



## 2011 *Community Conversations*

### Participant Idea Board Question:

What specific idea(s) do you have for a program, facility, or project that would improve our County?

Participants Submitting Suggestions = 115

Total Suggestions = 151

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 7/25/2011 Meeting

1. Cut-out lane for buses.
2. The County government does too much already. Remember that every dollar spent is earned by a citizen of Alachua County. Times are tough; your budget is tight because we (the citizens) have less. When you keep the budget the same during an economic downturn, we (the citizens) have even less.
3. Bring businesses to Gainesville.
4. Increase participants on Tax Roles.
5. If we funded and provided jobs for the poor members of our community, then we could kill 2 birds with one stone. The more we privatize, the less opportunity we have to enrich the community.
6. Improve our community by; jail population reduction, enhanced mental health services, and conclude Koppers fiasco.
7. Reduce regulations/requirements.
8. Create a program to cause the 49% exempt entities to pay their share of County costs.
9. Expand jail diversion.
10. Enhance social services.
11. Make it easier for new businesses to come to our county; increase incentives, decrease regulations, etc. - this will lead to more jobs, more property taxes, less homelessness, etc.
12. Increase education and out-reach to increase awareness of county services.
13. Job training targeting teens and young adults with emphasis on skilled trades that have promising employment prospects.
14. Increasing funding to our jail diversion program would reduce higher level services that cost more, and result in a savings overall.
15. Our county is not going to be improved by any one program, facility or project. The improvement will come from the people...the average person with an above average desire to set things right. The building/real estate/construction industries have taken the biggest hit – let's get rid of the redundancies in programs and allow businesses to flourish – more jobs – more revenue – more stability.
16. Impact fees for improvements.
17. Better education and awareness of weatherization program for low-income residents.
18. Natural gas supply to East Side and solar hot water units to reduce bills and late payments.
19. County oversight of GRU and City contracts with combined Commission participation.
20. Aggressive demand side management to reduce demand for electricity and peak power.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 7/25/2011 Meeting

21. To improve our county's after school programs and summer programs for children outside of Gainesville.
22. Efficiency study to determine areas, if any, of excessive waste.
23. More tax incentives to businesses.
24. Streamline development review process.
25. Reduce the amount of paperwork, regulations, etc required to bring in new businesses.
26. Increase services for homeless and mentally ill.
27. Increase programs for at-risk youth.
28. Improve at-risk youth program by facilitating faith based programs in local churches; use and encourage the local churches.
29. Regardless of specificity, the environment and land protection must be priorities.
30. Emphasis on seeking student from the University who would happily choose to volunteer (for free) for positions that are currently paid for by the county. If awareness levels were raised this could really happen.
31. Partnership with public/private in job creation – fund CEO.
32. Promote & advance energy efficiencies and conservation. The savings will help finance other operations.
33. Fund youth recreation programs in un-incorporated areas.
34. Support the entrepreneur programs of UF & Chamber.
35. Increase library services – they have become the focus of “e”-government access. Library staff have to help those who do not know how to use computers.
36. Maintain the roads.
37. End development for 5 years to let infrastructure catch up. Don't let growth start back up unless there is adequate water. Right now, we are out of water.

## FACILITY

1. Centrally locate “One Stop Homeless Center”.
2. Treatment Center for addiction and mentally ill.
3. Permanent low cost housing development for Veterans.
4. County located Family Safety Center.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 7/28/2011 Meeting

1. A FLAT (per living unit) Fire Tax will help diversify the income stream to the county and raise awareness to those currently not supporting (but using) county services.
  - a. A set fire fee on vacant land, relative to size also
2. Incentivize Redevelopment By:
  - a. Reducing the regulatory costs associated with reusing and/or revitalizing existing sites that exceeded their lifecycle and use – if you don't want urban sprawl, provide an initiative to reclaim aging properties and developments (partner with municipalities and utilities to reduce costs for Re-development sites)
3. Asking yourselves honestly just how much planning and development staffing is required to serve – efficiency increases reduce staffing needs (chew the fat).
4. Reduce Harmlessness by:
  - a. ↑ Mental health services
  - b. Forging an initiative with UF - who remains totally uninvolved in this issue – students should be encouraged to meet the homeless and be required to participate in positive outreach programs to feed, shelter, and represent the homeless – legal support, medical care, etc.
  - c. Eliminate the meal limit
5. Project-
  - a. Increase the efficiency and correlation between CRA and Development Planning & Review across city, county, and municipalities
  - b. Reduce the timing
  - c. Increase the ease
  - d. Utilize the collective budget and reduce duplication
  - e. Make it easier for Incubator & start-up Businesses to stay here
    - i. Make it more attractive to locate here
6. Look at the manner that real estate sales contribute to conservation and land purchases
  - A. San Juan Island, Washington State collects 1% on all real estate sales to fund purchases of conservation lands and easements
7. I think if we just invest in preventative services, we will save in the long run. So – invest in at risk youth programs, homeless prevention and eradication, behavior health programs, etc.
8. Increase road maintenance
9. More programs geared toward parenting and child protection

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 7/28/2011 Meeting

10. Joint collaboration between co., city, and school board to address early childhood education (birth-3<sup>rd</sup> grade) needs, parenting programs with goal to increase early learning success. This will reduce dropout rate in teens which reduces crime, drug use, etc.
11. Increase transportation (bus) system to include the whole county
12. Teach People to be more self sufficient & prepare for hard times.
13. Promote urban gardens with FOG and Office of Sustainability
14. Promote buying local
15. Promote alternative transportation
16. Building Moratorium
17. Build More
18. More funding for choices for after school programs
19. More funding for Alachua County Forever
20. Promote and facilitate competition of Depot Park and linking its bike paths to county wide trails
21. Innovation Business Environment
22. Fix the Broken Planning Department
23. Find a way to Reduce and Manage homelessness –Jobs-
24. The counter needs to work harder to clean up the water quality of our large lakes. The increase tax values surrounding properties, and the increases in recreation and tourism, will offset these costs.
25. Better roads and bike lanes
26. Buy local, hire local, create jobs program
27. ↑ Jail Diversion Program
28. Food credits for poverty-level residents to use for purchase and locally grown food
29. Focus on our children seriously- track indicators and fund private/public interventions
30. - Cut Jail Management by 1/3 - Cut LE Road Patrol by 15% - Increase Social Services by 25% - Increase At Risk Youth by 25% - Cut Fairgrounds Development by 100% - Cut County Road Paving by 25%
31. Improve our infrastructure (roads)
32. Streamline the ability to navigate county staff and the process – the staff works for the citizens
33. Merge County/City/Fire/Sheriff/Police

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 7/28/2011 Meeting

34. Reduction in programs, facilities, and projects that use tax dollars. If these programs and facilities have merit, they will be promoted and funded by private dollars
35. Streamline and Eliminate Regulation and duplication within County depts.
36. We need a true regional transit system. Establish a transit activity w/a dedicated funding source to serve the entire county.
37. Reduce the number of resources needed for county jail operations. Inmates should grow their own food. Use inmates to maintain more county facilities, schools, buildings, etc. Use more green technology in county through inmate work and training.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 7/30/2011 Meeting

1. Provide additional facilities for the homeless
2. Have (reasonably low-cost) rental space for artists in a collective building in different areas.
  - a. Part of the contract would entail that artists give back to community (ie public exhibit; go as speakers/presenters to a local school, etc)
  - b. Gainesville has such a diverse creative community, it would be powerful to connect it. Also it seems like there are a lot of big empty buildings -> could provide tax incentives for owners in exchange for lower rent
  - c. A more visible community will also improve the county's attractiveness as a place to live/invest/etc.
3. More services for elders.
4. Don't allow any more bldg permits until there is infrastructure and the supply of homes/apartments is much lower.
5. Support Innovation Gainesville Think outside the Box
6. Connect and more involvement of local farmers/food in school system food service
  - a. Improving the food quality and education is vital to county health. This will ultimately reduce impact in social care costs and improve discipline, graduation...
  - b. Support local agriculture put money back into our economy as well, preserves land and improves social welfare.
7. Spend more on road improvements
8. Support Innovation Gainesville
9. Support transit service
10. Retrain workers
11. Have UF students, who use our facilities (roads, etc) volunteer in our community
12. Make county land available to small farmers at low-lease rates
13. Promote local food in AC. At County meetings serve only local food.
14. Continue educating citizens about prevention & sustainability
15. Spend more on roads and infrastructure
16. Light the soccer fields at Kanapaha park
17. Reduce bus service where not needed – study usage
18. Increase funding for senior citizen services using the new Senior Center as a resource.
19. Increase Risk Youth Programs
20. Support collaboration
  - a. Between govt. and community groups
  - b. Between govt. and business
  - c. Between paid and volunteer people
21. Somehow encourage non-productive people to not have more children, to be better more responsible parents thereby saving \$ on jail etc.

## FACILITY

1. Build new recreation center a Kanapaha Park off Tower Road

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 8/1/2011 Meeting

1. Provide tax incentives and work w/ local developers and UF + Santa Fe to create jobs in 32609 + 32641 zip codes
2. Increase in opportunities for ex-offenders that make re-entry positive – eg job opportunities (train), housing, voting rights
3. Continue investing in energy efficiency for county buildings and services
4. Community gardens at Fairgrounds
5. At risk youth
6. A program/facility for the youth
7. Main focus: to teach skills and learning tools, motivate, encourage, etc...to become productive citizens.
8. Get the Fairgrounds project complete!
9. Will bring in a lot of revenue!
10. Add money to jail diversion.
11. USA jails one person out of 100
12. China #2 – jails one out of 1000
13. We jail for too many
14. What a waste of human resources
15. Regular “Community Conversations”
16. Clean air program
17. Fund a juvenile crime prevention program modeled after Reichert House, or even larger – modeled after Harlem Children’s Zone project
18. I’d like to see better transit projects connecting small municipalities to Gainesville job centers, including bus, park and rides, etc.
19. Ongoing structured financial literacy education for all citizens at all levels
20. The more each citizen knows, the better we can all budget
21. Have more music events downtown that are free.
22. This will help draw more people downtown + support the businesses there.
23. Keep music + arts classes in schools
24. Tax & Spend
25. Bring to our County Big Businesses that would give more better paying jobs for our youth.
26. More bike paths that double as sidewalks on the eastside
27. Help for homeless
28. Support for area youth
29. Alternative energy invests
30. Tax incentives for local businesses to start up – expand
31. Support Alachua County Forever with \$ or support a new bond program to raise \$.
32. A halfway house (Apartment etc) to house parents + teens in trouble for specific parenting classes. Particular attention to the deficits parents who have not been parented bring to their role.
33. Fund community gardens at fairgrounds for at risk youth!

### FACILITY

1. Community center with a wood floor, dedicated to social dancing.

## PROGRAMS/PROJECTS/FACILITIES – 8/15/2011 Meeting

1. Improve education + consistency of gov't officials involved in inspecting/approving business advancements/growth/development.
2. My concern is for the Homeless Population – I support, financially, the Home Van – cook and serve at St. Francis House, and Helping Hands. I support the animals from the homelessness etc etc etc What can you all do to improve this situation??
3. I would invest in technology to improve operational efficiencies iPad
4. Have tutoring programs after school for at-risk kids. Teach them that jail is the worst place to end up. Volunteers from UF could do the tutoring.
5. Combine strategies in community with all possibilities on the table for a superb animal service program that combines multi participants – grants/organizations, + even vot for 1% tax creative solution! This should be a community project to be proud of
6. Alternative Energy
7. Animal Shelter Have a “Speed Dating” event for adoption. Enlist local groomers to prep most adoptable dogs. (Saw this on TV in Chicago last weekend)
8. Support city core project to draw visitors\_\_\_\_
9. Organize programs for matching work projects for the low income, disabled, needy with unemployed skilled workers similar to CCC of the depression era. Could provide job training exchange welfare with community service
10. Additional programs for acquisition + maintenance of natural resources
11. County employment liaison
12. A massive weatherization/energy efficiency program to reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. This would dramatically reduce our ecological footprint, save people \$\$ that they would spend locally, + would increase our community's resilience in the face of rising fossil fuel costs.
13. Land preservation. Tree canopy in developed or to-be-developed areas. Change land development regulations to reduce infrastructure requirements to make it easier to leave trees and native vegetation.
14. Move the CRA money to health & human services for at risk youth & seniors
15. Reverse how much we spend on animals with how much we spend on at risk youth (then one day we'll spend less on prisons)

## FACILITY

1. Increase income from visitors over 10 years to cover costs of track/swim/multi-purpose facility
2. Competition Swim + Dive Center and Track + Field Stadium – can be used for football, soccer, lacrosse, rugby too. Anchored by 35,000 sq.ft. Multipurpose center