

## 5.0 INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

### 5.1 GENERAL

#### OBJECTIVE 5.1

An institutional land use category shall be established to provide for a range of activities related to human development and community services, subject to the policies and standards contained in this Section.

Policy 5.1.1 Potential locations for major future institutional uses are identified on the Future Land Use Maps. Institutional uses may be allowed in other land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map, and implemented in accordance with the guidance and policies within this Section 5.0., and within the Comprehensive Plan as a whole.

Policy 5.1.2 The following uses are considered institutional and governmental uses in Alachua County:

- a. Public and Private Educational Facilities (meeting State of Florida compulsory education requirements), Day Care Centers, and Nursery Schools.
- b. Community Services (e.g. civic and government facilities, fire and emergency services, law enforcement, health facilities, community service organizations, correctional facilities).
- c. Public Utility, Communications or Infrastructure Services (e.g. utility transmission and distribution facilities, landfills).
- d. Religious Facilities; and
- e. Cemeteries.

### 5.2 LOCATION AND COMPATIBILITY

Policy 5.2.1 The following criteria shall determine the appropriateness of potential institutional locations and uses requiring special use permits shall be demonstrated prior to establishing the institutional use:

- a. Optimum service area.
- b. Optimum operating size.
- c. Access to clientele.

- d. Compatibility of the scale and intensity of the use in relationship to surrounding uses, taking into account impacts such as, noise, lighting, visual effect, traffic generation, odors.
- e. Nature of service provision.
- f. Needs of the clientele.
- g. Availability and adequacy of public infrastructure to serve the particular use.
- h. Preservation and strengthening of community and neighborhood character through design.
- i. Consistency with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Conservation and Open Space Element.

Policy 5.2.2 Institutional facilities shall be designed and located for integration into the surrounding community. Land use decisions concerning location of institutional uses shall take into consideration environmental justice.

### **5.3 EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES**

Policy 5.3.1 The following areas shall be avoided when locating future educational facilities in Alachua County:

- a. Noise Attenuation Area or Noise Sensitive District, and other airport impact areas as prohibited by Chapter 333, Florida Statutes.
- b. Environmentally sensitive areas as determined in accordance with the conservation policies of Alachua County (see the Conservation and Open Space Element.
- c. Areas designated for Rural/Agriculture land use.
- d. Existing or designated industrial districts (except for vocational schools).
- e. Any area where the nature of existing or proposed adjacent land uses would endanger the safety of students or decrease the effective provision of education.

Policy 5.3.2 Elementary and middle schools are encouraged to locate:

- a. within existing or proposed residential areas or village centers, and

- b. near existing or designated public facilities such as parks, recreational areas, libraries, and community centers to facilitate the joint use of these areas.
  
- Policy 5.3.3 To ensure the safety of children, elementary schools shall be located on paved roads . Direct access should be available from local or collector streets, or from arterials with an interior road to the school.
  
- Policy 5.3.4 To ensure accessibility, middle and senior high schools shall be located near arterial streets.
  
- Policy 5.3.5 To ensure safety and accessibility, all schools shall be linked with surrounding residential areas by bikeways and sidewalks.
  
- Policy 5.3.6 Alachua County shall collocate public facilities such as parks, recreational areas, libraries, and community centers with schools to the extent possible.
  
- Policy 5.3.7
  - a. Public educational facilities shall be allowable uses in the following land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map:
    - 1. Urban Residential: Low density, Medium density, Medium-high density, and High density ranges.
    - 2. Institutional, within the urban cluster.
  
  - b. Public educational facilities may also be allowed as conditional uses in activity centers, institutional areas designated outside of the urban cluster, and other land use categories.
  
  - c. Land proposed for donation for school sites shall comply with Future Land Use Element Policy 7.1.10.
  
  - d. Private educational facilities shall be allowable uses in Medium Density, Medium-High Density, and High Density Residential, Institutional, Office, Commercial, Light Industrial, and Industrial, within specific zoning districts subject to performance criteria in the land development regulations directed toward the specific characteristics of private schools.
  
  - e. Private educational facilities may be allowed through the special use permit process in other land use categories.
  
  - f. Land development regulations for public and private educational facilities shall include reasonable development standards and conditions, and shall provide for consideration of the site plan’s adequacy as it relates to environmental concerns, health, safety, and general welfare, promotion of safe pedestrian and bicycle access with interconnections to related uses, and effects on adjacent property.

Policy 5.3.8 Existing schools shall be considered consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. If the School Board of Alachua County submits an application to expand an existing school site, the County may impose reasonable development standards and conditions on the expansion only, and in a manner consistent with Florida Statutes. Standards and conditions may not be imposed which conflict with those established in the Florida Statutes or the State Uniform Building Code, unless mutually agreed. In accordance with Florida Statutes, site plan review or approval shall not be required for:

- a. The placement of temporary or portable classroom facilities; or
- b. Proposed renovation or construction on existing school sites, with the exception of construction that changes the primary use of a facility, includes stadiums, or results in a greater than 5 percent increase in student capacity, or as mutually agreed.

Policy 5.3.9 Day care centers shall be allowable uses in Medium Density, Medium-High Density, and High Density Residential, Institutional, Office, Commercial, Light Industrial, and Industrial, within specific zoning districts subject to performance criteria in the land development regulations. Day care centers may be allowed through the development review process in other land use categories as specified in the land development regulations.

#### **5.4 COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Policy 5.4.1 **CIVIC AND GOVERNMENT FACILITIES:** Civic and government facilities, including future branch libraries, should be located on transit routes, in activity centers, village centers, or near other community services to ensure accessibility.

Policy 5.4.1.1 Libraries shall not be located in the Noise Sensitive District or Noise Attenuation Area.

Policy 5.4.1.2 Civic and government facilities may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

#### **5.4.2 FIRE PROTECTION**

Fire stations shall be located so as to provide the most cost effective, efficient protection of life and property.

Policy 5.4.2.1 Fire stations may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

### **5.4.3 LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Law enforcement facilities should be located near the center of the area to be serviced with access to major streets.

Policy 5.4.3.1 Law enforcement facilities may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

### **5.4.4 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE**

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) facilities shall be located near the center of the area to be serviced with access to major streets.

Policy 5.4.4.1 Emergency Medical Service facilities may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

### **5.4.5 HEALTH FACILITIES**

Major health facilities should be accessible by mass transit.

Policy 5.4.5.1 Medical support facilities and services shall locate in close proximity to hospitals.

Policy 5.4.5.2 New major health facilities, e.g., hospitals and medical complexes, shall be located in areas designated for Institutional/Medical land uses on the Future Land Use Map. This land use category shall also provide for related facilities such as pharmacies, medical suppliers, lodging, restaurants, and accessory facilities, subject to performance standards in the land development regulations.

Policy 5.4.5.3 Other health facilities such as outpatient medical clinics, including emergency facilities and nursing homes, may be allowed in the urban cluster in areas designated on the Future Land Use Map for Institutional, Institutional/Medical, Commercial, Medium-High Density Residential, and High Density Residential, within specific zoning districts subject to performance criteria in the land development regulations regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

- Policy 5.4.5.4 Outpatient clinics, including emergency facilities, may be allowed in areas designated for Rural/Agricultural uses and Rural Clusters on the Future Land Use Map subject to performance criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.
- Policy 5.4.6 **COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS:** Community Service Organizations, such as voluntary organizations and clubs engaged in civic, charitable, and related activities, shall be considered as institutional uses. Special provisions shall be made in the land development regulations to address the unique needs of those uses, including criteria regarding site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, clientele, and other impacts. Some activities not typical for residential areas such as the provision of temporary residences, homeless shelters, and community residential homes not otherwise exempted by Florida Statutes may be allowed in the urban cluster through the special use permit process. New homeless shelters shall be subject to performance criteria regarding site, size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.
- Policy 5.4.7 **CORRECTIONS FACILITIES:** New corrections facilities shall be located away from residential neighborhoods in areas designated for Institutional/Corrections land uses on the Future Land Use Map. Potential locations shall be based on factors such as adequate infrastructure, environmental concerns, and access issues.

## **5.5 PUBLIC UTILITY, COMMUNICATION, OR INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

Infrastructure and utility structures, such as communication towers, personal wireless service facilities, radio and television antennas, water and sewer, and energy generation and distribution facilities shall be designed and located to eliminate or minimize adverse visual impacts on the landscape.

- Policy 5.5.1 Public utilities distribution facilities (electrical, gas, telephone, and cable) shall be located in common corridors where practical from an engineering and economic standpoint to reduce land costs and to minimize the impacts of exposing new land to such uses. The land development regulations shall specify the factors that would be applicable to the location of such utilities distribution facilities in common corridors to the extent such locational decisions are within the County's legal authority. Factors that shall be addressed in determining practicality include things such as compliance with federal, state and local codes, safety and maintenance requirements relating to horizontal and vertical separation of facilities, soil and subsurface conditions and structures, efficiency and sustainable delivery to the end user, and ability of different utility providers to secure necessary coordination with other providers in a timely manner.

- a. Public utilities shall be permitted in all land use categories, subject to appropriate locational criteria in the land development regulations.
- b. New public utilities distribution lines within new developments shall be located underground. New public utilities distribution lines within rights-of-way shall be located underground to the maximum extent possible. The financial responsibility for the additional cost of underground facilities shall be borne directly by the developer and/or owners of the properties to be served by the underground facilities, or by the entity requiring those facilities to be placed underground. The County shall coordinate with local municipalities and public utilities to implement this policy in accordance with Florida Public Service Commission statutes, rules and regulations or other processes authorized by law.
- c. The County shall coordinate with public utilities to provide for use of utility corridors as part of open space systems, including public walking trails or linkages to greenways.

Policy 5.5.2 Sanitary landfills, solid waste transfer stations, and regional sewage treatment plants shall be adequately buffered from residential neighborhoods.

Policy 5.5.3 A future Institutional/County solid waste management facility, known as Balu Forest, is designated on the Future Land Use Map to be held in reserve as a future solid waste management facility site. Should the need arise and should there be no other environmentally safe or economic option available Balu Forest should be considered for a solid waste management facility site. Development of the solid waste management facility shall be subject to the issuance of a site-specific special use permit by the Board of County Commissioners. Any special use permit issued shall include the provision that no construction shall begin until necessary federal, state, regional and local permits and approvals have been obtained. The County shall initiate a comprehensive plan amendment to consider the redesignation of the alternate site, known as Site Delta.

Policy 5.5.4 Landfills and transfer systems shall be designed to have a minimal impact on the environment.

## **5.6 RELIGIOUS FACILITIES**

Policy 5.6.1 Houses of worship, churches, or places of religious assembly shall be considered to be institutional uses. Religious facilities may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map subject to performance criteria regarding minimum site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

**5.7 CEMETERIES**

Policy 5.7.1 Cemeteries may be permitted in all land use categories designated on the Future Land Use Map through the special use permit process, subject to performance criteria regarding minimum site size, scale, and dimensions, building coverage, parking, buffering, access, and other impacts.

**5.8 PERSONAL WIRELESS SERVICE FACILITIES**

Policy 5.8 The County shall facilitate the deployment of personal wireless services and facilities (PWSFs) in a manner that balances needs for economic development, environmental protection, and minimization of adverse visual impacts in Alachua County. PWSFs should:

- a. use existing structures not originally built as antenna mounts, including, but not limited to rooftops, utility poles, and church steeples.
- b. use the least obtrusive mount for deploying service, including minimizing the height and silhouette to have the minimum visual impact possible;
- c. be located, sited, and designed in a way that minimizes the adverse visual impact on the community.
- d. be located in such a way as to avoid impacting view corridors, vistas, and viewsheds.
- e. if ground-mounted, not be located in environmentally sensitive areas or passive recreation areas within Alachua County parks.
- f. not be placed or constructed on a historic structure, landmark or site that is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or is deemed of historic value by the State of Florida or Alachua County.
- g. not be located in conservation areas.
- h. not be located where the potential for bird kills is shown to exist.