

**City of Gainesville Five-Year Consolidated Plan  
Stakeholder Meeting: City Departments  
March 18, 2013 | 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**  
Thomas Center  
306 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Building B, Room 201  
Gainesville, Florida



## **MEETING SUMMARY**

City of Gainesville is in the process of drafting a Five-Year Consolidated Plan for FY 2013/2014-2017/2018 to create a strategic and unified vision for HUD funding over the next five years. In order to develop this vision, City of Gainesville conducted a series of stakeholder meetings during March 2013 to collect input and comments related to the Five-Year Consolidated Plan.

On March 18, 2013, the City conducted a stakeholder meeting at the Thomas Center on NE 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Approximately seven individuals representing city department interests attended the meeting. Departments represented included but were not limited to:

- Public Works
- Gainesville Regional Utilities – Energy and Business Service
- Parks, Recreation and Community Affairs
- Planning and Development Services
- Code Enforcement

In an effort to provide an environment that would allow for all attendees to be heard, a three tier approach was conducted. The first was to present an educational PowerPoint which provided background on the purpose of drafting a Five-Year Plan, which activities and area are eligible for HUD funding, and the schedule that City of Gainesville will follow to adopt the Five-Year Plan in 2013. The second was a questionnaire asking participants about their experiences working with City of Gainesville to administer HUD funds both in the past and present. The third was an open discussion where participants were asked to discuss issues and concerns publicly.

## **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire allowed for attendees to convey their familiarity with HUD programs administrated by City of Gainesville and to provide input on obstacles to and priorities for fund administration over the next five years. The questionnaire included five questions in an open-ended format. No individuals returned questionnaires during the City Departments stakeholders meeting.

## **Open Discussion**

During the discussion, participants were asked to speak openly regarding issues and concerns affecting their respective focus group. Participants were very engaged in this portion of the meeting. A number of issues were brought to City of Gainesville's attention. These issues are listed below, specific to the City Departments stakeholders:

- Code Enforcement
  - Challenges:
    - Not enough staff to carry-out code enforcement/inspections
  - Priorities:
    - Demolition/blight removal in target areas; primarily single family (not commercial)
- Community Development
  - Priorities:
    - Public Infrastructure

- Increase access via sidewalks and ADA ramps, bus stops, etc.
- Stormwater management plan; stormwater projects
- Emphasis on sidewalk/bicycle path needs, East Smokey Bear area and Duval
- Planning Coordination
  - Historic preservation and façade improvements
  - Comprehensive Plan – Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan – coordinate projects located in low- to moderate-income neighborhoods – Housing Element
- Economic Development
  - Housing Weatherization – Renter and Owner
  - Case management for utility bills etc.
  - Energy efficiency retrofits
  - Rebates to businesses for commercial rehabilitation
  - Façade program
- Public Facilities
  - Improvements to Smokey Bear Park
  - Trail access/bike access for improved connectivity
  - Coordination with Recreation and Parks Master Plan that identifies 20 years of facilities needs/capital projects (recently adopted)
  - Accessibility for the disabled (e.g. ADA retrofits)
  - Crime awareness
  - Facilities and programs for seniors and youth

## Conclusion

Although there are many issues that the City Departments stakeholders felt are important, there are a few items that were stressed throughout the meeting as being of the highest priority:

- Code Enforcement (staffing and demolition)
- Community Development, including:
  - Public infrastructure (accessibility and stormwater)
  - Improved planning coordination
  - Economic development activities
  - Public facilities (accessibility, park improvements and facilities/programs for non-homeless special needs populations)

For questions regarding the Five-Year Consolidated Plan, please contact John Wachtel at 352.393.8565 or [wachteljs@cityofgainesville.org](mailto:wachteljs@cityofgainesville.org).

City of Gainesville Housing & Community Development Division  
 Thomas Center “B”  
 PO Box 490, Station 22  
 Gainesville, FL  
 32627-0490

More information can be found at [www.cityofgainesville.org](http://www.cityofgainesville.org)