



## Historic Preservation Board Agenda October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 - 4:00 PM

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of the May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Minutes
3. Appeals Procedures
4. Old Business
5. New Business
  - A. Case: 15-42
  - Location:
  - Applicant: City of Palatka
  - Request: Historic Preservation Element of Comprehensive Plan
6. Other Business
7. Adjourn

ANY PERSON WISHING TO APPEAL ANY DECISION MADE BY THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD WITH RESPECT TO ANY MATTER CONSIDERED AT SUCH MEETING WILL NEED A RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS THAT INCLUDES THE TESTIMONY AND EVIDENCE UPON WHICH THE APPEAL IS TO BE BASED, AT THE EXPENSE OF THE APPELLANT. F.S. 286.0105 PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES REQUIRING ACCOMMODATIONS IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS MEETING SHOULD CONTACT THE CITY BUILDING DEPARTMENT AT 329-0103 AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE TO REQUEST SUCH ACCOMMODATIONS.

# **Attachment A**

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD**  
**CITY OF PALATKA**  
**DRAFT Meeting Minutes May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Roberta Correa at 4:00 pm. Other members present included Lynda Crabill, Meri Rees, Larry Beaton, and Elizabeth van Rensburg. Absent members included Robert Goodwin, Gilbert Evans Jr, and Laura Schoenberger. Staff present: Planning Director Thad Crowe and Recording Secretary Ke'Ondra Wright.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion made by Ms. van Rensburg to approve the April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015 minutes, seconded by Ms. Crabill. Motion passed unanimously.

**APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Chairperson Correa read the appeals procedures.

**NEW BUSINESS**

<b>Case:</b>	HB 15-18
<b>Locations:</b>	115 Dodge St
<b>Applicant:</b>	Andrew Kiley
<b>Request:</b>	Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove freestanding brick pier near house, replace a deck and add a pergola roof feature, replace boat dock, and remove screening from porch (South Historic District).

Chairperson Correa disclosed she was the realtor that assisted the Kileys in purchasing the home. Mr. Kiley had asked Chairperson Correa about the Certificate of Appropriateness process and Chairperson Correa directed Mr. Kiley to the Planning Director.

Mr. Crowe summarized the facts of this case and noted that a graphic was passed out to the board members to better describe of the work that will be taken placed. Several actions were requested in the COA including the removal of a single freestanding brick pier, replacement of a boat dock, deck replacement and addition of a pergola, replacement of the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor attic vent, and removal of porch screening. A lot of the work is replacement with similar material and it is in keeping with the standards. Staff did not believe that the freestanding pier was an important feature, so its removal was acceptable. The deck was not a historic element of the house but staff did support the pergola in an interlocking form or outward-running pattern. The attic vent would echo the existing and historic attic window facing Dodge Street, and dock should have wood or similar looking materials. Staff recommends approval of the following COA items, with the work being in keeping with the narrative submitted by the Applicant: 1) either the open River Street - facing deck or a deck with a pergola is acceptable, with the deck being at ground level or only slightly higher so as to remain unobtrusive, and with the pergola roof being interlocking rafters or outward-running rafters; 2) replacement of the current attic vent facing the River Street side with a window feature similar to the attic vent facing Dodge Street is acceptable; and 3) a replacement L-shaped dock facing northeast is acceptable, no boathouses or other structures except for a boat lift, utilizing wood or similar-looking materials, minimizing any modern materials when possible; and 3) removal of the freestanding pier is acceptable.

Andrew Kiley, 115 Dodge Street, said he agreed with staff recommendations. Mr. Kiley passed around a picture (file) that provides more specific information on the pergola design. He said he would like to build up the ground to direct rainwater away from the house. He added that the pergola will be painted the same colors of the house.

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**Public Comments**

Chairperson Correa read the letter as presented in the record (file) from Planning Board member Anthony Harwell, 322 Madison Street, who opposed the request. Mr. Harwell objected to the lack of specific building plans and architectural elevations in the application, and also objected to the removal of the freestanding pier, which he said was an important architectural element. Mr. Crowe said that Mr. Harwell was requesting very detailed information that Staff does not require for COA applications. He said that the Board's role was to provide general guidance and not to micro-manage specific building code related information. Staff then implements the Board's direction. He added that all work requires conformance with the Florida Building Code, as demonstrated through more specific plans, this step happens later as this is more of a preliminary or conceptual review stage.

The Chairperson then closed the public comments portion of this item.

**Board Discussion**

Ms. Rees advised the board that she doesn't see a problem with the removal of the pier, because it serves no purpose. Chairperson Correa said the Board tries to preserve historic architecture, but at the same time recognizes the need to make historic buildings functional for current use. She said the pier removal would allow for parking two cars, which is a realistic need. Unless the Applicant planned to reconstruct the full lattice feature, the single pier does not serve a purpose. Ms. Crabill agreed that the pier was placed there for the lattice work and not as a separate architectural feature, and having the extra parking in the area will serve a positive purpose.

Ms. van Rensburg asked if staff would like the Board to approve the items individually or on a blanket motion. Mr. Crowe responded that a blanket motion was fine, unless the Board decided to treat individual requests differently – in the latter event individual motions would be required.

Ms. van Rensburg said there had been some constructive discussion between the homeowner and the building department to sort out any challenges long before the COA application came before the board and commends staff on this communication.

**Motion** by Mr. Beaton to approve the following items: 1) approve an open River Street –facing deck or patio, which can include a pergola, to occupy the same or lesser area than the existing deck, to be ground level or only slightly higher, with an optional pergola roof with interlocking rafters or outward-running rafters; 2) approve replacement of the current attic vent facing the River St. side with a window feature similar to the attic vent facing Dodge St.; 3) approve replacement of the L-shaped dock, no boathouse or other structures except for a boat lift, dock materials shall predominantly be wood or similar-looking materials, minimizing any modern materials when possible; and 4) the removal of the isolated masonry pier adjacent to the northwest corner of the house, The motion was seconded by Ms. Crabill and passed unanimously.

**Case:** HB 15-19  
**Locations:** 300 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St; 304 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St; 310 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St  
**Applicant:** Coenraad & Elizabeth van Rensburg

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD**  
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**Request:** Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to install a black metal picket fence, construct an in-ground pool and pool house, and re-roof garage with weathered wood architectural asphalt shingles (North Historic District).

Mr. Crowe summarized the facts of this case, noting that the proposed six-foot tall decorative metal fence meets the state requirements for securing pool areas. Wooden gates in three locations will be bounded by columns. An existing outbuilding at the rear of the vacant lot will be used for the pool house and will include a pergola/trellis roof feature facing the pool. Historically fencing was placed along property lines, but by backing up the front fence where it connects the front wall of each house, more open space is provided for the public to enjoy, and the Applicant will also save money by using less fencing. Staff recommends COA approval for 1) installation of an in-ground pool with a grey bottom finish and pocked/shell-studded pool deck; 2) erection of a six-foot tall black decorative metal picket fence; 3) installation of fence gates utilizing decorative block columns; 4) replacement of front façade of pool house with accordion style garage doors; and 5) installation of trellis porch roof on the east and south side of the pool house.

Ms. van Rensburg recused herself from the item as she is the property owner. She added that one exterior alteration was not included in the request, but she wanted to make the Board aware of it. This was the re-opening of the back porch for 300 N 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Mr. Crowe confirmed that Staff had approved this action as it was documented to be a restoration of an original feature. Planning Code Sec. 54-78(g) allows Staff to do this.

**Public Comments**

Anthon Harwell, 322 Madison St, Chairperson Correa read his letter objecting to this request into the record (file). Mr. Harwell's raised the following objections: Applicant did not submit detailed information and plans; metal fence does not match the architecture as it is too "frail", pool house columns should be round; gates should match fencing; and removal of 2<sup>nd</sup> floor rear porch should be denied. Mr. Crowe responded, saying the Board provided more of a conceptual approval that did not require final and detailed plans and renderings. He added that the other objections were a matter of preference and did not rise to the level of noncompliance with the design standards.

Conreed van Rensburg, 300 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St, said that since the application was submitted he had combined the two parcels at the property appraiser's office. In reference to Mr. Harwell's letter he said that the Board basically approves the concept of the project with certain parameters placed on the project and that the detailed plans are filed at the time of building permitting. The fence is required by the Florida Building Code because of the pool, and he would have preferred to have the space open. The hedges will essentially disguise the fences, and the wooden gates will provide an historic look. The pool house columns are square because that is the shape of the original columns on the back porches of both houses. Finally, the rear porch was not removed but brought back to its original and historical appearance with the removal of post-historic siding and windows.

Elizabeth van Rensburg, 310 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St, said that the hedges will be podocarpus spaced about three feet apart so in about three years you will not be able to see the pool at all.

The Chairperson then closed the public comments portion of this item.

**Board Discussion**

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Mr. Beaton asked if there will be a walkway from the sidewalk to the gate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Street side. Mr. van Rensburg answered in the affirmative. Mr. Beaton asked if the gate will be on the south side of the property facing 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. Mr. van Rensburg answered in the affirmative.

Ms. Rees said that she like the idea of the fence facing south.

**Motion** by Mr. Beaton to approve installing an in-ground pool with grey bottom finish, pocket/shell studded pool deck; six foot tall black metal picket fence, installation of gates utilizing decorative block columns, replacement of front façade of pool house with accordion style garage doors, and installation of trellis porch roof on the east and south side of the pool house. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rees and passed unanimously.

**OTHER BUSINESS** – Mr. Crowe reminded the Board of the City’s application for a Certified Local Government grant for a historic resurvey. He said he was almost finished with the National Register nomination for the Century Block and Mr. Beaton was very helpful with the information he provided. Mr. Beaton advised the board if they wanted a copy of the information submitted he would be glad to provide a copy to the board. Mr. Crowe advised when the National Register application is finished he will send the final copy of the application to the board.

Mr. Beaton advised the board that he will be doing a PowerPoint presentation on the “Great Fire of Palatka” on Saturday May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at one of the historic round tables at the library at 10:00 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT - Motion** to adjourn made by Ms. Crabill to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ms. von Rensburg, and the meeting was adjourned at 4:35 pm.

# **Attachment B**



# **Certificate of Appropriateness HB 15-42 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR)**

## **STAFF REPORT**

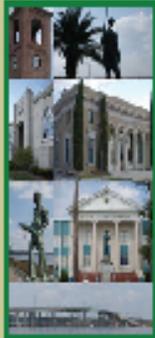
**DATE:**September 21, 2015

**TO:** Historic Preservation Board members

**FROM:** Thad Crowe, AICP  
Planning Director

The EAR effort is the first step in updating the City's currently-adopted Comprehensive Plan. The attached document is an excerpt from the overall draft EAR that is of relevance or interest to the Historic Preservation Board. Various sections have been included so the Board may get some context of the overall document, but the action items in this case are proposed revisions to Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives, and policies pertaining to historic preservation, found in Section C.

Recommend approval of proposed historic preservation-related goals, objectives, and policies as recommended in Section C of the draft EAR.



# **CITY OF PALATKA: EVALUATION AND APPRAISAL REPORT**

**Prepared by the City of Palatka  
Building & Zoning Department  
September, 2015**



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# Section A: Introduction



## **Purpose**

The purpose of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) for the City of Palatka's Comprehensive Plan is to examine and evaluate how well the Plan is serving the municipality since its adoption in 2008. The EAR process provides flexibility with regard to how the City may address its major local issues, as well as how the plan could be tailored to reflect recent changes in the community. Specifically, the purpose of the EAR process is to:

- Identify major issues for the community
- Review past actions of the local government in implementing the Plan with respect to the major issues since the last EAR
- Assess the degree to which the Plan objectives have been achieved as they relate to the major issues
- Assess shortcomings and successes of the Plan
- Identify ways that the Plan should be changed
  - Respond to changing conditions and trends affecting the local community
  - Respond to the need for new data
  - Respond to changes in state requirements pertaining to growth management and development
  - Respond to changes in regional plans
- Ensure effective intergovernmental coordination

## **City Profile:**

The City is an incorporated municipality located in the east central part of Putnam County, which is an interior county located in the northeast Florida region. The City was chartered in 1853, soon after Putnam County became the 28<sup>th</sup> Florida County in 1849. Palatka is approximately 5.2 miles from north to south and 6.0 miles from west to east, and has an approximate land area of 5,253 acres, or 8.21 square miles. The City is located within a predominantly rural county and surrounding land uses include pine flatwoods, planted pine, temperate hammock, wetlands, and low density single family units. Additionally, the St. Johns River forms the eastern boundary of the City.

There are four major roadways that access the City from various directions: S.R. 19 runs north-south through the City and terminates at U.S. 17; S.R. 100 and S.R. 20 run east-west through the City before merging near the Memorial Bridge; and U.S. 17 merges with S.R. 100 in the northwestern quadrant of the City and runs east through the City and across the river.

The City has the largest incorporated population in Putnam County, with its 10,418 persons (2015 estimates from Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida) representing 14.4% of the estimated US Census 2014 county population of 72,143. This is a 1.3% decrease from the official 2010 US Census population of 10,558.

Specific attributes that distinguish the City from other surrounding communities is its proximity to the St. Johns River. The St. Johns River is the largest river wholly within the State of Florida. The river is a valuable recreation resource which provides many opportunities for aquatic activities such as boating and fishing. Many pleasure craft ply the river south of Jacksonville, going as far as Sanford. The channel is well-marked by lights and day beacons, and is comparatively easy to navigate with the aid of charts. Commercial traffic is light and consists of barges hauling petroleum products for oil company distributors and fuel oil for power plants; the oil barges are loaded at Jacksonville and towed to Palatka and Sanford. The Boathouse Marina, southwest of the Memorial (U.S. 17) bridge, has good facilities for yachts with over 30 berths with water and electricity at finger piers. Gasoline and limited marine supplies are available. The City pier, just northeastward of the marina, has overnight berths, electricity, and water. The City's Riverfront Park has undergone a recent transformation with the utilization of \$2 million in federal and local CRA tax increment funds to revitalize landscaping and plant street trees, reorganize and increase public parking, install decorative street and sidewalk pavers, underground utilities, increase boat launch lanes from two to five, and create a kayak soft launch. Upcoming park improvements include a new ship store with public restrooms and concession restaurant as well as an expansion of the private Boathouse Marina, which will manage the ship store and boat launch area as a public-private partnership. The City has assisted nearby private development projects including the Georgia-Pacific funded St. Johns River Educational and Environmental Center, a 70-room Hampton Inn, and the historic rehabilitation of the 100 block of N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street into a retail-residential complex.

Another distinctive geographic feature found in the City is Ravine Gardens State Park, where a ravine with a 60-foot elevation change provides dramatic natural scenery. The park was established in 1933 as a federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) project with the planting of over 95,000 azaleas and 250,000 ornamental plants. Current visitors mostly use the park for walking or jogging the 1.8 mile perimeter loop road. Part of loop road is a "parcourse" or fitness trail with multiple obstacles and physical fitness stations.

## **Evaluation and Appraisal Report Process:**

In 2008 the City was compelled by the now-defunct Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to adopt an updated Comprehensive Plan, after it was found that City staff had failed to transmit adopted Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) amendments to DCA. At the time this was a major violation of state growth management laws which without an amended plan would have otherwise resulted in the invalidation of years of FLUM and rezoning amendments. (It should be noted that most of the state growth management laws, including transmittal of small-scale FLUM amendments to the state, were effectively eliminated by the Florida Legislature in 2010.) In 2008 the City quickly adopted a plan to comply with statutes and legitimize previous actions, while pledging to DCA that it would use the state-mandated Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) process to more thoroughly evaluate and amend its plan. This EAR effort was completed by early 2011, with the assistance of staff from the Northeast Florida Regional Council, which functioned as the City's consultant. A series of highly publicized and well-attended visioning workshops were held at the time of the Plan update, and the information gathered during these workshops serves as the basis of the Local Major Issues within this EAR. The questions below were handled by small groups, which developed answers

on a consensus basis, and also utilized a modified S.W.O.T. (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) facilitating technique.

### **Natural Features**

- Where are opportunities to preserve natural features and/or unique characteristics in Palatka?
- What kind of land uses would threaten the natural features or unique characteristics in Palatka? What kind of land uses would be beneficial?

### **Housing**

- Where are opportunities for infill housing?
- What parts of the City are suitable for higher density? Lower density? Multi-family?

### **Commercial**

- Where are opportunities for commercial or industrial infill?
- Where are opportunities for redevelopment?
- Where is commercial or residential development not thriving? Why is it not thriving?

### **Institutional**

- Where are there opportunities for civic, institutional and public facilities (i.e. churches, schools, etc)?

### **Parks, Recreation and Open Space**

- Where have parks not been successful in Palatka? Where are opportunities for parks and open space?
- How should parks and open space be incorporated into the City? In other words, should there be a linear park system throughout the City, or more regional and neighborhood parks?
- Where should parks be located?
- What should parks be composed of as a standard? (e.g., playground equipment, benches, bathrooms, basketball courts, etc.). What should the current City parks look like? Do they need more trees and landscaping? What should newly constructed parks look like?
- How important is a City wide park and recreation system? Does the City need to do a better job in this area? If so, why? Should there be a city wide recreation program? What policies should there be imposed?

### **Public Utilities**

- How should the City address the Urban Service Area?
- Should each City service be addressed separately or include it as a whole?

### **Transportation**

- Does the current transportation system/network meet the needs of today?
- Identify the areas you assess as areas that have major issues today and what are those issues?

### **Downtown Redevelopment**

- List the opportunities and assets of downtown, and separately list the challenges facing downtown redevelopment.
- Identify Downtown Palatka's identity.
- Create a Downtown Vision Statement.
- Identify the successes and shortcomings of the City's North and South Historic Districts, both in terms of regulations and strategies.

## **Local Major Issues**

Based on the input and findings of the public workshops, a preliminary list of Local Major Issues was developed. The general subject areas for these issues were, in no order of importance:

- Issue 1: Historic Preservation
- Issue 2: Economic Development
- Issue 3: Transportation Level of Service
- Issue 4: Trails and Parks
- Issue 5: Annexations / Municipal Boundaries

A Scoping Meeting was held on March 9, 2010, at the City Commission Chambers, at which time the preliminary list of Local Major Issues was presented and discussed with reviewing agencies and stakeholders. Based on input from the Scoping Meeting, a finalized, more specific list of Local Major Issues was presented to, and subsequently adopted by, both the Local Planning Agency and the City Commission. The City then requested of DCA a written confirmation that these would be the Local Major Issues that would be analyzed by the City. On April 28, 2010, DCA provided written confirmation of the following Local Major Issues:

### ***Issue 1: Historic Preservation and Cultural Arts***

The City of Palatka has two previously identified historically significant areas, the North Historic District, also known as Reid's Garden and the South Historic District, also known as the Hammock. The North Historic District is primarily single-family, while the south district is both single-family as well as urban (i.e. downtown) Palatka. Currently, protection of these areas is provided through policies set forth in the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan and implemented by historic district regulations found in the Planning Code, a section of the City's Municipal Code.

The historic preservation policies of the Plan compel the City to protect the designated historic resources of the North and South historic districts while providing an exception to protection standards based on economic and practical hardship. In recent years historic preservation has been upheld by the City's Historic Preservation Board and City Commission in the case of historic buildings owned by St. Mark's Episcopal Church, but not in the case of a historic building owned by First Presbyterian Church, which was approved for demolition through an appeal to the City Commission.

The policies also direct the City to, on an on-going basis, identify and monitor historic resources. This did not occur until 2012 when City staff conducted a re-survey of downtown properties, previously surveyed 35 years ago. The City has applied for a state historic preservation grant to re-survey North and Historic District properties and to survey other potential historic areas such as the Northside and Palatka Heights. It is particularly important for the City to recognize African-American historic properties that have in the past been ignored.

Currently the Comprehensive Plan is silent on the issue of cultural arts. A need has been identified to further efforts such as art in public places, larger performing arts venues, and attracting education and cultural institutions like the Florida School of the Arts (FloArts) to downtown Palatka.

## ***Issue 2: Economic Development***

Although Palatka is the economic hub of Putnam County, the City faces several challenges in improving economic vitality:

### Downtown Palatka

Many of the buildings in downtown Palatka were constructed prior to the new building codes and ADA requirements. The economic reality in many situations is that the retrofitting of these buildings is cost prohibitive. Challenging factors include the changing role of “bricks-and-mortar” stores as more Americans shop online, the tendency of local residents to shop or dine in Orange Park or St. Augustine. Lower resident discretionary income has affected downtown as well as Palatka’s nearly empty mall. Boutique and specialty shops and a handful of restaurants and bars have struggled to survive downtown, and the only real growth in the City has been the slow increase of chain stores, mostly dollar stores and restaurants, occurring only in outlying areas along Crill Ave., Reid St., and SR 19. An August, 2015 survey indicated that of the 95 functional commercial (ground floor) spaces along St. Johns Avenue between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Streets, just 73 or 77% were occupied.

### Blighted Thoroughfares

The City’s major thoroughfares, including Reid St., Crill Ave., State Rd. 19, and US 17, present a generally blighted appearance with a lack of landscaping and shade, excessive sign clutter, expanses of deteriorating pavement, and lack of property and building maintenance. Most properties have intensive commercial zoning, which has resulted in a preponderance of auto repair-related uses that produce negative visual and noise impacts, particularly on small sites where a lack of adequate indoor repair space results in outside dead vehicle storage and repair activity occurring in parking lots and even sidewalks. These factors work against property maintenance, investment, and reinvestment.

### Income

Palatka residents are among the poorest in Florida, with 35.4% of families having incomes below the poverty level (2013, American Community Survey, US Census Bureau). This compares with a much lower 12% statewide rate. Lack of job opportunity and low wages has resulted in 47.5% of those 16 or older ending up outside the labor force, compared with the comparable state proportion of 40%. In a state where the median income approaches \$\$47,000, Palatka households make \$19,883. Over 17% of households received some sort of public benefit, compared to a lower 7.6% on the state level.

### Housing

As previously noted, Palatka’s population has stagnated or fallen for many years. The urban area has slowly grown with scattered subdivisions mostly occurring outside of the City limits to the west. This has resulted in an aging housing stock with increasing numbers of substandard units, foreclosed homes, vacant and even abandoned homes, and code enforcement violations. The only subdivision developed in the last twenty years is the 27-unit Crystal Cove single-family development, completely built-out. Just south of

this development is a platted and approved 24-unit single-family subdivision, as of yet undeveloped. The 96-unit Cypress Mills Planned Unit Development (PUD), located south of downtown and just west of the South Historic District, was approved in 2008, during an unprecedented time of expansion of the Jacksonville metropolitan area, a time in which some people prematurely anticipated that Putnam County was the next logical location for regional growth. This PUD recently expired and the owner is considering shifting from townhome to single-family units that would be more marketable.

A primary problem in housing development is the City's high tax burden, with properties annexing into the City subject to an almost-doubling of ad valorem taxes and user fees. For this reason new subdivisions primarily occur in the unincorporated County, often on well and septic and on larger lots, the classic definition of urban sprawl.

### Shovel Ready Sites

In order to become competitive for large industries, there is a need for fully entitled, infrastructure ready non-residential lands within the City. Two large industrial sites have been annexed into the City: The Putnam County Business Park and 680 acres of undeveloped lands owned by Plum Creek. The Putnam County Business Park has incomplete infrastructure and is unplatted. The 680 acres of Plum Creek property is undeveloped but has development rights for industrial uses. Very little industrial development has occurred since most industries prefer to move into already developed sites.

# **Section B: Community-Wide Assessment**



## Population Growth:

Palatka utilizes official population projections done by the Florida Bureau for Business and Economic Research (BEBR), out of the University of Florida. BEBR utilizes electricity customer and other records to help in their estimates. This table shows a period of slow but steady growth in the early 2000's, likely a product of a strong economy within the county and region. After the 2008 crash the growth was replaced by a period of declining population that has generally persisted to the current year.

**Table B1: Comparison of Population Estimates**

Year	Estimate	Annual Growth Rate
2000	10,033	N/A
2001	10,037	0.0%
2002	10,250	2.1%
2003	10,510	2.5%
2004	10,820	2.9%
2005	11,154	3.1%
2006	11,417	2.4%
2007	11,470	0.5%
2008	11,265	-1.8%
2009	11,133	-1.2%
2010	10,926	-1.9%
2011	10,522	-3.7%
2012	10,203	-3.0%
2013	10,213	0.1%
2014	10,558	3.4%
2015	10,418	-1.3%

In general, the downturn of the U.S. economy, as well as the state economy has had significant impacts on local jurisdictions including the City. Prior to the recent recession, people were moving to the State of Florida at a rapid pace. The downturn in the economy has led to increased unemployment rates and decreased in-migration. Limited job prospects can be considered a contributing factor to the decrease in population over the last several years. And while other jurisdictions within the region and mostly across the state have recovered from the downturn and resumed a healthy growth rate, Palatka's economy has remained unresponsive. BEBR anticipates this lack of growth to continue into the coming mid-century as shown in Table B2. <sup>1</sup> In this table, Putnam County's population is predicted to decrease or stagnate in the Low and Medium projections. This compares with growth proportions for the same time period for nearby St. Johns County, well into the double digits.

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<sup>1</sup> BEBR projections, as shown in Table B2, provide three alternative growth projections: Low, Medium, and High. Prior to the downturn, Medium projections were accepted as coming close to actual growth, although the downturn period saw rates more around the Low rate.

**Table B2: Putnam Co. Population Projections through 2030**

Year	Projections (Low)	Percent change	Projections (Medium)	Percent change	Projections (High)	Percent change
2015	70,400	---	72,600	---	75,500	---
2020	68,600	-2.6%	73,100	0.7%	78,100	20.5%
2025	66,800	-2.6%	73,500	0.5%	80,800	18.8%
2030	64,900	-2.8%	74,200	0.4%	83,400	16.0%
2035	63,000	-2.9%	74,200	0.5%	86,000	13.9%
2040	61,000	-3.2%	74,400	0.3%	88,600	12.6%

*Source: Bureau of Economic Business and Research, University of Florida*

***Average seasonal population***

The 2010 Census identified 21 seasonal housing units, which is a little less than 0.5% of City housing units. It is anticipated that this number will rise as more people from the Northeast, Midwest, and Canada purchase relatively affordable properties for wintertime residence. As noted by such publications as the Wall Street Journal, the US Census has difficulty in accurately counting seasonal residents, and it is likely that the 21 units are an undercount. In a 2006 statewide survey BEBR found that seasonal residents ranged between a low of 0.5% in August to a high of 5.4% in January, and averaged 2.4%. The seasonal population is divided into two generally equal groups: older snowbirds staying for the several winter months and younger seasonal residents who are working, visiting friends/relatives, or on extended vacations. This last group of younger seasonals resemble permanent residents in terms of their impacts. The proportion is much higher in resort communities (including almost half the residents of Daytona Beach Shores and one-quarter of St. Pete Beach and Venice residents), but a local trend has at least been anecdotally identified of Northern residents spending the winter in Palatka. This Comprehensive Plan assumes that 2.5% of households are seasonal, which at this time would constitute 113 housing units.

**Change in Land Area:**

Since the last adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, the City has annexed several parcels from Putnam County. Table B3 details the date of the annexation, the new designated land use category for the annexed parcels within the City, and the total acreage of each annexation. As of August, 2012, the City has added an additional 755.5 acres of annexed land.

**Table B3: Annexations since the last adoption of the Comprehensive Plan**

City of Palatka Annexations		
<i>Date</i>	<i>Request</i>	<i>Acres</i>
11/13/2008	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential Low Density	0.23
11/13/2008	FLUM from County Urban Reserve to City Medium Density Residential	9.68
11/13/2008	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	0.50
12/11/2008	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	1.98
5/14/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential Low Density	0.33
5/14/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential Low Density	0.23
5/14/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential Low Density	0.31
5/14/2009	FLUM from County Commercial to City Commercial	0.75

<b>City of Palatka Annexations</b>		
<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Request</i></b>	<b><i>Acres</i></b>
8/27/2009	FLUM from County Urban Reserve to City Commercial	7.4
8/27/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential Low Density	0.2
8/27/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential Low Density	0.2
8/27/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	0.5
9/10/2009	FLUM from County Industrial to City Industrial	6.7
11/12/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	5.9
11/12/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	9.6
11/12/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	2.2
12/10/2009	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Commercial	2.8
2/25/2010	FLUM from County Industrial to City Industrial	680.1
6/10/2010	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential High Density	2.8
8/26/2010	FLUM from County Urban Service to City Residential High Density	0.7
9/9/2010	FLUM from County Commercial to City Residential Low Density	0.8
1/13/2011	FLUM from County Urban Reserve to City Commercial	1.2
1/26/2011	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Residential Low Density	0.4
9/8/2011	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Industrial	14.4
11/10/2011	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Residential Low Density	0.2
11/10/2011	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Residential Low Density	0.3
5/24/2012	FLUM from County Urban Services and Commercial to City Commercial	5.4
8/16/2012	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Commercial (102 Phillips Dairy Rd.)	0.3
2/14/2013	FLUM from County Urban Reserve to City Residential Low Density (100 Kelley Smith School Rd.)	1.2
6/13/2013	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Commercial (1095 N SR 19)	0.7
6/13/2013	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Commercial (421 N. Palm Ave.)	0.3
1/23/2014	FLUM from County Urban Reserve to City Residential Low Density (2410 Tommy Ave.)	0.2
1/23/2014	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Industrial (1400 N SR 19)	5.7
6/26/2014	FLUM from County Urban Reserve to City Residential Low Density (2525 Husson Ave.)	0.5
5/14/2015	FLUM from County Urban Services to City Commercial (3314 Crill Ave.)	1.0
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>765.7</b>

Source: City of Palatka

Table B4 highlights the total annexed lands by land use category. The City added almost 800 acres in five different land use categories. The largest proportion of annexed lands (94%) is designated as industrial use, of which 680.1 acres are solely attributable to the Plum Creek Industrial Park annexation. Commercial land use makes up approximately 5% of the annexed lands, with residential land uses comprising the remaining 1%.

**Table B4: Annexations by City Land Use Category**

<b><i>Land Use Designation</i></b>	<b><i>Acres</i></b>
Low Density Residential	5.1
Medium Density Residential	9.7
High Density Residential	3.5
Commercial	40.5
Industrial	706.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>765.7</b>

Source: City of Palatka

Residential and commercial land use categories had minor acreage increases and industrial land use acreage almost tripled. The addition of industrial and commercial land has little affect on anticipated population growth, but the addition of residential acreage can accommodate modest increases in population. By taking the maximum development potential of units per acre of each residential density category, the City has the ability to add an additional 173 units from the annexed residential land. Low density residential can accommodate an additional 15 units; medium density residential can add an additional 97 units; and high density residential can add an additional 61 units. Table B5 is the updated existing land use table with the above annexations factored in.

**Table B5: Existing Land Use by Category 2015**

<i>Land Use Category</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Total*</i>
Residential	1,733	24.8%
<i>Low Density (up to 5 units per acre)</i>	1,022	14.6%
<i>Medium Density (5 to 10 units per acre)</i>	238	3.4%
<i>High Density (10 to 18 units per acre)</i>	498	7.1%
Commercial	1,242	17.8%
Industrial	945	13.5%
Conservation	58	0.8%
Public Building and Grounds	11	0.2%
Other Public Facilities	1,041	14.9%
Recreation	158	2.3%
Historic Resources	40	0.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,986</b>	100.0%

\*Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

### ***Impact of Infrastructure***

The City's sewer system is currently at 83% capacity, which is sufficient to serve the City at its projected slow growth rate. The sewer plant can accommodate more than another 2,100 residents. The distribution system is more of a problem than capacity, as the costs of extending sewer lines is prohibitively high, and the limited capacity of individual lift and pump stations discourages new development.

The City owns and operates its municipal garbage collection service. Putnam County is responsible for disposal of collected solid waste for the City, which is hauled to the Central Landfill, located four miles north of Palatka. The landfill is approaching capacity (2017) and in July of 1015 the County Commission voted to expand landfill capacity from the current 200 tons per day to 500 tons per day. This will substantively increase landfill capacity and help to accommodate future City needs.

The City is served by the municipally-owned and operated R.C. Willis Water Treatment Plant, located west of Moody Road near the St. Johns River State College. The R.C. Willis plant is a 6.0 MGD (million gallons per day) aeration and chlorination Water Treatment Plant. The plant has almost 70% available capacity, meeting the needs of the City by serving an additional 24,700 people.

Annexation of lands has the potential to encourage sprawl. Fortunately, the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan has several objectives and policies that are directed towards infill development and the discouragement of sprawl. This element also includes objectives and policies that limit development in flood prone and wetland areas, requirements for natural buffers, and development that is adapted to the natural features in the landscape.

For a more thorough discussion on annexation, please refer to Local Major Issue #5 in this Evaluation and Appraisal Report.

**Development Activity:**

The last adoption of the Comprehensive Plan occurred in July of 2008. The Future Land Use Element of the Plan favors the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) areas of Downtown and the North and South Historic Districts, distributing funds on a competitive basis to downtown and historic district property owners to improve properties and create jobs.

Between 2008 and August, 2015 the City has issued 23 commercial building permits, and also 33 residential building permits for 60 units (see Tables B7 and B8). Building permits for commercial development are located in outlying areas of the City along the three major thoroughfares. Three new dollar stores opened, indicating growing trends of the poorer population to seek more discounts, and two medical offices added to the growing medical complex around Zeagler Drive. FDOT and federal grants funded the construction of multiple airport hangers, and a strong demand has kept the hangers full. The downtown riverfront is experiencing a renaissance with the \$2 million dollar park renovation, the newly completed St. Johns River education and environmental center (complete with rooftop viewing area for organized activities), the Hampton Inn (projected for completion in 2015), and the restoration of the historically significant 100 block of N. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street into a mixed use complex of stores and loft apartments. Residential development was dominated by the Palatka Housing Authority’s development of 36 apartment units for senior citizens on Crill Ave. Single family residential development has been scattered among residential neighborhoods south of Reid Street and to the east of Palm Avenue. Several Habitat homes were constructed, and four downtown “loft” units were developed.

**Table B7: Building Permits Issued for Major Commercial Development**

Permit #	Commercial Development	Address	Parcel Number
# 08-284	C284 - Airport terminal building	4015 Reid St.	03-10-26-0000-0010-0000
# 08-294	C213 - 71 Room Motel (Holiday Inn Express)	3813 Reid St.	02-10-26-0000-0380-0000
# 08-308	C214 - Airport hanger	4015 Reid St.	03-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 09-13	C325 - Office Building (PGA)	518 Main St.	42-10-27-6850-0310-0031
# 09-65	C327 - Drive Through Convenience Store	200 S. State Rd. 19	11-10-26-0000-0143-0000
# 09-292	C324 - New Dental Clinic	2801 Kennedy St.	12-10-26-0000-0420-0000
# 10-85	C324 - Commercial Plaza (5 units)	5015 Crill Ave.	10-10-26-0000-0270-0000
# 10-374	C324 - O'Reilly Auto Parts	619 S Highway 19	11-10-26-0000-0470-0010
# 10-448	C324 - Towing service office building	3311 Reid St.	02-10-26-0000-0090-0024
# 10-33	C328 – Restaurant (Zaxby’s)	423 N. State Rd. 19	02-10-26-8900-0010-0000

Permit #	Commercial Development	Address	Parcel Number
# 12-70	C327 – Retail store (Family Dollar)	2608 Reid St.	01-10-26-0670-0120-0070
# 12-197	C327 – Retail store (Family Dollar)	3205 Crill Ave.	11-10-26-0000-1160-0000
# 12-205	C324 – Medical office (kidney dialysis center)	326 Zeagler Dr.	10-10-26-0000-0200-0120
# 13-428	C324 – Vocational - tutoring center	1100 Madison St.	42-10-27-6850-1990-0100
# 13-442	C214 – Warehouse building (County EOC)	410 S. State Rd. 19	11-10-26-0000-0513-0020
# 13-657	C320 – Warehouse distribution building	1400 Reid St.	42-10-27-6850-2650-0000
# 14-18	C327 – Retail Store (Dollar Tree)	3621 Reid St.	02-10-26-0000-0180-0000
# 14-99	C213 – 70-Room Motel (Hampton Inn)	100 Memorial Pkwy.	42-10-27-6850-0010-0000
# 14-52	C323 – County Jail	130 Orié Griffin Blvd.	37-09-26-0000-0070-0000
# 14-436	C326 – Environmental Center	102 N. 1 <sup>st</sup> St. (River Center)	42-10-27-6850-0020-0101
# 15-26	C323 – Medical office (imageing center)	6300 St. Johns Ave.	03-10-26-0000-0131-0120
# 15-36	C324 – Medical office (dentist)	6200 St. Johns Ave.	03-10-26-0000-0131-0050
# 15-41	C320 – Airport hanger	4015 Reid St.	03-10-26-0000-0010-0000

Source: City of Palatka

**Table B8: Building Permits Issued for Residential Development**

Permit	Residential Development	Address	Parcel Number
# 08-111	101A - New SFR	201 Morris St.	42-10-27-6850-0500-0021
# 08-224	101A - New SFR	2217 St. Johns Ave	12-10-26-7970-0000-0164
# 08-262	101A - New SFR	703 N 9th St.	42-10-27-6850-0820-0010
# 08-446	101A - New SFR	109 Pink Orchid Way	12-10-26-0520-0010-0050
# 09-88	R101 - New SFR	6002 7th manor E	10-10-26-9130-0010-0470
# 09 – 92	R101 - New SFR	1207 Short St	07-10-27-3550-0120-0010
# 09-126	R101 - New SFR	111 Pink Orchid Way	12-10-26-0520-0010-0050
# 09-137	R101 - New SFR	107 Pink Orchid Way	12-10-26-0520-0010-0050
# 07-81	R101 - New SFR	1105 N 19th St.	42-10-27-6850-3190-0040
# 09-262	R101 - New SFR	6106 7th Manor W	10-10-26-9130-0030-0680
# 09-314	R101 - New SFR	709 N 9th St.	42-10-27-6850-0820-0000
# 09-331	R101 - New SFR	105 Underwood Dr.	11-10-26-9101-0010-0011
# 10-67	R101 - New SFR	410 S 14th St.	42-10-27-6850-2600-1200
# 10-205	R101 - New SFR	1404 Diana Dr.	42-10-27-6850-2600-1000
# 10-394	R101 - New SFR	1597 Westover Dr.	12-10-26-9355-0000-0021
# 10-396	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 1)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-397	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 2)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-398	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 3)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-399	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 4)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-400	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 5)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-401	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 6)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-402	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 7)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 10-403	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 8)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000

Permit	Residential Development	Address	Parcel Number
# 10-404	R104 - Res - 4 units (Bldg 9)	3310 Crill Ave. (Annie Spells Homes)	11-10-26-0000-0100-0000
# 11-128	R101A - New SFR	1410 Diana Dr.	42-10-27-6850-2600-0800
# 11-129	R101A - New SFR	411 S. 15 <sup>th</sup> St.	42-10-27-6850-2600-0400
# 11-130	R101A - New SFR	1414 Diana Dr.	42-10-27-6850-2600-0600
# 11-335	R101A – New SFR	216 St. Johns Ave (downtown, 2nd floor)	42-10-27-6850-0110-0040
# 11-339	R101A – New SFR	403 S. 15 <sup>th</sup> St.	42-10-27-6850-2600-0100
# 11-340	R101A – New SFR	400 S. 14 <sup>th</sup> St.	42-10-27-6850-2600-1600
# 12-4	R101A – New SFR	2129 Diana Dr.	12-10-26-3750-0030-0110
# 14-95	R104 - Res - 3 units	220 St. Johns Ave (downtown, 2nd floor)	42-10-27-6850-0110-0031
# 15-395	R101B – New Mobile Home	6005 E 7 <sup>th</sup> Manor	10-10-26-9130-0010-0440

Source: City of Palatka

### Vacant and Developable Land: TO BE UPDATED

Vacant and developable land was determined by using the Putnam County Florida Parcel Data provided by the Florida Department of Revenue in **December of 2009** (best available data). This data source identifies each parcel's tax information from the Florida Department of Revenue's tax database.

According to the Department of Revenue's tax database, the City has four vacant land use categories totaling 1,365.9 acres. This is a significant increase when compared to the vacant and developable land section of the Future Land Use Element in the Comprehensive Plan. A considerable portion of this increase is directly attributable to the annexation of the Plum Creek Industrial Park, which accounts for approximately 680 acres of new vacant industrial land.

**Table B9: Vacant and Developable Lands**

<i>Land Use Type</i>	<i>Acres</i>
Vacant Commercial	167.3
Vacant Industrial	943.0
Vacant Institutional	1.2
Vacant Residential	254.4
<b>Total Vacant Lands</b>	<b>1,365.9</b>

Source: Putnam County Florida Parcel Data provided by the Florida Department of Revenue (12/2009)

Vacant industrial areas make up the largest proportion (69%) of the vacant and developable lands within the City. The largest section is located at the Plum Creek Industrial Park, with smaller parcels located to the southwest of the airport. There are some additional vacant industrial parcels located along the St. Johns River near the eastern extent of the City.

Vacant residential parcels make up the second largest vacant land use (19%) and vacant commercial parcels make up the third largest vacant land use (12%) in the City and of Palatka. Vacant residential parcels are scattered throughout the City, with the biggest concentrations located in the eastern sections. Vacant commercial lands total 167.3 acres within City limits.

# Section C: Major Issues



**NOTE: The Cultural Arts section of the following Local Major Issue has been incorporated into the Economic Development Local Major Issue #2**

## **Issue #1: Historic Preservation**

### **Analysis**

The City of Palatka has three National Register-listed Historic Districts, the North Historic District, the South Historic District and Ravine Gardens Historic District, which reflect three significant periods in Palatka's history. For the purposes of the following discussion, Ravine Gardens Historic District will not be discussed since it is associated to the State Park and its ancillary structures.

The North and South Historic Districts are located in the eastern portion of the City, along the St. Johns River. These Districts were designated as National Register Historic Districts on November 17, 1983. Although these historic districts are close together from a geographic standpoint, they are remarkably different in terms of historic representation, preservation, and efforts to conserve.

The North Historic District has a smaller housing inventory that is more consistently preserved and maintained. It is comprised of 59 structures on 37.13 acres, which includes St. Mark's Episcopal Church and the Bronson-Mulholland House. The boundary of the District is North 1<sup>st</sup> Street to the east, Bronson Street to the north, North 5<sup>th</sup> Street to the west and Main Street to the south. The primary architectural styles of the district are Late Victorian and Colonial Revival, and have a period of significance from 1825 through 1950.

The South Historic District covers more territory and has an assortment of historic and non-historic structures with varying preservation and restoration qualities. It is comprised of 140 structures on 101.43 acres. The South Historic District is roughly bounded by Oak Street to the north, South 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the west, Morris Street to the southwest and the St. Johns River to the south and east. The primary architectural styles of the district are Queen Anne and Colonial Revival, and have a period of significance from 1850 through 1950<sup>2</sup>.

Currently, protection of these historic districts is accomplished by the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Regulations (LDRs). The LDRs provide for local historic designation, which results in design guidelines for renovation, new construction, relocation, and demolition. Existing local historic district boundaries are coterminous with National Register district boundaries. Through the adoption of a Historic Preservation Element, the City's Comprehensive Plan would provide more emphasis and clarity on historic preservation.

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<sup>2</sup> Note: Per National Register Program, period of significance applies to the district and properties, not the architectural style. The National Register nomination form should list the specific period of significance for the district.

Future Land Use Element goals, objectives, and policies (GOPs) pertaining to Historic Preservation are shown below (*in italics*). Objective A.1.5 and its policies will be modified as shown below in strike-through for deleted language and underlining for new language and moved to the new Historic Preservation Element.

**Objective A.1.4**

*Upon Plan adoption the City shall ensure the protection of natural resources and historic resources through implementing the following policies.*

**Policy A.1.4.1**

*The City shall provide for the recognition and protection of historic resources through the Historic Preservation Element and implementing standards of the Land Development Code.*

**Objective A.1.5**

*Upon Plan adoption, the City, through implementing the following policies, shall increase public awareness of the historical significance of the City and provide incentives to maintain and restore historically significant areas and structures within the City limits.*

**Policy A.1.5.1**

*Historic resources are protected through designation as historic sites by the City. Such designated sites require plan review procedures for proposed alterations or remodeling that ensures, through the permitting process that the proposed activity will not degrade or destroy the historical / archaeological significance of the site.*

**Policy A.1.5.2**

*Neither the owner of, nor the person in charge of, a property or structure within a locally designated historic district, property or structure shall permit the resource to fall into a state of disrepair which may result in the deterioration of exterior appurtenances or architectural features so as to produce or tend to produce, in the judgment of the board, a detrimental effect upon the character of the district as a whole or the life and character of the structure in question.*

**Policy A.1.5.3**

*New construction in locally designated historic districts shall be architecturally compatible with adjacent structures. Compatibility standards within the Land Development Code shall ensure that such new construction neither detracts from nor imitates architectural character in the vicinity.*

**Policy A.1.5.4**

*The City shall seek funding and technical support from the Department of State, Division of Historic Resources to review and conduct further field surveys to identify any additional historical/archaeological sites that may exist within the City limits. The City shall update Figure A-2 accordingly.*

### **Policy A.1.5.5**

*The City shall support public activities which disseminate information regarding the historic significance of the City and its historic sites.*

As encouraged in Policy A.1.5.4 above, it is appropriate for the City to take stock of its older neighborhoods to determine if new local or national historic districts or sites should be designated. The passage of time has rendered obsolete the “50-year rule” that structures built after World War II are not of historical value. Many other Florida communities are evaluating post-war neighborhoods with Art Deco and Ranch style structures for historic designation. Palatka has numerous post-1920 structures that are not designated or even inventoried locally. Architecture is not the sole determining factor for local designation, as significant cultural and historical events justify designation. For example, other jurisdictions are designating properties linked to the Civil Rights movement. The City has largely ignore African-American historic resources.

It is often the case that the cost of renovating historic structures often exceeds the cost of new construction. The City should investigate the continued use of existing incentives – such as façade grants – and explore the potential of currently unused incentives such as historic property tax exemptions.

Finally, the City should consider the use of targeted infrastructure improvements to attract investment in historic districts. As noted in the Community Redevelopment Plan, such infrastructure improvements can include restoration of brick streets, period streetlighting, sidewalk construction and reconstruction, traffic calming, parks improvements, power line undergrounding, and street tree planting.

### **Recommendations**

- Develop and adopt a Historic Preservation Element into the Comprehensive Plan. At a minimum, goals, objectives and policies (GOP’s) should be adopted to define the City’s historic preservation program.
- Maintain Certified Local Government (CLG) designation from State of Florida and National Park Service, committing to continue historic preservation efforts.
- Adopt policies in the Historic Preservation Element that allow for the evaluation of older areas of the City to determine if the designation of new historic districts or sites is warranted.
- Consider policies within the Historic Preservation Element (referenced by a policy in the Economic Development Element) that consider the implementation of state-enabled city tax exemptions for locally designated historic structures, including: 1) a ten-year freeze on property tax increases attributable to historic renovations; 2) 100% property tax exemption when the cost of historic renovation exceeds 50% of property value; and 3) 50% property tax exemption for commercial and non-profit use of publicly accessible buildings (public access including those structures with historic facades visible from the right-of-way).
- Adopt policies in the Economic Development and Historic Preservation Element that steer the City to match current CRA district boundaries to historic district boundaries.

- Adopt GOPs within the Historic Preservation Element (and referenced by a policy in the Capital Improvements and Economic Development Elements) that call for infrastructure improvements in locally designated historic districts including:
  1. restoration of brick streets;
  2. new or retrofitted period streetlighting;
  3. sidewalk construction and reconstruction;
  4. traffic calming;
  5. unified and unique signage, wayfinding, and gateway/entry features;
  6. parks improvements;
  7. power line undergrounding; and
  8. street tree planting.
- Continue programs that leverage private investment on historic rehabilitation for locally designated structures with City TIF or other funds.
- In cooperation with the Historic Preservation Board and the Putnam County Historical Society, continue to work to preserve, renovate, and market the City's historic resources, including the following: Bronson-Mulholland House, Larimer Arts Center, Old A.C.L. Union Depot, Palatka City Hall, Palatka Waterworks, Putnam County Historical Museum, Tilghman House, 1885 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Buildings, Central Academy, West View Cemetery, Oak Hill East Cemetery, and the North and South Historic Districts.
- Continue to seek public and private funding sources for downtown and historic district improvement for publicly and privately owned properties, utilizing funding from sources such as State Historic Preservation Office Acquisition and Development (restoration), Survey and Planning, and Education grants as well as private/nonprofit sources such as National Trust grant and revolving loan funds.
- Coordinate with Putnam County Historical Society, the Chamber and others to update documentation of historic buildings in published guides, including a walking tour format (funding available from State SHPO).
- Continue to utilize design standards for downtown that protect the historic character and pedestrian orientation of buildings, including prohibition of blank walls on new or renovated buildings; use of awnings and canopies; and general compatibility with existing and adjacent historic buildings.
- Pursue local and national historic district designation for downtown.

## **Issue #2: Economic Development**

### **Analysis**

As outlined in Chapter 163.3177(7)(j) of the Florida Statutes, an Economic Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes principles and guidelines for commercial and industrial development and personnel utilization within the City. The element sets forth the types of commercial and industrial development sought by the City and links present and projected employment needs of the City to potential industry. Finally, the element establishes methods by which the City can pursue a balanced and stable economic base. Currently the City does not have an economic element and is now considering developing this plan document.

In order to become competitive for large industries, there is a need for fully entitled, infrastructure-ready lands within the City. Two large industrial sites have been annexed into the City: the Putnam County Business Park and 680 acres of undeveloped lands known as Plum Creek. The Putnam County Business Park has incomplete infrastructure and is unplatted. The 680 acres of Plum Creek property is undeveloped and is entitled.

Economic development in the City is a multi-faceted issue. The City has a designated Downtown Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) that currently caters to boutique style commercial storefronts. The City also has an industrial park and business park that are best suited for larger manufacturing and industrial uses. Both of these areas are integral to the economic vitality of the City, but each will require different approaches to become successful. Goals, objectives and policies (GOPs) that would benefit the small commercial storefront should be dramatically different than GOPs that would benefit a larger manufacturing or industrial business. As a result, GOPs will need to be targeted to attract the specific intended user to these sites.

The City's economic development efforts are focused mainly on industrial site marketing by the Putnam County's Economic Development Council (EDC), through the City's Community Redevelopment Agency, and through private and non-profit efforts.

At this time the City does not have a concentrated and customized economic development program. The City Commission contributes \$5,000 to the Chamber for economic development assistance, which will not adequately fund a specialized approach for the City. However the Chamber and EDC market the entire County and therefore assists the City like any other area in the County. The EDC's main emphasis is on the county-owned industrial park located in the northern part of the City. The industrial park is adjacent to the Kay Larkin Airport, which in turn attracts aviation-related companies and corporate jets.

The City has in the past utilized the Main Street Program, a national model developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation that has served as a model for marketing, empowerment, and technical advice for downtown merchants. As of August, 2015 the City does not have a Main Street Manager and this work is being done by volunteers.

The City's economic development efforts are intertwined in a number of programs, including the City's Community Redevelopment Area (CRA), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, and general services and infrastructure provision by the City, the latter focusing on replacement/modernization of water, sewer, and installation of reuse lines.

The City Commission sits as the CRA, which is typical in towns of Palatka's size with hands-on elected bodies. Some smaller towns have a separate CRA, such as the City of Sanford, and for a CRA advisory council, such as the City of Mt. Dora. Choosing between a Council CRA and separate advisory boards is a function of how much time elected officials want to devote to CRA issues and whether they want the more specialized and focused approach of a separate body.

Economic development priorities will influence the policies of other elements of the comprehensive plan. There are three key areas in which Palatka can lead and promote economic development for its residents:

1. Land Use (zoning, development standards, permit processing)
2. Public Facility and Service Investments (utilities, transportation, job training/assistance, parks, public safety, beautification).
3. Marketing, Cooperation and Coordination with Others.

## **Opportunities Analysis**

There are some key factors that attract new businesses and residents to cities, including location (proximity to metropolitan areas), transportation network, labor force, partnerships (public-private), and quality of life.

### Location

While it is not served by a limited access highway and therefore may not attract higher profile and larger employers, Palatka is at the crossroads of two key corridors: the U.S. 17 Jacksonville-to-Orlando corridor and the S.R. 100/20/207 corridor between Gainesville and St. Augustine. Due to the lack of a direct route between Jacksonville and Tampa, considerable traffic is funneled through Palatka (in excess of 35,000 daily cars). The City is less than an hour drive from Jacksonville and Gainesville, and when economic circumstances improve and these metropolitan areas grow, Palatka will benefit from increased business activity.

### Transportation

Area growth and increased regional traffic have prompted road widening for two-lane segments of S.R. 20 and U.S. 17 in the County. It is not just the road network that links Palatka to other urban areas. A rail line connects Palatka with Jacksonville and Orlando and is utilized by Amtrak for passenger rail service, with the potential for future improved service. This comes at a time when Orlando-area counties are implementing a commuter rail system (Sunrail) that will be operational by 2013, and the Jacksonville Transportation Authority is studying commuter rail as well. The DeLand and Winter Park Sunrail commuter rail stations will co-locate with Amtrak stations, allowing for passenger transfers between the two systems and increased accessibility for Palatka. U.S. Representative, John Mica, who represents this area in Congress, has been effective in procuring funding for commuter rail, water transportation, and other transportation modes. It is also probable that increasing fuel costs will support commuter rail, and there may also be

increased demand for tourism-related rail passengers originating from Eastern Seaboard metropolitan areas.

FDOT's reconstruction of C.R. 309C between S.R. 20 and S.R. 100 will help develop and maximize use of the Kay Larkin Municipal Airport and the adjacent Putnam County Business Park.

### Labor

The City's labor force is less educated and poorer than the nation on average, as well as in comparison to cities and counties in the First Coast Region. Just 17% of City residents have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 28%<sup>3</sup> for the nation. The economic success of residents is relatively low, as one might expect from the shortage of educated residents. Around one-half of the City's population is in the labor force, compared to almost two-thirds of the Jacksonville area, and the median household income in the City is less than half of incomes for the nation and the Jacksonville area. It is fortunate that the St. Johns River State College is located in Palatka. The City and SJRSC should explore funding opportunities for a downtown extension office for classes and job training, possibly in conjunction with a business incubator as has been discussed by the City Commission.

### Partnerships

The City has a unique opportunity to partner with a variety of public and private entities. For a relatively small population, the City hosts several influential entities, first and foremost being the St. Johns River Water Management District. The District has taken on an even more important role given the pressing issues of water supply and St. Johns River restoration. The Florida School for the Arts (FLOARTS) is a unique and exciting institution from a planning perspective, since artists have been at the forefront of the revitalization and success of many Florida cities such as Sarasota, St. Augustine, Vero Beach, Naples and Lake Wales. St. Johns River State College is an excellent resource to provide job training and educational advancement for City residents. The State of Florida has recognized the importance of economic development through its Rural Initiatives program, which requires that state agencies aggressively partner with jurisdictions to receive grant funding and attract businesses. Downtown merchants can benefit from the Main Street program, which is run by the City. The City also has many involved citizens who support arts and culture organizations, and Downtown Palatka Inc. and the Main Street program can serve as an effective private/quasi-public partnership to improve downtown.

### Quality of Life

In this time of suburban and exurban growth, the City is positioned to provide an alternative to formless and unattractive sprawl. The historic central city is unique and attractive, the river is magnificent and relatively pristine, and the juxtaposition of city and nature is compelling. Palatka has the opportunity to weave together strains of culture and environment to increase overall livability. This can be achieved through preserving historic buildings in the downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods, promoting appropriate infill in historic neighborhoods, retrofitting older suburbs that are experiencing decline, and requiring that new development follow design standards that promote a sense of place. Private investment can be sparked by public investment in streetscape, parks, and infrastructure in general.

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<sup>3</sup> Source: 2005-2009 ACS 5-Year Estimates, American Community Survey

Additionally, the City has benefitted from arts and cultural activities in recent years. FLOARTS attracts students from across the state to study under accomplished artists in the performing arts (acting, dance, musical theatre, and production and design) and visual arts (studio and graphic design/new media). The Arts Council of Greater Palatka is an established organization with a board of directors, operating programs out of the historic Larimer Arts Center. The Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee has created striking murals on building walls throughout the City that showcase Palatka's history. Create! The Artists Guild of North Florida holds an annual "paint-out" competition that attracts artists from across the state to develop locally-inspired works of art. Other active arts organizations include the African Cultural Arts Council, the Gourd Society, Palatka Art League, Palatka Railroad Preservation Society, and Putnam County Community Band.

Economic and quality of life impacts of art to Florida communities have been documented, most recently in a study called "Arts and Economic Prosperity III: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences in the State of Florida." This study measured the economic impact of the nonprofit arts and culture industry in Florida. In 2008, spending by arts and culture organizations and their audiences supported a total of 88,326 full-time equivalent jobs, and total revenue generations of \$196,778,000 for local government and \$2,057,309,000 for household income paid to residents. Additionally, the average event attendee spent \$29.42 on event related activities, meals, lodging, and transportation per event.

Florida cities like DeLand, Sarasota, Venice, and Winter Park have reaped considerable benefits from the presence of a vigorous arts community. As one example, Greater Sarasota is home to 1,690 arts-related businesses that employ over 6,258 people. Arts-related activities in Sarasota County generate millions in local economic impact. Sarasota County-based non-profit cultural organizations conservatively employ more than 3,000 full-time cultural workers and generate more than \$123 million in household income to local residents. Arts districts and colonies like Towles Court and the Arts Village have sparked revitalization in downtown Sarasota and surrounding neighborhoods, and arts audiences spend more than \$54 million in local restaurants, hotels, retail stores and parking garages. An important mainstay of the arts community in Sarasota is the Ringling College of Art and Design, an institution similar to FloArts.

Success stories like this provide insight into the economic and social benefits of promoting arts, especially for a city like Palatka that is trying to reinvigorate its economic base. There is excellent potential to utilize arts-related activities to reinvigorate the downtown area. Significant efforts should be made to entice FloArts to locate classrooms, studios, and design space in vacant buildings in the Downtown CRA. The Savannah College of Art and Design accomplished this on a larger scale, to the benefit of the community and the local economy. This type of arts anchor would encourage the creation or rehabilitation of larger performing arts centers.

### Downtown Palatka

Downtown Palatka is located in the eastern section of the City. This area of Palatka is comprised of two historic districts, three Community Redevelopment Areas, and a Main Street area. Therefore there is a need for a cohesive and coordinated effort to tackle historic preservation, economic vitality, transportation, recreation and an assortment of other issues associated with these different areas and programs.

The North and South Historic Districts are located adjacent to downtown Palatka. These viable residential areas help to support downtown businesses.

In 2008, the City recognized the importance of reviving downtown Palatka and updated the Community Redevelopment Area Plan which focuses on both historic districts and the downtown core. The CRA Plan states “there is a collective momentum through organizations, residents and the City to move forward with an action plan that may include redevelopment, new construction, rehabilitation, restoration, historic preservation, rezoning, demolition and riverfront and downtown master plan.”<sup>4</sup> Although the two historic districts and the central business district are geographically and functionally separate, efforts should be made to identify and employ unifying tactics for the three areas. An example of such a tactic would be the implementation of a new mixed use land use category.

### Major Thoroughfares/Future CRAs

The City’s main roadways exhibit signs of ongoing blight, represented by a lack of property maintenance and landscaping, sign clutter, expanses of broken pavement, and some decrepit buildings. Adjacent residential areas also exhibit blight with high numbers of vacant lots and foreclosed and abandoned homes. Future Community Redevelopment Areas could help to arrest this blight by re-directing future tax revenues into infrastructure improvements that will help businesses and residences to revitalize.

### Income

Much of the area workforce leaves the county for employment because of lack of jobs and low wages in Putnam County. Additionally, Putnam County has a low median income, and an increasing unemployment rate. Approximately 36% of Putnam County’s workforce is employed outside of the county (source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2009 ACS 3-Year Survey). Per capita personal income in Putnam County is a relatively low \$25,712 compared to the statewide figure of \$39,064 (source: 2010 Florida Statistical Abstract).

### Housing

In 2009, new housing (based on building permit activity) in Palatka was valued at \$1,043,000. In 2009, there were 7 new single-family homes constructed in Palatka, averaging \$149,000 per unit. New housing value based on building permit activity in Putnam County was valued at \$4,909,000. In 2009, there were 36 new single-family homes constructed in the County, with an average value of \$136,361 (source: 2010 Florida Statistical Abstract).

### Analysis

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<sup>4</sup> City of Palatka Community Redevelopment Area Plan, Prepared by Kimley-Horn and Associates

The following discussion will be broken into two distinct sections: downtown redevelopment, and shovel ready sites associated with Plum Creek and the Putnam County Business Park. Attracting large-scale employers to the City poses different issues than downtown redevelopment. Downtown redevelopment generally attracts small business owners, while large tracts of land located in the business or industrial park will attract larger-scale businesses.

An important feature of trying to attract new business to these areas is having a trained and educated workforce that can fulfill the needs of the prospective employer. Fortunately, there are several local programs in place that are ready to provide this service to the residents of Palatka and Putnam County. The Putnam County campuses of the First Coast Technical Institute and St. Johns River State College provide training for new and existing businesses and industries. The First Coast Technical Institute has expanded its programs in Putnam County to offer coursework in the culinary arts, welding, and diesel mechanics.

Technical training needs have also been addressed through the creation of the Tech Prep initiative. This initiative was created through a partnership between Putnam County Schools and St. Johns River State College. "Tech Prep is a proactive response to an evolving society. It begins in high school and students apply what they learned in their Tech Prep classes to real life situations, and graduate better prepared for future technical training and careers<sup>5</sup>." These training and educational opportunities are a necessity if Palatka is going to attract new business.

Another major component of attracting new employers to Palatka is having fully entitled parcels with available municipal infrastructure and services (shovel-ready sites). The Putnam County Business Park is considered partially shovel ready and Plum Creek Industrial Park remains undeveloped and without municipal services. Although Plum Creek is not considered as a shovel-ready site, the City has made efforts to prepare this site for development in the near future.

Adopted Amendment 10-1 highlights two phases of development for the Plum Creek site. Phase I allows for up to 180,000 square feet of development through 2015. Phase II allows for up to 3.28 million square feet of development through 2020, provided that level-of-service standards have been adopted into the 5-year schedule of capital improvements and traffic impacts have been assessed. Once municipal services and infrastructure have been established at Plum Creek, the site will be shovel-ready.

The main argument behind having an educated/trained workforce and shovel-ready sites is that the City is in competition to attract business and industry with other local municipalities in the region. If the City wants to compete on a regional level for employers, it must have a trained workforce and available space to locate and expand. Municipalities that are prepared for expansion will benefit first, while other places will lag. This is particularly important as the national, state, and local economy begins to recover from the recession.

Another issue to consider is the promotion of mixed-use development in the City, particularly downtown. Mixed-use development is the planned integration of some combination of retail, office, residential, hotel, recreation or other functions. It is pedestrian-oriented and contains

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<sup>5</sup> Putnam County Economic Development Element, Putnam County Comprehensive Plan 9-8-2006

elements of a live-work-play environment. It maximizes space usage, has amenities and architectural expression and tends to mitigate traffic and sprawl. This definition of mixed-use fits in with recommendations expressed in the Community Redevelopment Area Plan and projects that are already in their implementation stage. The CRA Plan highlights the need to provide more low to moderate income housing in the downtown area and to encourage private businesses to locate in these areas.

There are several commercial storefronts with available space located on upper floors in the Downtown CRA. The creation of residential units and additional office space from these vacant floors would serve as a good reuse of space and would also not require additional utilities and services. Mixed-use development helps to limit sprawl and reduce traffic, goals of HB 697, which requires communities to adopt GOPs that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are suggested for a proposed Economic Development Element. These recommendations are listed under specific topics:

1. Downtown Revitalization and Marketing
2. Arts/Cultural Strategies
3. Tree City
4. Industrial Park
5. Future CRAs
6. Airport
7. Infrastructure Improvements
8. Business Incubator
9. Public-Private Partnerships
10. Urban Service Boundary
11. Rail and Water Transportation
12. Eco-Tourism
13. City Economic Development

### Downtown Revitalization

- Adopt policies within the Historic Preservation Element (referenced by a policy in the Economic Development Element) that consider the implementation of state-enabled city tax exemptions for locally designated historic structures.
- Continue programs that leverage private investment on appropriate historic building improvements with City TIF or other funds.
- Continue to institute downtown design improvements including the following:
  - a. Nurture, trim, and replace downtown street trees
  - b. Consider instituting public and private lighting improvements in the form of a “Light Up Downtown program” particularly historic facades
  - c. Fill holes (vacant lots, parking lots) in downtown building fabric by installing “streetwalls” or low hedges/walls along frontage of vacant lots and parking lots that continue the line of buildings that provides enclosure for the street.
  - d. Develop signage program for public parking, public buildings, and merchant directories that is tasteful and recognizable.

- e. Consider establishing a civic facility like a town square with a pavilion in an interior downtown location within walking distance of riverfront. This space would not be open like the riverfront, but enclosed by buildings like urban plaza, celebrating the city instead of river/open space. This area would be utilized for special events and would link pedestrians and energy from the public riverfront to the retail district. Several potential locations exist for this such as the northwest corner of St. Johns Ave. and 2<sup>nd</sup> St., the courthouse parking lot, or the courthouse lawn.
- f. Beautify currently unattractive and critically important view corridors from US 17 to attract passers-by: street trees and plantings, building canopies/ awnings, and parking/vacant lot streetwalls.
- g. Develop parking study that identifies current and future parking demand and supply. Work to provide for public parking either through small and scattered lots peripheral to St. Johns Avenue or through a parking garage including ground floor retail.

#### Downtown Marketing

- Partner with private entities to leverage public resource – in particular consider partnering with banks that can match city loan contributions and sponsor activities.
- Encourage and consider providing incentives for establishment of live-work artist district and ancillary uses.
- Continue using grant and other funding to transform the Price Martin Center into a mid-size performing Arts Center, upgrade lighting, sound, and wiring; fit interior with appropriate seating, and improve design elements.

#### Arts/Cultural Strategies

- Nurture and promote active cultural and arts programs, particularly in conjunction with downtown redevelopment and programs.
- Continue and enhance Mural Program.
- Support art events that attract artists to the City like the annual “paint out” held by Create! The Artists Guild of North Florida.
- Inventory art facilities and programs to assist in determining types of facilities, capacities and activities to be scheduled. Update inventory annually.
- Complete an assessment of cultural needs of the community.
- Continue allowing 501(C)(3) non-profit art organizations with demonstrated track record and/or business plan to lease unoccupied city buildings for a nominal fee.
- Interface with state and regional tourism agencies to develop a clearer identity for the City.

#### Tree City Strategies

- Develop tree inventory of street trees along collector and arterial road corridors in conjunction with the development of a citywide Master Tree Plan, aimed at supplementing existing tree canopy along roadways, preserving and pruning existing trees, and planting appropriate new urban street trees where needed.

- Identify additional funding sources for tree planting and maintenance through programs like Keep America Beautiful and adopt-a-median, adopt-a-block and other sponsorship and recognition programs.

#### Industrial Parks

- Work with the EDC and Chamber as lead agencies in marketing the Plum Creek and Putnam County industrial parks to targeted industries.
- Investigate whether the availability of shovel-ready sites is a determining factor for businesses and industry to locate within a community.

#### Future CRAs

- Establish Community Redevelopment Areas along blighted sections of major thoroughfares such as Reid St., SR 19, Crill Ave., and US Hwy 17, along with adjacent residential areas. This will lay the groundwork for future localized public/private improvement projects.

#### Airport

- Continue to pursue state and federal grants for capital improvements in airport facilities and new business attraction and retention (within reason, ensuring not to over commit the City to matching grant costs).
- Improve appearance of airport through use of strategic landscaping.
- Implement marketing proposed by Airport Master Plan.

#### Infrastructure Improvements

- Pursue the following prioritized economic development-related infrastructure projects:
  - a. Reuse System – the goal is phased, 100% coverage as required by the water management district and EPA. The City is has completed the system that serves the municipal golf course and cemeteries. This project cost \$1.5 million, and was grant funded by DCA, DEP, District, with a City match. The City is now in a position to offer reuse to public and private properties.
  - b. Other Projects - ongoing replacement of very old water and wastewater lines; space needs for City administration; City development of Terminal West industrial park for aviation-related facilities.

#### Business Incubator

- In planning for such a facility, stress the following elements that help businesses to succeed: determining the best location; have available space for expansion, availability of basic services (reception, conference room) track record of the incubator's manager, “graduation” policy, flexible space, common facilities, and negotiation with service firms (accounting, tax, marketing, legal, advertising and business planning) for trial-period discounts for services to new businesses.
- Consider working with SJRSC/FLOARTS to establish a downtown incubator, branch, and continuing education facility to address the need for job training and education that is accessible for those most in need, and to build on the potential synergy between the arts and education.

### Public-Private Partnerships

- Communicate with the following public, quasi-public, and non-profit groups including establishing recurring agenda items for Putnam County, Northeast Florida Regional Council, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce & Main Street Program, Putnam County Economic Development Council, St. Johns River State College, St. Johns River Water Management District, Downtown Palatka, Inc., African Cultural Arts Council, the Arts Council of Greater Palatka, Create!, the Gourd Society, the Palatka Railroad Preservation Society, Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee, Palatka Art League, Putnam County Community Band, Putnam County Historical Society, River City Players, residents, property owners, and businesses.
- Pursue established foundations, state, federal, and other grant and loan opportunities in conjunction with the entities listed above, possibly utilizing a city-funded grants staff person, who could also act as City's economic development coordinator.
- Create a committee of those who deliver cultural programs to greater Palatka, including at a minimum a representative member from the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Palatka, Inc, Palatka Main Street Program, St. Johns River State College, Florida School of the Arts (FloArts), Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee, Palatka Art League, the Arts Council of Greater Palatka and area museums and cultural groups, and a City Commissioner. The committee will serve as a catalyst in securing grants, developing long-range planning goals, and encouraging joint programming.

### Urban Service Boundary

- Consider an agreement with County that would define the logical extent of city-provided urban services and provide for funding strategies for service area expansion and annexation.
- Work with County to identify logical land use mix for lands identified for future expansion and annexation areas, including sufficient lands for commercial and industrial use.

### Rail and Water Transportation

- Work with Amtrak, CSX, Jacksonville Transportation Authority, First Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization, FDOT, Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission, and state and federal elected officials toward extending commuter rail north from Deland to connect with a possible Jacksonville commuter rail system that terminates in Clay County.
- Work with Amtrak in converting train station to "manned" status.
- Support water taxis for eco-tourism and potential transit purposes.
- Market and promote rail daytrips to City from regional origins such as Jacksonville, Orlando, South Georgia, etc.; with hiking, water taxi, and downtown shopping/eating as a draw.

### Eco-Tourism

- Continue to support and promote fishing tournaments.
- Plan for bicycle routes or trails to link terminus of Lake Butler-Palatka rail trail to downtown. Work with St. Johns River Water Management District and Municipal

Airport to showcase trail, given that both facilities are close to the trail and can provide connections for visitors and trail users.

- Support public and/or private water taxis that connect the Riverfront Park with Murphy Island for hikers and/or campers.
- While planning for trails consider equestrian use when appropriate.”

#### City Economic Development

- Consider separate advisory CRA board to allow for citizen advice and more focus on redevelopment.
- Consider city staff economic development staff position – not to replace Chamber efforts but to supplement them.
- Consider tax exemptions for property improvements to new or expanding businesses in brownfields or enterprise zones (requires city referendum) under F.S. 196.1995.

The following is a compilation of recommendations from the Special Topics and Major Issues sections of this report. The list does not include the necessary strike through and underline of the goals, objectives and policies which are included in a table in Section B.

## **Future Land Use Element**

- Adopt policies in the Future Land Use Element that direct the City to proactively work to diminish and eventually eliminate enclaves.
- Adopt policies in the Future Land Use Element to include criteria to be considered for each annexation request addressing each parcel's potential to increase City tax revenue; alleviate negative environmental impacts; and more efficiently provide for service delivery and eliminate enclaves.
- Adopt policies in the Future Land Use Element that enforce the voluntary annexation agreements once a property owner's land becomes contiguous to the City to include time limits to apply for annexation.
- Adopt policies in the Future Land Use Element that promote the use of a Joint Planning Area with Putnam County.
- Adopt a policy in the Future Land Use Element that promote compact development patterns and promotes a pedestrian friendly environment.
- Consider holding a series of workshops to assess annexation and annexation provisions. Develop GOPs from these workshops that can be included as part of the EAR-based amendments.

## **Proposed Historic Preservation Element**

- Develop and adopt a Historic Preservation Element into the Comprehensive Plan. At a minimum, goals, objectives and policies (GOP's) should be adopted to protect the integrity of the given district and its contributing structures.
- Apply for Certified Local Government (CLG) designation.
- Adopt policies in the Historic Preservation Element that allow for the evaluation older areas of the City to determine if the designation of new historic districts or sites is warranted.
- Consider policies within the Historic Preservation Element (referenced by a policy in the Economic Development Element) that consider the implementation of state-enabled city tax exemptions for locally designated historic structures, including: 1) a ten-year freeze on property tax increases attributable to historic renovations; 2) 100% property tax

exemption when the cost of historic renovation exceeds 50% of property value; and 3) 50% property tax exemption for commercial and non-profit use of publicly accessible buildings (public access including those structures with historic facades visible from the right-of-way).

- Adopt policies in the Economic Development and Historic Preservation Element that steer the City to match current CRA boundaries to historic district boundaries.
- Adopt GOPs within the Historic Preservation Element (and referenced by a policy in the Capital Improvements and Economic Development Elements) that call for infrastructure improvements in locally designated historic districts including:
  1. restoration of brick streets;
  2. new or retrofitted period streetlighting;
  3. sidewalk construction and reconstruction;
  4. traffic calming;
  5. unified and unique signage, wayfinding, and gateway/entry features;
  6. parks improvements;
  7. power line undergrounding; and
  8. street tree planting.
- Consider programs that leverage private investment on historic rehabilitation for locally designated structures with City TIF or other funds, similar to programs in DeLand and other towns.
- In cooperation with the Historic Preservation Board and the Palatka Historical Society, continue to work to preserve, renovate, and market the City's historic resources, including the following: Bronson-Mulholland House, Larimer Arts Center, Old A.C.L. Union Depot, Palatka City Hall, Palatka Waterworks, Putnam County Historical Museum, Tilghman House, 1885 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Buildings, Central Academy, West View Cemetery, Oak Hill East Cemetery, and the North and South Historic Districts.
- Continue to seek public and private funding sources for downtown and historic district improvement for publicly and privately owned properties, utilizing funding from sources such as State Historic Preservation Office Acquisition and Development (restoration), Survey and Planning, and Education grants as well as private/nonprofit sources such as National Trust grant and revolving loan funds.
- Coordinate with Putnam County Historical Society, the Chamber and others to update documentation of historic buildings in published guides, including a walking tour format (funding available from State SHPO). Utilize the following documents as well as others in developing this document.
- Consider adopting design standards in conjunction for local historic designation for downtown that protect the historic character and pedestrian orientation of buildings, including prohibition of blank walls on new or renovated buildings; use of awnings and canopies; and general compatibility with existing and adjacent historic buildings.

## Proposed Economic Development Element

- Adopt policies within the Historic Preservation Element (referenced by a policy in the Economic Development Element) that consider the implementation of state-enabled city tax exemptions for locally designated historic structures.
- Consider a program that leverages private investment on appropriate historic building improvements with City TIF or other funds, similar to programs in Deland and other towns.
- Continue to institute downtown design improvements including the following:
  - a. Nurture, trim, and replace downtown street trees
  - b. Consider instituting public and private lighting improvements in the form of a “Light Up Downtown program” particularly historic facades
  - c. Fill gaping holes (vacant lots, parking lots) in downtown building fabric by installing “streetwalls” or low hedges/walls along frontage of vacant lots and parking lots that continue the line of buildings that provides enclosure for the street.
  - d. Develop signage program for public parking, public buildings, and merchant directories that is tasteful and recognizable.
  - e. Consider establishing a civic facility like a town square with a pavilion in an interior downtown location within walking distance of riverfront. This space would not be open like the riverfront, but enclosed by buildings like urban plaza, celebrating the city instead of river/open space. This area would be utilized for special events and would link pedestrians and energy from the public riverfront to the retail district. Several potential locations exist for this such as the northwest corner of St. Johns Ave. and 2<sup>nd</sup> St., the courthouse parking lot, or the courthouse lawn.
  - f. Beautify currently unattractive and critically important view corridors from U.S. 17 to attract passers-by: street trees and plantings, building canopies/ awnings, and parking/vacant lot streetwalls.
  - g. Develop parking study that identifies current and future parking demand and supply. Work to provide for public parking either through small and scattered lots peripheral to St. Johns Avenue or through a parking garage including ground floor retail – note that the riverfront redevelopment project includes the best opportunity for such a public parking structure.
- Partner with private entities to leverage public resource – in particular consider partnering with banks that can match city loan contributions and sponsor activities.
- Encourage and consider providing incentives for establishment of live-work artist district and ancillary uses.

- Continue using grant and other funding to transform the Price Martin Center into a mid-size performing Arts Center, upgrade lighting, sound, and wiring; fit interior with appropriate seating, and improve design elements.
- Nurture and promote active cultural and arts programs, particularly in conjunction with downtown redevelopment and programs.
- Continue and enhance Mural Program.
- Support art events that attract artists to the City like the annual “paint out” held by Create! The Artists Guild of North Florida holds.
- Inventory art facilities and programs to assist in determining types of facilities, capacities and activities to be scheduled. Update inventory annually.
- Complete an assessment of cultural needs of the community.
- Continue allowing 501(C)(3) non-profit art organizations with demonstrated track record and/or business plan to lease unoccupied city buildings for a nominal fee.
- Interface with state and regional tourism agencies to develop a clearer identity for the City.
- Develop tree inventory of street trees along collector and arterial road corridors.
- Develop street tree program that supplements existing tree canopy along roadways, preserving and pruning existing trees and planting appropriate new urban street trees where needed.
- Identify additional funding sources for tree planting and maintenance through programs like Keep America Beautiful and adopt-a-median, adopt-a-block and other sponsorship and recognition programs.
- Work with the EDC and Chamber as lead agencies in marketing the industrial park to targeted industries.
- Investigate whether the availability of shovel-ready sites is a determining factor for businesses and industry to locate within a community.
- Continue to pursue state and federal grants for capital improvements in airport facilities and new business attraction and retention (within reason, ensuring not to over commit the City to matching grant costs).
- Improve appearance of airport through use of strategic landscaping.

- Implement marketing proposed by recently completed Airport Business Plan.
- Pursue the following prioritized economic development-related infrastructure projects:
  - a. Reuse System – the goal is phased, 100% coverage as required by the water management district and EPA. The City is has completed the system now serving the municipal golf course and cemeteries. This project cost \$1.5 million, and was grant funded by DCA, DEP, District, with a City match.
  - b. Other Projects - ongoing replacement of very old water and wastewater lines; space needs for growing City administration; completion of grant-funded new Airport Terminal; City development of Terminal West industrial park for aviation-related facilities.
- In planning for such a facility, stress the following elements that help businesses to succeed: determining the best location; have available space for expansion, availability of basic services (reception, conference room) track record of the incubator's manager, “graduation” policy, flexible space, common facilities, and negotiation with service firms (accounting, tax, marketing, legal, advertising and business planning) for trial-period discounts for services to new businesses.
- Consider working with SJRSC/FloArts to establish a downtown incubator, branch, and continuing education facility to address the need for job training and education that is accessible for those most in need, and to build on the potential synergy between the arts and education.
- Communicate with the following public, quasi-public, and non-profit groups including establishing recurring agenda items for Putnam County, Northeast Florida Regional Council, Putnam County Chamber of Commerce & Main Street Program, Putnam County Economic Development Council, St. Johns River State College, St. Johns River Water Management District, Downtown Palatka, Inc., African Cultural Arts Council, the Arts Council of Greater Palatka, Create!, the Gourd Society, the Palatka Railroad Preservation Society, Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee, Palatka Art League, Putnam County Community Band, Putnam County Historical Society, River City Players, residents, property owners, and businesses.
- Pursue established foundations, state, federal, and other grant and loan opportunities in conjunction with the entities listed above, possibly utilizing a city-funded grants staff person, who could also act as City’s economic development coordinator.
- Create a committee of those who deliver cultural programs to greater Palatka, including at a minimum a representative member from the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Palatka, Inc, Palatka Main Street, St. Johns River State College, Florida School of the Arts (FloArts), Conlee-Snyder Mural Committee, Palatka Art League, the Arts Council of Greater Palatka and area museums and cultural groups, and a City Commissioner. The committee will serve as a catalyst in securing grants, developing long-range planning goals, and encouraging joint programming.

- Consider an agreement with County that would define the logical extent of city-provided urban services and provide for funding strategies for service area expansion and annexation.
- Work with County to identify logical land use mix for lands identified for future expansion and annexation areas, including sufficient lands for commercial and industrial use.
- Work with Amtrak, CSX, Jacksonville Transportation Authority, First Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization, FDOT, Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission, and state and federal elected officials toward extending commuter rail north from Deland to connect with a possible Jacksonville commuter rail system that terminates in Clay County.
- Work with Amtrak in converting train station to “manned” status.
- Support water taxis for eco-tourism and potential transit purposes.
- Market and promote rail daytrips to City from regional origins such as Jacksonville, Orlando, South Georgia, ect; with hiking, water taxi, and downtown shopping/eating as a draw.
- Continue to support and promote Bass Fishing Tournaments.
- Plan for bicycle routes or trails to link terminus of Lake Butler-Palatka rail trail to downtown and/or equestrian trails. Work with St. Johns River Water Management District and Municipal Airport to showcase trail, given that both facilities are close to the trail and can provide connections for visitors and trail users.
- Support public and/or private water taxis that connect the Riverfront Park with Murphy Island for hikers and/or campers.
- Consider separate advisory CRA board to allow for citizen advice and more focus on redevelopment.
- Consider city staff economic development staff position – not to replace Chamber efforts but to supplement them.
- Consider tax exemptions for property improvements to new or expanding businesses in brownfields or enterprise zones (requires city referendum) under F.S. 196.1995.