



Chapter 5: Land Use & Transportation



Why this matters

Humans have altered around three-quarters of Earth's land surface within the last 1,000 years. Converting land for human use damages its ability to store carbon in soil and trees, infiltrate rainwater to replenish the aquifer, and support plant and animal life.

Urban development and associated transportation demands can create urban sprawl, which increases vehicle congestion, fuel use, and emissions. Expansive paved surfaces in urban areas trap heat and increase stormwater runoff, contributing to hotter temperatures, greater flood risk, and poorer downstream water quality.

What's happening here?

As Alachua County's population grows, we need more homes and transportation options to support people's needs. Sprawling development patterns beyond urban centers can lead to loss of farmland and forests, longer commutes, and more dependence on automobiles, generating more emissions. In contrast, compact, mixed-use neighborhoods and multi-modal transportation options can lower infrastructure costs and fuel expenses, protect natural resources and wildlife habitats, and improve human health.

The CAP prioritizes two approaches to improve land use and transportation resiliency:

Promote low-impact development with mixed uses and higher densities

Increase options and infrastructure for walking, biking, and bus rapid transit

What does the CAP include?

Building on strong sustainable development and transportation elements in the Comprehensive Plan, Alachua County aims to reduce land use and transportation impacts from urban development and private vehicles by:

- **Encouraging compact, mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods**
- **Supporting diverse and accessible biking, walking, and public transit options**
- **Planning safe routes for cyclists and pedestrians**
- **Protecting farmland, critical ecosystems and natural areas from urban sprawl**

Program Highlight

Alachua County's 2040 Mobility Plan ensures new development helps pay for transportation projects that improve sidewalks, bike lanes, transit access, and safer streets.

How can residents contribute?

Stay engaged

- Attend local planning meetings to shape the way the County and its cities and towns develop to protect the natural resources that are important to you

Use low-impact transportation

- Choose biking, walking, e-biking, or traveling by bus when and where possible