

List of Major Issues

Gadsden County Comprehensive Plan

The following is the list of major issues gathered through input from local agencies, adjacent jurisdictions, the County Commission, and the public. The list is not in priority order, but is intended to be complete. Each issue will be used to assess the associated objective(s) within the Comprehensive Plan.

Community Planning and Land Use:

- Land Use Category Consistency - *Land use categories need to be applied consistently and in keeping with the intent of the Comp Plan.*
- Development Patterns - *There have been multiple annexations by surrounding jurisdictions creating impacts to the County due to conflicting land use regulations across jurisdictional boundaries. There needs to be better inter-governmental coordination. Consideration towards revising development processes to have land use amendment approvals and decisions of where development should occur should be controlled primarily by the Commission rather than by developers. It is strongly encouraged that clustering development patterns be used to allow for more open space and natural areas. Land use classifications of large undeveloped platted subdivisions should be reevaluated.*
- Urban Sprawl - *The land use changes from agricultural uses to residential uses should be reduced or eliminated. If higher density is desired it should be located near incorporated cities or where adequate infrastructure exists.*
- Urban Service Areas - *An evaluation of urbanizing and concentrated growth/development areas should be completed to emphasize and create unique destination areas within the County. This will allow for concentrated business and industry areas. Special consideration for commercial and neighborhood commercial should be given to areas along US 90. Land use designations need to be area specific with a balance of land uses, including commercial and residential uses generated from the local communities' needs and visions.*

Economic Development:

- Employment Opportunities - *Local industries are closing leaving hundreds unemployed. New jobs and workforce development with vocational training is needed.*
- Schools - *The school system is underfunded which in turn is affecting the County's ability to grow and attract new businesses and citizens.*
- Taxes - *County taxes need to be reevaluated to account for changes in land uses as well as to include solid waste collection and roadway cleanup.*

Affordable Housing:

- Senior Housing - *Many seniors within the County are unable to afford necessary repairs to their homes to keep them consistent with County codes. Programs need to be established that address these needs.*
- Family Homestead Provision - *Upon the expiration of the County's Family Homestead Provision at the end of 2008, families owning large plots of land are unable to divide their property into smaller parcels to distribute to immediate family members. Provisions need to be made to address this change in property management.*

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Transportation:

- Transportation Needs - *An evaluation of the current Level of Service (LOS) standards for roadways is needed along with a schedule for roadway improvements through consideration of a Long Range Transportation Concurrency System. Potential funding sources, such as the possible instatement of impact fees, need to be identified and updates to the proportionate fair-share ordinances need to be addressed.*
- Alternative Modes of Transportation- *Public transportation options within the County need to be provided, especially for seniors and citizens dependent of public transportation to fulfill daily tasks and obligations.*

Infrastructure Expansion/Improvement:

- Water Supply and Water Quality- *Regional impacts on water quality in Gadsden County from water transfers needs to be monitored. A higher priority needs to be placed on water usage and re-use within the Plan. A loading study is needed to assess other hydrological aspects and water availability.*
- Stormwater and Drainage- *Regional and local stormwater master planning needs to be completed to coordinate drainage issues County-wide rather than parcel by parcel. The use of the new Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) drainage requirements is now required.*
- Sewer, Septic Tanks and Waste Water- *Sewer and wastewater infrastructure should be addressed within the County. A long-range plan for a centralized or retrofit sewer system is needed. Density standards and monitoring (committees) need to be established regarding the capacity or impact placed on the infrastructures and water quality. Central sewer should be provided or high performance septic systems where central sewer is not available.*
- Impact Fees - *The adoption of impact fees should be considered as a funding option for infrastructure improvements. Infrastructure funded through impact fees could be put in place before development occurs and could help manage growth while attracting economic development to certain locations.*

Environmental Protection and Conservation:

- Overlay District – *A protection plan or overlay district needs to be established for the Lake Talquin area.*
- Environmental Protection – *Nonconforming land uses, such as industrial uses are affecting watersheds, local aquifers, creeks, and ravines. Impacts to the natural environment should be considered before approving development, and conservation areas should be expanded. Proper site location should be a strong factor in siting such uses.*

Coordination with Municipalities:

- Interlocal Agreements – *Interlocal agreements should be created between the County and municipalities for the provisions of:*
 - *Infrastructure,*
 - *Hurricane evacuation,*
 - *Adjacent land use changes,*
 - *Concurrency, and*
 - *Domestic animal control.*