

*Having maintained the citywide discussion begun July 2018, Gainesville Neighbors is a platform for community engagement in the planning process for affordable housing and hereby proposes this*

## **DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPOSAL FOR GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA**

### **PRINCIPLES**

1. The Gainesville housing market should be more fair, accessible, and affordable, particularly for low to moderate income households.
2. We should maintain and enhance the character and community of Gainesville's diverse neighborhoods. They are the backbone of our city.
3. The public should play a significant role in defining affordability and in making a variety of affordable housing options available for rent and for sale to a broad spectrum of occupants.
4. Gainesville is distinct, in part because of our enormous student population: Programs implemented elsewhere may not work here.
5. Because the consequences of urban housing decisions unfold over many years, during which time irreversible damage may occur, it is wise to review experiences from many other cities, for examples of successes and failures.
6. All government decisions involving tax dollars and modifying government regulations should rely on sound evidence, appropriate planning, and fiscal accountability--not supposition, trends, or ideology.

### **THE PROPOSAL**

#### **A. Acknowledge and operate within broader systems and partnerships.**

1. The City, the County, the University of Florida, and Santa Fe College must work together.
2. Public, private, non-profit, religious, and neighborhood association partners must better coordinate joint efforts.
3. Those in need of affordable housing must be included in all discussions, early and often.

#### **B. Address the easier solutions first.**

1. Inventory and support successful efforts and build on them.
2. Enforce existing housing codes and laws and expand those pertaining to Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), and to home and neighborhood safety.
3. Place a moratorium on demolition and new development in vulnerable, especially historic, neighborhoods and natural areas, until the City and County develop a framework to address gentrification and displacement concerns.
4. Prioritize quality renovation and repurposing, on previously developed sites.
5. Inventory housing options countywide showing access to schools/shopping/services and public transport.
6. Strengthen City/County transport networks and make innovative options better known and more available.
7. Use the heritage neighborhood and historic district nomination processes to help neighborhoods define, preserve, and protect Gainesville's unique character.
8. Improve existing rental housing with weatherization, insulation, etc., to meet or exceed codes.
9. Develop and maintain a countywide housing information and roommate matching service.

#### **C. Design and build an equitable Gainesville.**

1. Find mechanisms to provide housing, new or renovated, that meets ADA requirements.
2. Create short term/one-time subsidies and rent-to-own programs for renters and first-time homeowners. \*
3. Develop an urban homesteading program perhaps linked to a community land trust. \*
4. Research, design, and prototype options such as single-room occupancy dwellings (SROs) and co-housing. \*
5. Support the creation of a credit union to invest local money in local solutions. \*
6. Make energy and water efficiency, and the protection of environmental health and integrity, central to all existing and new housing.
7. Incentivize landlords, when possible, while benefiting tenants.

*\*Some efforts are already underway.*