



North Florida

GAINESVILLE/ALACHUA COUNTY AIRPORT GATEWAY PROJECT



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PANEL | AUGUST 16-17, 2022

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

About the Urban Land Institute (ULI)

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a nonprofit education and research institute supported by its members. Its mission is to shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide. Established in 1936, ULI has more than 46,000 members worldwide representing all aspects of land use and development disciplines. The North Florida District Council was formed in 2005 and has approximately 550 members in 34 counties, including the cities of Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Gainesville, Tallahassee, Panama City and Pensacola.

What are Technical Assistance Panels (TAPs)?

The Technical Assistance Panel program is an advisory service available to a community, nonprofit, public entity or private enterprise that is facing real estate or land-use issues. Typically, a two-day session, the TAP program brings together a cross-section of experts who do not have a vested interest in the project to examine the issues from multiple angles and produce recommendations and implementation strategies based on market conditions, sound information, community realities, and best practices. The District Council assembles a panel of ULI members chosen for their knowledge of the issues facing the client. The interdisciplinary team may include land planners, architects, market and financial analysts, developers, engineers, appraisers, attorneys and/or brokers who are well qualified to provide unbiased, pragmatic advice on complex real estate and land-use issues.

To ensure objectivity, panel members cannot be involved in matters pending before the client, currently work for the client or solicit work from the client during the six months following the TAP program. In addition, they are not compensated for their time, but they are reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses, such as overnight lodging and transportation to attend the TAP.

How Does the Program Work?

TAP members are briefed on the issues facing the client and receive detailed information relevant to the assignment including project history, detailed maps of the study area, relevant demographics and other relevant data necessary for an understanding of the task at hand. During the two-day program, TAP members tour the study area, interview stakeholders (business owners, city council members, etc.), and work collaboratively to produce preliminary findings and recommendations which are presented at the end of day two to the client. A complete report follows within about six to eight weeks with detailed recommendations.

ULI Advisory Services identify creative, practical solutions for complex land use and development challenges.

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PHOTO: Santa Fe College



PHOTOS: GNV Airport

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TAP SCOPE

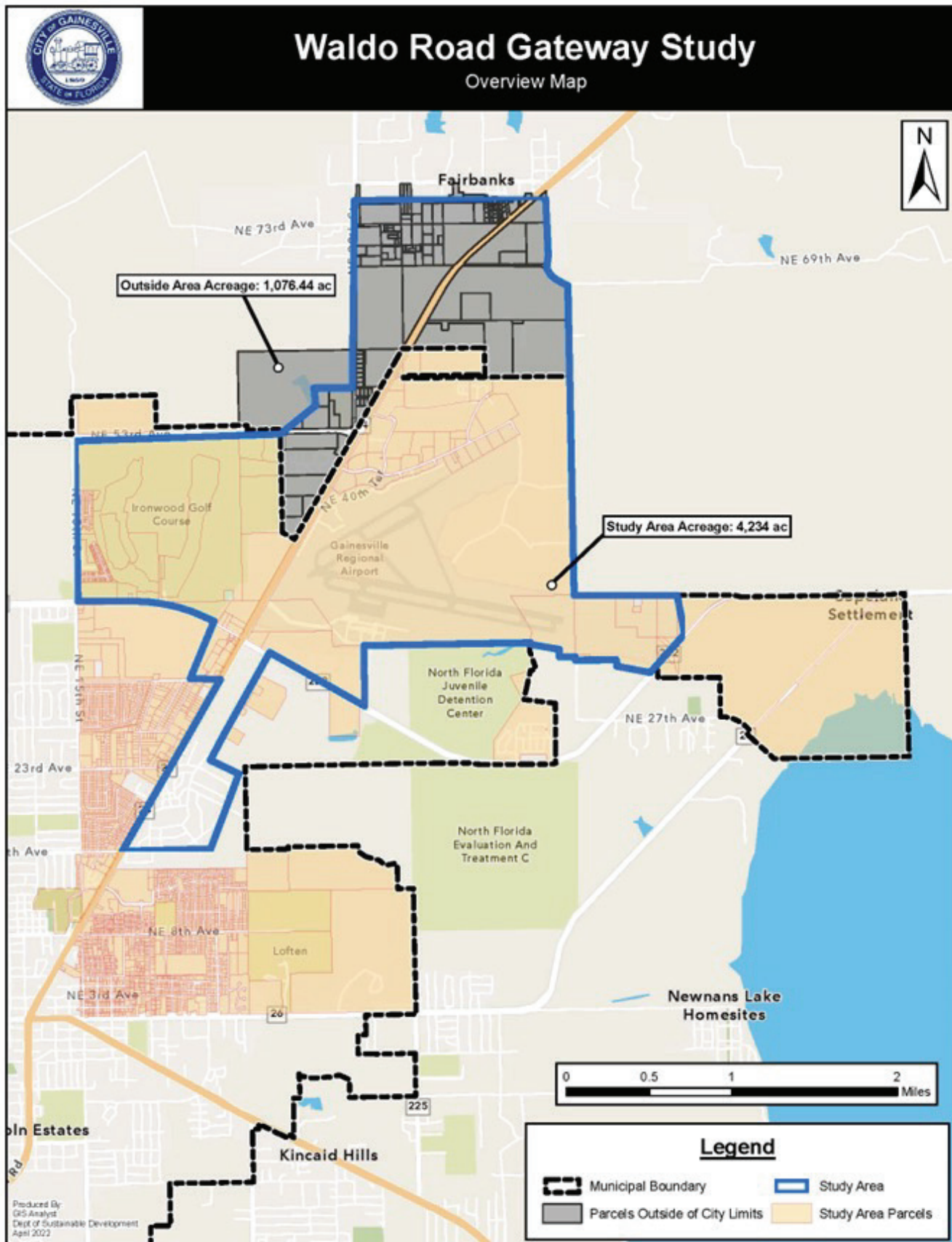
The Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) was asked to examine the Airport-Waldo Road and 39th Avenue area, a.k.a. Airport Gateway, with the objective of promoting a sense of place through a unified vision of modern light industrial and commercial property opportunities.

Phase 1 is a two-part analysis study of the project area:

- Part 1: ULI North Florida Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) jointly funded by the City of Gainesville and Alachua County; Handoff to Part 2 work. (Not within ULI scope)
- Part 2: Consultant economic analysis for the best fit industries and recommendation on recruit/site selector priorities; Handoff to Phase 2 Master Planning work.

In prioritized order of importance with priority “1” being the highest and priority “6” being the lowest, the TAP scope of work included:

1. Analysis of existing undeveloped and/or undeveloped properties surrounding the Airport Gateway, including sustainable economic growth, greater density of community-compatible manufacturing, light industrial facilities, and commercial uses.
 - a. Methods to encourage appropriate and desirable development within the Airport Gateway may include industrial parks, commercial hubs, and/or industrial/commercial development authorities or districts.
 - b. Identify a range of possible locations with a SWOT analysis and hierarchy of options.
2. Examine and identify infrastructure needs (including roads owned and maintained by FDOT) and changes to support the development of light industrial and commercial opportunities considering both the existing offerings and potential future land acquisitions in the Airport Gateway area. Infrastructure needs should focus on creating competitive logistical advantages for light industrial/commercial uses while also considering the potential impacts on community needs and sense of placemaking.
3. Identify and recommend methods, practices, and multipliers that will focus new development on placemaking for the Airport Gateway and East Gainesville communities including a sense of community “entrance” and secondary or supporting uses such as nearby retail and hospitality options for the corridor.
4. Identify best practices in the development of public-private collaboration, industrial development authority, or other entities to promote high-quality light industrial and commercial development opportunities, including high-quality job creation, a sense of community, and incentivized modernization, within the Airport Gateway.
5. Examine inter-governmental (state (FDOT), Airport Authority, City & County) and intra-governmental (economic development, airport, budgets) cooperation and coordination needed to effectively develop and ultimately implement the intended Master Plan process with a focus on governance, financial responsibility, authority/jurisdiction, and task responsibility.
6. Prepare priority areas for further review under Phase 1 Part 2 Economic Analysis.



PANEL PROCESS

The ULI North Florida District Council assembled a group of accomplished professionals who have expertise in airport real estate development, transportation planning and engineering, aviation manufacturing, land planning and design, zoning and landscape architecture to address the challenges facing the Airport Gateway.

Prior to convening, TAP members received information on the Gainesville Regional Airport, including a 2006 master plan and 2014-15 update, a 1997 East Gainesville Action Plan, and parcel ownership outside the airport.

Orientation on day one included an introductory discussion on the scope of work with Erik Bredfeldt, Economic Development and Innovation Director for the City of Gainesville; Sean McLendon, Economic Development and Food Systems Manager for Alachua County; and Ken Cornell, Alachua County Board of County Commissioners.

A tour of the airport and study area was followed by stakeholder interviews, which provided a variety of perspectives. They included Andrew Persons, Director of Sustainable Development, City of Gainesville; Allan Peska, Chief Executive Officer, Gainesville Regional Airport; Tracey Todd, Advisor, Engel & Volkers/Alachua County Economic Development Advisory Council; and City Commissioner Desmon Duncan-Walker. Day one ended with a panelist discussion and a SWOT analysis of the Gateway corridor.

Day two entailed an in-depth panel discussion based on the TAP scope and stakeholder input. Using statewide, national and international examples to define transferrable lessons, the team analyzed the site's potential and steps needed to further its economic development. The panel formalized their observations and made their recommendations at the day's end to representatives from the city, county, airport and other community stakeholders.



PHOTOS: Gainesville Regional Airport (GNV)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ULI was engaged to study economic development opportunities in and around the Gainesville Regional Airport, known as the Airport Gateway corridor in East Gainesville. The Airport Industrial Park is near capacity, and there is a growing need to improve economic opportunity in East Gainesville, which has not experienced the economic boom enjoyed on the west side of the City.

The TAP study area comprises 4,234 acres and currently consists mainly of light industrial, logistics and institutional facilities. Some of the study area lies in Alachua County outside the Gainesville municipal boundary.

Gainesville is the largest city in Alachua County and serves as the county seat. With a population of 141,085 (278,468 countywide),¹ the City is growing at a rate of 1.17% annually.² Gainesville is home to the University of Florida (UF) and Santa Fe College. UF is the economic driver of the City; the university and its health affiliates are the largest area employers.³

Airport Gateway economic development faces numerous challenges, most importantly no one entity aggressively marketing the area. Large swaths of land are public- and institution-owned, not utilized or not utilized to the highest and best use. Much of the landscape is dominated by correctional facilities. In addition, there is significant wetland. Multiple landowners and the geometry of the area makes cobbling a large plot for development difficult. Utility rates are high and much of the land is not shovel-ready. Information regarding developable property is not easily ascertainable in one site that provides granular property data. The area also suffers from a negative image with a perception of blight and crime. As a gateway to Gainesville the corridor lacks identity. There is no sense of place.

The TAP evaluated current efforts, market conditions and potential development areas as well as the need for stakeholders to speak with one voice. The panelists' overarching recommendations included the need to develop a vision and strategic plan for the Airport Gateway that speaks to the East Gainesville brand and provides a foundation for why companies should relocate to the corridor.

In addition, along with the creation of an economic development zone that provides incentives for the business community, the TAP recommended the creation of an "Economic Gateway Partnership" to specifically champion the Airport Gateway corridor's economic development. The individual in charge of this entity—whether a development authority or public-private partnership—should be tasked with implementing a master plan, conducting due diligence, and spearheading the coordination, financing and marketing effort. The entity should include representation from each stakeholder – city and state government, airport authority, GRU, Chamber, local businesses, UF, Santa Fe College, community leaders, FDOT, Army Corps of Engineers, among others. Their participation, collaboration and financial and other support is crucial to creating ownership and synergy.

Other recommendations included:

Spatial Inventory and Prioritization

Identify key catalytic sites that are ripe for redevelopment. The ULI TAP Committee has identified various potential catalyst sites in the following map figure, which would need to be assessed and prioritized. Evaluate opportunities for these catalyst sites and explore how the City can incentivize their redevelopment, as well as what infrastructure improvements the City can provide to spur their redevelopment. (*short-term*)

Alleviate the costs and time for developers by identifying shovel-ready parcels and providing interactive mapping and granular due diligence data. *(short-term)*

Prioritize areas within the Gateway for development based on typology and potential. *(short-term)*

Facilitate engagement with the local brokerage community either by (1) listing sites identified (and under one control/ownership structure) with a commercial brokerage firm to provide market exposure, or (2) establishing a broker compensation policy if a new governing body is created and markets sites directly through their own website. *(short-term)*

Economic Development

Review zoning codes and other land-use regulations and proactively re-zone properties or amend the regulations to expedite approvals. *(short-term)*

Create a redevelopment grant program for the Airport Gateway to assist landowners in upgrading their existing businesses; e.g., façade grants, etc. *(short-term)*

Acquire additional land for redevelopment where possible including land swaps with the State and/or relocating correctional facilities. *(mid- to long-term)*

Infrastructure

Review stormwater conveyance for areas that will require mitigation strategies. *(short-term)*

Assess environmental issues for properties based on prior land use as part of a due diligence package. *(short-term, ongoing)*

Determine capacity of existing utilities along with affordable and sustainable energy needs for developable properties. *(short-term)*

Airport Gateway Potential Priority Areas

On-Airport:

- PA 1 Airside/Landside Business Park
- PA 2 Mid-Field Cargo, Logistics & Manufacturing*

Off-Airport:

- PA 3 Gateway Commercial & Innovation
- PA 4 Gateway Commercial & Hospitality
- PA 5 GVN Business Park North
- PA 6 Recreation
- PA 7 Recreation

Future Potential Sites:

- PA 8 Logistics & Manufacturing
- PA 9 Logistics & Manufacturing

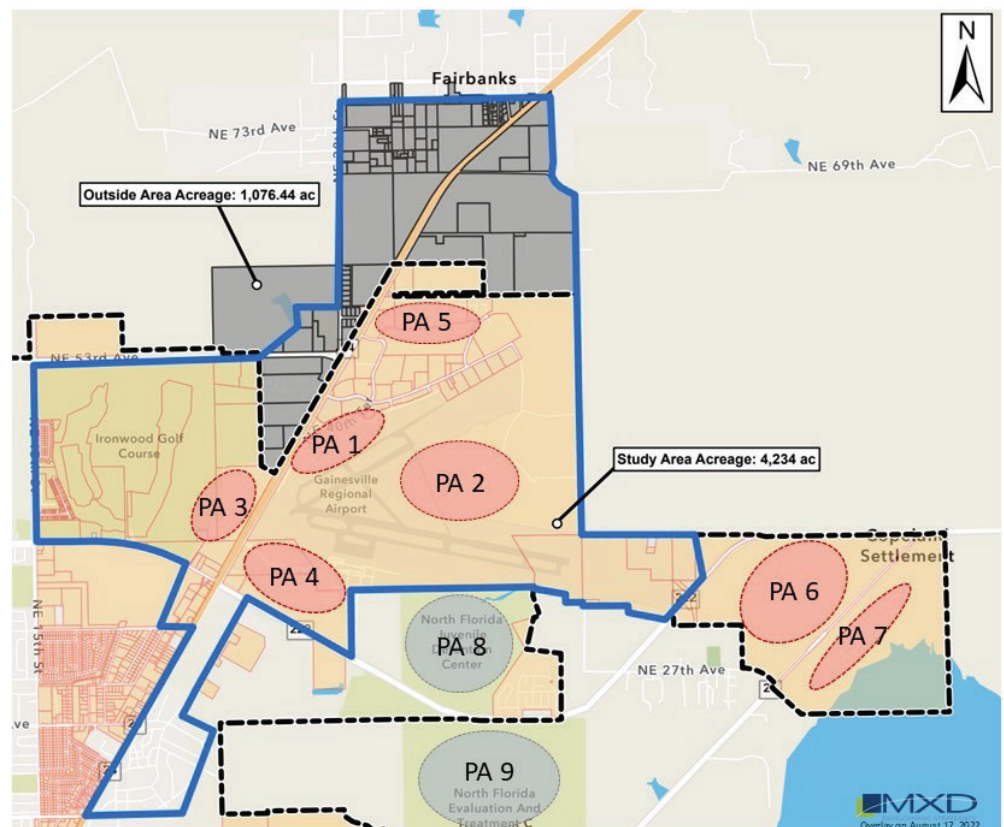


IMAGE: GVN Airport Gateway, Potential Priority Areas

Determine associated costs for infrastructure improvements needed to enable land development in order to provide airport and potential developers with an estimate of such costs. *(short-term)*

Engage FDOT and review possible new road requirements and road widening, e.g., Waldo Road and 39th Avenue. *(mid- to long-term)*

Review public transportation and connectivity within East Gainesville to the airport and from West Gainesville to the airport. *(mid- to long-term)*

Invest in infrastructure improvements that serve not just future market demand but also the existing neighborhood and needs for walkability and better access to local service, retail, recreation and open space. *(mid- to long-term)*

Airport

Upgrade airport infrastructure in order to accommodate regular Aircraft Design Group C-IV operations on the north and south side of the airfield as currently planned in the next few years. *(short- to mid-term)*

Consider creating a minimum standards document that defines design guidelines and standards for horizontal infrastructure and vertical development. *(short-term)*

Utilize 50-year ground lease as a property conveyance practice in order to assure passive income stream and maintain property control. *(short-term, ongoing)*

Kepp the airport website current, including an interactive map with detailed property data. *(short-term, ongoing)*

Validate that FAA regulations (height and noise) do not limit development opportunities in certain areas, such as around the Ironwood Golf Course. *(short-term)*

Relocate General Aviation toward the terminal area in order to redevelop and activate the current General Aviation site. *(mid-term)*

Placemaking

Engage a landscape architect to develop a beautification program with hardscape and landscape improvements, urban design elements for when properties are redeveloping, public art and wayfinding. *(short- to mid-term)*

Workforce Training

Address the workforce skill gap by creating and supporting technical and trade education programs for avionics, mechanics, electrical and other trades. *(short- to mid-term)*

Develop a mentorship program for high school or college students at all levels. *(short-term)*

Champion development of a vocational high school or magnet that focuses on aviation trades, including mechanics and other avionics technicians. *(long-term)*

Funding Sources

- Seed money
- Intergovernmental agencies (City, County, Airport, EDC)
- Grants
- Private sector corporate partnerships/sponsorships
- Public-private partnership with a developer

BACKGROUND



PHOTO: University of Florida

The City of Gainesville lies adjacent to I-75, which runs north and south along the city's western border. Approximately 45 miles to the north is the I-10/I-75 interchange and 70 miles to the east is I-95. The closest major city is Ocala about 30 miles to the south.

Gainesville is the largest city in Alachua County and is the county seat. As of 2020 Census data released in August 2021, the City's population was 141,085 (278,468 countywide) and is growing at a rate of 1.17% annually. The population is 64.5% white (56.3% white alone, non-Hispanic), 20.7% black, 12.2% Hispanic and 6.7% Asian. Median household income in Gainesville is \$37,264 compared with \$51,995 for Alachua County. The local market unemployment rate as of August 2022 was 2.8%.¹

Gainesville is home to the University of Florida (UF), ranked among America's five best public universities,⁴ and Santa Fe College, which offers both associate and bachelor degrees

as well as vocational certificate programs. In February 2022 Santa Fe was awarded a \$2 million grant from the State of Florida to develop a STEM-focused charter school on its Northwest Campus.⁵

UF is the economic driver of the city; the university and its health affiliates are the largest area employers. Despite UF's heavy footprint, retention of UF students after graduation is an issue, as many leave the area due to a perceived lack of employment opportunity.

"In Alachua County land is extremely affordable. People haven't discovered this area. There is a huge opportunity here."

— Ken Cornell,
Alachua County Commissioner

Top Industries

More than half of Gainesville's civilian employed population aged 16 and older is employed in three industries – education, health care and retail.⁶

A growing segment is the life science/biotechnology industry. The Gainesville Innovation District nestled between UF and Downtown offers premium office, restaurant, lab and retail space. It is home to 80+ businesses, anchored by The Hub, one of two UF Innovate business incubators. UF Innovate helps to move research discoveries from the laboratory to the market. It comprises four organizations: Tech Licensing, Ventures, and two business incubators, The Hub and Sid Martin Biotech in nearby Progress Park in the

city of Alachua. The Hub has served startup companies in biomedicine, agricultural technology, food sciences, information technology and other areas since October 2011. Sid Martin Biotech is a world-recognized leader in biotechnology business incubation, assisting therapeutic, diagnostics, medical device, ag-bio, clean energy, and/or biopharma enterprises.

With respect to blue collar employment, Gainesville has launched a pilot program called "Community Action via Development Education and Training" (CADET) that looks to recruit and train at-risk local residents, giving them skills to become full-time police officers, firefighters or Gainesville Regional Utility (GRU) workers.



PHOTO: Sid Martin Biotech, a UF Innovate business incubator

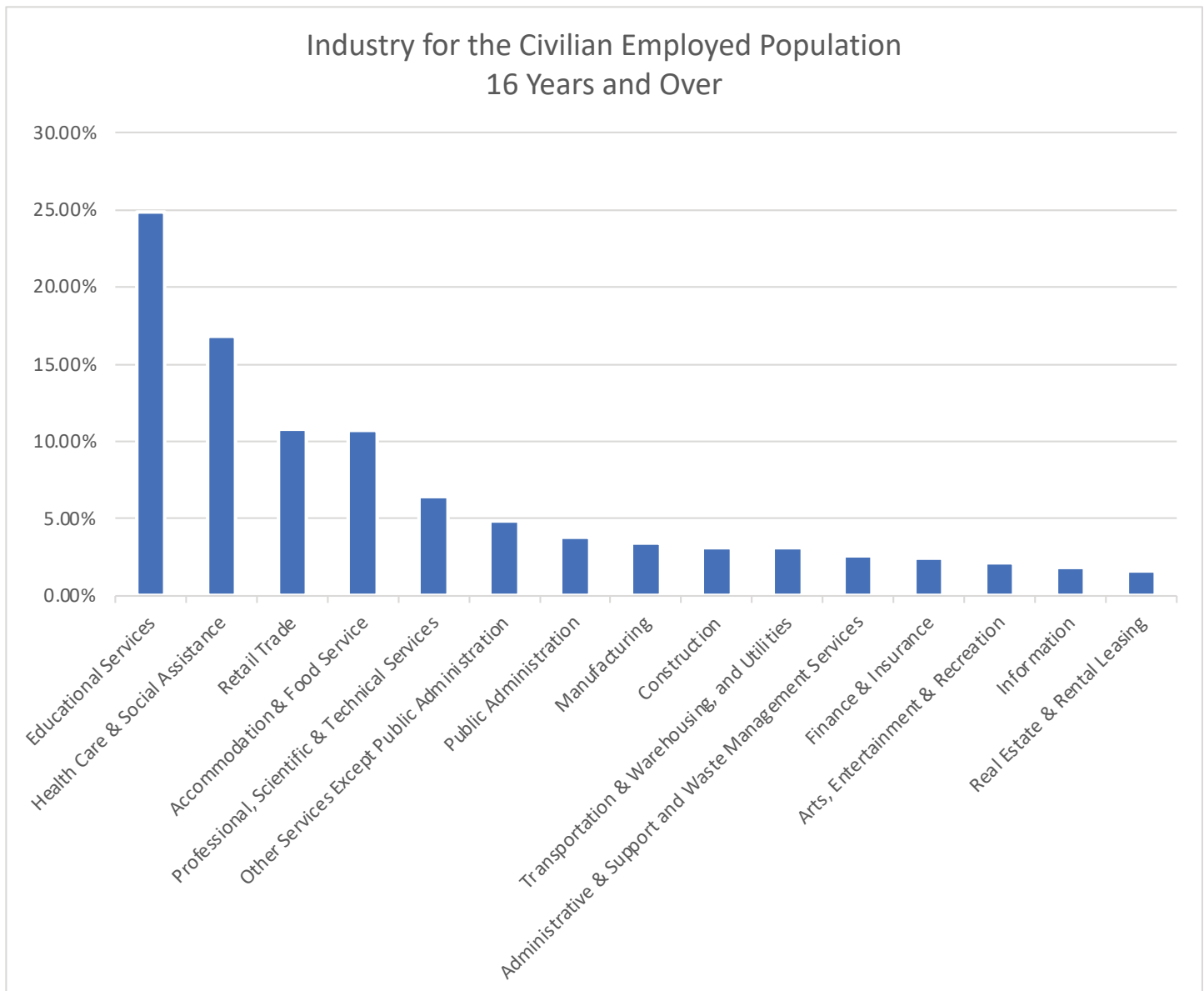


CHART: Percentages of Gainesville's population employed in various industries⁷

Gainesville's electric facilities are provided by GRU, a municipally-owned utility system that serves approximately 74% of the population of the County, including the entire City, with the exception of the University of Florida campus, which is served principally by Duke Energy Florida.

GRU's electric rates are the second highest in the state. City officials voted to increase electric rates by 3% and wastewater rates by 5% as part of the City's nearly \$445 million budget approved in September. According to Moody's August 2022 credit opinion, "residential and commercial electricity rates will likely exceed the state average in the

foreseeable future given a high fixed costs base, transfers to the City's general fund, the current high natural gas price environment and future investment needs."⁸

In addition to electric generation and transmission, GRU provides natural gas, water, wastewater and telecommunication services. The Stormwater Management Utility (SMU) is a fee-based program billed through GRU to all developed properties within the City. Non-residential properties are assessed according to the amount of impervious area on the property.⁹

GRU offers an Economic Development Rate as an incentive for larger business customers who want to establish or expand their presence in Gainesville and meet certain criteria. New businesses can get a 20% discount on base rates for five years, while expanding businesses can receive a 15% discount for five years.¹⁰

Collaborate 2025

The Greater Gainesville Chamber of Commerce is the designated economic development organization of the Greater Gainesville Region. Its five-year strategy, Collaborate 2025, was developed after conducting visioning sessions involving a cross-section of businesses, community and government leaders. The strategic planning process synthesized data and extensive public input into key issues facing the Greater Gainesville region.

The Collaborate 2025 strategy determined that the region's best opportunities to grow manufacturing employment is to focus on areas of existing strength, namely production operations related to Human Life Sciences, Agricultural Science & Technology, and Clean Technology. The five-year strategy targets five industry clusters: Distribution and Trade, Business Support Services, Agriculture Science and Technology, Human Life Sciences, and Digital Technology.



IMAGE: Collaborate 2025 key messages

TAP Study Area

The TAP study area is located in East Gainesville, portions of which have been designated as an Enterprise Zone. In the past, most economic development and growth has focused on the western portion of the City. There is a particular need to improve economic opportunity in East Gainesville, where a lack of substantial investment has created gaps in employment opportunities and skills training for its predominantly black residents. City and county representatives would like to attract light industrial manufacturing, warehousing and logistics companies to the area.

At the center of the scope area is Gainesville Regional Airport (GNV), which is owned by the City of Gainesville. The Gainesville-Alachua County Regional Airport Authority (GACRAA) operates and maintains the airport, which provides commercial air transportation, General Aviation (GA), cargo and other aviation-related services to North-Central Florida. Commercial service from GNV is provided by Delta and American Airlines. Direct flights are available to Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas/Fort Worth and Miami. There is a high percentage of business and University-related traffic, with low demand for leisure-oriented traffic.

The airport has spent \$100 million in the last 10 years in improvements. Most recently, it completed a 15,200 square-foot expansion of its commercial terminal, adding seating area, additional space for vendors and food, a second TSA screening lane, and two boarding bridges. The terminal expansion and boarding bridges are the second and third phases of terminal investment. Plans call for an additional \$75 million over the next five to seven years to add a multistory parking garage with up to 418 spaces, a new outbound, baggage screening/handling system, and a fourth boarding bridge, expand the airline ticket office, and strengthen the apron as well as double the control tower height.

The airport officially accommodates Design Group C-III aircraft, although it appears to be over designed for that category. It is looking to lengthen its 7,501-foot runway by 500 feet in order to accommodate larger aircraft. A 4,158-foot runway currently accommodates smaller aircraft.

In 2019, traffic from GNV set an all-time record for commercial passengers at 558,246. The coronavirus pandemic in 2020 cut volume by 5%. Volume has since rebounded and is currently 2.3% above 2019 levels.

There are no hotel accommodations located at the airport, and a recent request for proposals received no responses from developers.

Located to the airport's immediate north is Airport Industrial Park. It has successfully added companies over the past 25 years and now has limited availability for additional businesses. One of the challenges is the conveyance structure. Property has been sold fee simple versus ground lease. The FAA considers long-term ground lease (50 years) as best practice as it provides a passive income stream and enables the airport to maintain control of the property at the end of the term.

The industrial park is home to light manufacturing, warehouse, logistics and distribution companies, including SiVance LLC (a wholly owned subsidiary of Milliken), Nordstrom Distribution Center, FedEx, and Florida Food Service, Inc., among others. A 47-acre former Gainesville Job Corps Center has been vacant since 2017. Currently owned by the GSA, it is prime for repurposing.

Currently under construction at the park is UF Health's new Remote Sterile Processing Facility. The 8.3-acre parcel will house a 56,000 square-foot facility that will support several UF Health facilities. The sterile processing center will house around 140 employees. It is scheduled for completion in Summer 2023.

On August 26, 2022, the FAA provided notice of its intent to release 6.71 acres located in the industrial park. The release

will allow the City of Gainesville to dispose of the property for other than aeronautical purposes. The property will be released of its federal obligations for the purpose of selling the property at fair market value, determined to be \$216,000, for light industrial future commercial development.

North of Airport Industrial Park is the Alachua County EcoLoop. The 31-acre park is a first-of-its-kind class site for waste-based industrial and research in the southeastern United States. Shovel-ready parcels are available for private sector entrepreneurs invested in recycling, reprocessing and remanufacturing.

About six miles north of the airport is the Gainesville Raceway, Florida's home for drag racing. It hosts year-round racing action and events. A CSX rail line providing freight service is located 12 miles to the north in Waldo.

To the south of the airport in the former Alachua County Fairgrounds, a new U.S. Army Reserve equipment concentration site broke ground in July 2022. The first equipment concentration site in Florida, it will be home to almost 2,500 vehicles. Jobs are expected to pay between \$65,000 and \$70,000. It is estimated that the nearly 46,000 square foot site will be completed by 2024.¹¹

Also south of the airport are several government facilities. The state-owned Tacachale Development Disability Center is the oldest and largest community for Floridians with developmental disabilities. The City has reviewed the status of the site with the controlling party, but to date they have not expressed interest in selling the property.

The study's southern border is also home to a number of prisons and correctional facilities, including the Juvenile Detention Center, the Alachua County Correctional Center and others. In 2003, the Plan East Gainesville prepared for Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization in association with Alachua County, City of Gainesville, Gainesville Regional Utilities and Florida Department of Transportation, noted, "The proliferation of correctional facilities in this area can impact opportunities for future



PHOTOS: Gainesville Regional Airport (GNV)

BACKGROUND

development...because they limit the range of compatible land uses that can be developed nearby...this area may be perceived as one that is not ripe for economic investment because of the negative aesthetics associated with these uses.”¹²

There is an established Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) south of Gainesville Regional Airport. In East Gainesville, 46% of the population has an income below the poverty level.¹³

The CRA has targeted the Waldo Road/N.E. 8th Avenue as a potential spot for economic development.¹⁴

The Ironwood Golf Course sits to the west of the airport. The City-owned, 18-hole course is operated by the Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs. There is some City interest in possible land use zoning changes to industrial around the golf course.

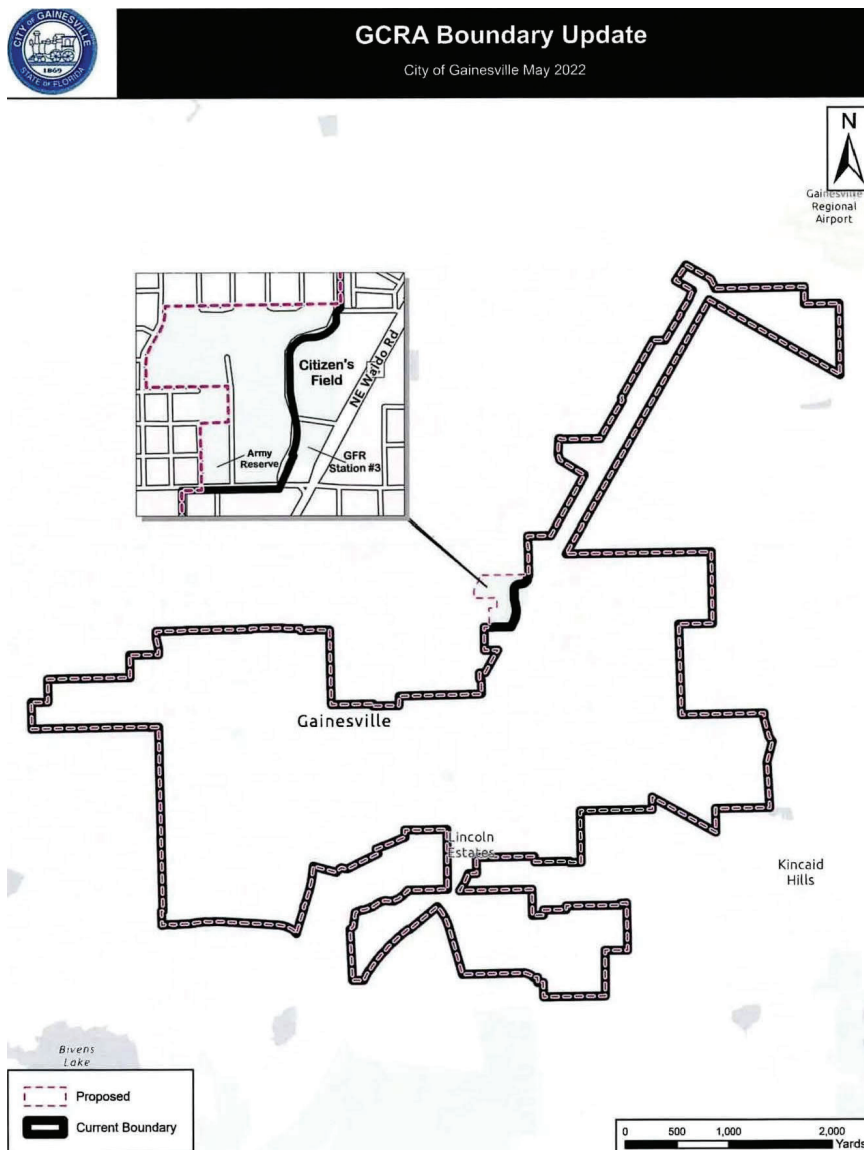


PHOTO: Juvenile Detention Center

IMAGE: Map of the Gainesville Community Reinvestment Area (CRA)

ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

Affordability	Labor/Recruitment
Airport connectivity - Delta/ American	Lease rates high
Bike network	Location in Florida
Community Reinvestment Area	New leadership
Ease of mobility	Population growth
Financially healthy airport	Santa Fe College
Health care	Transportation infrastructure (I-75)
Innovation District/Progress Park	University of Florida

OPPORTUNITIES

Define the community character	Land swap
Development authority	Leverage the CRA
Establish an incentive program	Magnet school
Establish a master plan	Mentorship
Establish a strategic plan	Santa Fe workforce pool - vocational training
Improve look of the gateway corridor	State funding for wetland mitigation/stormwater improvement
Interactive business map	

WEAKNESSES

99-year ground lease/fee simple (off-airport)	Land poor
Airport infrastructure immaturity	Location of the airport – 1,3,5-mile radius demographics
Community perception	Low inventory
Environmental impacts	Multiple landowners
First and last impression – prisons	No champion/ownership
Food desert	Not dirt ready
Geometry of parcels	Perception of crime
Lack of identifiable available parcels	Regional utility – high rates
Lack of identity/clear vision – EDC	Restrictive land development code and process
Lack of master plan	State engagement
Lack of stakeholder consensus	Vacant/unsightly buildings/blight

THREATS

Competition – more organized, more aggressive EDC – Ocala, Jax, others
Inaction - Risk of further deterioration
Loss of knowledgeable talent
Perception of land use
The longer it takes, other markets win!

The TAP study area comprises 4,234 acres in and around Airport-Waldo Road and 39th Avenue, also known as the Airport Gateway, and consists mainly of light industrial, logistics and institutional facilities. Some of the study area lies in Alachua County outside the Gainesville municipal boundary.

Strengths

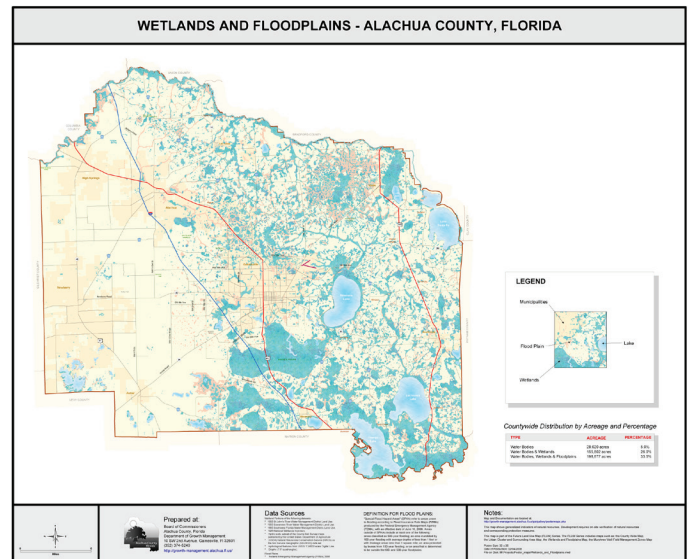
Gainesville is considered a tertiary industrial market with a small footprint. The current industrial market is very tight with a vacancy rate of between 2% and 3%.¹⁵ The Airport Industrial Park is near capacity. Lack of available space in the market has driven up rents, averaging about \$9 a square foot for logistics to more than \$12 for flex facilities.¹⁶

In terms of attracting new industrial and logistics companies, Gainesville offers a central location in Florida and good transportation options with easy access to Gainesville Regional Airport and major roadways. It boasts strong population growth, a labor force that has grown by 3.2% over 12 months, as well as support through UF research and development and Santa Fe College's vocational training programs.

City and county leadership appear to be committed to supporting commercial growth in East Gainesville and the Airport Gateway, as well as to addressing eastside deficiencies in economic and social issues. The Community Reinvestment Area to the south extends into a portion of the study area and can be leveraged to encourage growth.

Weaknesses/Threats

The scope area, however, faces numerous barriers. As a gateway to Gainesville the Waldo Road corridor lacks identity. East Gainesville suffers from a negative image with a perception of blight and crime. The first impression of air travelers or those driving to Gainesville from the northeast is created by the number of correctional facilities in the area. Further, the area is a food desert with no grocery stores or restaurants that can accommodate area workers. These factors inhibit growth in East Gainesville and the Airport Gateway.



In addition, large swaths of land are public- and institution-owned, dominated by correctional facilities. The public land is either not utilized or current use is not the highest and best use of the properties. There is significant wetland east of Waldo Road, and some land around the Gateway is designated for preservation. With multiple landowners and the geometry of the area, cobbling a large plot for development is difficult.

For companies looking at site selection, the high utility rate and the need for upgrades can be a hindrance. Some choke points can occur in the development process. There needs to be a more streamlined process that is clear and transparent with an understanding of the timeframes required. Projects of 50,001 square feet require a public hearing and approval of a City review board. Parking is restricted to the side and back of buildings with a maximum allowance. There is no excess parking without a parking analysis demonstrating need and City approval.

The Airport Gateway also faces tough competition from other parts of Greater Gainesville, Ocala, Marion County, Jacksonville and other locations where it is easier to develop without environmental issues and where there are large plots readily available with zoning and infrastructure in place. The competition is more organized and have more aggressive economic development initiatives in place. These



PHOTO: Delta flight on runway, Gainesville Regional Airport (GNV)

also have greater interstate access. Inaction risks losing economic growth and jobs to these entities.

Further, airport infrastructure, aging facilities and surrounding area conditions cut the airport's potential. To attract larger players and air cargo, for example, the runway needs to be lengthened and the concrete pavement reinforced in order to accommodate Aircraft Design Group C-IV. There is an expectation that pavement rehabilitation will be done in the next 18 months.

There does not appear to be a comprehensive master plan for the area and a clear conceptual vision of what it could be. Marketing appears to be minimal at best with no single champion and an apparent lack of State engagement. There is a need to prioritize shovel-ready parcels in order

to have some short-term wins. Finding information is difficult. There is no one individual site showing all area parcels available for sale including key data, such as utilities, environmental issues, etc. Leasing/property and other information on the airport website is out of date or nonexistent.

In terms of the labor market, Phyllis Marty, CEO of CareerSource of North Central Florida, told the *Gainesville Sun* in August, "The trend for the majority of [job] postings is the need for specific skills. This is where the current issue of the talent skill gap is becoming apparent — employers need skilled talent, but the job seekers that are currently not employed either are low to no skills or are not looking for work."

Airport-Centered Development Models

Aerotropolis

An Aerotropolis is a metropolitan subregion whose infrastructure, land use, and economy are centered on an airport...[It] consists of a multimodal airport-based commercial core (airport city) and outlying corridors and clusters of aviation-linked businesses and associated residential developments that benefit from each other and from their accessibility to the airport.

- John D. Kasarda, President & CEO, Aerotropolis Business Concepts, LLC

Airport Urbanism

Airport Urbanism is a people-focused approach to designing airports and developing the airport area. Both a design philosophy and a practical model for implementation, AU is based on two core principles: (1) Focus on people: Passengers and the people who live, work, and run businesses in the airport area; and (2) Growing together: Coordinating airside, landside, and off-airport development in a holistic and mutually beneficial manner.

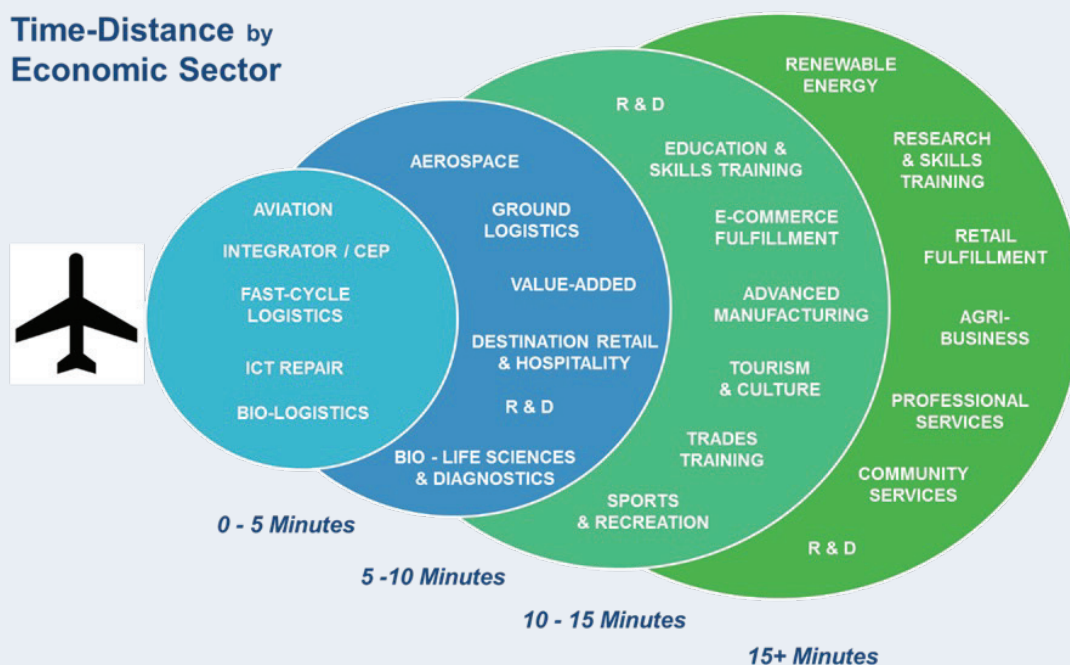
- Max Hirsh, PhD, Managing Director, Airport City Academy

Airport Connected Development

Airport Connected Development (ACD) leverages airports' multimodal connectivity to facilitate the movement of passengers, goods and information, by recognizing economic benefits and synergies associated with being situated within a specific drive time distance from an airside system (as illustrated below). ACD occurs on airport, directly adjacent to airports and in the broader community by facilitating symbiotic economic relationships across various business, industry and institutional sectors to facilitate regional economic development.

- Chris LeTourneur, Co-Chair, ULI Airport Development Council
Chair, SMART Airports and Regions
President & CEO, MXD Development Strategists

Time-Distance by Economic Sector



© Property of MXD Development Strategists

Opportunities

Overdevelopment and congestion in West Gainesville offer an opportunity for businesses to look east as the next area for growth. What's more, development in the TAP study area can help spur economic development within the larger East Gainesville community. There is a connective priority here for both the public and private sectors and the general population. Getting multiple stakeholders to buy in to and commit to the project requires that each sees some benefit.

In terms of ranking areas for development, they are the airport property, industrial/research and development parks, property south of the airport and the golf course area. It is important that development of catalytic sites be identified that support growth on the airport, as well as for adjacent areas and the region. As an anchor project, catalytic sites should economically benefit not only the study area but the surrounding community and its residents as well. Collectively, the GNV Airport Gateway Economic Zone would establish the foundation for facilitating not only economic but also social, educational and sustainability goals.



To succeed, there is a need to evolve a unified narrative – all the entities involved speaking with one voice. A new development authority or public-private partnership could serve to champion Airport Gateway economic development as well as to market the opportunity and expedite the development approvals process. This organization would include a representative from key stakeholders – including government, chamber, utility, local businesses, education and airport – bringing them together in one entity with a shared financial interest.

This organization would be charged with developing an area master plan and strategy, applying for government grants and credits, marketing sites, recruiting companies and meeting specific goals. In addition, there is an opportunity to leverage the CRA and Opportunity Zone to the south of the airport to maximize the potential for Gateway development.



Team Volusia EDC is an example of an autonomous public-private not-for-profit corporation whose primary mission is to market and recruit business to the county. The initiative to create the EDC was driven by the Daytona Beach Chamber of Commerce. While it has a countywide mission, the Team Volusia's model can be applied to Gainesville's Airport Gateway. Team Volusia works in partnership with state and county agencies, municipalities, chambers and other resource partners to achieve economic development goals. Its program and services are partially funded through contracts with Volusia County and municipalities. Additional funds are raised from seven colleges and universities and more than 80 private sector companies.¹⁷

Another example is the Aerotropolis Atlanta Alliance, also known as AeroATL. Created in 2014, the AeroATL Alliance is a public-private partnership comprised of governments, businesses (including Delta Airlines, Porsche, Prologis, Duke Realty, Truist and many others) and institutions (Georgia Power, Invest Atlanta, Woodward Academy, Wellstar and many others), working to improve the quality of life and economic well being of the communities surrounding Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

In addition to marketing the airport area, the AeroATL Alliance facilitates solutions to workforce challenges and partners with educational institutions to develop local talent through a committee system of “Collectives” comprised of business, institutional and community champions.

With a \$200,000 grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the Alliance developed its Blueprint 1.0 in partnership with the airport, local governments, Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), businesses, and the broader community. The five-year plan formalized the Alliance’s vision, strategy, branding and marketing in a framework for its partners to work collectively to target industries and catalytic sites. It also identified existing and proposed initiatives and specific partners, including identification of target economic sectors and potential catalyst projects. Blueprint 1.0 has been key for establishing a series of business and community nodes in the area and spurring large-scale development plans around the airport.

To implement the framework articulated by Blueprint 1.0, over the past year the AeroATL Alliance has evolved its Blueprint 2.0, which identifies specific priority catalyst sites for re-investment, complemented by definitive plans for the adaptive re-use and/or redevelopment of these key sites. Blueprint 2.0 also identifies an action plan to illustrate the roles and responsibilities of partners, as well as funding sources to kick-start development of the catalyst sites, while establishing the basis for attracting private investment and developer interest.¹⁸

State Engagement

In addition to a champion, there is a need to have greater engagement with the state. Advocacy at the state level can help to bring projects on a regional level and funding in support of infrastructure needs. The Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) connects communities with opportunities that stimulate their local economies. For example, in August Suwannee County was awarded more than \$1.9 million through the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund to support business growth at a 500-acre industrial park centrally located between I-10 and U.S. 90. The funding

will help to expand water distribution infrastructure and treatment facilities to support commercial businesses moving to the area.¹⁹

The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund is an economic development program designed to promote public infrastructure and workforce training across the state. DEO and Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) review proposals, which are then chosen by Governor DeSantis. As of September 1, 2022, proposals are being accepted until all funding has been awarded. [See www.FloridaJobs.org/JobGrowth.]

EFI is a prime resource for identifying entities interested in relocating to the area. Formerly Florida’s Department of Commerce, Enterprise Florida was converted to a public-private partnership of business and government leaders. Its goal is to promote Florida as a premier business destination and expand the state’s economy through private-sector job creation.

Relocate General Aviation

There may be an opportunity to free up land space within the airport by consolidating facilities. Moving general aviation toward the terminal area can enable the airport to redevelop and activate the current general aviation site.

Land Swap

Among the challenges for the study and surrounding areas is the lack of large contiguous land available for development. The area is characterized by a large amount of government-owned property, multiple private landowners and small size parcels. To transform the targeted area for industrial development as well as the surrounding East Gainesville area for retail and mixed-use development, land use changes outside the airport property may be necessary as well as land assembly through land swaps.

Unutilized public land holdings and others that are not used to their best potential provide an opportunity for repurposing into a catalytic site can help move the goalpost closer to achieving study goals.

While a long-range opportunity, relocating correctional facilities not only can make way for commercial use that adds to the tax roll but would play a key role in improving Gateway aesthetics and placemaking efforts.

Anticipated Uses

There is a need to assess market and economic demands to validate what is available and identify low hanging fruit opportunities, including an evaluation of Gainesville's existing economic anchor activities and how these could be leveraged when paired with the airport's connectivity.

Light Industrial and Logistics

These industries are already well represented in the study area and provide a foundation for further recruitment to the Airport Gateway. Proximity to the airport offers a particular advantage to delivery and fulfillment centers. The airport's plan to extend and enforce the runway and taxiways and other improvements will lay the groundwork for larger aircraft and greater opportunity to draw these and light

industrial companies to the area.

Medical and Bio-Life Sciences

Gainesville has a strong life sciences cluster and access to major research labs. This offers an opportunity to draw biomedical manufacturing to the Airport Gateway. A study of Minnesota's medical device industry cluster noted that the cluster "relies heavily on a combination of surface and air transportation."²⁰ Gainesville's airport can leverage the City's blossoming industry if it is able to develop air cargo operations for high value medical devices.

Agriculture and Value-Added Agri-Business

Florida's climate is prime for hemp production. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) has approved more than 800 hemp cultivation permits for farmers in 65 of Florida's 67 counties, with more than 30,000 acres approved for planting. There are 238 licensed acres of hemp in Alachua County.²¹



PHOTO: Kalera's HyCube growing center on the premises of the Orlando World Center Marriott

While the study area lacks sufficient acreage for incorporating a hemp farm, its location can be ideal for a hemp processing facility or manufacturer. Various parts of the plant can be processed for different uses, including industrial applications. Hemp seed oil can be manufactured into a wide variety of goods such as body care products cosmetics, solvents, inks, and fuel products. Hemp fiber applications include clothing, shoes, paper, industrial textiles, various building materials (i.e., concrete, insulation mats, fiber boards) and bio-composites. Hemp bioplastics are being incorporated in car manufacturing.

Indoor vertical farming is a growing industry. The U.S. vertical farming market is expected to register a CAGR of 11.2% during the forecast period 2022-2027, according to Mordor Intelligence. There were more than 2,000 farms across the country in 2019.²²

Vertical farms can be built on small acreage parcels. Kalera, Inc., based in Orlando, is currently constructing a vertical farm in an industrial park in Columbus, Ohio, near Rickenbacker International Airport and is planning to build its newest high-tech, indoor vertical farm near Orlando International Airport.²³

Sustainable Energy, Electrification & Future Mobility

With the drive for clean energy, some airports are turning to solar farms as a revenue generator and/or as a source of low-cost energy for the airport itself. Twenty percent of public airports have adopted solar panels in the last decade, according to a University of Colorado study.²⁴

Lack of large acreage makes a solar farm unlikely. However, non-reflective solar panels can be mounted on roofs and garages as part of an energy- and money-saving effort with no up-front cost.

In April 2022 the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey announced the completion of a rooftop solar energy project at LaGuardia Airport. The installation on a newly

built parking garage on the western side of the airport includes over 3,500 solar panels that will produce more than 1.7 million kilowatt-hours of clean, renewable energy annually. The Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) enabled the Port Authority to develop its project at no upfront cost and without using bond funds. In exchange, ForeFront Power will operate and maintain the system at no cost and charge the airport a fixed, below-market rate for electricity, which is locked in for the 20-year duration of the agreement.²⁵

Aviation

Aviation and aerospace research and development, equipment manufacturing, electronics and other ancillary companies that make components used by aviation companies are a strong fit for the Airport Gateway. There is an opportunity to leverage the addition of Consortia Aerospace Group to draw other aviation-related companies to the area. In addition, the aviation maintenance, repair and overhaul industry is anticipated to continue to grow, offering opportunities for the area.

Hospitality

A new \$45 million Hyatt Place opened in downtown on September 8, 2022. However, a recent RFP for a hotel at the airport drew no interest. Hospitality is not a short-term prospect. Growth of the airport and within the study area is needed to spur future interest.

Interactive Business Map

There currently appears to be no site showing all properties available for sale or lease within the study area along with pertinent information. Such lack hampers efforts of businesses interested in finding suitable Gateway locations. A site is needed with an interactive map that provides all the granular information that companies are seeking when looking at properties. Further, the site needs to be kept current.

Orlando International Airport (MCO) offers an example of best practices. Their “Destination MCO” website includes an



PHOTO: Orlando International Airport properties available

interactive map that allows users to quickly obtain site-specific information for airport land. [See <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=b30a2a818b844f46bd95f43bbcd4de76>]

The Welcome page provides basic information about Greater Orlando, its growth, transportation network, air service, higher education, housing, regional economy and planning documents, including the airport master plan.

Under Available Parcels, visitors can click on the map for each available site to get key information about each parcel, while the Parcel Data tab provides links to even more granular information. Due diligence documents are also available, e.g., Security Sensitive Information (SSI) Affidavit, Non-Terminal Guidelines and Tenant Design Criteria.

Example charts from the Destination MCO parcel data map:

Available Parcel

Parcel Name	EA03
Use	Aviation support
Acres	353.1
Hectares	142.9
Availability	Available
Airfield Access	Yes
Structures on Site	No
Electric	Yes
Natural Gas	No
Water	Yes
Sewer	Yes
Telecommunications	No
Development Zone	East Airfield
Parcel Data Sheet	More info

Parcel Data

1. Existing Parcel Configuration
2. Jurisdictional Constraints
3. Easements
4. Permits
5. Environmental Data
6. Existing Structures
7. Photographs

Infrastructure

Airport infrastructure improvements are needed to accommodate larger aircraft and grow the airport facility.

In looking at areas outside the airport, FAA regulations (height and noise) could limit opportunity and should be validated; e.g., golf course area.

Greater development in the Airport Gateway area will necessitate a review of new road requirements and possible road widening, e.g., Waldo Road and 39th Avenue, requiring a traffic study and FDOT support. Other considerations include pedestrian and cyclist requirements as well as public transportation, such as improved bus connectivity.

In terms of area infrastructure needs to aid in parcel development, issues to be taken into account include:

- Stormwater conveyance – some developable areas will require mitigation strategies
- Validation of environmental assessment based on prior land use as part of a due diligence package, including on buildings
- Capacity of existing utilities along with affordable and sustainable energy needs

Placemaking

When coming south on Waldo Road, there appears to be no signage that indicates one has entered Gainesville's city limits. Entrances to the airport from Waldo Road and from 39th Avenue are nondescript. There is no sense of arrival.

The area around the airport is the first and last impression of the city when one arrives and leaves Gainesville through the Airport Gateway. There is an opportunity to create a welcoming environment that speaks to the East Gainesville "brand" and tells the story of East Gainesville. The brand needs to be determined.

In Pensacola the airport celebrates the hometown Blue Angels with a Blue Angels jet at its entrance. Visitors to Denver, home of the Broncos, are greeted at the airport

with a giant blue horse that lights up at night. At Jackson Hole Airport a bucking bronco and rider sculpture is a representation of Wyoming's state logo and license plate.

There needs to be greater focus on signage, landscape beautification and public art to create a sense of place. A landscape architect can provide hardscape and landscape opportunities and conceptual drawings of a vision for the Airport Gateway study area and the airport entrances. The city must work with FDOT and can apply for available roadway beautification grants.

The intersection of Waldo and 39th Avenue is a focal point ripe for commercial and retail development as well as a site for a future hotel. It is also the northern access point of the CRA. Beautification, architectural design and façade standards and other placemaking efforts should be coordinated with the CRA.

Workforce Readiness

Companies are looking for skilled workers—an important element in attracting new businesses to the area. Santa Fe College offers a number of vocational training programs, which the city should encourage and support. But there appears to be a missed opportunity in the educational system for those who are not going on to higher education to receive vocational training in aviation, mechanics, electronics, etc. through a magnet school or specialized vocational high school. In addition, mentorship programs are critical to reinforce the foundation here.

Implementation

For the Airport Gateway project to succeed, authorities must build support at the grass roots level and keep the momentum going. Identifying the dividends to the community can bring the vision into focus.



PHOTO: Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport entrance



PHOTO: Jackson Hole Airport entrance



PHOTO: Denver airport entrance



PHOTO: Pensacola airport entrance

RECOMMENDATIONS

"I am not afraid to dream and I dream big. We can make this happen."

- Desmon Duncan-Walker, Gainesville City Commissioner

Airport Gateway Potential Priority Areas

On-Airport:

- PA 1 Airside/Landside Business Park
- PA 2 Mid-Field Cargo, Logistics & Manufacturing*

Off-Airport:

- PA 3 Gateway Commercial & Innovation
- PA 4 Gateway Commercial & Hospitality
- PA 5 GVN Business Park North
- PA 6 Recreation
- PA 7 Recreation

Future Potential Sites:

- PA 8 Logistics & Manufacturing
- PA 9 Logistics & Manufacturing

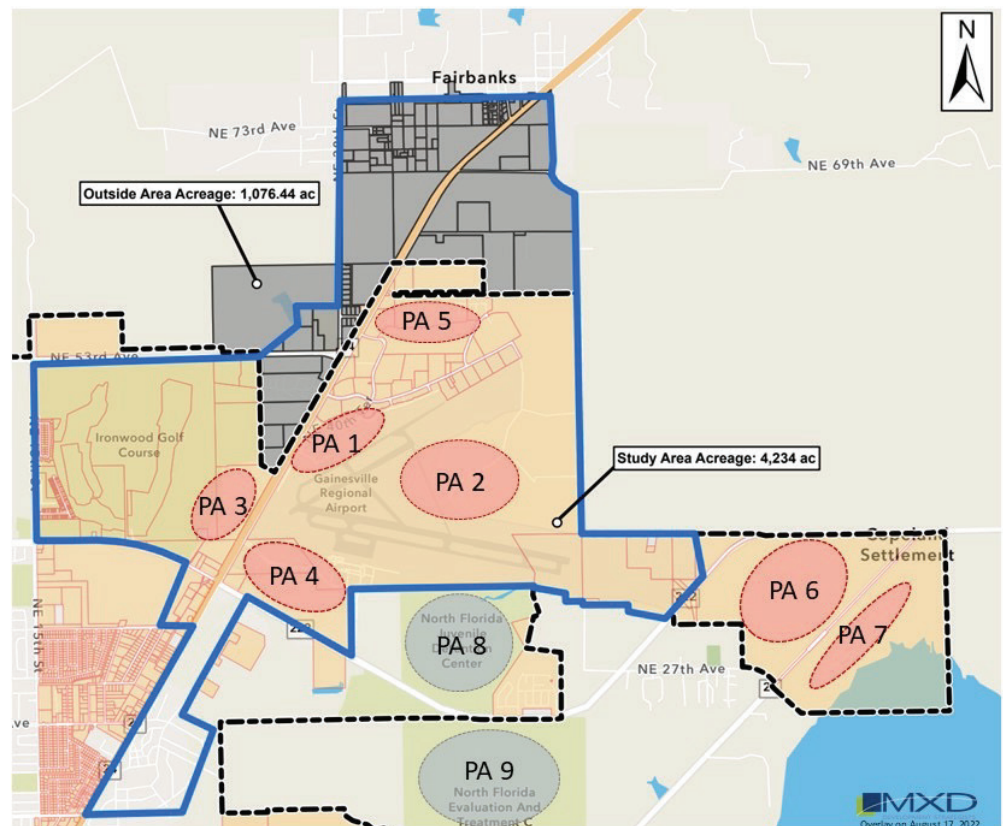


IMAGE: GVN Airport Gateway, Potential Priority Areas

Overarching Recommendations

Vision and Strategic Plan: Who and What is East Gainesville and Why Now?

Develop a vision and strategic plan for the Airport Gateway that speaks to the East Gainesville brand and provides a foundation for why companies should relocate to the corridor, including creation of an economic development zone that provides incentives for the business community.

Governance and Framework

Create an Economic Gateway Partnership to specifically champion the Airport Gateway corridor's economic development. The individual in charge of this entity—whether a development authority or public-private partnership—should be tasked with implementing a master plan, conducting due diligence, and spearheading the coordination, financing and marketing effort. The entity should include representation from each stakeholder – city and state government, airport authority, GRU, Chamber, local businesses, UF, Santa Fe College, community leaders, FDOT, Army Corps of Engineers, among others. Their participation, collaboration and financial and other support is crucial to creating ownership and synergy.

Other Recommendations

Spatial Inventory and Prioritization

Identify key catalytic sites that are ripe for redevelopment. The ULI TAP Committee has identified various potential catalyst sites in the adjacent map figure, which would need to be assessed and prioritized. Evaluate opportunities for these catalyst sites and explore how the City can incentivize their redevelopment, as well as what infrastructure improvements the City can provide to spur their redevelopment. *(short-term)*

Alleviate the costs and time for developers by identifying shovel-ready parcels and providing interactive mapping and granular due diligence data. *(short-term)*

Prioritize areas within the Gateway for development based on typology and potential. *(short-term)*

Facilitate engagement with the local brokerage community either by (1) listing sites identified (and under one control/ownership structure) with a commercial brokerage firm to provide market exposure, or (2) establishing a broker compensation policy if a new governing body is created and markets sites directly through their own website. *(short-term)*

Economic Development

Review zoning codes and other land-use regulations and proactively re-zone properties or amend the regulations to expediate approvals. *(short-term)*

Create a redevelopment grant program for the Airport Gateway to assist landowners in upgrading their existing businesses; e.g., façade grants, etc. *(short-term)*

Acquire additional land for redevelopment where possible including land swaps with the State and/or relocating correctional facilities. *(mid- to long-term)*

Infrastructure

Review stormwater conveyance for areas that will require mitigation strategies. *(short-term)*

Assess environmental issues for properties based on prior land use as part of a due diligence package. *(short- to mid-term, ongoing)*

Determine capacity of existing utilities along with affordable and sustainable energy needs for developable properties. *(short-term)*

Determine associated costs for infrastructure improvements needed to enable land development in order to provide airport and potential developers with an estimate of such costs.

Engage FDOT and review possible new road requirements and road widening, e.g., Waldo Road and 39th Avenue. *(mid- to long-term)*

Review public transportation and connectivity within East Gainesville to the airport and from West Gainesville to the airport. *(mid- to long-term)*

Invest in infrastructure improvements that serve not just future market demand but also the existing neighborhood and needs for walkability and better access to local service, retail, recreation and open space. *(mid- to long-term)*

Airport

Upgrade other airport infrastructure in order to accommodate regular Aircraft Design Group C-IV operations on the north and south side of the airport, as currently planned in the next few years. *(short- to mid-term)*

Consider creating a minimum standards document that defines design guidelines and standards for horizontal infrastructure and vertical development. *(short-term)*

Utilize 50-year ground lease as a property conveyance practice in order to assure passive income stream and maintain property control. *(short-term, ongoing)*

Keep the airport website current, including an interactive map with detailed property data. *(short-term, ongoing)*

Validate that FAA regulations (height and noise) do not limit development opportunities in certain areas, such as around the Ironwood Golf Course. *(short-term)*

Relocate General Aviation toward the terminal area in order to redevelop and activate the current General Aviation site. *(mid-term)*

Placemaking

Engage a landscape architect to develop a beautification program with hardscape and landscape improvements, urban

design elements for when properties are redeveloping, public art and wayfinding. *(short- to mid-term)*

Workforce Training

Address the workforce skill gap by creating and supporting technical and trade education programs for avionics, mechanics, electrical and other trades. *(short- to mid-term)*

Develop a mentorship program for high school or college students at all levels. *(short-term)*

Champion development of a vocational high school or magnet that focuses on aviation trades, including mechanics and other avionics technicians. *(long-term)*

Funding Sources

- Seed money
- Intergovernmental agencies (City, County, Airport, EDC)
- Grants
- Private sector corporate partnerships/sponsorships
- Public-private partnership with a developer or venture capital firm

Next Steps to Advance the GNV Airport Gateway Strategy

To keep the momentum going from the ULI TAP process, the following “Next Steps” were identified by the ULI TAP Committee. These Next Steps are presented in a sequential flow, although many of the steps could occur simultaneously.

Examples such as Aerotropolis Atlanta illustrate the importance of exploring, assessing and focusing in on specific catalyst sites and projects to advance a planning vision framework forward into implementation. The process requires being definitive about desired economic sectors and development typologies which are consistent with market opportunities, and creating an action plan that illustrates the prescriptive steps to plan, market, fund, service and build catalyst projects.

1. Engage regional stakeholders.
2. Explore economic sectors to leverage and grow.
3. Identify development typologies that facilitate targeted economic sectors.
4. Assess potential net developable areas.
5. Prepare market analysis to explore the scope of land use and development opportunities.
6. Assess the highest and best use of development uses for the net development areas.
7. Assess, identify and define land use and development strategy for the net developable areas.
8. Define priority development areas.
9. Correlate economic sectors and typologies to priority areas.
10. Define a GNV Airport Gateway Economic Development Zone.
11. Define policy framework for a GNV Airport Gateway Economic Development Zone.
12. Explore and define the creation of GNV Airport Gateway Economic Partnership as a champion and coordinating entity for the GNV Airport Gateway Economic Development Zone.
13. Explore funding mechanisms, governance and organizational structure techniques for planning, designing and constructing enabling infrastructure and transportation improvements and empowering development.
14. Identify and secure strategic partners and consider approaches for development structures for priority areas.
15. Prepare and implementation action plan and monitoring strategy.



PHOTO: Beamer and Jason on Tarmac

ABOUT THE PANEL



**Jennifer Carter, TAP Chair
Vice President, National Accounts and
Business Development
Aeroterm**

As vice president of National Accounts and Business Development for Aeroterm, Jennifer Carter is responsible for lease strategy execution and cultivating asset revenue enhancement. She has more than 15 years' experience in real estate with a deep knowledge of air cargo and on-tarmac facilities. Her unique ability to collaborate with airport authorities and clients provides creative solutions while adding value to the portfolio.

Carter holds a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Maryland. Currently, she is a member of Airport Council International-North America serving on the Air Cargo Steering Committee.



**Cherie Akers, AICP
Senior Project Manager
BL Companies**

Cherie Akers has more than 26 years of experience in the land development and urban planning industry in both the public and private sectors. Her leadership and project management skills have assisted in advancing over 250,000 acres of land plans and have provided site analysis for over 300,000 acres.

Her experience focuses on land planning for large mixed-use communities, Developments of Regional Impacts (DRI's), and residential and commercial/industrial master planned developments.

In addition, Akers has extensive experience in airport development master planning and land development. She has been the project manager for a number of land development projects and strategic land use plans for properties surrounding airports (airside and landside) that require close coordination with FAA and surrounding jurisdictions. Akers also serves as a vice chair for ULI's Airport Development Council.



**Greg Akers, Vice President
Division Leader, Aviation & Aerospace
Manufacturing
Haskell Company**

Greg Akers leads Haskell's Aviation & Aerospace Manufacturing Division where he is responsible for all Aviation & Aerospace market sector projects. The Aviation & Aerospace Manufacturing Division provides total facility solutions for project types that include advanced manufacturing, aircraft assembly, research and development, maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO), painting and coating, corporate hangars, flight training, fixed-base operations (FBO), airfield improvements and air cargo facilities. Haskell has worked at 30 airports and four spaceports around the world.

He has served Aviation & Aerospace customers such as Blue Origin, Gulfstream, United Airlines, Lufthansa Technik, Spirit AeroSystems, Aerion, Rolls-Royce, Boeing, Collins Aerospace, Safran, L3Harris, and others.

Akers holds a master of building construction degree from the University of Florida and a bachelor's degree in architecture from the University of Miami.



**Karlen Beitman
Regional Manager, Mountain-Northwest
CBRE**

Karlen Beitman is a national expert for non-aviation commercial real estate development on airport property within CBRE's Public Institutions and Education Solutions practice. He specializes in the provision of strategic planning, development advisory, portfolio consulting and brokerage services to states, counties and municipal agencies. In this role Beitman has advised several international airports, municipalities, and mission-driven clients on their most pressing real estate projects.

He earned a master of urban planning degree from the University of Illinois–Chicago and a master of business administration degree from Roosevelt University.

Beitman is a Colorado real estate broker and a member of NAIOP, ULI, ICSC and CBRE's LGBTQ & Allies network group. In 2014 he won an Emmy® Award for Outstanding Achievement for Writing and was an Emmy® nominee for Outstanding Achievement for Public/Current Affairs Programming for a short film for the Obama Presidential Library.



Jay Cassens, AAE, ACE, IACE
Senior Airport Properties & Development Rep
FedEx Express

Jay Cassens is a senior airport development representative for FedEx Express Corporation. FedEx Express connects 99% of the world's GDP through its operations at 650 airports worldwide, providing service to more than 220 countries and territories. Cassens is responsible for negotiating complex on-airport development transactions, facility leases and use agreements at 40 airports across the United States, ranging from small to large hub facilities.

With more than 20 years of diverse aviation experience, Cassens has spent the last decade in airport property and business development. He's an Accredited Airport Executive (AAE), Airport Certified Employee (ACE), an International Airport Certified Employee (IACE) by the American Association of Airport Executives, an instrument-rated pilot and FAA certified unmanned aircraft pilot.

Cassens holds both a bachelor's degree and master's degree in aviation administration and is an adjunct professor at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's College of Business.



Fred Choa, PE
Principal/Senior Market Leader
Fehr & Peers

A principal and senior market leader with Fehr & Peers, Fred Choa has nearly 30 years of experience in transportation planning/engineering for major mixed-use specific plan development, including industrial, high cube warehouse, e-commerce, and freight logistics centers.

Choa has worked on a wide variety of goods movement projects. He serves as the company's national traffic operations expert based on his expertise in multimodal operations (Synchro, SIDRA, RODEL, HCS, VISTRO, Tru-Traffic, and TRANSYT) and simulation (SimTraffic, CORSIM, Paramics, VISSIM, and TransModeler).

In addition to client-based consulting, he also is an instructor for the University of California Berkeley Institute of Transportation Studies Tech Transfer Program and Trafficware University. Choa holds a master of science degree in civil engineering from University of California-Berkeley and a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from California State Polytechnic University-Pomona.



Jay Cunio, AIA, CCIM
Chief Development Officer
Jacksonville Airport Authority

As the Jacksonville Airport Authority's chief development officer, Jay Cunio is focused on fully utilizing the Authority's assets to better serve the public and provide for a more fiscally responsible and self-sustaining enterprise.

With more than 30 years of experience in real estate, architecture and construction, Cunio brings a diverse background to his role. Prior to joining the Authority, Jay served as vice president of business development for Kenyon Energy, where he was responsible for all new market analysis, strategy and project development. He relocated to Jacksonville from Richmond, Virginia, where he spent 13 years as president of Greystone Properties, Inc.; a real estate brokerage and management firm.

Cunio received a 5-year professional degree in architecture from Virginia Tech, a master of business administration in real estate from Virginia Commonwealth University, and maintains licensure in both architecture and real estate brokerage. He is an active member of the CCIM Institute, the Urban Land Institute, and the American Institute of Architects.



Gerry Dedenbach, AICP, LEED AP
Executive Vice President & Principal Planner
CHW

Gerry Dedenbach brings 30 years' experience to his position as CHW's executive vice president and principal planner. Since joining the company in 2003, he has been providing professional land planning services throughout Florida.

Dedenbach is a University of Florida graduate with a bachelor of science degree in landscape architecture. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and a LEED Certified Professional.

He has chaired the City of Gainesville's Historic Preservation Board and its Land Code Update Subcommittee, been an Alachua County Planning Commissioner, and served on the Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee for Economic Competitiveness. Dedenbach currently serves on the Gainesville/Alachua County Regional Airport Authority. An active Urban Land Institute member, he has served on the Gainesville Leadership committee as a tri-chair and was in the initial ULI Center for Leadership Class Number 1.



Max Hirsh, PhD
Managing Director
Airport City Academy

Dr. Max Hirsh is managing director of the Airport City Academy and a leading global expert on airports and urban development. Dr. Hirsh pioneered the airport urbanism (AU) method: a customer-focused approach to developing airports and planning the airport area. His research and advisory services focus on airport real estate, sustainable automation, and airport-led urban development. He provides thought leadership through the popular website airporturbanism.com, where he presents leading-edge strategies for tackling the key challenges facing airports today.

Core areas of expertise include concept development, visioning, and positioning; benchmarking and market demand analysis; stakeholder engagement and alignment; tendering, procurement, and competitions; sustainable urban planning and building technologies; and governance, SPVs, and collaborative development.

Dr. Hirsh received his doctorate in architecture and urban planning from Harvard, where he also received a master's degree in architecture.



Chris LeTourneur
President & CEO
MXD Development Strategists

Chris LeTourneur has more than 32 years of experience in planning, design, land economics and airport area development. As president and CEO, LeTourneur leads MXD Development Strategists, an international planning and development consultancy. His project portfolio spans six continents and 50 countries, including the Americas, Europe, Russia, Australia, Asia, India, Africa and the Middle East/MENA Region.

LeTourneur has been at the leading edge of defining sustainable and resilient strategies for SMART airport development, economic development strategies, innovation hubs, non-aeronautical revenues, airport cities and aerotropoli.

Over the past year, LeTourneur has been actively assisting airports and their regions with economic diversification and resiliency strategies in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He acts as a key facilitator bridging the airport world together with the commercial, economic development and innovation worlds, and he is co-chair of the Urban Land Institute's Airport Development Product Council based in Washington, DC.



Peter Ma, PE
Executive Vice President/Shareholder
England Thims & Miller, Inc.

Executive Vice President and shareholder Peter Ma has been with England-Thims & Miller for more than 29 years. Developers of industrial, commercial, residential and mixed-use projects rely on Ma to increase the profitability of their projects, effectively connect them with the right resources, and provide timely information critical to making sound investment decisions. He understands the intricate details and extremely sensitive timelines of the land development process, has established relationships within the land development community, and is adept at understanding due diligence influences on project outcomes.

Ma received his bachelor of science in civil engineering from the University of Florida (UF). He actively participates in community events and professional organizations, including UF Bergstrom MSRE Advisory Board, Urban Land Institute, and the National Association of Industrial and Office Properties.



Lynn Smith
Director of Real Estate, Property Management
& Development
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International
Airport

Lynn Smith brings more than 35 years of leadership, innovation, and motivation to organizations and people to push beyond their life and career goals.

Her focus at Hartfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) is to target the visionary goals of the City and senior leadership and work with stakeholders to strategically improve the significance of ATL's real estate holdings – primarily nontraditional assets.

Smith's work in the industry has been featured in media, including the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*, *Daily Report*, *Atlanta Magazine*, *Urban Land Magazine*, *NAIOP magazine*, and *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*. One of her most significant accomplishments is the mentorship and guidance of over 90 rising stars in the commercial real estate industry, facilitating a comprehensive "Real Estate Association Program" course promoting diversity in the industry, and hosting education and training assistance by national experts sharing their expertise.

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North Florida

The mission of the Urban Land Institute is to shape the future of the built environment for transformative impact in communities worldwide