties removed from consideration, the LCB may make a recommendation to the BOCC with regard to whether the entire project should be withdrawn from consideration. A parcel may be resubmitted for consideration at the request of the property owner at any time.

g. The goal of all purchase negotiations shall be to obtain the appropriate interest in land free of encumbrances, conditions, restrictions and reservations at the lowest possible price. However, the County Commission has the authority to accept lands with less than perfect title if it is determined to be in the best interests of the County.

h. Any member of the LCB or BOCC with a financial conflict of interest related to any property acquisition shall declare the nature of the conflict and shall abstain from voting on that property in accordance with state ethics law.

Section 4. Steps of the Land Selection Process. Environmentally significant lands to be acquired using Alachua County Forever bond or Wild Spaces and Public Places Local Government Infrastructure Surtax proceeds shall be selected for acquisition according to the following process:

a. Establishment of an Open Nomination Process. Alachua County shall accept nominations for land acquisition projects from any person or organization at any time for any property located in Alachua County. Members of the LCB and BOCC may not nominate properties for acquisition. Nominated projects shall be reviewed in order on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Board of County Commissioners may limit

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the number or combined value of projects evaluated within each review cycle, and may establish deadlines for consideration within the active cycle. Those projects that are not reviewed in the active cycle shall be automatically considered in the next available cycle. The Board of County Commissioners shall periodically and broadly advertise its open process for accepting nominations for environmentally significant land acquisition projects.

b. Acceptance of One-Page Nominations. Each nomination shall be submitted on a one-page form provided by Alachua County. Information required on the form shall include the property location (street address and/or section, township, range), tax parcel number(s), approximate project size, record owner of title, existing designations on the applicable future land use and zoning maps, and reasons the land should be acquired. If requested, Alachua County staff shall provide any needed help in completing this form. Up to fifteen pages of text, maps, photographs, letters, appraisal summaries, or other documentation may be provided to the County for consideration at the time of nomination. This supporting documentation is not required. A signed standard form indicating each owner's willingness to negotiate a sale or easement and granting right of access for site inspection may also be submitted at the time of nomination, but is non-binding with respect to a sale by the owner and not required.

c. Establishment of the Nomination Pool. Upon receipt of a complete nomination form, each candidate project shall be added to the Nomination Pool and given an initial office review by County staff or designees using the most accurate reference materials available as well as any information submitted with the application form. References used to complete this initial office review shall include, but not be limited to existing maps, Geographic Information System (GIS) databases, aerial photographs, and reports. If, upon completion of the initial office review, staff finds that the biological value of the candidate project is low or that the proposed acquisition would not fulfill the purposes of the Alachua County Forever Land Conservation program set forth herein, staff may recommend the LCB take no further action on the application. The nominator will be notified of the decision and shall have the opportunity to appeal the decision at a regular meeting of the LCB. If the LCB decides to take further action on the candidate project, it will be referred back to staff for further evaluation under the procedures outlined below.

(1) A conceptual project boundary shall be established by County staff, and may be adjusted at the request of an affected property owner or the LCB. The conceptual project boundary may include all parcels that serve to enhance the values, purpose, viability or function of the project

(2) If a conceptual project boundary includes multiple properties with different owners, the LCB shall identify those keystone parcels that are necessary to acquire to justify obtaining other adjacent parcels. No non-keystone portion of a project shall be acquired unless the appropriate keystone parcels have been acquired as well. The LCB may review any project and recommend the BOCC amend the keystone parcel designations. Any candidate project or parcels may either be retained indefinitely in the Nomination Pool or removed by the LCB at the request of a keystone parcel owner. If the project is retained, reconsideration for advancement to the Active Acquisition List may be requested at any time with receipt of updated information that may affect the site ranking or viability of sale. If a parcel is removed from the Nomination Pool at the request of the parcel owner, it shall not be further considered for purchase for a period of not less than five (5) years unless submitted for reconsideration at the written request of the property owner. The parcel or a project may be reconsidered at any time if it was removed at the request of the LCB.

d. Rapid Ecological Project Assessment. Staff will use any available information to address the criteria in the Land Conservation Decision Matrix, adopted by the BOCC on October 23, 2001 (as amended) and summarized below. Staff will draft a Rapid Ecological Project Assessment (REPA) to evaluate the candidate project. The purpose of the REPA is to provide the LCB with the merit of the conceptual project relative to the existing projects. Alternately, staff may recommend that the LCB add nominated parcels to an existing project and amend its boundary and REPA appropriately, rather than establish a new project. If

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a nomination consists of a single property ownership that is not appropriate to add to an existing REPA, a Site Evaluation Report may be performed in lieu of the REPA.

LAND CONSERVATION DECISION MATRIX
FOR ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER ACQUISITIONS

I-1. ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES - PROTECTION OF WATER RESOURCES
A. Whether the property has geologic/hydrologic conditions that would easily enable contamination of vulnerable aquifers that have value as drinking water sources;
B. Whether the property serves an important groundwater recharge function;
C. Whether the property contains or has direct connections to lakes, creeks, rivers, springs, sinkholes, or wetlands for which conservation of the property will protect or improve surface water quality;
D. Whether the property serves an important flood management function.

I-2. ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES- PROTECTION OF NATURAL COMMUNITIES AND LANDSCAPES
A. Whether the property contains a diversity of natural communities;
B. Whether the natural communities present on the property are rare;
C. Whether there is ecological quality in the communities present on the property;
D. Whether the property is functionally connected to other natural communities;
E. Whether the property is adjacent to properties that are in public ownership or have other
environmental protections such as conservation easements;
F. Whether the property is large enough to contribute substantially to conservation efforts;
G. Whether the property contains important, Florida-specific geologic features such as caves,
sinkholes or springs;
H. Whether the property is relatively free from internal fragmentation from roads, power lines, and other features that create barriers and edge effects.

I-3. ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES - PROTECTION OF PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES
A. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for rare, threatened, or endangered species or species of special concern;
B. Whether the property serves as documented or potential habitat for species with large home ranges;
C. Whether the property contains plants or animals that are endemic or near-endemic to Florida or Alachua County;
D. Whether the property serves as a special wildlife migration or aggregation site for activities such as breeding, roosting, colonial nesting, or over-wintering;
E. Whether the property offers high vegetation quality and species diversity;

I-4. SOCIAL/HUMAN VALUES
A. Whether the property offers opportunities for compatible resource-based recreation, if appropriate;
B. Whether the property contributes to urban green space, provides a municipal defining greenbelt, provides scenic vistas, or has other value from an urban and regional planning perspective.

II-1. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

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A. Whether it will be practical to manage the property to protect its environmental, social and other values (examples include controlled burning, exotics removal, maintaining hydro-period, and so on);
B. Whether this management can be completed in a cost effective manner.

II-2. ECONOMIC/ACQUISITION ISSUES
A. Whether there is potential for purchasing the property with matching funds from municipal state, federal, or private contributions;
B. Whether the overall resource values justifies the potential cost of acquisition;
C. Whether there is imminent threat of losing the environmental, social or other values of the property through development and/or lack of sufficient legislative protections (this requires analysis of current land use, zoning, owner intent, location and market conditions).

e. Establishment of the Eligibility Pool. No less than twice per year, County staff shall provide a presentation on all draft Site Evaluation Reports at an open, public meeting of the Land Conservation Board. Staff shall contact the property owners of parcels in the Nomination Pool to determine their willingness to participate in the Program. Staff shall conduct site-specific evaluations using any available and appropriate information to answer the criteria in The Land Conservation Decision Matrix in (d) above and prepare a Site Evaluation Report. When the evaluation is complete, the draft Site Evaluation Report shall be provided upon request to the nominator, the property owner and the LCB. The property owner and nominator shall be notified of the opportunity to provide additional information regarding the draft Site Evaluation Reports within a specified timeframe. Prior to the presentation before the LCB, the County shall make a good faith effort to provide notice of the LCB meeting date to the person or organization nominating the subject property and the owner. Each shall be notified of the opportunity to speak and present additional information before the LCB. The Land Conservation Board shall divide Site Evaluation Reports into two categories for the purpose of establishing an Eligibility Pool: (1) properties eligible for further consideration for public acquisition by Alachua County; and (2) properties not eligible for further consideration for public acquisition by Alachua County at the present time. The decision to add a property to the Eligibility Pool shall be made by a majority vote of a quorum of the LCB. The property nominators shall be notified of the Eligibility Pool determination of the LCB. The Board of County Commissioners may not add a property to, delete a property from, or alter the Eligibility Pool. Any parcel can be subject to approval for placement on the Eligibility Pool by the LCB without a vote by the County Commission.

f. Establishment of the Priority Pool. A Priority Pool of properties shall be established by the LCB and forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for authorization to proceed with the acquisition process using budgeted funds available. The decision to move a property from the Eligibility Pool to the Priority Pool shall be made by a majority vote of a quorum of the LCB. Staff and the LCB shall consider additional information submitted prior to moving properties to the Priority Pool. The property nominators and owner shall be notified of the Priority Pool determination of the LCB. The Board of County Commissioners may not add a property to, delete a property from, or alter the Priority Pool.

Section 5. Final Steps of the Acquisition Process by County Staff, Contracted Outside Agencies, and the Seller for Properties on the Active Acquisition List. The final steps in the acquisition process are as follows:

a. Establishment of Active Acquisition List with Approval by the BOCC. An Active Acquisition List, consisting of the Full-Price List and the Bargain-Share List as described below, will be maintained and regularly modified by the BOCC based on the following criteria, and other factors deemed significant by the decision-making bodies.

- Final site scores using the site scoring criteria.

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- Potential purchase price.
- Availability of matching funds.
- Urgency of purchase based on imminent threat of loss.
- Contribution of the property to regional conservation efforts.
- Contribution of the property to protecting habitats and species underrepresented in the portfolio.
- Contribution of property to protecting water resources.
- Contribution of the property to addressing unmet social, human, or resource-based recreation goals.
- Estimated management costs that may be borne by the County.

The Board of County Commissioners may remove a property from the list if acquisition of the property no longer furthers the purposes of the Alachua County Forever Land Conservation Program, but may not add a property to the list outside of the established process. The Board of County Commissioners may also direct staff to pursue matching funds from outside agencies or private parties for any property listed in the Active Acquisition List.

(1) The Full-Price List shall contain those acquisition proposals which are deemed most worthy of acquisition based upon the criteria provided in Section Sa and which have been recommended for immediate acquisition by the LCB. The County may acquire the Full-Price properties using Alachua County Forever or Wild Spaces and Public Places Funds alone to fund 100% of the purchase price and transaction costs. No ranking order shall be assigned to Full-Price List properties. The County shall pursue the acquisition of all properties on the Full-Price List. Staff is authorized to develop any partnerships with other agencies and non-profits and to apply for any grants to match the Bond and Surtax funds.

(2) The Bargain-Share List shall contain acquisition proposals which are deemed worthy of acquisition based upon the evaluation criteria provided in Section Sa and which have been recommended for acquisition by the LCB, but which have not been assigned to the Full Price List. The County may not actively pursue acquisition of a property on the Bargain-Share List unless the share of the purchase price paid from the Alachua County Forever Bond or Wild Spaces and Public Places Local Government Infrastructure Surtax proceeds is no more than fifty (50) percent of the Fee-Simple purchase price of the property. Staff is authorized to develop partnerships with other agencies and non-profits and to apply for grants to match the Bond and Surtax funds. Property on the Bargain-Share List may also be acquired if the seller donates fifty (50) percent or more of the value of the property as estimated in an appraisal report prepared by a state certified real estate appraiser, within one (1) year of the property purchase, and accepted by the County. The Board of County Commissioners may move properties between the Full-Price List and the Bargain Share List based on the factors described in Section 5a above.

(3) Inclusion on the Active Acquisition List will authorize the final steps listed in this section for closing on the properties within each project, but does not guarantee site acquisition.

(4) These final acquisition steps may be completed concurrently or in any sequence to expedite the acquisition process and minimize expenses.

(5) The County may elect to contract with a qualified not-for-profit agency to oversee and complete property appraisals, negotiations and other related acquisition activities. Such outside agency contracts shall not provide for compensation based on a percentage commission.

(6) If the seller chooses to be represented by a licensed real estate professional or other registered agent, a Designation of Registered Agent Form must be completed and submitted to the Department

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Director. All real estate professionals' and other agents' costs and commissions shall come from the seller's proceeds.

b. Final Steps for the Acquisition of Property on the Active Acquisition List. The properties shall be pursued for acquisition by completing the following final steps:

(1) An Option or Purchase and Sale Agreement shall be signed using a form acceptable to the County. The County shall not be under any obligation to exercise the option, and the option agreement is not required to contain either a minimum or maximum consideration to the Seller. The Agreement may establish a fixed price for the proposed transaction, or may establish a price per acre. No action on the part of County staff or any agency contracted to represent the County shall be interpreted to bind the County. Only the Board of County Commissioners may exercise an option agreement or execute a purchase and sale agreement by formal action of a majority vote during a duly advertised public meeting.

(2) A Boundary Survey shall be completed by a Professional Land Surveyor registered in Florida. The County may solicit professional surveying services to expedite real property acquisitions in a consistent and cost efficient manner. All survey work shall be reviewed and approved by appropriate County staff.

(3) A Title Search or an Ownership and Encumbrance report shall be completed to clarify any issues related to the property title. All title work, including earliest record searches, title searches, title binders, title insurance policies, ownership reports, encumbrance reports and updated title reports shall be performed in accordance with adopted industry standards. The County may solicit professional title services to expedite real property acquisitions in a consistent and cost-efficient manner. Property owners or other interested parties may secure title services using the County's selected contractors at the County's negotiated rates.

(4) Appraisal(s) shall be completed and used in accordance with the procedures described below. The Maximum Allowable Purchase Price (MAPP) using Alachua County Forever funds alone shall be the appraised value if one appraisal report was required or the average of two appraisals if two appraisal reports are required.

(a) Purchases of real property having a value of $20,000 or less may be appraised using current estimated market value tax appraisals on file with the Alachua County Property Appraiser's Office. All purchases of real property having a value of between $20,000 and $250,000 shall be supported by one independent appraisal report provided by a state certified real estate appraiser. All purchases of real property having a value greater than $250,000 shall be supported by two current, independent appraisal reports prepared by different state certified real estate appraisers within one (1) year of the property purchase. Two appraisals shall be determined to be divergent if the higher of the two values exceeds 120% of the lower value. When two appraisals are required and are divergent, a third appraisal shall be obtained. If a third appraisal is obtained and approved, the MAPP is the average of the two closest, non-divergent appraisals. If the two closest appraisals are divergent, 110% of the lower of the two closest appraisals shall be the MAPP.

(b) If the agreed purchase price exceeds the MAPP, the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners may approve the purchase by an extraordinary vote.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the maximum value of a parcel to be purchased by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners as determined by the highest approved appraisal or as determined pursuant to the above standards shall not be increased or decreased as a result of a change of zoning or permitted land uses that are requested by the landowner that occur within 1 year prior to the date Board of County Commissioners approves a contract to purchase the parcel.

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(d) The County may solicit professional appraisal services to expedite real property acquisitions in a consistent and cost-efficient manner.

(5) Appraisals, offers and counteroffers for purchase of real property shall comply with the confidentiality of records requirements set forth in Florida Statute 125.355(1)(a) as amended. Appraisals are to be confidential and disclosure limited to those County staff designated by the County Manager. The County may use an appraisal provided by a cooperating agency, pursuant to an informal acquisition agreement. Standard practice for negotiations and appraisals on behalf of Alachua County shall be guided by Florida Administrative Code Chapter 18-1, as amended.

(6) Phase I and, if necessary, Phase II Environmental Site Assessment(s) prepared in accordance with the American Society of Testing and Materials Practice El527 as amended shall be performed by a Professional Engineer or Professional Geologist registered in the State of Florida. County Environmental Protection staff shall review the results of any environmental audit completed for the site acquisition. Unfavorable or inconclusive environmental audit results or any other available information that indicates potential onsite contamination shall be sufficient cause to terminate the acquisition process or re-open property negotiations. Property may not be approved for purchase when it is determined by County staff that the property's natural resources are substantially impacted by litter, debris, or contamination. To expedite acquisitions, audits may be completed after closing, and an appropriate amount of the seller's proceeds escrowed to fund clean-up of the property after all the environmental audits have been approved by the County. The unused portion of the escrowed proceeds may be released to the seller after the audits and cleanup are complete.

(7) A Deed or Easement shall be prepared by the County Attorney's office or under contract. Alachua County may share title with any other governmental organizations and may hold less than fee title for conservation easements on private land. Alachua County may accept a special warranty deed or quit claim deed if reasonable assurance is provided that the desired conservation values of the property are being conveyed to the County in perpetuity as a result of the agreed-upon transaction. All exceptions, reservations, encroachments, or other adverse conditions that are disclosed in the course of the acquisition process shall be individually evaluated by the County in writing to review possible adverse effects on the objectives of the acquisition.

(8) BOCC action on the acquisition of property shall occur at a duly noticed Public Meeting.

(9) Documentation of the property transaction shall be completed for the records of the Board of County Commissioners and the Clerk of the Court.

(10) A Check Request shall be made to the County's Finance and Accounting Department for the purchase price and any closing costs to be paid by the County as purchaser.

(11) Real Estate closings shall be completed in accordance with standard practice.

(12) BOCC Notification shall be made on the Commission's agenda to provide information of the final closing and associated costs.

(13) Recording of deed or easement shall be completed and filed with the Clerk of the Court.

(14) When the acquisition is for a conservation easement or other less-than-fee property interest, a baseline monitoring report that establishes the initial conditions of the property at the time of purchase shall be completed prior to closing. County staff or its designee will visit the property on an annual basis to insure that the conditions of the conservation easement are being fulfilled.

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Section 6. Stewardship of Acquired Lands; Role of the LCB.

a. The 2000 Referendum mandates the County "improve and manage" the acquired lands; such stewardship shall be consistent with the directive to protect water resources and wildlife habitats, and to provide natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation. Resource-based recreation is defined in the Alachua County Comprehensive Plan as "Recreational activities that are essentially dependent upon the natural, scenic, or historic resources of the area provided the associated activities do not have significant adverse impacts on the ecological integrity or ecological or historical values of the resources in these areas."

b. The County recognizes that outreach, education and promoting volunteer opportunities are critical components of any stewardship strategy. The County recognizes that an informed community and educated neighbors allows the County to better steward these preserves. Further, the County recognizes the desire for the community to participate in the stewardship of the acquired lands as evidenced by their volunteering for service on the LCB, for workdays, and at other events.

c. The Alachua County Environmental Protection Department shall have the primary responsibility for implementing the stewardship of the lands acquired under the Alachua County Forever, Wild Spaces & Public Places referenda, as well as other conservation lands assigned by the BOCC.

d. A conceptual management plan shall be developed for the acquired property within twelve (12) months of closing and adopted by the BOCC. The plan may be amended as additional parcels within the same project are acquired.

e. The LCB shall have the responsibility of advising the BOCC regarding the stewardship of conservation lands acquired under this Resolution and elsewhere in Alachua County. As part of their general role as advisory board to the BOCC on conservation land stewardship, the LCB may:

(1) Receive assignments from the BOCC to review stewardship issues and make policy recommendations for BOCC consideration;

(2) Receive reports from County staff to provide advice and recommendations on stewardship issues before bringing them to the BOCC for consideration; and

(3) Consider stewardship issues brought by the public as they relate to the management and operation of conservation lands.

(4) Assist with the County's land conservation education, outreach and volunteer activities.

f. By March 2020 and every 5 years thereafter, the LCB shall prepare a written report to the BOCC providing the public with an update on the previous five years major land stewardship accomplishments, initiatives, preserve openings and closures, and challenges. The Report should also outline the major land stewardship accomplishments, initiatives, preserve openings and closures, and challenges for the coming five years.

Section 7. Repealing Clause. Resolution 18-101 is hereby repealed and replaced by this one. All other resolutions or parts thereof of the County in conflict with the provisions hereof are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby superseded and repealed.

Section 8. Effective Date. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption this _____day of _____, 2022.

DULY ADOPTED in regular session, this 28th day of June, 2022 A.D.

SIGNATURE PAGES TO FOLLOW

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BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Marihelen Wheeler
Marihelen Wheeler, Chair

ATTEST:

J.K. Irby, Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM
As to DocuSigned by:
David Forziano
70E5E81DBE1E4D3...
Alachua County
Attorney

Item #17, 22-490

Final Audit Report 2022-06-29

Created:	2022-06-29
By:	Steve Donahey (asd@alachuaclerk.org)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAA3vxjZEhGDltOP8mjpOkP0saW4LBBJcjW

"Item #17, 22-490" History

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Agreement completed.
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ALACHUA COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ORDINANCE 2022-08

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA, REPEALING ORDINANCE 16-06 OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA ("THE CURRENT 0.50 PERCENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE SALES SURTAX") EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 31, 2022, AND LEVYING A NEW 1.0 PERCENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE SALES SURTAX ON CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS OCCURRING WITHIN ALACHUA COUNTY FROM WHICH TAXES ARE PAYABLE TO THE STATE OF FLORIDA UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF CHAPTER 212, FLORIDA STATUTES, FOR A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS, BEGINNING JANUARY 1, 2023, AND ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2032 ("NEW SURTAX"); PROVIDING THAT THE LEVY OF THE NEW SURTAX, AND THE REPEAL OF THE CURRENT 0.50 PERCENT LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE SALES SURTAX, SHALL NOT BE EFFECTIVE UNLESS APPROVED AT A REFERENDUM ELECTION; PROVIDING FOR USE OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE NEW SURTAX; PROVIDING THAT 50.0 PERCENT OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE NEW SURTAX SHALL BE USED TO ACQUIRE AND IMPROVE LANDS FOR CONSERVATION, PROTECTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES, OR PUBLIC RECREATION, AND TO OPERATE AND MAINTAIN PARKS, RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY ("WILD SPACES PUBLIC PLACES USES" OR "WSPP USES"); PROVIDING THAT 50.0 PERCENT OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE NEW SURTAX SHALL BE USED TO REPAIR ROADS AND IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY, CONSTRUCT OR RENOVATE FIRE STATIONS AND OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES, ACQUIRE LANDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING, AND FUND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 212.055(2)(d)(3), FLORIDA STATUTES ("NON-WSPP USES"); PROVIDING THAT NOT MORE THAN 15.0 PERCENT OF THE PROCEEDS OF THE NEW SURTAX MAY BE USED TO FUND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 212.055(2)(d)(3), FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR AUTHORIZATION AND LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS; PROVIDING FOR A REFERENDUM ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 8, 2022; PROVIDING BALLOT LANGUAGE; PROVIDING FOR DISTRIBUTION AMONG THE GOVERNMENTS OF ALACHUA COUNTY AND ELIGIBLE MUNICIPALITIES PURSUANT TO THE FORMULA PROVIDED IN SECTION 218.62, FLORIDA STATUTES; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, subsection 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, authorizes Alachua County to levy by ordinance a local government infrastructure surtax of 0.5 percent or 1.0 percent upon most taxable transactions occurring within Alachua County that are taxable under Chapter 212, Florida Statutes, subject to referendum approval; and

WHEREAS, the local government infrastructure surtax may be used to fund the various types of programs that are enumerated in subsection 212.055(2), Florida Statutes; and

WHEREAS, among other allowable uses, subsection 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, provides that surtax proceeds may be used to acquire any interest in land for public recreation, conservation, or protection of natural resources, to improve conservation lands, or to create, improve, maintain and operate the parks and recreational programs and facilities established with the proceeds of the surtax within Alachua County (hereinafter, "**Wild Spaces Public Places Uses**" or "**WSPP Uses**"); and

WHEREAS, subsection 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, provides that a county may levy a local government infrastructure surtax by ordinances, subject to referendum approval, that would authorize the use of the surtax proceeds for uses beyond just WSPP Uses, including but not limited to the following: land acquisition, land improvement, design, engineering costs, and all other processional and related cost to finance, plan, construct, reconstruct or improve public facilities that have a life expectancy of 5 years or more; land acquisition expenditures for a residential housing project in which at least 30 percent of the units are affordable to individuals or families whose total annual household income does not exceed 120 percent of the area median income adjusted for household size, if the land is owned by a local government or by a special district that enters into a written agreement with the local government to provide such housing; and up to 15 percent of the surtax may be allocated for funding economic development projects having a general public purpose of improving local economies, including the funding of operational costs and incentives related to economic development (collectively, "**Other Infrastructure Uses**"); and

WHEREAS, on May 10, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners of Alachua County, Florida, ("**Board**") adopted Ordinance 16-06 to levy a 0.5 percent surtax that may be used only for WSPP Uses (the "**WSPP Surtax**" or the "**WSPP Surtax Ordinance**"); and

WHEREAS, the WSPP Surtax Ordinance was approved by a majority of the electors voting in the referendum election held on November 8, 2016, became effective on January 1, 2017, and is scheduled to expire on December 31, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Board now finds that there is a great need on the part of Alachua County and the municipalities within Alachua County to fund Other Infrastructure Use projects, including economic development projects that have a general public purpose of improving the local economy; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, the Florida Policy Institute released a report finding that insufficient affordable housing limits Florida's economic potential; and

WHEREAS, home prices rose 18.8% in 2021, according to the S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller US National Home Price Index. All regions saw price gains last year, but increases were strongest in the South and the Southeast, each of which was up over 25%.; and

WHEREAS, while the lack of affordable housing is a national problem, Alachua County is particularly impacted due to its status as a college town. There is a large student housing market (approximately 12% of the renter pool in the City of Gainesville). Some students need affordable rental units, causing competition between local residents and incoming students. This competition contributes to increased rental rates in Alachua County; and

WHEREAS, HUD defines rent cost-burdened families as those who pay more than 30% of their income for housing and may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing,

transportation, and medical care. According to Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies, in 2017, Gainesville had the highest rent-cost burden rates of any metro area in the state of Florida. In Gainesville, 65 percent of the population are rent-cost burdened, and 42 percent have a severe rent-cost burden; and

WHEREAS, the National Income Housing Coalition has calculated that the "housing wage" for Alachua County (the amount required to afford a two-bedroom apartment comfortably) is $20.83 per hour. Additionally, the cost of utilities in Alachua County exceeds that of the state and nation, further burdening low-income tenants; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Economic Forecasting and Analysis at Florida State University annually reviews the statewide economic impact of affordable housing programs administered by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation and, in 2020, estimated that it leveraged $1.9 billion in affordable housing resources to create $7.71 billion in economic activity and 55,719 full and part-time jobs; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the stimulative effect of its construction or rehabilitation, workforce housing can benefit a local economy by reducing housing costs to affordable levels, thus creating more room in the family budget for local purchases; and

WHEREAS, the Board finds that the use of the proceeds from the New Surtax to facilitate the creation of workforce housing will have a general public purpose of improving the local economy; and

WHEREAS, Florida law authorizes the Board to levy and have in effect only one local government infrastructure surtax at a time; and

WHEREAS, in order to comply with the legal prohibition against having two local government infrastructure surtaxes in effect at the same time, the Board desires to repeal the 0.5 percent WSPP Surtax Ordinance and replace it with a new 1.0 percent local government infrastructure surtax that would continue to authorize WSPP Uses, and also authorize Other Infrastructure Uses; and

WHEREAS, Subsection 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, requires voter approval in a referendum election prior to the imposition of the local government infrastructure sales surtax; and

WHEREAS, subsection 212.054(5), Florida Statutes, provides that no surtax shall terminate on any day other than December 31st; and

WHEREAS, subsection 212.054(5), Florida Statutes, provides that all new surtaxes must commence on January 1; and

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners of Alachua County finds that it serves a public purpose and that it is in the public interest to repeal Ordinance 16-06 and to adopt this Ordinance to fund the types of projects described herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1. Authorization and Legislative Findings. This Ordinance is authorized by Chapters 125 and 212, Florida Statutes, and other applicable laws. The Board of County Commissioners of Alachua County ("**Board**") finds and declares that all statements set forth in the preamble of this Ordinance are true and correct and are hereby incorporated by reference as legislative findings.

SECTION 2. Levy of Local Government Infrastructure Sales Surtax. Subject to approval by a majority of the electors of Alachua County voting in the referendum to be held for this purpose on November 8, 2022, there is hereby a levy of a local government infrastructure sales surtax throughout the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Alachua County on all transactions subject to the state sales tax imposed on transactions by Part I of Chapter 212, Florida Statutes ("Surtax"). The Surtax shall be at the rate of one percent (1%) of the sales price or actual value received and for each fractional part of $1.00 of the sales price or actual value received. The Surtax shall be levied and imposed pursuant to sections 212.054 and 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, and the rules promulgated by the Florida Department of Revenue.

SECTION 3. Distribution of Surtax Proceeds. The proceeds of the Surtax levied pursuant to this Ordinance shall be distributed to Alachua County and the municipalities within Alachua County in accordance with subsection 212.055(2)(c)2., Florida Statutes, which provides for distribution according to the formula provided in section 218.62, Florida Statutes.

SECTION 4. Use of Surtax Proceeds. The proceeds of the Surtax levied by this Ordinance shall be used by Alachua County and the municipalities located within Alachua County only as follows:

a. **WSPP Uses**. Fifty Percent (50%) of the Surtax proceeds shall be used for the following:

i. To acquire any interest in land for conservation, public recreation, and protection of natural resources, including but not limited to the protection of drinking water sources, water quality, and wildlife habitat; and

ii. To create, improve, operate and maintain parks and recreational facilities; and

iii. To finance, plan, construct and purchase infrastructure for conservation lands, parks, and recreational facilities.

b. **Other Infrastructure Uses**. Fifty Percent (50%) of the Surtax proceeds shall be used for the following:

i. To repair roads and improve road safety;

ii. To construct and renovate fire stations and other Public Facilities;

iii. For any land acquisition expenditures for a residential housing project in which at least 30 percent of the units are affordable to individuals or families whose total annual household income does not exceed 120 percent of the area median income adjusted for household size, if the land is owned by a local government or by a special district that enters into a written agreement with the local government to provide such housing. The local government or special district may enter into a ground lease with a public or private person or entity for nominal or other consideration for the construction of the residential housing project on land acquired pursuant to this subsection 4.b.iii; and

iv. To deposit into a trust fund within the county's accounts created for the purpose of funding economic development projects having a general public purpose of improving local economies within Alachua County, including the funding of operational costs and incentives related

to economic development. In accordance with section 212.055(2)(d)3., Florida Statutes, not more than 15 percent of the Surtax proceeds may be allocated to funding economic development projects.

SECTION 5. Alachua County's Non-Recurring Municipal Partnership Program. Alachua County shall allocate and award $12,000,000.00 of its statutory formula share of the Surtax proceeds for municipal projects, as set forth in subsections 5.a. and 5.b., below. This is not an annual allocation but shall be a one-time allocation of $12,000,000.00 by Alachua County.

a. **Partnership Program for WSPP Uses**:

i. The City of Gainesville. Alachua County shall allocate $3,000,000.00 to the City of Gainesville ("Gainesville") for uses authorized by Section 4.a. of this Ordinance, that Alachua County finds, in its sole discretion, have countywide significance. Gainesville shall submit a detailed request to Alachua County for each project for which it is requesting grant funding. If approved, Alachua County and Gainesville shall enter into and execute a grant agreement. Gainesville shall be solely responsible for completion of the project, including all planning, design, procurement, construction, operation, maintenance and repairs needed during the life-cycle of the project. Gainesville shall acknowledge Alachua County's contribution by erecting a sign at the project site that

includes the following statement: “Jointly funded by Alachua County and the City of Gainesville.” Upon achieving final completion of the project, Gainesville shall submit a written invoice to Alachua County in an amount that shall not exceed 50% of the allowable project costs actually incurred and paid by Gainesville for the project, up to an aggregate total of $3,000,000.00 for all approved projects. Alachua County shall remit reimbursement to Gainesville within 60 days of Alachua County’s receipt of an invoice that includes all receipts, statements or other records as Alachua County or the Clerk of Court may reasonably require to substantiate the cost of the project and the amount requested by Gainesville.

ii. All Nine Municipalities. Alachua County shall allocate $3,000,000.00 to fund a grant program for Alachua County’s nine municipalities (hereinafter collectively referred to as the “Municipalities”, and individually as a “Municipality”) for uses authorized by Section 4.a. of this Ordinance, that Alachua County finds, in its sole discretion, have countywide significance. Each Municipality shall submit a detailed request to Alachua County for each project for which it is requesting grant

funding. If approved, Alachua County and the Municipality shall enter into and execute a grant agreement. The Municipality shall be solely responsible for completing the project, including all planning, design, procurement, construction, operation, maintenance, and repairs needed during the project's life-cycle. The Municipality shall acknowledge Alachua County's contribution by erecting a sign at the project site that includes the following statement: "Jointly funded by Alachua County and [insert name of the Municipality]." Upon achieving final completion of the project, the Municipality shall submit a written invoice to Alachua County in an amount that shall not exceed 50% of the allowable project costs incurred and paid by the Municipality for the project. Alachua County shall remit reimbursement to the Municipality within 60 days of Alachua County's receipt of an invoice that includes all receipts, statements, or other records as Alachua County or the Clerk of Court may reasonably require to substantiate the cost of the project and the amount requested by the Municipality.

b. **Partnership Program for Other Infrastructure Uses**:

i. The City of Gainesville. Alachua County shall allocate $3,000,000.00 to the City of Gainesville ("Gainesville") for uses authorized by Section 4.b. of this Ordinance, that Alachua County finds, in its sole discretion, have countywide significance. Gainesville shall submit a detailed request to Alachua County for each project for which it is requesting grant funding. If approved, Alachua County and Gainesville shall enter into and execute a grant agreement. Gainesville shall be solely responsible for completing the project, including all planning, design, procurement, construction, operation, maintenance, and repairs needed during the project's life-cycle. Gainesville shall acknowledge Alachua County's contribution by erecting a sign at the project site that includes the following statement: "Jointly funded by Alachua County and the City of Gainesville." Upon achieving final completion of the project, Gainesville shall submit a written invoice to Alachua County in an amount that shall not exceed 50% of the allowable project costs actually incurred and paid by Gainesville for the project, up to an aggregate total of $3,000,000.00 for all approved projects.

Alachua County shall remit reimbursement to Gainesville within 60 days of Alachua County's receipt of an invoice that includes all receipts, statements, or other records as Alachua County or the Clerk of Court may reasonably require to substantiate the cost of the project and the amount requested by Gainesville.

ii. All Nine Municipalities. Alachua County shall allocate $3,000,000.00 to fund a grant program for Alachua County's nine municipalities (hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Municipalities," and individually as a "Municipality") for uses authorized by Section 4.b. of this Ordinance, that Alachua County finds, in its sole discretion, have countywide significance. Each Municipality shall submit a detailed request to Alachua County for each project for which it is requesting grant funding. If approved, Alachua County and the Municipality enter into and execute a grant agreement. The Municipality shall be solely responsible for completing the project, including all planning, design, procurement, construction, operation, maintenance, and repairs needed during the project's life-cycle. The Municipality shall acknowledge Alachua County's contribution by erecting a

sign at the project site that includes the following statement: “Jointly funded by Alachua County and [insert name of the Municipality].” Upon achieving final completion of the project, the Municipality shall submit a written invoice to Alachua County in an amount that shall not exceed 50% of the allowable project costs actually incurred and paid by the Municipality for the project. Alachua County shall remit reimbursement to the Municipality within 60 days of Alachua County’s receipt of an invoice that includes all receipts, statements, or other records as Alachua County or the Clerk of Court may reasonably require to substantiate the cost of the project and the amount requested by the Municipality.

SECTION 6. Effective Date and Duration of the Surtax. Subject to approval by a majority of the electors of Alachua County voting in the referendum to be held for this purpose on November 8, 2022, the Surtax levied pursuant to this Ordinance shall be levied and imposed for the period commencing January 1, 2023, and ending at midnight on December 31, 2032.

SECTION 7. Repeal of Ordinance 16-06. Ordinance 16-06 shall be repealed effective midnight December 31, 2022, if, and only if, the Surtax levied in Section 2 of this Ordinance is approved by a majority of the electors of Alachua County voting in the referendum to be held for that purpose on November 8, 2022. If the Surtax levied in Section 2 of this Ordinance is not approved by a majority of the electors voting in the referendum election to be held on

November 8, 2022, then Ordinance 16-06 shall remain in full force and effect until its expiration at midnight December 31, 2024.

SECTION 8. Referendum.

a. The Board hereby calls for a referendum election and directs the County Manager to request the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections to conduct such election on November 8, 2022, for the submission of a referendum question of the Surtax to the electors of Alachua County.

b. In accordance with sections 101.161 and 212.055(2), Florida Statutes, the following ballot title and ballot summary are approved for submission to the electors of Alachua County, Florida, at the election called in subsection 8.a. of this Ordinance:

Ballot Title:	WILD SPACES PUBLIC PLACES, ROAD REPAIR, FIRE STATIONS, AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING ONE PERCENT SALES TAX
Ballot Question:	SHALL ALACHUA COUNTY: ACQUIRE AND IMPROVE LANDS FOR CONSERVATION, WILDLIFE HABITAT, WATER QUALITY, AND RECREATION; OPERATE AND MAINTAIN PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES; REPAIR ROADS AND IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY; CONSTRUCT AND RENOVATE FIRE STATIONS AND OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES; ACQUIRE LANDS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING; FUND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PURSUANT TO FLORIDA STATUTE 212.055(2)(D)(3); PROVIDE CITIZEN OVERSIGHT AND INDEPENDENT AUDIT; BY LEVYING A ONE PERCENT SALES SURTAX FOR TEN YEARS STARTING JANUARY 1, 2023?
	[ ] FOR the one-cent sales tax.
	[ ] AGAINST the one-cent sales tax.

c. The Board directs the County Manager to publish notices of the referendum in accordance with section 100.342, Florida Statutes, in the Gainesville Sun or by other means authorized by section 100.342, Florida Statutes.

SECTION 9. Effective Date of Ordinance.

a. The Clerk of the Board is directed to file a certified copy of this Ordinance with the Department of State by the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners within 10 days after enactment by the Board of County Commissioners. This Ordinance shall take effect upon filing with the Department of State, but the levy of the Surtax set forth in Section 2 of this Ordinance shall not take effect unless it is approved by a majority of the electors of Alachua County voting in the referendum to be held for that purpose on November 8, 2022.

b. The County Manager is directed to provide a copy of this Ordinance to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability at least 180 days before the November 8, 2022 referendum election and to comply with all other requirements of section 212.055(11), Florida Statutes.

c. The Clerk of the Board is directed to provide the notice required by section 212.054(7)(b), Florida Statutes, to the Florida Department of Revenue by no later than October 1, 2022.

d. If the referendum is approved at the November 8, 2022 election, then the Clerk of the Board is directed to notify the Florida Department of Revenue within 10 days of the referendum date as provided in section 212.054(7)(a), Florida Statutes, but no later than November 16, 2022.

e. If the referendum is not approved at the November 8, 2022 election, this Ordinance shall automatically expire, and Ordinance 16-06 shall remain in full force and effect until its expiration at midnight December 31, 2024.

SECTION 10. Severability. It is the declared intent of the Board that if any section, subsection, sentence, clause, phrase, or provision of this Ordinance is held invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not be so constructed as to render invalid or unconstitutional the remaining provisions of this Ordinance.

DULY ADOPTED in regular session this 22nd day of March, 2022.

ATTEST:

J.K. "Jess" Irby, Esq.
Clerk of Court

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF ALACHUA COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Marihelen Wheeler
Marihelen Wheeler, Chair

APPROVED AS TO FORM

David Forziano
David Forziano (Mar 23, 2022 11:14 EDT)
County Attorney's Office

ALA20220323_Ordinance2022_08

Final Audit Report 2022-03-29

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Adobe Sign

ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER
WILD SPACES AND PUBLIC PLACES

10-Year Surtax Funded Plan Summary (2023-2032)

Andi Christman
Land Conservation and Management Program

WSPP COUNTY SURTAX PROGRAMS
2023-2032 BIG PICTURE

- Projected total 10-Year County* WSPP surtax funds = **$194M****
  - $6M off the top to Municipalities for joint WSPP projects with County
  - 80% Conservation Lands/20% Active Parks County Funding Allocation

Conservation Lands 10-Year Plan

- Conservation Land Acquisition
  - ACF Conservation Lands
  - Agriculture Protection Program
- Preserve Infrastructure Development
- Preserve Operation & Maintenance

Parks and Open Space Master Plan

- Active Park Improvements
- New Active Park Acquisition
- Active Park Operation & Maintenance

Alachua County, Florida

* *After initial State dispersal to municipalities and County.*

** *Estimate provided by OMB, projections using FL Dept of Revenue estimates with 4% growth annually.*

COLLABORATIVE MISSIONS UNITED IN CITIZEN SERVICE

Environmental Protection Department

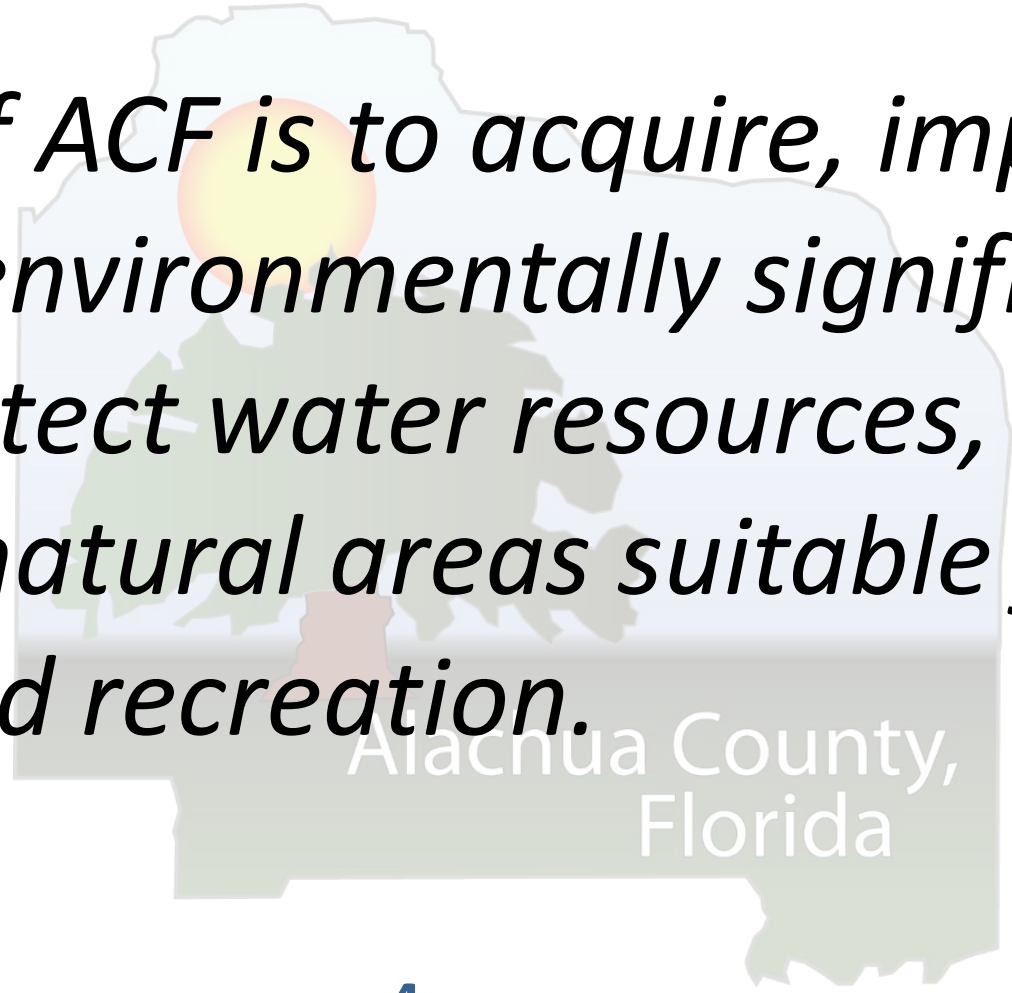
- Alachua County Forever Land Acquisition Program
- County Nature Preserves

Parks and Open Space Department

- County Active Parks

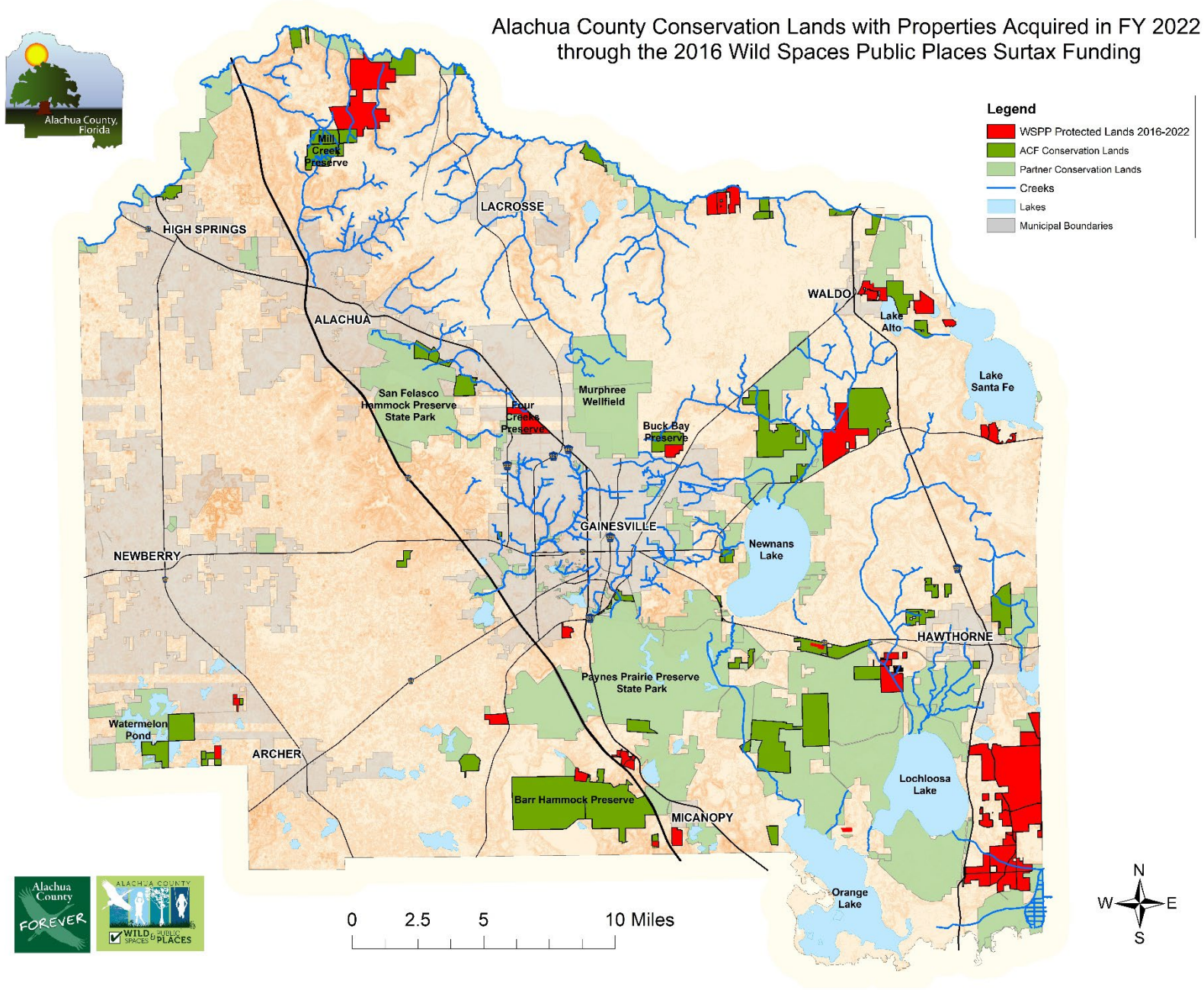
THE ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER MISSION

The mission of ACF is to acquire, improve, and manage environmentally significant lands that protect water resources, wildlife habitats and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.



CONSERVATION SUCCESSES

Total Acres acquired to date = 33,037



WILD SPACES PUBLIC PLACES 2016-2022: ACQUISITION SUMMARY

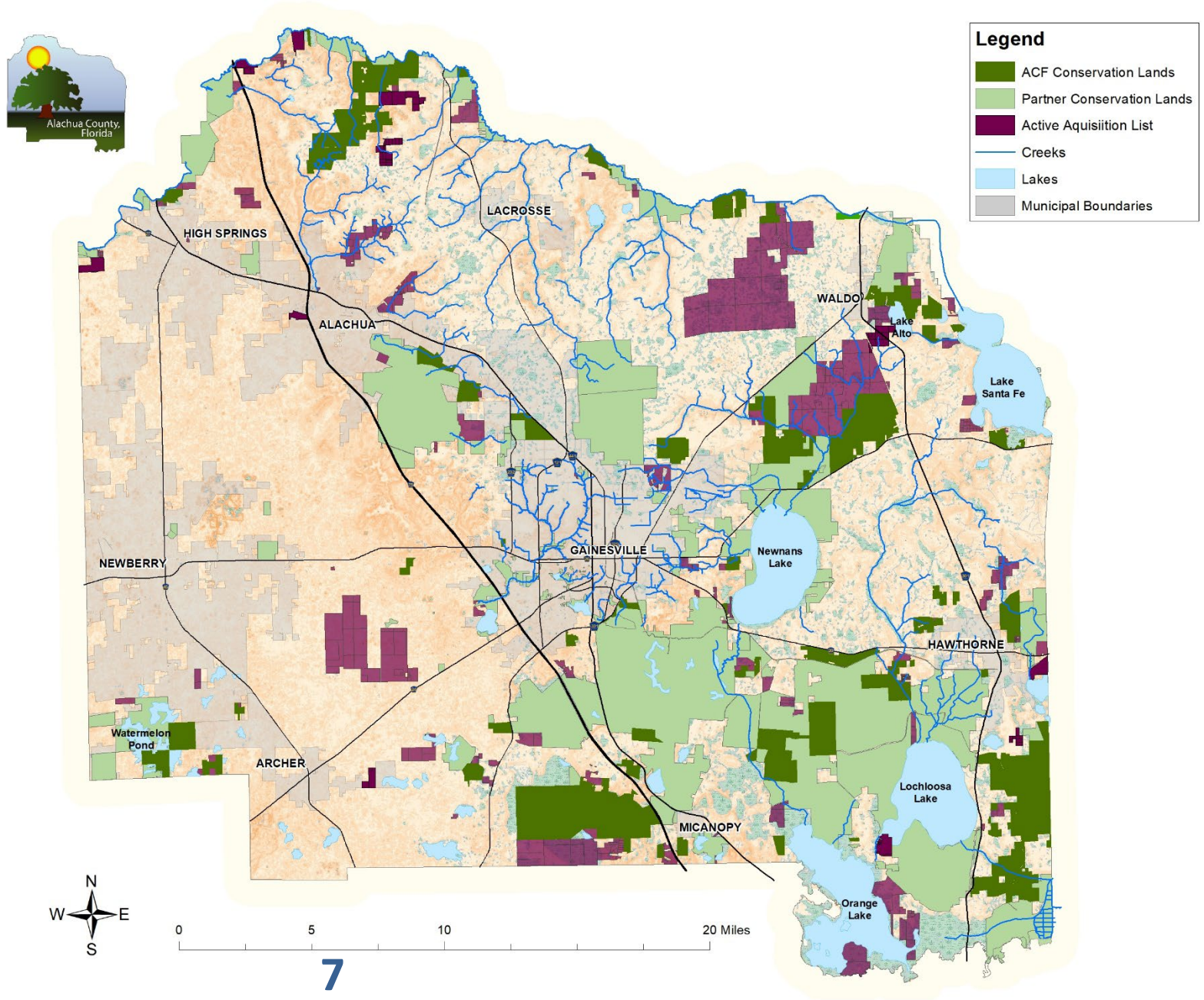
	# of Properties	Acreage	Land Cost
WSPP Acquisitions, 2016 to 2022	27	13,168.61	$39,788,124
Acquired Lands Due Diligence			$1,745,695
In Progress Lands Due Diligence			$301,603
TOTAL SPENT 2016-2022			$41,835,423

Average Acquisition Cost = $3,177 per acre*

** Includes Fee Simple, Conservation Easements, and Donations.*

ACTIVE ACQUISITION LIST

Currently =
40,380 acres



CORRIDOR-BASED STRATEGY

Santa Fe River Corridor

- Santa Fe River
- Hornsby Springshed

Florida Wildlife Corridor

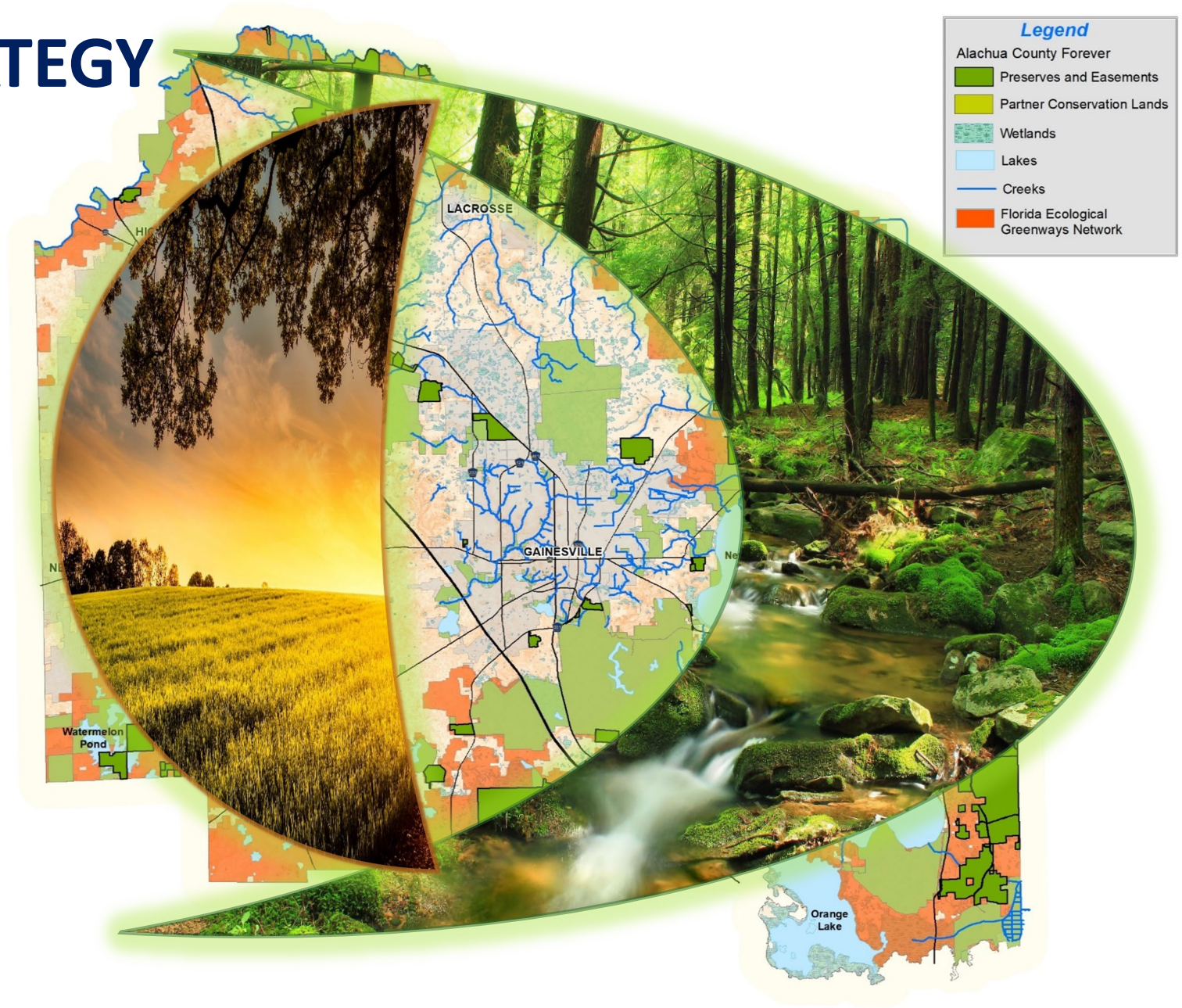
- Lakes Santa Fe and Alto
- Austin Cary Flatwoods
- Lochloosa Creek & Slough

Southern Corridor

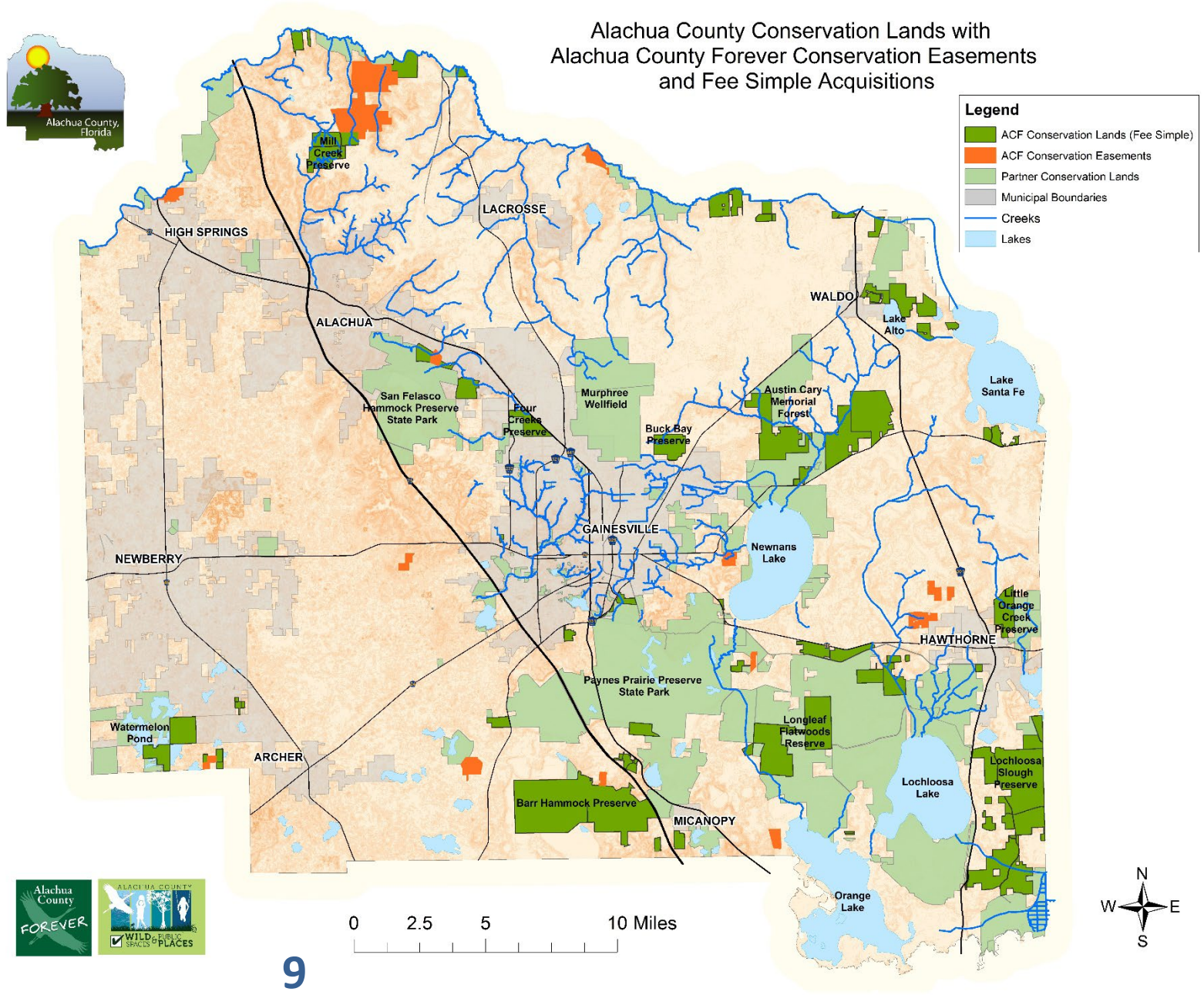
- Barr Hammock
- Watermelon Pond

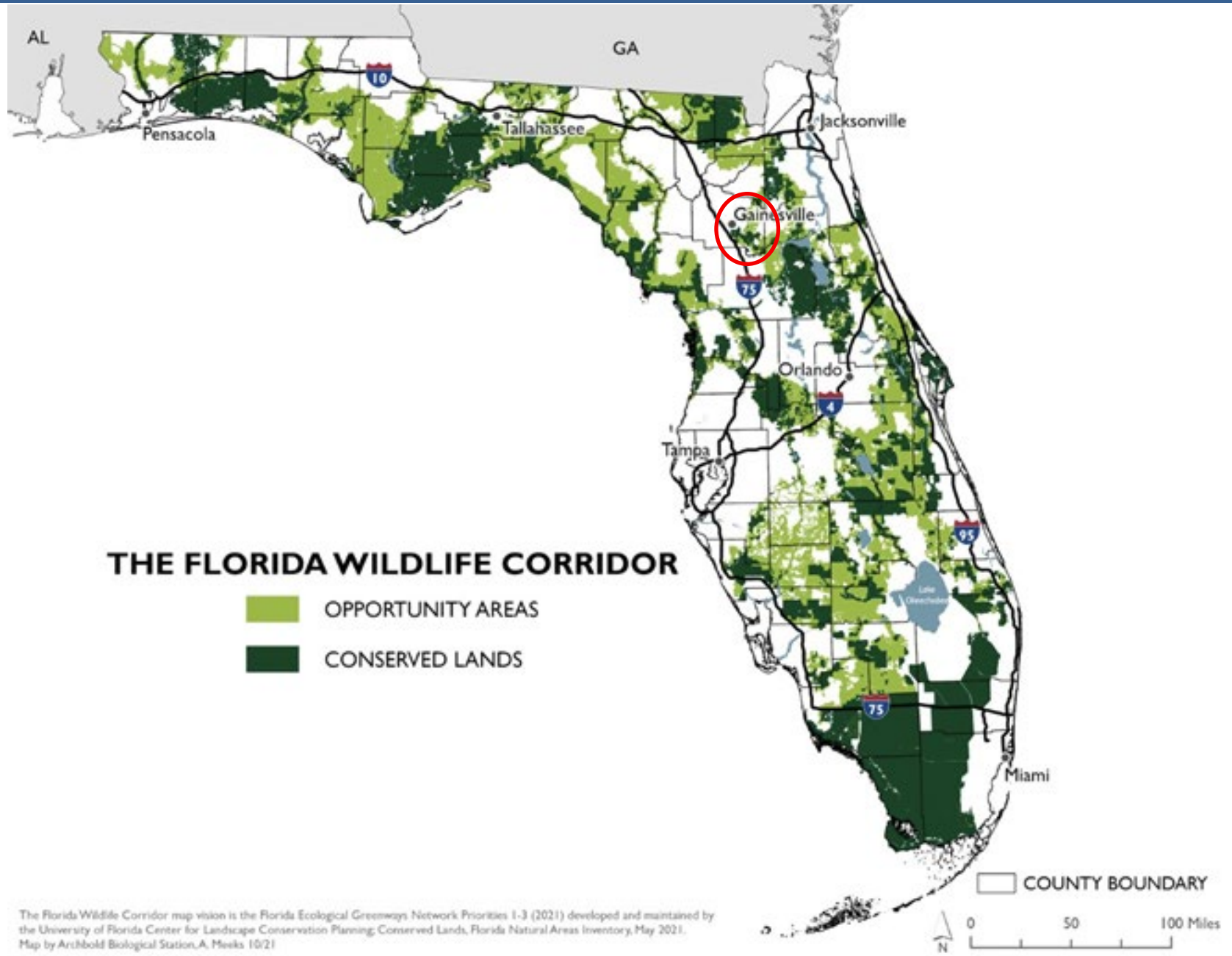
Agriculture Protection Program

- Strengthening all Corridors
- Water Quality & Recharge
- Local Food Production



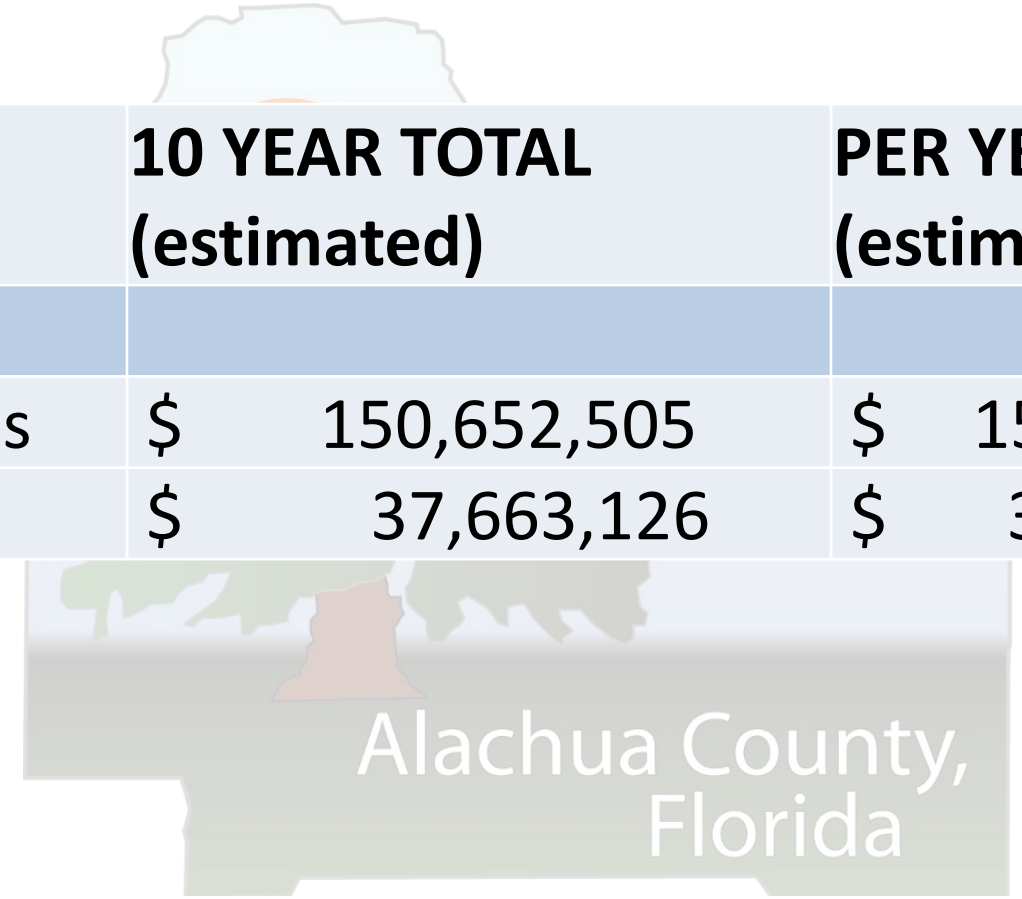
15 County-held Conservation Easements Currently in Place




AL
GA
Pensacola
Tallahassee
Jacksonville
Gainesville
Orlando
Tampa
Miami
10
75
4
95
THE FLORIDA WILDLIFE CORRIDOR
OPPORTUNITY AREAS
CONSERVED LANDS
COUNTY BOUNDARY
0
50
100 Miles
N
The Florida Wildlife Corridor map vision is the Florida Ecological Greenways Network Priorities 1-3 (2021) developed and maintained by the University of Florida Center for Landscape Conservation Planning; Conserved Lands, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, May 2021.
Map by Archbold Biological Station, A. Meeks 10/21

WSPP SURTAX PERCENTAGE SPLITS*

	10 YEAR TOTAL (estimated)	PER YEAR (estimated)
80%/20% Split		
Conservation Lands	$ 150,652,505	$ 15,065,250
Parks	$ 37,663,126	$ 3,766,313



**Estimates provided by OMB, projections using FL Dept of Revenue estimates with 4% growth annually. Splits established by the BOCC at special policy meeting on 2/7/2023.*

Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00125 **Agenda Date: 5/23/2023**

Agenda Item Name:

Parks and Open Space

Presenter:
Jason Maurer, Parks and Open Space Director, 352-213-4796

Prior Board Motions:
On March 22, 2022, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) passed a motion adopting Ordinance 2022-088 levying a 1 percent local government infrastructure surtax effective only after voter approval at a referendum election, and authorizing the use of infrastructure surtax proceeds as follows:

1. Providing that 50.0 percent of the proceeds of the new surtax shall be used to acquire and improve lands for conservation, protection of natural resources, or public recreation, and to operate and maintain parks, recreational programs and Recreational facilities throughout the county ("Wild Spaces Public Places uses" or "WSPP uses");
2. Providing that 50.0 percent of the proceeds of the new surtax shall be used to repair roads and improve road safety, construct or renovate fire stations and other public facilities, acquire lands for affordable housing, and fund economic development projects pursuant to Florida Statute 212.055(2)(d)(3), Florida Statutes ("non-WSPP uses");
3. Providing that not more than 15.0 percent of the proceeds of the new surtax may be used to fund economic development projects pursuant to Florida Statute 212.055(2)(d)(3), Florida Statutes;
4. Providing for authorization and legislative findings; providing for a referendum election on November 8, 2022.
5. Providing for Alachua County's Non-Recurring Municipal Partnership Program (Section 5) with the City of Gainesville (i) and the nine municipalities (ii).

On 6/28/22 the Board passed a motion to establish BOCC Resolution 22-066, providing and amending the process for selecting and acquiring environmentally significant lands purchased using Wild Spaces Public Places local government infrastructure surtax proceeds.
On February 7, 2023, following presentations on the Alachua County Parks and Open Space Master Plan, and the Alachua County Land Conservation and Management Program 10-year Plan, the Board of County Commissioners moved the following:

1. Approve the implementation of the 10-year Land Conservation and Management Plan and strategies as presented.
2. Authorize funding, planning, and construction of the combined field support and office facility for the Land Conservation Program using WSPP surtax funds to the extent permissible.

3. Utilize an 80% Conservation and 20% Recreation split of WSPP infrastructure surtax proceeds to be dedicated to conservation lands and active parks for the 10-year surtax beginning January 1, 2023 and ending December 31, 2032.
4. Allow staff to utilize the surtax for startup operations and maintenance costs and ask staff to bring back recommendations during the budget process that includes a cap, a transition to General Fund, and a yearly report process recommendation for the Board to consider.
5. Adopt the Alachua County Parks & Open Space Master plan as a visioning document and ask staff to develop for the Board to review and bring back in approximately 90 to 120 days the following:
   a. An overlay of the County's Bike and Pedestrian Master plan to identify short and midterm opportunities for trail and walkway connectivity.
   b. Add an equity lens as defined in our Comprehensive Plan and identify short and midterm opportunities to enhance this visioning document.
   c. Identify existing lands owned by the County that could be utilized in the short term to leverage the implementation of this plan; and work with the Conservation and Management Program to identify future acquisition sites that could be utilized for both Parks & Open Space and Land Conservation 10-year Master Plans

Provide an overlay of municipal parks and county conservation lands, and open space available to the public and bring back recommendations for the visioning document.

Background:

The Alachua County Wild Spaces Public Places/Local Government Infrastructure Surtax referenda have supported the following programs goals, building on the foundation of the Alachua County Forever bond referendum passed in 2000:

- In 2008, Alachua County voters passed the Wild Spaces and Public Places surtax referendum, establishing a 2-year, half-cent surtax to be utilized by Alachua County and the municipalities within Alachua County to acquire and improve conservation lands and create, improve and maintain parks and recreational facilities within Alachua County.
- In 2016, Alachua County voters approved a renewal of the Wild Spaces and Public Places initiative with a one-half cent sales tax to be levied for eight years.
- In 2022, Alachua County voters passed a referendum to fund local infrastructure projects with a ten-year one-cent surtax. This surtax repealed and replaced the last two years of the 2016 surtax, dedicating one-half cent dedicated to Wild Spaces and Public places projects, and the other half cent funding to other County infrastructure needs including road safety, affordable housing, fire stations, and other public infrastructure needs.

The mission of the Alachua County Forever (ACF) Program is to acquire, improve, and manage environmentally significant lands that protect water resources, wildlife habitats and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation. Since the program's inception in 2000, Alachua County has protected 33,037 acres of environmentally significant lands through fee simple lands purchases, purchase of conservation easements, and generous landowner donations. The ACF Program was established in 2000 after the Alachua County Forever Bond referendum was approved by the voters of Alachua County.

On February 7, 2023, the Alachua County Land Conservation and Management Program presented a ten-year plan to the Board of County Commissioners, reflecting the strategy for continued pursuit of the ACF program mission and County Comprehensive Plan (2019-2040) goals; with emphasis on local conservation priorities, while considering state, national, and global conservation benchmarks. The Alachua County Parks and Open Space Department presented the Parks and Open Space Master

Plan to the Board of County Commissioners on February 7, 2023, providing a plan for the future of the County park system.

After discussion of county priorities for the projected WSPP portion of the surtax revenues, the Board moved to allocate 80% of the Alachua County surtax funds to Alachua County Forever/Land Conservation and Management program operation, and 20% of the surtax funds to the Alachua County Parks and Open Space Department operations. This allocation will be effective for Surtax revenue received by Alachua County from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2032.

Key priorities for the next ten-year period will include:

- Conservation Land Acquisition: protection of the Santa Fe River corridor, protecting a viable footprint of connected conservation lands within the Alachua County portion of the statewide Florida Wildlife Corridor, an increased emphasis on protection of a southern corridor between Paynes Prairie/Barr Hammock, and Watermelon Pond, and implementation of a more focused agricultural land protection strategy to be implemented through conservation easement acquisition.
- County Preserve Stewardship: Currently, 22 distinct preserves acquired through the ACF program have been opened for nature-based public recreational use. Emphasis in the coming years will include opening additional newly acquired lands to public use; and restoring and improving habitat through activities such as invasive species removal, prescribed burning, tree planting, and other techniques.

2023 Parks Master Plan Hyperlink - https://alachuacounty.sharefile.com/share/view/sc0274a47d22d41b1b5aaa983d0efcae7

ALACHUA COUNTY
PARKS & OPEN SPACE
MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 2023

ALACHUA COUNTY

PARKS & OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

FEBRUARY 2023

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS GROUP

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Orlando, Florida 32801
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Contact: Kristin Caborn, CPRE
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This document has been prepared by GAI Consultants, Inc. on behalf of the Alachua County, Florida.

Acknowledgments

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Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler, Chair - District 2
Commissioner Anna Prizzia, Vice Chair - District 3
Commissioner Ken Cornell - District 4
Commissioner Charles Chestnut, IV - District 5

Alachua County Staff
Michele L. Lieberman - County Manager
Gina Peebles - Assistant County Manager - Chief of Staff
Jason Maurer - Parks & Open Space Director

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Kyle Willems, PE – Design & Operations Manager
Logan Peters, PE – Project Manager
Jack Charnas, EI – Design Engineer
Gabe Sanz, EI – Production Engineer

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Hannah Hollinger – Project Planner
Wes Schaffer – Senior Project Planner
Paloma Prieto – Landscape Designer

RRC
Kailyn Haskovec – Research Analyst
Ethan Adams – Senior Data Analyst & IT Manager

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ROUTE 66
ROUTE 66

1 - WHAT'S THE VISION?

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Alachua County comprises nine incorporated cities and towns that offer a multitude of municipal park and recreation opportunities. These areas collectively are estimated to contain over half the County's population. The Alachua County Parks & Open Space Master Plan serves as a roadmap to guide how the County's system can effectively enrich recreation experiences for all County residents and visitors. To accomplish this, the Master Plan provides an in-depth review of existing conditions, needs, and desires before developing a blueprint for the future of the system. The Master Plan aims to be a proactive plan for the Parks & Open Space Department to better prepare for future growth and anticipate needs of the greater Alachua County community.

Master Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Alachua County Parks & Open Space Master Plan is to provide a roadmap for the future of the County's park system.

Specifically, the Master Plan should strive to achieve the following:

- Ensure consistency with the overall vision of the Comprehensive Plan
- Evaluate current park properties and facilities
- Evaluate and make recommendations regarding priorities for the improvement and expansion of these facilities
- Plan for a future parks system that responds to growth within Alachua County
- Make recommendations for prioritization of future land acquisition and park facility construction
- Identify and make recommendations on how the County might partner with other agencies to maximize its park and open space resources
- Locate and identify existing bicycle and pedestrian pathways in the County and recommend safe connections between park properties
- Create an action plan that is implementable, and identify acquisitions and projects for the future
- Provide a conceptual blueprint for improving, sustaining, and enhancing the quality of life in Alachua County

The County's Parks & Open Space system is currently guided by the Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Our goal is to develop a system that provides an integrated recreation and open space system for Alachua County.

Master Plan Process

The Master Plan process aims to provide a thorough and context-sensitive look into the Alachua County Parks & Open Space System to provide implementable recommendations that enhance the system to best serve the needs of the community. The following process guides the project, resulting in a Master Plan that is tailor-made to suit the specific needs and context of Alachua County.

1. EXISTING CONDITIONS ASSESSMENT

The existing conditions assessment forms the foundation upon which future planning of the parks system can occur. By identifying and valuing the current parks system—combined with the planning context within which the parks system operates—the project team can understand the strengths and weaknesses of the parks system. This phase of the project consisted of a documentation review summary, which included providing planning context to the current system, demographics and population summary, and analysis of facilities.

2. PUBLIC INPUT

After establishing an initial planning framework, further refinement of the needs and aspirations identified by the community were developed through a comprehensive public input program that included in-person public workshops and focus groups to engage more deeply with the community. Additionally, a full statistically valid and open survey was conducted to determine needs and opportunities for improvement. The data collected in this portion of the process informs an initial planning framework specific to the assets and needs of Alachua County Parks & Open Space.

3. MASTER PLAN DEVELOPMENT

Next, the framework for the future parks & open space system is developed based on findings of the Existing Conditions Analysis and Public Input. An evaluation of the Level of Service examines current measurement tools and proposes a revised measurement tool to more accurately demonstrate where current and future population and ecological needs will demand parks and recreation investment. This framework provides high-level guidance for improvements to the system.

4. STRATEGY & RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the establishment of a framework, the project team develops a series of Guiding Principles synthesized from the existing conditions observed and the community input data. The development of guiding principles will reflect the unique opportunities for enhancement of the Alachua County Parks system. The principles provide the foundation upon which the Master Plan recommendations are based. With specific recommendations in place, the project team creates a strategic roadmap toward the realistic implementation of proposed enhancements. By closely collaborating with County staff, the project team develops improvement costs, which estimate, prioritize, and compile a Capital Improvement Plan that will provide the County a clear path toward implementation.

1.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following Guiding Principles create a foundation affirming that the Master Plan serves to further goals and objectives which have been vetted through the Master Planning process. Guiding Principles are derived from key issues highlighted by the community through statistically-valid and open surveys, public workshops, and focus groups. Due to this process, Guiding Principles respond directly to the needs and desires of the community to assure that the resulting Master Plan Vision is responsive to the specific needs of Alachua County residents.

Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles are aspirations for the Alachua County park system as a whole and ultimately guide all recommendations in the Master Plan. A variety of public input venues helped to identify key needs and desires within the community, which in turn inform and develop the Guiding Principles, refer to Section 2.3 (p. 116) for further breakdown of Public Input methodology and responses. As a result, these aspirations are a direct reflection of the specific needs and desires of Alachua County residents.

The combination of these Guiding Principles serve as the basis of the Vision for the future of Alachua County Parks by providing Objectives and Implementation Strategies to aid in attaining these aspirations.

Based on public engagement, the following Guiding Principles have been identified:

- Provide for Today and Plan for Tomorrow
- Proximity and Access
- Inclusivity and Safety
- Natural Alachua
- Communication

Social Equity

The Alachua County PRMP aims to further the County's goal of social equity to provide all residents of Alachua County with opportunities to access play and recreation. In particular, three Guiding Principles focus on providing social equity throughout the system: Provide for Today and Plan for Tomorrow, Proximity and Access, & Inclusivity and Safety.

The Comprehensive Plan 2019-2040 defines social equity as follows:

> ***Social Equity:***
> *Principle of fairness, with attention to provision of opportunity to those portions of the community that are less well off; as applied to Comprehensive Plan, related issues include the provision of affordable housing, economic opportunity, and choice of living environments for all members of the community without regard to sex, race, age, religion, ethnicity, national origin, etc.*

PROVIDE FOR TODAY AND PLAN FOR TOMORROW

Parks provide for the needs of current users and respond to future trends.

- To achieve equity, Parks throughout the county are of a consistent quality and meet basic standards.
- Amenities offered respond to the needs of surrounding park users achieved through a community engagement process.
- Amenities planned for future parks respond to trends and forecasting.

PROXIMITY AND ACCESS

All residents have access to opportunities for play and recreation:

- Each resident lives within a close range of either a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural).
- A robust network of trails and pathways connect users with park amenities.
- Parks provide amenities to facilitate multi-modal access.

INCLUSIVITY AND SAFETY

Parks are safe and welcoming to multicultural users of all ages and abilities:

- Each park provides facilities usable by people of all ages and abilities.
- Each park promotes safe and inclusive spaces for all users.

NATURAL ALACHUA

Alachua County residents have access to nature-based recreation:

- Residents have access to nature trails and water-based activities.
- Parks leverage natural assets for environmental education and interpretation

COMMUNICATION

Park users are aware of park and programming offerings:

- Residents can easily find and share information about available amenities and upcoming events.
- Partnership between departments and agencies allow for efficient and expanded park programming opportunities.

The following breakdown of Guiding Principles provides a further explanation of the desired Objectives for each Guiding Principle as well as the Implementation Strategies that serve as the blueprint to reach these aspirations. Collectively, these Objectives and Implementation Strategies guide the specific recommendations provided in the Vision.

Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow

The park system should provide residents with equitable park amenities while reflecting and responding to the specific needs and desires of the community and future trends.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide all residents of Alachua County with equitable access to quality parks
- Maintain and enhance existing parks
- Determine additional park amenities needed within the community
- Respond to future trends when planning for future park offerings

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Establish minimum park standards
- Enhance existing parks with upgraded facilities and amenities
- Expand offerings of sports courts and fields
- Establish additional dog off-leash areas

Proximity & Access

Park users throughout Alachua County live in both urban and rural areas, but all users should have access to parks within a close range of their household. The approach to park access takes into account the various modes in which users may access parks.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide park access within close proximity to all residents of Alachua County
- Improve pedestrian and bike linkages throughout the County
- Promote a healthy community by motivating park users to use active modes of transportation to and from parks

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Establish a geographic level of service where each resident lives within a close range of a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural).
- Coordinate with Growth Management on implementation of their Trails Master Plan.
- Work closely with Public Works to provide safe, walkable connections into all parks such as marked crosswalks to improve driver awareness of pedestrians/cyclists to create a welcoming environment for those choosing active transportation.
- Include amenities that encourage a variety of multi-modal access points including bike racks and pedestrian entry points.

Inclusivity & Safety

The park system should make a concerted effort to make park users feel welcome and included. Furthermore, parks should be designed and maintained to provide residents with a reasonable level of safety.

OBJECTIVES

- Provide all residents of Alachua County with equitable access to quality parks
- Maintain and enhance existing parks with safety in mind
- Plan park amenities, such as signage in multiple languages, to appeal to diverse park user groups
- Respond to future trends when planning for future park offerings

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Establish minimum park standards
- Enhance existing parks with upgraded facilities and amenities including boundless playgrounds with appeal to children of various physical and emotional abilities
- Expand offerings of sports courts and fields
- Establish additional dog off-leash areas

Natural Alachua

Alachua County has a strong appreciation for the region's natural resources and the importance of their protection. Access to nature not only benefits people physically and mentally, but also promotes better stewardship of natural resources.

OBJECTIVES

- Promote nature-based recreation that fosters environmental stewardship and wellness.
- Protect natural resources and habitat to preserve biodiversity and ecological services.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Provide access to lake/water edge amenities for non-boaters, such as additional piers and boardwalks.
- Increase access to green spaces and nature-based recreation, such as nature trails by partnering with Conservation Lands to co-locate active park amenities in disturbed areas (when feasible).
- Provide environmental education wherever possible, such as pollinator gardens and interpretative signage.
- Preserve open space.

Communication

Public input indicated an opportunity to increase the effectiveness of communication about parks and recreation opportunities. It should be easy for park users to find information about park offerings both print and digital formats. Additionally, improved communication and partnerships with other departments and agencies could facilitate park activation and improved operations.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve digital and in print communication of events and programming at parks throughout the County and municipalities
- Raise public awareness of the existing park system to enhance knowledge of offerings for all Alachua County residents
- Increase opportunities for community-based grassroots organizations to engage with parks & open space
- Foster partnerships between departments and agencies

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- Develop a Parks & Open Space communications strategy in partnership with Communications
- Expand social media marketing and webpage presence
- Develop a brand for Alachua County Parks & Open Spaces
- Facilitate special events with community-based grassroots organizations
- Improve internal communication between County departments and agencies
- Partner with municipalities within the County to create a comprehensive awareness of parks & open space offerings through all jurisdictions
- Work with County Public Information Office to build strategy for parks & open space

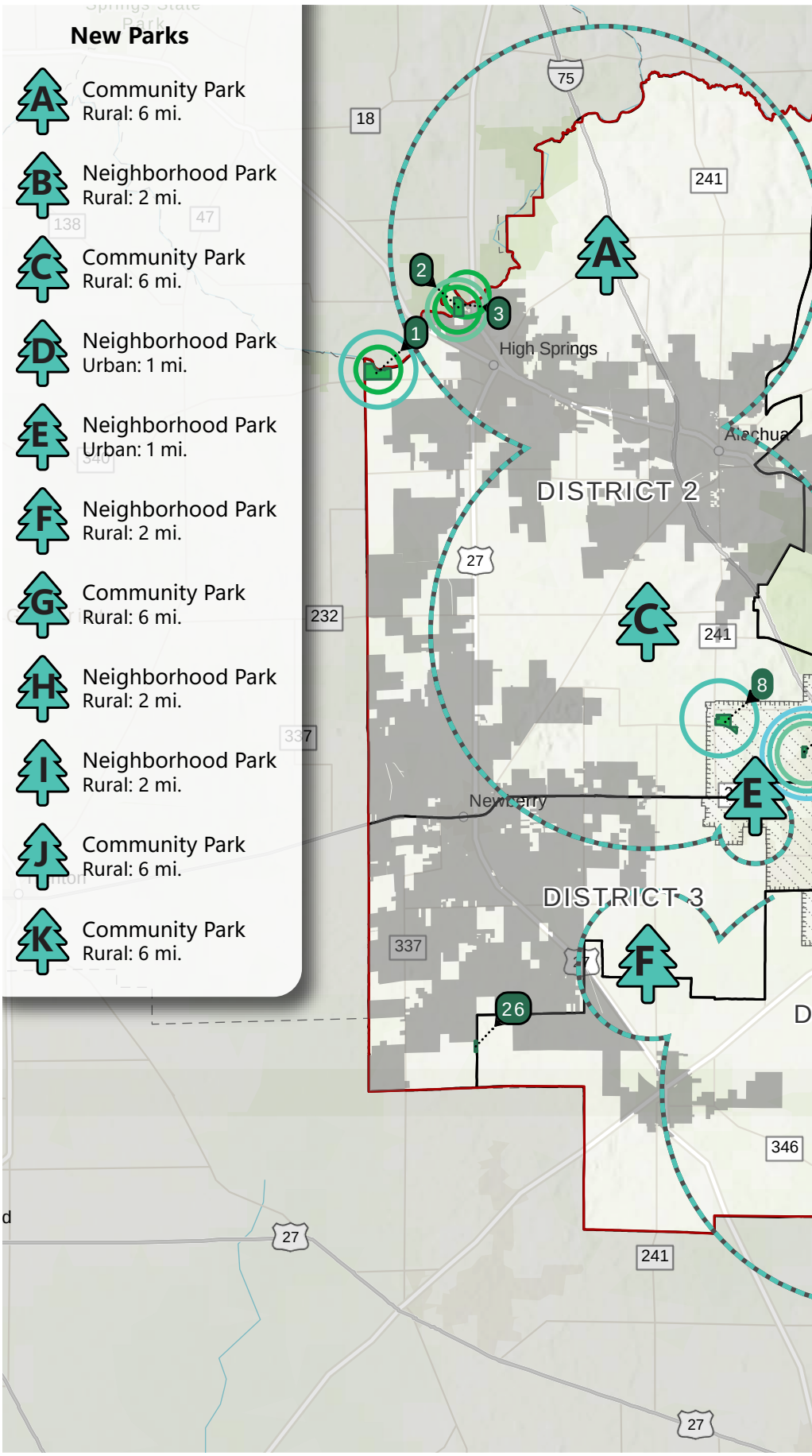
1.3 VISION

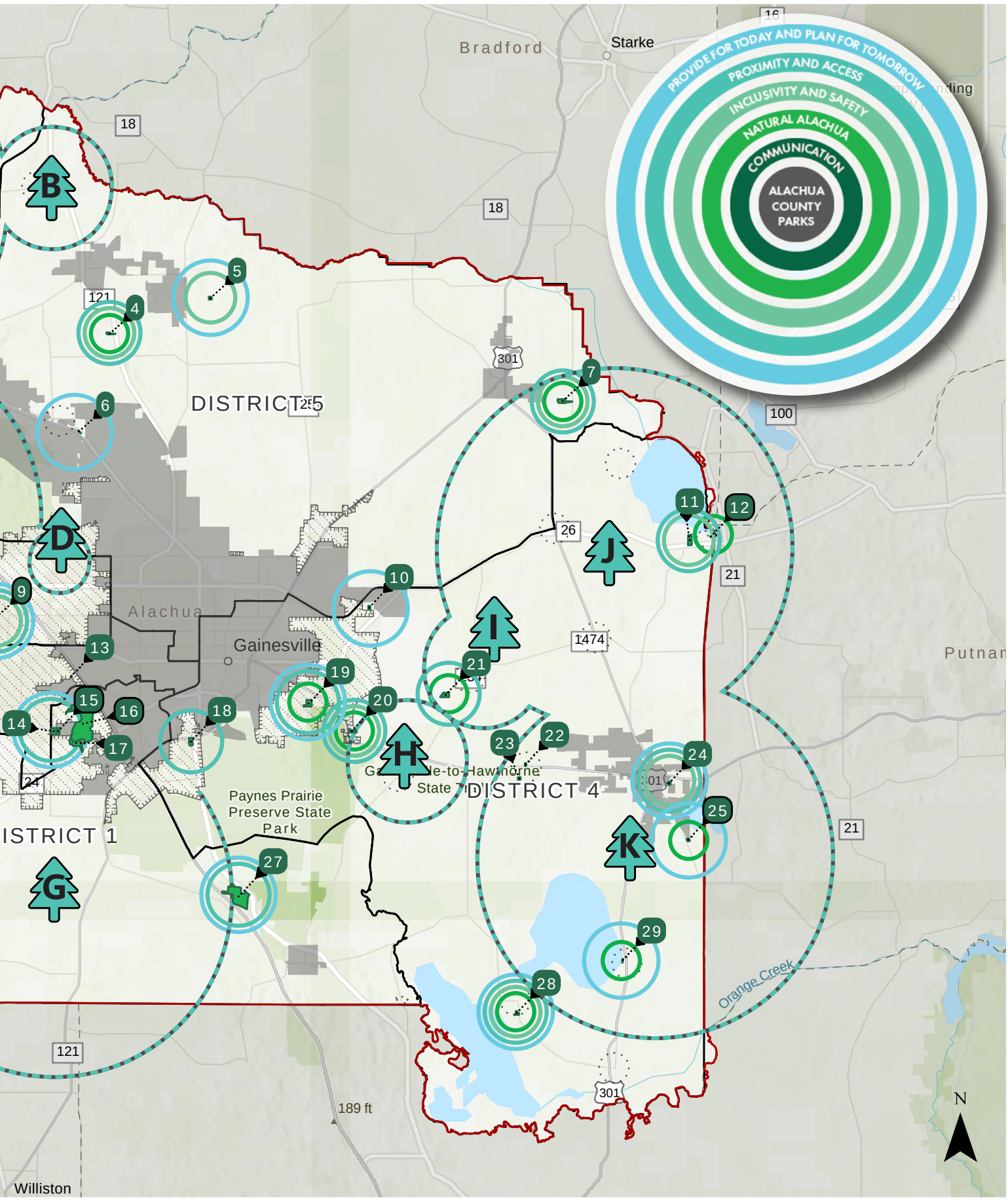
The Alachua County Parks Vision aims to provide an equitable park system with access to quality parks for all Alachua County residents. Development of the Vision is the direct result of the Guiding Principles developed through the public input process (Section 2.3, p. 116) to create a blueprint for the future of Alachua County Parks. In this way, the Vision seeks to provide implementable steps to meet the needs and desires of Alachua County residents.

Alachua County Parks Vision

The Vision for Alachua County Parks is provided in the following pages and is directly derived from the Guiding Principles. Recommendations put forth aim to advance the objectives of the system and meet the needs of Alachua County residents. Concrete recommendations provide implementable steps to achieving this vision.

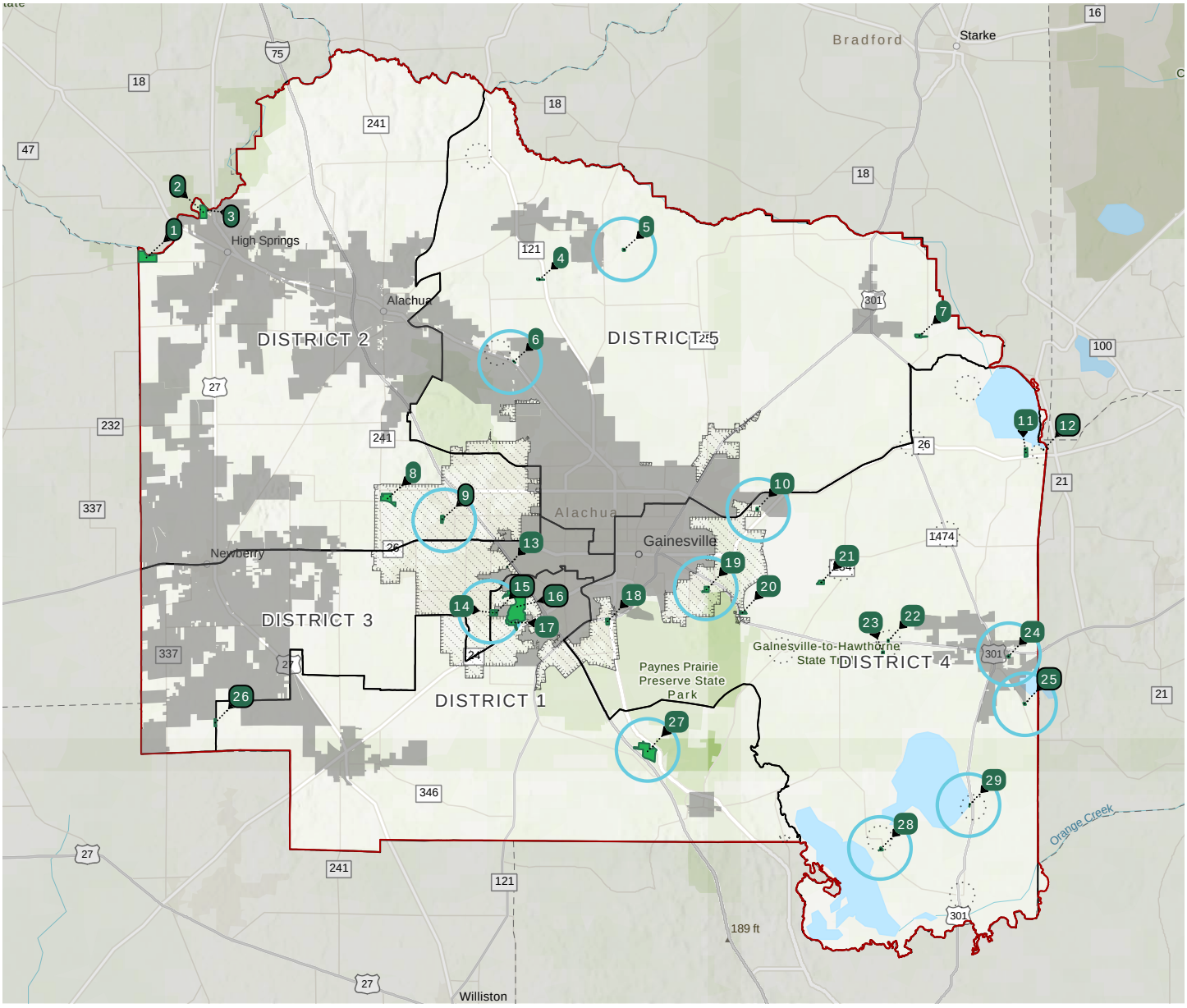
The following map provides a breakdown of the general location and park-type recommendations and the corresponding Guiding Principles. Notably, Communication recommendations function on a system-wide scale.




PROVIDE FOR TODAY AND PLAN FOR TOMORROW
PROXIMITY AND ACCESS
INCLUSIVITY AND SAFETY
NATURAL ALACHUA
COMMUNICATION
ALACHUA COUNTY PARKS
Bradford
Starke
Alachua
Gainesville
DISTRICT 5
DISTRICT 4
DISTRICT 1
Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park
Orange Creek
Putnam
Williston
189 ft
N
B
D
G
H
I
J
K
18
121
301
100
26
1474
21
16

Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow

	Implementation Strategy	District	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow	Enhance existing parks with upgraded facilities and amenities	1	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	Develop site-specific master plan to build on existing amenities and enhance offerings for the general public Provide off peak public access	x		
		4	Copeland Park	New playground	x		
		4	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Stormwater plan to address drainage issues	x		
		4	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Replace existing restroom	x		
		4	Holden Pond Park	Add play area	x		
		5	Monteocha Park	New pavilion and playground	x		
		4	Lochloosa Park	Restabilize and even out grade	x		
	Expand offerings of sports courts and fields	1, 2, 4	New Community Parks			x	
		1	Veterans Memorial Park	New fields (SE corner, slated as "Future Fields" on plans)		x	
	Establish additional off-leash areas	4	Hawthorne Dog Park		x		
		5	DeSoto Park			x	
		2	Jane B. Walker Park		x		
		TBD	New Parks	Determine locations based on new parks' master planning process	x	x	x



Park Legend

1 Poe Springs
2 McCall (Undeveloped)
3 High Springs Boat Ramp
4 Cellon Oak
5 Monteocha
6 DeSoto Park
7 Lake Alto
8 Rotary Park at Jonesville
9 Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)
10 Copeland
11 Santa Fe Lake
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15 Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)
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20 Earl P. Powers
21 Owens-Illinois
22 Scott-Phifer House
23 Grove
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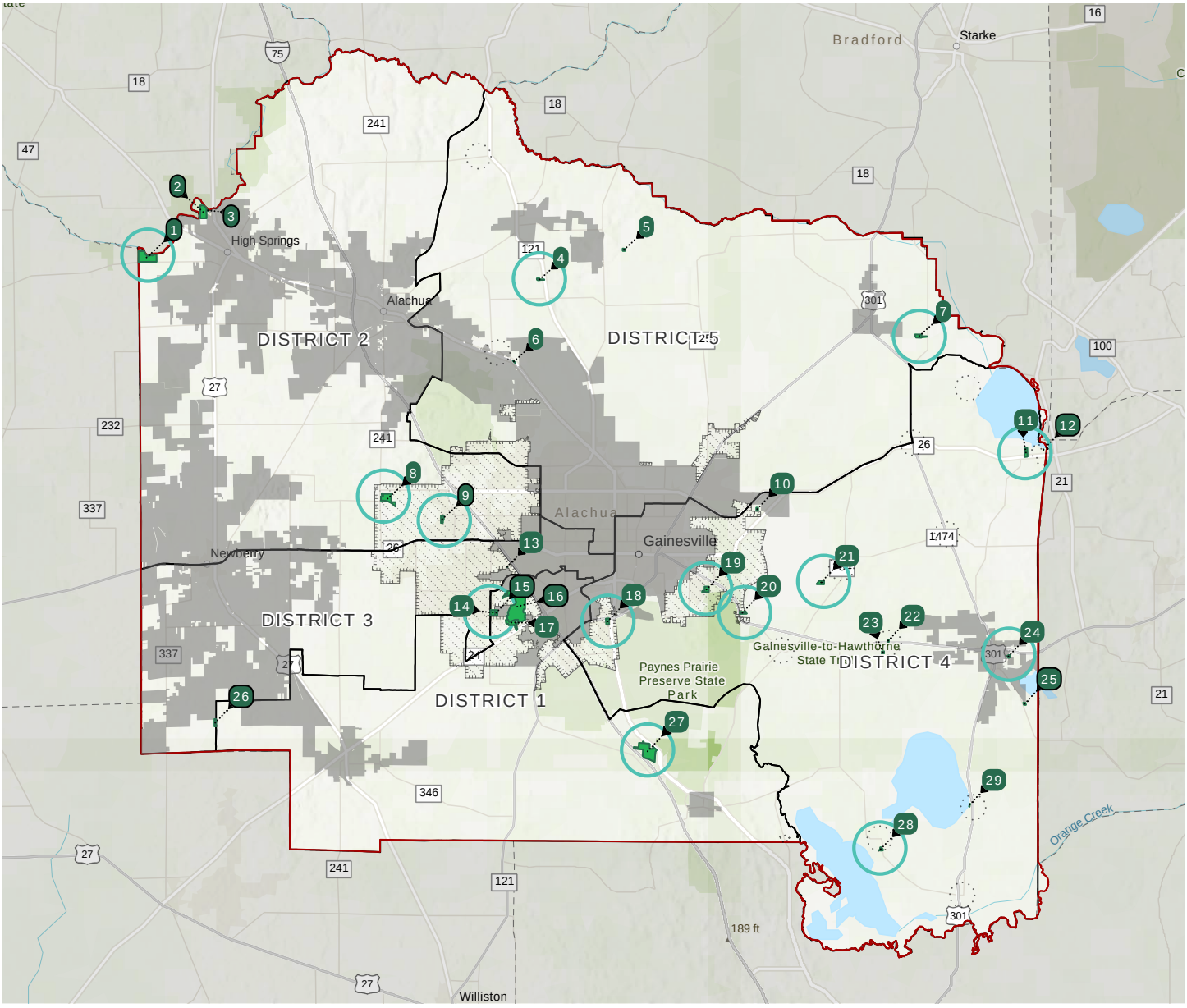
25 Holden Pond
26 Watermelon Pond
27 Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center
28 Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park
29 Lochloosa

Proximity & Access

	Implementation Strategy	District	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Proximity & Access	Coordinate with Growth Management on implementation of their Trails Master Plan	All	County-wide		x		
	Work closely with Public Works to provide safe, walkable connections into all parks such as marked crosswalks to improve driver awareness of pedestrians/cyclists to create a welcoming environment for those choosing active transportation Note: Prioritize parks with existing sidewalk network, provide entry points as sidewalk grids extend and/or with additional trail connections	2	Rotary Park at Jonesville	Add crosswalks along NW 32nd Ave	x		
		2	Jane B. Walker Park	Add sidewalk and crosswalks with development	x		
		1	Veterans Memorial Park	Add crosswalk connections west across SW 75th St	x		
		4	Squirrel Ridge Park	Pave existing sidewalk connection into park	x		
		2	Poe Springs	Provide pedestrian entry and sidewalk connection into park	x		
		4	Santa Fe Lake	extend sidewalk along ROW into park	x		
	Include amenities that encourage a variety of multi-modal access points including bike racks and pedestrian entry points	All	All Parks		on-going		



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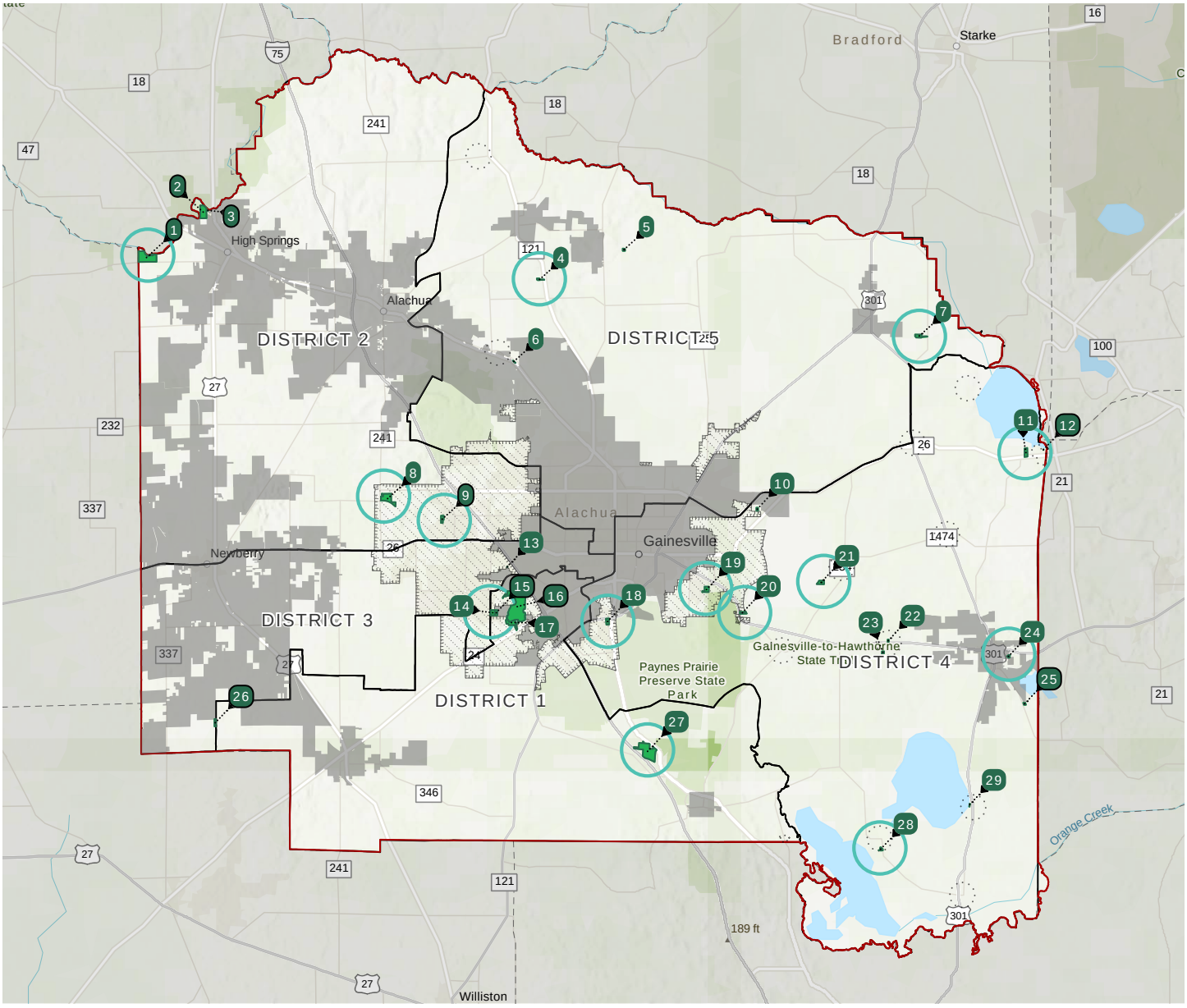
Proximity & Access

	Implementation Strategy	District	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Proximity & Access	Establish a geographic level of service where each resident lives within a close range of a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural). Meet new geographic LOS through the following strategies:	All	County-wide		x		
	1. Reclassifying existing parks based on amenities to provide Neighborhood or Community LOS	All		Lake Alto, Rotary Park at Jonesville, Santa Fe Lake, Earl P. Powers, Owens-Illinois, Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center, Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	x		
	2. Upgrading existing parks with additional neighborhood or community park amenities	2	Poe Springs	Offer free entry during non-peak times and add/ enhance neighborhood amenities such as playground, sports court, picnic areas	x		
		2	Jane B. Walker Park	Add neighborhood amenities	x		
		4	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Add community amenities	x		
		4	Hawthorne Dog Park	Add neighborhood amenities	x		
	3. Expanding existing parks by acquiring adjacent properties and adding new amenities/ facilities	5	Cellon Oak	Expand existing park and add new community parks amenities such as play area, sports fields/courts, open space, group and small pavilions, restroom building, shade trees, off-street parking	x	x	

Recommendations for Level of Service are the result of a comprehensive Level of Service analysis process aimed at providing equitable access to parks for all Alachua County residents. For more detailed methodology information, refer to Section 3.1, p. 154.



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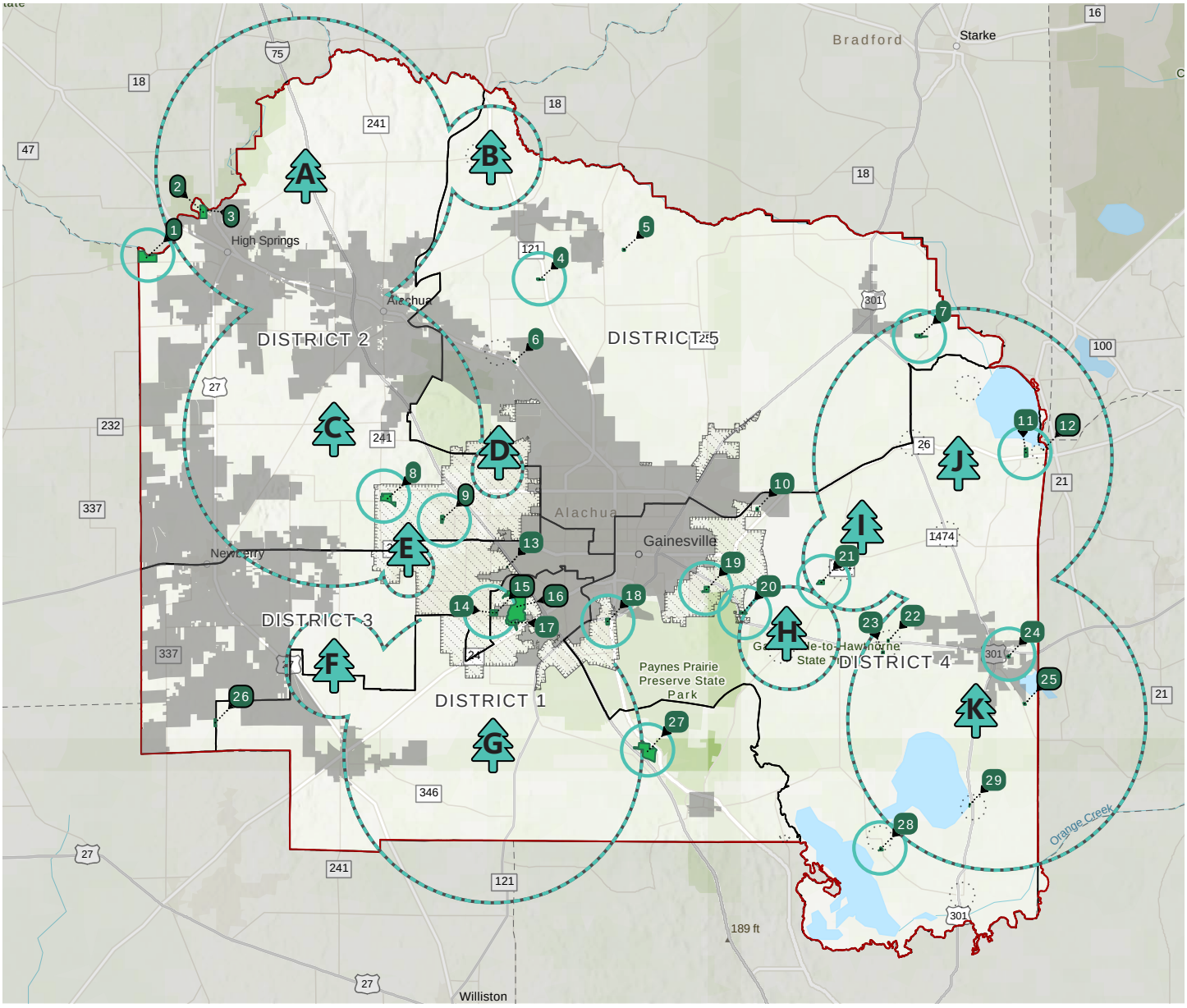
Proximity & Access

	Implementation Strategy	District	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Proximity & Access	4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas	5	New Neighborhood Parks Acquire property and develop with neighborhood park amenities such as: play area, sports court, open space, small pavilions and picnic tables, shade trees, off-street parking	New Rural Neighborhood Park (B)	x		
		2		New Urban Neighborhood Park (D)		x	
		3		New Urban Neighborhood Park (E)	x		
		4		New Rural Neighborhood Park (H)		x	
		4		New Rural Neighborhood Park (I)			x
		2	New Community Parks Acquire property and develop with community park amenities such as: play area, sports fields/courts, open space, group and small pavilions, restroom building, shade trees, off-street parking	New Rural Community Park (A)	x		
		2		New Rural Community Park (C)	x		
		1		New Rural Community Park (G)		x	
		4		New Rural Community Park (J)	x		
		4		New Rural Community Park (K)			x

New Park Legend

- **A** Community Park (Rural)
- **B** Neighborhood Park (Rural)
- **C** Community Park (Rural)
- **D** Neighborhood Park (Urban)
- **E** Neighborhood Park (Urban)
- **F** Neighborhood Park (Rural)
- **G** Community Park (Rural)
- **H** Neighborhood Park (Rural)
- **I** Neighborhood Park (Rural)
- **J** Community Park (Rural)
- **K** Community Park (Rural)

Recommendations for Level of Service are the result of a comprehensive Level of Service analysis process aimed at providing equitable access to parks for all Alachua County residents. For more detailed methodology information, refer to Section 3.1, p. 154.



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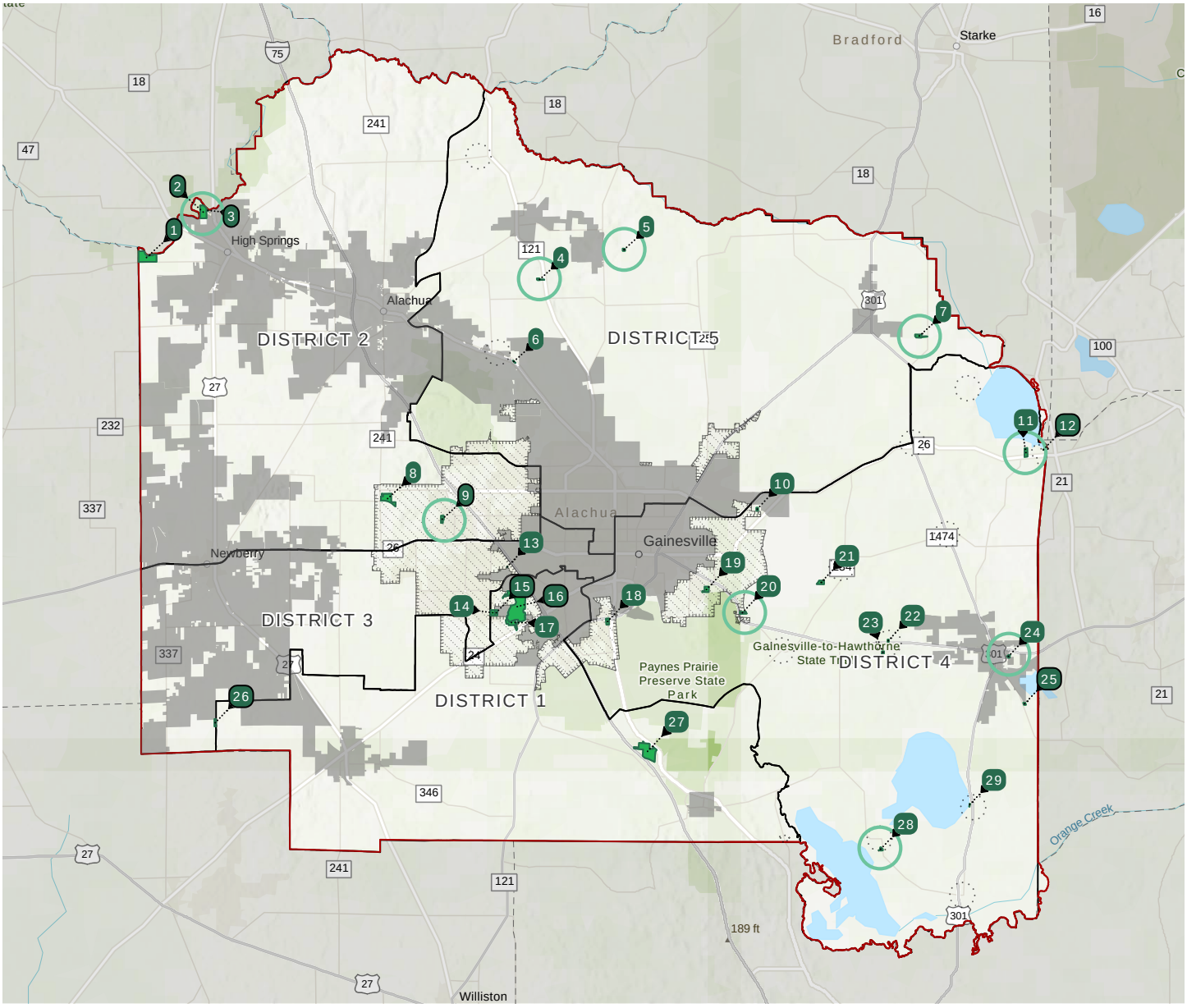
Inclusivity & Safety

	Implementation Strategy	District	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Inclusivity & Safety	Establish Park Equity Standards	All	County-wide		x		
	Incorporate gathering space into parks that promotes social interaction between diverse users such as pavilions and picnic tables as well as flexible lawn spaces for gathering and events.	5	Cellon Oak	Add pavilion		x	
		4	Hawthorne Dog Park	Add pavilion and picnic tables	x		
		2	Jane B. Walker Park	Add pavilion and picnic tables	x		
		5	Lake Alto	Add large group pavilion	x		
		2	McCall Park	Add periodic benches along new trails			x
		5	Monteocha Park	Add small pavilions		x	
		All	New Parks	Consider gathering spaces in new parks	x	x	x
	Provide inclusive amenities that go beyond basic handicap accessibility.	4	Earl P. Powers Park	Complete accessible circulation	x		
		4	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Enhance sidewalk connectivity		x	
		5	Monteocha Park	Enhance sidewalk connectivity	x		
		4	Santa Fe Lake	Provide sidewalk connection between family area and boat ramp	x		
	Install inclusive playgrounds that go beyond ADA accessibility. Playgrounds should offer activities for all children regardless of level of ability with unitary surfacing such as poured-in-place rubber, and maneuverable routes for wheelchair access.	All	All Parks	As playgrounds are replaced or implemented	on-going		
	Implement CPTED recommendations to improve safety and comfort of park users.	All	All Parks		on-going		
	Provide protection from the elements at all parks.	All	All Parks	Provide pavilions at all parks	on-going		



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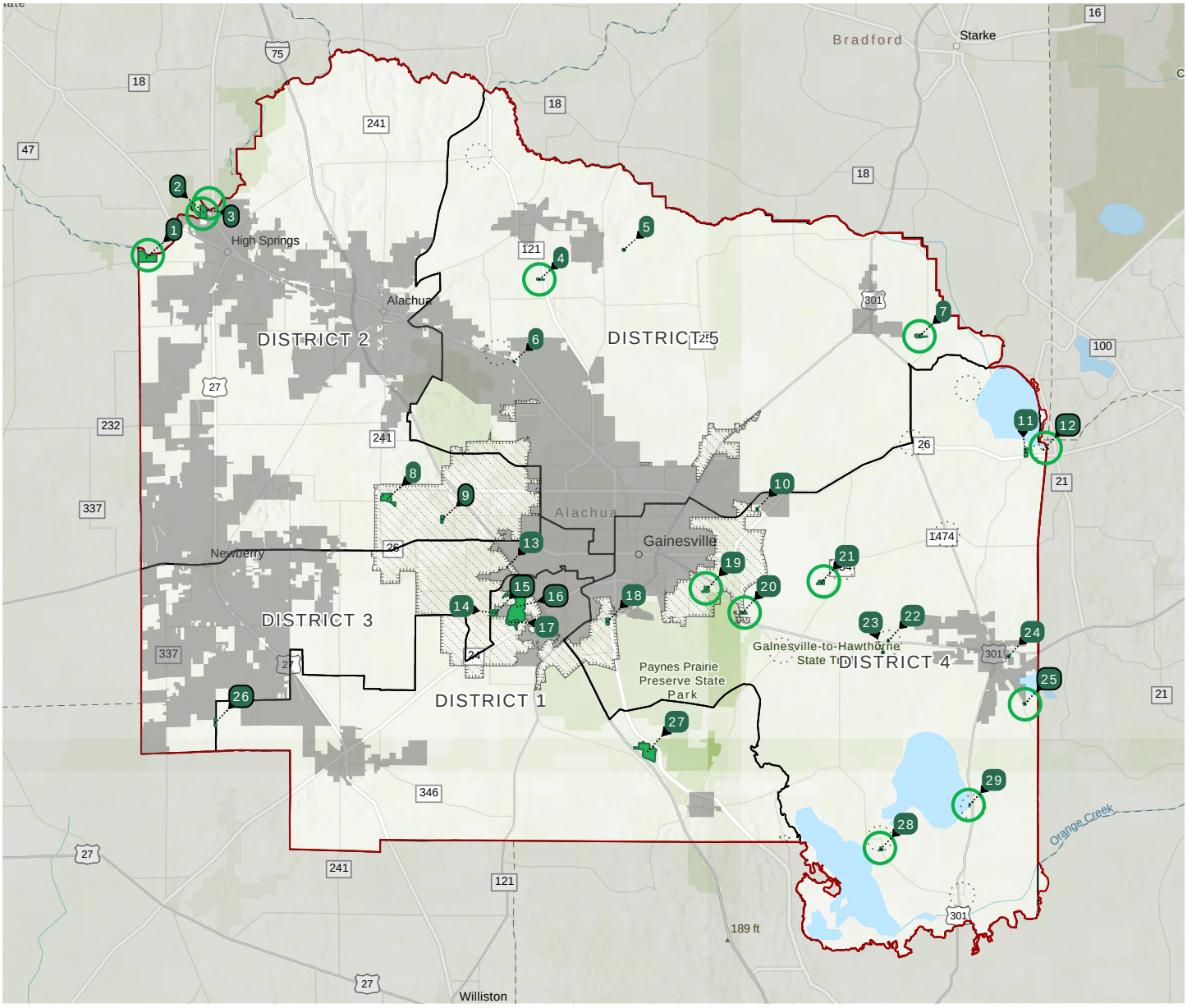
Natural Alachua

	Implementation Strategy	District	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Natural Alachua	Provide access to lake/water edge amenities for non-boaters, such as additional piers and boardwalks	4	Owens-Illinois	Boardwalk access to water's edge with observation platform	x		
		4	Holden Pond Park	Replace fishing platform	x		
		4	Lochloosa	Provide bank grade stabilization and fishing spots	x		
	Increase access to green spaces and nature-based recreation, such as nature trails by partnering with Conservation Lands to co-locate active park amenities in disturbed areas (when feasible).	2	McCall Park	Walking trails, boardwalks, observation platforms			x
		3	GRU Wetlands Park	Work with GRU on Wetlands Park set to open 2024		x	
	Provide environmental education wherever possible, such as pollinator gardens and interpretative signage	5	Cellon Oak	Pollinator garden, interpretative signage	x		
		4	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Pollinator garden, interpretative signage	x		
		4	Earl P. Powers Park	Interpretative signage	x		
		2	High Springs Boat Ramp	Interpretative signage	x		
		4	Holden Pond Park	Interpretative signage	x		
		4	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Interpretative signage, nature trail towards bank	x		
		5	Lake Alto	Interpretative signage	x		
		4	Lochloosa	Interpretative signage	x		
		4	Melrose Boat Ramp	Interpretative signage	x		
		2	Poe Springs	Interpretative signage, environmental education programs, volunteer opportunities	on-going		
		2	McCall Park	tbd, interpretative signage			x
	Preserve open space	All	County-wide		on-going		



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23 Grove
24 Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)
25 Holden Pond
26 Watermelon Pond
27 Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center
28 Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park
29 Lochloosa

Communication

A park system is only as effective as its ability to communicate to its users. In order to create a truly equitable park system, residents throughout Alachua County should have access to and knowledge of parks and recreation offerings. Park users do not perceive departmental or jurisdictional boundaries, rather they seek to understand what kinds of recreational amenities are around them. Therefore interdepartmental and inter-jurisdictional partnerships are key to providing a well-rounded experience for all Alachua County residents.

Additionally, parks serve as key public spaces and should provide equitable opportunities to host grassroots events and community building activities. An effective communications strategy helps build community advocacy and excitement about the parks system as a whole.

Within Alachua County, enhanced communication between departments and agencies provides access to a wider range of resources and collaboration opportunities that reduce redundant efforts and provide creative problem solving and activation.

The following recommendations provide a blueprint for Alachua County Parks & Open Space to raise awareness, build community, and enhance operations. While some of these recommendations have recommended timelines, many are on-going efforts to continually engage with the community and provide open lines of communication both internally and externally. All recommendations under this Guiding Principle are to be implemented on a system-wide scale to provide resources for Alachua County residents at large.

	Implementation Strategy	Projects	short	mid	long
Communication	Develop a Parks & Open Space communications strategy in partnership with Communications		on-going		
	Expand social media marketing and webpage presence		x		
	Develop a brand for Alachua County Parks & Open Space focusing on Master Plan implementation and generating excitement within the community	Create awareness campaign for Master Plan initiatives	x		
		Develop hashtag campaign to crowdsource marketing content and highlight grassroots activities		x	
		Provide opportunities for community engagement throughout Master Plan implementation, e.g., public workshops for new parks	on-going		
	Facilitate special events with community-based grassroots organizations	Provide point of contact for grassroots organization wishing to use parks for events	on-going		
		Create crowdsourced events calendar for ease of communications. Foster access to grassroots events without complex permitting processes to create equitable opportunities for event access.	on-going		
		Create "superhost" program to highlight key event partners	on-going		
	Improve internal communication between County departments and agencies	Continue to develop partnerships with other departments and agencies for the provision of amenities and activation of parks (i.e., Land Conservation, Public Works, Sheriff's Office, Alachua County Public Schools)	on-going		
	Partner with municipalities within the County to create a comprehensive awareness of parks & open space offerings through all jurisdictions	Develop inventory of park offerings through the County including municipal parks	x		
		Provide interactive map of parks offerings throughout the County for public use	x		
	Work with County Public Information Office to build strategy for parks & open space	Build and implement communications strategy	x		
		Re-evaluate strategy at 5 years		x	

Park Equity Standards

Park Equity Standards provide a baseline for all parks in Alachua County. Through these standards, Alachua County Parks & Open Space can provide consistent and equitable access to high-quality amenities and facilities throughout the County. The elements determined provide a base level standard for amenities provided within each park type to meet the identified Level of Service. A park that does not include all the elements of its park type is considered deficient in Level of Service (LOS). Elements have been broadly defined to provide flexibility as to the exact type and quantity of amenities needed to be responsive to both site conditions and public needs through a public engagement process.

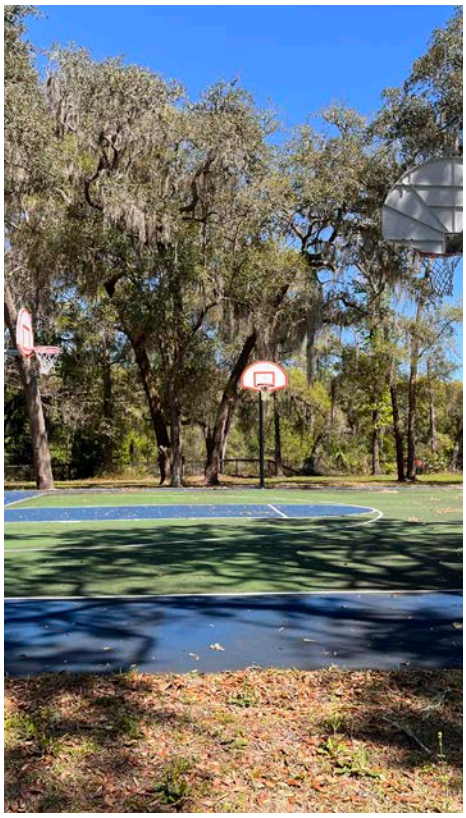
NEIGHBORHOOD PARK

DESCRIPTION

Neighborhood Parks are generally five (5) or more acres in size providing access to recreational amenities to a neighborhood. These parks include a mix of passive and active amenities with little programming. In urban areas, it is expected that nearby residents will be able to access neighborhood parks within walking distance or a short drive. In rural contexts, a short drive is expected.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Preserve open space within parks to maintain passive uses
- Position play areas away from sports courts, near parking but away from streets
- Incorporate seating, picnic areas, and pavilions near play areas to provide gathering spaces (e.g., pavilion, outdoor stage, grouped picnic tables/benches) and weather protection
- Provide shade trees along pathways



REQUIREMENTS

Size

5-acre min.

Geographic Level of Service

- Urban: 1-mile
- Rural: 2-miles

Elements

- Play area
- Sports Court
- Unprogrammed Open Space
- Small Pavilions and Picnic Tables
- Off-street Parking – sufficient for daily use patterns and ADA requirements

COMMUNITY PARK

DESCRIPTION

Community Parks are generally 20 or more acres in size providing access to active amenities and public and community events across a larger geographic area. Community parks are active parks with recreational programming that can accommodate a large geographic service area, especially in lower density and rural residential areas. In both urban and rural contexts, it is expected that many users will drive to these parks.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Position play areas away from sports courts, near parking but away from streets
- Locate restroom(s) in centralized areas and near play areas
- Place sports lighting away from surrounding residential areas
- Based on space constraints, sports fields may be used as flexible open space for events
- Locate pavilions in key activity areas such as near play areas, recreation field complexes, and near sports courts to provide gathering spaces and weather protection
- Provide periodic bench seating along primary pathways and walking loops
- Provide shade trees along pathways

REQUIREMENTS

Size

20-acre min.

Geographic Level of Service:

- Urban: 3-mile
- Rural: 6-miles

Elements

- Play area
- Sports Fields and/or Sports Courts
- Flexible Open Space
- Mix of Group Pavilions and Small Pavilions
- Restroom Building
- Off-street Parking – sufficient for daily use patterns and ADA requirements

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Recommendations

Crime Protection Through Environmental Design (CPTED, pronounced "sep-ted") is an approach to reducing crime through the design and management of the built environment. CPTED strategies aim to reduce targeting of victims, deter offender decisions preceding criminal acts, and build a sense of community among residents to reduce opportunities for crime and fear of crime.

NATURAL ACCESS CONTROL

Natural access control aims to reduce opportunities for crime by restricting access to a site creating defensible entry points that provide safe entry for users of the space, while dissuading criminal activity. Access control uses design to clearly differentiate between public and private space and controls flow of users through lighting and landscape.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Clearly marked entry points
- Fences where necessary – Restrict number of entry points into an amenity
- Lockable gates & Building locks – Reduce access into specific areas/ after-hours
- Strategic lighting – Lead users to specific entry points and prevent use of undesired amenities after hours

NATURAL SURVEILLANCE

Natural surveillance focuses on creating clear unobstructed views to prevent crime. By increasing visibility, there are less opportunities for criminals to hide and engage in undesired activities. This strategy also reduces ambush points, or areas where criminals can hide and attack a victim.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Group like activities together – Allow observation into surrounding facilities causing intruders to stand out
- 2' – 6' rule – Maintain landscape cleared above 2' and below 6' to allow visibility and surveillance
- Right plant, right place – Plant and maintain landscape to allow visibility
- Lighting – Avoid lighting that will create glare or low light spots

TERRITORIALITY

Territoriality relies on developing a sense of ownership by park users. This empowers community members to challenge/report intruders and increase surveillance into the facility. This strategy causes intruders to stand out and deters criminal activity.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Celebrated entry – Define a facility and create a clear boundary/sense of entry
- Encourage volunteer partnerships – Encourage a sense of ownership within the community
- Materiality – Provide cohesive design throughout the park that defines park vs. non-park boundary
- Buffer/separate private non-facility property – Define the territory as a public amenity and encourage use of the space

MAINTENANCE

A well-maintained space reinforces the idea that someone is observing and caring for a space. Observing and repairing vandalism dissuades repeat vandalism while maintaining lighting and landscape ensures natural surveillance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Maintain landscape and lighting – Ensure natural surveillance
- Repair vandalism – Reinforce sense of ownership and perception of surveillance
- Select durable items – Prevent vandalism and reduce maintenance costs

Recommendations by District

The following tables provide a breakdown of recommendations within this Master Plan per County Commission District as they pertain to specific Guiding Principles as well as the expected timeline of implementation. A series of recommendations, labeled “All Districts”, are to be implemented on a system-wide scale and pertain to parks in every district. Recommendations have been developed through a county-wide lens to provide equitable access to quality parks for all Alachua County residents.

ALL DISTRICTS

	Implementation Strategy	Projects	short	mid	long
Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow	Establish additional off-leash areas	Determine locations based on new parks' master planning process			
Proximity & Access	Establish a geographic level of service where each resident lives within a close range of a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural) Meet new geographic LOS through the following strategies:	1. Reclassifying existing parks based on amenities 2. Upgrading existing parks with additional amenities 3. Expanding existing parks by acquiring adjacent properties and adding new amenities 4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas	x		
	Coordinate with Growth Management on implementation of their Trails Master Plan		x		
	Include amenities that encourage a variety of multi-modal access points, including bike racks and pedestrian entry points	Provide amenities in response to evolving connectivity improvements throughout the County such as additional sidewalks and trails	on-going		
Inclusivity & Safety	Establish Park Equity Standards		x		
	Incorporate gathering space into parks that promotes social interaction between diverse users, such as pavilions and picnic tables as well as flexible lawn spaces for gathering and events	Consider gathering spaces in new parks	on-going		
	Install inclusive playgrounds that go beyond ADA accessibility. Playgrounds should offer activities for all children regardless of level of ability with unitary surfacing, such as poured-in-place rubber, and maneuverable routes for wheelchair access	As playgrounds are replaced or implemented	on-going		
	Implement CPTED recommendations to improve safety and comfort of park users		on-going		
	Provide protection from the elements at all parks	Provide pavilions at all parks	on-going		

	Implementation Strategy	Projects	short	mid	long
Natural Alachua	Preserve open space		on-going		
Communication	Develop a Parks & Open Space communications strategy in partnership with Communications		on-going		
	Expand social media marketing and webpage presence		x		
	Develop a brand for Alachua County Parks & Open Space focusing on Master Plan implementation and generating excitement within the community	Create awareness campaign for Master Plan initiatives and other departmental initiatives	x		
		Develop hashtag campaign to crowdsource marketing content and highlight grassroots activities		x	
		Provide opportunities for community engagement throughout Master Plan implementation, e.g. public workshops for new parks	on-going		
	Facilitate special events with community-based grassroots organizations	Provide point of contact for grassroots organization wishing to use parks for events	on-going		
		Create crowdsourced events calendar for ease of communications. Foster access to grassroots events without complex permitting processes to create equitable opportunities for event access.	on-going		
		Create "superhost" program to highlight key event partners	on-going		
	Improve internal communication between County departments and agencies	Continue to develop partnerships with other departments and agencies for the provision of amenities and activation of parks (i.e., Land Conservation Lands, Public Works, Sheriff's Office, Alachua County Public Schools)	on-going		
	Partner with municipalities within the County to create a comprehensive awareness of parks & open space offerings through all jurisdictions	Develop inventory of park offerings through the County including municipal parks	x		
		Provide interactive map of parks offerings throughout the County for public use	x		
	Work with Communications Office to build strategy for parks & open space	Build and implement communications strategy	x		
		Re-evaluate strategy at 5 years		x	

DISTRICT 1

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow	Enhance existing parks with upgraded facilities and amenities	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	Develop site-specific master plan to build on existing amenities and enhance offerings for the general public Provide public access during non-peak usage	x		
	Expand offerings of sports courts and fields	Veterans Memorial Park	New fields (SE corner, slated as "Future Fields" on plans)		x	
		New Community Parks			x	
Proximity & Access	Meet new geographic LOS by: 4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas		New Rural Community Park (G)		x	
	Work closely with Public Works to provide safe, walkable connections into all parks such as marked crosswalks to improve driver awareness of pedestrians/ cyclists to create a welcoming environment for those choosing active transportation Note: Prioritize parks with existing sidewalk network, provide entry points as sidewalk grids extend and/or with additional trail connections	Veterans Memorial Park	Add crosswalk connections west across SW 75th St	x		

DISTRICT 2

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow	Establish additional off-leash areas	Jane B. Walker Park		x		
	Expand offerings of sports courts and fields	New community parks			x	
Proximity & Access	Meet new geographic LOS by: 2. Upgrading existing parks with additional neighborhood or community park amenities	Poe Springs	Offer free entry during non-peak times and add/enhance neighborhood amenities such as playground, sports court, picnic areas	x		
		Jane B. Walker Park	Add neighborhood amenities	x		
	4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas	New Neighborhood Parks Acquire property and develop with neighborhood park amenities such as play area, sports court, open space, small pavilions and picnic tables, shade trees, off-street parking	New Urban Neighborhood Park (D)		x	
		New Community Parks Acquire property and develop with community park amenities such as play area, sports fields/ courts, open space, group and small pavilions, restroom building, shade trees, off-street parking	New Rural Community Park (A)	x		
			New Rural Community Park (C)	x		

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Proximity & Access	Work closely with Public Works to provide safe, walkable connections, such as marked crosswalks, into all parks to improve driver awareness of pedestrians/cyclists to create a welcoming environment for those choosing active transportation Note: Prioritize parks with existing sidewalk network, provide entry points as sidewalk grids extend and/or with additional trail connections	Rotary Park at Jonesville	Add crosswalks along NW 32nd Ave	x		
		Jane B. Walker Park	Add sidewalk and crosswalks with development	x		
		Poe Springs	Provide pedestrian entry and sidewalk connection into park	x		
Inclusivity & Safety	Incorporate gathering space into parks, such as pavilions and picnic tables, that promotes social interaction between diverse users as well as flexible lawn spaces for gathering and events	Jane B. Walker Park	Add pavilion and picnic tables	x		
		McCall Park	Add periodic benches along new trails			x
Natural Alachua	Increase access to green spaces and nature-based recreation , such as nature trails by partnering with Conservation Lands to co-locate active park amenities in disturbed areas (when feasible)	McCall Park	Walking trails, boardwalks, observation platforms			x
	Provide environmental education wherever possible, such as pollinator gardens and interpretative signage	High Springs Boat Ramp	Interpretative signage	x		
		Poe Springs		on-going		
		McCall Park	interpretative signage			x

DISTRICT 3

Much of District 3 lies within the municipal boundaries of the City of Newberry and it is therefore expected that the City of Newberry will provide access to parks to residents within its municipal boundary with Master Plan recommendations focusing on providing service to park users in unincorporated Alachua County. However, it is recommended that Alachua County work closely with the City of Newberry to ensure the provision of parks for residents within municipal boundaries.

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Proximity & Access	Meet new geographic LOS by: 4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas	New Neighborhood Parks Acquire property and develop with neighborhood park amenities such as play area, sports court, open space, small pavilions and picnic tables, shade trees, off-street parking	New Urban Neighborhood Park (E)	x		
Natural Alachua	Increase access to green spaces and nature-based recreation, such as nature trails by partnering with Conservation Lands to co-locate active park amenities in disturbed areas (when feasible).	GRU Wetlands Park	Work with GRU on Wetlands Park set to open 2024		x	

DISTRICT 4

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow	Enhance existing parks with upgraded facilities and amenities	Copeland Park	New playground	x		
		Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Stormwater plan to address drainage issues	x		
		Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Replace existing restroom	x		
		Holden Pond Park	Add play area	x		
		Lochloosa Park	Restabilize and even out grade	x		
	Establish additional off-leash areas	Hawthorne Dog Park		x		
	Expand offerings of sports courts and fields	New community parks			x	
Proximity & Access	Meet new geographic LOS by: 2. Upgrading existing parks with additional neighborhood or community park amenities	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Add community amenities	x		
		Hawthorne Dog Park	Add neighborhood amenities	x		
	4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas	New Neighborhood Parks Acquire property and develop with neighborhood park amenities such as: play area, sports court, open space, small pavilions and picnic tables, shade trees, off-street parking	New Rural Neighborhood Park (H)			
			New Rural Neighborhood Park (I)			
		New Community Parks Acquire property and develop with community park amenities such as: play area, sports fields/courts, open space, group and small pavilions, restroom building, shade trees, off-street parking	New Rural Community Park (J)			
			New Rural Community Park (K)			

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Proximity & Access	Work closely with Public Works to provide safe, walkable connections, such as marked crosswalks, into all parks to improve driver awareness of pedestrians/cyclists to create a welcoming environment for those choosing active transportation Note: Prioritize parks with existing sidewalk network, provide entry points as sidewalk grids extend and/or with additional trail connections	Squirrel Ridge Park	Pave existing sidewalk connection into park	x		
		Santa Fe Lake	Extend sidewalk along ROW into park	x		
Inclusivity & Safety	Incorporate gathering space into parks, such as pavilions and picnic tables, that promotes social interaction between diverse users, as well as flexible lawn spaces for gathering and events	Hawthorne Dog Park	Add pavilion and picnic tables	x		
	Provide inclusive amenities that go beyond basic handicap accessibility	Earl P. Powers Park	Complete accessible circulation	x		
		Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Enhance sidewalk connectivity		x	
		Santa Fe Lake	Provide sidewalk connection between family area and boat ramp	x		
Natural Alachua	Provide access to lake/water edge amenities for non-boaters including additional piers and boardwalks.	Owens-Illinois	Boardwalk access to water's edge with observation platform	x		
		Holden Pond Park	Replace fishing platform	x		
		Lochloosa	Provide bank grade stabilization and fishing spots	x		
	Provide environmental education wherever possible including pollinator gardens and interpretative signage.	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Pollinator garden, interpretative signage	x		
		Earl P. Powers Park	Interpretative signage	x		
		Holden Pond Park	Interpretative signage	x		
		Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Interpretative signage, nature trail towards bank	x		
		Lochloosa	Interpretative signage	x		
		Melrose Boat Ramp	Interpretative signage	x		

DISTRICT 5

	Implementation Strategy	Location	Projects	short	mid	long
Provide for Today & Plan for Tomorrow	Enhance existing parks with upgraded facilities and amenities	Monteocha Park	New pavilion and playground	x		
	Establish additional off-leash areas	DeSoto Park			x	
Proximity & Access	Meet new geographic LOS by: 3. Expanding existing parks by acquiring adjacent properties and adding new amenities/facilities	Cellon Oak		x	x	
	4. Acquiring and developing new parks in unserved areas	New Neighborhood Parks Acquire property and develop with neighborhood park amenities such as: play area, sports court, open space, small pavilions and picnic tables, shade trees, off-street parking	New Rural Neighborhood Park (B)	x		
Inclusivity & Safety	Incorporate gathering space into parks, such as pavilions and picnic tables, that promotes social interaction between diverse users, as well as flexible lawn spaces for gathering and events	Cellon Oak	Add pavilion		x	
		Lake Alto	Add large group pavilion	x		
		Monteocha Park	Add small pavilions		x	
	Provide inclusive amenities that go beyond basic handicap accessibility	Monteocha Park	Enhance sidewalk connectivity	x		
Natural Alachua	Provide environmental education wherever possible including pollinator gardens and interpretative signage.	Cellon Oak	Pollinator garden, interpretative signage	x		
		Lake Alto	Interpretative signage	x		

2 - HOW DID WE GET HERE?

2.1 EXISTING CONDITIONS

To gain a baseline understanding of the parks & open space system, the project team reviewed the system's existing conditions. Each section provides unique insight into the current state of Alachua County's parks. A review of existing documentation provides a planning context for the Master Plan, including an understanding of previous planning efforts and current goals and programs within the County. The demographics and population analysis helps identify how current demographics may impact the use of parks, along with how future population growth may impact the system. Finally, the analysis of facilities provides a snapshot of current park offerings, conveying a full understanding of existing assets.

With these pieces in place, the service area analysis aims to understand how Park & Open Space is serving the needs of the Alachua County population, based on the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Documentation Review

PREVIOUS ALACHUA COUNTY RECREATION MASTER PLAN

The previous Alachua County Recreation Master Plan was split into two phases. Phase I (2002) provided an inventory and analysis of existing recreation within Alachua County to determine the needs in the community. The analysis included both county and city facilities, and compared existing park acreages by type and population projections to SCORP guidelines to determine acreage needs county-wide, along with needs by planning district. A similar approach determined needs for additional amenities as dictated by Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) guidelines. Additionally, an accessibility level of service metric provided a service area radius for each park type. The community park level of service further divided this accessibility metric to provide a 3-mile service area for urban areas and 6 miles for rural areas. Phase I determined 11 planning districts within Alachua County for the purposes of service delivery.

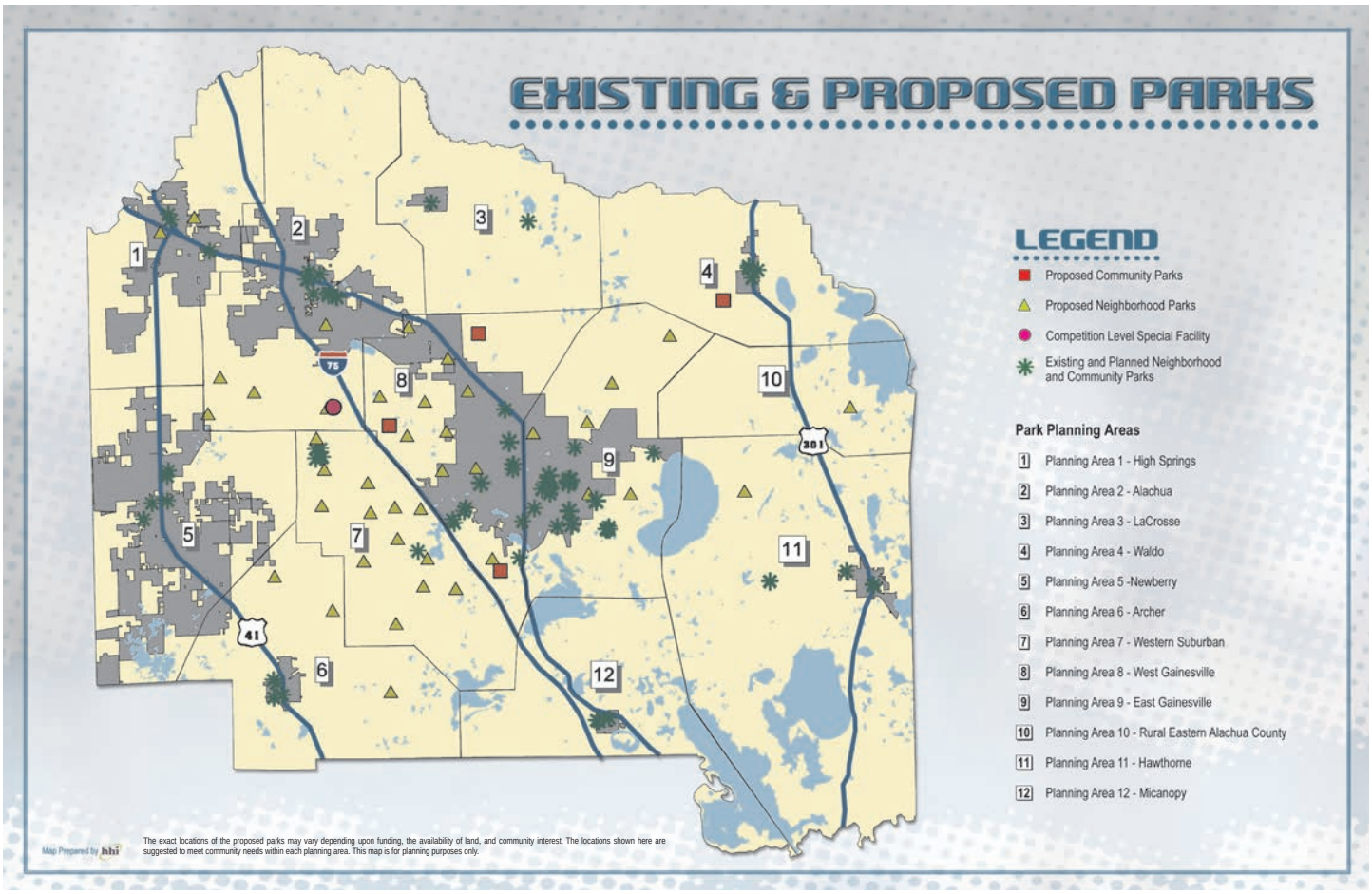
Phase II (2005) focused on building specific recommendations from capital improvements, as well as provided organizational structure recommendations and possible funding sources. Public participation served to verify and expand on park needs determined in Phase I to identify specific community needs and programming desires. Capital improvements projects covered projects at municipal, county, and school district levels to fill recreational gaps throughout the county.

In general, projects identified were prioritized based on the following criteria:

- high local priority
- provide a county-wide benefit
- centrally located
- use existing facilities
- take advantage of partnerships
- serve residents of different ages, abilities, and interests
- promote principles of sustainability
- are cost feasible

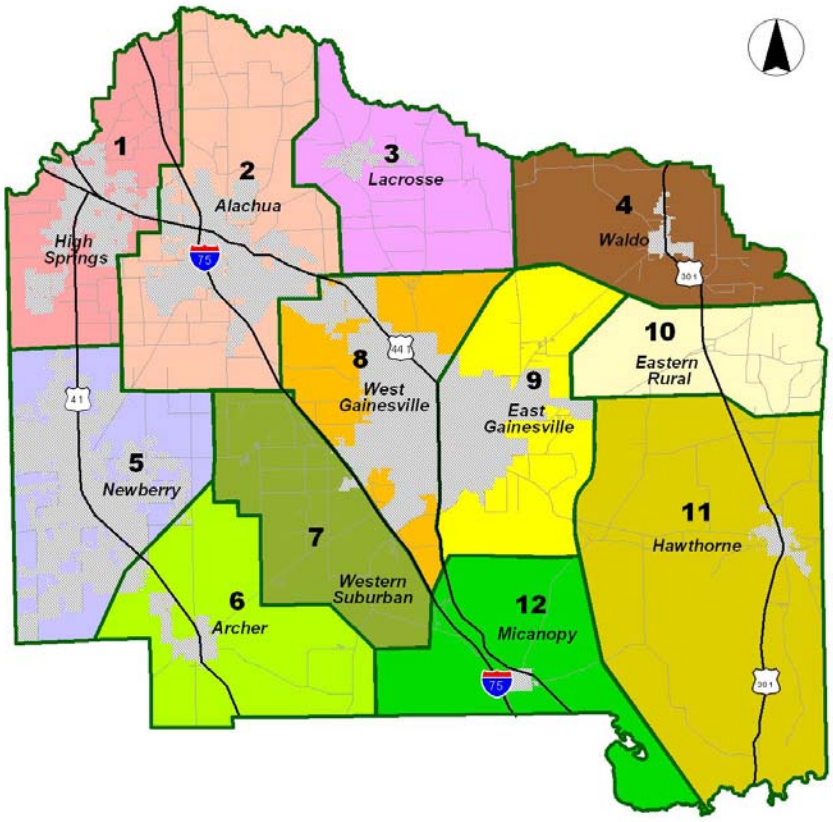
ALACHUA COUNTY RECREATION MASTER PLAN: PHASE I (2002)

Existing & Proposed Parks Map



ALACHUA COUNTY RECREATION MASTER PLAN: PHASE II (2005)

Planning Districts for Program Delivery Recommendations



Additionally, the plan identified the following Top 10 county-wide Recreational Desires:

- Better maintenance and use of existing parks
- Increased awareness of existing recreation opportunities
- More neighborhood and community parks
- Enhanced access to natural areas and interpretive information
- Interconnected system of greenways and trails
- Multi-purpose recreation centers/community buildings
- Public swimming pools
- Athletic practice fields
- Competition tournament facilities
- Skate parks

Phase II provided a 20-year capital improvements master plan, which extended to 2023 and identified the need for just under $147 million in capital projects. These included county, city, and school board projects, with upgrades to existing parks representing 72% of the total capital allocation.

New Parks recommended included:

- 18 Urban Neighborhood Parks
- 18 Suburban Neighborhood Parks
- 3 Community Parks
- 2 Special Facilities

The Program Delivery Recommendations report provided recommendations and a capital improvements master plan applicable for each of the 11 planning districts developed during Phase I of the Master Plan.

Phase II (2005) focused on building specific recommendations for capital improvements, while providing organizational structure recommendations and possible funding sources. A public involvement effort served to verify and expand on the park needs determined in Phase I by identifying specific community needs and programming desires. Capital improvements projects covered the municipality, county, and school district levels to fill recreational gaps throughout the county.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2040

The Alachua County Comprehensive Plan defines goals, objectives, and policies for the future growth of the county. The included Recreation Element provides the primary framework for the development and maintenance of the Alachua County parks system, while other elements, such as Future Land Use, Conservation and Open Space, and Public School Facilities interlink goals supporting the vision for the County. Alachua County partners with municipalities to provide activity-based recreation, while resource-based recreation is provided by the County through the Alachua County Forever program. The State Park system provides additional resource-based recreation independent of the Comprehensive Plan.

MINIMUM LEVEL OF SERVICE

The Recreation Element establishes a Level of Service (LOS) for parks to provide a minimum park acreage per 1,000 residents of unincorporated Alachua County. Additionally, LOS measurements respond to changes in the unincorporated population due to annexation. Essentially, this policy assumes that municipalities within Alachua County will provide service to their residents, while Alachua County will meet the needs of residents in unincorporated areas.

Measurement of LOS metrics includes County-funded or developed facilities operated by other jurisdictions, as well as facilities provided by other entities for which Alachua County has cooperative use agreements. Below is a breakdown of minimum LOS standards for recreation, as determined by policy 1.1.2.

Park Type	Minimum Improved Acreage Required per 1,000 Persons in Unincorporated Alachua County
Activity-Based	0.5
Resource-Based	5.0

According to the information obtained via Geographic Information System (GIS), Alachua County currently maintains 95 acres of activity-based park land and 611 acres of resource-based park land. Based on a 2035 unincorporated population estimate of 127,471 persons, Alachua County will have a surplus of 31 acres of activity-based park land, and will need 24 acres of resource-based park land to meet their LOS standards.

Year	Unincorporated Alachua Co. Pop. Est.	Existing Activity-Based Acres	Acres Needed	Surplus/ Deficiency Acres
2022	112,471	95	56	39
2027	116,036	95	58	37
2035	127,020	95	64	31

Year	Unincorporated Alachua Co. Pop. Est.	Existing Resource-Based Acres	Acres Needed	Surplus/ Deficiency Acres
2022	112,471	611	562	49
2027	116,036	611	580	31
2035	127,020	611	635	-24

PARK CLASSIFICATION

Park type classifications provide a service delivery model for various types of recreation needs. A comparative review generates an understanding of how Alachua County compares with other jurisdictions in its definition of park types and distributions.

In this review, Alachua County park types and definitions, as defined in the Recreation Element of the Comprehensive Plan, have been compared to the those of the City of Gainesville and neighboring Marion and Clay Counties. Additionally, Lake County serves as a comparison point—as Lake County similarly includes urban, suburban, and rural areas as well as encompasses several incorporated municipalities of various scales.

COMPARATIVE REVIEW SUMMARY

Generally, Alachua County's definitions are comparable to those used in other jurisdictions. Major differences are summarized below. A complete breakdown of the park type classification and definition comparison is detailed in the attached Park Type Classification Comparative Matrix.

Tot Lots

Alachua County includes a Tot Lot park classification that allows for the accommodation of play structures in conditions where land may not be readily available. In other municipalities, this park type may be called a Neighborhood Park.

Pocket Parks

The Pocket Park designation provides a classification for unique opportunities in high-density areas. This classification is also present in the City of Gainesville and Lake County as a "Mini Park."

Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks provide a catch-all classification for park types of varying sizes and county-wide service areas. Special Use Parks can be classified generally or more specifically as activity-based or resource-based parks. A general classification can be seen in Lake County (Special Facility), City of Gainesville (Special Use Parks), and Marion County (Memorial Parks).

Alachua County does not include a general catch-all category, but rather includes two separate special use park classifications—Special Use Activity Park and Special Use Resource Park. The separation of these provides a distinction between activity-based parks that are driven by demand and resource-based parks driven by availability. The City of Gainesville is the only other jurisdiction to have a specific activity-based park type: Sports Complex. Resource-based parks are defined in other jurisdictions under different monikers: the City of Gainesville uses "Local Nature Parks"; Marion County uses "Specialty Park", as well as a more specific "Water Access"; and Clay County calls out "Boat Ramps." Acreages within these definitions vary.

Classifications Not Found in Alachua County

Notably missing from Alachua County's park type classifications is a "Regional Parks" classification, which typically describes resource-based parks with service areas extending beyond county boundaries. Note that, if included within parks analysis, Alachua County's nature preserves would meet this definition.

Additionally, a trail system category is present in both City of Gainesville (Linear Corridors) and Marion County (Greenways). Lake County includes an additional county-wide resource-based park classification, known as "District Parks", which serves as a catch-all category for large parks over 75 acres that do not reach a regional scale service area. Based on the assets currently held by Alachua County, neither of these categories are applicable.

Acreage Guidelines

Acreages allotted generally align with definitions in other jurisdictions included within this comparative review, particularly when considering the Tot Lot category, which may be classified as a Neighborhood Park in other municipalities. Special Use Park acreages vary across jurisdictions as they are dependent on the specific resources of each park system. However, the acreages provided by the definitions in Alachua County for its Special Use Parks are appropriate based on the use case.

Service Area Guidelines

A unique condition for Alachua County is its wide variety of densities that make urban, suburban, and rural communities difficult to define in a standard manner. For example, the density and lifestyle in the City of Gainesville is different from that found in the City of High Springs; however, each of these is very different from a rural community like Cross Creek. This is captured in the current service area definition for Community Parks, such that a park located within an "urban" area can range in service from ½ mile to 3 miles, and "rural" service areas extend as far as 6 miles. While density is somewhat addressed through the capacity metrics dictating average maximum population and acreage per population, this does not address the geographic distribution of these parks. A more robust service area definition for each of these park types is needed to best serve each of these unique communities.

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PARK TYPE CLASSIFICATION COMPARATIVE MATRIX

	Acres	Service Area	Mode of Transportation
Tot Lot			
Alachua County	1 acre	1/4 mi. residential avg. pop. 2,500 max. 0.5 acre/1,000 pop.	
Lake County	-	-	-
City of Gainesville	-	-	-
Marion County	-	-	-
Clay County	-	-	-
Pocket Park			
Alachua County	<5 acres	1/4 mi. Typ. high density	
Lake County: Mini Park Note: classification to be phased out	<5 acres	1/4 mi. 0.5 acre/1,000 pop.	Low volume streets and trails
City of Gainesville: Mini Park	1/4-5 acres	1/4 mi. Typ. high density	
Marion County			
Clay County			
Neighborhood Parks			
Alachua County	5+ acres	1/4 - 1/2 mi. in neighborhood area; avg. pop. 5,000 max; 2 acres/1,000 pop.	
Lake County Note: classification to be phased out	5-19 acres typ. 10 acres	1/4-1/2 mi. in neighborhood area; 2 acres/1,000 pop.	Walking, bike riding, or short drive by car
City of Gainesville	5-20 acres typ. May be smaller	1/2 mi.	Walk or bike
Marion County	1-10 acres typ. 5-10ac	1/4 - 1/2 mi.	
Clay County	1/2 -10 acres	5 mi.	

Data Source

Alachua County: Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2019-2040 - Recreation Element
Lake County: Lake County Comprehensive Plan 2030 - Parks and Recreation Element
City of Gainesville: City of Gainesville Parks Comprehensive Plan - Recreation Element
Marion County: Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2016
Clay County: Clay County 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space

Programming	Amenities
	Examples: play structures, benches, picnic areas, open spaces, landscaping
-	
-	
-	
-	
Unique opportunity, generally no active recreation	Examples: walks, benches, gardens, etc.
Unique opportunity; located in high density areas including downtown	
	Examples: benches, child play areas, shade trees, picnic facilities
Balance of resource and activity-based	Examples: play structures, recreation buildings, court games, hard courts, tennis courts, internal trails, shuffleboard, volleyball courts, picnic areas, open areas, landscaping
Balance of resource and activity-based	Casual play with very little programming Examples: playgrounds, multi-purpose courts/fields, tennis courts, landscape areas, benches, recreation buildings, picnic areas and walkways
	Examples: tennis courts, racquetball courts, shade trees, picnic facilities, child play areas, limited soccer and baseball fields Facilities under 5 acres must include 2 of the following: basketball courts, tennis courts, racquetball courts, softball/baseball fields, gymnasium or recreation center, and soccer fields.
Informal active and passive recreation	

PARK TYPE CLASSIFICATION COMPARATIVE MATRIX (CONT.)

	Acres	Service Area	Mode of Transportation
Community Parks			
Alachua County	20+ acres	Urban: 1/2-3 mi. Rural: up to 6 mi.; avg. pop. 5,000 max; 2 acres/1,000 pop.	
Lake County	20-50 acres	Urban: 3 mi. Rural: 6 mi.; 5 acres/1,000 pop.w	walking, biking, but most often by car
City of Gainesville	20-100 acres	1.5 mi.	pedestrians, bicycles, autos, and buses
Marion County	20-75+ acres typ. 30-50 acres	County-wide	
Clay County	5-40 acres	10 mi.	
Special-Use Parks: General			
Alachua County			
Lake County: Special Facility	varies	County; acres/1,000 pop. not applicable; located based on the center of activity where pop. demands it	car, bikeways or trails
City of Gainesville: Special Use Parks	N/A	N/A	
Marion County: Memorial Park	<1 acre	1/4 mi.	
Clay County			

Data Source

Alachua County: Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2019-2040 - Recreation Element
Lake County: Lake County Comprehensive Plan 2030 - Parks and Recreation Element
City of Gainesville: City of Gainesville Parks Comprehensive Plan - Recreation Element
Marion County: Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2016
Clay County: Clay County 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space

Programming	Amenities
Primarily activity-based	Examples: athletic fields, swimming pools, multipurpose fields, recreation centers, picnic areas, open space areas
Primarily activity-based but can be resource-based as well	Examples: athletic fields, swimming pools, multipurpose fields, recreation centers; natural areas provide: biking, fitness, picnicking, and open space activities; other community services may be located within community park
Intensive-use, activity-based	Include a wide range and large concentration of facilities: lighted tennis courts, racquetball courts, soccer and baseball fields, a swimming pool, off-street parking, playgrounds, and picnic facilities. Parks between 10-20 acres can be classified as a community park if at least two different types of the following facilities are provided: baseball/softball fields, swimming pool, gymnasium, recreation center, and/or soccer or football fields.
Balance of resource- and activity-based	
May be resource-based or activity-based	resource-based: picnicking, boating, swimming, hiking, camping, and play areas; activity-based: equestrian center, golf course, senior center, or museum
	Provide unique or unusual facilities for specialized recreational users
	Pocket park, memorial, or special use park that serves a limited area or provides a unique recreation opportunity

PARK TYPE CLASSIFICATION COMPARATIVE MATRIX (CONT.)

	Acres	Service Area	Mode of Transportation
Special-Use Parks: Activity-Based Park			
Alachua County: Special Use Activity Park	20+ acres	county-wide	
Lake County			
City of Gainesville: Sports Complex	15-100 acres	urban area-wide	bicycles, auto, buses
Marion County			
Clay County			
Special-Use Parks: Resource-Based Park			
Alachua County: Special Use Resource Park	varies	county-wide	
Lake County			
City of Gainesville: Local Nature Parks	<100 acres	urban area-wide	
Marion County: Specialty Park	dependent on resource	statewide – 2 hr. drive	
Marion County: Water Access	2-15 acres typ. 5-10 acres	3 mi. – dependent on resource avail.	
Clay County: Boat Ramps			
District Parks			

Data Source

Alachua County: Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2019-2040 - Recreation Element
Lake County: Lake County Comprehensive Plan 2030 - Parks and Recreation Element
City of Gainesville: City of Gainesville Parks Comprehensive Plan - Recreation Element
Marion County: Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2016
Clay County: Clay County 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space

Programming	Amenities
activity-based	may include a single purpose or activity, such as soccer complex, golf course, senior center, etc.
	"intensive-use" recreation areas that provide a concentration of facilities for leagues and tournaments; one or more of the following facilities are necessary but not necessarily sufficient to classify a site as a "sports complex": (1) at least four adult-size or youth-size baseball/softball fields; (2) at least six regulation-size soccer fields; (3) a professional or semi-professional sports stadium; (4) a combination of at least one gymnasium, four tennis courts, and four racquetball courts; and/or (5) a region-serving water theme park
resource-based	natural resources, such as lakes and rivers, or cultural resources, such as museums, historical, sites, etc. Include picnic areas, boating, swimming, hiking, camping and play areas
resource-based	includes trails, benches, picnic facilities, boardwalks, and exhibits
resource-based	canoe/kayak/tube launch, historically significant facilities
	boat ramp facility with associated picnic facilities, etc.
	boat ramps

PARK TYPE CLASSIFICATION COMPARATIVE MATRIX (CONT.)

	Acres	Service Area	Mode of Transportation
Alachua County	-	-	-
Lake County	75+ acres	county-wide; 30-40 min. driving time; 5 acres/1,000 pop.	
City of Gainesville	-	-	-
Marion County			
Clay County			
Regional Parks			
Alachua County	-	-	-
Lake County	250+ acres	multi-county; up to 60 min. drive; 20 acres/1,000 pop;	car, bikeways, or trails
City of Gainesville	30+ acres	10 mi.	
Marion County	200+ acres	regionally - 1 hr. drive	
Clay County	150+ acres	1 hr. drive	
Trail Systems			
Alachua County			
Lake County			
City of Gainesville: Linear Corridors	trail based		bicyclists, hikers, horseback riders, canoeists, and joggers
Marion County: Greenway	trail based	dependent on size of trail network	
Clay County			

Data Source

Alachua County: Alachua County Comprehensive Plan 2019-2040 - Recreation Element
Lake County: Lake County Comprehensive Plan 2030 - Parks and Recreation Element
City of Gainesville: City of Gainesville Parks Comprehensive Plan - Recreation Element
Marion County: Marion County Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2016
Clay County: Clay County 2040 Comprehensive Plan - Recreation and Open Space

Programming	Amenities
-	-
resource-based	natural-resource: picnicking, boating, swimming, hiking, camping, and play areas; can be activity-based in outlying areas of the county
-	-
-	-
resource-based	camping, equestrian activities, canoeing, boating, fishing
	outdoor amphitheaters, skate parks, hiking/nature trails, public golf course, cone/kayak, nature/environmental centers, track and field facility, fishing piers, gyms, racquetball courts, disc golf course
resource-based	campgrounds, hiking, trails, playgrounds, boating facilities, lodging, recreation rentals, etc.
resource-based	
	trailhead to larger network of linear parks and trails, environmental education

CURRENT PARK TYPE APPLICATION

While this comparative review looks at the definitions set forth in Alachua County's Comprehensive Plan, there is a discrepancy between the definitions and the actual classifications used within the Parks & Open Space System. Parks within the system are currently classified by the Parks & Open Space System as follows:

PARKS & OPEN SPACE SYSTEM CLASSIFICATIONS

Park Name	Acres	Classification
Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)	-	-
High Springs Boat Ramp	0.25	-
Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)	17.24	Community
Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)	33.95	Community
Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)	10.99	Community
Scott-Phifer House	2.8	Historic
Cellon Oak	5.69	Nature
Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)	453.37	Nature
McCall (Undeveloped)	78.42	Nature
Copeland	5	Neighborhood
Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	27	Neighborhood
DeSoto Park	0.63	Neighborhood
Grove	4.32	Neighborhood
Mark S. Hopkins Park	0.26	Neighborhood
Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)	18	Neighborhood
Monteocha	5	Neighborhood
Poe Springs	202.47	Regional Resource
Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	224.69	Special Use Resource
Earl P. Powers	12.47	Special Use Resource
Holden Pond	5	Special Use Resource
Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	62	Special Use Resource
Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	12	Special Use Resource
Lake Alto	22.33	Special Use Resource
Lochloosa	1.24	Special Use Resource
Melrose Boat Ramp	0.25	Special Use Resource
Owens-Illinois	21.57	Special Use Resource
Rotary Park at Jonesville	87	Special Use Resource
Santa Fe Lake	24.98	Special Use Resource
Watermelon Pond	12	Special Use Resource

The definitions currently used do not match those defined in the Comprehensive Plan. Additional categories have been added to best fit the assets within Alachua County, such as Historic, Nature, and Regional Resource. Additionally, the categories of Tot Lot, Pocket Park, and Special Use Activity Park are not currently used.
It is recommended that park type classifications be revised in the Comprehensive Plan to more accurately reflect the current and future needs of the park system. Categories will be defined through the visioning process, and recommended nomenclature for continuity between both plans will be proposed.

FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

The Future Land Use Element provides for the orderly and efficient use of land within Alachua County. With such varied densities and urban typologies as those present within Alachua County, the Element provides definitions that may be key in developing park service delivery models, as well as guidance on where to locate park facilities to best serve the community. In particular, the Future Land Use Element provides definitions for both urban and rural clusters.

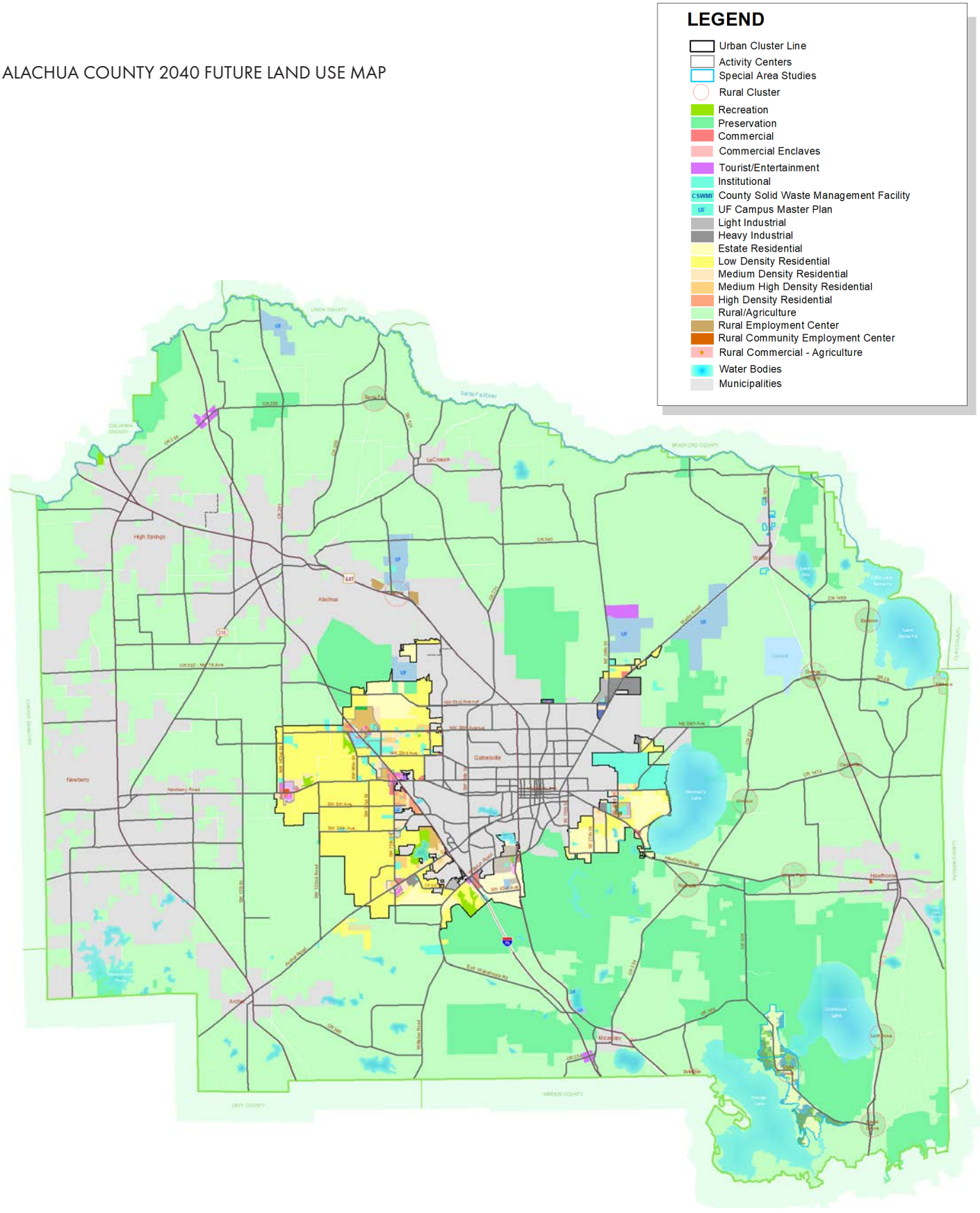
URBAN CLUSTERS

Areas designated for urban development on the Future Land Use Map are Urban Clusters. These areas include residential densities ranging from 1 unit per acre to 24 units per acre or greater, non-residential development. They are generally served by urban services.

RURAL CLUSTERS

Historic rural settlements outside of the urban cluster are called Rural Clusters. These areas, which generally lack public services and facilities identified as necessary for more intense urban development, serve as a focus for an existing rural community. Policies and related development regulations for Rural Clusters preserve their existing rural character, ensure compatibility with the surrounding Rural/Agriculture areas, and protect the historic and natural resources that make these communities unique.

ALACHUA COUNTY 2040 FUTURE LAND USE MAP



INFRASTRUCTURE SURTAX

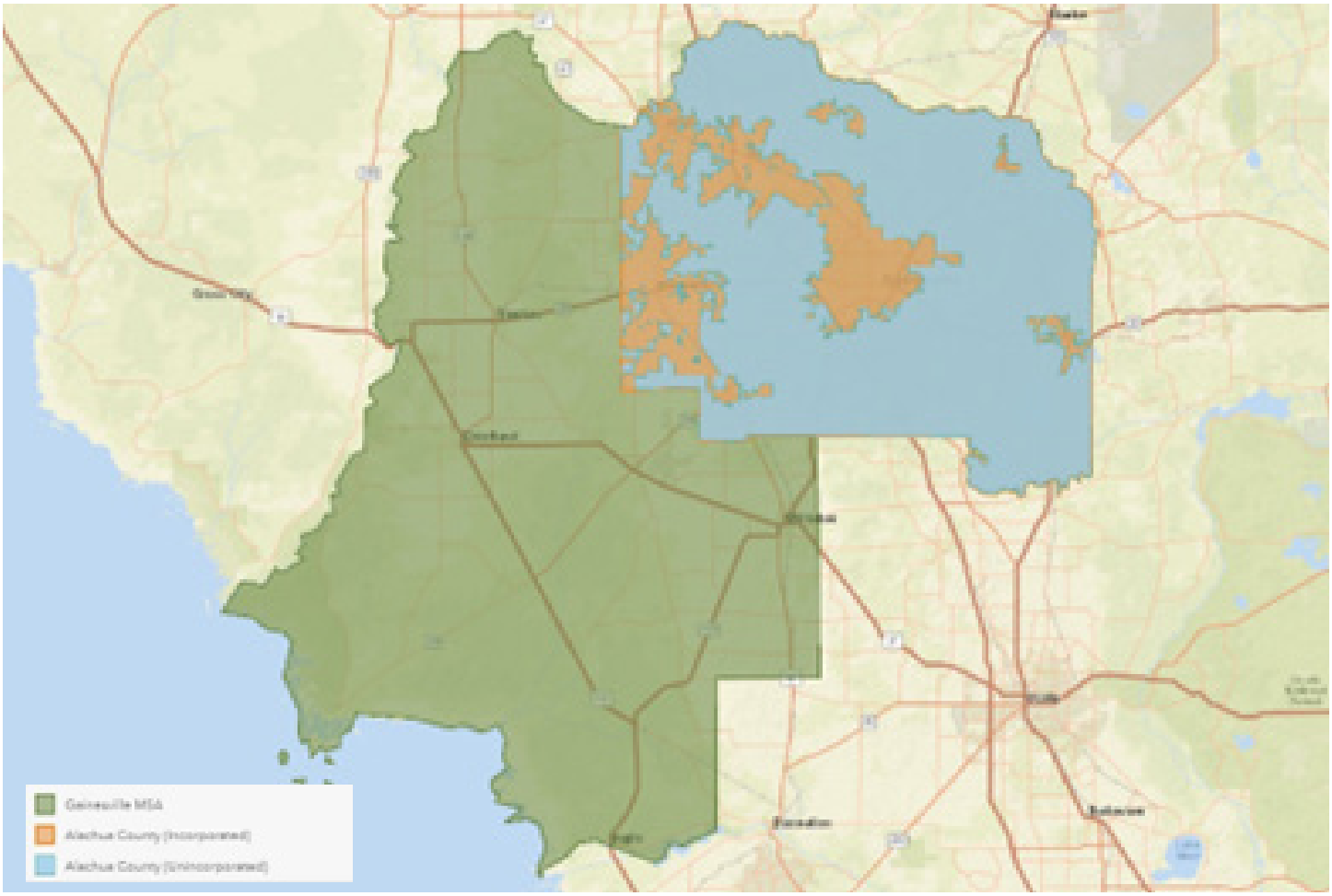
Alachua County has benefited from the passage of an infrastructure surtax in 2008, 2016, and 2022. The current surtax is a 10-year, one percent, sales tax. One half is dedicated to acquire and improve conservation lands as well as improve and maintain parks and recreational facilities within Alachua County. The current iteration is to be collected in Alachua County from January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2032. As described in the surtax ordinance, the funds approved through the referendum are to be expended on either Wild Spaces, through the acquisition of water and land resources deemed high-priority projects through the Alachua County Forever (ACF) Program; or Public Places, through the creation of new public recreation locations as well as the improvement and operation of parks and facilities.

The Infrastructure Surtax Oversight Board oversees expenditures. The Board consists of seven members and three alternate members representing Alachua County, the City of Gainesville, and other incorporated cities within Alachua County. In general, most funds allocated to the incorporated cities are utilized to fund park improvements and new parks, while conservation land acquisitions and improvements are generally carried out by the County.

Demographics & Population

When evaluating demographics, it is beneficial to look at both Alachua County and its surrounding Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) to understand the role that the County plays in the overall area. An MSA is formally defined as "a region consisting of a city or county and surrounding communities linked by social and economic factors established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB). " Therefore, the demographic profile for the Gainesville MSA—which covers all of Alachua County, Gilchrist County, and Levy County—is provided in addition to the area of interest, Alachua County.

Demographic study areas



According to 2022 estimates, unincorporated Alachua County has a population of 112,471, which accounts for roughly 40% of Alachua County's total population, including both unincorporated and incorporated populations. About 82% of the County's total population makes up the greater MSA. Historically, Alachua County represented roughly the same proportion of the MSA's total population; this trend is estimated to continue through 2027, as Alachua County and the MSA see a consistent increase in population.

The proportion of each age group in unincorporated Alachua County is consistent starting in the infant years to late adult years, but decreases in the elderly years. In Alachua County and the MSA, the highest percentage of the population falls into the 20-24 age groups for both areas, followed by the 25-29 and 15-19 age groups. The highest population percentages are estimated to remain in these cohorts, with less than a 1% change estimated for all age groups.

The total number of households within unincorporated Alachua County is estimated to grow approximately 3.3% through 2027 to 47,041. Like population, the total households within unincorporated Alachua County represent roughly 40% of the total households within the total County, and 81% of the County's total population makes up the greater MSA. These proportions are estimated to remain consistent through the 2027 projection period.

As of 2022, unincorporated Alachua County has a median household income of $78,120, which is projected to increase to $96,707 by 2027. This median household income is 27% higher than Alachua County and 31% higher than the MSA. This median household income is estimated to remain consistently higher through 2027.

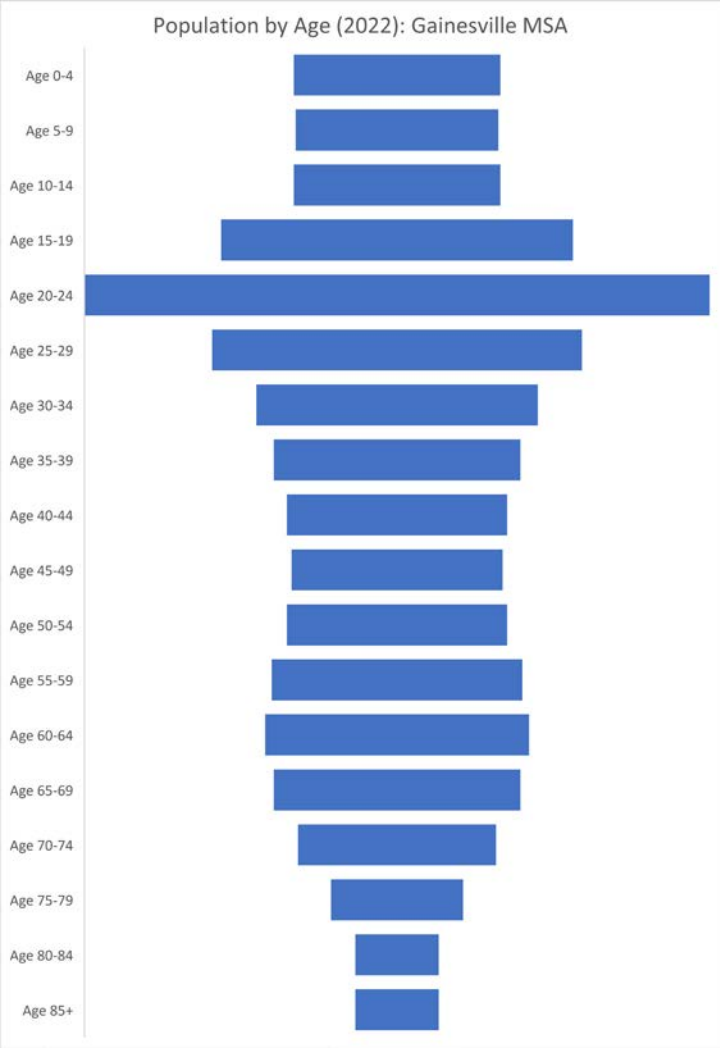
With varying incomes, unincorporated Alachua County residents have a higher spending per capita compared to the total County and MSA, with the highest spending on recreation and health membership fees, recreational lessons fees, and participant sports fees. Individuals invest most in camping equipment, water sports equipment, boat/trailer/camper/RV rentals.

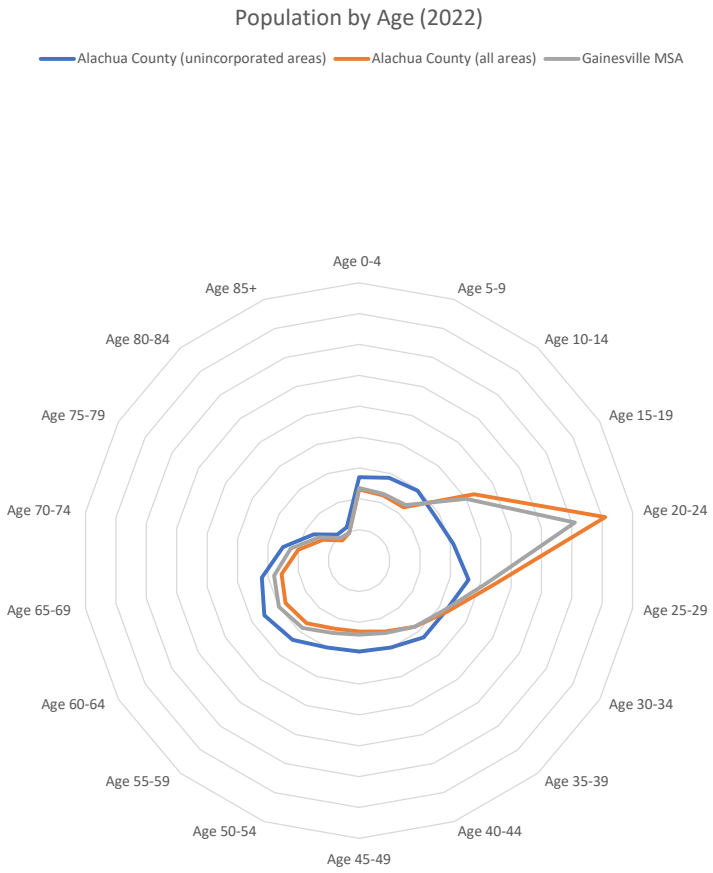
Summary Table	Unincorporated Alachua County	Alachua County	Gainesville MSA
Population (2022)	112,471	283,842	345,161
Population (2027)	116,036	289,148	351,724
Population (2035)	127,020	300,303	-
Population by Age (2022)			
Age 0-4	5.4%	4.6%	4.7%
Age 5-9	5.7%	4.5%	4.6%
Age 10-14	5.9%	4.5%	4.7%
Age 15-19	5.7%	8.6%	8.0%
Age 20-24	6.2%	16.2%	14.2%
Age 25-29	7.2%	8.9%	8.4%
Age 30-34	6.5%	6.6%	6.4%
Age 35-39	6.5%	5.6%	5.6%
Age 40-44	6.0%	4.9%	5.0%
Age 45-49	5.9%	4.6%	4.8%
Age 50-54	6.0%	4.7%	5.0%
Age 55-59	6.7%	5.3%	5.7%
Age 60-64	7.1%	5.5%	6.0%
Age 65-69	6.4%	5.1%	5.6%
Age 70-74	5.0%	4.0%	4.5%
Age 75-79	3.4%	2.7%	3.0%
Age 80-84	2.2%	1.7%	1.9%
Age 85+	2.3%	1.9%	1.9%
Number of Households (2022)	45,519	115,079	139,659
Number of Households (2027)	47,041	117,428	142,605
Median Household Income (2022)	$78,120	$56,478	$53,691
Median Household Income (2027)	$96,707	$70,737	$65,682
Average Household Income (2022)	$112,997	$87,432	$82,800
Average Household Income (2027)	$133,799	$105,129	$99,462
Average Fees for Participant Sports (per capita annually)	$143	$103	$97
Average Fees for Recreational Lessons (per capita annually)	$166	$117	$108
Average Membership Fees for Recreation and Health Clubs (per capita annually)	$307	$234	$217

Charts of ALACHUA COUNTY Population Distribution by Age

Data Source

ArcGIS Business Analyst, *Source: UF Shimberg


Population by Age (2022): Gainesville MSA
Age 0-4
Age 5-9
Age 10-14
Age 15-19
Age 20-24
Age 25-29
Age 30-34
Age 35-39
Age 40-44
Age 45-49
Age 50-54
Age 55-59
Age 60-64
Age 65-69
Age 70-74
Age 75-79
Age 80-84
Age 85+


Population by Age (2022)
Alachua County (unincorporated areas)
Alachua County (all areas)
Gainesville MSA
Age 0-4
Age 5-9
Age 10-14
Age 15-19
Age 20-24
Age 25-29
Age 30-34
Age 35-39
Age 40-44
Age 45-49
Age 50-54
Age 55-59
Age 60-64
Age 65-69
Age 70-74
Age 75-79
Age 80-84
Age 85+

Other Service Providers

Alachua County comprises 192 parks, including 25 state parks, 110 municipal parks, 47 school parks, 10 nonprofit parks, and a number of privately owned facilities.

Alachua
The City of Alachua is home to 6 parks: 4 neighborhood parks, 1 community rural park, and 1 community park. Facilities include play fields, picnic facilities, a community center, and supplemental facilities. The total park acreage in the City of Alachua is 31.26 ac.

Archer
The City of Archer is home to 6 parks: 3 neighborhood parks, 1 community rural park, and 2 pocket parks. Facilities include play fields, and supplemental facilities. The total park acreage in the City of Archer is 21.97 ac.

Gainesville
The City of Gainesville is home to 54 parks: 11 neighborhood parks, 4 community rural parks, 6 community urban parks, 21 pocket parks, and 12 special facilities. Facilities include play fields, picnic facilities, playgrounds, gym/ center, trails, and supplemental facilities. The total park acreage in the City of Gainesville is 8,740.77 ac.

Hawthorne
The City of Hawthorne is home to 2 parks: 1 community rural park and 1 neighborhood park. Facilities include play fields, supplemental facilities, and a boat ramp. The total park acreage in the City of Hawthorne is 34 ac.

High Springs
The City of High Springs is home to 6 parks: 3 community rural parks and 3 pocket parks. Facilities include play fields, playgrounds, supplemental facilities, and trails. The total park acreage in the City of High Springs is 31.74 ac.

LaCrosse
The Town of LaCrosse is home to 1 neighborhood park, which include soccer fields. The total park acreage in the Town of LaCrosse is 5.08 ac.

Micanopy
The Town of Micanopy is home to 2 parks: 1 community rural park and 1neighborhood park. Facilities include play fields, playgrounds, and picnic facilities. The total park acreage in the Town of Micanopy is 9.57 ac.

Newberry
The City of Newberry is home to 4 parks: 3 neighborhood parks and 1special facilities park. Facilities include play fields, supplemental facilities, playgrounds, and picnic facilities. The total park acreage in the City of Newberry is 50.39ac.

Waldo
The City of Waldo is home to 3 parks: 2 neighborhood parks and 1 special facilities park. Facilities include play fields, picnic facilities, a community center, trails, and supplemental facilities. The total park acreage in the City of Waldo is 15.21 ac.

Alachua County
Alachua County is home to 29 county parks: 16 special facilities parks, 7 neighborhood parks, 3 nature parks, 2 community urban parks, and 1 community rural park. Facilities include play fields, picnic facilities, playgrounds, trails, and numerous supplemental facilities. The total county park acreage in the Alachua County is 1,388.19 ac.

School Board
The Alachua County School Board is home to 47 school parks. Facilities include play fields, playgrounds, trails, gymnasiums, and supplemental facilities in a range of conditions from excellent to good. The total school park acreage owned by the Alachua County School Board is 1,092.07 ac.

Improvements being made at Lake Forest Elementary School, including shade structures, swings, and trail/sidewalk improvements, will allow amenities at the school to be accessed by the public after-hours.

State
Alachua County is home to 25 state parks, preserve and historic sites including 9 special facilities, 8 regional parks, 2 district parks, and 6 neighborhood parks. Facilities include trails, a gym/center and a number of special facilities. The total state park, preserve and historic sites acreage in Alachua County is 60,148.22 ac.

Non-Profit
Alachua County is home to 10 non-profit parks. Facilities include play fields, playgrounds, pools and a number of supplemental facilities. The total non-profit park acreage in Alachua County is 280.78 ac.

Private Ownership
Alachua County also includes a number of privately owned parks, including the facilities at the University of Florida, Santa Fe Community College, private senior citizen communities, and other private owners. Additionally, Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) currently owns and maintains recreation land adjacent Veterans Memorial Park, and will develop a groundwater recharge wetland for public recreation use in the future.

Parks under private ownership have been excluded from this table.

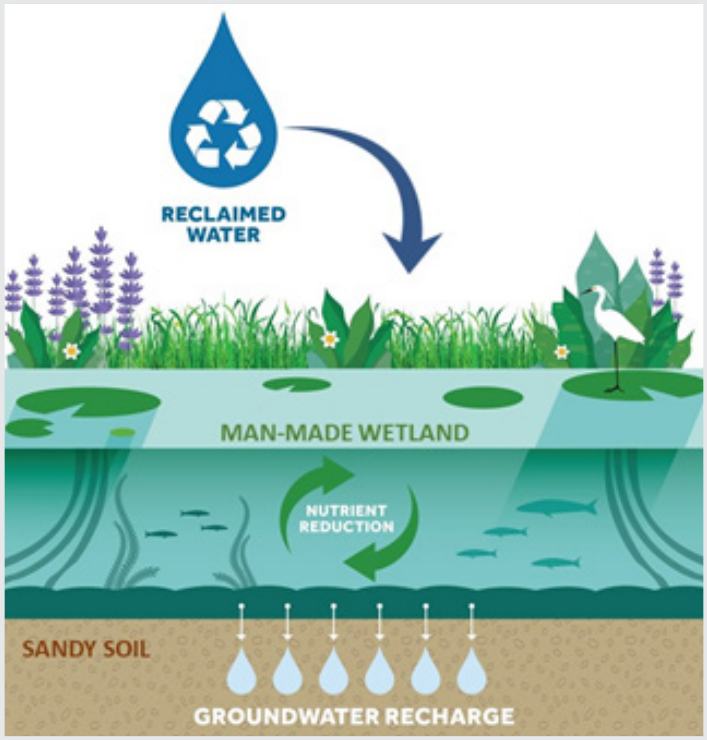
Park Owner	No. of Parks	Total Acreage of Parks
Alachua	6	31.26 ac
Archer	6	21.97 ac
Gainesville	54	8,740.77 ac
Hawthorne	2	34.00ac
High Springs	6	31.74 ac
LaCrosse	1	5.08 ac
Micanopy	2	9.57 ac
Newberry	4	50.39 ac
Waldo	3	15.21 ac
County	26	1,388.19 ac
School Board	47	1,092.07 ac
State	25	60,148.22 ac
Non-Profit	10	280.78 ac
Total	192	71,849.25 ac

FUTURE PARK: GRU GROUNDWATER RECHARGE WETLAND

Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) is constructing a groundwater recharge wetland in partnership with the Suwanee River Water Management District (SRWMD) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). The project is located north of the Diamond Sports Park and encompasses approximately 75 acres. The park will consist of a series of shallow basins that will filter the water and reduce nutrient loads while recharging the aquifer.

The constructed wetlands will be open to the public and include passive recreation opportunities like walking, jogging, wildlife viewing, photography, and environmental education.

Construction will occur in phases, with the first phase to be completed in 2026.



Source: GRU.com

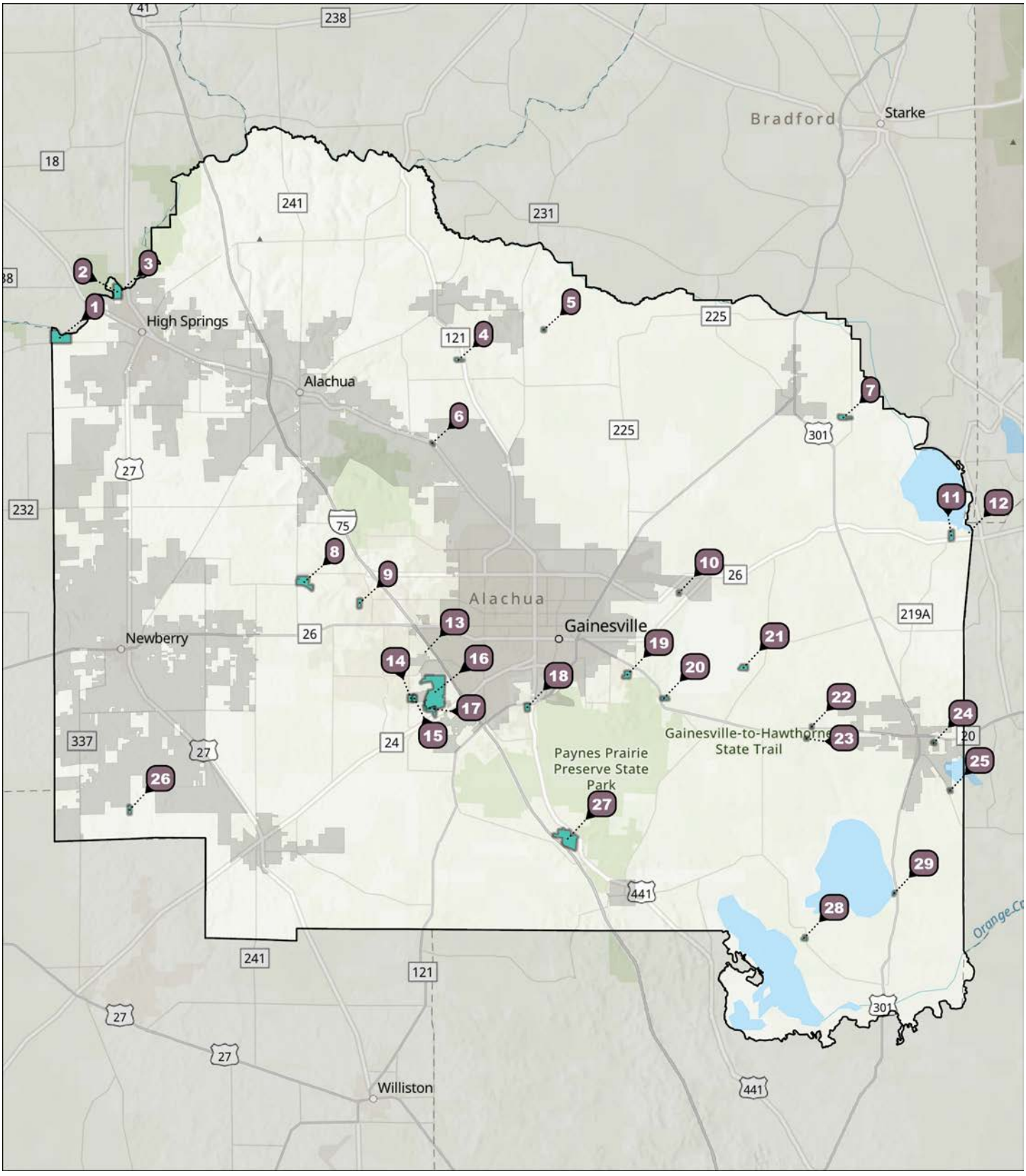
Source: GRU.com

Analysis of Facilities

Alachua County Parks & Open Space manages a total of 29 park properties of which 4 are currently undeveloped and inaccessible to the public. Combining park inventories collected by the County and in-person site visits, the project team gained a baseline understanding of where the parks system stands today. The following is a summary of the parks currently within the system. Undeveloped parks have been excluded from the analysis of facilities.

ID	Park Name	Acres	Classification
1	Poe Springs	202.47	Regional Resource
2	*McCall (Undeveloped)*	*78.42*	*Nature*
3	High Springs Boat Ramp	0.25	-
4	Cellon Oak	5.69	Nature
5	Monteocha	5.00	Neighborhood
6	DeSoto Park	0.63	Neighborhood
7	Lake Alto	22.33	Special Use Resource
8	Rotary Park at Jonesville	87.00	Special Use Resource
9	*Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)*	*18.00*	*Neighborhood*
10	Copeland	5.00	Neighborhood
11	Santa Fe Lake	24.98	Special Use Resource
12	Melrose Boat Ramp	0.25	Special Use Resource
13	Mark S. Hopkins Park	0.26	Pocket Park
14	Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)	33.95	Community
15	Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)	10.99	Community
16	*Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)*	*453.37*	*Nature*
17	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	62.00	Special Use Resource
18	Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)	17.24	Community
19	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	27.00	Neighborhood
20	Earl P. Powers	12.47	Special Use Resource
21	Owens-Illinois	21.57	Special Use Resource
22	Scott-Phifer House	2.80	Historic
23	Grove	4.32	Neighborhood
24	*Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)*	-	-
25	Holden Pond	5.00	Special Use Resource
26	Watermelon Pond	12.00	Special Use Resource
27	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	211	Special Use Resource
28	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	12.00	Special Use Resource
29	Lochloosa	1.24	Special Use Resource

Map of Alachua County Parks



CELLON OAK PARK

Cellon Oak Park is a small passive park located in the northern Alachua County. It is home to the Florida Co-Champion Live Oak, with a canopy spread of 160 feet. The park and tree are named after its former owner, Ralph W. Cellon. The site offers picturesque views suitable for weddings and family pictures, as well as two picnic tables, grill, and a small parking area. Future development is limited by the need to protect this unique tree's root system and prevent soil compaction.

Location	410 NW 169th Pl Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Nature
Acreage	5.69

Photo courtesy of floridahikes.com

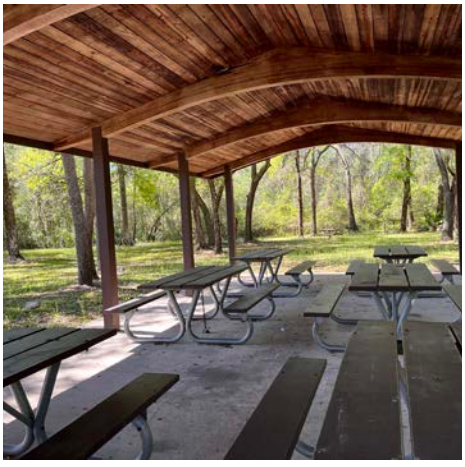
Photo courtesy of monumentaltrees.com

COPELAND PARK

Copeland Park is located east of the Gainesville Regional Airport and serves the Coco Plum neighborhood and surrounding areas. Upon arrival, there is a small parking lot with an adjacent playground that is functional but in need of updating. An ADA-accessible path leads from the parking lot to the restroom building along the edge of a baseball field, which needs additional maintenance. Past the restrooms, there is a small picnic area and a basketball court which has been recently resurfaced. There are plans to extend the existing ADA path to connect to the basketball court and picnic tables, providing access to these amenities. The perimeter fence is generally in good condition, but there is need for repair along the eastern edge of the property.

Overall, this park is functional providing access to active amenities within its service area. However, improvements could be made, particularly to the playground, to improve curb appeal and enhance usage. There are signs of undesired activity and playground upgrades would help reinforce its image as a family-friendly space and provide a draw for users.

Location	7020 NE 27th Ave Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	5.00



CUSCOWILLA NATURE & RETREAT CENTER

Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center is a 211-acre special use park located northwest of Micanopy along Hwy 441. The park contains a variety of activities including basketball, volleyball, and a swimming pool. Additionally, the park includes cabins and opportunities for hiking and fishing along its many wooded acres.

Alachua County recently renovated the park with improvements, such as ADA upgrades, resurfacing of the parking area, waterfront dock, climbing tower, and a butterfly garden.

The public may access the pool on summer weekends and holidays by purchasing a $5 day pass and residents can purchase a $20 seasonal pass. Additionally, Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center offers a variety of rental spaces, including overnight cabin stays, tent camping, meetings, weddings, and private pool parties. The park is publicly available outside of camp programs and private rentals.

Location	210 SE 134 Ave Micanopy, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	211

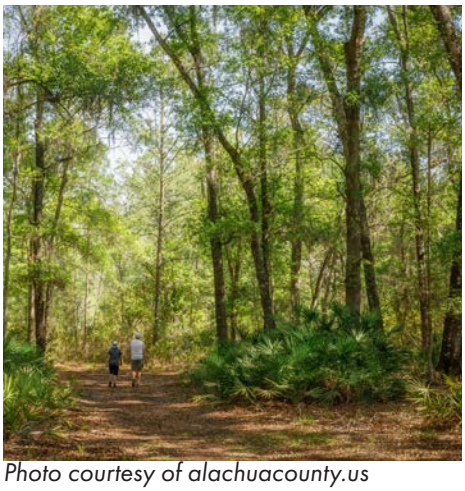


Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

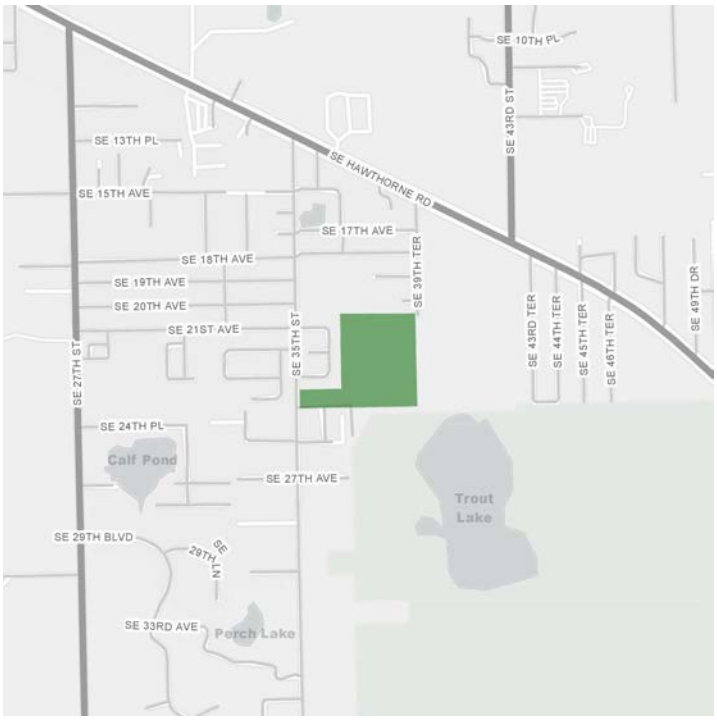
Photo courtesy of cuscowilla.org

Photo courtesy of cuscowilla.org

CYNTHIA MOORE CHESTNUT PARK & CLARK BUTLER NATURE PRESERVE

Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve offers both recreation areas and nature preserve. A scenic drive off SE 35th Road leads to a paved parking area with a stormwater facility to the south and park amenities to the north. The park is shady and includes a restroom building, various pavilions, playground, volleyball court, basketball courts, and a large multi-purpose field. The park is generally well maintained, although the playground turf surfacing is tearing at the seams and is slated to be replaced with a soft surface material. Additionally, there are plans to add another pavilion to serve the multi-purpose field. All pavilions are available for rent.

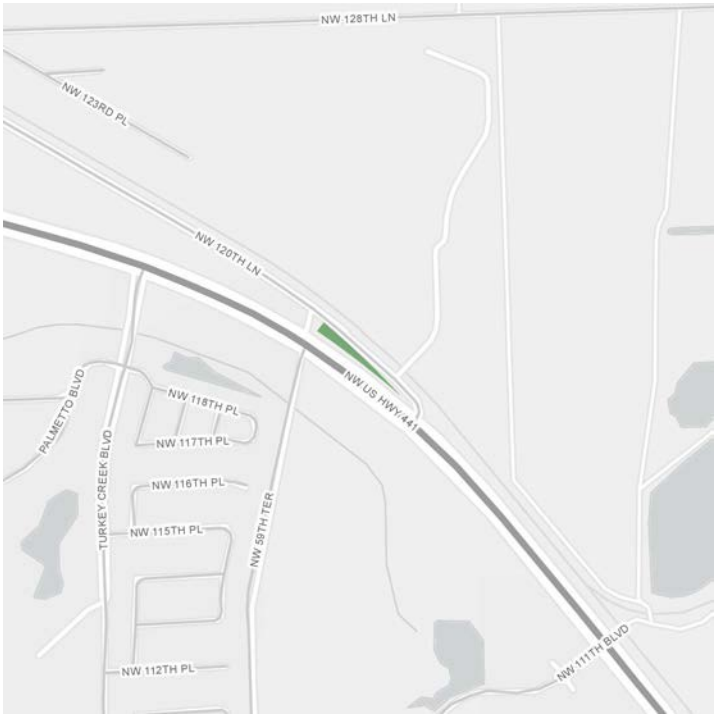
There are apparent drainage issues throughout the park—specifically within the multi-purpose field and around the playground and restroom building. These drainage issues are likely undermining the surfacing of the playground and could contribute to accelerating deterioration of park infrastructure. A stormwater master plan could help address these issues and prevent future wear on the park.



Location	2315 SE 35th St. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	27.00

DESOTO PARK

DeSoto Park is a small strip of land nestled between Hwy 441 and NW 120th Lane in northwest Gainesville. It currently contains two pavilions and picnic tables, and serves primarily as a parking/rest area along the existing highways. This property is used for sandbag distribution during declared emergencies.



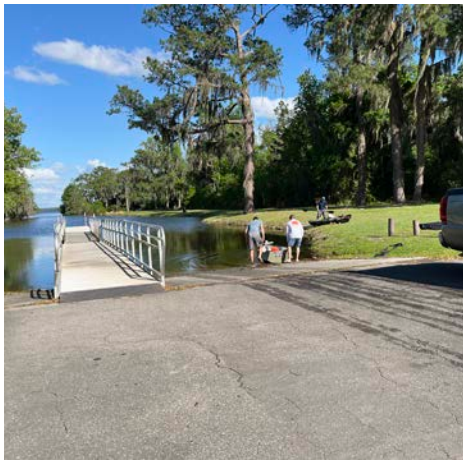
Location	11855 NW Hwy 441 Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	0.63

Source: Google Earth, 2021

EARL P. POWERS PARK

Earl P. Powers Park is located off SE Hawthorne Road and provides access to Newnan's Lake. The park serves primarily as a boat ramp and natural resource access site, but has been developed to include recreation amenities including a restroom building, paved parking lot (accommodating both boat trailer and regular vehicles). The boat ramp access canal bifurcates the park east of the parking lot, with a well-maintained playground and pavilions to the north and a picnic area and sidewalk leading to an observation deck toward the south. The observation deck allows non-boaters to enjoy scenic views of Newnan's Lake and wildlife. There is a concentration of active fishers who utilize the banks of the canal and the observation deck. While there are many amenities, there is a lack of accessible circulation, particularly around the play area. With its access to natural resources and engaged user group, there are opportunities for environmental interpretatation and experiential learning.

Location	5910 SE Hawthorne Rd. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	12.47



GROVE PARK

Grove Park is a rural park providing active recreation to residents of the Hawthorne area. The park includes a playground, picnic area, basketball court, and baseball field. The playground has been recently replaced and includes an ADA-accessible sidewalk as well as a permanent shade structure.

Location	SE 152nd St. Hawthorne, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	4.32

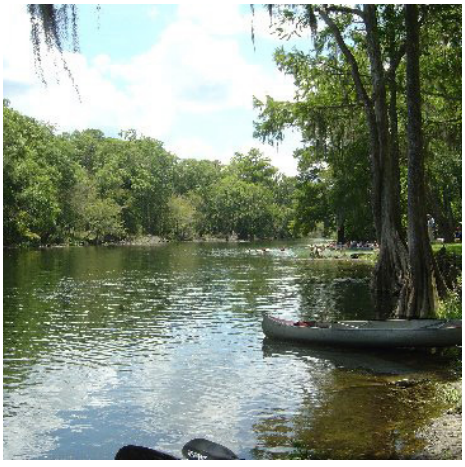
Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

HIGH SPRINGS BOAT RAMP

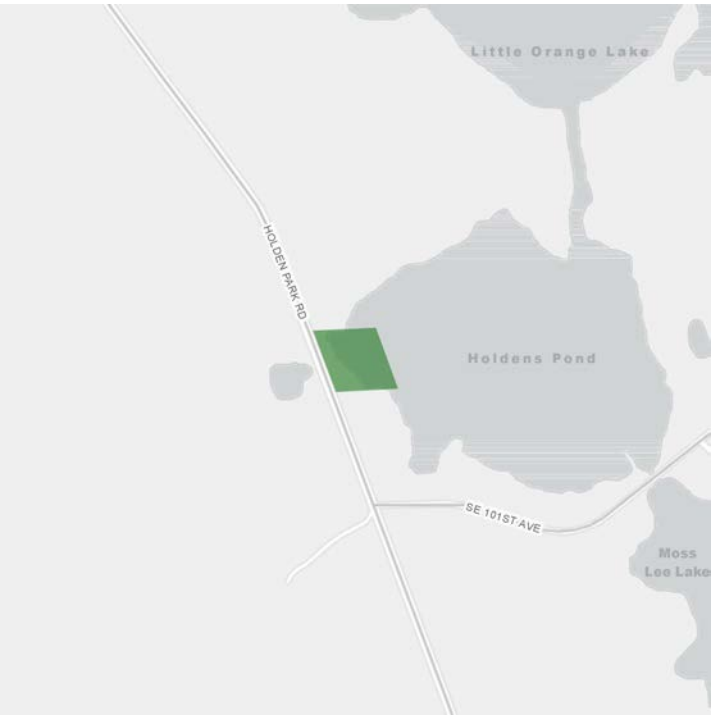
The High Springs boat ramp provides access to the Santa Fe River. From this point, it is possible to reach River Rise Preserve State Park, where the Santa Fe River emerges from underground within a 3-mile paddle upriver, and Poe Springs Park within a 5-mile paddle downriver. This boat ramp lies along a 26-mile designated paddling trail, enabling nature enthusiasts to access several springs and natural attractions along the way.

Location	6300 SE 152nd St. Hawthorne, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	4.32



HOLDEN POND PARK

Holden Pond Park offers boat ramp access into Holden Pond and Little Orange Lake on the outskirts of Hawthorne. The park includes a covered pavilion, picnic tables, shelter, and a parking lot (half paved asphalt and half stabilized grade). There is currently no ADA access. Because of its rural setting, this park does not have pedestrian access, and is likely to remain a drive-to destination.

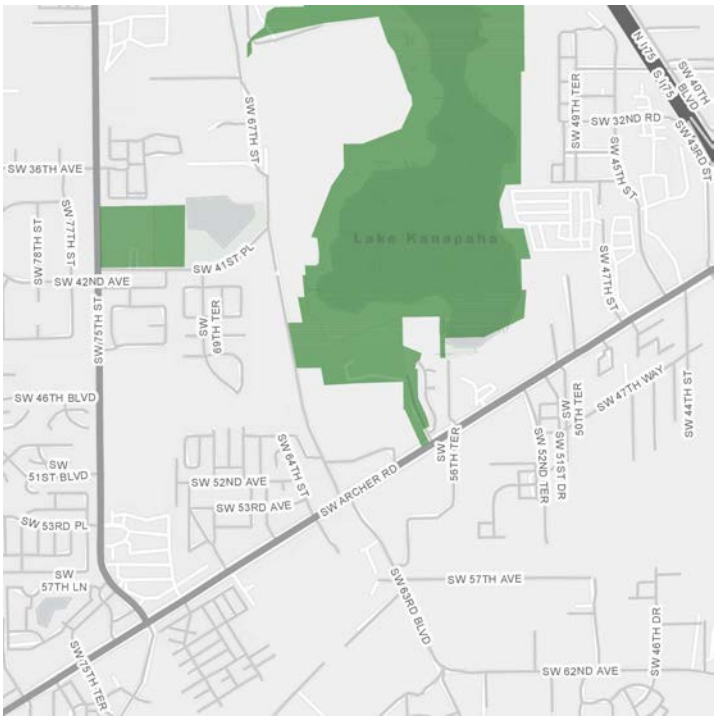


Location	9725 Holden Park Rd. Hawthorne, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	5.00

Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

KANAPAHA BOTANICAL GARDENS

Kanapaha Botanical Gardens is a 63-acre site leased and managed by the North Florida Botanical Society. The gardens contain a variety of major collections, including Florida's largest bamboo garden and the largest herb garden in the Southeast. An entry fee is usually required, however, there are a variety of events during which entry fees are waived.



Location	4800 SW 58th Dr. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	62.00

Photos courtesy of kanapaha.org

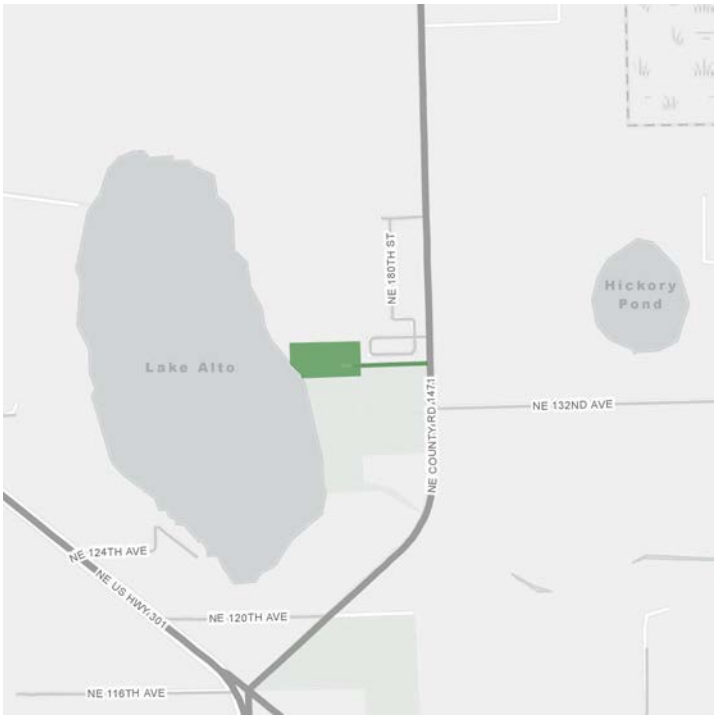
KATE BARNES BOAT RAMP AT MAJORIE KINNAN RAWLINGS PARK

The Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Majorie Kinnan Rawlings Park, located in Cross Creek, provides access to Orange Lake as well as the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park next door. The park includes a boat ramp, play area, restrooms, large pavilion, and picnic areas under dense oak canopy. The asphalt parking lot serves both the park and the historic site. Due to this relationship, the park serves both Cross Creek residents and regional tourists. Overall, the park provides an appropriate variety of activities for its location. However, the restroom building needs attention and could be upgraded. ADA improvements are planned which would provide accessible paths throughout the park to the restrooms, play area, and entrance to the state park.

Location	18800 S CR 325 Cross Creek, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	12.00

LAKE ALTO PARK

Lake Alto Park, located in Waldo, provides access to Lake Alto, and features a boat launch, play area, and picnic area. The park serves as a trailhead for hiking within Lake Alto Preserve. The recently installed playground includes an integrated shade structure. A new floating dock was recently added, with other improvements planned including restrooms, gazebo upgrades, shoreline preservation observation areas, and ADA-compliant paths to all amenities. There is an opportunity to include interpretative signage throughout this park.



Location	17800 NE 134th Pl Waldo, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	22.33

Photos courtesy of alachuacounty.us

Photo: Larry Korhnak

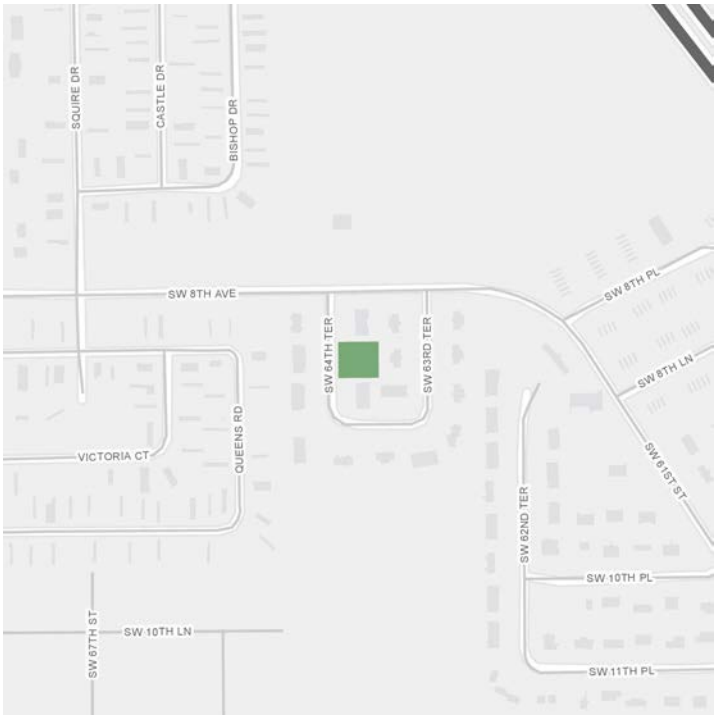
LOCHLOOSA PARK

Lochloosa Park provides access to Lochloosa Lake in southeast Alachua County. The park includes restroom facilities, as well as a boat ramp and observation deck with great views from the shoreline. Park development is essentially maxed out, with a permeable parking lot taking up much of the site. Over time, the parking area has settled and become uneven. There are also signs of erosion along the shoreline that may need additional vegetation and stabilization. This park is popular with both boaters and fishers, as it provides access to Lochloosa Lake Fish Management Area within a small, narrow footprint.

Location	16204 SE 207th Ln. Hawthorne, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	1.24

MARK S. HOPKINS PARK

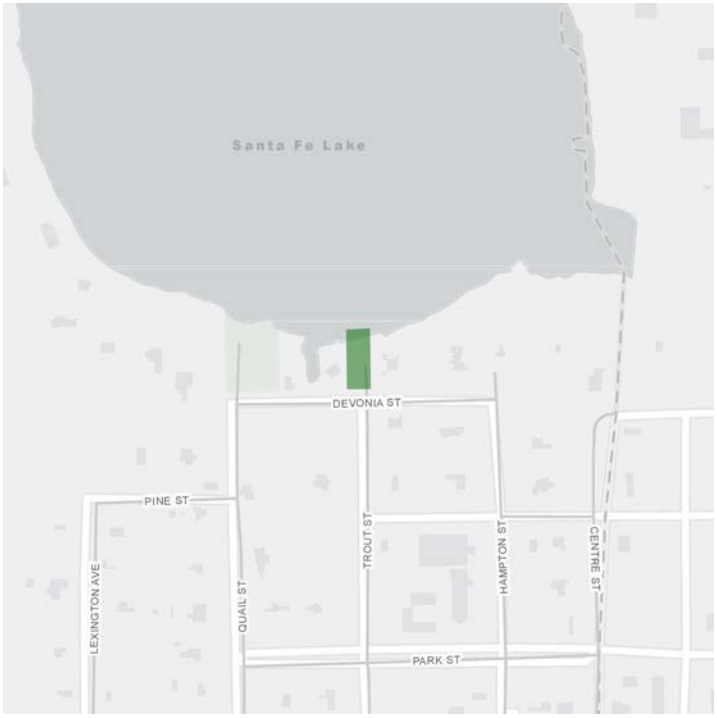
Mark S. Hopkins Park is located just outside of Gainesville and is the first pocket park developed by Alachua County serving the residents of the Sugar Foot Oaks neighborhood. It is designed for easy pedestrian access and includes a playground, half basketball court, and picnic tables. The relatively new park has been embraced by the community, with neighborhood kids actively using the park. Adjacent to the park, various service centers operated by SWAG provide family services, health clinic, and early childhood education.



Location	817 SW 64th Terrace Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	0.26

MELROSE BOAT RAMP

Melrose Boat Ramp is a concrete boat ramp located in Melrose near the county line. It provides access to Melrose Bay and connects to Lake Santa Fe. The boat launch has limited parking. Launch is limited to boats with 12-hp motors or less, and is also a popular destination for kayakers.



Location	End of Trout St. Melrose, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	0.25

Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

Photo courtesy of floridapaddlenotes.com

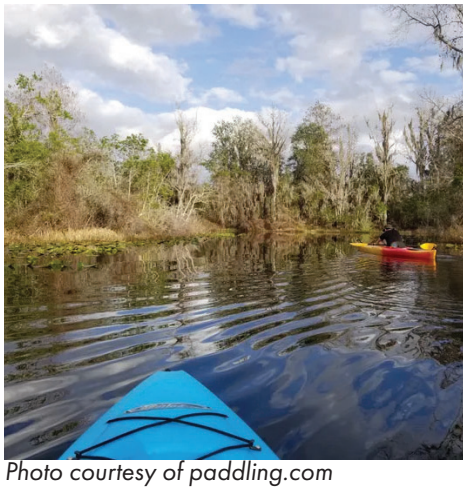


Photo courtesy of paddling.com

MONTEOCHA PARK

Monteocha Park is located in north Alachua County and serves the rural community of Gordon. The park includes a baseball field, playground, a recently resurfaced basketball court, picnic areas and grills. Parking is on stabilized grade, and there is no sidewalk infrastructure.

Location	803 NW 192nd Ave. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Neighborhood
Acreage	5.00

Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

OWENS-ILLINOIS PARK

Owens-Illinois Park is a peaceful park off the eastern shore of Newnan's Lake. A boat launch with dock provides canal access to Newnan's Lake, and the asphalt road with parking provides access to the playground, restrooms, pavilions, and picnic areas under dense tree canopy. The park is set back from the lake and does not provide lake views; however, a wildlife observation area is planned.

Location	11309 SE 16th Ave. Windsor, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	21.57

Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

Photo courtesy of fun4gatorkids.com

POE SPRINGS PARK

Poe Springs Park is a large, regional resource park providing access to scenic Poe Springs and the Santa Fe River. A paved drive leads to a variety of amenities including hiking trails, picnic areas, playground, sand volleyball court and multi-purpose field with backstop. Access to the spring is provided via a recently replaced boardwalk through cypress swamp. Spring amenities include a swimming area, pavilion, restrooms, and a recently added kayak dock. A boat ramp is located farther downstream. Two pavilions are available for rent, as well as a small lodge that includes a kitchen and restrooms. Poe Springs Park has a $6 park entry fee and is subject to capacity closures. There is a multi-use trail facility leading from downtown High Springs along NW 182nd Avenue to Poe Springs Park.

Location	28800 NW 182nd Ave. High Springs, FL
Current Park Type	Regional Resource
Acreage	202.47

ROTARY PARK AT JONESVILLE

Rotary Park at Jonesville is a large sportsplex providing soccer fields, ballfields, a tennis complex, basketball court (striped for pickleball), playground, and picnic tables. A 1-mile loop trail provides fitness opportunities throughout the park, and a disc golf course meanders through the back wooded section. The fields and courts are well maintained and the tennis courts were recently renovated. Shaded sidewalks provide pedestrian access along the perimeter of the park, and canopy trees have been added where feasible. Various sports organizations utilize the facilities including Gatorball Baseball Academy, Gainesville Soccer Alliance, Jonesville Tennis, and Gainesville Chain Hawks Disc Golf Club.

Location	14100 NW 32nd Ave. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	87.00

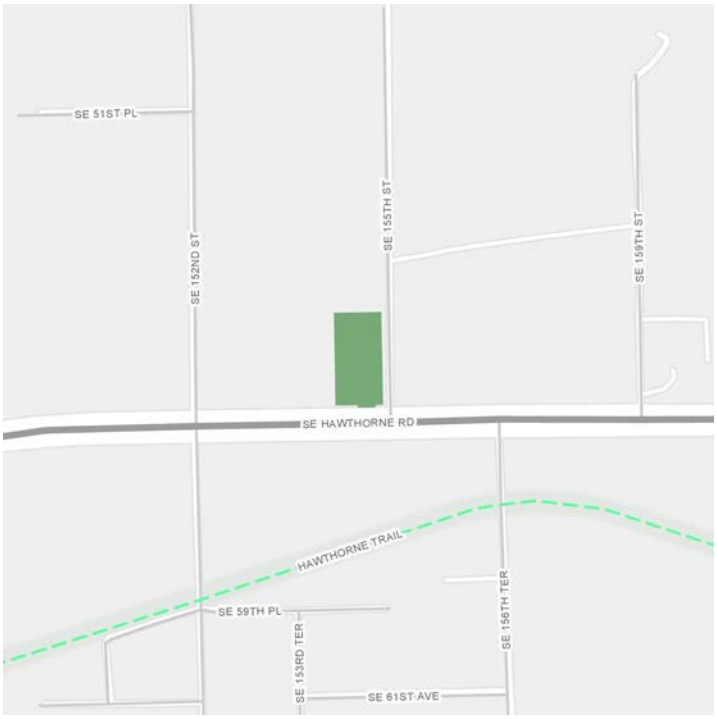
SANTA FE LAKE PARK

Santa Fe Lake Park is located just outside Melrose near the eastern edge of the County. The park provides access to Santa Fe Lake through a series of canals. The park can be divided into two sections: the family area located toward the entrance, and the boat ramp. The family area includes a recently installed, shaded playground with adjacent exercise equipment, picnic tables, and paved parking. However, there is no pedestrian connection between the family area and the boat ramp. The boat ramp area features restrooms, picnic tables, and boat launch. Boats too large for nearby Melrose Boat Ramp launch in this location instead. Pavilions are available for rent. Planned improvements for this park include a new restroom building.

Location	24500 NE SR 26 Melrose, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	24.98

SCOTT-PHIFER HOUSE

The Scott-Phifer House is a historic site that was home to the only antebellum house on the east side of the county. Currently, the property is fenced and contains the foundation of the house and historic beams with inscribed Roman numerals. A historic marker was placed on the site in 2016. Foundation ruins may be observed from outside the fenced area.



Location	5600 SE 155th St. Hawthorne, FL
Current Park Type	Historic
Acreage	2.80

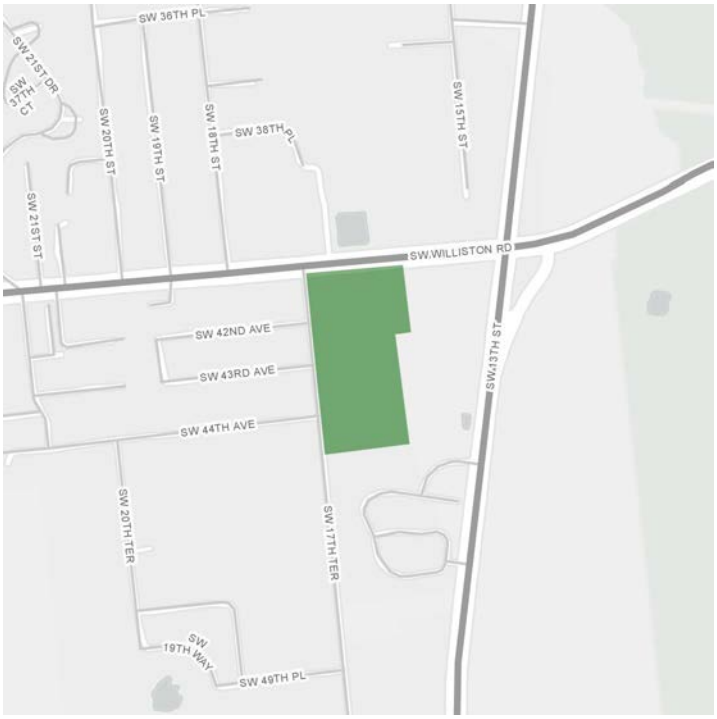
Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

Photo courtesy of hmdb.com

Photo courtesy of hmdb.com

SQUIRREL RIDGE PARK

Squirrel Ridge Park, located south of the City of Gainesville, offers the departments only designated dog park. Amenities include separately fenced areas for large and small dogs, dog pools, and wash station. A restroom facility is planned. The park shares a driveway with Meridian Behavioral Healthcare and includes a parking lot of both gravel and stabilized grade. Some of the gravel parking is uneven; therefore, it is recommended to pave a portion to provide greater accessibility. The park has recently been upgraded with a new inclusive playground and adjacent fitness equipment. Accessible paths are planned. Additionally, the park includes the Crime Victim Memorial Garden, with memorial benches and manicured gardens. The open field adjacent to Williston Road is used as a play field for rugby and soccer.



Location	1603 SW Williston Rd. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Community
Acreage	17.24

VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK

Veterans Memorial Park, located west of Gainesville, contains a wide variety of both active and passive amenities. A Veterans Memorial is prominently located in the median of the parking lot and a police memorial is located adjacent to the Freedom Community Center. The community center is available for rentals, and has an adjacent covered picnic area and restrooms. To the west of the parking lot are multiple soccer fields. A large playground, sand volleyball, and basketball court are located on the north side of the park. The playground is being replaced with a new inclusive playground. The existing baseball field is slated to be replaced with a splash pad and support facilities including a restroom area, primary driveway entry, and parking area. A shaded fitness trail with exercise equipment is popular among walkers. Just east of the parking lot is a full roller hockey rink complete with bleachers.

The eastern portion of the park, which operates under a use agreement with the City of Gainesville, is far more passive and includes picnic tables, informational signs, a pavilion, and a large stone monument. There is some potential to further activate this area.

Location	7400 SW 41st Pl. Gainesville, FL
Current Park Type	Community
Acreage	44.95 including joint-use

WATERMELON POND PARK

Watermelon Pond Park provides access to the 440-acre Watermelon Pond Preserve, a sandhill lake habitat providing opportunities for wildlife viewing and a multi-use trail system located south of Newberry. The park features a parking lot, picnic table, informational signage, and a boat ramp.

Location	10700 SW 250th St. Newberry, FL
Current Park Type	Special Use Resource
Acreage	12.00

Photo courtesy of alachuacounty.us

Photo courtesy of flickr.com

Photo courtesy of hikingproject.com

2.2 EXISTING SERVICE AREA

A review of the existing Service Area standards provides insights not only into the performance of the system, but also the metrics being used to measure it. By analyzing the current Service Area standards, this Master Plan is able to provide recommendations that consider not only physical improvements within the system but also regulatory improvements, allowing the system to be responsive to future growth.

Existing Service Area

BACKGROUND

Recreation Element Policy 1.1.2 of Alachua County's Comprehensive Plan provides a multifaceted set of standards for parks level of service (LOS). The population-based, county-wide park acreage standards are adopted as minimum maintenance LOS standards; calculations detailing service provision for current and projected populations are shown previously in this report (Section 2.1, p. 58).

Additional LOS standards are provided in Table 1 of the Recreation Element. These standards outline typical location, service distance, size, average population served, and area per 1,000 population for each park type.

Abridged Table 1, Alachua County Comprehensive Plan – Recreation Element

SITE TYPE	TYPICAL LOCATION	TYPICAL SIZE (ACRES)	AVERAGE POPULATION SERVED	AREA PER 1,000 POPULATION	TYPICAL FACILITIES/ CHARACTERISTICS
Neighborhood Park	Within .25 to .5 mile distance in neighborhood area	Minimum of 5 acres	5,000 maximum	2 acres	Play structures, recreation buildings, court games, hard courts, tennis courts, internal trails, shuffleboard, volleyball courts, picnic areas, open areas, landscaping
Community Park	Within .5 to 3 miles distance for urban areas and up to 6 miles for rural areas; usually serves two or more neighborhoods	Minimum of 20 acres	5,000 maximum	2 acres	Athletic fields, swimming pools, multi-purpose fields, recreation centers, picnic areas, open space areas

Multiple table entries have been excluded from the above abridged table.
Tot Lots and Pocket Parks: none currently owned/maintained by Alachua County Parks
Special Use Activity Parks and Special Use Resource Parks: County-wide service area does not require service area analysis.

Through inclusion of this wide variety of metrics, these LOS standards intend to simultaneously address geographic distribution and park capacity. However, the project team has found that data appropriate for an accurate analysis utilizing all provided metrics is not reasonably and reliably available; therefore, the intended effect of these LOS standards is not able to be evaluated. Put into narrative format, the Neighborhood Parks service area standards provide an exemplary scenario to illustrate both the complicated nature of the current LOS standards, and the shortcomings of available data.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS SERVICE AREA STANDARDS

Service Area Minimum: the greater of either a .25-mile distance in a neighborhood area, or the distance required to accumulate 2,500 people (the minimum neighborhood park size of 5 acres sets the minimum number of people served at 2,500 people).

Service Area Maximum: the greater of either a .5-mile distance in a neighborhood area, or the distance required to accumulate the maximum park population capacity of 1,000 people per 2 park acres, not to exceed 5,000 people.

Evaluation utilizing these metrics would require accurate population data within geographies as small as .25-mile, while best-available population data is typically associated with larger geographic units, such as U.S. Census blocks or Transportation Analysis Zones. In addition, geographic definitions of "neighborhood areas" would be required in order to determine the areas where neighborhood parks would need to be provided. "Neighborhood areas" are not defined in the Comprehensive Plan Recreation Element Definitions. In light of these analytical constraints, the project team performed a targeted existing service area analysis to focus on evaluating the geographic distribution of Alachua County's parks.

CURRENT LEVEL OF SERVICE

Using the Recreation Element's existing park classifications and location criteria, the current Level of Service Analysis reveals a relatively limited geographic service area across the county. Virtually all of the service area is concentrated within the urban cluster or incorporated areas. These areas correspond with the highest population densities; however, this analysis suggests there is a significant share of County residents who are "unserved" by County parks.
This current LOS analysis assumes the following, based on the criteria outlined in the Recreation Element:

TOT LOTS

Tot Lots are typically 1 acre in size and serve residents within a 0.25-mile radius. There are no Tot Lots owned or maintained by the County; therefore, they do not appear within the existing LOS analysis.

POCKET PARKS

Pocket Parks are typically no larger than 5 acres and serve residents within a 0.25-mile radius. Mark S. Hopkins Park (13) represents the only Pocket Park owned and maintained by the County.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Neighborhood parks are at least 5 acres in size and serve residents within a 0.25- to 0.5-mile radius. Of the seven neighborhood parks owned and maintained by the County today, only two have service areas that are substantially located outside of an urban cluster or incorporated areas.

COMMUNITY PARKS

Community parks are at least 20 acres in size and serve residents within a 0.5- to 3-mile radius within an *urban* context, and up to a 6-mile radius within a *rural* context. Of the three community parks owned and maintained by the County today, zero have service areas that are substantially located outside of an urban cluster or incorporated areas.

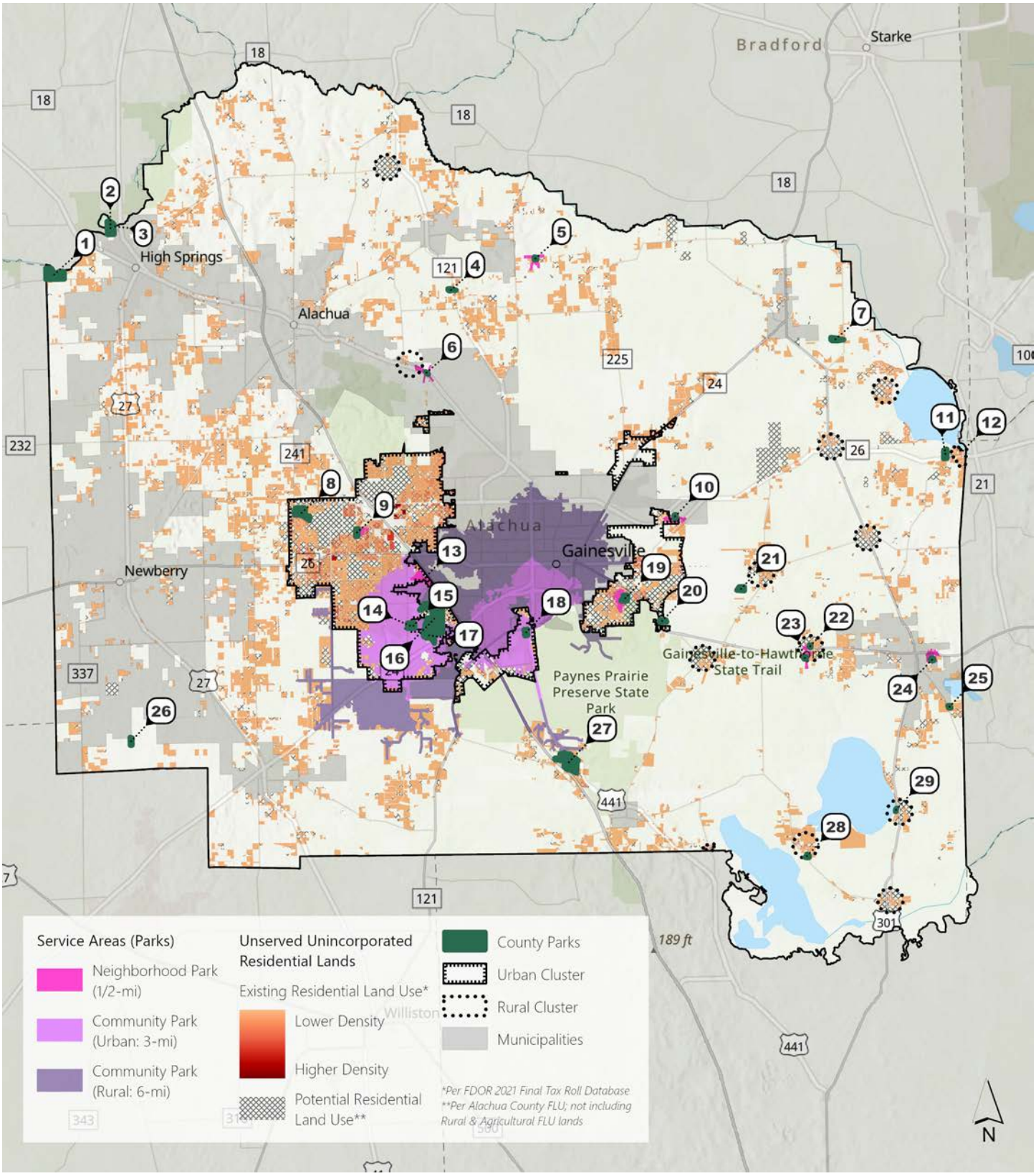
SPECIAL USE PARKS

Special Use Activity and Special Resource Parks have a "County-wide" service area; however, this analysis purposely excludes these park types from the LOS results shown on the map figure because it does not add clarity about what the existing LOS is.

Park ID	Park Name	Classification	Service Area (mi.)
1	Poe Springs	RR	-
2	McCall (Undeveloped)	NA	-
3	High Springs Boat Ramp	SR	-
4	Cellon Oak	NA	-
5	Monteocha	N	0.5
6	DeSoto Park	N	0.5
7	Lake Alto	SR	-
8	Rotary Park at Jonesville	SR	-
9	Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)	N	0.5
10	Copeland	N	0.5
11	Santa Fe Lake	SR	-
12	Melrose Boat Ramp	SR	-
13	Mark S. Hopkins Park	P	0.5
14	Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)	C	3.0
15	Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)	C	6.0
16	Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)	NA	-
17	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	SR	-
18	Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)	C	3.0
19	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	N	0.5
20	Earl P. Powers	SR	-
21	Owens-Illinois	SR	-
22	Scott-Phifer House	H	-
23	Grove	N	0.5
24	Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)	N	0.5
25	Holden Pond	SR	-
26	Watermelon Pond	SR	-
27	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	SR	-
28	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	SR	-
29	Lochloosa	SR	-

N = Neighborhood C = Community H = Historic
NA = Nature P = Pocket
SR = Special Use Resource RR = Regional Resource

Map of Alachua County Parks Existing Level of Service



2.3 PUBLIC INPUT

Public engagement is a critical component in gauging the community's needs and desires to guide the production of the Master Plan. Input through community surveys, public workshops, and focus groups all serve to shape the vision of the Master Plan. Utilizing these methods can help the project team gain intimate knowledge of the parks & open space system through the experience of park users, and help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the existing system. By matching the existing conditions of the park system with the needs and desires expressed through public engagement, it is possible to form a vision that responds directly to the specific needs of the Alachua County community.

Survey Summary

The purpose of this study was to gather community feedback on the Alachua County parks, recreation, facilities, amenities, future planning, communication, and more. This survey research effort and subsequent analysis were designed to assist Alachua County in developing a plan to reflect the community's needs and desires.

To help understand Alachua County residents' current usage, satisfaction, and priorities for parks and recreation facilities and programs, a statistically-valid survey was developed for distribution across the county. Residents living within Alachua County limits were considered the population for this study. In total, 4,000 surveys were randomly sent to selected households across the area. Residents were mailed a paper survey that included a postage-paid envelope with the option to also take the survey online through a password-protected website. Reminder postcards were sent to 3,000 households to boost response. Additionally, an "open link" survey was distributed via social media and promoted through other efforts by the County approximately two weeks after the statistically-valid survey.

A total of 303 statistically-valid surveys were completed (representing a +/- 5.6% margin of error). Furthermore, 2,337 open surveys were collected from residents who did not participate in the statistically-valid survey. Results were used to aid the decision-making process on current opportunities and to plan for future needs among residents.

The underlying data from the survey was weighted by Commission District to ensure equal representation of the population across Alachua County in the statistically-valid survey sample. Using U.S. Census data, the district distributions in the total sample were adjusted to more closely match the actual population of Alachua County's five Commission Districts.

KEY FINDINGS

LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

Overall satisfaction with the quality of parks, facilities, and programs provided by Alachua County is generally positive: 43% of Invite respondents rated 4 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very satisfied". Invite respondents are slightly more satisfied, rating an average 3.8 vs. 3.5 out of 5.

PARK USERS

Nature-based parks and amenities are of high use and importance to the Invite sample. A total of 22% Invite respondents use trails and pathways at least once a week, and 14% said they use County parks at least once a week. Nature walking/jogging trails were also rated as the highest use, with 81% of Invite respondents saying they use them when visiting the Alachua County Parks & Open Space facilities.

PROXIMITY & ACCESSIBILITY

Respondents live in close proximity to the parks they visit most often. Nearly half (47%) of both samples live 1-4 miles away. The majority (89%) of the Invite respondents use a motor vehicle to get to parks; however, there is also a strong presence of walkers/runners (34%) and bicyclists (27%). Responses were similar for Open link respondents. Respondents would generally prefer to walk no more than 15 minutes to different park types.

ACTIVITIES & AMENITIES

Walking, jogging, and running are the most frequent activities for the Invite sample (70%). Open link respondents are split between walking, jogging, and running, with playgrounds/play areas being the most used activities or amenities. Trails and pathways are the most frequently used facility, followed by County parks for both samples. Open link respondents report using the facilities and services more frequently.

IMPORTANCE

Invite respondents place high importance on walkways and trails and County parks & open space; these averaged 4.4 and 4.2, respectively, on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very important". Gymnasiums for indoor sports and events and indoor recreation centers are of the lowest importance.

NEEDS MET

On a scale of 1-5, in which 5 is "completely meeting the needs," almost all categories for the Invite sample are meeting the needs of the community sufficiently, with a rating of 3.0 or above, except for indoor aquatics (2.8). Open link respondents rated the categories lower than Invite respondents for "meeting the needs of the community", and agree that indoor aquatics should be an area of attention.

INCREASE USE

The top area that, if addressed, would increase use by the Invite sample is "closer facilities to where I live or work" and for the Open link sample is additional facilities and amenities. The top 5 most important areas are the same across sample types, suggesting similar needs across the community.

COMMUNICATION

There is some room for improvement for the County to increase the effectiveness of communication about parks and recreation opportunities. The average rating given by Invite respondents was 2.5 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very effective", while the Open link averaged 2.2. Currently, the most common way residents receive information from Alachua County Parks & Open Space is through word of mouth; however, the two most preferred methods of communication by both respondent samples is email, followed by social media. Invite respondents are more likely to use the Alachua County website, local media, and the activity guide/brochure.

FUTURE NEEDS

Additional trails, adding more parks, and making improvements to and/or renovating existing parks or facilities are the most important future needs, according to both respondent samples. There is also a need for programs for residents of all ages, including kids, teens, and seniors.

SATISFACTION WITH PARKS, FACILITIES & PROGRAMS

LENGTH OF TIME IN ALACHUA COUNTY

Respondents have a long tenure living in Alachua County; more than half of Invite respondents report that they resided in the County for over 20 years, with the average length of time being nearly 24 years.

Q 1: How long have you lived in Alachua County? (If less than 1 year, enter 0)

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Less than a year	0%	3%	3%
1 - 5 years	19%	18%	19%
6 - 10 years	11%	16%	15%
11 - 20 years	18%	22%	22%
Over 20 years	51%	40%	42%
Avg.	23.9	19.7	20.2
n=	302	2,337	2,639

Source: RRC Associates

SATISFACTION WITH PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Overall satisfaction with the quality of Alachua County parks, facilities, and programs is generally positive: 43% of Invite respondents rate their satisfaction as 4 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very satisfied". Invite respondents are slightly more satisfied than Open Link respondents, with an average 3.8 vs. 3.5 out of 5.

Q 3: Overall, how satisfied have you been with the quality of parks, facilities, and programs provided by Alachua County Parks and Open Space?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
1 - Not at all satisfied	4%	5%	5%
2	2%	11%	10%
3	28%	31%	31%
4	43%	36%	37%
5 - Very satisfied	24%	18%	18%
Avg.	3.8	3.5	3.5
n=	303	2,333	2,636

Source: RRC Associates

CURRENT USAGE

PARKS VISITED MOST OFTEN

Open-Ended Comments

A total of 2,228 comments were collected for the question, "What is the name of one park in Alachua County you and your household visit most often?". The top 5 parks are Depot Park, Jonesville Park (these two mentioned much more than others), Veterans Memorial Park, Possum Creek Park, and Westside Park. Only Jonesville Park and Veterans Memorial Park are Alachua County owned and managed parks. The others are City of Gainesville parks.

Westside
Depot
Possum
Creek
Jonesville
Northside
Sweetwater
Veteran
Memorial
Kanapaha
Felasco
Legacy
Wetland
Forest
Preserve
Ring
Tom
Spring
Petty
Headwaters
Soccer
Squirrel
Oak
Paynes
Rotary
Turkey
Brady
Near
Barr
Disc
Ridge
Santa
Prairie
One
Cofrin
Complex
Water
Ramp
Golf
Massey
Mlk
Hammock
Cone
Bear
Hogtown
Chestnut
Boat
Acres
Forte
Tioga
Hoggetown
Lake
Cellon
Smokey
Easton
Field
Trail
Newnan
Alfred
Blue
Fe
Gsa
Citizens
Tennis
Dwight
Payne's
Powers
Sport
Earl
Mill
Area
Rec
West
Ne
Wood
Nature
Loblolly
Hog
Ray
Branch
Millhopper
Oakview
Center
Sweet
Side
Longleaf
Course
Pond
Garden
Veteran's
Albert
Chua
Diamond
Northeast
Hawthorne
Springtree
Dog
Roper
Green
Gainesville
Botanical
San
St
Poe
Lois
High
La
Pool
Visit
Hal
None
Barr
Disc
Tom
Ridge
Santa
Prairie
One
Cofrin
Lois
Possum
Pool
Ring
Visit
Hoggtown
Chestnut
Preserve
Devils
Powers
Sport
Earl
Mill
Boat
Acres
Forte
Veteran
Wood
Nature
Loblolly
Hog
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Spring
Area
Ne
West
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Springtree
Dog
Roper
Green
Gainesville
Botanical
San
St
Poe
Petty
Jonesville
Tioga
Hoggetown
Lake
Cellon
Smokey
Easton
Field
Trail
Newnan
Alfred
Blue
Fe
Gsa
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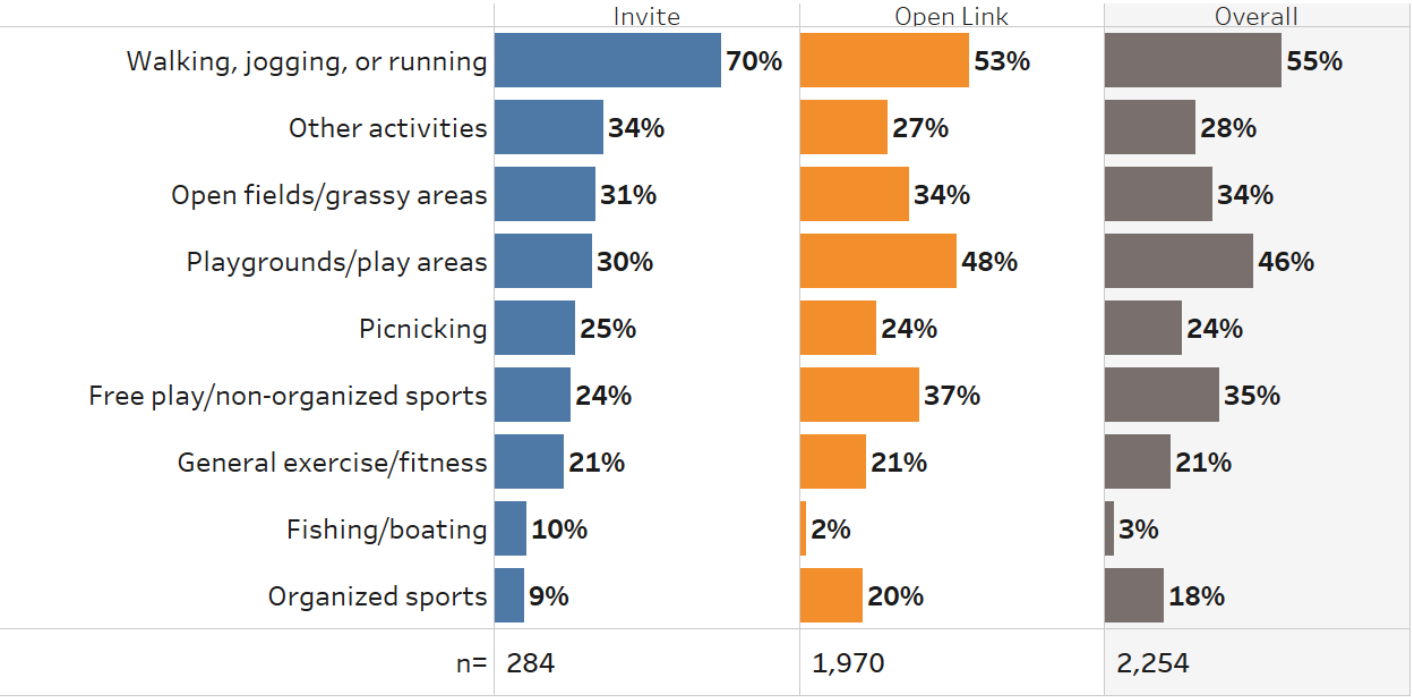
Albert
Chua
Diamond
Northeast
Hawthorne
Springtree
Dog
Roper
Green
Gainesville
Botanical
Golf
Massey
Mlk
Hammock
Cone
Felasco
Kanapaha
Soccer
Go
Memorial
Bear
Hogtown
Next
Squirrel
North
Reserve
Archer
Ramp
Water
Complex
Year
Tree
Town
Headwaters
Alachua
Skate
Wilson
State
County
Newberry
Oak
Paynes
Rotary
Turkey
Brady
Near

USES AT MOST FREQUENTED PARK

Walking, jogging, and running are the most frequent activities for Invite respondents (70%). Open link respondents are split between walking, jogging or running, and playgrounds/play areas as the most used activities or amenities. Invite respondents participate in organized sports infrequently, whereas Open link respondents rarely fish/boat.

Q 6: And, what activities or amenities does your household use that park for most often? (Check all that apply)



Source: RRC Associates

FREQUENCY OF USE

Trails and pathways are the most frequently used facility for both samples, followed by County parks. Open link respondents report frequently using a greater variety of facilities and services, with larger shares responding that they use several facilities or services at least once a week.

Q 7: How frequently have you and/or a member of your household used or participated in any of the following facilities or services?

			Percent Responding: At least once a week	A few times a month	At least once a month	A few times a year	Have not visited
Trails and pathways	Invite	273	22%	18%	20%	29%	12%
	Open Link	1,952	24%	24%	18%	27%	7%
County parks	Invite	257	14%	17%	20%	36%	12%
	Open Link	1,945	24%	21%	19%	29%	8%
Adult Recreation & Sports Programs	Invite	260	10%	7%	3%	13%	67%
	Open Link	1,928	22%	11%	5%	12%	51%
Youth Recreation & Sports Programs	Invite	251	6%	3%	2%	11%	77%
	Open Link	1,931	22%	6%	3%	11%	58%
Sports Complex	Invite	242	6%	3%	4%	21%	67%
	Open Link	1,906	17%	6%	5%	22%	50%
Recreation Complex	Invite	245	5%	7%	6%	25%	57%
	Open Link	1,909	13%	8%	7%	31%	40%
Boat ramps	Invite	254	3%	3%	4%	24%	66%
	Open Link	1,912	2%	3%	4%	20%	71%
Special events	Invite	256	1%	3%	7%	49%	41%
	Open Link	1,930	4%	6%	8%	49%	33%
(Optional) Other - specify in follow-up questi..	Invite	96	15%	6%	7%	5%	67%
	Open Link	1,440	20%	8%	3%	8%	61%

*Ratings categories are sorted in descending order by the frequency of use

Source: RRC Associates

USE OF AMENITIES AT FACILITIES

Invite respondents use nature walking/jogging trails, restrooms, open space, or lawn and picnic areas most frequently. Open link respondents use nature walking/jogging trails, restrooms, playgrounds, and open space or lawn most frequently. They also use athletic fields and splashpads more often than Invite respondents.

Q 8: Which of the following amenities does your household use when visiting the Alachua County Parks and Open Space facilities? (Check all that apply)

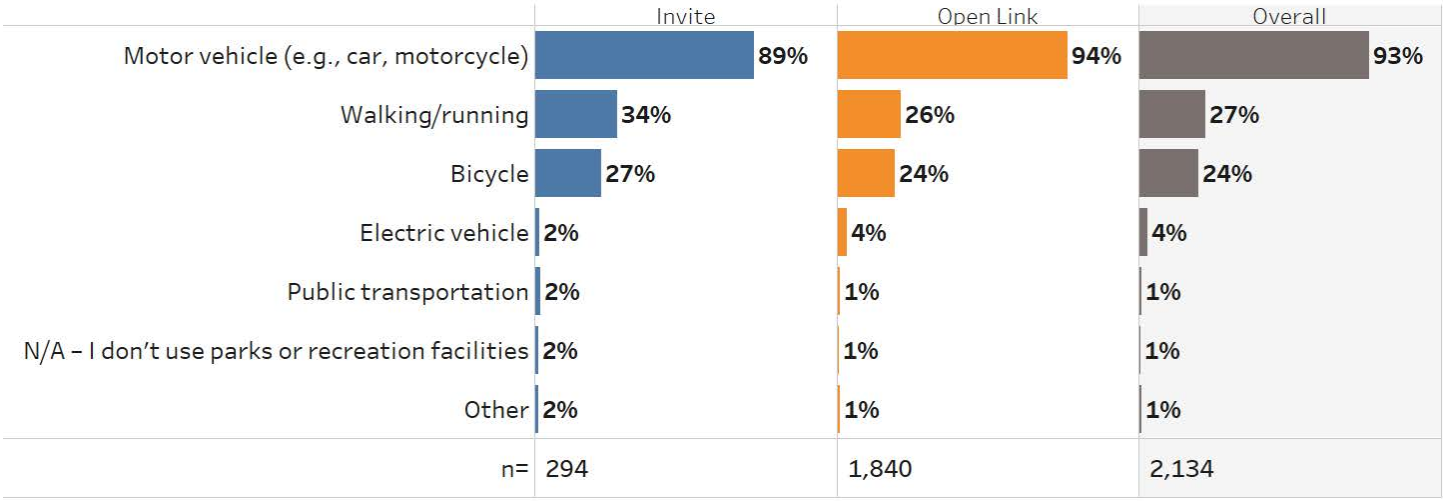
	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Nature walking/jogging trail	81%	78%	79%
Restrooms	63%	71%	70%
Open space or lawn	49%	54%	54%
Picnic areas	47%	48%	48%
Pavilions	40%	41%	41%
Playgrounds	34%	56%	53%
Athletic courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, volleyball)	24%	29%	28%
Fenced areas for large and small dogs	24%	22%	22%
Boat ramp	24%	14%	16%
Athletic fields (e.g., baseball, football, soccer)	22%	35%	33%
Outdoor fitness area	20%	23%	22%
Community garden	20%	15%	15%
Ornamental garden	18%	18%	18%
Splash pad	17%	34%	32%
Grills	16%	13%	13%
Fishing piers	14%	8%	9%
Skatepark	11%	14%	13%
Concession stand	11%	16%	16%
Indoor gymnasium	5%	6%	6%
None of the above	4%	2%	2%
Meeting rooms	3%	4%	4%
Other	6%	13%	12%
n=	291	1,838	2,129

Source: RRC Associates

TRANSPORTATION TO PARKS OR RECREATION FACILITIES

The majority of respondents use a motor vehicle to travel to parks and/or recreation facilities, followed by walking/running and bicycling.

Q 9: When you and/or your household visit parks and/or recreation facilities, which mode(s) of transportation do you typically use? (Check all that apply)

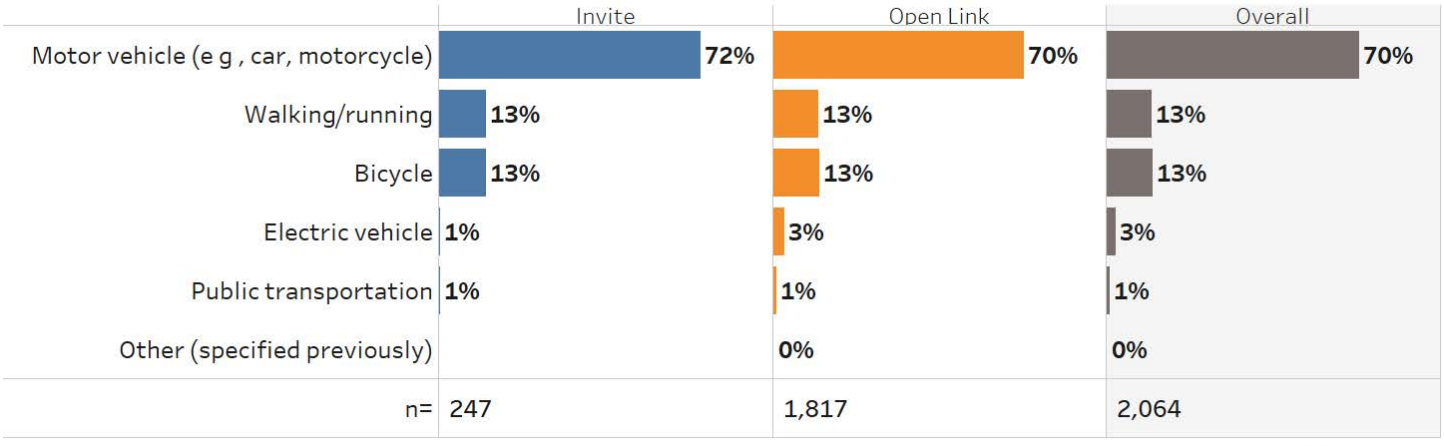


Source: RRC Associates

PREFERRED MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

The preferred mode of transportation is also motor vehicle. Preference is split between walking/running and bicycling, with 13% selected for each.

Q 10: From the list in the previous question, what is your preferred mode of transportation?



Source: RRC Associates

LIMITING FACTORS TO PREFERRED MODE OF TRANSPORTATION

Open-Ended Comments

A total of 1,110 comments were collected in response to "Is there anything limiting your use of preferred transportation". The word cloud below highlights the top 150 most frequently used words. Distance from parks and limited parking were the main complaints. However, limited parking primarily refers to parking at Depot Park which is City of Gainesville park.

WILLINGNESS TO WALK TO DIFFERENT PARK TYPES

Most respondents prefer to walk no more than 15 minutes to each of the park types.

Q 12: How long would you be willing to walk to each of the following park types?

		Invite	Open Link	Overall
Nature Park	More than 15 minutes	26%	23%	23%
	No more than 15 minutes	34%	33%	33%
	No more than 10 minutes	20%	25%	24%
	No more than 5 minutes	7%	11%	11%
	Not willing to walk	13%	7%	8%
	n=	280	1,825	2,105
Community Park or Center	More than 15 minutes	19%	19%	19%
	No more than 15 minutes	31%	32%	32%
	No more than 10 minutes	21%	28%	27%
	No more than 5 minutes	10%	14%	14%
	Not willing to walk	19%	7%	9%
	n=	282	1,815	2,097
Local Park	More than 15 minutes	24%	18%	18%
	No more than 15 minutes	31%	32%	32%
	No more than 10 minutes	22%	29%	28%
	No more than 5 minutes	11%	15%	15%
	Not willing to walk	12%	6%	7%
	n=	284	1,825	2,109

Source: RRC Associates

CURRENT CONDITIONS

FACILITIES AND SERVICES - IMPORTANCE

By Invite Sample

On a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very important," Invite respondents place high importance on walkways and trails and County parks & open space, averaging 4.4 and 4.2, respectively. Gymnasiums for indoor sports and events and an indoor recreation center are of the lowest importance.

Q 13: How important are the following facilities and services to your household?
Invite

Rating Category	Av..	n=	Percent Responding: 1 & 2	3	4 & 5
Walkways and trails	4.4	275	8%	5%	87%
County parks and open spaces	4.2	275	11%	9%	80%
Amenities at County Parks (e.g., picnic areas, playgrounds)	3.7	275	20%	17%	63%
Special events (e.g., festivals, outdoor concerts, 5k races)	3.5	278	22%	23%	55%
Outdoor Recreation Facilities (tracks, exercise circuits, etc.)	3.4	278	28%	20%	52%
Venues to rent for family/friends gatherings or events (e.g., large pavilions, lawn areas)	3.1	274	33%	24%	43%
Outdoor Aquatics (pools, splash pads, etc.)	3.0	277	39%	14%	47%
Community centers	3.0	271	35%	26%	39%
Dog parks	3.0	275	39%	19%	42%
Youth recreation and sports programs	2.9	277	44%	17%	39%
Athletic courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, volleyball)	2.9	275	43%	18%	38%
After-school and summer camp programs for children	2.8	277	48%	16%	36%
Athletic fields (e.g., baseball, football, soccer)	2.8	276	48%	18%	34%
Adult recreation and sports programs	2.7	275	49%	21%	30%
Indoor Aquatics (lap pools, open swim, splash pads, etc.)	2.6	278	49%	19%	31%
Gymnasiums for indoor sports and events	2.5	274	53%	22%	25%
Indoor Recreation Center	2.5	275	55%	21%	24%
(Optional) Other	3.2	73	38%	13%	49%

*Ratings categories are sorted in descending order by the average rating

Source: RRC Associates

FACILITIES AND SERVICES - NEEDS MET

By Invite Sample

On a scale of 1-5, where 5 is "completely meeting the needs," for the Invite respondents, almost all categories meet the needs of the community sufficiently, with a rating of 3.0 or above, except for indoor aquatics (2.8).

Q 13: How well are the following facilities and services meeting the needs of the community?
Invite

Rating Category	Av..	n=	Percent Responding: 1 & 2	3	4 & 5
Walkways and trails	3.9	214	11%	21%	69%
City parks and open spaces	3.8	204	8%	28%	64%
Amenities at City Parks (e.g., picnic areas, playgrounds)	3.8	190	12%	25%	64%
Athletic fields (e.g., baseball, football, soccer)	3.7	172	13%	24%	62%
Athletic courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, volleyball)	3.7	174	14%	25%	61%
Youth recreation and sports programs	3.6	134	22%	20%	58%
Outdoor Recreation Facilities (tracks, exercise circuits, etc.)	3.6	179	18%	25%	57%
Special events (e.g., festivals, outdoor concerts, 5k races)	3.5	171	22%	24%	53%
Dog parks	3.5	174	20%	31%	49%
Venues to rent for family/friends gatherings or events (e.g., large pavilions, lawn areas)	3.4	144	25%	30%	45%
After-school and summer camp programs for children	3.4	124	28%	23%	49%
Community centers	3.4	156	23%	31%	46%
Outdoor Aquatics (pools, splash pads, etc.)	3.3	162	29%	19%	51%
Adult recreation and sports programs	3.2	142	29%	30%	41%
Indoor Recreation Center	3.2	136	31%	27%	42%
Gymnasiums for indoor sports and events	3.0	128	36%	27%	38%
Indoor Aquatics (lap pools, open swim, splash pads, etc.)	2.8	139	44%	20%	35%

*Ratings categories are sorted in descending order by the average rating

Source: RRC Associates

FACILITIES AND SERVICES - IMPORTANCE

By Open Link Sample

Walkways and trails, County parks & open space, amenities at County parks, outdoor recreation facilities, special events, and outdoor aquatics represent the top important categories for Open link respondents, with a rating of 3.5 and above. Open link respondents also agree gymnasiums for indoor sports and events are of lesser importance.

Q 13: How important are the following facilities and services to your household?

Open Link

Rating Category	Av..	n=	Percent Responding: 1 & 2	3	4 & 5
Walkways and trails	4.5	1,707	5%	8%	87%
County parks and open spaces	4.5	1,705	4%	10%	86%
Amenities at County Parks (e.g., picnic areas, playgrounds)	4.3	1,693	8%	13%	80%
Outdoor Recreation Facilities (tracks, exercise circuits, etc.)	3.8	1,703	17%	19%	64%
Special events (e.g., festivals, outdoor concerts, 5k races)	3.7	1,697	17%	23%	61%
Outdoor Aquatics (pools, splash pads, etc.)	3.6	1,687	25%	17%	58%
Youth recreation and sports programs	3.3	1,692	32%	15%	52%
Athletic fields (e.g., baseball, football, soccer)	3.2	1,683	34%	19%	47%
Athletic courts (e.g., basketball, tennis, volleyball)	3.2	1,688	32%	23%	45%
After-school and summer camp programs for children	3.1	1,691	39%	17%	44%
Indoor Aquatics (lap pools, open swim, splash pads, etc.)	3.1	1,699	38%	21%	41%
Venues to rent for family/friends gatherings or events (e.g., large pavilions, lawn areas)	3.1	1,686	32%	27%	41%
Community centers	3.1	1,693	30%	32%	38%
Adult recreation and sports programs	2.9	1,695	40%	24%	36%
Dog parks	2.8	1,691	43%	21%	36%
Indoor Recreation Center	2.8	1,693	45%	24%	31%
Gymnasiums for indoor sports and events	2.7	1,686	46%	25%	29%
(Optional) Other	3.3	1,036	35%	17%	49%

*Ratings categories are sorted in descending order by the average rating

Source: RRC Associates

FACILITIES AND SERVICES - NEEDS MET

By Open Link Sample

Open link respondents scored the categories lower than Invite respondents for "meeting the needs of the community". They also agree that indoor aquatics has room for improvement.

Q 13: How well are the following facilities and services meeting the needs of the community?

Invite

Rating Category	Av..	n=	Percent Responding: 1 & 2	3	4 & 5
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Source: RRC Associates

AVERAGE IMPORTANCE - PERFORMANCE MATRIX

The average importance-performance matrix provides comparison between the importance of select facilities and programs and how well respondents feel the County is meeting the needs of the community in those same areas.

This following diagram provides an overview of how to interpret these matrices.

High Importance/Low Needs Met

These are key areas for potential improvements. Improving these facilities/programs would likely positively affect the degree to which community needs are met overall.

High Importance/High Needs Met

These amenities are important to most respondents and should be maintained in the future; however, these are less of a priority for improvements, as needs are currently adequately met.

Low Importance/Low Needs Met

These "niche" facilities/programs have a small but passionate following, so measuring participation when planning for future improvements may prove to be valuable.

Low Importance/High Needs Met

Current levels of support appear to be adequate. Future discussions evaluating whether the resources supporting these facilities/programs outweigh the benefits may be constructive.

INCREASING THE USE OF PARKS & OPEN SPACE FACILITIES, PROGRAMS, AND SERVICES

The top area that, if addressed, would increase use by Invite respondents is "closer facilities to where I live or work"; for Open link respondents, it is "additional facilities and amenities". Improved communications about offerings, additional lighting, and better condition/maintenance of parks or facilities are other key areas. The top 5 most important areas are the same across sample types, indicating similar needs across the community.

Q 14: What are the most important areas, that if addressed by Alachua County Parks and Open Space, would increase your use of parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services? (Check all that apply)

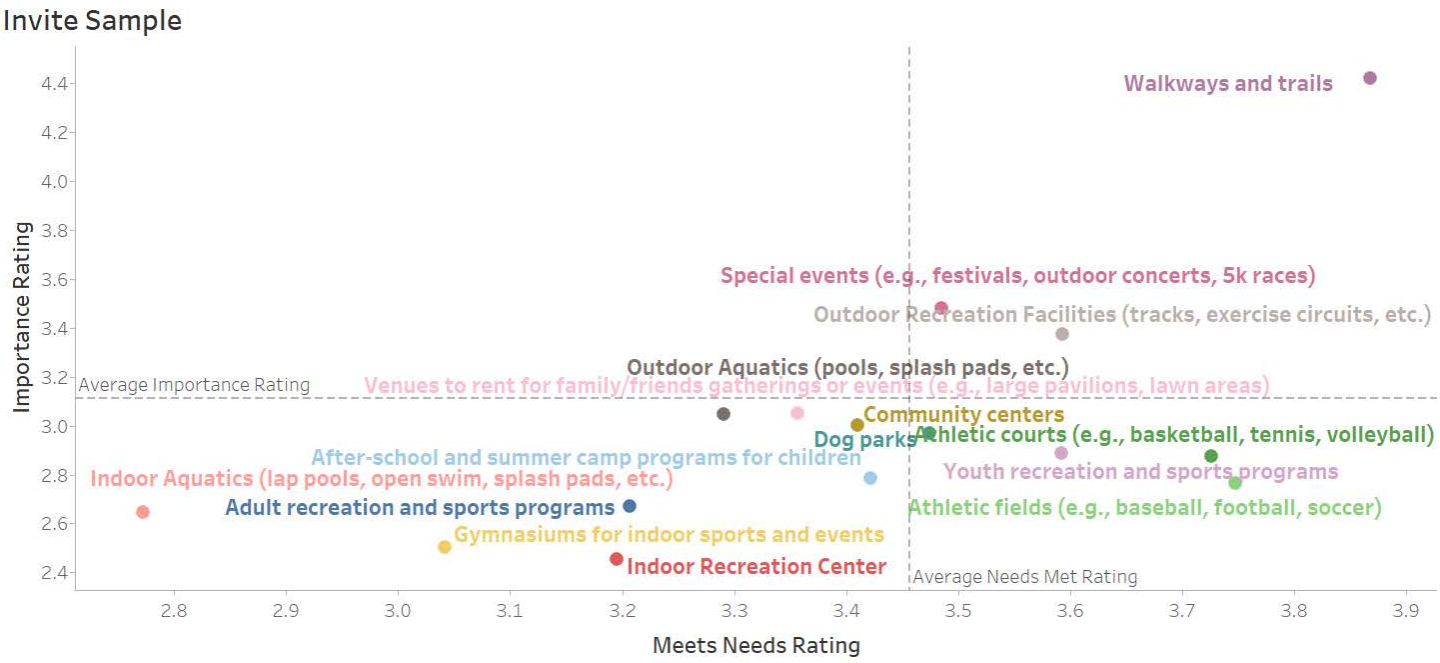
	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Facilities closer to where I live or work	44%	49%	48%
Additional facilities and amenities	42%	55%	53%
Improved communication about offerings	37%	38%	38%
Additional lighting (e.g., parks, trails, facilities)	35%	36%	36%
Better condition/maintenance of parks or facilities	34%	38%	37%
Improved safety and security	23%	23%	23%
More parking	22%	26%	25%
Lower pricing/user fees	20%	16%	17%
WiFi connectivity	20%	16%	16%
Better accessibility for people with disabilities	19%	17%	17%
Expanded hours of operation	18%	18%	18%
Better signage/wayfinding	17%	14%	15%
Improved customer service/staff knowledge	13%	7%	8%
Other	16%	18%	18%
n=	264	1,471	1,735

Source: RRC Associates

FACILITIES AND AMENITIES

By Invite Sample Average

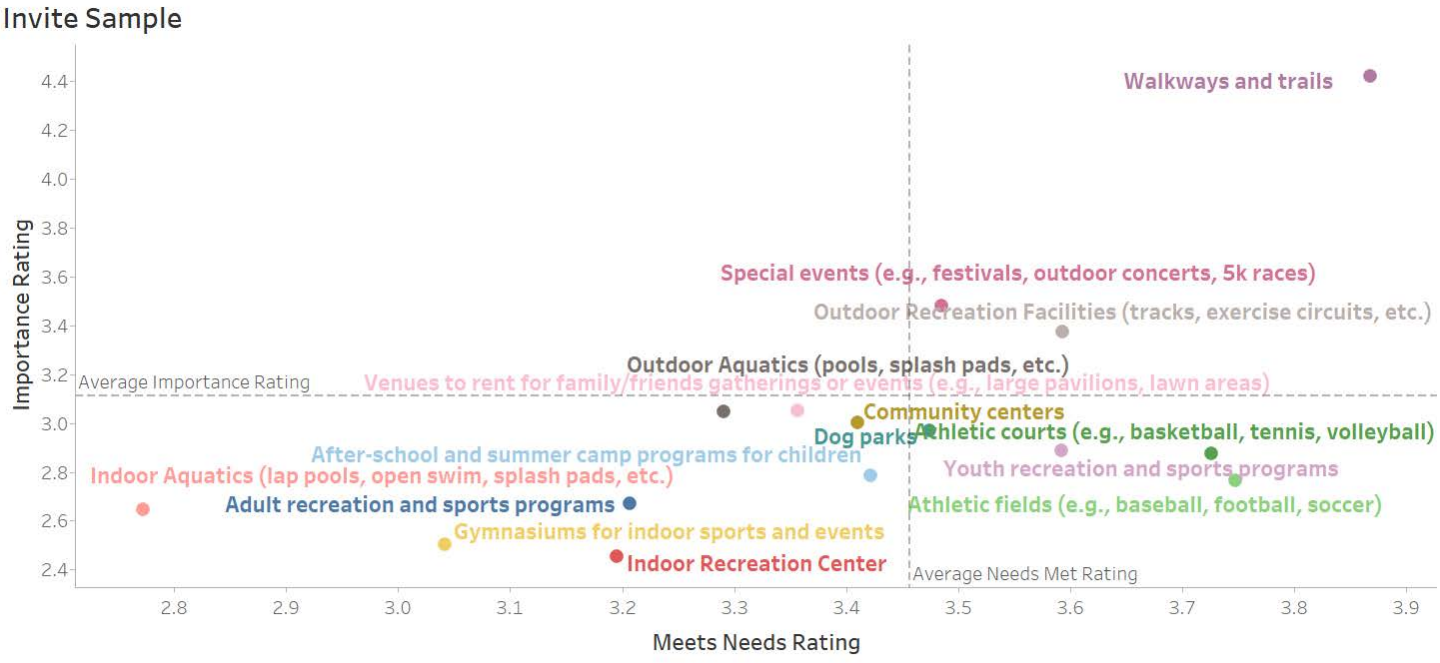
There are no facilities or amenities in the high importance/low needs met category, which is a good sign that the County is doing well. Invite respondents are particularly happy with walkways and trails, and rated them with high importance.



Source: RRC Associates

By Open Link Sample Average

Open link respondents prove to be more variable across the average, with walkways and trails scoring high in both categories. Outdoor aquatics is the only amenity in the high importance/low needs met category.



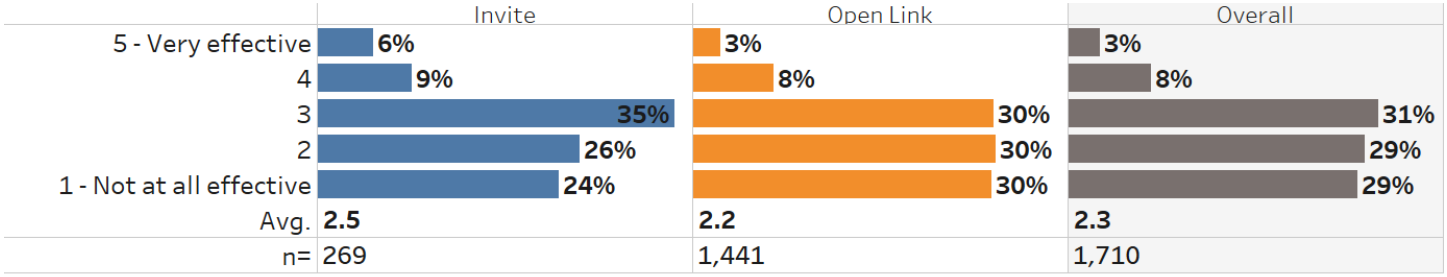
Source: RRC Associates

COMMUNICATION

EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION

There is room for improvement for the County to increase the effectiveness of communication about parks and recreation opportunities. The average rating given by Invite respondents was a 2.5 on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being "very effective"; the Open link respondents averaged 2.2.

Q 15: How effective is Alachua County Parks and Open Space at reaching you with information on parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services?

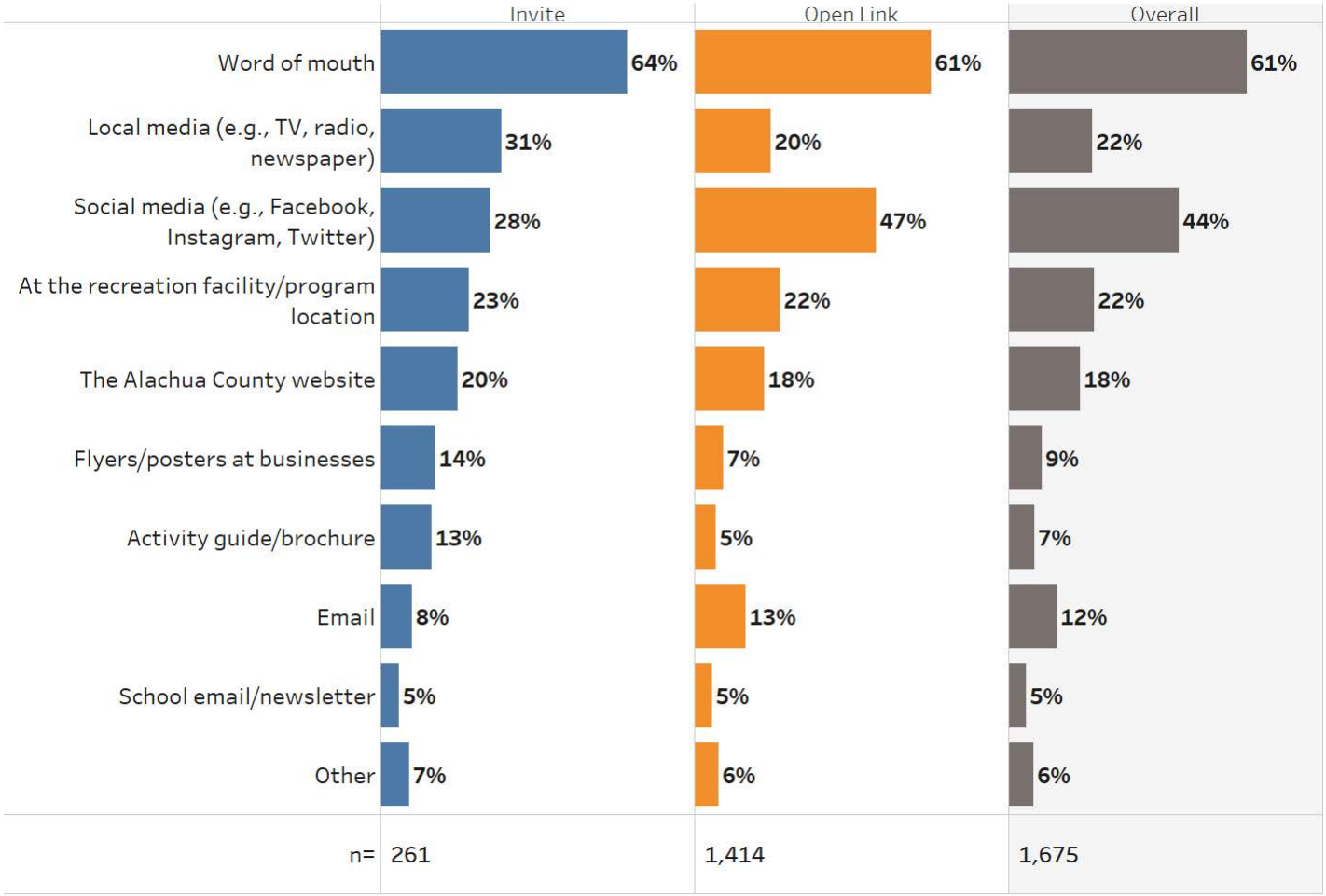


Source: RRC Associates

CURRENT COMMUNICATION METHODS

Most individuals receive information about parks and recreation opportunities through word of mouth.
Invite respondents use local media more frequently, and Open link respondents use social media more frequently.

Q 16: How do you currently receive information on parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services offered by Alachua County Parks and Open Space? (Check all that apply)

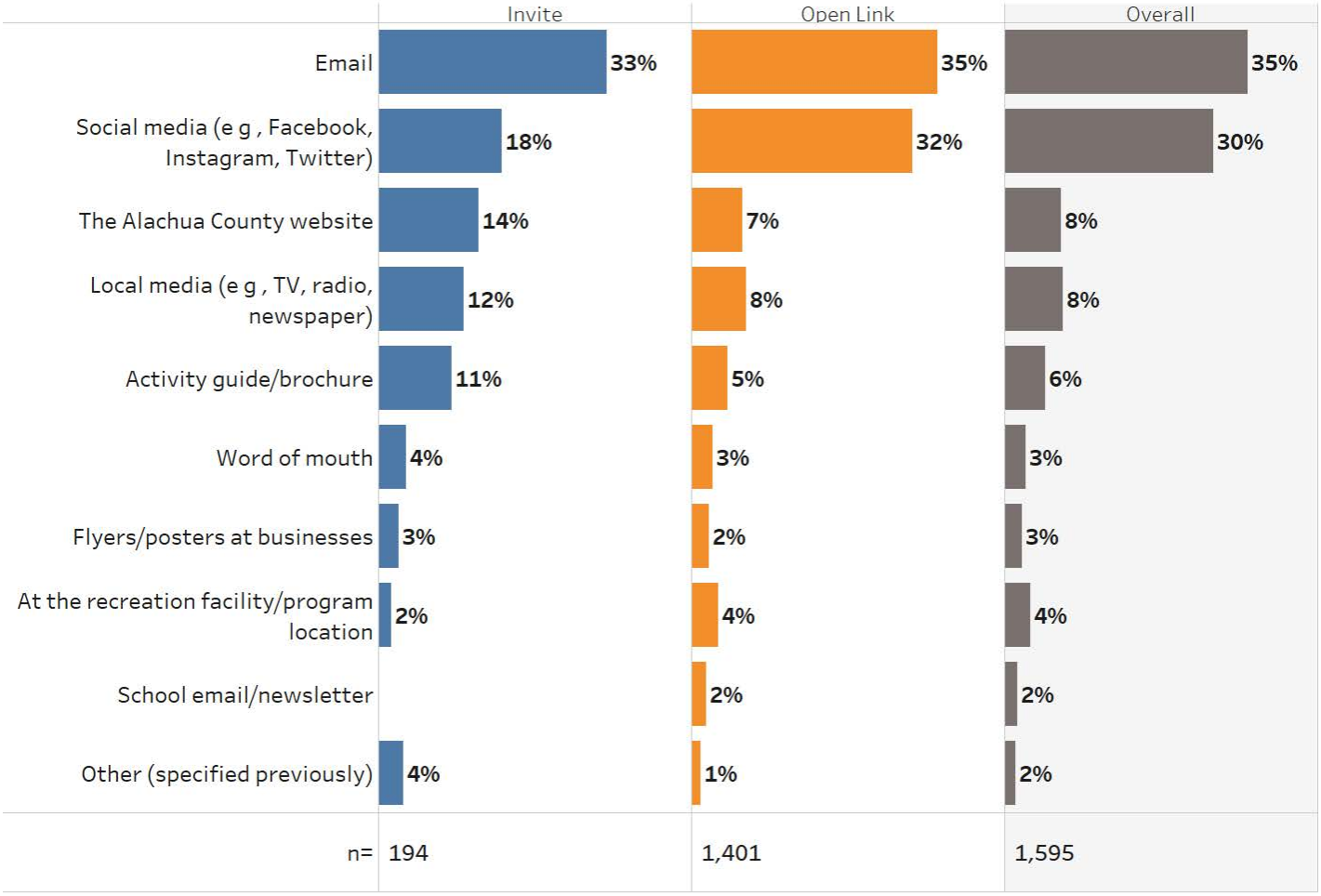


Source: RRC Associates

PREFERRED COMMUNICATION

The two most preferred methods of communication by both samples is email, followed by social media. Invite respondents are more likely to use the Alachua County website, local media, and the activity guide/brochure.

Q 17: What is the preferred way for you to receive information on parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services?



Source: RRC Associates

FUTURE NEEDS - MOST IMPORTANT NEEDS FOR IMPROVEMENT

FACILITIES

Additional trails, adding more parks, and making improvements to and/or renovating existing parks or facilities are rated most important for both samples.

Q 18: What are the most important needs for improvement in Alachua County over the next 5 to 10 years?
Facilities

Rating Category	Sample	Av..	n=	Percent Responding: 1 & 2	3	4 & 5
Additional trails/paths that connect throughout the county	Invite	4.2	252	12%	11%	20% 57% 77%
	Open Link	4.1	1,..	11%	14%	21% 53% 75%
Add more parks	Invite	3.9	246	15%	17%	51% 68%
	Open Link	4.3	1,..	9%	12%	19% 60% 79%
Make improvements to and/or renovate existing parks or facilities	Invite	3.8	242	15%	23%	22% 40% 62%
	Open Link	4.1	1,..	9%	19%	25% 47% 72%
More community gardens	Invite	3.4	230	26%	23%	20% 30% 50%
	Open Link	3.3	1,..	30%	24%	20% 26% 46%
Outdoor aquatics (pools & splash pads)	Invite	3.2	123	18% 34%	22%	30% 44%
	Open Link	3.5	1,..	27%	16%	40% 57%
Add outdoor sports fields and sports courts	Invite	3.0	227	22% 18% 41%	22%	21% 38%
	Open Link	3.5	1,..	27%	22%	35% 51%
New indoor aquatics center	Invite	2.7	223	30% 21% 51%	16%	19% 33%
	Open Link	2.9	1,..	28% 16% 45%	16%	27% 39%
Additional dog parks	Invite	2.8	231	26% 21% 47%	20%	17% 33%
	Open Link	2.7	1,..	30% 18% 48%	20%	18% 32%
New recreation center	Invite	2.8	218	24% 19% 44%	27%	17% 30%
	Open Link	3.0	1,..	21% 17% 38%	25%	19% 36%

5 - Very important
2
3
1 - Not at all important
4

*Ratings categories are sorted in descending order by the average rating

Source: RRC Associates

PROGRAMS & SERVICES

Programs and services are of higher importance to both samples. There is a need for programs for residents of all ages, including kids, teens, and seniors.

Q 18: What are the most important needs for improvement in Alachua County over the next 5 to 10 years?

Programs & Services

Rating Category	Sample	Av..	n=	Percent Responding: 1 & 2	3	4 & 5
More activities for kids	Invite	3.7	214	16% 25%	12%	18% 45% 63%
	Open Link	3.9	1,..	17%	16%	19% 48% 67%
Additional summer programs for kids	Invite	3.6	216	17% 27%	11%	18% 45% 62%
	Open Link	3.6	1,..	23%	18%	19% 40% 59%
More teen and youth programs	Invite	3.4	213	19% 30%	17%	16% 38% 54%
	Open Link	3.6	1,..	20%	21%	21% 38% 59%
More senior programs	Invite	3.4	219	17% 24%	24%	20% 32% 52%
	Open Link	3.4	1,..	18% 27%	23%	18% 32% 50%
More fitness/wellness/health programs	Invite	3.4	224	17% 26%	23%	20% 31% 51%
	Open Link	3.5	1,..	23%	26%	23% 28% 51%
More adult programs	Invite	3.3	217	17% 16% 33%	20%	32% 47%
	Open Link	3.3	1,..	27%	23%	23% 26% 49%
Offer aquatic programs	Invite	3.1	202	27% 34%	20%	24% 22% 46%
	Open Link	3.4	1,..	26%	22%	19% 33% 52%
(Optional) Other - specify in follow-up question	Invite	3.3	40	33%	13%	46% 54%
	Open Link	4.3	435	12%	9%	72% 78%

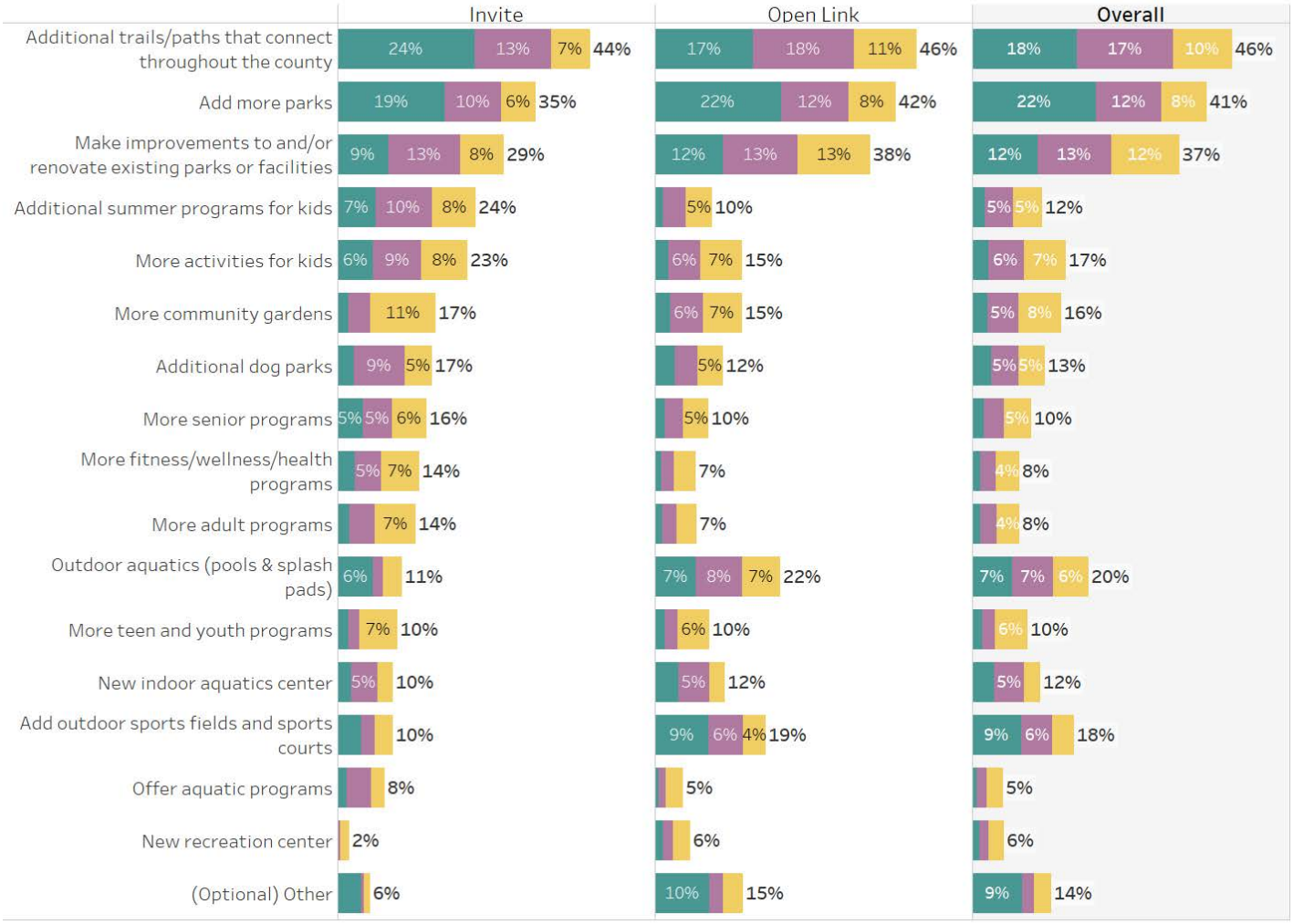
*Ratings categories are sorted in descending order by the average rating

Source: RRC Associates

TOP THREE PRIORITIES

The two samples agree on the top three priorities: additional trails, add more parks, and make improvements to and/or renovate existing parks or facilities. The open link respondents feel stronger about outdoors aquatics and adding outdoor sports fields and sports courts.

Q 19: From the list in the previous question, which three facilities, programs and services are the highest priorities to your household?



Source: RRC Associates

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/SUGGESTIONS

Respondents were offered an opportunity at the end of the survey to provide any additional comments and suggestions for Alachua County. A total of 933 additional comments were received. Common themes are outlined below, and a list of full responses is included in the Appendix.

Appreciation

"Thank you for all you do. These services are the main reason I love Gainesville."

"I think Alachua has done an amazing job so far, it's about attuning/ fine tuning to meet changing population demographics now. Thank you!"

Disc Golf Courses

"Add more disc golf courses. The only 2 large courses in the area will not be enough to sustain the large amount of traffic due to the huge growth of disc golf in the last year. We need 1-2 more ones in the county."

"Alachua Counties disc golf scene has exploded in recent years. While the 2 existing courses are great we could really use another."

Restrooms

"Add or maintain restrooms at parks, all parks should have a restroom with water fountain."

"Bathrooms need more management, they are aways filthy."

"Please maintain the bathrooms better. Thanks!"

Roller Skating

"Additional park spaces for roller skating could add to the culture of Alachua County, and nighttime lighting and a covered or (even better!) indoor space could add to its usability."

"It would be nice to have a free outdoor skating rink. I would go more often to parks that had this if it were an option. Preferably a covered one to get protection from the rain and summer sun."

Green Spaces

"Keep Alachua county green! Thank you for prioritizing parks and recreations spaces with trees and fields."

"Keep green park areas with facilities for walking, jogging and gardens and picnic areas as well as concession stands. Residents need parks for children to play, take dogs for walks, NEAR their homes. And seniors need places to meet and relax safely."

DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER & AGE

The greater portion of respondents who completed the survey was female. Invite respondents skewed a bit older, while Open link respondents were somewhat younger.

Q 21: Please indicate the gender with which you identify

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Female	56%	68%	66%
Male	40%	27%	30%
I prefer to identify as:	1%	1%	1%
Prefer not to answer	2%	4%	4%
n=	271	1,401	1,672

Source: RRC Associates

Q 22: What is your age?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Under 34	15%	22%	21%
35 – 44	16%	30%	28%
45 – 54	16%	19%	18%
55 – 64	20%	12%	13%
65 – 74	26%	13%	15%
75 or over	7%	4%	5%
n=	267	1,395	1,662

Source: RRC Associates

HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP

A greater percentage of Open link respondents are couples with children at home. Invite respondents are relatively dispersed in terms of household makeup.

Q 23: Which of these categories best applies to your household?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Couple with children at home	21%	45%	41%
Couple, no children	20%	16%	17%
Couple, children no longer at home (empty nester)	18%	12%	13%
Single, no children	18%	11%	12%
Multi-generational home (grandparents, parents, children)	10%	6%	7%
Single, children no longer at home (empty nester)	7%	4%	4%
Single with children at home	6%	6%	6%
n=	266	1,394	1,660

Source: RRC Associates

STUDENTS, HOMEOWNERSHIP, AND REGISTERED VOTERS

Most respondents are not students, own their own home, and are registered voters in Alachua County.

4: Are you a student?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
No	92%	92%	92
Yes	8%	8%	8%
n=	264	1,395	1,659

Source: RRC Assoc

Q 25: Do you own or rent your residence?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Own	88%	83%	84%
Rent	12%	15%	14%
Other	0%	2%	2%
n=	267	1,402	1,669

Source: RRC Associates

Q 26: Are you a registered voter in the Alachua County?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Yes	97%	95%	96%
No	3%	5%	4%
n=	268	1,398	1,666

Source: RRC Associates

ADA NEEDS

A total of 13% of Invite respondent households has a need for ADA-accessible facilities and services.

Q 27: Does your household have a need for ADA-accessible (Americans with Disabilities) facilities and services?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
No	87%	90%	89%
Yes	13%	10%	11%
n=	264	1,395	1,659

Source: RRC Associates

DOG OWNERSHIP

About half of Invite respondents have a dog.

Q 28: Do you or a member of your household own a dog?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
No	52%	43%	44%
Yes	48%	57%	56%
n=	267	1,397	1,664

Source: RRC Associates

ETHNICITY & RACE

Most respondents are not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin and are white. A total of 6% consider themselves Asian and 6% are Black or African-American, with smaller shares representing other races.

Q 29: Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
No	92%	91%	91%
Yes	8%	9%	9%
n=	259	1,391	1,650

Source: RRC Associates

Q 30: What race do you consider yourself to be? (Check all that apply)

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
White	87%	90%	90%
Some other race	8%	6%	6%
Asian	6%	3%	3%
Black or African American	6%	4%	4%
American Indian and Alaska Native	2%	1%	1%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%	0%	0%
n=	259	1,372	1,631

Source: RRC Associates

INCOME

Invite respondents are low- to mid-income level, while Open link respondents skew slightly more affluent.

Q 31: Which of these categories best describes the total gross annual income of your household (before taxes)?

	Invite	Open Link	Overall
Under $25,000	7%	4%	5%
$25,000–49,999	19%	13%	14%
$50,000–74,999	19%	16%	16%
$75,000–99,999	19%	19%	19%
$100,000–149,999	18%	25%	24%
$150,000–199,999	7%	10%	10%
$200,000–249,999	5%	5%	5%
$250,000 or more	6%	6%	6%
n=	238	1,315	1,553

Source: RRC Associates

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Public Workshops

PUBLIC WORKSHOP FORMAT

The team facilitated four public workshops at public parks, allowing Alachua County residents various opportunities to give their input. Public workshops were held in an informal open-house style, with various stations providing opportunities for input and conversation between residents and the project team. Workshops were conducted during weekday evening hours to accommodate work schedules, and were held in frequently used parks.

Public workshops have two major goals: to receive input from the community as to their needs and desires, and to educate new park advocates who are excited and engaged with their park system. Each of the various stations were specially designed to reach these goals.

The following is a breakdown of the stations and the type of input collected at each point.

WELCOME STATION

As participants entered the workshop, they were greeted at a welcome table and given a brief summary of the project and public workshop format. Comment cards were distributed for participants to fill out and return by the end of the workshop.

Comment cards included the following prompts:

I am ___ years old and I live in_____.
I like parks that_____.
In the future, I hope Alachua County Parks can become places for_____.
Can't wait to _____ in the parks!

The prompts aimed to target the residents' aspirational goals and desires for the park system to follow.

LIVE WORK PLAY STATION

Activity

Participants were asked to mark the locations of where they live and work, and what parks they play in on the County map using sticker dots. The facilitator guided participants through the map and pointed out the various parks currently existing within the system to help ensure participants understood the map and directions for the activity. Sticker dots were color-coded, with red sticker dots used to mark where participants live, blue dots marking where they work, and green dots marking where they play. Participants were prompted to elaborate on why they may prefer to commute to a park.

Purpose

This activity provided the project team with an understanding of which parks are most used, how other park systems contribute to providing service within Alachua County, and why participants may be driving long distances to reach a park. As part of this activity, participants were given a map highlighting the location of all the County parks to help further their awareness of park locations that they might have not previously known about.

WRITE-ON-ME STATION

Activity

Participants were given an Alachua County map that highlighted County parks. Residents were asked to write directly on the map, indicating general or specific comments regarding the vision they have about parks in their area. This activity was facilitated by a team member who helped participants expand on the written comments and draw out additional desires and needs for the community.

Purpose

This activity gathered input on geographically specific aspirations for the community for their County's park system, including where park amenities may be missing, desired amenities, and potential missing connections.

I WISH WE HAD MORE... STATION

Activity

Participants given six options for amenities (Sports Fields/Courts, Trails, Natural Areas, Recreation Centers, Playgrounds, and Other) they would like to see more of in their area. They were then asked to vote for their preferred option by placing stickers on a map, and could further expand on their specific choice with the station facilitator.

Purpose

This activity served as a conversation starter to help participants identify what they determine to be key components of a successful park, as well as provide insight on the desired programming of specific communities. This input helped identify why some parks may be loved in a community, while others remain unused and abandoned regardless of proximity or access. It also helped identify amenities that may be missing or in high demand within the park system.

SURVEY

The survey station, equipped with a laptop, was available to capture participants' responses via the Open link survey. Participants could complete the survey during the workshop, and a written link was provided, so that the survey could be shared and promoted to others or be taken at another time.

TIMELINE

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1
May 10, 2022, 5:30-7:30 pm
Veterans Memorial Park
7400 SW 41st Pl, Gainesville, FL

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2
May 11, 2022, 5:30-7:30 pm
Jonesville Park
NW 32nd Ave NW 143rd St,
Gainesville, FL

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #3
May 24,2022, 5:30-7:30pm
T.B. McPherson
1717 SE 15th St, Gainesville, FL

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #4
May 25, 2022, 5:30-7:30pm
T.B. McPherson
1717 SE 15th St, Gainesville, FL

PUBLIC WORKSHOP INPUT SUMMARY

The project team facilitated public workshop meetings at three different locations, including two County parks. All meetings were advertised as being open to all County residents. As a result, there was overlap between attendees of different meetings. Input has been organized based on general comments and specific station input.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Spaces for Everyone

Throughout the first two workshops, participants expressed the value of senior-focused resources as well as youth activities. Residents prioritized amenities that could provide activities for different ages and levels of ability. Residents expressed the importance of parks that serve many different types of users, with features such as additional active amenities and social spaces. Based on their input, an ideal park would provide a variety of amenities serving the entire family, sufficient parking, and protection from the elements.

Sports

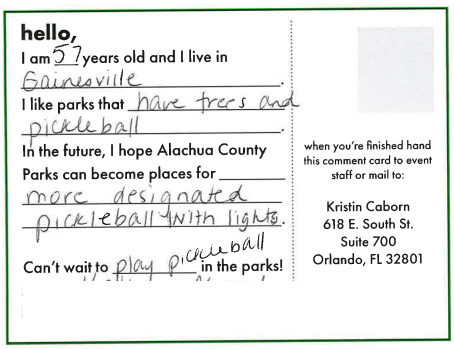
The community showed a strong desire for sports, such as pickleball, soccer, and disc golf, in addition to currently provided sport fields and courts. Many participants emphasized the positive impact that sports have had in generating a sense of community and suggested the need for infrastructure that supports the fast-growing interest of various sports.

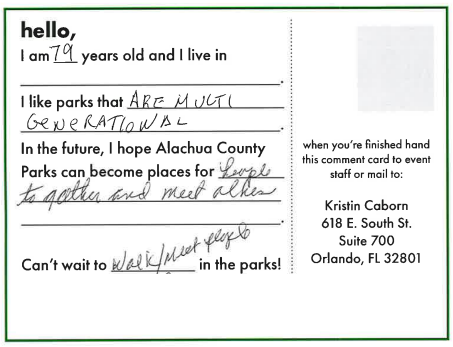
Protection from the Elements

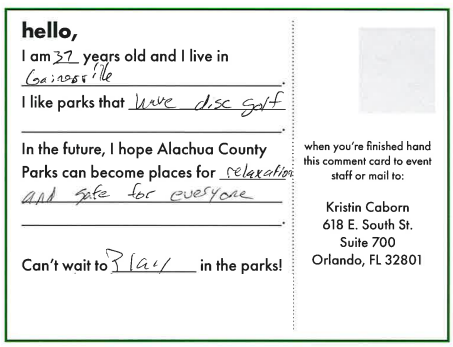
While Florida's climate provides year-long access to outdoor parks, high temperatures and inclement weather can be an obstacle for park users. Participants indicated that providing protection from the elements was key in creating parks that are inclusive and welcoming for all users. Additionally, covered sport courts and fields were also desirable to provide outdoor opportunities, regardless of Florida's heavy rain, thunderstorms, or heat.

Safety Measures

Additional lighting in the parks was requested to enhance safety during the evening or night.







STATION INPUT

Comment Cards

Across all age groups, participants valued active, multi-generational spaces—they also emphasized the need for spaces that bring community together and are equally accessible from all locations of the County. Participants expressed a desire for central gathering spaces (e.g., pavilion, outdoor stage, grouped picnic tables/benches) to help foster a sense of community. Many also noted the importance of nature trails and court-specific sports, such as pickleball and disc golf. Individuals also requested more trees, dog-friendly spaces, and an interconnected trail system.

Live Work Play

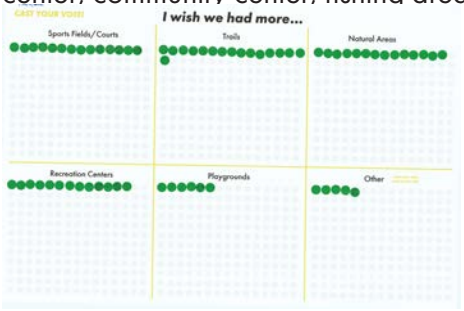
Most participants in the first two public workshops lived in western Alachua County. Fewer blue dots showed "work", as many of participants were retired. The majority of "work" indicated was in or around the City of Gainesville. The green dots showed a wide geographic distribution of park usage throughout the entire County, with a clear concentration of use at Rotary Park at Jonesville, Veterans Memorial Park, and eastern City of Gainesville parks. The second two public workshops included primarily participants living in the City of Gainesville, with only one located outside City boundaries. However, the green dots indicated park usage throughout the County, with groupings in Veterans Memorial Park, Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, Hawthorne State Trail (especially for cycling and hiking), and Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center. The few blue dots clustered in western and central City of Gainesville, were again likely due to many of the participants being retired.

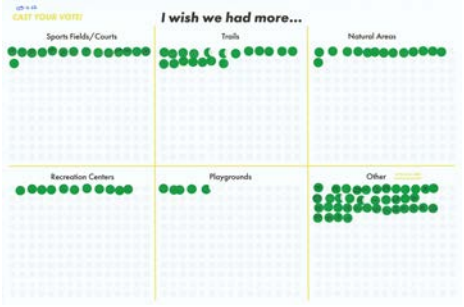
Write-On-Me

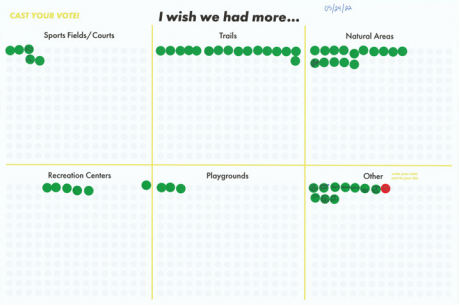
Remarks written on the map included the desire for new parks, community gardens, dog parks, natural areas, and multi-use fields, as well as a community center for indoor and outdoor activities. For specific sports, participants asked that 18-hole disc golf course and covered pickleball courts be added into the parks system. Participants expressed a desire for multi-purpose trails to connect key destinations (referred to by some as an "infinity loop"), as many of the existing parks are inaccessible due to missing/unsafe bicycle infrastructure or lack of sufficient parking. There is also a desire for more amenities providing public access to lake edges, as many edges are inaccessible without a boat; some users suggest the need for more lake beaches and fishing piers. Participants also noted that air boat noise coming from Orange Lake and Lochloosa Lake can impact the park experience at Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park. Comments at the station noted properties not managed by Alachua County, such as securing and expanding the green space and accessibility of the existing McRorie Community Garden in downtown Gainesville.

I Wish We Had More...

The dot voting activity showed that the overall priority for the participants are trails and natural areas, followed by sports fields and community centers. Safer multi-modal trails to connect "in-town" destinations and mountain bike trails were specifically written in. On the other hand, playgrounds did not receive a high number of votes. Under the "Others" category, additional desires included dog park, splash pad, community garden, senior center, exploration center, community center, fishing areas, and a community pool, along with an overall desire for more green space.







Focus Groups

TIMELINE

FOCUS GROUP #1
May 10, 2022, 10:30 am
Veterans Memorial Park
7400 SW 41st Pl, Gainesville, FL

FOCUS GROUP #2
May 10, 2022, 2:00 pm
Veterans Memorial Park
7400 SW 41st Pl, Gainesville, FL

FOCUS GROUP #3
May 19,2022, 6:00pm
Zoom Virtual Meeting

FOCUS GROUP #4
May 24, 2022, 4:00pm
T.B. McPherson
1717 SE 15th St, Gainesville, FL

The project team conducted focus groups with various members of the Alachua County community, such as sports leagues, program coordinators, and environmental groups for the purposes of targeted engagement and candid discussion about the County's Parks & Open Space System. Focus group meetings provided the project team an opportunity to gather vital information at the initial stages of the Master Plan process from people with intimate knowledge of the parks, programs, and activities currently available in the County.

Utilizing a sample list of the types of people to invite, County staff extended participation invitations to community members to participate in 1 of 4 focus group meetings. Individuals were brought together to share their experiences and knowledge with the project team, and to engage in conversation centered on a series of prompted questions prepared by the project team.

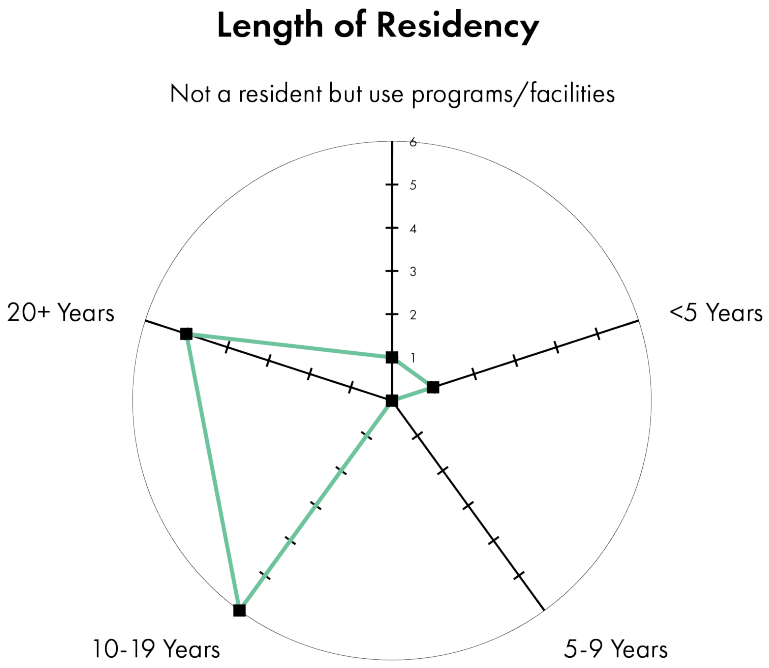
Prompted Questions:

1. How long have you been a resident of Alachua County?
2. How would you describe the existing Alachua County Parks & Open Space System? What are the strengths and weaknesses?
3. Do you or your family visit County parks? If so, which ones? Any City parks? Parks in next door counties?
4. How do you receive information about programs and facilities?
5. Big Idea Activity: Using the provided sticky note, write down a guiding principle for the County's Parks & Open Space Department. We will vote on these ideas together and determine what are some of your high priorities for the system. (Ideas: take care of what we have, canopy and wildlife, health and fitness, ability to walk from home, accessibility, and inclusivity, etc.)
6. Anything else? Here is your chance to tell us something we may be missing.

PROMPTED QUESTION SUMMARY

The following are summaries of the discussion and responses gathered at each focus group meeting.

How long have you been a resident of Alachua County?



Focus group participants consisted primarily of long-time Alachua County residents, with the majority of participants having been residents for more than a decade.

How would you describe the existing Alachua County Parks & Open Space System? What are the strengths and weaknesses?

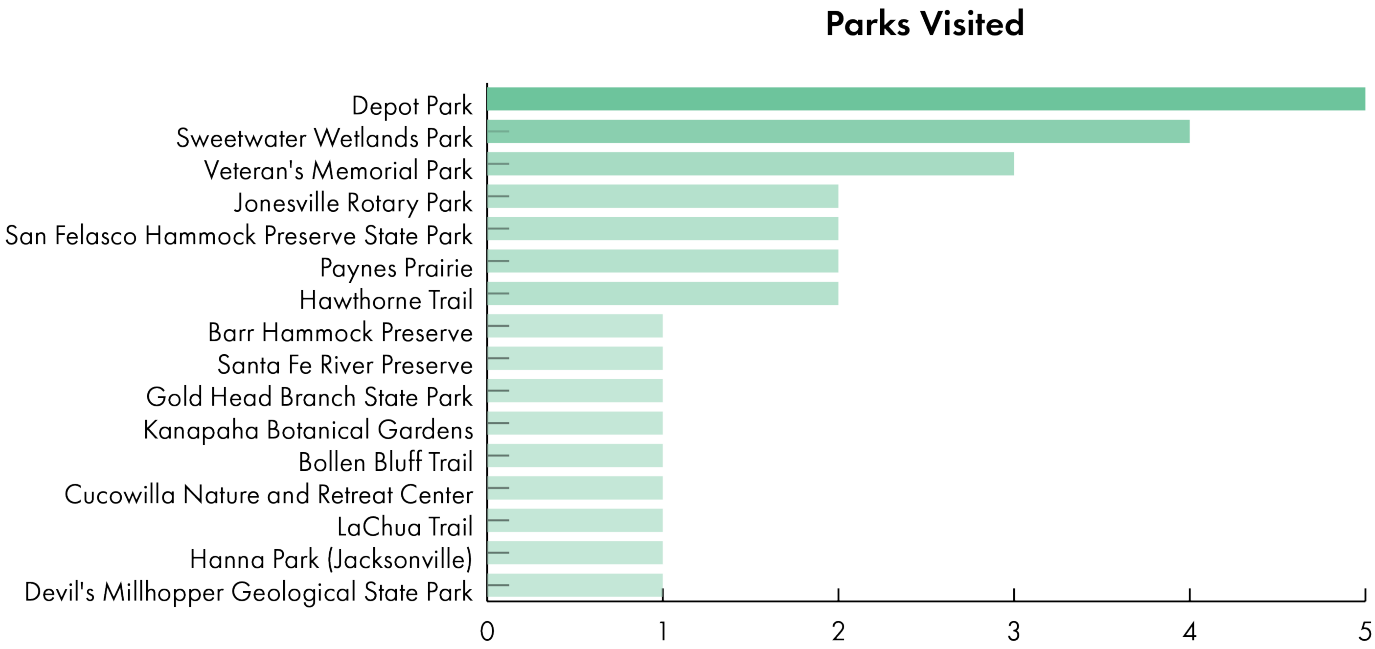
Strengths

Activities
Good number of parks
Clean
Accessible
Responsive to community interests
Well-maintained
Playgrounds
Pleasant
Variety of amenities
Good staff

Weaknesses

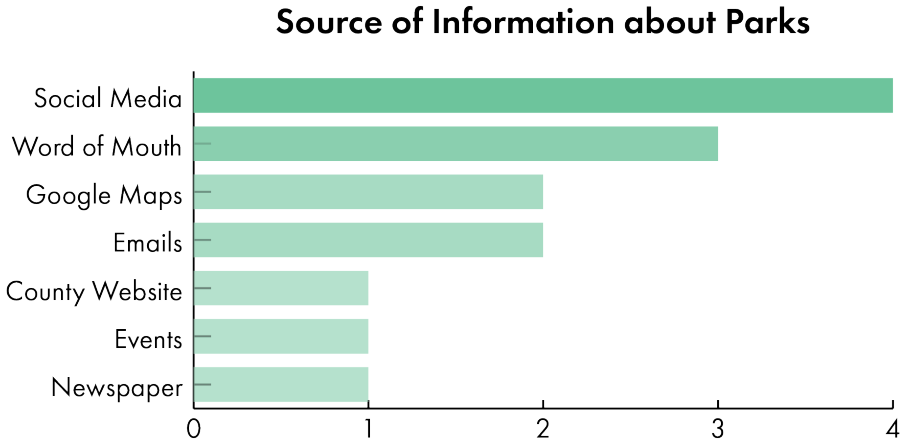
Limited exposure, communication, and marketing
No infrastructure to attract bigger leagues
Facilities need to expand
Lack of parking & lighting
No recreation or senior center
Not walking distance for many users
Not prepared for growth
Organized sports need more help
More maintenance needed
Understaffed & underfunded
Upgrades needed
Safety concerns

Do you or your family visit County parks? If so, which ones? Any City parks? Parks in next door counties?



Participants use a combination of County, City, and State facilities for their recreation needs. State Parks contribute resource-based recreation for many Alachua County residents. Active recreation use was primarily focused on Veterans Memorial Park and Jonesville Rotary Park.

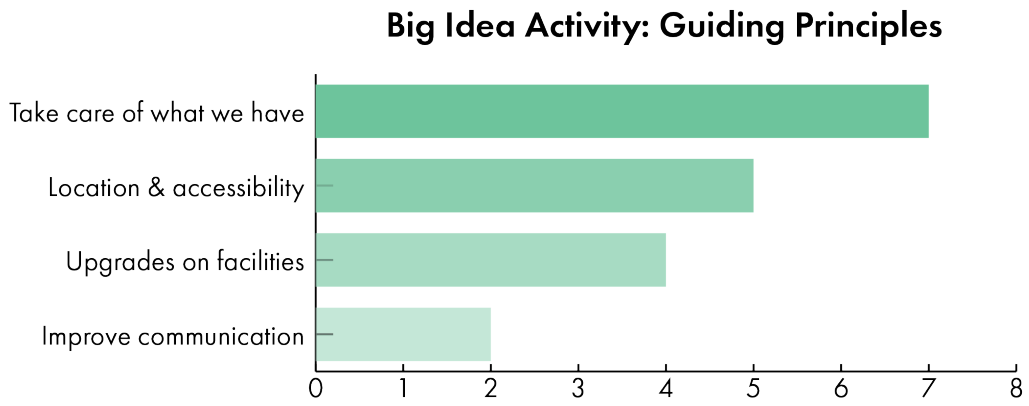
How do you get information about programs and facilities?



Throughout the various focus groups, participants expressed a need to improve communications about park offerings. Many felt that while the information existed, it was not always easy to find or presented in the most user-friendly way. Participants suggested that establishing a hierarchy of information between different parks would facilitate finding information about amenities in small neighborhood parks, while more complex parks could more easily communicate information about additional offerings such as reservations and events.

Additionally, participants felt that some information may be better served appearing both online and offline to reach a wider population, such as senior residents and residents who may not have access to the internet.

Big Idea Activity: Write down a guiding principle for the County's Parks & Open Space Department.



Participants were asked to share their "big ideas" for the Alachua County parks system, as well as vote on their priorities. Most participants prioritized maintaining and improving the existing park system; however, many also mentioned providing park access for all residents throughout the County, along with better communication of the park offerings to encourage usage and engagement with the community.

Additional Thoughts

Participants were interested in how attracting sports leagues at a regional scale could be beneficial to the park system and the local economy. Some opined that a park suited for regional league play could attract sponsors and generate income that could be used to improve the maintenance budget for the smaller parks.

Additionally, participants were interested in a maintenance plan for the parks. A particular topic of concern was turf management within sportsfields, as continuous play can cause erosion and an uneven playfield. The thought was that the County could explore the options of rotating sportsplay to allow the turf to recuperate, as well as evaluate the need for an additional sports complex to address capacity issues. One attendee was passionate about the need to recoup lost amenities from redevelopment—especially dedicated, covered space for roller sports, including roller skating, roller derby, and hockey. Existing space is not properly maintained, and prior suitable space was repurposed.

The online focus group emphasized the importance of ecological/natural areas to be intentionally incorporated into every park, in addition to the recreational amenities, such as pollinator gardens and interconnected trail systems.

3 - HOW DO WE GET THERE?

3.1 LEVEL OF SERVICE

The Level of Service analysis guides the Vision by determining where gaps in service exist and how future system improvements and acquisitions can help to fill those gaps. Based on the newly established geographic level of service, each resident should live within a close range of a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural).

The updated geographic LOS should be met using the following strategies:
1. Reclassify existing parks based on amenities
2. Upgrade existing parks with additional amenities
3. Expand existing parks by acquiring adjacent properties and adding new amenities/facilities
4. Acquire and develop new parks in unserved areas

The following section details the process by which these recommendations have been determined to provide an equitable level of service throughout Alachua County.

LEVEL OF SERVICE RECLASSIFICATION ANALYSIS

The map shown herein illustrates the results of the service area analysis after reclassifying a handful of parks in cases where the existing amenities were congruent with a different park classification. By reclassifying these parks, the LOS analysis begins to reveal greater service within the rural context. Five of the seven reclassified park have service areas that reach rural residents.

This reclassification analysis assumes the following, based on the definitions and criteria outlined in the Recreation Element:

TOT LOTS & POCKET PARKS

Tot Lots and Pocket Parks are excluded from the reclassified LOS analysis, because their implementation is generally more opportunistic, and the amenities they offer can be limited.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The reclassified LOS analysis maintains the existing LOS criteria for neighborhood parks; therefore, the map herein illustrates the same level of service.

COMMUNITY PARKS

The reclassified LOS analysis maintains the existing LOS criteria for community parks; therefore, the map herein illustrates the same level of service.

SPECIAL USE PARKS

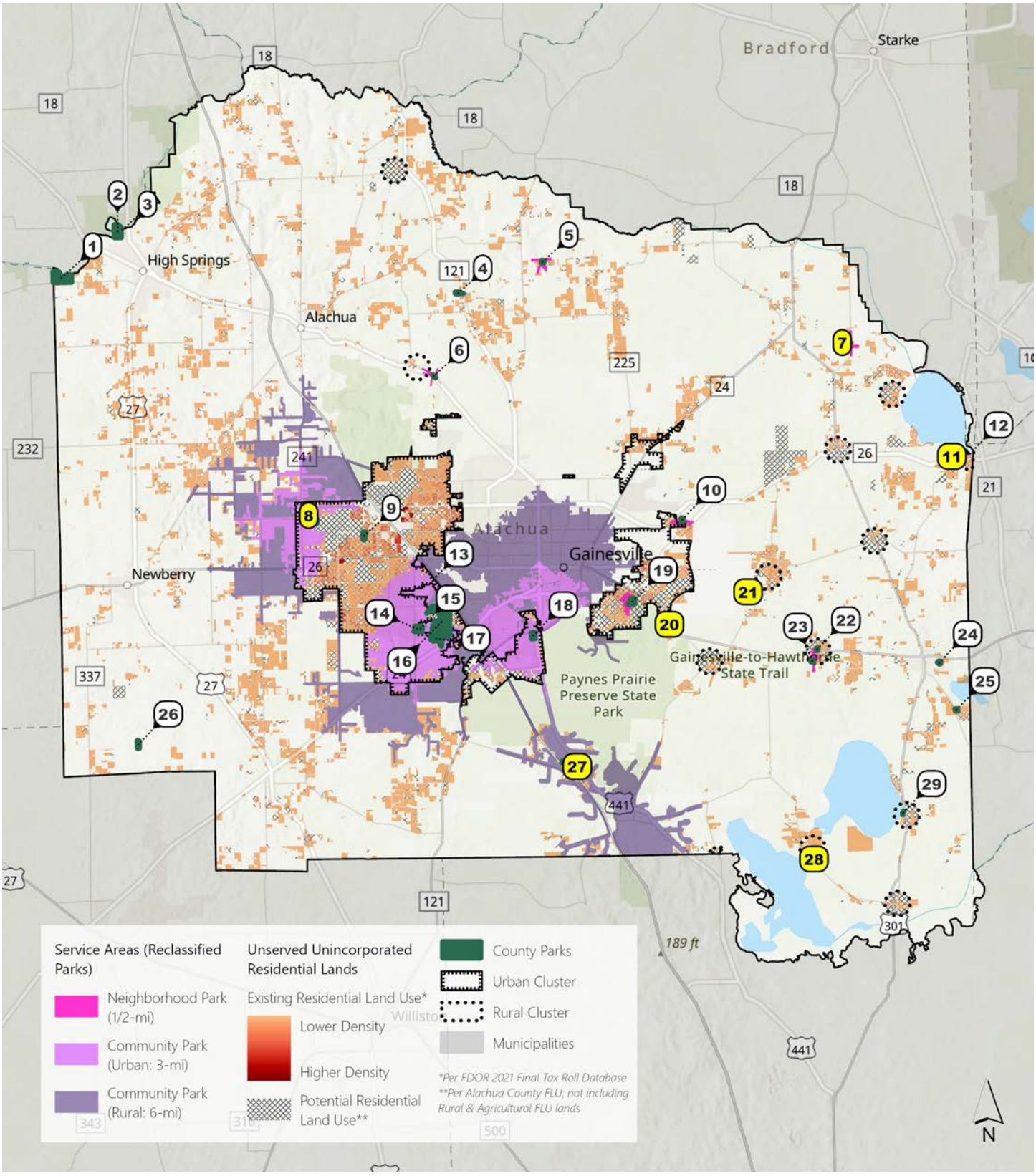
Seven of the 13 Special Use Activity and Special Resource Parks include amenities commonly found in neighborhood and/or community parks. As such, the reclassification analysis modifies their LOS criteria from a "County-wide" service area to a neighborhood or community park service area. In doing so, the map herein illustrates an additional five neighborhood parks and two community parks. This analysis reclassifies the following parks as either neighborhood or community:

- Lake Alto (Neighborhood)
- Rotary Park at Jonesville (Community)
- Santa Fe Lake (Neighborhood)
- Early P. Powers (Neighborhood)
- Owens-Illinois (Neighborhood)
- Cuscowilla Nature & Retreat Center(Community)
- Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park (Neighborhood)

Park ID	Park Name	Classification	Service Area (mi.)
1	Poe Springs	RR	-
2	McCall (Undeveloped)	NA	-
3	High Springs Boat Ramp	SR	-
4	Cellon Oak	NA	-
5	Monteocha	N	0.5
6	DeSoto Park	N	0.5
7	Lake Alto	N	0.5
8	Rotary Park at Jonesville	C	3.0
9	Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)	N	0.0
10	Copeland	N	0.5
11	Santa Fe Lake	N	0.5
12	Melrose Boat Ramp	SR	-
13	Mark S. Hopkins Park	P	-
14	Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)	C	3.0
15	Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)	C	6.0
16	Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)	NA	-
17	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	SR	-
18	Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)	C	3.0
19	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	N	0.5
20	Earl P. Powers	N	0.5
21	Owens-Illinois	N	0.5
22	Scott-Phifer House	H	-
23	Grove	N	0.5
24	Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)	N	0.0
25	Holden Pond	SR	-
26	Watermelon Pond	SR	-
27	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	C	6.0
28	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	N	0.5
29	Lochloosa	SR	-

N = Neighborhood C = Community H = Historic
NA = Nature P = Pocket
SR = Special Use Resource RR = Regional Resource

Map of Alachua County Parks Level of Service after Reclassification



PROPOSED LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS

The map shown illustrates the results of the service area analysis performed using LOS criteria recommended by this Master Plan. This recommended LOS criterion is based on survey results in which nearly 3 in 4 respondents stated a preference for using motor vehicles to access parks. The results of this LOS analysis reveal a greater portion of service within the rural context.

TOT LOTS & POCKET PARKS

Tot Lots and Pocket Parks are excluded from the proposed LOS analysis, because their implementation is generally more opportunistic, and the amenities they offer can be limited.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The proposed LOS criteria expands service area radius for neighborhood parks from 0.5 to 1-miles within urban contexts and adds a 2-mile service area radius within rural contexts. This change applies to ten parks, seven of which have service areas that are predominantly in rural contexts. The proposed LOS criteria affect the following neighborhood parks:

- Monteocha
- DeSoto Park
- Lake Alto
- Copeland
- Santa Fe Lake
- Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve
- Earl P. Powers
- Owens-Illinois

COMMUNITY PARKS

The proposed LOS analysis maintains the existing LOS criteria for community parks; therefore, the map herein illustrates the same level of service.

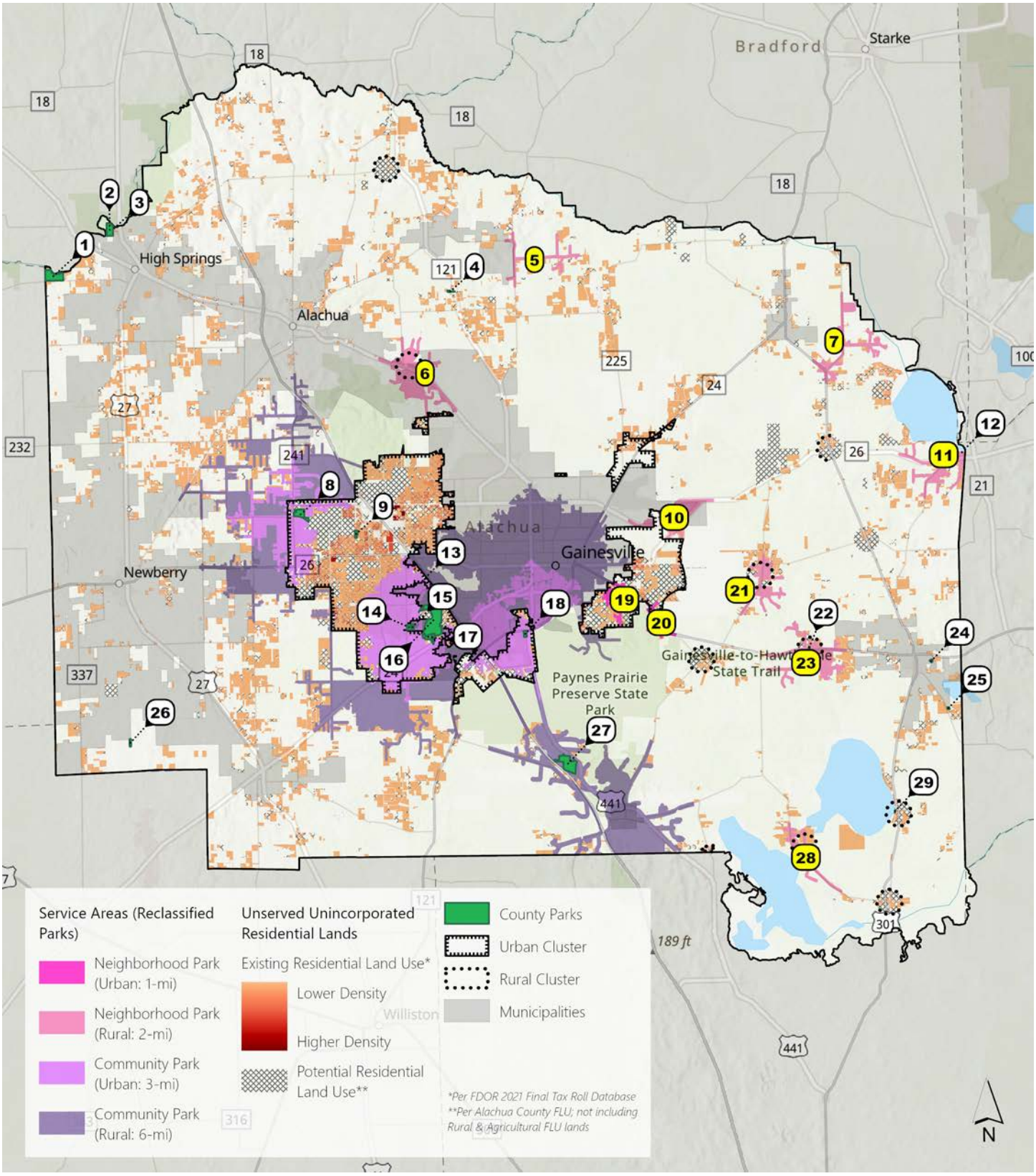
SPECIAL USE PARKS

Parks of these types provide county-wide service, per the LOS standards, therefore service areas are not depicted on the map. While the location of these parks is largely dependent on the location of specific resources, they are fairly well-distributed across the County, with many located on the periphery of the County in areas that do not have neighborhood or community parks.

Park ID	Park Name	Classification	Service Area (mi.)
1	Poe Springs	RR	-
2	McCall (Undeveloped)	NA	-
3	High Springs Boat Ramp	SR	-
4	Cellon Oak	NA	-
5	Monteocha	N	2.0
6	DeSoto Park	N	2.0
7	Lake Alto	N	2.0
8	Rotary Park at Jonesville	C	3.0
9	Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)	N	0
10	Copeland	N	2.0
11	Santa Fe Lake	N	2.0
12	Melrose Boat Ramp	SR	-
13	Mark S. Hopkins Park	P	-
14	Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)	C	3.0
15	Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)	C	6.0
16	Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)	NA	-
17	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	SR	-
18	Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)	C	3.0
19	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	N	1.0
20	Earl P. Powers	N	1.0
21	Owens-Illinois	N	2.0
22	Scott-Phifer House	H	-
23	Grove	N	2.0
24	Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)	N	0
25	Holden Pond	SR	-
26	Watermelon Pond	SR	-
27	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	C	6.0
28	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	N	2.0
29	Lochloosa	SR	-

N = Neighborhood C = Community H = Historic
NA = Nature P = Pocket
SR = Special Use Resource RR = Regional Resource

Map of Alachua County Parks Level of Service with New Proposed Level of Service



PROPOSED LEVEL OF SERVICE ANALYSIS WITH PARK DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION

The map shown illustrates the results of the service area analysis performed with the expectation that numerous parks might expand in size or range of amenities. This Master Plan assumes that five parks are candidates for expansion—two of which would significantly increase service within rural areas. The following parks assume development or expansion:

- Poe Springs from Resource to Neighborhood Park
- Cellon Oak from Nature to Community Park
- Hawthorne Dog Park (to be developed as a Neighborhood Park)
- Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve expanded into Community Park

TOT LOTS & POCKET PARKS

Tot Lots are excluded from the expansion LOS analysis, because their implementation is generally more opportunistic, and the amenities they offer can be limited.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

The expansion LOS criteria expands service area radius for neighborhood parks from 0.5 to 1 mile within urban contexts, and adds a 2-mile service area radius within rural contexts. A new 5-acre minimum has been established as part of the Park Equity Standards. This change applies to 10 parks, 7 of which have service areas that are predominantly in rural contexts.

COMMUNITY PARKS

The proposed LOS analysis maintains the existing LOS criteria for community parks; therefore, the map herein illustrates the same level of service. A new 20-acre minimum has been established as part of the Park Equity Standards.

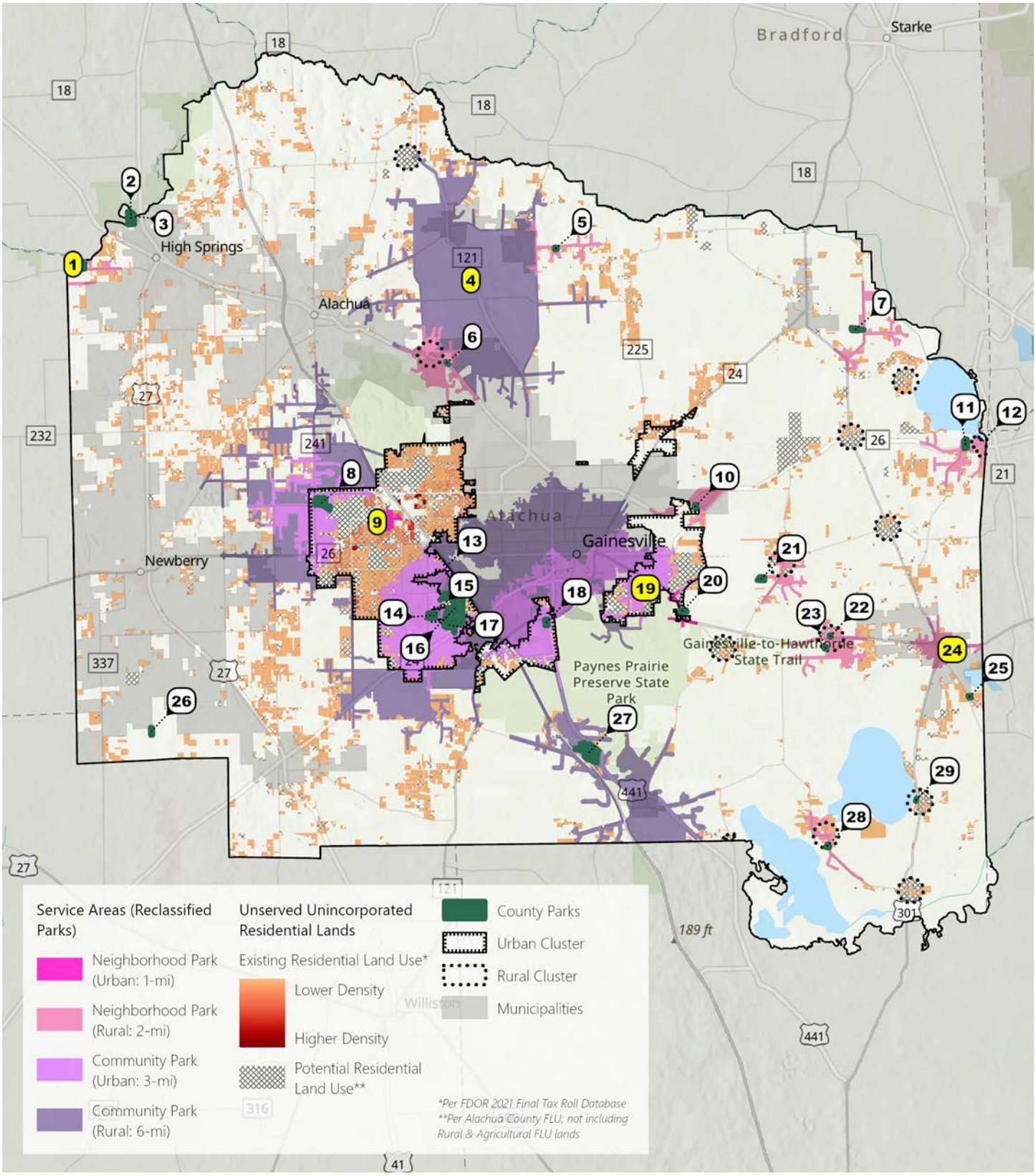
SPECIAL USE PARKS

Parks of these types provide county-wide service, per the LOS standards; therefore, service areas are not depicted on the map. While the location of these parks is largely dependent on the location of specific resources, they are fairly well-distributed across the County, with many located on the periphery of the County in areas that do not have neighborhood or community parks.

Park ID	Park Name	Classification	Service Area (mi.)
1	Poe Springs	N	2.0
2	McCall (Undeveloped)	NA	-
3	High Springs Boat Ramp	SR	-
4	Cellon Oak	C	6.0
5	Monteocha	N	2.0
6	DeSoto Park	N	2.0
7	Lake Alto	N	2.0
8	Rotary Park at Jonesville	C	3.0
9	Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)	N	1.0
10	Copeland	N	2.0
11	Santa Fe Lake	N	2.0
12	Melrose Boat Ramp	SR	-
13	Mark S. Hopkins Park	P	-
14	Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)	C	3.0
15	Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)	C	6.0
16	Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)	NA	-
17	Kanapaha Botanical Gardens	SR	-
18	Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)	C	3.0
19	Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve	C	3.0
20	Earl P. Powers	N	1.0
21	Owens-Illinois	N	2.0
22	Scott-Phifer House	H	-
23	Grove	N	2.0
24	Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)	N	2.0
25	Holden Pond	SR	-
26	Watermelon Pond	SR	-
27	Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	C	6.0
28	Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	N	2.0
29	Lochloosa	SR	-

N = Neighborhood C = Community H = Historic
NA = Nature P = Pocket
SR = Special Use Resource RR = Regional Resource

Map of Alachua County Parks Level of Service with Park Development and Expansion

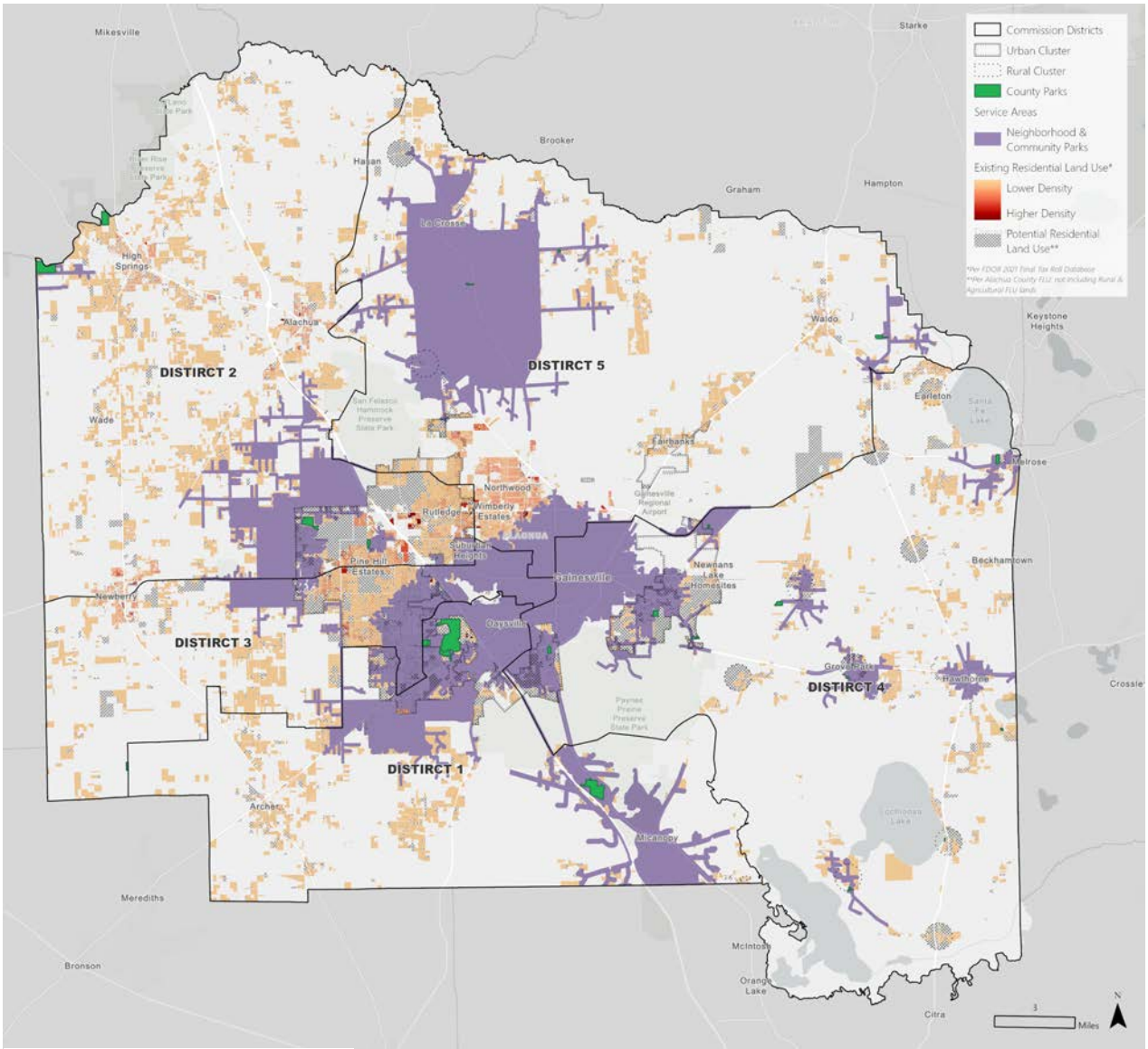


Identifying Priority Land Acquisition Areas

Step 1

Step 1: Review Service Areas

- Reviewed service areas provided by existing County community and neighborhood parks (shown in purple).
- Reviewed remaining unserved current and future residential areas throughout Alachua County (shown in orange).

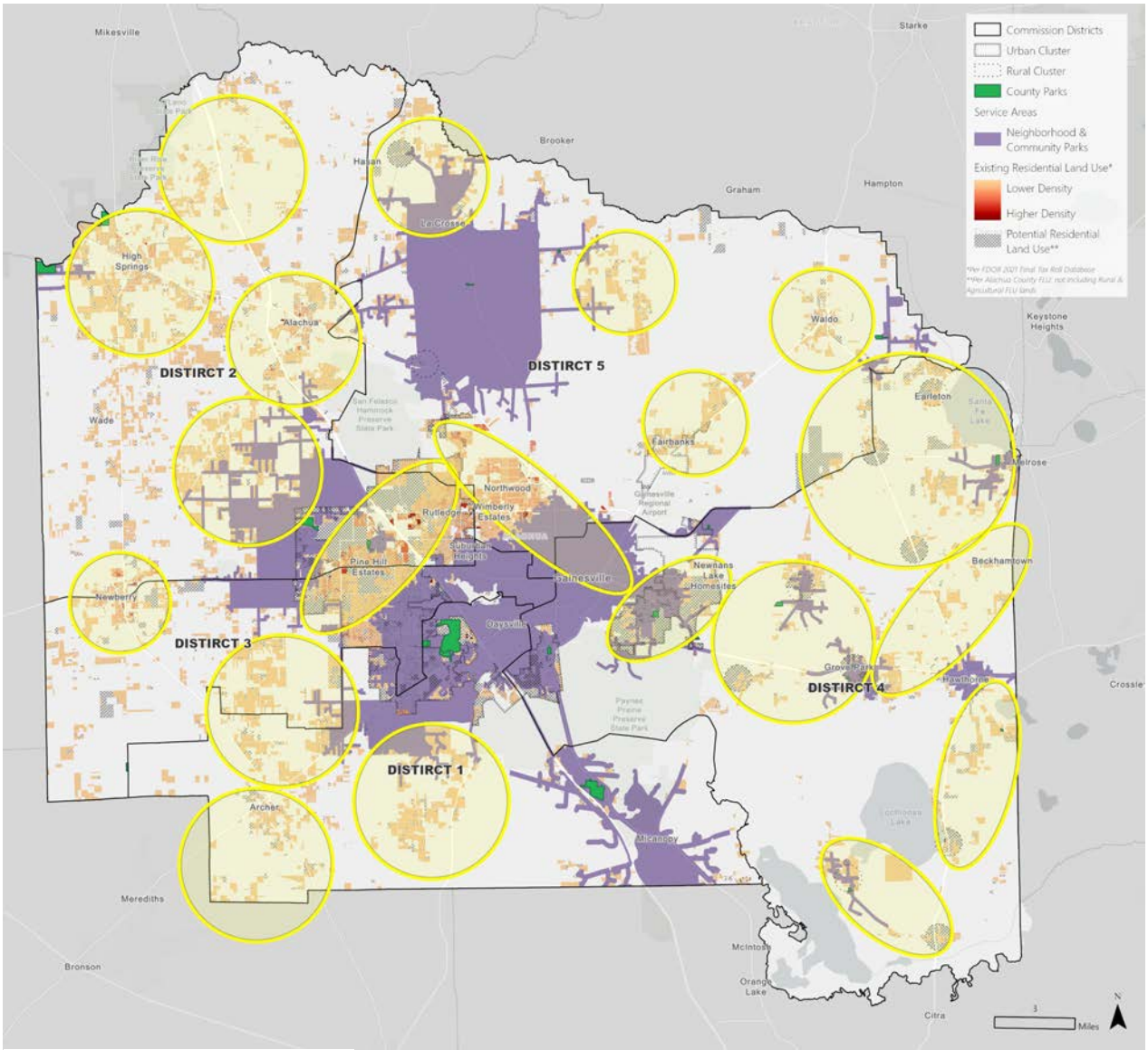


Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 2

Step 2: Highlight Significant Unserved Areas

- Highlighted groupings of unserved areas as "significant unserved areas" (shown in yellow). These areas are guided by existing and future residential land uses. These overlays served as a filter for the remaining steps of the analysis.



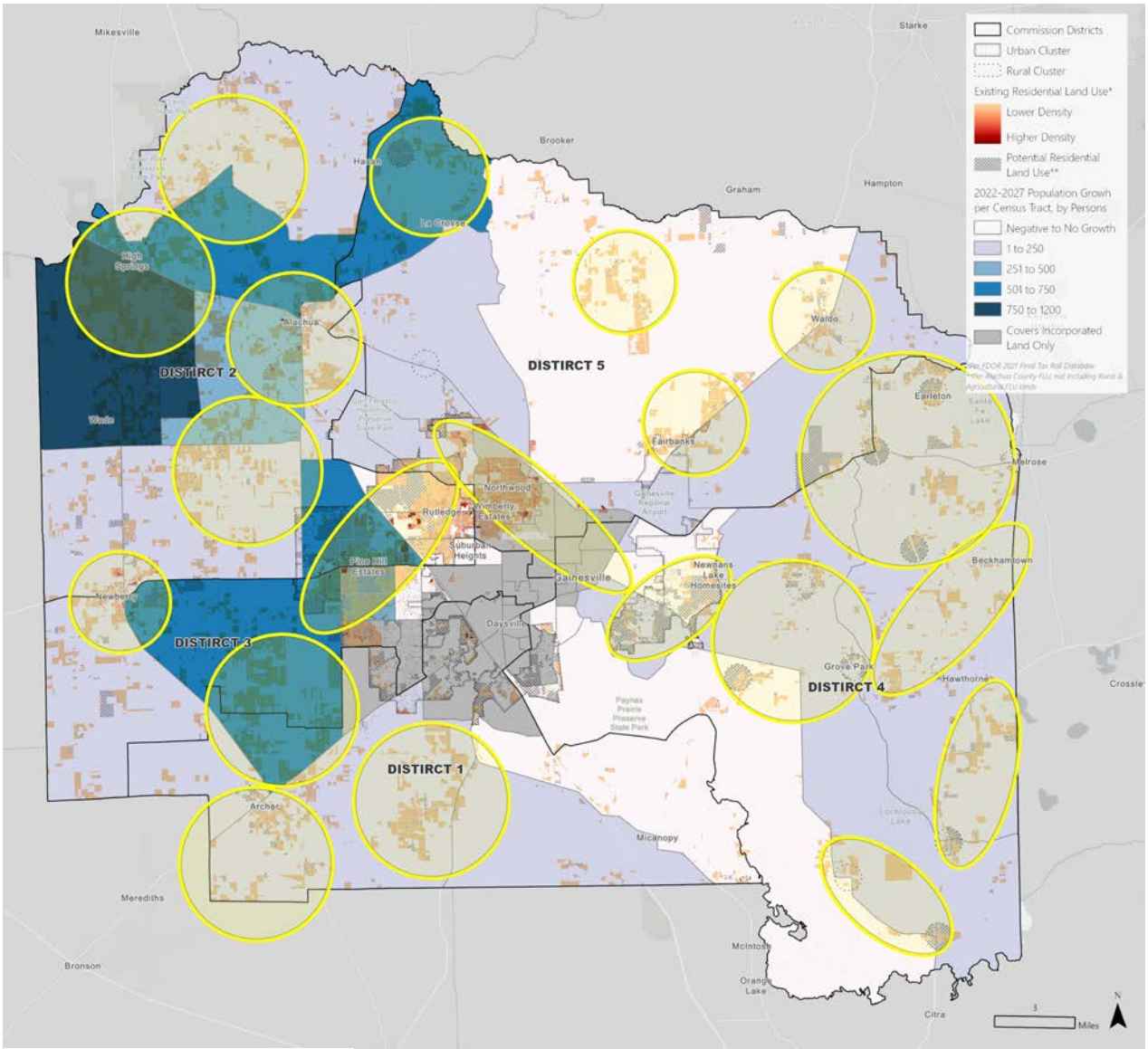
Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 3

Step 3: Review Significant Unserved Areas with Projected Population Growth

- Reviewed significant unserved areas overlays (shown in yellow) with 2022-2027 census tract level population growth projections.

Findings: The significant unserved area overlays vary in projected population growth. Additional steps were needed to narrow the geographic areas that the parks growth analysis focused on— i.e., areas that are not located within an incorporated municipal boundary or not located within conservation land.



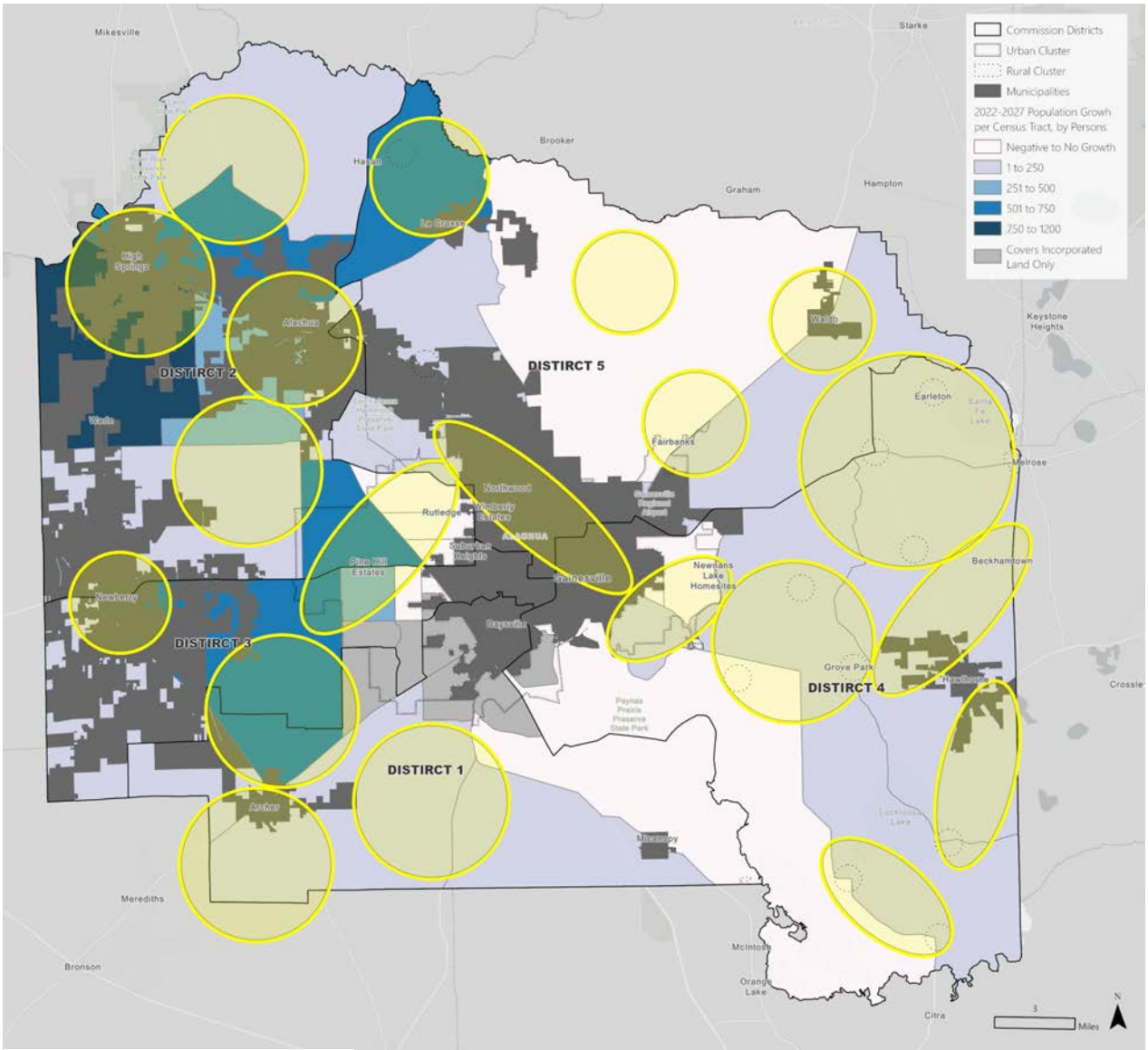
Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 4

Step 4: Review Incorporated Areas

- Added incorporated areas (shown in dark grey) for visual analysis.

Findings: Overlap of incorporated areas with the significant unserved areas overlays was sufficient to warrant use of the incorporated areas layer to further refine the geographic areas of concern.

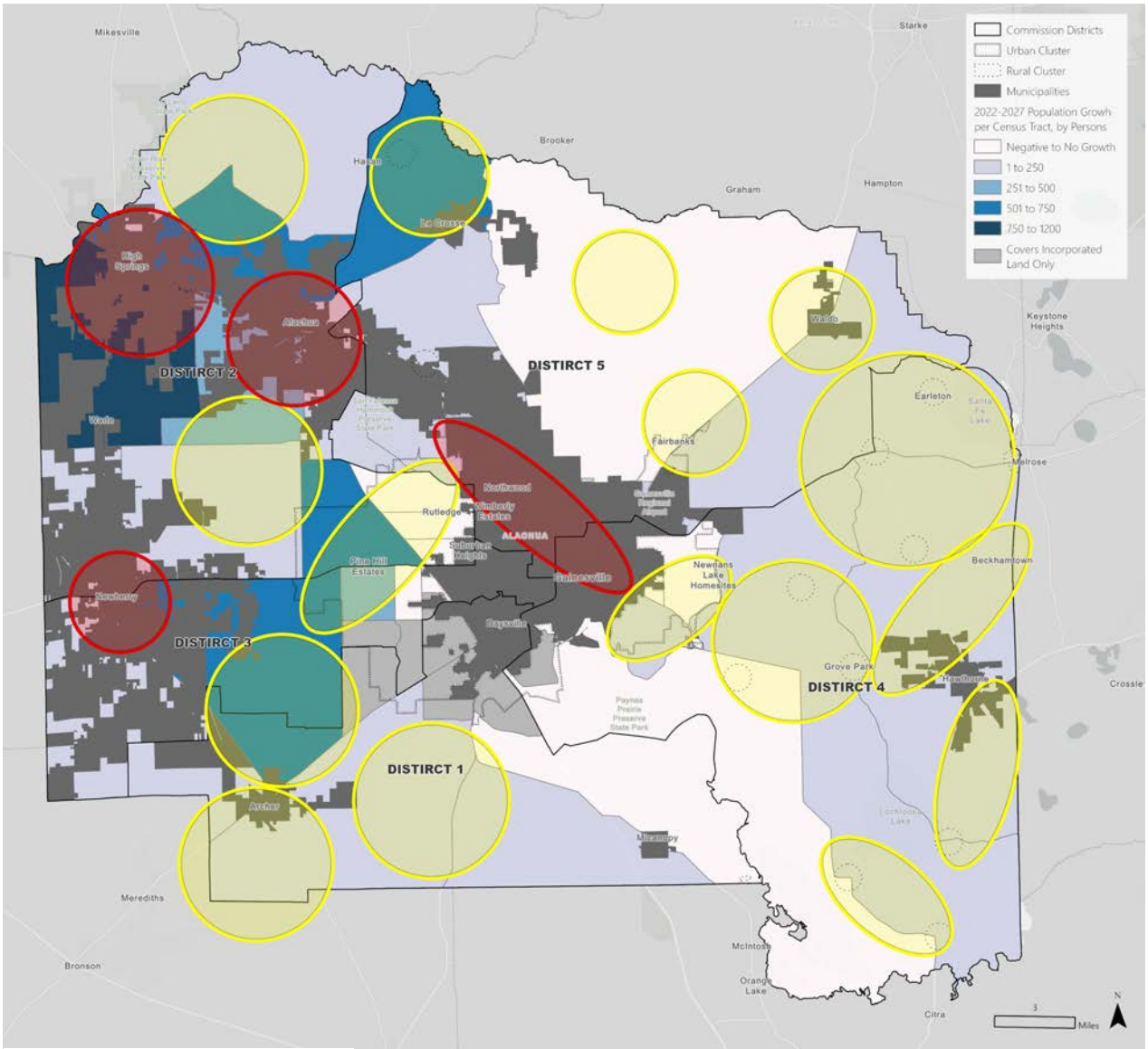


Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 5

Step 5: Remove Incorporated Areas

- Removed the significant unserved areas overlays where they are majority intersected (greater than 50% of the area) with incorporated areas. The significant unserved areas that are being removed are shown in red.



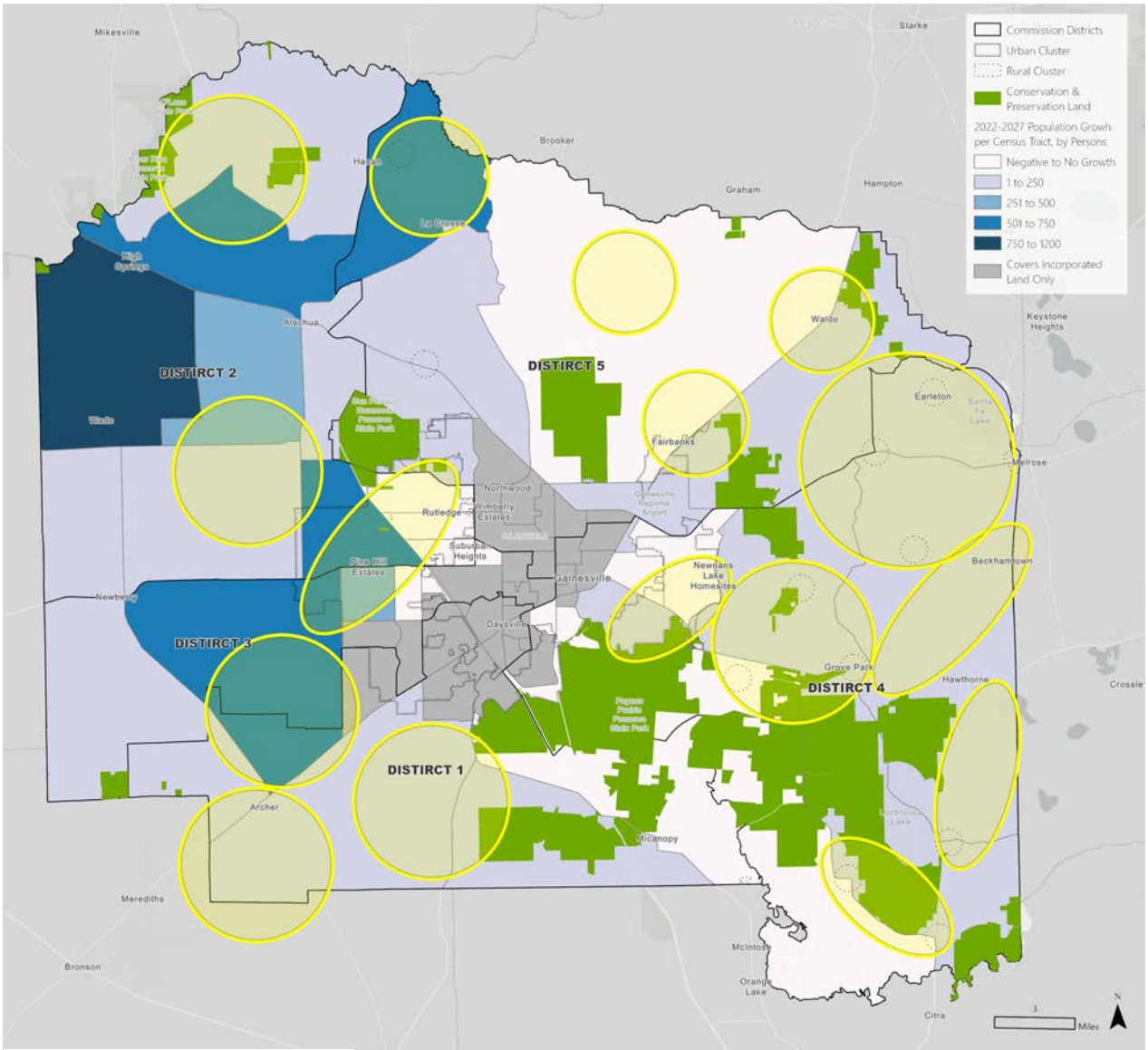
Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 6

Step 6: Review Conservation Areas

- Added conservation and preservation areas (shown in green) for visual analysis.

Findings: Overlap of conservation areas with the significant unserved areas overlays was sufficient to warrant use of the conservation areas layer to further refine the geographic areas of concern.

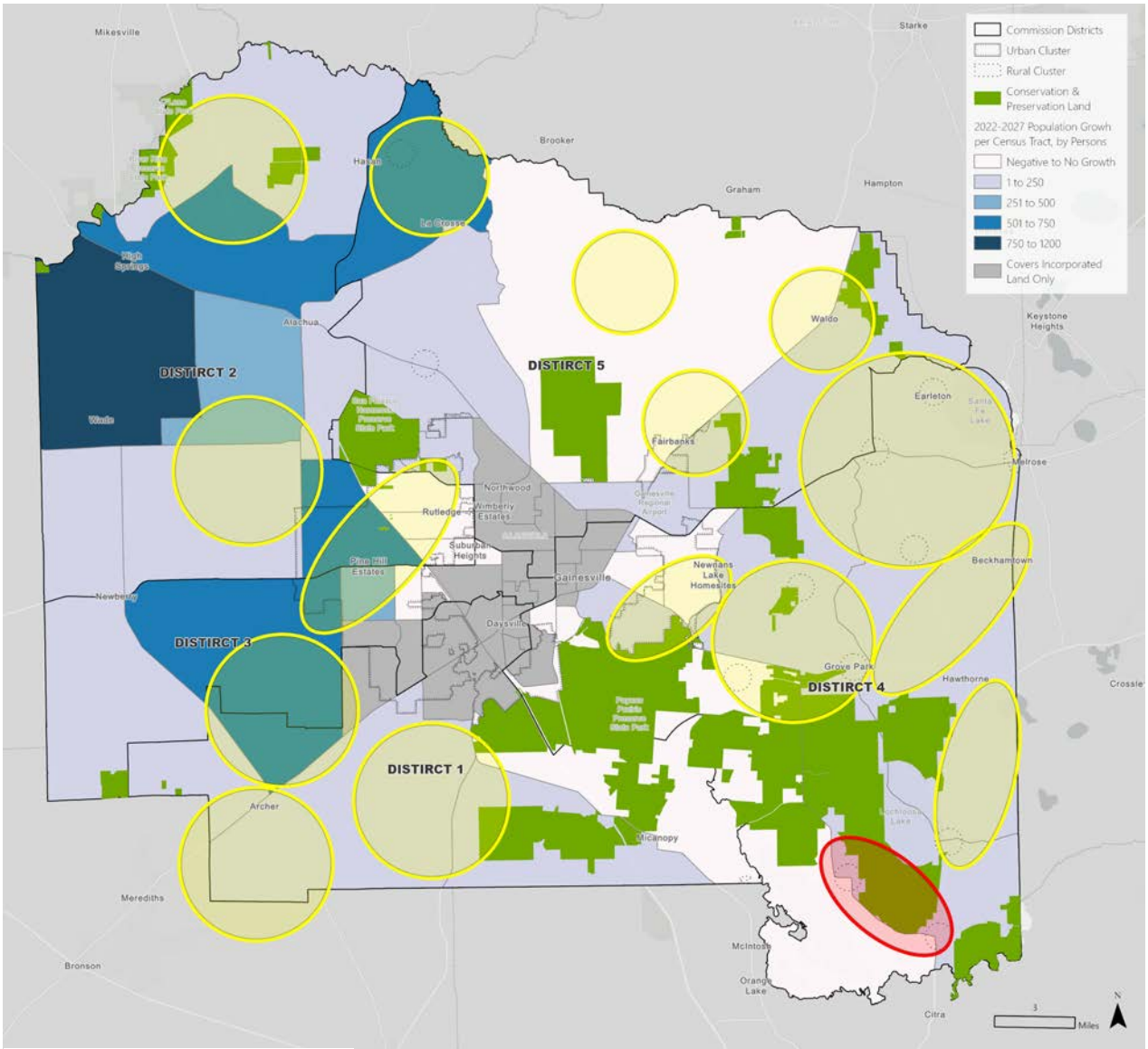


Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 7

Step 7: Remove Conservation Areas

- Removed the significant unserved areas overlays where they are majority intersected (greater than 50% of the area) with conservation areas. The significant unserved areas that are being removed are shown in red.



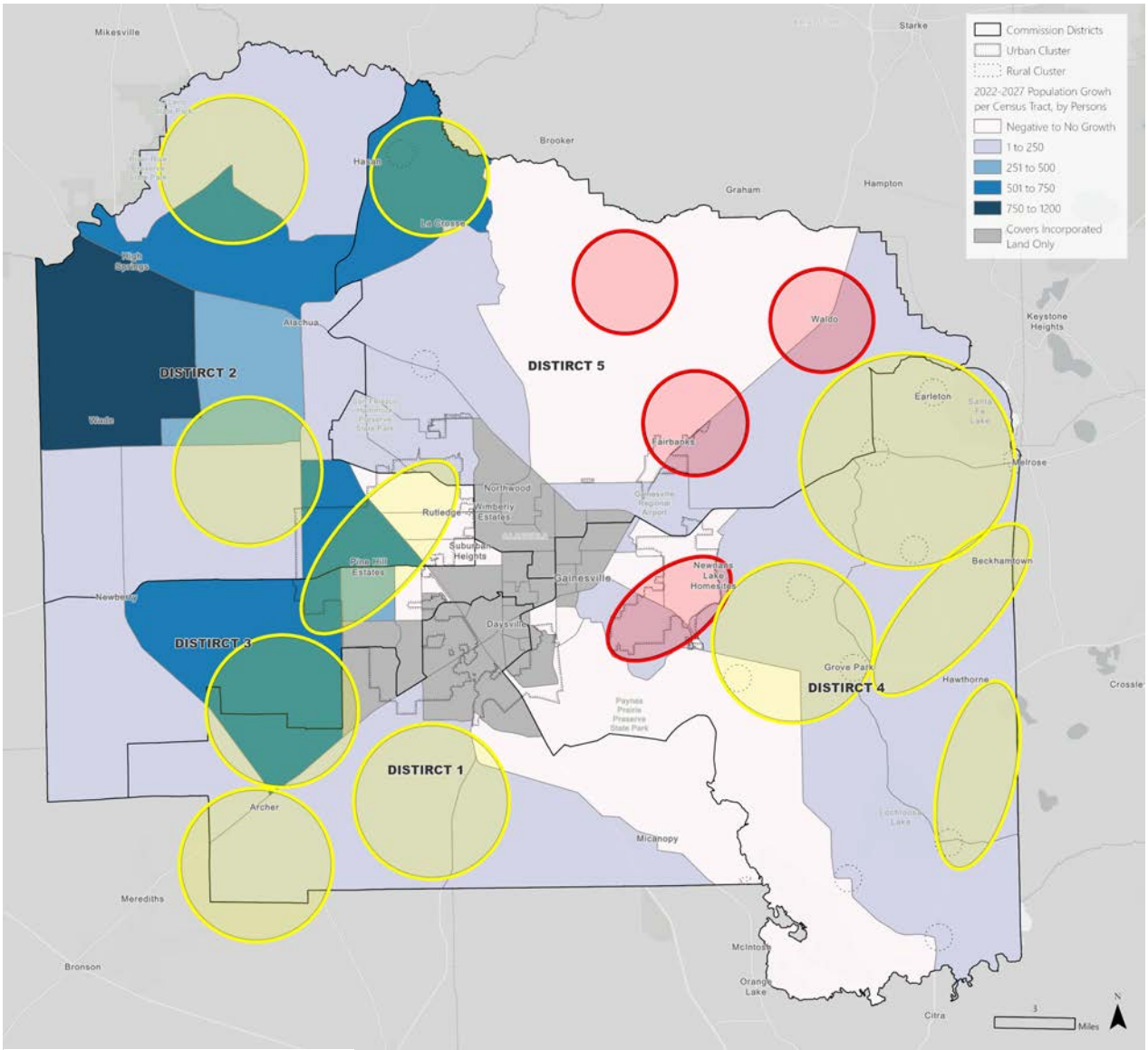
Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 8

Step 8: Remove Significant Unserved Areas with Low Projected Population Growth

- Reviewed the significant unserved area overlays with the filtered population growth projections.

Findings: Determined that the overlays located within the north and central east Alachua County (shown in red) should be removed from further analysis due to low projected population growth through the 2022-2027 period.



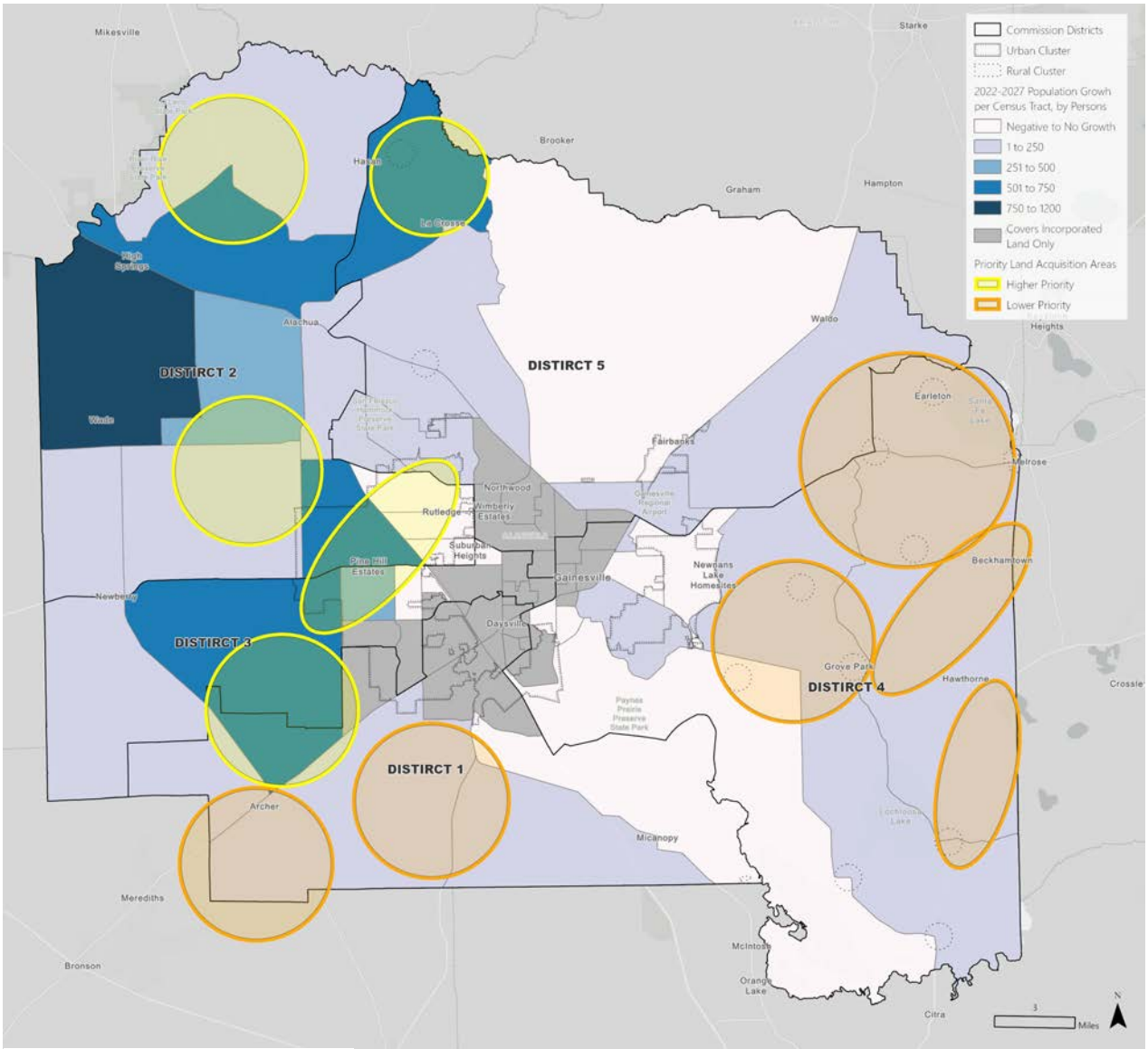
Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Step 9

Step 9: Prioritize Significant Unserved Areas Based On Projected Population Growth

- Reviewed the remaining significant unserved area overlays with the population growth projections and prioritize the census tracts projecting higher population growth.

Findings: Determined that the overlays located within the northwest and central west Alachua County (shown in yellow) are projecting higher population growth, and the east and southwest Alachua County (shown in orange) are projecting lower population growth through the 2022-2027 period. This helps prioritize land acquisition areas.



Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

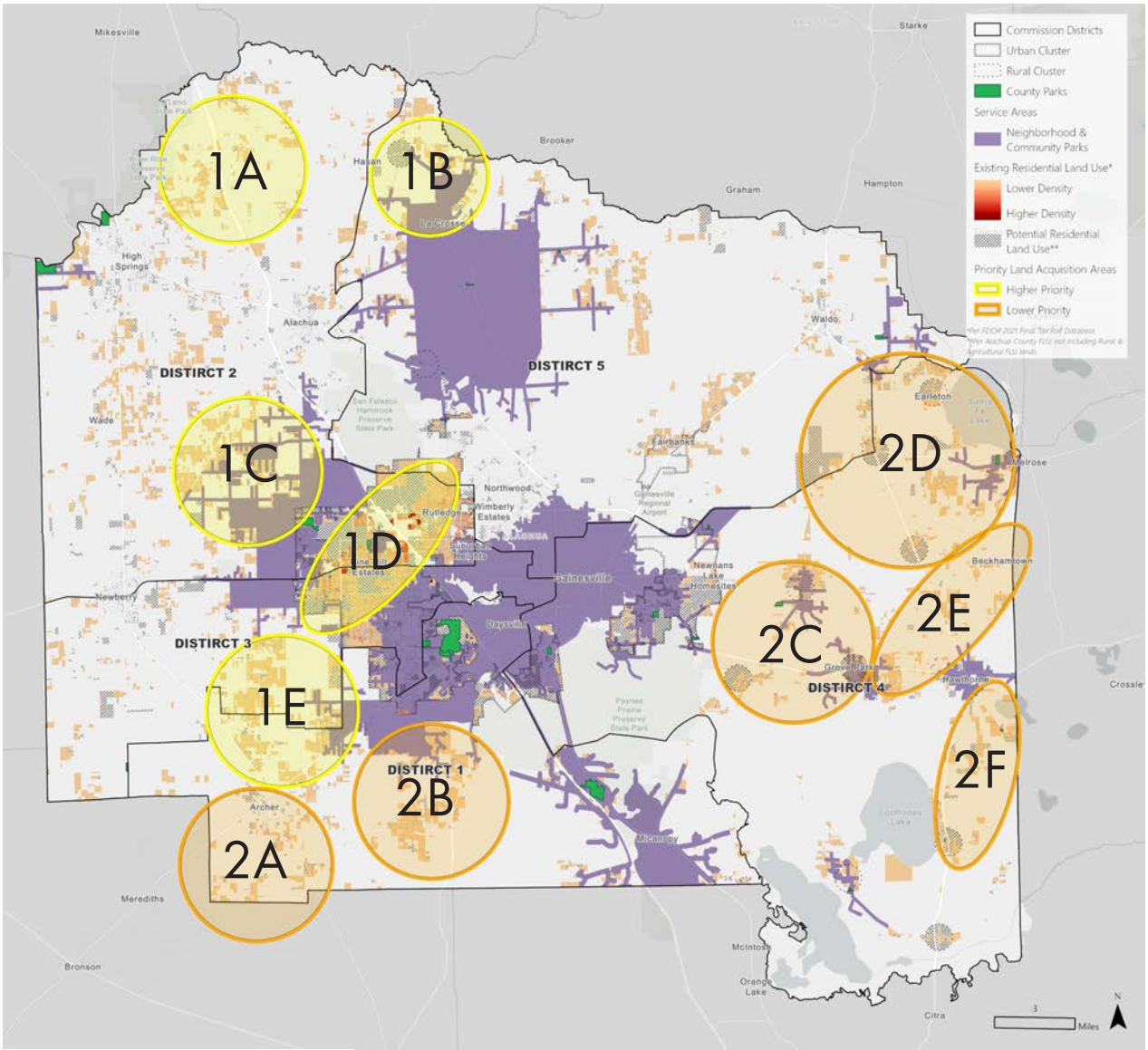
Step 10

Step 10: Review Remaining Significant Unserved Areas for Land Acquisition

- Reviewed the significant unserved area overlays with the filtered population growth projections.

Findings: The priority land acquisition areas were identified per County Commission District.

Commission District 1: Areas 1E, 2A, 2B
Commission District 2: Areas 1A, 1C, 1D
Commission District 3: Areas 1D, 1E
Commission District 4: Areas 2C, 2D, 2E, 2F
Commission District 5: Areas 1B, 1D, 2D



Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Land Acquisition Scenarios

The 10-step Priority Land Acquisition Process identified key significant unserved areas within Alachua County. The following Land Acquisition Scenarios have been developed to fill the existing gaps in service and provide equitable geographic access to parks for all Alachua County residents.

Land Acquisition Scenarios developed focus on three strategies:

- **Scenario 1:** Acquiring and Developing New Neighborhood Parks
- **Scenario 2:** Acquiring and Developing New Community Parks
- **Scenario 3:** Acquiring and Developing a mix of New Neighborhood Parks and New Community Parks

Service areas shown within these scenarios account for the new established geographic level of service standards.

NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

- Urban: 1-mile
- Rural: 2-miles

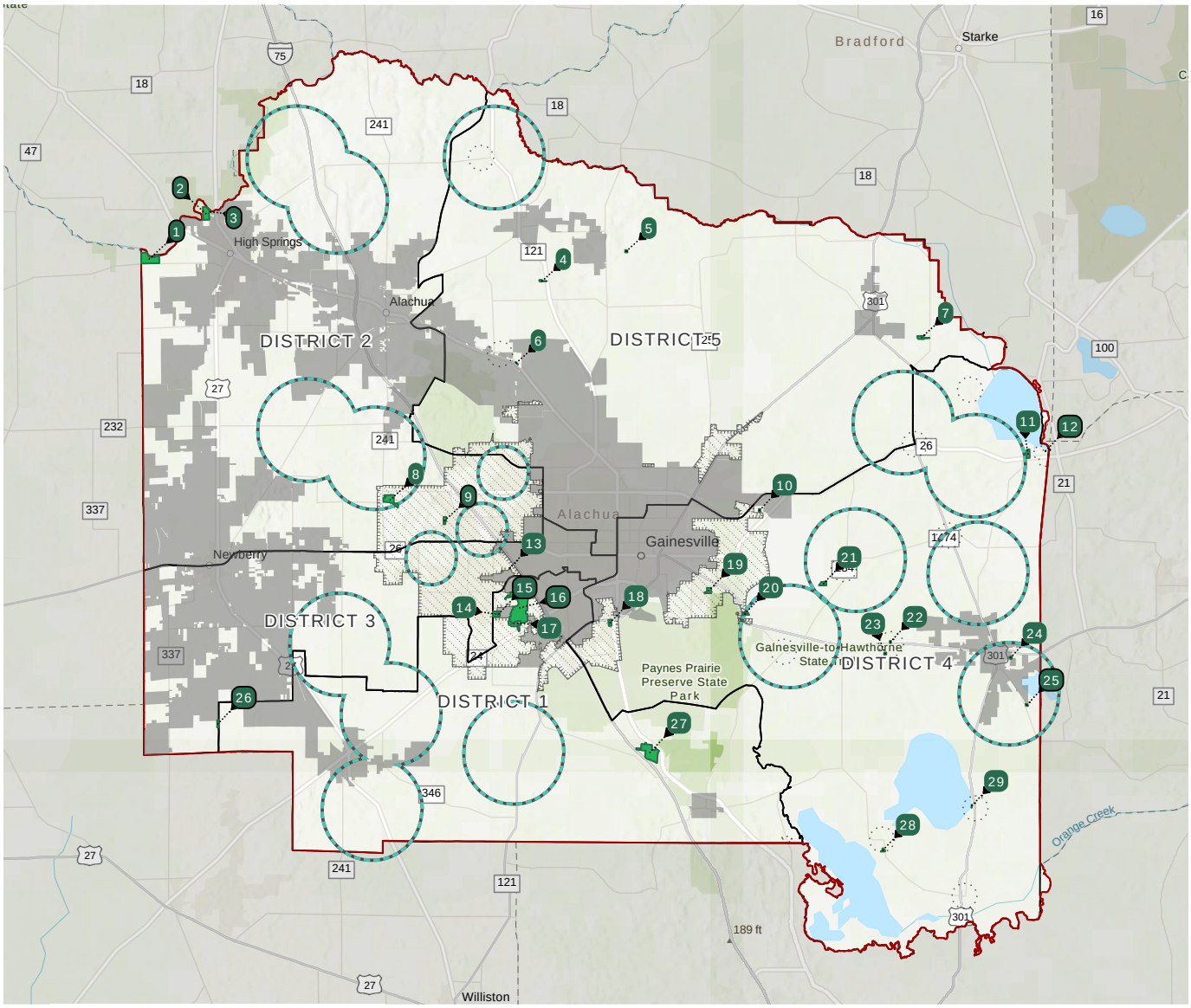
COMMUNITY PARKS

- Urban: 3-miles
- Rural: 6-miles

Scenarios shown are general guides for future park locations, not identification of individual parcels. For this reason, general radii of potential levels of service have been shown, rather than specific network-based coverage, which would vary based on exact parcel location. Scenarios developed here are to be used for planning purposes only, with exact impacts of land acquisition to be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Scenario 1: New Neighborhood Parks

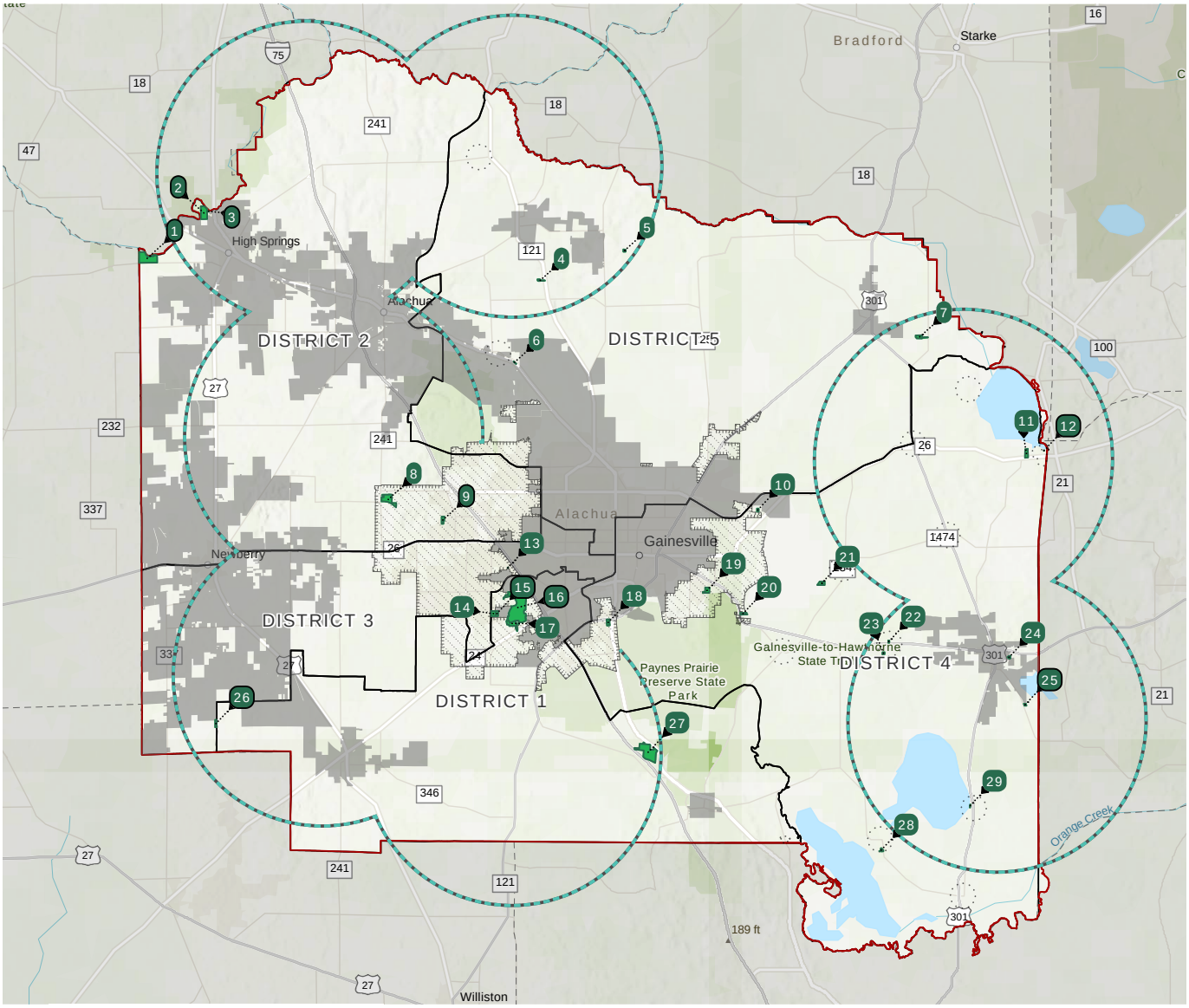
This scenario fills in the identified key significant unserved areas solely with new Neighborhood Parks. While it is possible to plug gaps with Neighborhood Parks, this requires many new parks and is an efficient service delivery model, as it is simpler to consolidate amenities to community parks and maintain a smaller number of parks.



Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Scenario 2: New Community Parks

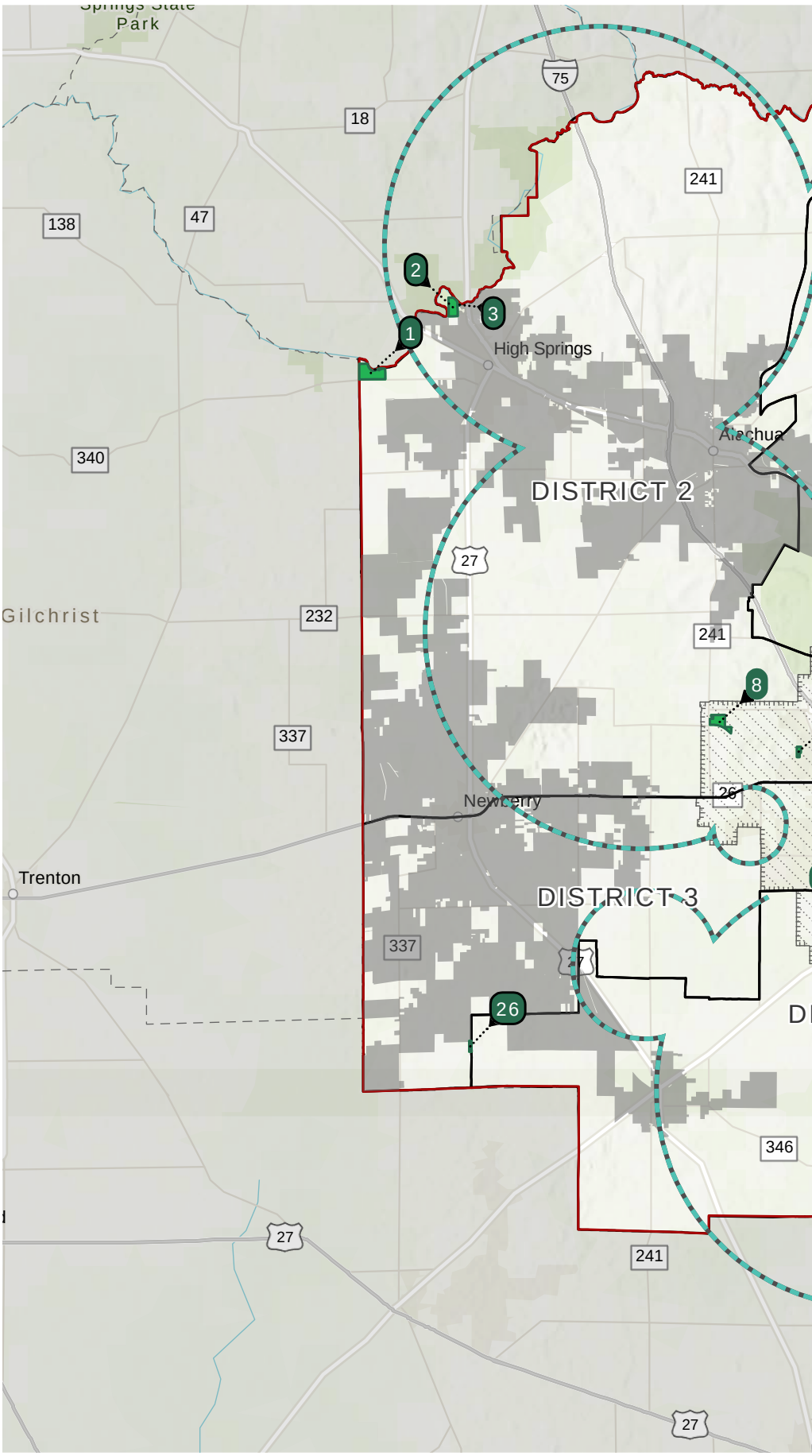
This scenario fills the identified key significant unserved areas with new community parks. While this is a more efficient service delivery model in that it requires a fewer number of parks and more consolidated services, this approach may not be applicable in all areas particularly, areas near other community parks or where large tracts of land may not be readily available.

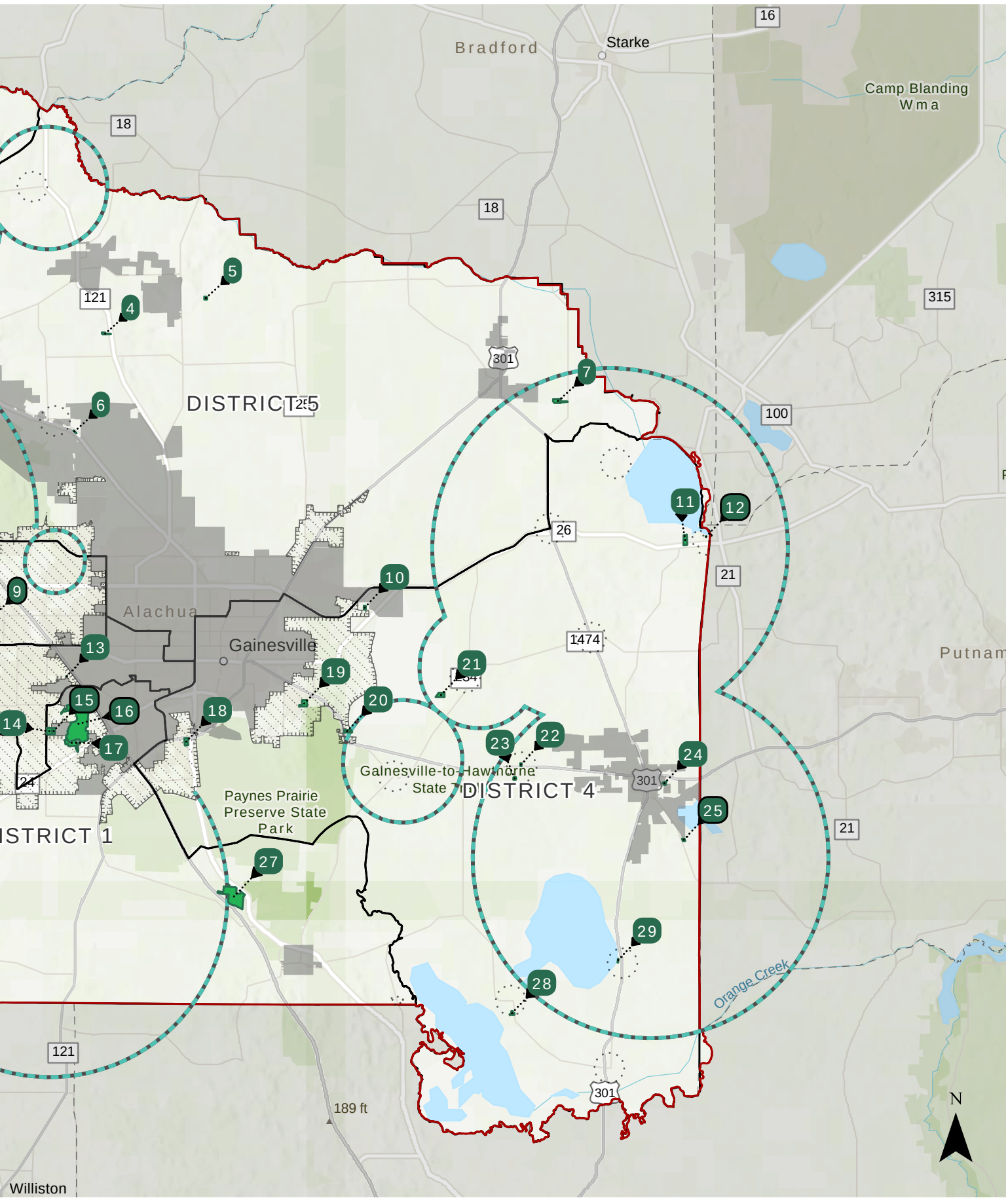


Data Credits: Alachua County, FDOR, ESRI

Scenario 3: Recommended Mixed Approach

A mix of new neighborhood and community parks is responsive to the needs of the community by providing a mix of amenities and responding to the availability of land throughout the County. This approach allows more rural areas to be served by centralized Community Parks, which will provide a wide range of amenities, including sports fields. Smaller Neighborhood Parks provide access to amenities closer to larger residential hubs where residents may not have much of their own land, and large tracts of land may not be readily available for acquisition. This approach assumed the acquisition and expansion of land surrounding Cellon Oak for the development of a larger Community Park. If not possible, it is recommended that a different Community Park be established near it to provide service within this area.




Bradford
Starke
Camp Blanding Wma
DISTRICT 5
DISTRICT 4
DISTRICT 1
Alachua
Gainesville
Putnam
Galnesville-to-Hawthorne State Trail
Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park
Orange Creek
Williston
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16
18
121
315
301
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3.2 IMPLEMENTATION

The Alachua County Parks & Open Space Master Plan provides a blueprint for the future of Alachua County parks. The following implementation section provides a Capital Improvements Plan to provide planning guidance for the implementation of recommendations set forth within the Vision.

Park Land Acquisition

METHODOLOGY

Based on the Vision developed through this Master Planning process, in order to extend appropriate access and level of service to the currently unserved residential areas within Alachua County, it is anticipated that the following park land should be acquired:

Neighborhood Parks (min. 5 acres)
- 2 - Urban Neighborhood Parks (within Urban Cluster)
- 4 - Rural Neighborhood Parks (outside Urban Cluster)

Community Parks (min. 20 acres)
- 5 - Rural Community Parks (outside Urban Cluster)

A land price analysis was developed to determine land acquisition cost in Alachua County. The analysis measured the potential sale price for all vacant land within Alachua County—including vacant residential, commercial, industrial, agriculture, institutional, and government land—and estimated the price per acre for each land use category. To estimate the cost for acquiring park lands within the County, an aggregate average of the price per acre for these vacant properties was applied. This analysis also examined the cost per acre within and outside the urban service boundary using a similar methodology. The analysis revealed that the cost per acre is much higher within the urban service boundary which may be attributed to the availability of utilities and services within the urban service cluster. Additionally, since the price per acre for land acquisition generally decreases with larger acreage purchases, it can be inferred that the price per acre is higher for a neighborhood park versus a community park.

Park Type	Acreage Min.	Cost per Acre	Assumed Parcel Cost
Urban Parks			
Neighborhood Park	5	$74,600	$373,000
Community Park	20	$36,800	$736,000
Rural Parks			
Neighborhood Park	5	$49,400	$247,000
Community Park	20	$27,800	$556,000
Based on Alachua County recent vacant land sales (2021-2022)			

Capital Improvement Plan

COUNTYWIDE SUMMARY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

	Improvements	Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 1		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
	Short Projection Total	$3,847,500			$193,000
	Mid Projection Total		$17,664,000		$720,000
	Long Projection Total				
	Total Budget	**$21,511,500**			**$913,000**
District 2					
	Short Projection Total	$13,121,000			$150,000
	Mid Projection Total		$3,233,000		$143,000
	Long Projection Total			$110,000	
	Total Budget	**$16,464,000**			**$293,000**
District 3					
	Short Projection Total	$6,466,000			$150,000
	Mid Projection Total		$3,520,000		$75,000
	Long Projection Total				
	Total Budget	**$9,986,000**			**$225,000**
District 4					
	Short Projection Total	$29,874,250			$1,268,000
	Mid Projection Total		$45,000		
	Long Projection Total				
	Total Budget	**$29,919,250**			**$1,268,000**
District 5					
	Short Projection Total	$9,861,500			$720,000
	Mid Projection Total		$210,000		
	Long Projection Total				
	Total Budget	**$10,071,500**			**$720,000**
CIP Grand Total					
	CIP Grand Total	**$87,952,250**			**$3,419,000**

Note: The projects listed above are example projects based on the Parks Master Plan. The budgets and timeframes are estimates with the intention provide the Parks & Open Space Department with flexibility to allocate funds for all future projects.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN BY DISTRICT

Improvements		Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 1		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center	Amenity Enhancements, Public Access	$500,000			
	Design & Permitting	$75,000			
Veterans Memorial Park	Amenity Enhancements, Public Access Improvements	$2,975,000			$193,000
	Design & Permitting	$297,500			
New Rural Community Park (1E)	Land Acquisition		$498,000		$240,000
	Design & Permitting		$490,000		
	Implementation		$4,900,000		
New Rural Community Park (2A)	Land Acquisition		$498,000		$240,000
	Design & Permitting		$490,000		
	Implementation		$4,900,000		
New Rural Community Park (2B)	Land Acquisition		$498,000		$240,000
	Design & Permitting		$490,000		
	Implementation		$4,900,000		
Short Projection Total		$3,847,500			$193,000
Mid Projection Total			$17,664,000		$720,000
Long Projection Total					
Total Budget				**$21,511,500**	**$913,000**

Improvements		Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 2		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
Jane B. Walker Park	Pedestrian & Amenity Improvements	$155,000			
	Neighborhood Amenities	$300,000			
	Design & Permitting	$30,000			
Poe Springs	Neighborhood Amenities	$750,000			
	Design & Permitting	$75,000			
New Urban Neighborhood Park (1D)	Land Acquisition		$373,000		$143,000
	Design & Permitting		$260,000		
	Implementation		$2,600,000		
New Rural Community Park (1A)	Land Acquisition	$498,000			$75,000
	Design & Permitting	$490,000			
	Implementation	$4,900,000			
New Rural Community Park (1C)	Land Acquisition	$498,000			$75,000
	Design & Permitting	$490,000			
	Implementation	$4,900,000			
Rotary Park @ Jonesville	Pedestrian Access Improvements	$25,000			
McCall Park	Pedestrian Amenity Improvements			$95,000	
	Signage			$15,000	
High Springs Boat Ramp	Signage	$10,000			
Short Projection Total		$13,121,000			$150,000
Mid Projection Total			$3,233,000		$143,000
Long Projection Total				$110,000	
Total Budget				**$16,464,000**	**$293,000**

Improvements		Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 3		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
New Urban Neighborhood Park (1E)	Land Acquisition	$373,000			$75,000
	Design & Permitting	$260,000			
	Implementation	$2,600,000			
GRU Wetland Park	Amenities, Infrastructure Improvements		$3,200,000		$75,000
	Design & Permitting		$320,000		
New Urban Neighborhood Park (1D)	Land Acquisition	$373,000			$75,000
	Design & Permitting	$260,000			
	Implementation	$2,600,000			
Short Projection Total		$6,466,000			$150,000
Mid Projection Total			$3,520,000		$75,000
Long Projection Total					
Total Budget				**$9,986,000**	**$225,000**

Improvements		Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 4		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
Copeland Park	Play Amenities	$350,000			
Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park & Clark Butler Nature Preserve	Stormwater Improvements & Community Amenities	$600,000			
	Signage	$10,000			
	Design & Permitting	$60,000			
Kate Barnes Boat Ramp @ Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park	Amenity Enhancements	$500,000			
	Design & Permitting	$50,000			
	Nature Trail & Signage	$10,000			
	Pedestrian Enhancements		$45,000		
Holden Pond Park	Amenity Enhancements	$400,000			
	Signage	$10,000			
	Design & Permitting	$60,000			
Lochloosa Park	Grading & Stabilization Improvements	$65,000			
	Signage	$10,000			
Hawthorne Dog Park	Neighborhood Park Amenities	$730,000			
	Design & Permitting	$73,000			
Squirrel Ridge Park	Pedestrian Enhancements	$55,000			
	Design & Permitting	$11,000			
Santa Fe Lake	Pedestrian Enhancements	$75,000			
	Design & Permitting	$18,750			
Earl P. Powers Park	Complete accessible circulation	$10,000			
	Signage	$10,000			
Owens-Illinois	Boardwalk Improvements	$75,000			
	Design & Permitting	$22,500			
Melrose Boat Ramp	Signage	$10,000			

Improvements		Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 4 (cont.)		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
New Rural Neighborhood Park (H)	Land Acquisition	$247,000			$308,000
	Design & Permitting	$260,000			
	Implementation	$2,600,000			
New Rural Community Parks (2C)	Land Acquisition	$498,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$490,000			
	Implementation	$4,900,000			
New Rural Community Parks (2D)	Land Acquisition	$498,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$490,000			
	Implementation	$4,900,000			
New Rural Community Parks (2E)	Land Acquisition	$498,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$490,000			
	Implementation	$4,900,000			
New Rural Community Parks (2F)	Land Acquisition	$498,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$490,000			
	Implementation	$4,900,000			
Short Projection Total		$29,874,250			$1,268,000
Mid Projection Total			$45,000		
Long Projection Total					
Total Budget				**$29,919,250**	**$1,268,000**

Improvements		Projection			Operation & Maintenance
District 5		**Short**	**Mid**	**Long**	
Monteocha Park	Amenity & Pedestrian Enhancements	$405,000			
	Design & Permitting	$40,500			
	Pavilions		$100,000		
DeSoto Park	Amenity Enhancements		$45,000		
	Design & Permitting		$15,000		
Cellon Oak	Pavilions		$50,000		
	Signage	$10,000			
Lake Alto	Pavilion	$75,000			
	Signage	$10,000			
New Rural Neighborhood Park (1B)	Land Acquisition	$247,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$260,000			
	Implementation	$2,600,000			
New Rural Neighborhood Park (1D)	Land Acquisition	$247,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$260,000			
	Implementation	$2,600,000			
New Rural Neighborhood Park (2D)	Land Acquisition	$247,000			$240,000
	Design & Permitting	$260,000			
	Implementation	$2,600,000			
Short Projection Total		$9,861,500			$720,000
Mid Projection Total			$210,000		
Long Projection Total					
Total Budget				**$10,071,500**	**$720,000**

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS GROUP

GAI Consultants, Inc.
618 East South Street, Suite 700
Orlando, Florida 32801
(407) 423-839

Alachua County Parks and Open Space

2023 WSPP Update

Jason Maurer
Parks and Open Space Director

Wild Spaces Public Places

Improvements

Squirrel Ridge Park

Wild Spaces Public Places

Improvements

Chestnut Park

Grove Park

Wild Spaces Public Places

Improvements

Lake Alto

Copeland Park

WSPP Funding Split

80% Conservation Lands and 20% active parks.

The 10-year funding amount for active parks is anticipated to be $37,663,126

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Parks Masterplan Process

Oct. 2021

GAI Consulting was hired to perform the departments masterplan process in October 2021

Apr. 2022

Surveys launched in April of 2022

May 2022

Public meetings were held in May 2022

29 July

Existing Park Conditions Review July 29

2 Sep. 2022

Master Plan Development September 2, 2022

Feb. 2023

Masterplan approved in February 2023

Parks Masterplan Guiding Principles

PROVIDE FOR TODAY AND PLAN FOR TOMORROW

Parks provide for the needs of current users and respond to future trends.

- To achieve equity, Parks throughout the county are of a consistent quality and meet basic standards.
- Amenities offered respond to the needs of surrounding park users achieved through a community engagement process.
- Amenities planned for future parks respond to trends and forecasting.

PROXIMITY AND ACCESS

All residents have access to opportunities for play and recreation:

- Each resident lives within a close range of either a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural).
- A robust network of trails and pathways connect users with park amenities.
- Parks provide amenities to facilitate multi-modal access.

INCLUSIVITY AND SAFETY

Parks are safe and welcoming to multicultural users of all ages and abilities:

- Each park provides facilities usable by people of all ages and abilities.
- Each park promotes safe and inclusive spaces for all users.

NATURAL ALACHUA

Alachua County residents have access to nature-based recreation:

- Residents have access to nature trails and water-based activities.
- Parks leverage natural assets for environmental education and interpretation

COMMUNICATION

Park users are aware of park and programming offerings:

- Residents can easily find and share information about available amenities and upcoming events.
- Partnership between departments and agencies allow for efficient and expanded park programming opportunities.

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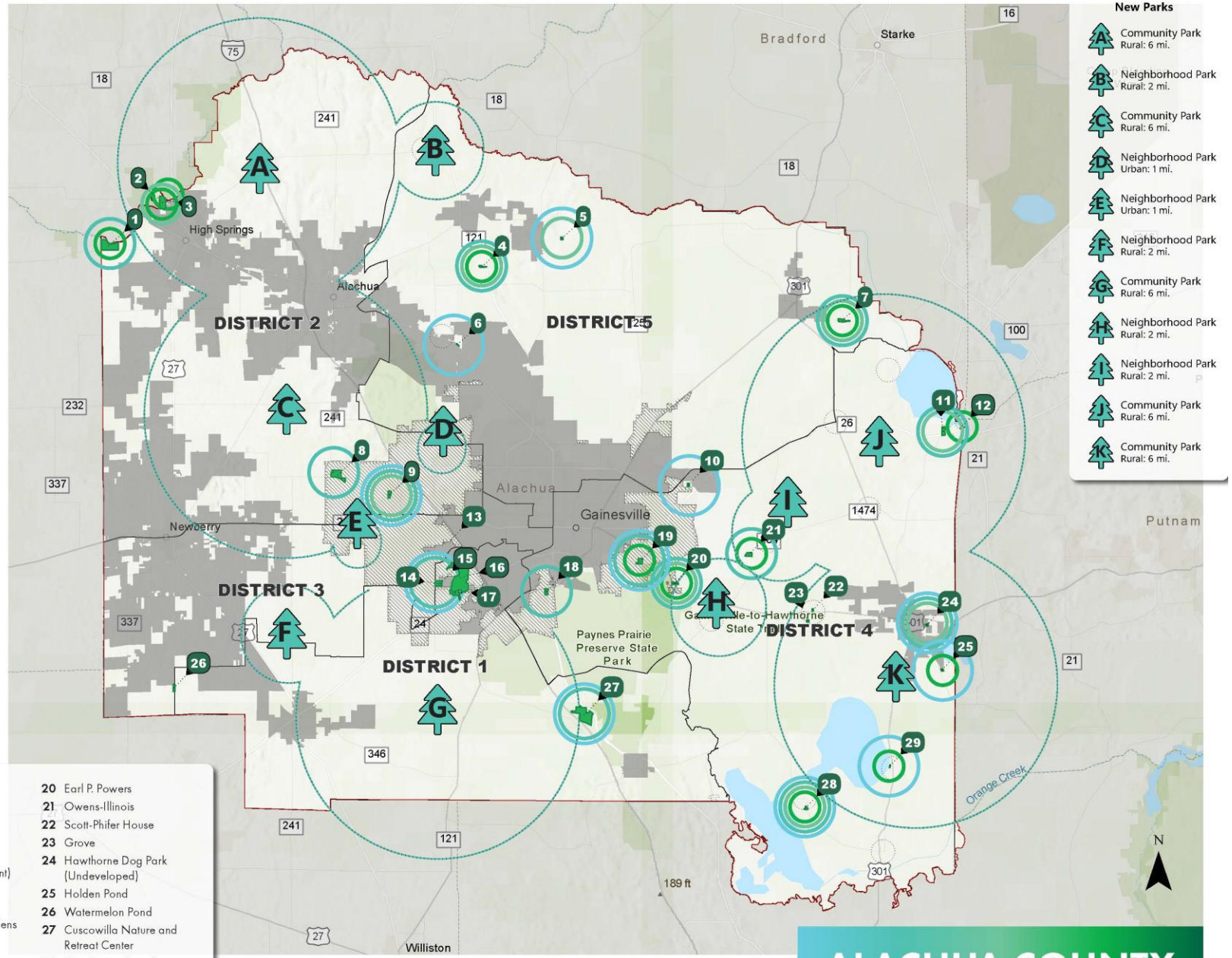

New Parks

- A: Community Park, Rural: 6 mi.
- B: Neighborhood Park, Rural: 2 mi.
- C: Community Park, Rural: 6 mi.
- D: Neighborhood Park, Urban: 1 mi.
- E: Neighborhood Park, Urban: 1 mi.
- F: Neighborhood Park, Rural: 2 mi.
- G: Community Park, Rural: 6 mi.
- H: Neighborhood Park, Rural: 2 mi.
- I: Neighborhood Park, Rural: 2 mi.
- J: Community Park, Rural: 6 mi.
- K: Community Park, Rural: 6 mi.

Park Legend

1. Poe Springs
2. McCall (Undeveloped)
3. High Springs Boat Ramp
4. Cellon Oak
5. Monteocha
6. DeSoto Park
7. Lake Alto
8. Rotary Park at Jonesville
9. Jane B Walker Park (Undeveloped)
10. Copeland
11. Santa Fe Lake
12. Melrose Boat Ramp
13. Mark S. Hopkins Park
14. Veterans Memorial Park (2 Lighted Soccer Fields)
15. Veterans Memorial Park (Gainesville Use Agreement)
16. Kanapaha Lake (Undeveloped)
17. Kanapaha Botanical Gardens
18. Squirrel Ridge (Dog Park)
19. Cynthia Moore Chestnut Park and Clark Butler Nature Preserve
20. Earl P. Powers
21. Owens-Illinois
22. Scott-Phifer House
23. Grove
24. Hawthorne Dog Park (Undeveloped)
25. Holden Pond
26. Watermelon Pond
27. Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center
28. Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park
29. Lochloosa

ALACHUA COUNTY
PARKS & OPEN SPACE VISION

WSPP Priorities

- Renovating existing parks per adopted masterplan priorities
- Acquire/improve new parks in unincorporated Alachua County per adopted masterplan priorities including pocket parks in underserved communities
- Partner with other government agencies (where appropriate) to provide active park amenities

Questions

PROVIDE FOR TODAY AND PLAN FOR TOMORROW

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- To achieve equity, Parks throughout the county are of a consistent quality and meet basic standards.
- Amenities offered respond to the needs of surrounding park users achieved through a community engagement process.
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PROXIMITY AND ACCESS

All residents have access to opportunities for play and recreation:

- Each resident lives within a close range of either a neighborhood park (1-mile urban or 2-miles rural) or a community park (3-miles urban or 6-miles rural).
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Park users are aware of park and programming offerings:

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- Partnership between departments and agencies allow for efficient and expanded park programming opportunities.

Park Legend

1 Poe Springs
2 McCall (Undeveloped)
3 High Springs Boat Ramp
4 Cellon Oak
5 Monteocha
6 DeSoto Park
7 Lake Alto
8 Rotary Park at Jonesville
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27 Cuscowilla Nature and Retreat Center
28 Kate Barnes Boat Ramp at Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Park
29 Lochloosa

New Parks

A Community Park Rural: 6 mi.
B Neighborhood Park Rural: 2 mi.
C Community Park Rural: 6 mi.
D Neighborhood Park Urban: 1 mi.
E Neighborhood Park Urban: 1 mi.
F Neighborhood Park Rural: 2 mi.
G Community Park Rural: 6 mi.
H Neighborhood Park Rural: 2 mi.
I Neighborhood Park Rural: 2 mi.
J Community Park Rural: 6 mi.
K Community Park Rural: 6 mi.

Bradford
Starke
High Springs
Alachua
Gainesville
Newberry
Vision Map
Williston
Putnam
Paynes Prairie Preserve State Park
Orange Creek
189 ft
DISTRICT 1
DISTRICT 2
DISTRICT 3
DISTRICT 4
DISTRICT 5
N

ALACHUA COUNTY
PARKS & OPEN SPACE VISION

Alachua County, Florida

Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00156 **Agenda Date: 5/22/2023**

Agenda Item Name:

Roads

Presenter:
Ramon Gavarrete, Alachua County Public Works Director, 352-548-1214

Prior Board Motions:

1. On January 24, 2023, Staff presented the Transportation Capital Improvement Program (TCIP) Projects.

2. On March 7, 2023, the Board held a Special Meeting and provided direction to Staff on parameters for the Pavement Management Program

3. On April 4, 2023, the Board provided further direction on the parameters for the Pavement Management Program

Fiscal Note:
Funding Sources include General Fund Transfer, Infrastructure Surtax (70% of ½), Grants, 5 Cent Local Option Gas Tax (ELM Nickel), Impact Fees, and Multi Modal Transportation

Background:
The new surtax will generate approximately $11.7 million per year for roadways and the general fund will contribute an additional $8 million per year. The County is using Agile Assets Optimization Software and, with the help of Mott MacDonald, is creating a pavement management plan that best prioritizes the timing and location of road paving throughout the County. In determining the most efficient and cost-effective program, several factors must be considered including the condition of each County road and the daily traffic volume on the roads. In addition to these typical inputs, the County Commission has chosen to include historical inequity as a major weight factor influencing the output of the pavement management program. Three parameters were used to determine the Areas of Historical Inequity: US Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Qualified Census Tracts, Census Tracts with Median Income less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Guideline, and properties with residential improvement values in the bottom 20%. Alachua County is one of only a few communities in the Country using equity data in this way. The application of this data to the pavement management system allows the County to ensure more equitable outcomes in planning for infrastructure and ensures funding will address the needs of historically disadvantaged communities.

The County Commission reviewed and discussed many scenarios to ensure that the order and timing of road improvements coming out of the system will be the most fiscally sound and best for the County road system as a whole while addressing the historical inequities. At the most recent April 4th meeting,

the Commission asked staff to include the following parameters (in addition to pavement condition and traffic volume):

- Incorporate an Inequity Component into the Pavement Management Plan with a 40% weight
- Include $750,000/year for Residential Roadway within Areas of Inequity
- Include road segments with 15 or more work orders recorded in Alachua County's Cityworks database
- Staff to analyze and include roadways within one neighborhood and continuous segments of roadways so the timing and cost of mobilizing equipment is optimized.

Staff will be bringing this back to the County Commission on May 23rd.

MOTT MACDONALD

Alachua County Pavement Management Program Update

Using AgileAssets Optimization Software to Develop a Pavement Management Plan

April 4, 2023

Chris Dawson, AICP Alachua County Transportation Planning Manager
Ramon D. Gavarrete, P.E. Alachua County Public Works Director
Brian C. Kauffman, P.E., Alachua County Assistant Public Works Director
Addie Javed, PE, CFM Mott MacDonald
Arron Gerber, P.E. Mott MacDonald

Surtax Passes

- **November 8, 2022 Alachua County Voters Pass Ten Year One Penny Surtax**
  - 1st half cent is dedicated to “Wild Spaces & Public Places (WSPP)”
  - 2nd half cent is dedicated to roads, fire stations and other public facilities
    - BOCC allocates 70% to roadways

- **New Surtax will generate approximately $11.7 million/year for roadways**
  - $4.2 million in 2023 after city allocations

Board Direction

- **For revenue projections:**

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
$17,960,880	$19,250,527	$19,250,527	$19,250,527	$19,250,527	$28,615,100	$28,615,100	$28,615,100	$28,615,100	$28,615,100

  - The above revenue projection assume a $30,000,000 bond in 2028 from the "ELMS" Nickle with the revenues being spent over 5-years.
  - Bond is paid over 30-years
  - Infrastructure SurTax is not being bonded.

- **3% Cost Inflation each year of the analysis**
- **Pavement Preservation budgets capped to 3% of revenue, capped at $500,000 per year**

Board Direction

- **Use AgileAssests optimization software to develop a Pavement Management Plan**
- **Incorporate an Inequity Component into the Pavement Management Plan**
  - Use map developed by Alachua County Growth Management
  - Use 40% benefit weighting to Inequity Areas
  - $750k / year to Residential Roadways within Areas of Inequity
  - Yields the Best Results
- **Include road segments with 15 or more work orders recorded in Alachua County's Cityworks database**
- **Staff to analyze and smartly include roadways within one neighborhood and continuous segments of roadways**

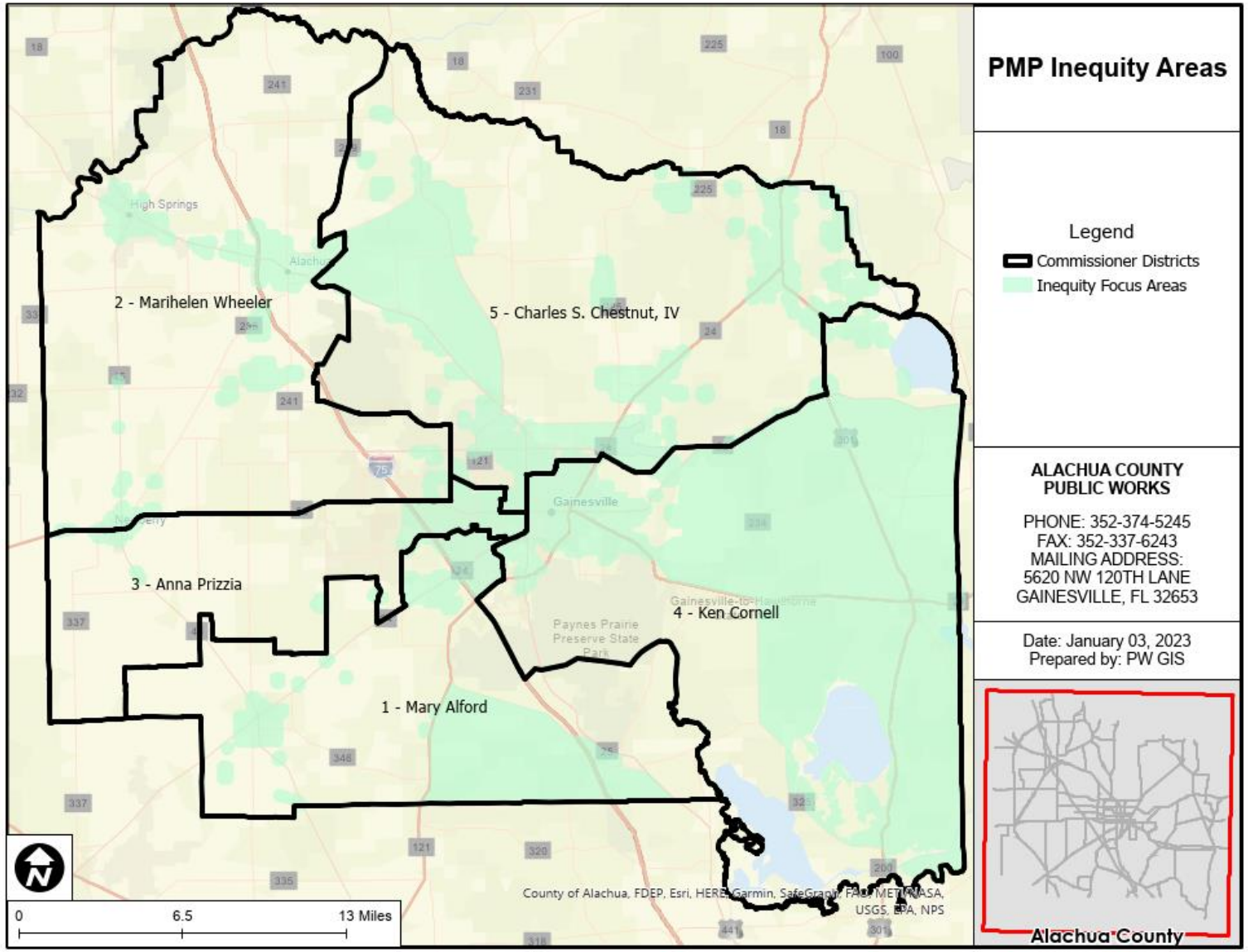
Inequity Area Development

- This is a leading-edge analysis considering Inequity – very important topic in Asset Management, but few examples available from around the US

- Staff utilized three metrics to identify Inequity Areas:
  - U.S. Housing and Urban Development Qualified Census Tracts
    - 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI) OR
    - have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more
  - Census Tracts with Median Income <185% of Federal Poverty Guideline
  - Properties with residential improvement values in the bottom 20% of all values
    - Added a buffer of 1,320 ft.

- Population in Inequity Area:
  - 2020 Population is just less than 90,000, or about 1/3 of County Population
  - Includes both incorporated and unincorporated residents

Inequity Focus Area Map



Summary

- **Things to Take Away**
  - **There is a limited budget**
  - **Not all roads will be fixed in the first 10 years**
  - **Additional roads can be selected if revenues increase**
  - **Additional roads will be repaired as the County receives grants**
  - **BOCC will review the 10-year road list on May 23, 2023.**
- **Good News**
  - **Incorporating Inequity Areas raised the overall County PCI**
  - **Most of the highly travelled collector roads, which yielded most of the work orders, will be repaired**
  - **Paving will start this Summer**
  - **You will see an improvement in the County's road system**

MOTT MACDONALD

April 4, 2023

City of Alachua
THE GOOD LIFE COMMUNITY

Commission Agenda Item

MEETING DATE: 5/22/2023
SUBJECT: Fire Station Equipment and Trunk Radio System Update
PREPARED BY: LeAnne Williams, Deputy City Clerk

RECOMMENDED ACTION:
Alachua County staff to provide the update.

Summary

The City of Alachua has requested an update on fire station equipment partnership and trunk radio system.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- Update on Fire Stations and Trunk Radio System 23.05.22 - 23-00157

Agenda Item Summary

File #: 23-00157 **Agenda Date: 5/23/2023**

Agenda Item Name:

Fire Station and Trunked Radio System Update

Presenter:
Harold Theus, Fire Rescue Chief, 352-384-3101

Description:
The City of Alachua has requested an update on the construction of Fire Station 21, the status of the Tech City Project and the Trunked Radio System.

Recommended Action:
Discussion Only

Prior Board Motions:
N/A

Fiscal Note:
N/A

Strategic Guide:
Public Safety

Background:
Fire Station 21- NW 173rd Street Project- The county is meeting bi-weekly with The Lunz Group to discuss site specific work. Currently, we are conducting site surveys, evaluating road conditions of entry and exit, evaluating the existing structure for demolition, and working through the permitting process. It is believed this phase will take approximately 3 months to complete.

Tech City Project- The county executed a donation agreement for land from the Laser Investment Group, LLC on June 10, 2021. A condition of the agreement was the construction of a “Primary Access Road” linking the proposed site to HWY 441. According to the donation agreement and once all conditions are met, the construction of the station shall begin prior to January 1, 2025.

Staff from Alachua County and Gainesville Regional Utilities Communication (GRUCOMM) continue to develop a purchase agreement. The Board of County Commission and the City of Gainesville have both approved a conditional sale of the Trunked Radio System to the County. Operation and ownership of the system would transfer on October 1, 2023. County staff have discussed individual agreements with staff from each entity that uses the system. GRU’s charge to the City of Alachua for

Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) was $126,329.41. The County has proposed a 5-year agreement with each user at a fixed price. The fixed price for Alachua would be $84,084 per year.

Joint City County Commission Meeting
Sign In May 22, 2023

Name (Please Print)	Name (Please Print)
(Please Print) Steve Donahey	(Please Print) Kimberly Young
(Please Print) Gina Peebles	(Please Print) Donnie Young
(Please Print) Tim WRIGHT	(Please Print)
(Please Print) Paola Suarez.	(Please Print) Austin Blazs
(Please Print) NATALIE + JAY WATKINS	(Please Print) Jeff Rosher.
(Please Print) Jazzlyn Harrell	(Please Print) CRAIG ROUTHIER
(Please Print) Mathew Rooney	(Please Print)
(Please Print) DARIN KILFOIL NFPS	(Please Print)
(Please Print) CAROL BUCHANAN	(Please Print)
(Please Print) Kari Cronin	(Please Print)

City Commission Meeting
Sign In May 22, 2023

Name (Please Print)	Name (Please Print)
(Please Print) JERRI WARRINGTON	(Please Print) CERRON MARKY
(Please Print) Ronald Lang	(Please Print) Harold THEUS
(Please Print) Phyllis W STRICKLAND	(Please Print)
(Please Print) Cary Wilson Coa	(Please Print)
(Please Print) Mike Cooksey	(Please Print)
(Please Print) DAVE Lowney Dave Lowney	(Please Print) DAVE Lowney
(Please Print) CHRISTOPHER Potts	(Please Print)
(Please Print)	(Please Print)
(Please Print)	(Please Print)
(Please Print)	(Please Print)