

# Walton County Evaluation and Appraisal Report

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## I. Walton County Profile

Walton County is located in the “panhandle” of northwestern Florida, about 60 miles east of Pensacola and approximately 115 miles west of Tallahassee. It is bordered on the west by Okaloosa County; on the east by Bay, Holmes, and Washington Counties; by the Alabama state line to the north; and the Gulf of Mexico to the south. According to the 1989 soil survey, the county has a total area of 1,135 square miles (or 726,400 acres), with 90 square miles (57,720 acres) of water, and 1,045 square miles (668,680 acres) of land.

The county is about 50 miles long and 33 miles wide at its widest. Elevation ranges from the highest point in Florida, 345 feet above sea level near Lakewood in the northwestern sector of the county, to sea level in the southern part. The county is not only located along the Gulf of Mexico, but the southern half of the jurisdiction is divided, either by the Choctawhatchee Bay or River.

There are five primary arteries for automobile travel through the county. U.S. Highway 331 is the only arterial extending in a north-south direction. U.S. Highways 90 and 98, Interstate Highway 10 and State Route 20 are all in an east-west direction. U.S. Highway 90 (Old Spanish Trail) and Interstate 10 go through the center of the county. Florida Highway 20 is north of the Choctawhatchee Bay and U.S. Highway 98 is along the Gulf. Interstate 10 is the most important of the five arteries, going from Jacksonville, Florida to Los Angeles, California. North-south Interstate connections can be made off of I-10 approximately 130 miles to the west at Mobile, Alabama (Interstate 65) or about 240 miles to the east at I-75 near Lake City, Florida.

Within Walton County there are three cities or towns, with a (2000 Census) total of 6,935 residents. These are the City-and county seat-of DeFuniak Springs, population of 5,089; the City of Freeport, with a population of 1,190; and the Town of Paxton, with 656 residents.

### History

#### Indian Settlement

Archaeological research and active involvement by Walton County residents have resulted in identification of numerous prehistoric archaeological sites throughout the County. Archaeological sites dating between 7000 B.C. and 1500 A.D. have been identified, particularly along the Choctawhatchee River and its major tributary creeks and the Choctawhatchee Bay. Locations such as the Point Washington, Four Mile Point, Alaqua Bayou, Horseshoe Bayou, and Hogtown Bayou areas, among others, are well known as having been occupied by native populations, particularly between AD 100 to 1500. Due to state requirements on specific site location confidentiality and the widely-scattered location of recorded sites, no maps can be provided identifying locations. The

most common archaeological sites in south Walton County are deposits of oyster, clam, snail, and mussel shells and artifacts known as middens but numerous artifact scatters and remnants of prehistoric habitation are also known. Between 1677 and 1763, the area of the present-day county was sparsely populated by the remnants of the Panzacola and Chatot (Chacato) tribes, most of whom left the area to settle nearer to Mobile and Pensacola. The greatest exodus occurred shortly after 1704-1705. In the 1700s the Lower Creeks (later called the Seminoles) and the Chisca (Eucheas) began to enter the area from Alabama and Georgia.

### European Settlement

Known European (and American) settlement in what is now Walton County began as early as 1820 in the Euchee Valley, generally located between U.S. Highway 90, Rock Hill Road, U.S. Highway 331 and the Choctawhatchee River. Another early area of colonization was the Alaqua Creek basin, now largely within Eglin Air Force Base. Walton County was formed December 29, 1824 from Escambia and Jackson Counties. Alaqua, one the oldest communities in the county, was the county seat until 1845, when the county government was moved to Eucheeanna.

Landings on the Choctawhatchee River such as Moss Bend (Story's Landing) and Miller's Ferry provided interior settlements with access to the shipping lanes. However the river landings were harder to reach than those on the Choctawhatchee Bay, therefore Mallet's Landing and LaGrange, now Freeport, were the first along the bay to develop as port communities. Portland, located where Alaqua Creek enters the Choctawhatchee Bay, a few miles west of Freeport, became a port and sawmill community prior to the Civil War.

### Civil War

No major conflicts were fought in the county during the war. Local military efforts concerned defending the Choctawhatchee Bay and River from invasion and thwarting Federal efforts to control the bay and river.

### Late Nineteenth/Early Twentieth Century

Much of northwest Florida's economy was destroyed in the Civil War. The lumber and turpentine (naval stores) industries saw a resurgence in the 1870s. The Choctawhatchee Bay area became more industrialized as new lumber mills and shipbuilding facilities were constructed in Freeport, Portland, Santa Rosa, and Point Washington. Freeport was the center of shipbuilding activity with three or four shipbuilders.

One of the greatest changes in the county in this period occurred in 1884, with the completion of the Louisville & Nashville railroad between Tallahassee

and Pensacola. This railroad through DeFuniak Springs opened the interior to widespread commercial logging and the naval stores industry. Clear-cutting of the vast timber stands aided the expansion of agriculture into previously forested areas. These changes resulted in a marked increase of population. The county's population reached a peak in 1910 that it would not attain again until after 1970 (if all cities and towns are included) or after 1980 if these communities are excluded. The turpentine industry was at its peak between 1890 and 1920.

With the accidental burning of the courthouse in Eucheeanna in 1885, the county seat was moved to DeFuniak Springs in 1886, where it remains today.

Walton County was also the home of the original Florida Chautauqua, which opened on February 10, 1885 in DeFuniak Springs, Florida, with a five-day series of lectures, religious training sessions, educational activities, and entertainment. In 1887, the assembly expanded from five days to six weeks, and in the ensuing years it grew annually. By 1897, the program featured numerous entertainment acts, and in 1899, the assembly showed the first moving pictures. In 1920, facing increasing competition from motion pictures and radio, the Florida Chautauqua ended its original run in DeFuniak Springs.

The lumber boom ended by the early decades of the twentieth century. Shipbuilding faded with the lumber industry. The Great Depression of the late 1920s and the 1930s further weakened the local economy.

### Present Era

The onset of World War II improved conditions and the presence of the U.S. military after the war further altered the economic climate. However, population in the unincorporated county declined or remained stagnant between 1910 and 1980. The apparent loss of people between 1940 and 1970 was caused by the incorporation of the cities and towns of DeFuniak Springs, Freeport, and Paxton and their resulting subtraction from the unincorporated county totals. Since 1980, population has grown dramatically (234 percent) with the addition of beach-related tourism to the local economy.

The rise of coastal tourism is the second of the two great changes to Walton County in the twentieth century. This change resulted in a shift of economic activity and population to a 26-mile area along the Gulf of Mexico, with the creation of settlements at Miramar, Dune Allen, Blue Mountain, Grayton, Seagrove, Inlet, Tang-O-Mar, Blue Gulf, and Rosemary Beach, among others. Walton County is also home to the ground-breaking new urbanist community of Seaside, which marked the beginning of the new urbanist movement across the country. This influential community has resulted in many new urbanist communities in southern Walton County.

On February 10, 1996, after a hiatus of more than 75 years, the Florida Chautauqua was re-instituted by a group of dedicated citizens. Much like the original assembly, the lecture topics for the current assembly include history, health, art, and current events, along with entertainment from performers across the country.

The long and diverse history of the county is best shown by the 1,862 recorded archaeological or historical sites found in the Florida Master Site File prepared by the Florida Division of Historical Resource Bureau of Archaeological Research. About 1,550 of these sites are in the unincorporated county.

### Walton County Geography

Walton County has three geographical sectors. The first of these is the southern part of the county between the Choctawhatchee Bay, the Intra-Coastal Waterway, and the Gulf of Mexico. This area, consisting of an estimated 52,252 acres (or about 8 percent of the total county land area), has come under intense development pressure because of its location along the Gulf with its many fine beaches, its frontage along the Choctawhatchee Bay, and its relative ease of access from Interstate Highways 10 and 65. Here are located most of the major commercial and residential developments that have occurred in the county over the past 25 years. The second and central section is generally located between the Eglin Air Force Base, Rock Hill Road-Seven Runs Creek, Choctawhatchee River and the Intra-Coastal Waterway. The largest of the three is the northern and historically agricultural sector extends north from the southern and eastern border of Eglin Air Force Base to Rock Hill Road-Seven Run Creek to the Alabama state line. This sector covers about 75 percent of the county.

### Climate

Walton County summers are long, warm, and humid and winters are mild and short. The Gulf of Mexico moderates temperatures during the winter along the coast, but the effect diminishes appreciably a few miles inland. Rainfall averages 66 inches a year.

About 44 percent of the annual precipitation falls during June, July, August, and September, with the greatest amount occurring in July and August. October and November have the least rain, followed by April and May. In the summer most rain falls during the afternoon and evening in the form of showers or thunderstorms. These showers, which occur on the average of 45 percent of the days, are widely scattered, of short duration, and are often excessive. They happen more often in the southern part of the county than they do in the northern because of the moisture from the Gulf of Mexico. Rainfalls in winter and early spring are gentle, generally 1 to 3 days in length, and more widespread than the rainfalls in summer.

Although the county is periodically invaded by cold air masses from the north, the cold periods only last from one to three days. The average temperature in December, January, and February is 54.2 degrees F. Temperature ranges during this time from the high forties to the low seventies. Snowfall is rare, and measurable snow occurs about once in 10 years. It rarely remains on the ground for more than 24 hours. Ground fog generally occurs in late fall, winter, and in early spring at night or early in the morning.

The average temperature in June, July, and August is 80.8 degrees F. Temperatures 90 degrees or higher occur July through September, but 100 degrees occurs only a few days a year. Warm summery weather lasts until early in October.

### Geography

Walton County is part of a very large geographic area called the Coastal Plain. Within that plain in the county are three major subdivisions. These are the Western Highlands, the Gulf Coastal Lowlands, and the River Valley Lowlands.

The Western Highlands is a belt of relatively high land extending from the Alabama line south about 30 to 40 miles, and includes the northern two-thirds of the county. A prominent seaward-facing slope called the Cody Scarp, generally corresponding to the 150-foot elevation line, is the southern boundary of this feature. The surface of the highland is characterized by low hills with a relief up to 100 feet. Many streams run through the highlands. Relatively flat, swampy areas that are locally called "bays" also commonly occur in the highlands. The bays range from a few acres to over a square mile in area. The terrain immediately surrounding the bays is steep, and the bay floors are usually 60 to 80 feet or more lower than the surrounding highlands. Another characteristic feature of the highlands area is called "steepheads." This feature consists of nearly vertical semicircular bluffs located at the head of many small streams. At the base of the bluffs are springs.

The Gulf Coastal Lowlands is a series of plains or terraces parallel to the coast that extends approximately 15 miles from the coast to successively higher levels in a landward direction. Each terrace is separated from the next by an escarpment or gentle slope. These lowlands lie immediately south of the Western Highlands. One characteristic feature of the lowlands is the presence of numerous coastal dune lakes. Coastal dune lakes develop through various processes, most commonly starting as a tidally influenced bay or inlet whose outlet to the gulf becomes closed by sand. Salinity in these lakes varies widely depending on local weather conditions.

The River Valley Lowlands are the swamps and flatwoods of the flood plain of the Choctawhatchee River Valley in the southeastern part of the county. This is the major riverine system in Walton County.

## Water

The Choctawhatchee River, in the southeastern part of the county, is the major river system in the area and the third largest Florida stream in terms of discharge. It flows into the Choctawhatchee Bay. The Shoal River and the Alaqua, Black, Bruce, Caney, Lafayette, Little Alaqua, Limestone, Natural Bridge, Rocky, and Seven Runs Creeks, among others, are also in the county, all north of either the Choctawhatchee River or Bay. In addition to the many streams in the area, there are also numerous lakes, in the north and south ends of the county. These fresh-water bodies constitute about 5,320 acres. A far greater area (52,400 acres) is made up of one large body of brackish water. This is the Choctawhatchee Bay, which discharges into the Gulf of Mexico at the East Pass at Destin.

## II. Purpose and Intent Statement

The purpose of the evaluation and appraisal report is for Walton County to look back over the past seven years and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of its comprehensive plan. The county selected the option for an abbreviated EAR utilizing a visioning/scoping process and focusing on major issues in lieu of evaluating every goal, objective, and policy in the plan. However, the county has evaluated each goal, objective, and policy from the standpoint of where text amendments are recommended. That evaluation is included in this report in the recommendations for the EAR based amendments, §VIII(b). The evaluation and appraisal report (EAR) will cover changes in population, housing trends and conditions (including housing supply and demand), and adequate residential commercial and industrial acreage on the FLUM to accommodate these anticipated changes over the 20 year planning horizon. Specifically, the Walton County EAR will address major planning issues as defined in the visioning/scoping public meetings and additional issues requested by the Florida Department of Community Affairs and the Florida Department of Transportation. Issues that go beyond the typical EAR process will include an analysis of the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) and related impacts on Eglin AFB and affiliated facilities. The EAR will also provide an analysis of laws and statutes enacted since the last Walton EAR adopted in 1999.

Walton County developed the list of major issues to be addressed in the EAR during a three year planning process, with the final issues list approved during a visioning/scoping meeting held January 13, 2006. The list of major issues created during that meeting was as follows:

- Establishing urban service areas;
- Developing build-out analysis scenarios for county future growth;
- Reevaluating and Consolidating the County's Land Use Categories;
- Producing a Financially Feasible Capital Improvement Program (CIP);
- Editing confusing and inconsistent language in the comprehensive plan and ensuring consistency between the comprehensive plan and land development code;
- Coordinating the parcel data with existing and future land use maps;
- Completing and adopting a master plan for the Town Center-1;
- Verifying the accuracy of neighborhood map series and correcting as appropriate
- Updating the Comprehensive Plan to be consistent with new statutes and laws
- Developing congestion mitigation strategies for highways 331, 90, and 20; and
- Adopting post-disaster policies.

Several of the state and regional agencies attended the visioning/scoping meeting and requested other issues be added to the EAR. The following is a list of issues that were requested by DCA and FDOT:

- Evaluating how current affordable housing policies are working to support the creation of affordable housing;
- Assessing how the plan directs population away from the coastal high hazard area; and
- Evaluating adoption of a common traffic concurrency methodology with cities and adjacent counties for highways 98, 331, 20, and 90.

### Plan Implementation since the 1999 EAR

Since the 1999 EAR, the county has had rapid growth and development in the southern and central areas of the county. The county attempted a comprehensive rewrite of the plan, but was unable to move the proposed amendments forward because the county's consultants (Kimley-Horn and Associates) did not prepare sufficient data and analysis to support them. The Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) noted this problem in their Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC report) on the proposed amendments. The county will evaluate and utilize the previous work by Kimley-Horn as appropriate where changes in population and housing trends and conditions support previous proposed amendments.

In 2002, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners appointed a wetlands work group and requested that they evaluate the county's wetlands protection policies and provide recommendations for clarification. The committee was given two tasks: (1) to evaluate alternative language for the county's wetlands protection policies to clarify the intent and provide guidance for county staff in reviewing development proposals; and (2) to develop directives to assist developers in understanding the policies that affect development in and near wetland areas. The committee was to provide recommended revisions to the Walton County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. The work group completed their work in mid 2003. The county in the EAR process and EAR amendments will utilize their report to evaluate the county's wetland polices and develop EAR-based amendments. A copy of the Wetlands Study Project Final Report is included as appendix E(8).

Since the county's first EAR in 1999, the county has adopted a significant number of large and small scale map amendments. These amendments addressed the rising demand for permanent and seasonal housing. An index of Future Land Use Map Amendments (FLUM) has been included as appendix B(3). As part of the EAR process, the county contracted with WilsonMiller to complete a residential land use needs analysis assessing housing supply and demand for the next twenty years. (Appendix A(3)). That report will be thoroughly discussed several sections of this report.

### **III. Successes and Shortcomings of the Plan**

Walton County has achieved numerous measurable goals that were set forth in the 1996 Walton County Comprehensive Plan. This report outlines several of these significant successes and also discusses some of the shortcomings of the plan that the county has identified since the first EAR was completed in 1999.

#### *Future Land Use*

The future land use element categories overall create a very low housing density for the county. Allowable densities range from a low of one dwelling unit per 40 acres and a high of 12 dwelling units per acre. A map and summary of acreage per FLU category, including the amount of vacant lands available in each category, are included in the map section of the data and analysis. This data indicates that the county has limited acreage available for the development of housing, office, industrial, and retail uses necessary to meet the needs projected in the WilsonMiller residential land use needs analysis and the Fishkind and Associates, Inc. office, industrial, and retail land analysis. (Appendix A(3, 4)). The WilsonMiller study projects the need for an additional 85,022 dwelling units to accommodate the projected seasonal and permanent population housing demands through 2025. The Fishkind and Associates, Inc., study (appendix A(4)) projects the need for an additional 2,000 acres of land designated for office and 3,200 acres of retail before 2025. (Appendix A(4)).

Vacant developable lands are further limited because of the vast amount of acreage located within private and public conservation lands and the acreage within the Eglin AFB reservation. The Eglin AFB Reservation covers 22% of the lands in Walton County. The map series in the data and analysis provides a detailed analysis of lands in public and private conservation. The overall low FLU densities, coupled with the public and private conservation areas, have resulted in high quality green belts around the high growth areas of south and central county. In addition, the 50' height limitation in south Walton has created a beautiful skyline not seen in other northwest counties and cities.

Through the EAR process the county will analyze the densities and intensities of each FLU category and determine if they should be amended, combined, or deleted, or if new categories are needed. The mixed use FLU categories have supported planned unit developments, especially those with work/live units. The county in the EAR amendments will strengthen policies that support well-planned mixed use developments and live/work environments.

The plan includes a policy that prohibits the transfer of density from the floodplain portion of a property to the non-floodplain portion of the property in the agricultural FLU categories. This policy should be deleted or amended to support transfer of density to enhance the green belt areas and protect

environmentally sensitive areas. Walton County has an amendment pending that will allow this type of density transfer.

### *Preservation of Native Vegetation and Environmentally Sensitive Lands*

The plan includes native vegetation preservation policies that are stringent to the point of reverse benefit. These policies are so limiting that the development community looks for every loophole, or commits outright violations and asks for forgiveness after-the-fact. In some instances the plan objectives and policies, including wetland preservation, vegetative preservation, and flood zone restrictions, could require 90 percent preservation of a site. When these provisions prove too burdensome, a developer typically seeks out every loop holes or simply clears the property in the middle of night or on a holiday weekend. The county through the EAR and EAR amendment process must evaluate these policies and develop a more balanced approach that can protect environmentally sensitive areas as the plan intended, while allowing reasonable development. Until recently the county did not have environmental staff to fully implement the native plant preservation policies. The Board of County Commissioners has now supported re-organization of the Planning and Development Services Division to include an environmental department with four environmental scientists.

While the county's native vegetation preservation policies in general are very restrictive, they completely fail to consider preservation of significant and heritage trees. In the EAR amendments, the county will propose amendments to correct this deficiency by adopting policies ensuring protection of significant and heritage trees, defining the species and diameters to be protected, while exempting agricultural and silvicultural activities.

The plan contains numerous goals, objectives, and policies addressing the protection of the coastal areas, including the dunes system and native vegetation. The county has suffered significant damage from hurricanes since the last EAR, and has found that several of the plan policies, while admirable, were unworkable with the result that portions of coastal protection zone were destroyed by the storms. The county is blessed with significantly high elevations along the coastal area that protect inland properties from storm surge associated with hurricanes. The plan objectives and policies are progressive and important to the county, but need to be updated to be consistent with changes in the law and to account for the damage to the local dune system by recent hurricanes. Overall, the plan has been successful in keeping development from being harmed by storm surge and high winds except for developments that pre-dated the comprehensive plan and development on vested lots of record.

Walton County is rich in natural resources including the Choctawhatchee Bay and riverine system, the Shoal River and riverine system, the Intracoastal Waterway, Morrison Springs, and most notably the fifteen coastal dune lakes.

With this abundance of the natural resources, the backbone of Walton County's comprehensive plan are the goals, policies, and objectives protecting the county's environmental resources. In most cases, these policies simply need clarification to make them easier to implement. In addition, the Board of County Commissioners has supported a reorganization of the Planning and Development Services Division to add additional planning, building, engineering, code enforcement, and environmental staff to oversee and implement the Walton County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. As discussed above, the division currently has four full time environmental scientists that review all development proposals and plan amendment requests for compliance with the plan and code provisions.

### Transportation Issues and Concurrency

Walton County's one and only north/south corridor is U S highway 331 that traverses through Walton County from the Alabama state line to the beaches of south Walton. Rapid growth and development in the unincorporated and incorporated areas, coupled with through traffic, have significantly stressed this roadway. The Board, in response to the increasing traffic problems on highways 331 and 98, stepped up to the challenge and earmarked general revenue funds to gain approval for two Transportation Improvement Program Grants (TRIP) providing funding for US 331. Walton County was successful in gaining approval for US Highway 98 to be the top ranked priority on the TPO project priorities list. Recently, Walton County was successful in gaining approval for state road 20 to be added to the Regional TPO Regional Priority Network.

The board responded to the traffic problems on major county roadway 30-A through contracting with the Genesis Group to conduct a study of 30-A, evaluating build out scenarios, capacity improvements, and safety enhancements. This study provided the county with a project list that the county adopted into its capital improvements element. Genesis also recommended policy changes to the county's concurrency management system (adopted in the land development code) that provided greater consistency with the comprehensive plan. (Appendices G(9) – G(11)). The adopted concurrency management system was based upon annual average daily trips (AADT), while the comprehensive plan adopted peak hour/peak direction. The county amended the land development code and a new concurrency management system is now in place that utilizes peak hour/peak direction. (Appendix G(13)).

County staff is currently receiving training in use of the various traffic models to assist in implementation of the concurrency management system. As part of the reorganization of the division, the board authorized three additional engineering positions and hired sufficient staff to fully implement the storm water and traffic concurrency goals, objectives, and policies of the plan. The county's budget for FY-07 provides an adequate budget for the division to complete the necessary tasks associated with the new concurrency management system and

train staff in the traffic models used to support the concurrency management system. Genesis has been retained to review the former concurrency management system and convert committed and vested trips to the peak hour/peak direction system. This project could not wait for the EAR and EAR amendments due to the traffic congestions problems on state and county roadways.

The county adopted the majority of the projects identified by the Genesis study for 30-A into to the CIP in late 2005. (Appendices G(29), G(41)). The CIP amendment is now in compliance and the Board has adopted a proportionate fair share ordinance consistent with Senate Bill 360. (Appendix G(38)). The 30-A corridor was ripe for this approach to concurrency since the county had well thought out short and long term strategies. The corridor was failing concurrency with numerous developments requesting to pay their fair share and go forward. This issue would have been a major issue for the county's EAR had the board not accepted the challenge to implement the 30-A study. The ordinance has functioned very well for county roads; however, the process is yet to be worked out on FDOT SIS and FHIS roadways. Walton County was the first county without impact fees to adopt a proportionate fair share ordinance. The county is optimistic that all of the implementation issues will be worked out for SIS and FHIS roadways as the county has developed cost estimates and procedures and await final approval by FDOT and the board.

### Scenic Corridor Committee

Overall the plan goals, objectives, and policies have been achieved because of the commitment by property owners in developing high quality development along the 30-A, US 98, and 331 corridors. Support has also come from several organizations, first the Scenic Corridor Association whose primary goal is to preserve and protect the scenic nature of US 98 in south Walton County from the Okaloosa County line to the Bay County Line and U.S. Highway 331 south of the Choctawhatchee Bay. Secondly, the South Walton Community Council, whose main organizational objective is to watch over the implementation of the plan with focus on quality of life issues. The 30-A Scenic Corridor Committee has provided support and has been instrumental in gaining scenic corridor status for 30-A from the FDOT. Finally, the Board appointed the Design Review Board that provides the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners input on site plan approval review consistent with the Scenic Corridor Guidelines as adopted in Chapter 13 of the Land Development Code.

### Coastal Dune Lakes

Several areas of the plan have shortcomings in achieving success in protection of the coastal dune lakes and system wetlands. The county has recognized that the local, regional, state, and federal regulatory programs are not adequately protecting the coastal dune lake watersheds. The coastal dune lakes

are rare and are only found in Australia, Africa, and Walton County, Florida. The Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Committee, appointed by the board to oversee the planning and management programs for the lakes, have also discussed the imminent need for special legislative designation that would more effectively protect the coastal dune lakes from new development and redevelopment and associated construction activities. The county will more thoroughly evaluate these issues in the EAR and propose amendments to the plan to address the issues. A significant part of the problem comes from the minimal standards of the permitting programs at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The state and federal regulatory programs do not distinguish priority protection of dune lakes from any other type of lake or wetlands permit request. The county will also request the northwest Florida legislative delegation to sponsor legislation that would establish a special designation for the lakes similar to the Wekiva River protection program, providing for additional regulatory protection in state wetland resource permitting program.

The final weakness in the plan is the fact that the plan does not contain redevelopment goals, objectives, and polices. The county during the EAR based amendments will develop redevelopment goals, objectives, and policies as necessary throughout the plan elements. The plan currently does not provide for policy direction for redevelopment. Typically redevelopment occurs every 25-40 years in a fast growing environment like Walton County, and in some cases shorter intervals where land values outstrip the existing uses. Development from the early 60s and 70s is being evaluated by the development community for redevelopment and the county must prepare for this onslaught of redevelopment activity.

#### **IV. Public Participation and Scoping Process**

In 1987, the county adopted an ordinance outlining the citizen participation process for the county's comprehensive planning process. (Ordinance # 87-6, as amended by ordinance # 99-20). The ordinance was developed to be consistent with the provisions of §163.3181, F.S., for citizen participation. The county has followed the ordinance in efforts to gain citizen participation in the development of the EAR. The county will further utilize the ordinance's direction in pursuing citizen participation in the development of the EAR based amendments.

In 2003, Walton County contracted with Kimley-Horn and Associates to assist the county in reviewing its comprehensive plan and suggesting revisions. Kimley-Horn held numerous public meetings and took input from the Walton County Planning Commission, the Board of County Commissioners, and the public regarding issues they felt the comprehensive plan was not adequately addressing and aspects of the comprehensive plan they felt needed to be amended. Kimley-Horn submitted suggested revisions to the comprehensive plan and a list of issues they felt should be addressed in the EAR and EAR-based amendments. (Appendix B(36)). The list of EAR issues from their report is included in §VIII(a) along with the county's comments.

The county submitted the Kimley-Horn amendments to DCA, but DCA felt that the county had submitted inadequate data and analysis to support the proposed changes. DCA suggested that these issues be re-visited as part of the EAR and EAR-based amendments, and the county agreed.

In January of 2006, the county held two final scoping meetings, one with the state agencies, and one with the public. From these meetings, the county developed and adopted a list of eleven major issues that the county felt should be addressed in the EAR. In addition to these issues, DCA requested that the county address three additional issues: affordable housing, property rights in the coastal high hazard area and how evacuation times are maintained, and establishment of a common traffic methodology for traffic concurrency between Walton County and the incorporated municipalities. (Appendix A(2)).

## V. Major Issues for EAR from Scoping Process

### a. Establish Urban Service Areas

With a rapidly-expanding population and housing base, Walton County's existing program to cluster development and to assure that adopted levels-of-service are maintained needs to be reinforced. The delineation of urban service boundaries on the future land use map is a key component to this effort when done in conjunction with developing a build-out analysis for the county's future growth.

Presently most development has occurred in the southern part of the county. This section includes the area between the Choctawhatchee Bay/Intracoastal Waterway, the Gulf of Mexico with its 26 miles of beaches, and the Bay and Okaloosa County borders. Because of the absence of large, vacant, privately-owned tracts of land, future growth is expected to shift to the county's central and northern areas. The central area is considered to be the area located east of Freeport, and the north is the Mossy Head-Oakwood Hills area west of DeFuniak Springs. The county anticipates that the expected growth through the 2025 planning horizon will be concentrated in these areas, and feels that urban service areas should be created in these areas if the infrastructure can support them. This would encourage development to focus in areas with urban services, and assist the county in controlling sprawl.

Additional areas, especially south of the Choctawhatchee Bay-Intracoastal Waterway, were investigated as potential sites of urban service areas but were rejected because of insufficient remaining developable land that was not in the floodplain, wetland, or public ownership.

If they can be supported by the required infrastructure improvements, these areas will be implemented in the EAR-based amendments. These areas will identify specific geographical locations known as urban service areas, which will be evaluated under the following criteria of F.S. Chapter 163.3177(14):

- 1) The land included in the proposed boundaries is served or is planned to be served with adequate public facilities and services based on adopted level-of service standards and an adopted 10-year financially feasible facilities plan in the capital improvements element of the comprehensive plan, and
- 2) That the amount of land within the boundaries does not exceed the amount needed to accommodate the projected population growth at densities consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan within the 10-year planning timeframe.

(emphasis added).

#### Proposal #1, Mossy Head-Oakwood Hills

The first potential urban service area analyzed by the county is in the Mossy Head-Oakwood Hills region in the north-west part of Walton County. This area is situated between Laird Road on the west, north to the township line closest to the junction of Laird and Deshazo Roads, then nine miles due east along that township line to the range line separating sections 14 and 15-3N-21W, then due south along that range line to its intersection with Interstate Highway I-10, then nine miles west along I-10 to the range line separating sections 29 and 30-3N-21W, then north along that range line to its intersection with U.S. Highway 90, then east to Laird Road then north along Laird Road to point of beginning. (Appendices B(16), (17)). This area contains approximately 15,389 acres, with 777 acres that are either wetlands or located in a flood plain. About 3,758 acres are vacant and upland. An estimated 10,000 people will potentially reside in this area within the next ten years.

This area contains the proposed Blackstone Development of Regional Impact (DRI) with build-out anticipated by the year 2020. This DRI is a 1,240 acre mixed-use project anticipating at build-out a total of 3,300 dwelling units, including 2,050 single family residences, 750 townhouses, 100 condominiums, and 400 apartments, in addition to 182,000 square feet of retail and office space, and a projected population of 7,689. This DRI is located on the western side of the proposed urban service area, generally between Laird, Deshazo, Hinote Roads, and U.S. Highway 90. (Appendix B(31)).

Also in the western side of the proposed urban service area is a proposed 215 acre industrial park, known as the Northwest Florida Commerce Park at Mossy Head. The facility is located on both sides of the intersection of SR 285, Interstate I-10, and U.S. Highway 90. This planned park will contain industrial uses, including manufacturing, warehousing, and office space. (See appendix B(32)). A development order application is being prepared for this proposal. As currently planned, this park will remain below the DRI threshold.

Another integral element within this proposed urban service area is the presence of approximately 8,000 largely undeveloped lots that are in recorded subdivisions platted between 1952-1957 and 1970-1973. These subdivisions include Oakwood Hills Units I-III, Oakwood Estates, County Club Manor (including South, North, and East), South and North Orange View, and Mossy Head. While the earlier subdivisions contained small lots, generally 25 x100 feet, most of the later plats had lots that were one-quarter or one-half acre in size. (See appendix B(35)).

The last important component within the proposed service area is the 20-acre site located approximately .4 mile west of the intersection of Hinote Road and U.S. Highway 90 behind the County Emergency Management (EMS) building. This site will be an elementary school and is expected to be completed within the next two years. Site work has already begun at this location. (See appendix B(15)).

The proposed Mossy Head Urban Service Area is currently provided potable water by the Mossy Head Water Works Inc. (See appendix B(16)). It is not currently served by central sewer, but the Walton County Board of County Commissioners has formally agreed to construct a regional treatment plant and representatives of the Mossy Head Water Works, Inc. have agreed to handle the billing work for the facility. (See appendix D(3)).

The Future Land Use Map designations for the proposed urban service area are predominantly rural residential, which allows for one dwelling per 2.5 acres, with rural village (two dwellings per acre) in the Mossy Head area, and rural low density residential (one dwelling per acre) in the Oakwood Hills area. (See appendix B(17)). There are also limited areas with commercial or industrial designations. According to Policy L-1.1.9 of the county's comprehensive plan, the lots in most of the existing subdivisions are vested and will allow a single-family dwelling regardless of the FLU density, subject to the availability of water and sanitary sewer services and the ability to meet required setbacks. The county should review and revise the future land use designations to accommodate the expected growth in this proposed area.

As the area in the proposed Mossy Head Urban Service Area is built out, improvement of U.S. Highway 90 and other corridors, along with associated right-of-way acquisition, parallel corridor development, and facility improvements (signalizations, intersection improvements, operational analyses and public/private partnerships for right-of-way dedications) will be required to meet level-of-service (LOS) requirements of future development. As further discussed in §V(j), the county has begun to implement planning and mitigation strategies to address these concerns.

The above service area has been designed around known private developments in the planning stages. WilsonMiller's residential housing needs analysis (appendix A(3)) establishes that the county will need an additional 85,022 residential units by 2025. This area, located in close proximity to DeFuniak Springs, Eglin AFB, and the proposed county industrial park, and with existing water service and planned sewer service, will certainly be one of the areas of intense growth that will provide many of those housing units. From the county's evaluation of the data collected, however, the current and proposed county infrastructure is insufficient to support the projected growth. As proposed, this area will require CIP projects to be adopted through the EAR-based amendments to build the capital infrastructure to support both the private developments and the proposed USA. As the county engages in the proposed re-mapping of the future land use map (see §V(c)) the proposed densities and intensities in this area will need to be reviewed. To further complicate this effort, the county has adopted a proportionate fair share ordinance and capital improvements for road impacts, but the technical implementation of the ordinance with the Florida Department of Transportation remains to be worked

out. This urban service area would severely impact two SIS facilities, SR 331 and SR 90, where DOT's concurrence is required for any proposed capital improvements. As part of the remapping effort, the county will assess the proposed densities and intensities and the capital improvements needed to support these proposed densities and intensities, and determine whether the county can adopt and fund the capital projects needed to support the proposed USA.

Proposal #2 Black Creek-Freeport East Urban Service Area

A second potential urban service area that the county has analyzed is in the Black Creek-Freeport East section of central Walton County, situated east of the City of Freeport and north of Black Creek and Black Creek Road (CR 3280). This is an area about eight miles long by six miles wide centered near State Highway 20. The identified area (appendix B(18)), contains approximately 29,187 acres, of which 8,019 acres are either wetland or flood plain, and 21,168 acres are buildable uplands. (Appendix B(18)). The boundary selected represents the geographical area with the greatest concentration of large-scale future land use map amendment applications, developments of regional impact, and major development applications that have been or are being processed by Walton County. As shown in the table below, there are eleven developments approved or pending with almost 23,000 dwelling units as well as 2.3 million square feet of retail and office space expected to be constructed by 2016. (Appendix B(19)).

Development Proposed within Proposed  
Black Creek/Freeport East Urban Service Area

Land Use Change Approved-Pending Development Order Approval

No.	Project Name	Land Use Amendment Number	10-Year Residential Build-Out	Commercial/ Office Sq. Feet	Acreage
1	Regional Utilities	05-1B.2.41	618	0	960
2	Black Creek Plantation	05-1C.14	11,189	818,050	2,790
Pending Land Use Change After EAR Adoption and Development Order Approval					
No.	Project Name	Land Use Amendment Number	10-Year Residential Build-Out	Commercial/ Office Sq. Feet	Acreage
3	Miller Development	06-01.C19	2,050	20,000	1,683
5	M.C. Davis	06-01.C20	2,120	636,000	909
8	Sandhill Lakes	06-01.C23	4,456	762,300	1,124
9	Quail Run at Freeport	06-01.C18	280	0	211

10	Miller/Avcon fka Meierjohan	06-01.C22	320	80,000	103
11	Harrell& Swatty	06-01.C45	360	0	60
In Development Order/Annexation Review Process					
No.	Project Name	Land Use Amendment Number	10-Year Residential Build-Out	Commercial/ Office Sq. Feet	Acreage
4	Plantation at Freeport	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
6	Brandon Oaks DRI	N/A	1,031	20,000	369
7	Bear Creek PUD	N/A	351	0	197
	TOTAL		22,775	2,336,350	8,406

The proposed Black Creek-Freeport East Urban Service Area is within the central water and sewer franchise area of the City of Freeport. Approximately the western 60 percent of this proposed area is also proposed as an urban service area by the City of Freeport. (Appendix B(30)).

Within the boundaries of the service area are extensive sections with a future land use designation of large scale agriculture (one dwelling per 40 acres), general agriculture (one unit per 10 acres), and estate residential (one dwelling per five acres). This area is undergoing a transformation through the large-scale comprehensive plan map amendment process; with the close proximity to the southern portion of the county, this area is appealing to developers seeking to serve the residential and commercial needs of Walton County. As indicated by the WilsonMiller study (appendix A(3)) and the Fishkind and Associates study (appendix A(4)), the county anticipates a need for 85,022 additional dwelling units and supporting commercial and industrial development by 2025. This area, in close proximity to Freeport, south Walton, and Eglin AFB, will attract a great deal of this anticipated development.

As the area and associated development is built out for this area, improvement of U.S. Highway 331, State Road 20, and other adjacent thoroughfares, along with associated right-of-way acquisition, parallel corridor development, and facility improvements (signalizations, intersection improvements, operational analyses and public/private partnerships for right-of-way dedications) will be required to meet level-of-service requirements for future development. The county has begun to implement traffic planning and mitigation strategies through adoption of a county wide level-of-service tracking system, a unified capital improvements program, development of a county wide traffic modeling effort, and traffic concurrency and road project coordination with the Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization, the Florida Department of Transportation, the Northwest Florida Transportation Authority, Walton County

communities and adjacent counties as noted in more detail in other sections of this report.

As discussed with the proposal for the Mossy Head USA, this proposed USA has been designed around known private developments in the planning stages. At its November 8, 2005, regular meeting, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners voted to grant priority to a package of large scale comprehensive plan amendments that were under review when hurricane Dennis impacted Walton County. After it became apparent that the EAR and EAR-based amendments would need to be completed before the county could consider further FLUM amendments, the county placed these amendments on hold. The vast majority of these amendments (though not all) were located east of Freeport, in the area being considered by the county for an USA. The commission specifically voted to grant these proposed amendments priority consideration, if they were supported by the data and analysis developed during the EAR.

The county's review shows that the demand for additional residential units and commercial uses supports increased density in this area. In common with the first proposal, however, the county's evaluation of the data shows that the current and proposed county infrastructure is insufficient to support the projected growth. This area will require CIP projects to be adopted through the EAR-based amendments to build the capital projects needed to support both the private developments and the proposed USA. As the county engages in the proposed re-mapping of the future land use map (see §V(c)) the proposed densities and intensities in this area will need to be reviewed. To further complicate this effort, the county has adopted a proportionate fair share ordinance and capital improvements for road impacts, but the technical implementation of the ordinance with the Florida Department of Transportation remains to be worked out. This urban service area would severely impact two SIS facilities, SR 331 and SR 20, where DOT's concurrence is required for any proposed capital improvements. At part of the remapping effort, the county will assess the proposed densities and intensities and the capital improvements needed to support these proposed densities and intensities, and determine whether the county can adopt the capital projects needed to support the proposed USA.

**b. Develop Build out Analysis Scenarios for County Future Growth**

*Background Causes and Impacts*

As has been noted in the introduction and in other sections of this report, there has been no systematic re-evaluation of the Walton County Future Land Use Map (FLUM) since its adoption on November 7, 1996. The 1999 EAR and the Kimley-Horn analysis both concentrated on evaluating the comprehensive plan, but did not re-evaluate the FLUM or the designated densities and intensities. The county has responded to requests for changes to the plan and map on the basis of individual requests. This was an adequate alternative with a small number of applications and acres involved, but not for the current volume of activity. In 2005, applicants requested large-scale future land use amendments for a total of 21,785 acres. In 2006 the proposed acreage is currently 11,718 acres.

Walton County did not conduct a county-wide land use study as part of the 1996 comprehensive plan or future land use mapping program. The only organized review done for the plan and map was in a 1994 series of reports prepared for the South Walton Conservation and Development Trust for land south of the Choctawhatchee Bay and Intra-Coastal Waterway. This area comprised 52,250 acres, or about seven percent of the county's total land area. The recommendations of the trust documents were superimposed over the southern sector of the county's existing future land use map.

The 1993 comprehensive plan, like the 1996 document, was a strategic plan, containing only written goals, objectives, and policies, and lacked any technical analysis of individual components of the plan, including future land use. A rudimentary land use analysis was provided in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan for Walton County. Such analysis included existing land use maps, tables and a short review of existing land use patterns by broad categories, population projections, soils and wetlands studies, and future land use maps. No correlation was made showing how any of these variables were related to any of the others or to how these variables as presented resulted in a consistent and coherent future land use pattern.

The absence of a county-wide systematic future land use analysis would not be as critical if not for the rapid growth of population and housing in the unincorporated county. In the 2005 BEBR estimates, Walton County ranked fourth in change in population for all counties in the state of Florida, with an increase of 12,924 people or 31.8%. (Appendix A(8)). In 2004, Walton County tied for third in ranking with Sumter County. Nothing in these projections indicates that the rate of growth is slowing down. By the year 2025 the county can expect to have 150,250 permanent residents. (Appendix A(9)).

The figures in the paragraph above include only permanent residents. A significant characteristic of the unincorporated county, especially the southern portion, is its seasonal population. In 2000 the population of south Walton County was 9,737. (Appendix A(22)). However, in 2005 the additional summer season (tourist) daily population was estimated at 75,352 with a peak-period, peak-season additional daily population exceeding 100,000. (Appendix A(12)). By 2025, the county expects to have an additional 2,584,781 seasonal residents.

Growth in new housing significantly exceeds even the surging population increase, being based not only on the many new residents but on housing constructed for seasonal use. Between 1990 and 2004 the (total) county added 22,587 new permanent residents. (Appendix A(8)). At the average occupancy rate of 2.44 persons per year-round occupied dwelling in 1990 and 2.35 in 2000, the new residents would have needed 9,410 more housing units. (Appendix A(21)). But during this period building permits were issued for 22,956 dwellings. These additional 13,546 units reflect units built for seasonal residents.

Projections for 2010, 2020, and 2030 suggest an increase of 18,536 total housing units between 2000 and 2010, 21,420 more between 2010 and 2020, and an additional 31,747 units between 2020 and 2030, for a total increase of 71,703 units between 2000 and 2030.

As the county's re-mapping effort, the EAR-based amendments, and assessment of potential urban service areas result in updated FLUM designations that solidify the allowed intensity and density of development, Walton County will re-evaluate the potential build-out analysis and needed updates to the CIP. As part of the county's re-mapping of its FLUM (see §V(c)), the county will consider the following issues:

1	Existing land use	8	Prime agricultural lands
2	Unplatted subdivisions	9	Future municipal incorporation areas
3	Existing and future transportation networks	10	Areas of expanded central water and sewer service
4	Wetlands	11	Likely sites of future school expansion
5	Floodplains	12	Large future development areas
6	Critical habitat areas	13	Existing local, regional, state and federal conservation areas
7	Current future land use districts and densities		

These variables should not be considered independently but overlap one upon another to clearly suggest where future growth should and should not be encouraged. The scenarios should, as far as possible, indicate general land use

densities for broad areas of the county and demonstrate the population likely to occur with different alternatives or variations.

As a part of any build-out analyses for different land uses and demographic scenarios, consideration should be given to the infrastructure planning to address potential demands, construction schedules and corridor set-asides, or acquisitions required. Infrastructure includes public facilities and services that will be required for transportation systems, drainage, stormwater management, flood protection, and other services that maintain the high quality of life in Walton County. Presented below are potential strategies that should be considered when linking land use and demographic projections to infrastructure planning for build-out scenarios.

During the first 150 years since Walton County was founded in 1824, roads and utility services kept pace with demand and were provided on an as-needed basis. As Walton became one of the fastest growing counties in Florida, and as development extended out of the southern county growth area of the past into the entire county, demand for public facilities and services has increased dramatically. As the future land uses are determined across the county, a build-out analysis should also consider developing infrastructure and public service needs for the fully built-out condition.

Walton County's commitment to looking to the future is evidenced through programs that have been instituted over the past several years to lay the groundwork for build-out analyses by assessing the current service levels in transportation and stormwater management in Walton County.

- 1998 – First CR 30A Traffic Study (Appendix G(14)).
- 1999 – CR 30A Traffic Task Force Formed (Appendix G(15)).
- 2000 – CR 30A Study for Traffic Control Devices, Trail Crossings, Parking Concerns (Appendix G(16)).
- 2001 – Stormwater Master Plan for Walton County (Appendix D(30)).
- 2006 – CR 30A Traffic Corridor Management Study
- 2006 – Walton County adopted a completely overhauled transportation concurrency management system that included the first proportional fair share program in Florida. (Ordinance # 2006-02).

The county has compiled a great deal of valuable data and, through analysis of that data, has begun significant initiatives to evaluate the county's infrastructure needs over the planning horizon. The major effort remains to be incorporated into policy through modifications and updates to the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code. During the EAR-based amendment process, as the FLUM is evaluated for EAR-based amendments, the county will incorporate past study information, new land use information, the CIP and the long term comprehensive plan and LDC updates to analyze build-out needs in Walton County public facilities and services.

Transportation Systems

County staff conducted a build-out analysis using the CMS spreadsheets to assure that construction of the CIP transportation projects will provide adequate increases in the LOS to meet future demands based on the current FLUM. An evaluation of the build-out for the planned and proposed capital improvement projects indicates that with the exception of the “constrained” County Road 30-A segment, the transportation levels of service are met as shown in the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System (WCTCMS) spreadsheet for current conditions. In addition, the list of CIP projects and the WCTCMS spreadsheet have been updated to include improved LOS through the implementation of the CIP projects. (Appendix G(42)).

Present levels of service projected through the CMS and the CIP indicate that through continued use of proportionate fair share, operational studies, right-of-way protection, and corridor management the LOS provided will meet the expected build-out demands based on the current FLUM. (Appendix G(42)).

As the EAR-based amendments and evaluation of the proposed urban service areas result in changed land use and adoption of new FLUM delineations that solidify the intensity and density of future development along with the resulting transportation demands, the build-out analysis and the CIP will be re-evaluated as a part of the EAR-based amendments.

Future build-out analyses should consider corridor management techniques to assure timely provision of levels of service for build-out conditions throughout the county. Several components for corridor management techniques presented by the Center for Urban Transportation Research in the October 1996 report entitled, “Managing a Corridor Development, A Municipal Handbook” (Appendix G(2)) are shown in the following table.

*Corridor Management Techniques*

<b>Property Acquisition</b>	<b>Planning and Regulations</b>	<b>Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Collaborative Approaches</b>
Eminent domain	Thoroughfare plans	Transfer of development rights or density credits	Informal negotiations
Fee simple purchase	Maps of reservation	Special exceptions	Coordination
Advance acquisition	Access management	Waivers and variances	Public/private partnerships
Purchase of development rights	Dedications and exactions	Impact fee credits	Transportation corporations
Options to purchase	Building setbacks	Tax abatement	Public involvement
Land swaps	Corridor overlay zones	Interim use agreements	
	Down zoning		
	Cluster zoning		

Consideration should also be given to other transportation needs, including thoroughfare management, hurricane evacuation planning, roadway construction and improvement standards, and surveying standards.

### Stormwater Management

Master planning for future stormwater management needs is another critical issue in Walton County. Stormwater management levels of service best serve the county when they include a holistic or watershed approach. Walton County will consider incorporating into the countywide stormwater master planning activity for build-out conditions the stormwater activities associated with mosquito control, erosion control, preservation of the waters in Walton County through runoff treatment and water quality control, stormwater runoff control as it relates to drainage and quantity conveyance, stormwater and drainage facility maintenance, flood control, coastal high hazard areas and floodplain management. The EAR-based amendments will specifically focus on protecting the water quality of the coastal dune lakes.

Stewardship of the natural beauty and quality of the waters of Walton County and the heritage those waters bring to the panhandle region of Florida is of prime concern and a guiding principal of the citizens and officials of Walton County. As such the county commissioners through the Walton County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code have enacted policies and goals for the protection and enhancement of these precious resources.

Stormwater management is a term that is applied to the activities associated with enhancing the interaction of development, population growth, and water resource sustainability. Each component takes from and gives to the others. Stormwater management is the integrated approach to controlling, enhancing and directing their interaction to an optimal and sustainable level for all components. Traditionally stormwater management includes such topics as flood damage prevention, pollution prevention, erosion and sediment control, wetland management, coastal protection, drainage improvements, water supply, and recreational qualities and availabilities. In Walton County other components that factor into the objective include; mosquito control, aesthetics and the continuation of the natural beauty provided by our water resources through groundwater recharge, facility maintenance, monitoring along with focused legislative and operational activities.

In October 2001, Walton County developed a Stormwater Master Plan that identified the localized watershed basins throughout Walton County. (Appendix D(30)). A very important part of this plan was to inventory existing levels of service of water quality and to identify areas requiring continual monitoring and enhancement.

The Walton County Stormwater Master Plan highlighted focus areas for better management practice endeavors, including:

- Basin Delineation
- Facility Inventory
- Water Quality Assessment
- Water Quantity Issues & Strategy Plan
- Level of Service Methodologies
- Stormwater Capital Improvement Plan
- Recommendations for Procedures, Policies and Design
- South Walton County Stormwater Utility Analysis

The county will consider the components listed in the stormwater master plan when developing specific methods, goals and objectives along with policies and regulations to accomplish the implementation and operation of the master plan.

Water quantity has three main components: catastrophic preparedness for potential flood damage; property protection during major events; and everyday nuisance drainage issues. These three components rely on interaction among watersheds, levels of service guidelines for risk management, floodplain management and stormwater drainage design and construction standards. Development of stormwater design guidelines, a stormwater utility, and a system for evaluating the interaction and needs associated with the stormwater quantity needs across the county's basins will be considered during the EAR-based amendment process. These guidelines will consider interaction with the needs of mosquito control, the accessibility for maintenance of the stormwater facilities, and best management practices for various systems and their respective locations. The guidelines will also consider the water quality needs associated with erosion control and the county's MS4 permit activities, with a special emphasis on protecting water quality in the coastal dune lakes. The county will also consider funding sources for required public facilities to implement the county's stormwater master plan.

### **Solid Waste**

The county entered into contracts with Waste Management, Inc. of Florida in the early 1980s for solid waste collection and waste disposal. The agreements have been updated through several extensions, with the most recent being executed on May 9, 2000 that has a term for renewal through 2013. Waste Management, Inc. has a landfill in Jackson County that is permitted for Class I waste and has been permitted for a number of years out into the planning horizon of 2025. The county also has a permit for the Walton Central as a backup landfill facility should Waste Management have any compliance difficulties at the Jackson County Landfill. (Appendix D (29)). Based on this data, it appears that county will meet LOS requirements for solid waste through 2025.

## **Potable Water and Sanitary Sewer**

There are seven service areas that provide potable water to the residents of unincorporated Walton County. (Appendices D(3) – D(12)). Three are municipalities and the remaining four are not-for-profit cooperatives, or private water systems. The Floridan aquifer is the single source of supply for the seven service areas addressed by this plan. Walton County reviewed information provided by the service providers, FDEP Sanitary Survey reports, compliance reports, and Consumptive Use Permits issued by the NFWMD. Two of the providers provide data and analysis showing adequate capacity and no expected deficiencies throughout the planning horizon; five showed existing or impending deficiencies unless certain measures are taken. Following staff review and analysis of the reports provided the following pertinent issues were noted.

Virtually all of the coastal area in Walton County is designated as an “Area of Special Concern” by the Northwest Florida Water Management District. Groundwater withdrawals in the coastal area are causing a significant decline in the aquifer, which is now threatened with saltwater intrusion. (Appendix D(2)). Such a designation, adopted in NFWMD rules, restricts further withdrawals from the aquifer and requires re-use of treated wastewater for non-potable uses where feasible. In its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will propose amendments to protect the aquifer from decline and maintain consistency with the NFWMD Region II Water Supply Plan. Walton County will adhere to the District Water Supply Plan for Areas of Special Concern to ensure capacity throughout the planning horizon. (Appendix D(2)).

The City of Paxton is currently meeting the established LOS. There will, however, be significant deficiencies by year 2025 without improvements in the distribution system. Paxton has identified a deficiency in storage capacity, which falls below the average daily demand. In order for Paxton’s system to comply with the recommended standards, they need to add 100,000 gallons of storage capacity. At present they have one storage tank available on reserve, and that will be beneficial until this deficiency can be addressed. Paxton requested a Community Development Block Grant through the county to address this deficiency, but did not receive enough points for a grant award. At present they are seeking new funding from CDBG and the USDA/RD to correct their distribution system deficiencies at a cost of approximately \$3,730,400. Paxton has budgeted for matching funds for the project. (Appendix D(7)).

While currently maintaining an adequate LOS, the Argyle system has been notified by DEP that they should undertake planning efforts to ensure that the water system maintains adequate storage. (Appendix D(6)).

While Freeport lacks sufficient storage capacity at present, they sell roughly 1.3 MGD to Regional Utilities, which enables them to meet storage needs at this time. With the addition of a sixth well, which has already been

permitted, Freeport will be able to meet water demands if they continue to meet storage needs. The consumptive use permit for the City of Freeport states that by 2007 the city must provide a plan for 100% reuse of the output from their wastewater treatment plant, and the plan must be implemented by December 31, 2012. (Appendix D(9)).

Storage capacity for the City of DeFuniak Springs at present falls far below the required 25% maximum day capacity. The auxiliary capacity also exceeds the maximum day. Added storage capacity of more than 500,000 gallons is needed immediately. A new elevated storage tank is being constructed but the system may require additional storage within the next decade (FDEP Sanitary Survey, 2006). (Appendix D(10)).

The Inlet Beach Water System is not expected to meet capacity at buildout in year 2025 but they are currently negotiating for increased storage capacity. The Inlet Beach system has already established the necessary connections to take delivery from water systems north of Choctawhatchee Bay when they become available. (Inlet beach Quality Water Report, 2006). (Appendix D(5)).

In their 2005 Annual Compliance report, Regional Utilities stated that based on the current permitted daily capacity for each of the Owl's Head wells of 1,313,333 GPD, they estimate the need for three new wells and the associated pipeline conveyance improvements to deliver the additional water to their storage and pumping facility. (Appendix D (12)).

Based on a preliminary hydraulic analysis, the recommended improvements are:

- Complete Construction of Owl's Head Well # 3
- Main Production Well # 4
- Main Production Well # 5
- Main Production Well # 6
- New Well Field Pipe System from Wells 4, 5, and 6 to Existing Owl's Head Well Field Water Plant Site
- Booster Pump Station North of Choctawhatchee Bay on the Main Transmission Pipeline.
- New 24" pipeline attached to Choctawhatchee Bay Bridge.
- New 36" pipeline replacement/relocation for 24" pipeline US 331 from Choctawhatchee Bay South to US 331 Water Plant (This will be required by proposed roadway construction).
- New 36" pipeline Replacement/Relocation for 24", US 331 Bay relief Bridge to Jolly Bay Road

Regional anticipates obtaining a new consumptive use permit from the NFWFMD for three new wells to the north and east of the existing Owl's Head well field. Should the NFWFMD not approve additional wells, Regional will

assess alternate sources of raw water production such as surface water/reservoirs and/or desalinization.

Regional Utilities' sewer collection and treatment system consists of three wastewater treatment plants with interconnected wastewater collection and interconnected (under construction) reclaimed water distribution. Because of this interconnectivity, sewage collection has the ability to be adjusted to balance the treatment plant flows. Thus, the treatment plant capacities can be combined and viewed as a single plant for the purpose of plant capacity analysis. (Appendices D(13) – D(18)).

Each participating provider is responsible for installing and maintaining the infrastructure for its portion of the sewer system. The county should partner with providers to identify and correct deficiencies as they arise and coordinate installation of collection lines or other infrastructure whenever possible.

### **Recreation and Open Space**

In 2005, the Walton County Parks and Recreation Department conducted a strategic planning workshop “to develop a prioritized list of desired outcomes for Walton County citizens in the next five years through Parks and Recreation programs.” (Appendix H(3)). The mission of the workshop was “to assist the Walton County BCC in providing recreational opportunities for the citizens of Walton County. The REC shall provide County funds to agencies within Walton County that provide recreational services to children and adults. We will work with the BCC in looking at the future recreational needs of Walton County and recommend programs that are not at this time to be included in the recreational program in the future.”

The workshop identified the following issues:

- Insufficient facilities;
- Facilities are too expensive;
- Land price and limited availability;
- Tremendous population and economic growth;
- Relocation – Citizen needs are a “moving target;”
- Funding (all sources);
- Transportation for participants;
- Knowing community needs;
- Staffing/ contracted, staff, or volunteer;
- Developing partnerships;
- Informing the public - being an information source.

The desired outcomes of this initiative were:

1. Every person who wants to participate has the opportunity;

2. Each community in the County would have sufficient facilities and adequate staffing of a type and quantity to meet their specific needs;
3. Have sound partnerships for a productive purpose.

The workshop identified the next steps as:

1. Refine desired outcomes, strategic objectives and potential programs;
2. Identify the top five needs of *existing* programs and their needs/ required resources and the top five *potential* programs and their needs/ required resources;
3. Develop a marketing plan.

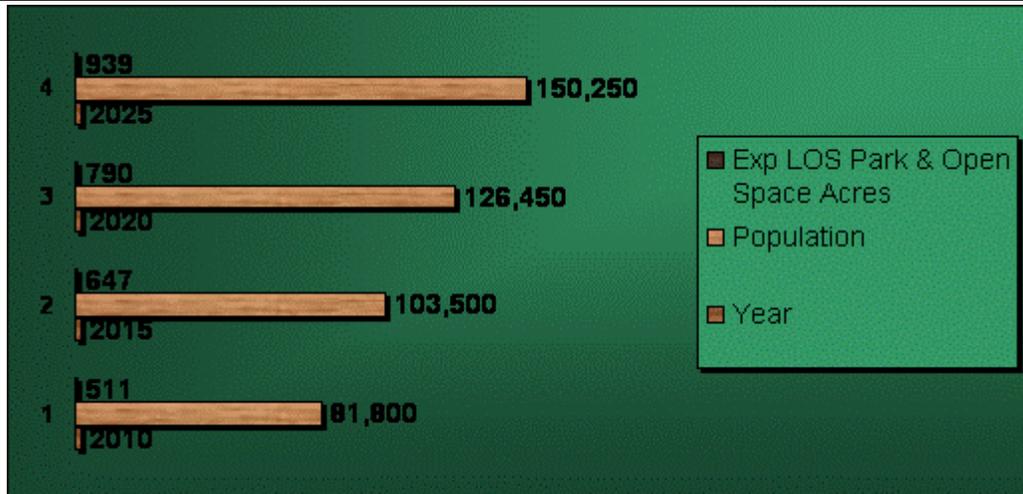
Through this strategic workshop, the county developed a capital improvement schedule identifying the parks that needed funds, the amount of funds, a time frame, and the park that would receive the improvements. The CIP schedule is included as appendix H(4).

Walton County currently has a level of service standard of 6.25 acres of recreation and open space per 1000 people. With the projects in the CIP and with the expected population growth, Walton County will meet its LOS for recreation over the current planning horizon. Table A is based on the population projections for the current planning horizon.

**TABLE A**

Recreation & Open Space  
Expected Level of Service  
Based on Population Projections 2010 to 2025

Year	2010	2015	2020	2025
Population	81,800	103,500	126,450	150,250
Exp LOS Park & Open Space Acres	511	647	790	939



**LOS 6.25 acres per 1000 people**

**Schools**

As one of the seven school concurrency model programs, Walton County, the City of DeFuniak Springs, the City of Freeport, the City of Paxton, and the Walton County School Board, working with Morris Depew Associates, have created an interlocal agreement on school concurrency, drafted proposed amendments to their respective comprehensive plans, and developed an overall strategy for tying development approval to school concurrency. (Appendix I(1) – I(3)). The data developed by Morris Depew indicates that Walton County can meet the demand for school seats over the planning horizon, with the projects currently indicated in the Walton County School Board’s five-year work program and future planned capital improvements. (Appendix I(2)). The Walton County School Board has hired a full-time coordinator for this effort, who is currently reviewing all development applications and applications for comprehensive plan amendments. The school board representative also sits as a non-voting member of the Walton County Planning Commission. The school board coordinates their proposed school expansions, new school locations, and other development plans with the county planning staff.

Walton County is committed to maintaining a high level of coordination between the Walton County School District and the Planning and Development Services Division. We are currently in the process of adopting the amendments developed as part of the model program, and any needed changes to those amendments will be reflected in our EAR-based amendments.

### Summary

Overall, the county's current build-out analysis indicates that significant capital improvements will be needed to meet existing LOS for the growth anticipated by 2025. The county will reconsider the capital improvements needed to support anticipated growth as it updates the allowable densities and intensities on the FLUM. Other concurrency items impacted by the USA and FLUM updates will also be included as a part of a re-evaluated buildout analysis. These other concurrency needs reflect public and private interests and include the involvement of many areas of Walton County government, service providers, and concern groups, including fire protection, mosquito control, health department, environmental interests, water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, school administration, other public building and organizational needs, parks and recreation, tourism services, housing, and emergency services, along with commercial, retail and industrial business needs. Each of these needs provides a vital component to the personality and quality of life in Walton County and will be considered and involved during the re-evaluated build-out analyses. All of this data, based on the FLUM re-mapping, will be included in the county's Fiscal Impact Analysis Model for determination of the financial feasibility of the CIP.

### Cost Feasible Model

A significant component to accomplish installation and implementation of infrastructure improvements to provide the required levels of service is to develop a financially feasible plan for the county's capital improvements program. Accompanying the financially feasible CIP will be Walton County's Fiscal Impact Analysis Model (FIAM) and the associated background data for input and calibration.

Walton County received a grant from the Department of Community Affairs to assist the county in developing a financially feasible capital improvement program. (Appendix F(1)). Walton County contracted with Fishkind and Associates to assist the county in preparing a draft of a CIP and revisions to the capital improvement element. Walton County has submitted the drafts of the CIP and CIE to DCA, and is in the process of resolving the Department's comments. (Appendices F(2), F(3)).

Walton County is in the process of working with the West Florida Regional Planning Council to set up the FIAM for the county. FIAM is recognized by DCA

as an acceptable methodology for determining the financial feasibility of a county's capital improvement program. It is most likely that the FIAM modeling effort along with the needed data collection, interpretation, development and repository will be performed through West Florida Regional Planning Council. This modeling effort will include continual updates for development, utility and public infrastructure needs, and population changes.

**c. Reevaluate and Consolidate the County's Land Use Categories**

Since the first Walton County comprehensive plan was adopted, Walton County has developed an increasingly complex and inter-related system of future land use categories. Currently, including the recently proposed category of Low Density Residential and the new DRI category that is in development, the county has a total of thirty-seven land use categories, generally divided between north Walton land uses, south Walton land uses, and land uses applicable to both north and south Walton County.

**North Walton Land Use Categories**

Number	Name	Sub-Categories
1.	General Agriculture	
2.	Estate Residential	
	Mixed Use Categories	
3.		Rural Low Density
4.		Rural Residential
5.		Rural Village
6.		Urban Residential
7.	Commercial (node)	
8.	Medium Industrial	
9.	Heavy Industrial	
	North-Bay Neighborhood Planning Area	
10.		Residential
11.		Mixed Use
12.		Rural Town Center

**South Walton Land Use Categories**

Number	Name	Sub-Categories
13.	Private Conservation	
	Conservation Residential	
14.		CR 1:10
15.		CR 1:2.5
16.		CR 2:1
	Neighborhood Planning Areas	
17.		NPA/Residential Preservation
18.		NPA/Infill
19.		NPA/Small Neighborhood
20.		NPA/Traditional Neighborhood Development
21.	Coastal Center	
	Mixed Use Centers	
22.		Coastal Center Mixed Use
23.		Village Mixed Use Center
24.		Town Center One

25.		Town Center Two
26.		Resort
27.	Light Industrial Center	
28.	Industrial	
29.	Coastal Village	

North and South Walton Land Uses

Number	Name
30.	Low Density Residential (approval pending)
31.	Large Scale Agriculture
32.	Public Facilities
33.	Parks and Recreation
34.	Conservation
35.	Business Park
36.	Light Industrial
37.	DRI/Mixed Use (currently under development)

Although in many ways these categories have worked to produce a functional and aesthetically pleasing range of uses, especially in south Walton, several issues have developed over time. These categories are too broad in some cases, and too restrictive in others. The restrictiveness of some of these categories has prompted many developers to apply for planned unit developments merely to obtain variances from these restrictions. This would not normally be necessary with better-defined policies.

Need for Additional Categories

Despite the wide variety of categories the Walton plan contains, it lacks certain basic categories, especially low, medium, and high density residential, and general commercial. This creates compatibility issues where a parcel designated NPA/Infill, for example, would allow limited commercial development in an area that is predominantly low density residential. For this reason, Walton County recently sought to amend their plan to include low density residential as a category. The addition of other basic categories would ensure the compatibility of development in adjacent areas by allowing calculated transitions from low density areas to higher density and mixed use areas.

Proposed New Walton County Land Uses

Low Density Residential (up to 4 d/u per acre)
Medium Density Residential (4 – 8 d/u per acre)
High Density Residential (9 – 12 d/u per acre)
Low Density Mixed Use
High Density Mixed Use (DRI)
Agriculture
Public Facilities

Parks and Recreation
Conservation
Commercial
Industrial

*Covenants and Restrictions as Part of Land Use*

The neighborhood planning areas established in the Walton County Comprehensive Plan included the sub-category of residential preservation. Residential preservation was intended for areas that were either already developed or in the process of development. The intent was to preserve the existing neighborhood as it was originally designed. To allow this, the residential preservation category included the following definition of the uses, densities, and intensities of development allowed in this category:

Development within RP areas is limited to the type (residential, commercial, workplace, etc.), density, and intensity of development that is shown in the approved plat, development order, or recorded covenants and restrictions that were recorded before December 28, 1992. Unless specified otherwise on a previously approved development order, the land use within an area designated RP shall be one (1) dwelling unit per platted lot.

This provision has caused interpretation problems for Walton County. In many instances, covenants and restrictions that were adopted before December 28, 1992 have now expired. If these covenants and restrictions are still applicable, many parcels in primarily residential neighborhoods have the ability to develop neighborhood commercial developments. If the expired covenants and restrictions are no longer applicable, longstanding neighborhood commercial uses are now non-conforming uses and cannot redevelop or expand. There are also parcels that have not developed, but because of the commercial uses in the surrounding area, sound planning principles dictate that they should also have a commercial use. The ability to use these parcels for commercial development is also questionable under the current land use definitions.

Florida has adopted a Marketable Record Title Act (MRTA), providing that after thirty years, private restrictions on property that are not carried forward in the public record are no longer enforceable. (Appendix B(4)). To address concerns about the effect of MRTA on covenants and restrictions, Florida has provided strict requirements for reinstating covenants and restrictions in neighborhoods where they have expired. (Appendix B(4)). As discussed in the article from the Florida Bar Journal (appendix B(4)), these provisions make allowing uses, densities, and intensities based on expired covenants and restrictions questionable.

The uncertainty caused by this provision has led to a large number of requests for small scale comprehensive plan amendments from property owners seeking greater certainty for their land use. In some areas, commercial uses developed on a number of parcels before the covenants and restrictions expired, but undeveloped parcels cannot develop similar uses, even though residential uses are incompatible with the surrounding developments. The confusion caused by this category makes many of these proposed amendments appear incompatible with the surrounding land uses because the surrounding designation is residential preservation, and the applicant is requesting a commercial use.

As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will seek to alter the future land use of many of these parcels to designate them, as appropriate, residential, commercial, or mixed use. This will allow Walton County to delete consideration of covenants and restrictions from its future land use categories.

#### *Consolidation of Land Use Categories: Neighborhood Planning Areas*

The Walton County comprehensive plan includes numerous land use categories that contain sub-categories. The most often used of these is the neighborhood planning area. This category contains four sub-categories: residential preservation, infill, small neighborhood, and traditional neighborhood development. As discussed above, residential preservation was targeted at already-platted subdivisions, with the intention of preserving established neighborhoods in south Walton. Density in this category is limited to one dwelling unit per platted lot.

Unfortunately, when the maps of the neighborhood planning areas were developed, numerous un-subdivided metes and bounds parcels, most too large to be considered a single-family lot, were included in the residential preservation category. Over the past several years, many of these parcels have sought re-designation to infill, the next-most-dense NPA category, either as scrivener's errors (because of mapping errors or because they didn't match the description of the land use category) or as privately-sponsored small or large scale amendments. (Appendix B(3)). Infill allows a density of up to eight units per acre, and allows some limited neighborhood commercial use as well. Applications for a land use change in these cases have been the source of a great deal of controversy in Walton County. The residents of the adjacent existing platted neighborhoods, mostly platted at much lower densities than eight units per acre, have objected to such a high density land use in adjacent areas, while the owners of the properties seeking the change have very limited choices for alternative land use categories to request. The only other relatively low-density category in south Walton is conservation residential 2:1, which is generally too low a density for most south Walton developments. Although the infill category requires a compatibility analysis, in the past this has not sufficed to

assure the adjoining neighborhood that only compatible development will occur. To partially address this problem, Walton County has done two things: adopted a stricter compatibility ordinance as part of its land development code, and proposed a low density residential category, allowing up to four units per acre, to give property owners an alternative to infill.

An additional issue with all of the NPA categories except residential preservation is that once these areas are developed, they maintain their underlying land use. Thus, even if a parcel develops compatibly at two or three units per acre, redevelopment at much higher intensity, or conversion of the residential uses to commercial, remains a possibility. The developed parcel remains designated as infill, traditional neighborhood, or small neighborhood, even though these categories are no longer appropriate. The only solution is requiring a map amendment for the newly-developed subdivision to change the designation to residential preservation. Creating low and medium density categories would allow the property to retain an appropriate designation whether it was undeveloped or already subdivided.

There are several further issues with the neighborhood planning areas. Many of the parcels designated for small neighborhood or traditional neighborhood development are not large enough to support that type of development, or are not placed in areas where that type of development is appropriate. In some cases, a large parcel of land is designated for a traditional neighborhood development, but preservation requirements or environmental constraints make meeting those requirements impossible. In addition, as discussed further in §IV(h), the neighborhood maps were drawn by hand, were not to scale, were not tied to particular parcels, and frequently give the same area different land uses on different maps. This has caused a great deal of confusion and difficulty for staff, developers, and neighborhoods in interpreting what can and should be built on a particular parcel. Walton County plans to re-map (and re-designate where appropriate) the neighborhood planning areas as part of its EAR-based amendments to correct these problems and allow greater predictability for developers and residents alike.

The neighborhood planning areas were intended to encourage existing neighborhoods – and newly created neighborhoods – to adopt neighborhood plans that would establish specific development criteria to protect the pattern of development in individual neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the neighborhood planning program established in Walton County's land development code required that neighborhood plans be adopted as comprehensive plan amendments. This resulted in only one neighborhood plan being adopted – the Inlet Beach neighborhood plan – and created a great deal of difficulty in quickly amending provisions of the plan when problems arose in implementation. Walton County recently sought to amend its comprehensive plan to allow adoption of neighborhood plans as overlay districts, and is in the process of adopting a companion land development code amendment.

As part of its overall re-mapping effort, Walton County intends to re-evaluate the neighborhood planning areas and correct the mapping of these areas.

*Consolidation of Land Use Categories: Mixed Use and Commercial*

Similar issues have occurred with the four mixed use sub-categories in north Walton: rural low density, rural residential, rural village, and urban residential. These represent extremely similar categories, with the essential difference between them being the allowable density. Rural low density allows one dwelling unit per acre (with potable water), rural residential allows one dwelling unit for 2½ acres, rural village allows two units per acre, and urban residential allows four units per acre. The first three categories could easily be combined into one low density mixed use category. In addition, terming the future land use “low density mixed use” would alleviate any confusion created by allowing neighborhood commercial uses in a land use termed “rural residential.”

Each of these categories allows supporting neighborhood commercial, but all limit the commercial to a certain percentage of the area (five percent in most cases, ten percent in urban residential). The limited percentage of commercial has caused much difficulty in interpretation for staff, developers, citizens, and elected officials. Neither the comprehensive plan nor the land development code gives a method for measuring this percentage. Interpretations have ranged from a percentage of the total area with this designation, a percentage of the contiguous area with this designation, or a percentage of the parcels with this designation, either in total or those that are contiguous. Nor is there any assurance that commercial development will be limited to the most appropriate areas within the designation.

In addition, in north Walton several areas that were designated for mixed-use development were already primarily commercial. In particular, an area west of DeFuniak Springs along Highway 90 has a large concentration of commercial and light industrial businesses, most of which pre-date the current Walton County future land use map. This area was designated rural village, a designation that is primarily residential, but allows limited, neighborhood-supporting, mixed uses. Many of the existing businesses along this corridor do not fit the definition of neighborhood-supporting commercial uses, nor is there any way to determine whether this area meets the 5% limit on commercial uses in rural village. As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will consider re-designating this area, and several areas with similar situations, to a general commercial or light industrial category, as appropriate.

The south Walton land use categories include five mixed use categories, including several that are limited to specific parcels of land. These mixed use categories include: Coastal Center Mixed Use, Village Mixed Use Center, Town

Center One, Town Center Two, and Resort. Again, the main difference between these mixed use centers is density, and in the case of Village Mixed Use Center, the allowable floor/area ratio. These developments have no required percentage of commercial or civic use, although such uses are allowed and encouraged.

As part of the data and analysis for the EAR, Walton County contracted with Fishkind and Associates to analyze the appropriate amount of commercial, industrial, and mixed use development needed in Walton County over the current planning horizon. (Appendix A(4)). Part of their scope of work was determining the best mix of commercial and residential development in mixed use areas and determining a methodology for measuring that mix. Their data and analysis showed that Walton County will need significant increases in the area designated for commercial and industrial land uses, and that mixed use categories can supply a maximum of 20% of that need. They also noted that for mainly residential mixed-use projects to be successful, they require a minimum of 2,000 dwelling units. This indicates that a percentage of mixed-use is appropriate for large, master-planned developments, but not necessarily as part of a general mixed use area, where development is generally piecemeal. As part of its EAR based amendments Walton County will seek to reformulate its mixed-use designations to eliminate the percentage requirement for general mixed-use areas while strengthening the requirements in large, master-planned communities.

### Commercial

The only category limited to commercial (as opposed to mixed) use in Walton County is a north Walton land use. This category includes the following language: “One-quarter mile radius commercial nodes may be located at improved (paved) roadway collector and/or arterial intersections. Boundaries of commercial nodes shall be construed to follow the quarter-quarter section lines nearest to the radius, and shall be mapped as on the Future Land Use Map.”

The first issue that arose with these “commercial nodes” was the mapping. Walton County’s first land use map was at a very large scale, was hand-drawn, and had no connection to particular parcels. This meant that the commercial node often split a parcel into two land uses – commercial node near the highway, and some other land use further away. In addition, the nodes depicted on the map did not correspond to the nodes that would be created following the quarter-quarter section lines nearest a one-quarter mile radius. Another issue arose where there was more than one arterial or collector intersection within the node, leaving the interpretation of the boundary uncertain. This description also created commercial parcels with no highway frontage and no commercial value. This was compounded by the lack of any residential density within the commercial category, which left the property owner with no residential density, no commercial value, and no way to use the land without going through a

comprehensive plan amendment. Existing residences within these areas became non-conforming uses.

As part of the EAR-based amendments, Walton County will re-evaluate the description of all of the commercial categories. The county may choose to adopt separate neighborhood and general commercial categories. The data produced by Fishkind and Associates indicates that Walton County will need an additional 2,000 acres of land designated for office and 3,200 acres of retail before 2025. (Appendix A(4)). They have indicated that only 20% of this need can be met as part of mixed use communities. As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will redefine the commercial land use categories and seek to re-designate existing commercial parcels into an appropriate commercial or mixed-use category. In addition, Walton County will seek additional areas, based on sound planning principles, to designate as commercial areas to serve Walton County's needs through at least 2010. In addition, further applications for land use amendments will be assessed based on this needs analysis.

Consolidation of Land Use Categories: Industrial

In 2003, Walton County created two north county industrial categories, medium industrial and heavy industrial. Only heavy industrial was added to the land development code. In addition, the south Walton land uses contain both a light industrial center category and an industrial category, while the north and south Walton land use categories contain a light industrial category. These categories could easily be combined into two industrial categories, one limited industrial appropriate for the entire county, and one general industrial that would be appropriate in the northern portion of the county. Fishkind and Associates' data indicate an additional 7,300 acres of land categorized for industrial land use will be needed by 2025. (Appendix A(4)). Through its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will seek to consolidate these land use categories and adopt the appropriate amount and types of industrial land use.

Consolidation of Land Use Categories: Conservation

Walton County's conservation categories are similarly confusing and overlapping. There are three categories of conservation residential, with the only difference being the allowed density.

The comprehensive plan, as adopted, included the following provision regarding all of the conservation residential categories:

Interim development criteria shall include a maximum of 10% clearance of natural vegetation and retention of 90% of the parcel in open space. Open space shall include unpaved parking and

access, stormwater retention, water bodies and courses, passive recreation, and silviculture. . . .

Within six (6) months of plan adoption, the County shall amend the Land Development Code to include a set of performance standards that allows development based on low/zero impacts, utilizing GIS/suitability methodologies. Criteria can include:

- a. Land management techniques for natural systems
- b. Wildlife corridor protection
- c. Impervious surface limitations
- d. Site clearing
- e. Setbacks and screening

These standards, intended only as an interim measure, are still in effect. The land development code standards anticipated under this section were never adopted.

The 10% rule has proved unworkable for a number of reasons. This provision is confusing and contradictory. It allows 10% of the natural vegetation to be cleared, but allows access and stormwater retention, both of which would require clearing of natural vegetation, to be included in the 90% of the site that is required to be open space. At two units per acre, development is a practical impossibility with only 10% of the site allowed to be cleared: access, utilities, and stormwater retention require nearly 20% of a site, not counting the building footprints.

In addition, these policies are both over-broad and redundant. Walton County already has some of the strictest vegetation-preservation policies in the state. These are targeted at those communities identified by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory as threatened or endangered. The more unique and valuable the community, the greater the preservation required by the comprehensive plan. With these land use categories, however, the vegetative community is subject to 90% preservation whether or not the community is unique and threatened. For example, these land use categories specifically allow silvicultural uses, but then require that 90% of a planted pine community be preserved. Vegetation considered in need of protection is covered by other policies, while these land use restrictions simply serve to protect additional vegetation that may not be in need of protection.

The same analysis applies to the wetland protection policies. The county already actively discourages impact on wetlands through density transfer provisions, required wetland buffers, and other permitting requirements. Property that is designated conservation residential is specifically subject to the wetlands preservation policies of the comprehensive plan. The strict open space and

vegetation-preservation policies do not serve to protect wetlands further than they are already protected by the conservation element.

As part of its EAR-based amendments, each conservation parcel should be analyzed to determine whether conservation or a low-density residential category is appropriate. There are no properties in Walton County currently designated as either CR 1:10 or private conservation, so these categories should be dropped in favor of an overall conservation category that would include both state and private conservation lands.

### Other Categories

Coastal village and town centers one and two are designations for particular parcels with unique features. Coastal village is the designation for WaterSound North, a DRI located in South Walton that has limited mixed use and relatively low residential density. Town Center One stems from property given to Walton County by the State of Florida for a government/education complex, and includes adjacent privately-owned parcels as well. Walton County is in the process of adopting a master plan for this community. (Appendices B(5), B(6)). Town Center Two is property governed by a settlement agreement, including permissible land uses, intensities, and densities, entered into during the State of Florida's acquisition of Deer Lake and Tops'l Hill State Park. All three of these properties would be better addressed, from a planning perspective, by a future land use allowing for mixed uses and an overlay district containing provisions of the master plans for each of these communities.

### Summary

The major change to the future land use element that Walton County wishes to pursue in a phased plan starting with its EAR-based amendments is a shift away from multiple land use categories to fewer land use categories. As part of this shift to fewer, simpler land use categories, the county may, in the future, consider instituting a limited zoning ordinance that would allow further land use restrictions than those created by the future land use category.

**d. Produce a Financially Feasible Capital Improvement Program**

Walton County received a grant from the Department of Community Affairs to assist the county in developing a financially feasible capital improvement program. (Appendix F(1)). Walton County contracted with Fishkind and Associates to assist the county in preparing a draft of a CIP and revisions to the capital improvement element. Walton County has submitted the drafts of the CIP and CIE to DCA, and is in the process of resolving any comments the department may have. (Appendices F(2), F(3)).

Walton County is in the process of working with the West Florida Regional Planning Council to set up the Fiscal Impact Analysis Model (FIAM) for the county. FIAM is recognized by DCA as an acceptable methodology for determining the financial feasibility of a county's capital improvement program.

e. **Edit Confusing Language in the Comprehensive Plan and Ensure Consistency with Land Development Code**

The county has chosen to address this issue by including a text of the comprehensive plan (see §VIII(b)) with notations of needed revisions below each policy. Needed revisions to the land development code are discussed as well.

f. **Coordinate Parcel Data with Current and Future Land Use Maps**

In November of 1996, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners adopted three maps that defined the County's future land use: (1) a 36 x 28 inch map of the north/central areas of the county, hand-drawn on various sections of copied "General Highway Maps" provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation, (2) a series of maps known as the "Neighborhood Planning Maps" on 60 8.5 x 11 inch sections of copied plat maps, and (3) a 44 x 36 inch colored digital map of south Walton. The digital map and the Neighborhood Planning Maps depicted the land use designations for those areas south of the bridge also known as South Walton.

These documents have presented Walton County with a number of interpretation issues. The land use map for North Walton County depicts a number of commercial nodes that are inconsistent with the description of commercial nodes in the comprehensive plan, and which did not reflect the actual or anticipated use of the property. The integrity of this map was compromised when changes were made to the original, many before or without adoption. Because this map lacks an accurate scale, and lacked an underlying depiction of existing parcels, many parcels were inadvertently given two or more land use designations without defined limits. It appears that many of the FLU designations were inconsistent with the actual and anticipated uses of the property.

The digitized map of south Walton land uses also lacked consistency with actual and anticipated uses. The bases for this map – the original tabular data and metadata -- are no longer available. This makes the map extremely difficult to interpret, as there is no record of how the FLU designations were generated. Some of the areas on this map reference the neighborhood planning maps. There were hand-drawn changes to this map, without any documented references. The most difficult aspect of this map is that the same color was used in several instances to designate more than one type of use. For example, village mixed use centers and large scale agriculture were both designated with the same shade of green; state land and undesignated lands were both identified as white.

The neighborhood planning maps were hand-drawn on letter-size copies of plat maps. Unfortunately, there are numerous inconsistencies in FLU designation from page to page where the pages overlap the same area. In other words, an area designated "infill" on one map may be designated "residential preservation" on a map that depicts an adjacent area. There are further inconsistencies where areas designated on the digital map are given one designation (e.g. coastal center) while the neighborhood maps give a different designation (e.g. residential preservation). In some areas these inconsistencies create enormous differences in allowable density and intensity depending on

which FLU designation is applied. In some instances developers have been given several land use determinations, have acted in reliance on those determinations, only to find out that their parcels have more than one designation and that their development is not consistent with the most accurate of them. These maps are difficult to read, and often have no designated scale. Some of the areas designated as neighborhood planning area were not depicted on these maps at all, leaving the area without a real FLU designation. And again, the maps were compromised when changes were made without or before adoption.

In addition to these problems, all of these maps lack a true and consistent scale. Nor was there any initial distinction between the future land use map and the existing land use map. Over time, most supporting documentation for these maps have been lost or destroyed. In many map amendments, the parcels being amended were often not noted by unique identifiers, such as a parcel id number. In many cases poorly written or inaccurate legal descriptions were all that was available. When the hand-drawn maps were digitized, the lack of an adequate parcel layer, a consistent scale, human error, undocumented adjustments to original drawings, inaccurate amendment information, and the other problems noted above left the digital maps riddled with errors.

As a result of the lack of detailed information and the technology necessary to prepare an accurate existing land use map in 1996, the county has recognized that certain land use designations on the FLUM were either derived from a scrivener's error in the drawing of the map or were predicated on incorrect data. Where the facts and evidence support that there was a mapping error based on a scrivener's error (meaning that the error was the result of a purely clerical or mechanical mistake in the assignment of a particular land use, and not the result of a mistake or change in the judgment, policy, or intent of planning staff or the Walton County Board of County Commissioners) the county will re-designate such parcel in its EAR-based amendments, as appropriate, to correct the scrivener's error.

While recognizing that scrivener's errors have occurred and should be corrected, the county is also cognizant of the potential for abuse of this mechanism to secure a land use change that would otherwise not be justified. Such abuse would undermine the integrity of the comprehensive plan. Therefore, in order to eliminate the potential for making land use changes based on the false pretense of correcting a scrivener's error, any re-designation on the FLUM based on a scrivener's error will be identified as such in the EAR-based amendment, and will be supported by the necessary factual documentation and evidentiary support to justify the amendment as the correction of a scrivener's error.

Through the cooperation and support of the Walton County Board of County Commissioners the Planning and Development Services Division has created a Geographic Information Analysis (GIA) office. Using the latest

technology, equipment, and software this office is responsible for creating, deploying and maintaining the ELUM and the FLUM. In addition, the department has been asked to establish digital mapping systems using ESRI mapping software, which will accurately overlay the Walton County Property Appraiser's parcel layer. Using this technology, the department will review current map(s), comprehensive plan requirements, DOR codes, ordinances, field data and other currently available information to produce two county wide land use maps, one depicting actual existing land use and one depicting the future land use designations. These maps will use industry standard (American Planning Association) coloring codes wherever possible while maintaining adequate distinction between designation types. The department will produce and maintain accurate textual documentation, accurately portray spatially, adopted amendments, maintain accurate boundary lines through documented annexation ordinances, and use distinctive and unique identifier's to accurately differentiate between parcels (polygons) together with the requirement of both digital map data and a complete legal description. One of the main immediate goals of the department is to work with the property appraiser's office to establish a quality parcel layer that is free of topology problems. Currently, overlapping and duplicate polygons are an issue with the parcel layer, and the department will need to add missing attribute data to approximately 9000 polygons.

**g. Complete and Adopt a Town Center-1 Master Plan**

In late July, 2006, Walton County submitted a package of comprehensive plan amendments, including several minor text amendments to the future land use element that supported adoption of the Town Center 1 Master Plan. The Master Plan is currently in draft form, scheduled to be submitted to the Walton County Board of County Commissioners for their review and possible adoption in November, 2006. (Appendices B(5) – B(7)).

**h. Verify Accuracy of Neighborhood Map Series and Correct as Appropriate**

In November of 1996, the Walton County Board of County Commissioners adopted a series of maps known as the “Neighborhood Planning Maps” on 60 8.5” x 11” sheets. The neighborhood planning areas were hand drawn on various sections of copied plat maps, and the various subcategories of the neighborhood planning areas were noted on each sheet. At the same time, the county also adopted a 44” x 36” colored digital map of the south Walton area that had been created by consultants. This map also delineated the neighborhood planning areas, but did not delineate the various subcategories.

The neighborhood planning areas were intended to build upon the historical patterns of settlement in South Walton County. Areas with already established neighborhoods were intended to be designated residential preservation, undeveloped areas adjacent to these established neighborhoods were intended to be designated infill, and large undeveloped tracts were intended to be designated for the development of small neighborhoods or traditional neighborhoods.

The small neighborhood planning maps were created using photocopied portions of the general highway map provided by the Florida Department of Transportation in January 1992. The intended land use designations were then hand-drawn onto the photocopied areas. As a result, the maps contain many errors, omissions, topology issues, and duplications. The maps did not use an established scale and boundaries were often blurred by the thickness of the writing utensil. Where two separate maps included the same area on each, the duplicated area was often given different designations on different maps. (See map series for samples). The areas designated as neighborhood planning areas in the small neighborhood maps were often given a different land use on the large digital map of the same area.

The Walton County Board of County Commissioners is committed to using current technology to develop clear and consistent existing and future land use maps for the county. To that end, the commission has created a Geographic Information and Analysis department within the Planning and Development Services Division, with the task of creating a full and accurate map series for the county. As part of its EAR-based amendments, the county will seek to re-designate any parcels with multiple or inappropriate land uses and create a base layer with parcel numbers as unique identifiers for each polygon. This will require a major revision of the county’s map series, but once the series is complete it will be a valuable tool for implementing the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan. The new mapping of the existing and future land use maps will be an EAR-based map amendment.

i. **Update Comprehensive Plan to be Consistent with New Statutes and Laws**

Since the first Walton County EAR was adopted in 1999, the Florida Legislature has made the most profound changes in the rules regarding growth management since the Growth Management Act was first adopted. Over that period of time, the legislature moved gradually toward adopting concurrency rules for water supply and public schools, changed the rules on transportation concurrency, and emphasized planning for post-disaster redevelopment, compatibility with military installations, and affordable housing. Walton County's comprehensive plan has been amended to take some of these areas into account, but further amendments are needed to bring the plan into full compliance with state law.

**School Concurrency**

As early as 1996, the legislature included the requirement that intergovernmental coordination elements include consideration of school board plans and required that counties establish, through interlocal agreement, joint processes to coordinate their comprehensive plan with the school board's plans, and establish collaborative planning and decision-making on population projections and school siting. (Fla. Stat. §163.3177(6)(h)(2))

In 1998, (98-176, Laws of Florida) the legislature established requirements for a public school facilities element and allowed local governments to voluntarily adopt school concurrency standards. Walton County did not adopt a school facilities element, or any concurrency requirements.

In 2002, the legislature mandated that school boards and local governments enter into an interlocal agreement addressing school siting, enrollment forecasting, school capacity, infrastructure and safety needs of schools, schools as emergency shelters, and collocation of facilities. (Chapter 2002-296, Laws of Florida). Walton County negotiated and entered into an interlocal agreement pursuant to this mandate.

In 2005, the legislature again toughened the standards relating to cooperation between local governments and school boards (Chapter 2005-290, Laws of Florida). The new law required that local governments adopt a public school facilities element, added schools to the list of items required to meet concurrency, and required consideration of co-location of facilities, location of schools near residential areas, and use of schools as emergency shelters. The bill also allocated funds for seven pilot programs to assist local governments in meeting the new criteria. (2005-290, Laws of Florida).

Walton County was chosen as one of the seven pilot programs, and has been working with the Walton County School Board, DeFuniak Springs, Freeport,

and Paxton to complete individual public school facilities elements for each local government and a joint interlocal agreement. Pursuant to the grant agreement for the model program, Walton County partnered with Morris-Depew Associates, Inc., Weiss Serota Heifman Pastoriza Cole and Boniske, and the University of Florida Center for Better Communities to develop and analyze the appropriate data on which to base a public school facilities element. (Appendices I(1) – I(3)). This data included population and housing, school age population, housing characteristics, development trends, enrollment and capacity of existing schools, and funding for capital improvements. Based on this analysis, the various parties have completed a draft interlocal agreement and a draft public school facilities element, and both of these should be ready for adoption shortly. (Appendices I(1) – I(3)). These two documents, along with the data and analyses supporting them, should bring the Walton County Comprehensive Plan into compliance with the school-related requirements of chapter 163.

#### *Traffic Concurrency, Proportionate Fair Share, and the Capital Improvement Element*

The most critical change relating to transportation is the new requirement that local governments adopt a methodology for assessing proportionate fair share mitigation where a particular facility cannot provide traffic concurrency. When Chapter 2005-290, Laws of Florida, went into effect, Walton County had one facility – CR 30A – where developments lacked any means to meet traffic concurrency. In order to rectify this situation, Walton County adopted a comprehensive plan amendment in the fall of 2005 to add several 30A capacity projects to its capital improvements program, and adopted a proportionate fair share methodology in February of 2006 to allow developers to contribute to those projects.

In addition to proportionate fair share, Walton County adopted a new concurrency management system to better assess impacts to traffic concurrency throughout the county. (Appendices G(12), G(13)). Walton County received a grant from the Department of Community Affairs to assist the county in updating its capital improvement element, and contracted with Fishkind and Associates to provide the data for that element. (Appendix D(29)). Walton County is pursuing an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation concerning the application of proportionate fair share mitigation to strategic intermodal systems facilities. These updates to the Comprehensive Plan are discussed in greater depth in §IV(j) and §V(c).

As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will need to update its transportation and capital improvements elements to reflect these changes. Walton County intends to adopt a 10-year concurrency management system, and an associated 10-year CIP. The capital improvement element and CIP table will address transportation improvements, in addition to all other facilities subject to a level of service standard.

### Other Transportation-Related changes to State Law

2005-281, Laws of Florida, created the Northwest Florida Expressway Authority, whose primary purpose is to improve mobility along U.S. 98 through construction of additional roads. This authority, and any related Walton County projects, will need to be addressed in both the transportation and capital improvements elements of the Walton County comprehensive plan.

### Encroachment and Compatibility with Military Installations

A large portion of the central part of Walton County is occupied by part of Eglin Air Force Base. Until recently, the central part of Walton County saw very little growth, and compatibility with Eglin was not a pressing issue.

In Chapter 2004-230, Laws of Florida, the State determined that compatibility of land development around military bases was a critical planning issue and required an exchange of information between local governments and military installations. It allowed the military installation to comment on whether a proposed land use change is compatible with the installation's Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ), an Installation Environmental Noise Management Program (IENMP), and/or an adopted Joint Land Use Study (JLUS), and to determine whether the proposed change would adversely affect the installation's mission. It required that local governments include a representative of the installation as an ex-officio, non-voting member of their local planning agency. Finally, it required that local governments amend their future land use element to include criteria to be used to achieve the compatibility of adjacent or closely proximate lands with the military installation.

In addition to these state law requirements, several things have changed that will require Walton County to update its comprehensive plan to fully address compatibility and encroachment issues. First, Eglin AFB is gaining 6,000 enlisted and civilian support personnel that are being transferred from other bases that were completely or partially closed through the Base Realignment and Closure process. These additional personnel and their families will create a need for affordable housing, impact traffic in central Walton County, and fuel further development in Freeport, Mossy Head, and other communities immediately adjacent to Eglin.

In addition, growth has been steadily moving north into central Walton County. There are at least four proposed developments in this area that either meet the criteria of being a DRI or are just below the DRI threshold.

As discussed in more detail in §VI(j)(1), Walton County proposes to address these concerns in several ways. Walton County is participating with Okaloosa County, Santa Rosa County, and each municipality adjacent to Eglin

AFB to perform a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). This study will provide the necessary data and analysis that will support any necessary adjustments to the future land use map to limit incompatible land uses adjacent to Eglin AFB, while assuring sufficient densities and intensities of development to support Eglin's personnel. Walton County is also planning to partner with the same local governments to complete a Growth Management study to ensure that adequate infrastructure will be available to serve Eglin. Eglin has also seen the need for a height assessment around the base, and has asked the county to formally request the base to conduct such a study.

Walton County has included an Eglin representative on the planning commission, and is submitting projects, land use changes, and code amendments that might adversely affect Eglin to the base commander for review. As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will adopt criteria to be used to achieve the compatibility of adjacent or closely proximate lands with Eglin AFB, and plans to update those criteria at the end of the joint land use study if necessary. Once the joint land use study, the height assessment, and the growth management studies are completed, Walton County will seek to amend its comprehensive plan to address any issues noted by those studies.

#### Water Supply Planning

The legislature has been incrementally moving toward requiring water supply planning as part of the local government comprehensive plan. In 2002-296, Laws of Florida, the state required that the local government amend their intergovernmental coordination, potable water, and conservation elements to consider the applicable water management district's regional water supply plan and to adopt a 10-year or more work plan for constructing water supply facilities necessary to meet projected water demand.

Chapter 2004-381, Laws of Florida, required local governments to address water supply sources necessary to meet and achieve the existing and projected water use demand for the planning period established in the comprehensive plan. It mandated that the adopted 10-year work plan be updated every five years within a year of the water management district's update of their regional water supply plan. (Chapter 2004-381, Laws of Florida, Chapter 2004-372, Laws of Florida). Chapter 2004-381 also gave incentives for the use of preferred water sources and encouraged the use of reclaimed water in lieu of groundwater or surface water. This bill also strongly encouraged water conservation, including xeriscaping. Walton County is planning to adopt a xeriscaping ordinance in its land development code once the EAR is adopted and submitted.

Chapter 2005-291, Laws of Florida, comprehensively addressed the development of alternative water supplies, strengthened stormwater management rules, and required local governments to implement water supply concurrency. In order to meet these requirements, Walton County's EAR-based

amendments will strengthen our stormwater and pollution control requirements to meet or exceed the new criteria. In addition, the potable water sub-element of the comprehensive plan will need to be amended to incorporate water supply planning, including funding needs and options, and water concurrency. Walton County is in the process of developing and adopting the required 10-year work plan. (Appendix D(1)). Regional Utilities is working closely with the county and the Northwest Florida Water Management District to support an additional eight million gallons per day to support the expected demand for potable water in central and south Walton County.

### Affordable Housing

Affordable housing has been of increasing concern to the Florida Legislature over the past seven years. In 2004-372, the legislature made findings of fact on the lack of affordable rentals for very-low-income, low-income, and moderate-income persons. This bill encouraged local governments to allow accessory dwelling units as affordable rentals, and authorized local governments to adopt an ordinance allowing accessory dwelling units in areas zoned for single-family residential use if the local government finds that there is a shortage of affordable rental units in their area. Accessory dwelling units could then count toward the affordable housing component of the housing element in the local government's comprehensive plan.

In 2006 (HB 1363), the legislature passed additional legislation supporting affordable housing initiatives. It requires counties and cities to inventory their property and determine its suitability for affordable housing. It extended the ability to permit accessory dwelling units to those with extremely-low income, allowed independent districts to offer housing and housing assistance to its employees, and allowed local governments to request that state lands be declared surplus for the purpose of providing affordable housing. This bill amended several provisions of Chapter 380 to allow previously approved developments of regional impact to add additional affordable housing units without triggering the substantial deviation provisions.

In addition, this legislation encouraged local governments with housing assistance programs to define essential service personnel for the county, including teachers, police and fire personnel, health care personnel, and other essential workers. Each local government is encouraged to develop a strategy within its housing assistance program to recruit and retain essential personnel, including both public and private sector employers. It also targets funding from the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to areas where 1) the disparity between the median income and the median sales price for a single-family home is the greatest (Walton County is currently ranked fourth in the state), 2) the population growth as a percentage rate of increase is the greatest, and 3) the local government has adopted innovative regulatory and financial incentives to support affordable housing, including expediting review of development orders,

supporting development near transportation hubs and major employment centers, and adopting land development regulations that allow flexibility in densities, use of accessory units, mixed use developments, and flexible lot configurations. This bill also allows local governments to give density bonus incentives to landowners who voluntarily donate fee simple interest in property to the local government to assist the local government in providing affordable housing. It requires that the local government adopt a comprehensive plan amendment for the property receiving the density bonus, and allows such an amendment to be adopted as a small scale amendment.

In 2005, Walton County adopted an amendment to its comprehensive plan to implement some of the strategies discussed in this legislation. This amendment allowed an expedited permit and site plan approval process including engineering, development review, and platting procedures and density bonuses of between 10% and 100% based on the project's location, existing affordable housing in the area, and land use compatibility. In addition, Walton County is involved in an innovative public-private partnership through the Walton County Chamber of Commerce, discussed in more detail in §V(a).

As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will consider allowing accessory units in some future land use categories for the purpose of providing affordable rental units. EAR-based amendments will incorporate the requirement that the county inventory county properties and determine their suitability for affordable housing. Walton County will also pursue an amendment allowing density bonuses for donated land.

### *Agricultural Lands*

The legislature has increasingly been concerned with the protection of rural areas and farm lands, and has implemented a variety of provisions to limit the premature conversion of land from agricultural uses to development. In Chapter 2001-279, Laws of Florida, the legislature implemented a limited program allowing up to five local governments to create rural land stewardship areas with a minimum acreage of 50,000 acres. These areas encouraged the use of innovative planning and development strategies, including the use of transferable credits from the RLSA to a receiving area.

Chapter 2004-372, Laws of Florida, expanded the use of rural land stewardship areas beyond the initial five local governments, and reduced the minimum acreage from 50,000 to 10,000. This bill allowed the Department of Community Affairs, the Department of Environmental Protection, water management districts, and regional planning councils to assist local governments in creating rural land stewardship areas.

Chapter 2002-162, Laws of Florida, defined "farm," "farm operation," and "farm product" and limited a local government's authority to duplicate regulation

of farming practices already governed by state and federal laws. In 2006 (HB 1015), the legislature passed a bill defining agricultural enclaves and making plan amendments easier for those whose property fits that definition.

Walton County has not yet adopted a rural land stewardship area, but as development increases and puts pressure on the northern Walton County agricultural areas, the county may wish to consider adopting such an area. As part of its EAR-based amendments, Walton County intends to adopt language allowing such an area to be designated in the future. Walton County will also incorporate language protecting farms from duplicate regulations, and add the definition of an agricultural enclave, with appropriate language supporting amendments of such enclaves.

### Coastal Issues

Ch. 2002-296, Laws of Florida requires local governments to address the feasibility of redevelopment in the coastal high-hazard area (CHHA) in their evaluation and appraisal report (see §§VI(b) and VII(m)). It requires local governments to assess whether any past reduction in land use density impairs the property rights of current residents, and requires that those property rights be balanced with public safety considerations.

This issue is discussed more fully in §VI(b) of this report. In essence, Walton County prohibits any new development in the coastal high hazard area unless the proposed lot contains sufficient non-CHHA buildable area that the building footprint will be out of the CHHA. (Policy C-4.2.6). This regulation, enacted as part of the 1996 adoption of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan, severely limits the amount of new residential development allowed in the CHHA. The only new residential development allowed in the CHHA would occur on lots that were of record before December 28, 1992, or as part of the redevelopment of currently existing developments, where the density and intensity would be limited to the amount already existing on the property. Because of the high bluffs that protect the majority of the Gulf front property in Walton County, and the extensive amount of property in state, private, or local conservation, only a very limited amount of undeveloped CHHA exists in Walton County. Thus, this regulation affects only a few properties within the county. ~~This regulation has severely impaired the property rights of current landowners, whose property is far less valuable because there is no possibility of increasing the density.~~

j. **Develop congestion mitigation strategies for Highways 331, 90, and 20 (and other Walton County transportation issues)**

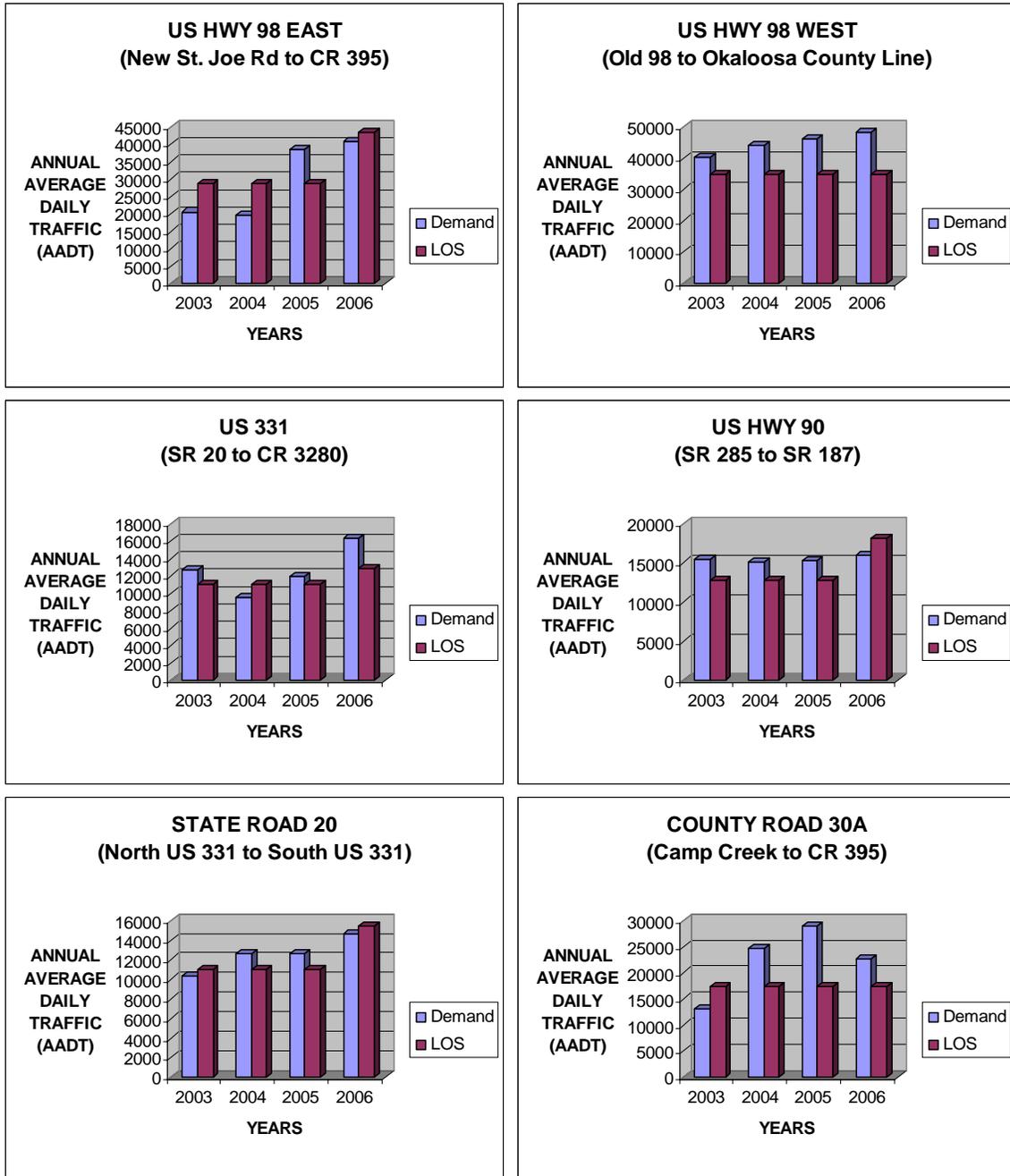
*Defining the Transportation Issues*

The major transportation network within Walton County is comprised of the following corridors as shown on the Walton County Map of Major Arterials. (Appendix G(30)).

- **Interstate I-10** – is an east-west segment of the national interstate highway system that is located in the northern 3<sup>rd</sup> quadrant from the south end of Walton County.
- **County Road 30A** – is an east-west corridor that traverses Walton County along the Gulf of Mexico. The proximity of this corridor to the coast, the amount of seasonal development, and the soaring value of land serve to set the character of CR 30A as a scenic corridor. Because of these components the Walton County Board of County Commissioners has determined that methods to improve the level of service along this corridor will be confined to the existing right-of-way for CR 30A (unless an owner is willing to work with the county and provide right-of-way for a roundabout, turn lane, or other intersection improvement).
- **US Highway 98 (State Road 30)** – is an east-west segment of the Florida SIS that is located in the southern 1<sup>st</sup> quadrant from the south end of Walton County.
- **State Road 20** – is an east-west segment of the Florida SIS that is located in the southern 2<sup>nd</sup> quadrant from the south end of Walton County.
- **State Road 90** – is an east-west segment of the Florida highway system that is located in the northern 3<sup>rd</sup> quadrant from the south end of Walton County.
- **US Highway 331 (State Road 87)** - is a north- south segment of the Florida SIS that is located in the northern 3<sup>rd</sup> quadrant from the south end of Walton County

The available roadway capacity of each of these major corridors is shown in the Transportation Concurrency Summary of Walton County (TCS) in the bar chart for each roadway corridor. While actual capacities along each corridor vary as noted in the concurrency spreadsheets (appendix G(40)), the summary information for each of the transportation corridors is indicative of the most constricted segment along each respective corridor. For some of the corridors the most constricted segments have changed with time. The intent of the TCS charts is to illustrate the general status of concurrency for each major roadway as the process has advanced in time.

## Transportation Concurrency Summary



Appendix G(27) includes a copy of the 2003 – 2006 concurrency spreadsheets from July of each year for all monitored segments throughout Walton County.

### Interstate 10

This corridor is a major limited-access freeway that is under the authority of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). As such this corridor is excluded from the Walton County CMS and any concurrency issue discussions of this corridor are referred to the FDOT.

### CR 30A

Early projects along this corridor used a variation of the new urbanist approach to land use. As a result, the county has identified this corridor as a limited collector, with the right-of-way and drive lanes limited to the existing configuration of the corridor.

Improvements to the LOS of this corridor must be provided through operational improvements, including multimodal bike paths, traffic calming roadways, roundabout intersections, parallel service roads for parking, and project access and pedestrian ways. Improving the LOS by lane widening, turn lanes, or added traffic lanes are constricted by the limited right-of-way. Multi-lane improvements along this roadway would also be contrary to the designation of CR 30A as a scenic corridor.

The EAR based amendments will evaluate operational improvements along the entire corridor and seek to establish incentives for such improvements as a part of future development along this corridor.

### US Highway 98 (State Road 30) West (Airport Road to CR 30A Intersection)

As noted in both the TCS and the spreadsheets, several segments of this corridor have lost available transportation capacity through increased development in Walton County, Bay County, Okaloosa County, and various cities along the US Highway 98 corridor. As a response to the increasing need for improved LOS on US 98, the Florida legislature created the US 98 Transportation Authority in 2005. Because of the long-standing need to increase the LOS on the western segments of US 98 (ranging from CR-30A intersection west to the Okaloosa County line), planning and engineering studies for improvements from Airport Road in Destin/Okaloosa County to the intersection with CR-30A in Walton County are well underway. This segment of US Highway 98 is the Okaloosa-Walton TPO's top priority in the five-year plan. Current activities associated with the western segments of US 98 are:

- PD&E study June 2006 (appendix G(23))
- Traffic Study (appendix G(22))
- Stormwater land needs study (appendix G(21))
- Creation of the 98 Transportation Authority

Walton County's EAR-based amendments will provide for consistency between the Walton County CIP, the Okaloosa-Walton TPO plans, and any other improvement efforts by the FDOT and the 98 Corridor Authority.

*US Highway 98 East (CR 30A west to the Bay County line)*

This is the portion of the US 98 corridor located from Walton County's boundary with Bay County to the western intersection of US 98 and CR 30A. Walton County anticipates increased development activity along this portion of US 98. This, along with increased construction costs for improvements on SIS facilities, warrants segmentation of roadways for both operational analyses and planning activities. The needs of this portion of the US 98 corridor are considered separately from the US Highway 98 West corridor, since the PD & E for the west part of the corridor is separately listed in the Okaloosa-Walton TPO project list.

The EAR based amendments will coordinate the CIE and CIP with the 98 Authority and TPO's programs to assure seamless planning, budgeting, and design efforts along the entire US Highway 98 corridor from the Okaloosa County line to the Bay County line.

*State Road 20*

State Road 20 traverses Walton County east to west. Several miles of the western portion of this corridor have suffered hurricane surge flooding and shoreline erosion along the Choctawhatchee Bay. The central portion of the corridor travels through Freeport, Florida. Walton County is negotiating with Freeport to establish seamless coordination of transportation planning, implementation schedules, and needs assessment. This coordination process will be supported through EAR based amendments to the comprehensive plan.

The eastern portion of the corridor travels through the proposed "Freeport East Urban Service Area" and the growing unincorporated community of Bruce, Florida. As this area of the SR 20 corridor is at the start of an active development cycle, EAR based amendments will include a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the area. The LRTP will identify right-of-way constraint areas and provide for right-of-way acquisition and preservation. It will support coordination among the needs of the City of Freeport, the Eglin military reservation, Walton County, and the proposed Freeport East Urban Service Area. In addition, the LRTP will support hurricane evacuation planning and other operational improvements. Currently, as in other areas of Walton County, this corridor has no alternate parallel or grid routes available. Walton County will propose EAR-based amendments to encourage the proposed urban service area to use parallel public roadway corridors and a grid street pattern to provide alternate transportation routes.

### State Road 90

The State Road 90 corridor traverses Walton County east to west north of I-10. The western portion of the corridor defines the southern boundary of the proposed Mossy Head Urban Service Area. Walton County will support a corridor management approach to capacity needs, funding, and right-of-way requirements for several proposed developments of regional impact in the proposed Mossy Head Urban Service Area. Most of the roadway corridors adjacent to SR 90 are local directional corridors with few alternate parallel routes available. EAR based amendments will be developed to support the use of parallel public roadway corridors and development of a grid street pattern that will provide alternate transportation routes to assist in meeting the LOS for the SR 90 corridor.

### US Highway 331

The US 331 corridor is the only south-north corridor that traverses Walton County and intersects with the other major corridors. The US 331 corridor also serves as the only corridor that links the three incorporated cities in Walton County (DeFuniak Springs, Freeport, and Paxton) with one another, the I-10 corridor, and the Beaches of South Walton.

As noted in both the TCS and the spreadsheets, several segments of this corridor have lost available transportation capacity. A PD&E study was prepared by H.W. Lochner, Inc. in October of 1996 for the US 331 corridor from US 98 to I-10. (Appendix G(18)). As a result of the PD&E, a US 331 bypass around the community of Freeport, Florida, was begun in 2005 with construction scheduled for completion in November of 2007. However, two significant portions of the corridor, one north of this improved portion and the other south of this improved portion, continue to have the demand for capacity exceed the required LOS. FDOT's SIS estimates for increasing the LOS for these portions range from \$42.2 million for the Owl's Head portion to \$ 47.5 million for the portion that crosses the Choctawhatchee Bay (excluding the cost of a bridge).

The Choctawhatchee Bay crossing improvements present sensitive environmental challenges that will need to be addressed. Solutions to these environmental issues will impact construction costs, schedules, and public support for any proposed projects.

### Current Interim Activities

As the LOS needs have increased for all major corridors, the county has begun to implement various strategies to assure that the LOS for the roadway corridors throughout the county keep pace with the increased demands of development. In 2005, the county adopted several transportation management

strategies through comprehensive plan amendments and related land development code amendments, including:

- Upgrades to the system for tracking concurrency management
- Use of operational studies to improve traffic flow
- Partnering between public and private interests to improve traffic flow and provide increased LOS
- Adoption of proportional fair share program

In its EAR-based amendments, the county will adopt any necessary modifications to the comprehensive plan and to the land development code to assure that LOS availability, funding, and schedules meet the demands of development and ensure that the county's CIP is financially feasible. The next sections discuss the past and current status of the CMS along with the future needs to be considered as a part of the EAR.

### Concurrency Management System

As the needs of development grew and the established level of service on the transportation network began to be used, Walton County realized that it was unable to wait for the next EAR cycle to address concurrency management system issues. Walton County has continued to implement, as allowed within the structure of the existing comprehensive plan, various land development code policies to improve the existing concurrency management system. The following is a review of the methods and improvements implemented by Walton County since the 1999 EAR.

The transportation concurrency system in Walton County has historically phased through the following stages:

- Single roadway segment tracking of used capacities
- Single roadway segment tracking of available capacity using spreadsheet analysis
- Single roadway segment tracking of available capacity using multi-roadway interaction using an operational analysis
- Single roadway segment tracking of possible segment improvements to increase available capacity using multi-roadway interaction using an operational analysis

In the early 1990's, Walton County developed a concurrency tracking system that began to track the capacity needs of developments for approximately 30 segments across Walton County. Staff performed this tracking manually on an annual basis for developments along each of the benchmark segments of roadway. (Appendix G(27)). This concurrency tracking system compared available LOS and accumulating development needs using annual average daily trips (AADT) counts. In 2006, as a result of the draft 2005 "Walton County Transportation Concurrency Determination Methodology and Procedures" by Genesis Group (appendix G(12)), the AADT counts are in the process of being

converted to PM/peak hour directional service volume with PM/peak hour counts used for subsequent traffic concurrency analyses. Genesis' final report is included in the county's data and analysis. (Appendix G(12)).

In 2003, Walton County developed a concurrency tracking system that assembled data for approximately 55 segments, tracking the demand and the available LOS for each segment. Tracking the available LOS, the changing existing usage as noted through annual FDOT traffic counts, and the updated demand for each segment allowed staff to determine and track available capacity. (Appendix G(40)). This system was limited to the 55 segments in the tracking system spreadsheet. Accumulated impacts of a project's transportation needs beyond these segments could only be determined by incorporating the changes reflected in the annual update by FDOT of the "background" trips counted across specified portions of the roadway system in the county.

### Operational Studies

As the tracking spreadsheets began to indicate that demands were exceeding the provided LOS for the segment closest to a proposed project, Walton County began to require a detailed operational analysis to evaluate traffic distribution for a particular segment and specific improvements, either physical or operational, that would improve the LOS and allow a specific project to proceed. These trips were added to the tracking spreadsheet and indicated the LOS to be less than the demand. Once this situation occurred, the county required all future development along this portion of roadway corridor to provide an operational analysis assuring that the project met concurrency.

As operational analyses for projects started to indicate that new projects would exceed the LOS on various road segments, county staff began to require road improvements to increase the capacity of the road so that projects could meet concurrency. The county required that these improvements either be constructed before a project could be platted, or required a letter of credit to assure a project would be built.

In 2005, the legislature passed Senate Bill 360, which required all local governments to provide a procedure for fair share mitigation for traffic impacts. Proportionate fair share provided three levels of LOS surety through a system by which a property owner could provide their portion of the funding needed to improve a roadway to provide concurrency for their project. On February 14, 2006, Walton County became the first local government to adopt proportionate fair share in their land development code. Based on this code change, the county is tracking LOS on roads and requiring a PFS contribution where a development project will not meet concurrency without a roadway improvement. As part of its 2005 comprehensive plan amendments, Walton County adopted a number of capacity projects for CR 30-A in its CIP, and is already collecting PFS payments toward the construction of those projects.

Walton County is anticipating adopting a number of additional road improvements into its CIP, especially for segments of SIS facilities in Walton County that are exceeding the adopted LOS, including segments of US 331, SR 90, SR 20, CR 30A, and US 98 east. Under SB 360, such improvements require interagency agreements between the developer (property owner), the county, and FDOT. Walton County is currently working with the FDOT planning staff to develop interagency agreements to establish, collect, and implement proportionate fair share contributions toward CIP improvements along SIS roadways. Walton County is also developing a 10-year CIP for SIS facilities that will be completed with the EAR amendments.

### County Road 30A Traffic Study and Walton County Transportation Modeling

The Board of County Commissioners has determined that, because of land use designations and community neighborhood layout, additional capacity needed for CR 30A must be provided through operational enhancements, multi-modal bike and walking paths, intersection improvements, and access management. Because of the nature of this scenic corridor, widening CR 30A is not an option that the county would consider. Walton County commissioned a Traffic Study by Genesis Group to “thoroughly evaluate the existing and projected traffic conditions, then to provide recommendations to address the mobility of the various users of the CR 30A corridor.” (Appendix G(10)). The study recommendations are as follows.

#### Short-Term Recommendations

- Full traffic signalization is warranted (or roundabouts) at: CR 30A & CR 283 and CR 30A & CR 395;
- The CR 30A & CR 393 intersection should be planned and will require an updated signal warrant study;
- A total of six (6) turn lanes are warranted at the Main Park Road, the Somerset Bridge Road, North / South Gulf Drive and Lakewood Drive intersections. These operational improvements combined with the new CR 30A concurrency roadway segmentation will help to provide for an increase in capacity;
- Standardize and upgrade roadway signs and pavement markings;
- Safety improvements to intersections with limited visibility;
- Retrofit existing CR 30A on-street parking for safety purposes;
- Upgrades to the multi-use trail;
- Dedicate CR 30A as a constrained facility to encourage quality development, while providing enhancements to the public transportation system and protecting the scenic corridor designation.

## Long-Term Improvement Recommendations

- Implementation of new CR 30A design standards and LDC requirements;
- Enhanced amenities for alternative modes of travel and community cohesiveness;
- Strict enforcement of development regulations and Comprehensive Plan policies;
- Planning for long-term implementation of transit;
- Planning for advanced traffic technology systems to improve operations;
- Application of new concurrency mitigation strategies along CR 30A
- New North-South Road connecting CR 30A to US 98, west of CR 395

As a result of the CR 30A traffic study and Genesis Groups concurrency recommendations, the county is converting its concurrency management system from AADT to PM peak hour directional, implementing a county wide PM peak hour directional modeling effort, and training staff in modeling techniques.

Using proportionate fair share, a financially feasible capital improvement program, and federal and state incentives, Walton County is moving forward to assure and adequate traffic LOS for the future. In several instances private owners have implemented operational improvements along the portion of roadways impacted by their projects to improve the LOS and offset transportation impacts of their projects. At this point in time these types of private-public partnerships have been confined to larger projects. With the advent of proportionate fair share, the use of the public/private partnerships can be extended to smaller projects.

### *Operational Improvements through Public / Private Partnerships*

One example of a public/private partnership is Alys Beach where the property owner has installed facility improvements along County Road 30A to offset the transportation impacts of his project. The improvements involved the construction of parallel (service) drives to maintain mainline traffic movement and separate access turn movements, parking and pedestrian movements from the through traffic lanes.

### *Capital Improvement Program for Transportation Facilities*

Historically the Walton County CIP has focused on existing improvements to local roadways such as paving dirt roads, resurfacing, widening of driving lanes, and roadway extensions, while supporting TPO coordination of major arterial improvements. In 2005 and 2006 Walton County developed a more holistic approach to the evaluation of its transportation system, and began to develop a wider reaching capital improvement plan. The Walton County CIP has been expanded to encompass transportation facility improvements across Walton County, including the project work programs for the following:

- Walton County Planning and Development Services CIP 2007 - 2011
- Florida Dept of Transportation Work Program 2007 – 2011 (adopted 8/3/06)
- Walton County Proportionate Fair Share Program
- Walton County Department of Public Works CIP
- Walton County Parks and Recreation Department CIP
- CIPs for utility service providers in Walton County

A spreadsheet tracking system is being implemented as a central repository of all CIP facility improvements. A preliminary composite spreadsheet is shown in appendix G(41).

The transportation component of the capital improvements element (CIE) will be modified to include all aspects of transportation planning that is needed to maintain the required transportation LOS. The comprehensive plan and the CIE will be modified to address the following transportation planning components:

- Existing and forecast transportation LOS
- Corridor management and right-of-way needs and acquisitions
- Project implementation schedule monitoring
- Annual evaluation and update
- Enhanced coordination with TPO, FDOT, NWFTCA, Walton County communities and adjacent counties

### Corridor Management

A major component that either facilitates or hampers facility planning, design, and improvements is the availability of adequate right-of-way and corridor management. As regions evolve from rural to urban uses, the transportation needs evolve as well. Early planning for sufficient corridors to maintain LOS through these changes is a vital part of this EAR process.

In its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will seek to support corridor management and other techniques for assuring LOS standards can be maintained over the planning horizon. A key element of corridor management is to develop corridor needs through long term build-out scenarios. Once the required corridors are identified, the county can adopt a thoroughfare plan that establishes present and future right-of-way requirements.

## **K. Post Disaster Policies**

Pursuant to new statutory requirements, Walton County must adopt a post disaster redevelopment plan that, once adopted, will become an appendix to the county's local mitigation strategy (LMS). The county has drafted a post disaster redevelopment plan (PDRP, appendix B(13)), but changes in the statutory requirements for coastal permitting of temporary structures after storm events will require evaluation for changes to the proposed draft PDRP prior to adoption. The comprehensive plan should have a stronger linkage to the LMS through EAR-based amendments to the future land use, natural resource protection, infrastructure, and conservation elements including sub elements for post disaster development, and beaches and dunes protection.

The county will be participating in the map modernization program through a partnership with the Northwest Florida Water Management District and FEMA. This program will provide digital flood insurance rate maps (DFIRMs) in a countywide format (NAVD 88). Previous FIRMs (the most recent set was completed in March 2000) for Walton County were developed based upon USGS 5' contour data. The FIRMs are currently being revised based upon 1' aeriels and field-collected contour data. These FIRMs have significant errors because of the poor base data that was used at the time of the flood map restudy for Walton County. The issue is linked to Walton County's discussion with DCA to revisit the county's policies linking FEMA flood zones with density restrictions. The new FIRMs will be based upon hydrology studies, field verification, and 12 inch color aerial data and will be invaluable to Walton County in the development and adoption of the EAR based amendments. The digital FIRMs will be used in the project review process where they can be overlaid with parcel data as described in other areas of this report. In addition, as a side project to the map modernization program, the county has committed \$100,000.00 in the 07 proposed budget for the acquisition of 12 inch color LiDar imaging for the entire county. This technology will provide a means to further develop contour data, visualize low lying areas, and manage flood prone areas. The only downside to the project is that the LiDar task is scheduled for completion in August 2008, which will hold up the EAR amendments that require the LiDar for data and analysis.

## **VI. State Agency Issues to be addressed in EAR**

### **(a) Affordable Housing**

At the visioning/scoping meeting and in the letter of understanding, DCA requested that the county include affordable housing as an issue in the EAR. (Appendix A(2)).

Affordable Housing is defined as housing where monthly rents or monthly mortgage payments; including taxes, insurance, and utilities, do not exceed 30% of the percentage of the median adjusted gross annual income for the households or persons indicated in § 420.0004 F. S. Affordable housing definitions that are prescribed by other affordable housing programs administered by either the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or the state of Florida may be used by local governments if such programs are implemented by local government to provide affordable housing.

Housing units are considered severely burdened if the occupant is paying 50% or more of the adjusted income for mortgage costs or rent. The Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing and the Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse report that Walton County had a total of 731 severely burdened owner-occupied units in 2002, with a projection of 1,588 severely burdened units by 2025. In 2002 there were 487 severely burdened rental units, and the center projected 776 units by 2025. The Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse Report has been included in the data and analysis, Appendix C(2).

Low-income households are defined as households with an annual adjusted household income that does not exceed 80% of the median adjusted annual gross income. The Shimberg Center reported that construction needs for low-income households in Walton County was 1,699 units for 2002-2005 and projected that by 2025 the need will be for 18,708 units. (Appendix A(27)).

Even prior to DCA's request, the county had moved forward with affordable housing incentives in an amendment to the comprehensive plan. The amendment proposed density bonus incentives and traffic concurrency exceptions similar to those adopted by Palm Beach County. DCA took the position that Chapter 163 F. S. does not allow an exception to traffic concurrency. County staff agreed, but modeled the county's effort after the Palm Beach County Comprehensive Plan provision already approved by DCA. Based on negotiations with DCA, the county will be entering into a stipulated settlement agreement and proposing a remedial amendment to delete the traffic concurrency provision. The density bonus incentives were approved by DCA and will remain in the remedial amendment to provide a basis for the county's affordable housing incentive program.

Property values are extremely high in Walton County. Recent revisions to the Florida Building Code, changes to the wind borne debris line, and proportional fair share payments for traffic concurrency have further increased the costs of construction in the county. To offset these issues, the county will focus on density bonuses to assist the development community in providing an affordable housing product.

As the data shows, Walton County has severe affordable housing problems, as do other coastal counties in the state. Employers, including the county, are having difficulty in recruiting, hiring, and maintaining a workforce. The need for affordable housing has become such a crisis that a public/private partnership has been developed between the Walton County Chamber of Commerce, Walton County, and the incorporated cities. This coalition combined forces to conduct a Walton County Workforce Housing Survey. (Appendix C(1)). The survey included questions regarding commute times and rents or mortgage payments. The majority of respondents own homes with mortgage payments of over \$1,100.00 per month and 40% of renters shared their rental expenses with others. The Haas Center for Business Research and Economic Development provided an analysis of a total of 2,164 surveys. This analysis verified that some of the county's traffic congestion is created by workers commuting great distances because they can't afford to live close to where they work.

Regional Utilities, which serves a large portion of the county population, identified a need for affordable housing for its workers some three years ago. The county supported a comprehensive plan amendment by Regional to allow development of a new waste water treatment plant and a large affordable housing project. Regional is now moving into the implementation phase for their project, which will include approximately 618 single family units, a 40-acre future school site, and a multi-purpose building site. Future plans will address services and neighborhood commercial uses to complete the community. Regional Utilities will transfer the property to the county, who will in turn transfer the property to the Walton County Workforce Housing Corporation.

The Florida Workforce Housing Alliance is aware of and enthusiastic about this project. They are implementing House Bill 1363, which included \$50 million of statewide grant money for the Community Workforce Housing Innovation Pilot Program (CWHIP). Walton County appears to be highly qualified to receive \$5 million of this grant money as we are currently ranked # 4 on the statewide list identifying the 'buying power gap' between the median income of a family of four and the median sales price of a home. Walton County hopes that this project will be a model for other communities facing the affordable housing issue, and the county will continue to support this effort through expedited site plan review and building permitting and inspection assistance.

S.H.I.P. is a state program that focuses on home ownership as a primary goal. It is funded by the documentary stamp tax on real estate transactions

recorded within the state. Funds are allocated to each county by population, with each county guaranteed to receive at least \$350,000 each year. Walton County uses these funds across five broad program strategies -- first-time homebuyer, significant rehabilitation, moderate rehabilitation, emergency repair, and replacement housing to help very low income, low income, and in some cases, moderate income families or individuals with their housing needs.

In its EAR-based amendments, the county will continue to flesh out the incentives program with specific guidelines. The county will focus on assurances that developments receiving the density bonus will remain in the workforce/affordable price range.

**(b) Directing Population Concentrations away from the Coastal High Hazard Area and how Evacuation Clearance Times are Maintained**

Most jurisdictions' comprehensive plans include a definition consistent with Chapter 163 F. S., which formerly defined the coastal high hazard area as the category 1 evacuation area. House Bill 1359, passed in the 2006 Florida legislative session, redefined the coastal high hazard area as the area below the elevation of the category 1 storm surge line as established by the Sea, Lake, and Overland Surges from Hurricanes (SLOSH) model.

Walton County's comprehensive plan was not consistent with the former state law; it defined the CHHA as the category 1 storm surge line. Although this definition was consistent with the revised language in Florida statutes, it referenced the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study, which has been replaced by the newer Northwest Florida Hurricane Evacuation Study (1999). Walton County transmitted an amendment to adopt the newer hurricane study on August 1, 2006.

The Walton County comprehensive plan prohibits the platting or creation of any new lots in the coastal high hazard area unless the proposed lot contains sufficient buildable area that the building footprint will be out of the CHHA. (Policy C-4.2.6). This has effectively directed additional development away from the CHHA, except for development on lots of record, created before the comprehensive plan was adopted.

Computer models have been used for several years in predicting the impacts from storm surges based on the category of a predicted storm, i.e. category 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Each storm event potential can be modeled from the standpoint of pressure, size, forward speed, track, and winds. The model used to simulate impacts for the various categories of storm events is the SLOSH model, as noted above. The SLOSH model is calibrated to a particular locale's shoreline, including the applicable bay and river configurations, water depth, bridges, roads and other physical features to estimate storm surge. Additionally, The Arbiter of Storms model (TAOS) is a model used in defining storm hazard risks that has been used effectively by cities and counties in their local mitigation planning. The TAOS model can estimate storm surge, wave height, maximum winds, inland flooding, debris and structural damage to a defined geographic area. Moreover, the TAOS model provides more detailed results for cities or counties for on-land storm surge damage.

Furthermore, the cities and counties have become far more sophisticated in local mitigation planning and site plan review for development. Most cities and counties now have ARCVIEW based GIS systems that are capable of query and analysis of the four major databases related to directing populations away from the coastal high hazard area. In 2005, the Walton County Board of County

Commissioners supported the Planning and Development Services Division in establishing a GIS staff with the necessary equipment to support the planning, engineering, environmental, building, and code enforcement staff in review of site plans for development approval, plan amendments, and building permit and inspections staff with site plan review.

Florida State University Urban & Regional Planning Department published an article entitled "*Reduced Hazards Exposure through Growth Management? An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Florida's Hurricane Mitigation Planning Mandates*" (March 2006, Policy Brief). The article was written as a summary of a study analyzing comprehensive plans adopted since the 1985 Growth Management Act. (Appendix B(11)).

The research approach was first to look at exposure of people and property to hurricane flooding despite the growth management act's mandate to direct population away from the coastal high hazard areas. The study evaluated the change of land use on exposure of people and property. The study concluded that, based on all of the coastal jurisdiction's comprehensive plans, development had increased outside the CHHA at a higher percentage than inside the CHHA. The development inside the CHHA had a 67% increase and outside the CHHA development had increased 77%. The Chapter 163, F.S. requirement for local government, through goals, objectives and polices, to direct population away from the CHHA had not been successful. The study concluded, however, that development had continued to increase inside the CHHA but at a lesser rate than outside because of vested rights, existing zoning on maps, political, and legal reasons.

Most local governments would agree with the study results in that local government can only do so much to direct populations away from the CHHA in light of private property rights. Development can, however, be regulated to limit the exposure of humans and property to damage from storms.

Whether or not the county is maintaining the adopted evacuation clearance times is the standard methodology for evaluating the effectiveness of the comprehensive plan's goals, objectives, and policies in providing linkage between the Walton County Comprehensive Plan, Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP), and the Northwest Florida Hurricane Evacuation Study (1999). (Appendices B(8), B(14)).

In 2005, Walton County amended its comprehensive plan to be consistent with the county's observed evacuation times during hurricane Dennis. As Dennis approached the county, the county implemented its evacuation plan and successfully evacuated the county in advance of the storm. Dennis affected Walton County during peak tourist season, during a period with an estimated 90% occupancy rate. Walton County's Comprehensive Plan includes goals, objectives, and policies that require proposed land use amendments that would

increase residential density to analyze their impact on the county's evacuation times. In addition, the Walton County Emergency Operations Center, as part of the county's technical review committee, reviews every development order application for its potential effect on the county's evacuation times and strategy.

(c) **Evaluate Common Traffic Methodology with Cities for 331, 20, and 90**

Walton County has interlocal agreements with the City of DeFuniak Springs and the Town of Paxton that allow Walton County to review all traffic reports submitted for development in those cities. These reviews are based on the traffic concurrency management system developed by Walton County, and the trips generated by those developments are included in the Walton County concurrency tracking system. Walton County has had several meetings with the City of Freeport regarding their participation in this or a similar concurrency management system. At this time the City of Freeport is utilizing their own concurrency management system to approve developments within Freeport.

While a common methodology for all areas of Walton County would be the preferred method for reviewing traffic concurrency, at this time Freeport has elected to use their own methodology. Walton County has also requested an inter-local agreement with the City of Freeport to allow Walton County to collect proportionate fair share mitigation for traffic impacts caused in Freeport by a Walton County project, and to allow Freeport to collect proportionate fair share for Freeport projects that impact concurrency in the county. To date, no such agreement has been reached.

## **VII. Analyzing the Issues as required by EAR Guideline**

### **a. Change in population**

#### *Walton County's Beginning*

Walton County was founded in 1824 and was named for George Walton, Secretary of the Florida Territory from 1821 to 1826 (Wikipedia, 2006). Free Port was founded in the 1830's on the Choctawhatchee Bay as a port with timber, livestock, and naval stores (Walton County Chamber of Commerce, 2004). In 1890, the town of Point Washington was founded for the purpose of processing timber, which later became the major economic engine for the area (Appendix A(5)). Prior to the Civil War, farming and livestock remained the primary economic activities in the county (McKinnon, 1968). After the war, timber took over as the main industry (Appendix A(5)).

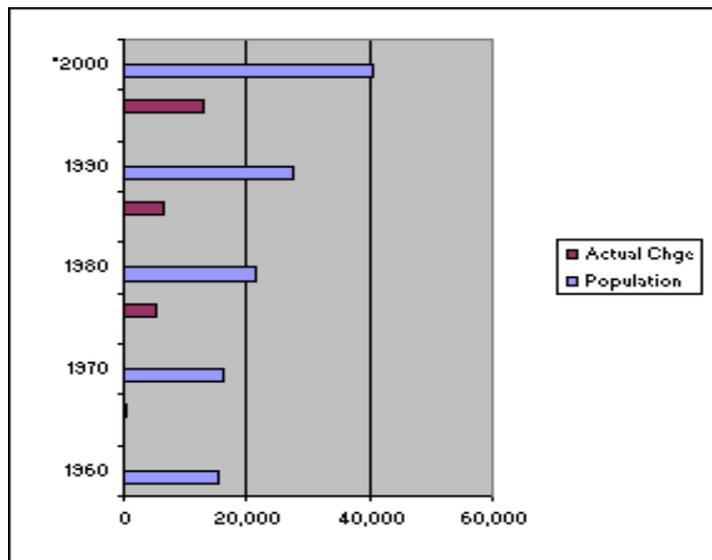
In the 1930's, U.S. Highway 98 was completed, the Highway 331 bridge was built over the Choctawhatchee Bay, and the Intracoastal Waterway was cut (Graytonbeach.com). These infrastructure improvements paved the way for tourists from the inland Panhandle and southern Alabama. Tourism and related industries continue to be the principal industry in Walton County today. (Appendix A(5)).

#### *Historical Trends*

In the year 1960 Walton County reported a population of 15,576 people and ten years later the population increased only by 511 people or a 3.2% growth. (Appendix A(23)). One factor for the very small increase in population was due to the incorporation of the cities of DeFuniak Springs, Freeport and Paxton, which subtracted their totals from the unincorporated areas. (Appendix A(31)). In 1970 to 1990 there was a 72% increase in population adding another 11,672 people to the County, bringing the total to 21,300. (Appendix A(23)). This was caused by development along the 26 miles of beach on the Gulf of Mexico that created Miramar, Dune Allen, Blue Mountain, Grayton, Seagrove, Inlet, Tang-O-Mar, Blue Gulf, Rosemary and Seaside Beaches. (Appendix A(31)). From 1990 to 2000 there was a 46.3% increase adding another 12,642 people to the area to a total of 40,601. (Appendix A(23)). Most of the population growth occurred in the unincorporated areas of the County, adding to the already booming areas along the coast. The growth in the unincorporated areas of Walton is a trend that continues to the year 2025, due to continued coastal or water front development for seasonal and permanent residents.

**TABLE - A**  
 Historical Population Trends for Walton County  
 From 1960 to 2000

Year	1960		1970		1980		1990		*2000
Population	15,576		16,087		21,300		27,759		40,601
Actual Chge		511		5,213		6,459		12,842	
% Chge		3.2		32.4		30.3		46.3	



Florida, Population of Counties by Decennial Census 1900 to 1990- Compiled and Edited by Richard L. Forstall

\* 2000 Figures came from 2000 Census Data

Future Population Growth

Several factors need to be considered when projecting future population growth for a given area. These can include, but are not limited to, historical data, in-migration, out-migration, deaths, and births. In Walton County the demographer also needs to consider seasonal or tourist population, population changes from BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure), and affordability of housing for the work force. This section will analyze and project future population growth for Walton County so that Walton County may anticipate future need for infrastructure, housing, and services to accommodate the projected population growth.

Methodology

Walton County contracted with WilsonMiller to prepare a “Residential Land Use Needs Analysis for Walton County.” (Appendix A(3)) WilsonMiller analyzed the low, medium and high population projections of Florida population from BEBR by county from 2005 to 2030. (Appendix A(9)). Their report indicates there was a 39% difference between the medium 2025 projection (69,400), April 1, 2000, and the medium 2025 projection (96,800), April 1, 2005, data. Based on this disparity, WilsonMiller determined that BEBR may be underestimating the future population growth for Walton County. WilsonMiller determined that using a “mean” of the medium and high projections would yield the most realistic future growth for the County. (Appendix A(3)).

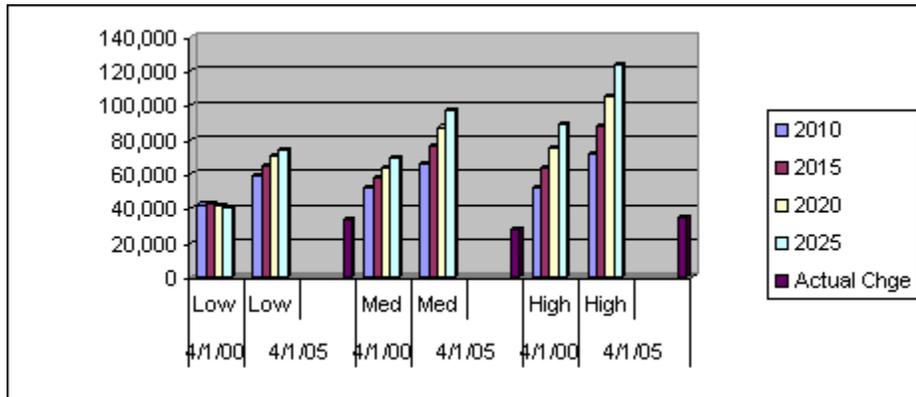
Example: For the year 2010, the mean is 61,800, a 72% difference between the 2000 medium estimates and 2005 high estimates, yielding an actual change in population of 20,000 people. This number is then added to the mean of 61,800 thus yielding a projection of 81,800 for the year 2010. These final figures derived from the mean were used as a starting point for all future projections, except any historical data that was taken straight from the source.

<b>Year</b>	<b>4-1-00 Medium Estimate</b>	<b>4-1-05 High Estimate</b>	<b>*** % Change</b>	<b>**Actual Change</b>	<b>*Mean</b>	<b>Projection</b>
<b>2010</b>	51,800	71,800	72%	20,000	<b>61,800</b>	81,800

**TABLE - B**

Walton County  
 Actual & Percentage Change of the  
 Low, Medium & High, April 1, 2000 & April 1, 2005 Estimates  
 From 2010 to 2025

		2010	2015	2020	2025	Actual Chge	% Chge
<b>4/1/00</b>	Low	42,300	42,500	41,900	40,200		
<b>4/1/05</b>	Low	58,700	65,200	70,300	74,000		
						33,800	54%
<b>4/1/00</b>	Med	51,800	57,600	63,600	69,400		
<b>4/1/05</b>	Med	65,500	76,700	87,300	96,800		
						27,400	39%
<b>4/1/00</b>	High	52,300	63,400	75,600	89,000		
<b>4/1/05</b>	High	71,800	88,200	105,500	123,300		
						34,300	38%

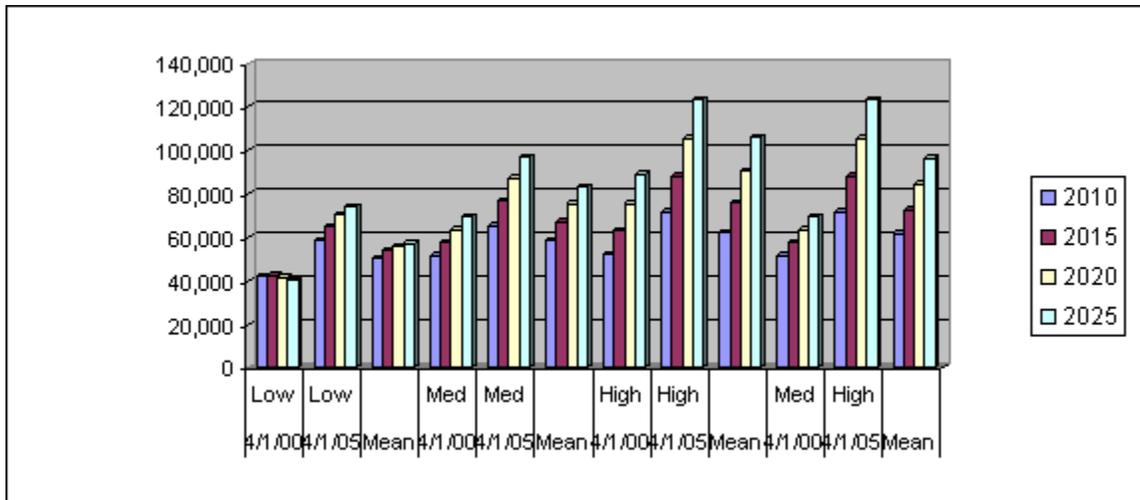


BEBR Projections of Florida Population Estimates 2005 -2030, Volume 39, Bulletin 144, February 2006  
 BEBR Projections of Florida Population by County 2000-2030, Volume 34, Bulletin 128, May 2001

**TABLE - C**

Mean of the Low, Medium and High Population Estimates  
 April 1, 2000 & April 1, 2005  
 2010 to 2025

		2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>4/1/00</b>	Low	42,300	42,500	41,900	40,200
<b>4/1/05</b>	Low	58,700	65,200	70,300	74,000
<b>Mean</b>		<b>50,500</b>	<b>53,850</b>	<b>56,100</b>	<b>57,100</b>
<b>4/1/00</b>	Med	51,800	57,600	63,600	69,400
<b>4/1/05</b>	Med	65,500	76,700	87,300	96,800
<b>Mean</b>		<b>58,600</b>	<b>67,150</b>	<b>75,450</b>	<b>83,100</b>
<b>4/1/00</b>	High	52,300	63,400	75,600	89,000
<b>4/1/05</b>	High	71,800	88,200	105,500	123,300
<b>Mean</b>		<b>62,050</b>	<b>75,800</b>	<b>90,550</b>	<b>106,150</b>
<b>4/1/00</b>	Med	51,800	57,600	63,600	69,400
<b>4/1/05</b>	High	71,800	88,200	105,500	123,300
<b>Mean</b>		<b>61,800</b>	<b>72,900</b>	<b>84,550</b>	<b>96,350</b>



\* Percentage change between April 1, 2000 Census to April 1, 2005 estimates

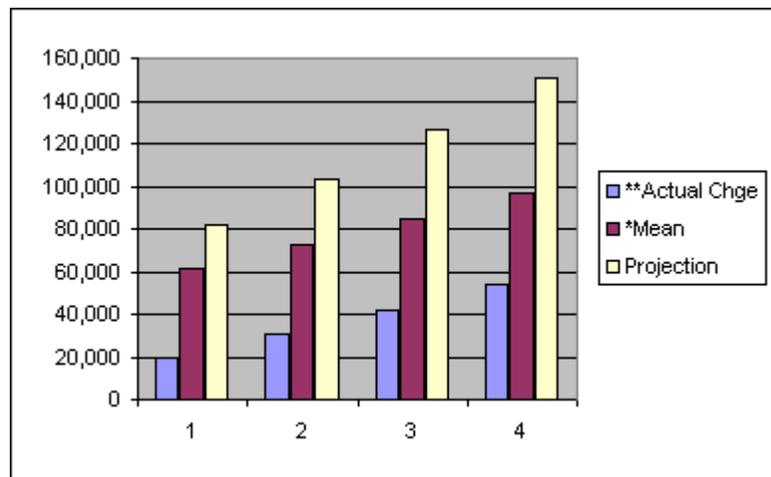
BEBR Estimates of Florida Population Estimates 2005 -2030, Volume 39 Bulletin 144, February 2006

BEBR Population Studies, Volume 34, Number 1, Bulletin 128

**TABLE - D**

Population Projections Based on the Percentage Change  
Of the 2000 to 2005 Estimates added to the Mean of the  
Medium April 1, 2000 Census to April 1, 2005 High Projections

Year	4-1-00 Med Est	4-1-05 High Est	*** % Chge	**Actual Chge	*Mean	Projection
2010	51,800	71,800	72%	20,000	61,800	81,800
2015	57,600	88,200	65%	30,600	72,900	103,500
2020	63,600	105,500	60%	41,900	84,550	126,450
2025	69,400	123,300	56%	53,900	96,350	150,250



\* The mean of April 1, 2000 medium Est. and April 1, 2005 High Est.

\*\* The actual change between the Medium and High Estimates

BEBR Estimates of Florida Population Estimates 2005 -2030, Volume 39 Bulletin 144, February 2006

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To extract the population in incorporated areas out of the overall population for the county, the 2005 population estimate of 53,525 was divided by the estimated area populations provided for each incorporated area (e.g. 5,392 for DeFuniak Springs), thus deriving that 10% of Walton County's overall population lives in DeFuniak Springs. These same percentages were carried forward for each incorporated and un-incorporated area. Thus 10% of 81,800 yielded 8,180 people are projected to live in DeFuniak Springs in the year 2010. (Appendix A(7)).

### Population Projections of Incorporated and Unincorporated areas

Walton County's 2005 estimates showed the overall county to have a population of 53,525. The County is made up of three incorporated areas, DeFuniak Springs, Freeport, and Paxton. The largest of the three incorporated areas is DeFuniak Springs, making up 10% of the overall county population. Freeport is the second largest incorporated area with 2%, followed by Paxton with 1% of the overall county population. The largest percentage of the population, 87%, was found in the unincorporated areas of Walton County. These percentages were calculated by data provided for by BEBR 2005 overall county estimates. (Appendix A(9)).

The mean of the medium population estimates from April 1, 2000 and the high April 1, 2005 were then used to project the population for incorporated and unincorporated areas. The largest amount of growth occurred in the unincorporated areas, which also claimed the largest amount of the population for the overall county. One of the factors for this large amount growth is the 26 miles of beautiful beaches that are located in the unincorporated areas of Walton County. Although non-seasonal residents do reside in these areas, the majority of the growth can be explained as vacation homes for seasonal or part time residents.

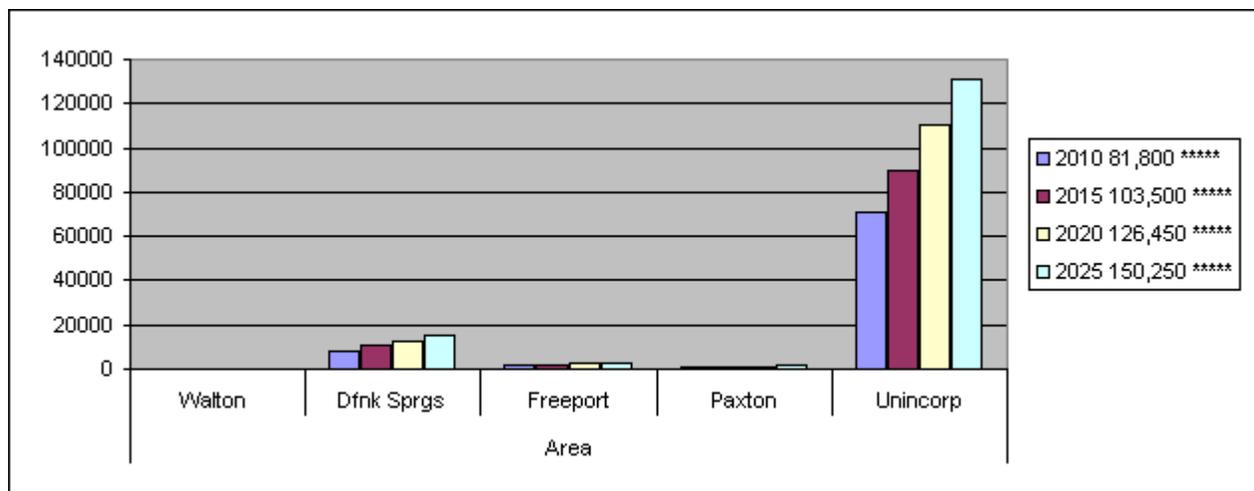
The county projects that by the year 2025 the county will have 150,250 people and 130,717 people will reside in the unincorporated areas. The county will seek to direct this increased population away from environmentally sensitive areas, away from hurricane and flood-prone areas, and toward areas where urban services can be economically provided. An urban service area based on services, natural barriers, natural resources, already directed growth and roads is discussed further in §IV(a) of this report.

In addition to most of the growth occurring in the incorporated areas of the county, DeFuniak Springs is projected to maintain its status as the largest incorporated area. In the year 2025, the data projects a population of 15,025 people in DeFuniak Springs, a 77% increase since 2005. The county will need to work closely with the incorporated areas to discuss future growth in the county and how this will affect all of the incorporated and unincorporated areas.

**TABLE - E**

Population Projections  
of Incorporated & Unincorporated Areas  
For Walton County  
2010 to 2025

Year				2010	2015	2020	2025
*** Projection				<b>81,800</b>	<b>103,500</b>	<b>126,450</b>	<b>150,250</b>
		<b>2005 Est.</b>	<b>% of 2005 Est</b>	*****	*****	*****	*****
<b>Area</b>	Walton	53,525					
	Dfnc Sprgs	5,392	10%	<b>8,180</b>	<b>10,350</b>	<b>12,645</b>	<b>15,025</b>
	Freeport	1,214	2%	<b>1,636</b>	<b>2,070</b>	<b>2,529</b>	<b>3,005</b>
	Paxton	689	1%	<b>818</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>1,264</b>	<b>1,502</b>
	Unincorp	46,230	87%	<b>71,166</b>	<b>90,045</b>	<b>110,011</b>	<b>130,717</b>



\*\*\*\*\* Percentage of total County based on 2005 estimates using

\*\*\*\* Population Projections based on the mean of 2000 and 2005 Medium Estimates of BEBR

BEBR Estimates of Florida Population Estimates 2005 -2030, Volume 39 Bulletin 144, February 2006

BEBR Population Studies, Volume 34, Number 1, Bulletin 128

### Population Projections minus Inmate Population

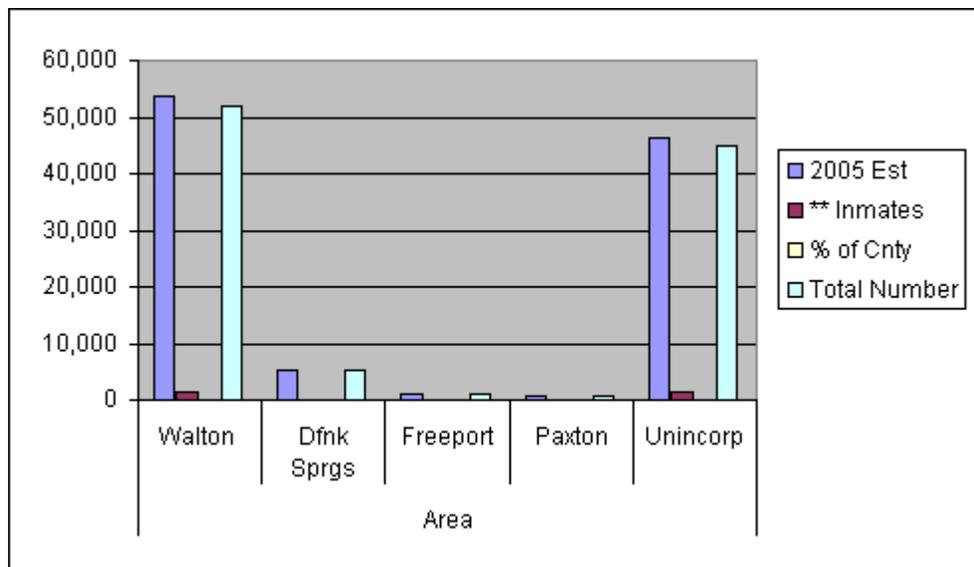
In this analysis, the inmate population was extracted from the total population and from the three incorporated areas based on the BEBR 2005 Florida Estimates of Population. The largest inmate population was reported in the unincorporated areas of Walton County, 1,477 or 2.8%. (Appendix A(9)). Freeport and Paxton showed no inmate activity for the 2005 estimates, thus any future projections did not show any change for these incorporated areas.

Using the 2005 Estimates from BEBR on inmate population, future projections show a slow but steady increase in the inmate population as population increases. (Appendix A(9)). The predicted inmate population for the county in the year 2025 is 4,207. The unincorporated inmate population in the year 2025 is predicted to be 4,507, a reduction 2.8% (2005) to 1.07% (2025). (Appendix A(9)). This reduction may reflect a reduction in overall crime, a reduction in crime in the unincorporated areas, and a population that is rising faster than the crime rate.

**TABLE - F**

Percentage of Inmates Per 2005 Estimates  
Incorporated & Unincorporated  
Walton County

Area	2005 Est	** Inmates	% of Cnty	Total Number
Walton	53,525	1,477	2.8	52,048
Dfnk Sprgs	5,392	39	0.7	5,353
Freeport	1,214	0	0	1,214
Paxton	689	0	0	689
Unincorp	46,230	1,438	3	44,792

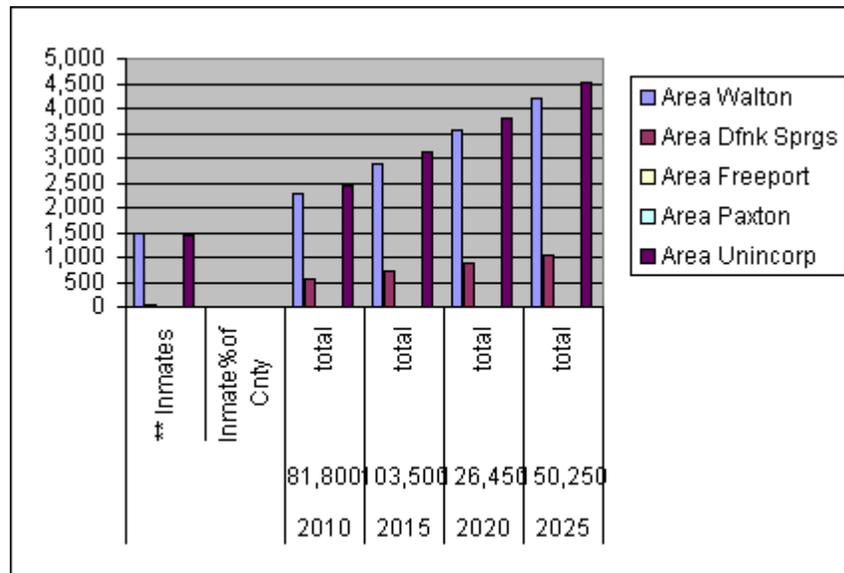


\*\* Inmate Population Based April 1, 2005 Estimates from BEBR  
 BEBR Population Studies, Volume 34, Number 1, Bulletin 128  
 BEBR Estimate's of Florida Population Estimates 2005 -2030, Volume 39 Bulletin 144, February 2006

**TABLE - G**

Percentage of Inmate Population  
Incorporated and Unincorporated Walton County  
From 2010 to 2025

Year				2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>Projection</b>				<b>81,800</b>	<b>103,500</b>	<b>126,450</b>	<b>150,250</b>
		<b>**</b>	<b>Inmate%of</b>				
		<b>Inmates</b>	<b>Cnty</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>total</b>	<b>total</b>
<b>Area</b>	Walton	1,477	2.8	2,290	2,898	3,541	4,207
	Dfnc Sprgs	39	0.7	573	724	885	1052
	Freeport	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Paxton	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Unincorp	1,438	3	2,454	3,105	3,793	4,507



BEBR Florida Projections 2005 to 2030, April 1, 2005 Estimate  
BEBR Florida Projections 2000 to 2030 April 1, 2000 Census

**TABLE - H**

Population Projections for Walton County  
Minus Inmate Population  
2010 to 2025

Year		2010	2010	2015	2015	2020	2020	2025	2025
<b>**** Proj</b>		<b>81,800</b>	<b>81,800</b>	<b>103,500</b>	<b>103,500</b>	<b>126,450</b>	<b>126,450</b>	<b>150,250</b>	<b>150,250</b>
	<b>Inst % of Cnty</b>		<b>Proj (-) Inmts</b>						
<b>Area % of Cnty</b>		<b>Inmates</b>		<b>Inmates</b>		<b>Inmates</b>		<b>Inmates</b>	
Walton	2.8	2,290	79,510	2,898	100,602	3,541	122,909	4,207	146,043
Dk Sprgs (10%)	0.7	573	7,607	724	9,626	885	11,760	1052	13,973
Freeport ( 2%)	0	0	**1636	0	**2070	0	**2529	0	**3005
Paxton (1%)	0	0	**818	0	**1035	0	**1264	0	**1502
Unincorp (87%)	3	2,454	68,712	3,105	86,940	3,793	106,218	4,507	126,210

The percentages in the first column represents the amount of the population that the area had in 2005 estimates from BEBR

\*\* Represents no change to population due to inmates

\*\*\*\* Inmate Population Based April 1, 2005 Estimates from BEBR

BEBR Estimates of Florida Population Estimates 2005 -2030, Volume 39 Bulletin 144, February 2006

BEBR Population Studies, Volume 34, Number 1, Bulletin 128

Population Growth by Age

Without considering the age demographic, the county cannot adopt policies to fit the need of the present and future populations. Age demographics also allows Walton County to anticipate how many of our residents will be retired and how many will be in the workforce. (Appendices A(9), A(20)). Walton County used this data to project age demographics to the year 2025.

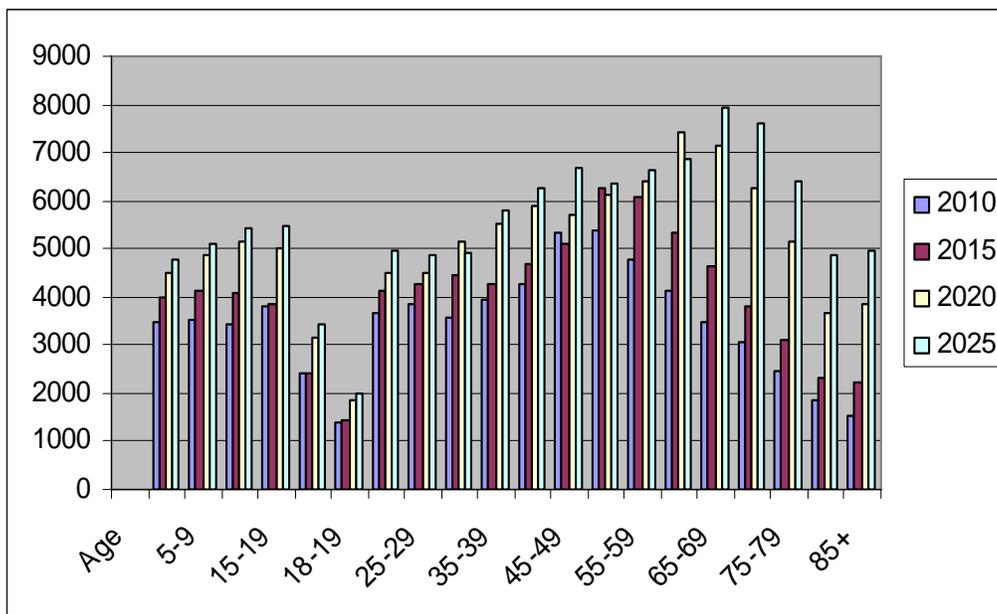
This data indicates the largest percentage increase will be in the 40 to 44 year age bracket, which contradicts the stereotype that most of Florida's residents are at retirement age. (Appendix A(9)). From the 0 to 24 year age group the percentage change ranges from 59% to 62%, which may be a result of the 40 to 44 year old group having children. (Appendix A(9)). Walton County will need to assure that the county school system will have the capacity to serve the needs of these children.

**TABLE - I**

Population Projections  
By Age for Walton County 2005 to 2025

	2000 Census	2005 Est	% Chge 2005 to 2025	2010	2015	2020	2025
	40,601	53,525		65,497	87,287	96,841	105,845
Age				2010	2015	2020	2025
0-4	2,158	2,831	59%	3,502	4,002	4,516	4,775
5-9	2,520	2,805	55%	3,506	4,131	4,884	5,081
10-14	2,560	3,280	60%	3,418	4,084	5,159	5,422
15-19	2,464	3,212	58%	3,827	3,848	5,005	5,458
15-17	1,557	2,031	58%	2,419	2,429	3,163	3,449
18-19	907	1,181	58%	1,408	1,419	1,842	2,009
20-24	1,992	3,094	62%	3,651	4,124	4,517	4,966
25-29	2,428	2,895	59%	3,837	4,278	4,477	4,884
30-34	2,541	3,201	65%	3,560	4,453	5,159	4,907
35-39	3,278	3,431	59%	3,949	4,253	5,516	5,808
40-44	3,315	4,339	69%	4,277	4,700	5,902	6,278
45-49	3,048	4,389	66%	5,330	5,091	5,686	6,685
50-54	2,866	4,036	63%	5,362	6,244	6,108	6,353
55-59	2,603	3,580	54%	4,757	6,082	6,410	6,612
60-64	2,397	3,104	45%	4,152	5,336	7,434	6,849
65-69	2,089	2,786	35%	3,501	4,633	7,155	7,914
70-74	1,798	2,158	28%	3,058	3,810	6,256	7,615
75-79	1,285	1,936	30%	2,460	3,121	5,140	6,390
80-84	696	1,284	26%	1,834	2,300	3,667	4,878
85+	563	936	19%	1,516	2,217	3,850	4,970

US Census and BEBR Estimates by age 2005



### Seasonal Population and the Change to Overall Population per Season

The data was provided by the Walton County Tourist Development Council. The county used the following methodology:  $((\text{available units} \times \text{occupancy by season}) \times (\text{total available room nights by season})) / (\text{average length of stay by season} \times (\text{party size by season})) = \text{overnight tourist count}$ . (Appendix A(19)). The projections were calculated based on the percentage change or ratio from the 5 year population projection period and then added 2005 seasonal population estimates and further added to the 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2025 mean population projections.

The seasonal population in 2005 estimates showed 2,471,922 seasonal people added to the county's non-seasonal population of 53,525. The 2,471,922 seasonal population was broken down into four seasons; spring, summer, winter and fall, with the largest number, 1,155,397 people, reported in the summer, and the lowest number, 78,044 people, reported in the winter.

What is obvious from looking at Exhibit J is the large numbers of additional population that is generated from the tourism base. There are both positive and negative aspects of the tourism industry. The positive aspects include creation of jobs, generated additional revenue, and growth. A study by the HAAS Center in 2004, "The Impact of Tourism of the Walton County Economy" (appendix A(12)) showed:

- Tourism contributes \$685 million per year to the local economy
- Tourism supports approximately 10,275 jobs that are directly or indirectly related to tourism
- Tourism generates local incomes and wages of approximately \$257 million annually
- Tourism generates annual tax revenues of approximately \$49 million for the county and the school district

The negative aspects of tourism are less obvious but should not be overlooked. In a Special Report by Florida TaxWatch Center for Tourism (appendix A(33)) they caution communities on several points about a "tourist based" economy:

- The uncertainty of continuous, year-round employment
- Seasonal fluctuations in the demand for services
- Stresses imposed on residents by the presence of a substantial seasonal inflow of non-residents

In a study by WilsonMiller in July 2006 titled "Residential Needs Analysis," tourism continues to be the leading source of employment, sales for local businesses, and county tax revenues. (Appendix A(3)). In a study by the HAAS Center in 2002, 10,274 jobs were created related to tourism, about 86% of the new jobs were related the service and construction industries. (Appendix A(12)). The report also revealed "a substantial percentage of residential units being

constructed are not for permanent residents but are for seasonal and temporary residents.”

Resolving the issues can easily stated, but much more difficult to implement. Although revenue from tourism allows local residents a slightly higher than average lifestyle on goods and services provided, they pay a price in secondary and tertiary jobs dependant on the tourism base. This contributes to escalating housing prices that the permanent workforce cannot afford.

In a recent study for Walton County by Fishkind & Associates, the ratio of employment went from 20 jobs per 100 residents in 1980 to 30 jobs per 100 permanent residents in 2005. (Appendix A(4)). This increase is 10 jobs per 100 people over 25 years. The increases in jobs were related to retail increases in the area. Service jobs as a percent of total went from 19% in 1980 to 28% in 2005. Manufacturing and government decreased sharply as a percent of employment totals (Fishkind & Associates, September 2006, appendix A(4)). The increase in retail and the substantial drop in manufacturing and government jobs equates to low paying jobs with few if any benefits, which can create a hardship in an area where the mean adjusted value for 2004 of a single family home is \$230,562 (<http://www.flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu/a/construction>).

In “Living in Paradise: Housing Strategies for Tourism Communities,” by Williams S. Hettinger, Abstract of Dissertation, College of Business and Economic Development of the University of Southern Mississippi, “There are affordable housing issues created by an imbalance of demand and supply for housing that is not a direct reflection of incomes for a specific area.” (Appendix C(3)). Hettinger looks at the lack of affordable housing in tourism destinations as “market failure.” He applies his theory to Keynesian economics by comparing the housing market to a perfect functioning market, i.e. one that acts to adjust supply and demand and keep market conditions in balance. In the case of tourism destinations, the demand for housing is greater than the supply and the price of housing supply is not a direct result of local income, but a direct reflection of what the seasonal or part-time resident’s incomes will pay for housing. Thus there are externalities that create a market failure in these geographic areas (Hettinger 2003). One way to rectify this “market failure” or “false equilibrium” is to attract higher paid professional jobs and industries to raise the median income for the area.

**Table - J**

Population Projections for Walton County 2010 to 2025  
Showing the Change Due to Seasonal Residents  
By Season

Year	2005	2005 to 2010	2010	2010 to 2015	2015	2015 to 2020	2020	2020 to 2025	2025
* Projection	<b>53,525</b>	*** 1.22% incrise	<b>81,800</b>	*** 1.14% incrise	<b>103,500</b>	*** 1.08% incrise	<b>126,450</b>	*** 1.05% incrise	<b>150,250</b>
	SesnI Pop 2005 Est.	SesnI Pop		SesnI Pop		SesnI Pop		SesnI Pop	
Spring	854,606	10,426	865,032	9,861	874,893	9,449	884,342	9,285	893,627
Summer	1,155,397	14,096	1,169,493	13,332	1,182,825	12,774	1,195,599	12,554	1,208,153
Fall	383,874	4,683	388,557	4,429	392,986	4,244	397,230	4,171	401,401
Winter	78,044	952	78,996	900	79,896	863	80,759	848	81,607
Total	2,471,922	30,157	2,502,079	28,524	2,530,603	27,330	2,557,933	26,848	2,584,781
**Walton	<b>53,525</b>		<b>81,800</b>		<b>103,500</b>		<b>126,450</b>		<b>150,250</b>
****Total	<b>2,525,447</b>		<b>2,583,879</b>		<b>2,634,103</b>		<b>2,684,383</b>		<b>2,735,031</b>

Data provided for by the Tourist Development Council of Walton County 2005  
Tourist Estimate Update

\* This number is the pop projection based on the mean of the April 1, 2000 Census and April 1, 2005 BEBR Estimates minus inmate population

\*\* This set of data represents the mean population projection minus the percentage of inmate population by BEBR 2005 Estimates of Population

\*\*\* Increase is based on percentage increase between the 5 year population projection increases.

\*\*\*\* Total based on estimated seasonal population 2005 added to population projections 2010 to 2025

**Military Bases**

Walton, Okaloosa, and Santa Rosa Counties are home to the largest air force base in the world - Eglin Air Force Base. The land reservation provided by Eglin AFB encompasses three military installations; Eglin AFB, Hurlburt Field, and Duke Field, collectively know as the Eglin Complex.

Not only does the Eglin complex contribute to the economy through its active duty, civil service, dependents, retirees, and surviving spouses' payroll but it also draws civilian defense contracting firms into the area; all of which contribute to Walton's spending and economic growth. The defense contracting in Walton County creates the foundation for growth and expansion in high-technology segments of the economy. Local defense contractors have increased hiring in response to the increased military spending since September 11, 2001.

Many are obtaining new contracts each year requiring hundreds of new employees.

Walton County's population will be affected by the BRAC closures. In the Northwest Florida Economy, Spring 2006, "Residential Sales Surrounding Eglin AFB, "as a result of BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) Eglin AFB is expected to increase its personnel by 6000 people by the year 2010." The three challenges faced for the new personnel are off base housing availability, housing affordability, and housing proximity to their specific work areas.

### Residential Land Use Needs

In a study conducted by WilsonMiller in July 2006, based on 2004 vacant lands analysis by residential land use category, there are 28,819 vacant acres that would allow for a potential maximum of 32,007 residential units. This number could be further reduced by 20% to accommodate infrastructure and other land requirements, which allows for a net of 25,606 residential units that can be actually built under the existing future land use map. The largest amount of vacant land was contained in north region of the county and the least amount in the south region of the county.

A new land use category was added to the future land use map in 2005, North Bay Neighborhood Planning Area/ Rural Town (NBNPA/RT). This new category added 2,790 acres that could be used for residential housing, creating a total of 8,928 possible buildable units for the entire county. There are proposed FLUM amendments and would add 1,455 acres designated rural village to the future land use map. These amendments would increase the total number of buildable units in the area to 17,119.

WilsonMiller projected that by the year 2010, an additional 22,832 housing units will be needed, and by the year 2025 an additional 85,022 housing units will be needed. These numbers include both non-seasonal and seasonal occupants. The population projection based on non-seasonal permanent residents projects 85,710 residents in the year 2025, with an additional 2,584,781 seasonal residents projected for the area. This clearly points out that adjustments need to be made on the future land use map to allow for more commercial, residential, and mixed use categories to house new residents. In addition to that there is an immediate need for action and or polices towards affordable housing for permanent residents, and economic development strategies to diversify the Walton County economy.

### Conclusion

In the 2005 BEBR estimates, Walton County ranked fourth in change in population for all counties in the state of Florida with an increase of 12,924 people or 31.8%. In 2004 Walton County tied for third in ranking with Sumter

County. The projections show that the population growth is not slowing down. By the year 2025 the county can expect to have 150,250 permanent residents and an additional 2,584,781 seasonal residents. Summer and spring are the peak seasons for seasonal residents in Walton County. It is projected that in spring of 2025, 893,627 people will visit our beaches followed by 1,208,153 people during the summer. In addition to facing large fluctuations in the population due to seasonal residents, Walton County faces other challenges that are location specific: to create affordable housing for its workforce and Eglin Air force base, diversify the economy so that it will not depend solely on tourism, and continue to offer a high quality of life that its residents have become accustomed to.

**b. Change in land area**

Walton County as a whole contains 677,120 acres (1,058 square miles). From 1996 to 2006 unincorporated Walton County lost approximately 8,140 acres to annexations into the City of Freeport and the City of DeFuniak Springs.

**c. Vacant land for future development**

There are approximately 42,695 total developable acres in unincorporated Walton County. A map showing the vacant land is included in the map series that is part of the county's data and analysis.

d. **Vacant land in A & AE flood zones**

In unincorporated Walton County there are approximately 4,132 vacant acres in the A flood zone and approximately 3,902 vacant acres in the AE flood zone. A map detailing the vacant land in the A and AE flood zones is included in the map series that is part of the county's data and analysis.

**e. Vacant land for development in CHHA**

Unincorporated Walton County has approximately 774 developable acres in the coastal high hazard area. This data was derived from the Northwest Florida Hurricane Evacuation Study (1999) produced by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The data was re-projected into state plane, Florida north zone, Datum NAD83, U.S. survey feet by Walton County GIA staff. The coastal high hazard data is based on the level 1 surge data provided through the results of this study.

Maps depicting the county's CHHA, and the vacant land located there are attached in the map series that is part of the county's data and analysis.

f. **CHHA by future land use**

The table below represents the CHHA acreage by future land use within unincorporated Walton County. The CHHA was determined by the methodology discussed under §(e).

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Business Park District	0
Conservation	636.2
Coastal Center	418.19
Coastal Center Mixed Use	0
Court Order Overlay	38.33
Conservation Residential	0.33
Conservation Residential 2:1	13.43
Conservation Residential 1:2.5	340.97
Coastal Village	15.99
In_Fill	183.74
Industrial	0
Institutional	0
Light Industrial	0.075
Large Scale Agriculture	0
Private Conservation	432.47
Public Facilities	0
Parks_Recreation	3.8
Residential Preservation	262.7
Small Neighborhood	17.27
Town Center One	0
Town Center Two	0
Traditional Neighborhood	110.95
Undesignated	0
Village Mixed Use	1.33
Total South Walton	2475.775
<b>North Walton Land Use</b>	
Commercial	7.11
Estate Residential	213.61
General Agriculture	325.05
Industrial	43.34
Institutional	0
Large Scale Agriculture	308.63
Rural Low Density	0
Rural Residential	0
Rural Village	561.41
Conservation	8147.36

Urban Residential	0
Total North Walton	9606.51
Total Acres	12082.29

A map depicting the county's CHHA by future land use category is included in the map series that is part of the county's data and analysis.

**g. CHHA by existing land use**

The table below represents the CHHA acreage by existing land use within Walton County. The CHHA was determined by the methodology discussed under §(e).

<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acres</b>
Agriculture	1122.41
Conservation	0
Commercial	103.63
County	10.39
Federal	126.09
Industrial	3.87
Professional & Institutional	2.13
Multi-Family	57.57
Municipal	0
Parks_Recreation	5036.25
Public Facilities	456.42
Right of way	0
Single Family Residential	457.53
State	582.72
Undetermined	3818
Vacant	774
Total	12551.01

A map depicting the county's CHHA by existing land use is included in the map series that is part of the county's data and analysis.

**h. Demands of growth on infrastructure**

As discussed in more detail in §V(b), the county's analysis indicates that the county's planned infrastructure improvements will not be sufficient to meet the projected demand unless the county adds additional projects to its CIP.

i. **Location of development**

Since 1996, the growth in Walton County has been located primarily in the southern portions of the County. Today, build out scenarios are pushing new development toward the central and northern regions of the County. A map depicting the location of recent major and minor development order proposals is included in the map series as part of the county's data and analysis.

**j. Coordination of school locations**

As one of the seven school concurrency model programs, Walton County, the City of DeFuniak Springs, the City of Freeport, the City of Paxton, and the Walton County School Board, working with Morris Depew Associates, have created an interlocal agreement on school concurrency, drafted proposed amendments to their respective comprehensive plans, and developed an overall strategy for tying development approval to school concurrency. The Walton County School Board has hired a full-time coordinator for this effort, who is currently reviewing all development applications and applications for comprehensive plan amendments. The school board representative also sits as a non-voting member of the Walton County Planning Commission. The school board coordinates their proposed school expansions, new school locations, and other development plans with the county planning staff. Walton County is committed to maintaining a high level of coordination between the Walton County School District and the Planning and Development Services Division. We are currently in the process of adopting the amendments developed as part of the model program, and any needed changes to those amendments will be reflected in our EAR-based amendments. (Appendices I(1) – I(3)).

**k. Consideration of the Water Management District Plans**

One of the major changes to the Florida growth management laws in 2005 required local governments to incorporate regional water supply planning into their comprehensive plans and to reflect the plans of the regional water management district. In response, Walton County has drafted a 10-year water supply facilities work plan (attached as appendix D(1)). The work plan is intended to aid in the review, planning, and permitting of projects that serve unincorporated Walton County. The facility plan summarizes information on existing water supply sources, current design capacities, permitted withdrawals, current average daily rates, anticipated growth for a twenty year planning period, and required improvements necessary within five years, ten years, and twenty years to meet projected demands. The work plan is consistent with and is prepared pursuant to the requirements of §163.3177(6)(c) F.S.

The coastal areas in south Walton County have been designated an “Area of Special Concern” by the Northwest Florida Water Management District, because groundwater withdrawals in the coastal area are causing a significant decline in the aquifer, which is now threatened with saltwater intrusion. (Appendix D(2)). Such a designation, adopted in NFWMD rules, restricts further withdrawals from the aquifer and requires re-use of treated wastewater for non-potable uses where feasible. (Ch. 40A-2, FAC).



There are seven utilities providing potable water within Walton County. Three are municipal utilities providing potable water both within their corporate boundaries (DeFuniak Springs, Paxton and Freeport) and to unincorporated areas immediately adjacent. The remaining four utilities serve customers of unincorporated Walton County. These utilities include private water systems and cooperatives. A map, entitled “Walton County Service Areas,” detailing the location of these service areas is included in appendix D(1).

To implement and coordinate this work plan and its recommendations, EAR-based amendments should be made to Walton County’s Comprehensive Plan. Draft amendments to Section 2.7, Potable Water, and 2.10, Conservation, are included in §VIII(b). Necessary revisions to the capital improvement element are included in Appendix E of the Draft Walton County Water Supply WorkPlan. (Appendix D(1)).

**I. Consistency with TPO Plans**

Walton County has currently adopted all of the projects on the Okaloosa/Walton TPO's five year workplan into its CIP. The TPO's long range and five year plans are included in the data and analysis. (Appendices G(28), G(39)). Walton County will continue to work closely with the TPO to implement their planning priorities.

m. **Evaluation of Redevelopment Feasibility and Property Rights in Coastal High-Hazard Areas**

As discussed in §VI(b), the county prohibits the creation of new lots in the CHHA unless the lot contains enough area outside of the CHHA for the building footprint. This significantly limits the ability to develop residential projects on large, un-subdivided parcels located in the CHHA, but does effectively direct new residential development away from the CHHA. Because of the high bluffs that protect the majority of the Gulf front property in Walton County, and the extensive amount of property in state, private, or local conservation, only a very limited amount of undeveloped CHHA exists in Walton County. Thus, this regulation affects only a few properties within the county.

Where the CHHA contains vested subdivided parcels or already developed property, the Bert J. Harris Act (Chapter 70, F.S.) could potentially ~~would~~ require local government to compensate the owners of those parcels if the government adopted comprehensive plan amendments or land development code provisions that would substantially reduce the owner's ability to use that property. This provision might also apply to properties where the local government sought to prohibit redevelopment. While the county can, and does, limit redevelopment to the existing footprint, density, and intensity of a destroyed structure, to go further and prohibit redevelopment in the CHHA might potentially subject the county to an action under Ch. 70, F.S. that might ultimately compel the county to compensate the property owners for the loss of their ability to develop.

n. **Analyzing Local Issues**

i. **BRAC Impacts, JLUS, and BRAC Growth Management Study**

Military bases and installations contribute billions of dollars to local economies. In response to the changing needs of the military, but aware of the impact that base closures could have on local economies, Congress authorized, and the Department of Defense (DoD) conducted, four rounds of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) in 1988, 1991, 1993, and 1995. Through the BRAC process realignment or closure actions were approved at 387 locations. These actions were ultimately reviewed by an independent commission and approved by both the President and the Congress. In response to the DoD's request, the Congress, in late 2001, authorized one additional BRAC round in 2005.

During the base closure process, DoD officials focused on encroachment issues as they examined individual installations to consider whether or not to close a facility. Encroachment includes environmental restrictions on military activities, incompatible land uses adjacent to a base, the incompatible use of airspace, and the decreased spectrum for military use. DoD officials also examined the military value to the state and local economies of each installation.

Most military installations are located near the perimeter of urban areas due largely to the availability of land for defense and security purposes. Over time however, installations draw people and businesses closer and closer to take advantage of civilian job opportunities offered by the installation and to provide the goods and services to support the installation's operations. As urban growth and development increase near these military installations, land use conflicts between mission activities and civilian settlements can increase.

Military operations can be loud and present safety concerns for nearby civilian communities. For example, low flying, high performance military aircraft can create both noise and accident potential during landings, take-offs, and training exercises. Likewise, ground training exercises (e.g., artillery firing ranges, maneuver areas, and aerial bombing ranges) generate impact noise that can adversely affect the surrounding community if the civilian population chooses to locate too close.

Conversely, when urban centers develop next to active military bases, the operational effectiveness, training, and readiness missions can be impaired. Urban encroachment near a military facility, if allowed to go unregulated, can compromise the utility and effectiveness of the installation and its mission. For example, certain types of land use activities such as homes, places of assembly (i.e., schools or religious centers), childcare centers, nursing homes, hospitals, restaurants, theaters, and shopping centers are often not compatible uses if

located too close to military operations. When people and communities are exposed to irritating noise and accident potential, they seek relief. Typically this results in public pressure on the military base commander to modify or curtail operations or transfer activities to other installations. Mission constraints can lead to closure of the installation.

The commensurate reduction in installation personnel and mission activities can have a direct and detrimental effect on the jurisdiction through reduced economic activity and loss of jobs, impacting the local tax base and economic health of the area. As mentioned above, the extent of urban encroachment impacting the operational utility of an installation is one consideration in determining the future viability of that installation.

### Eglin Air Force Base

Eglin Air Force Base had the highest military value in BRAC 2005 test and training ranges. Under BRAC 2005, three (3) new missions are to come to Eglin Air Force Base (along with the possibility of a fourth mission), all projected for FY 2010 and FY 2011. They are as follows:

1. Establishing the Initial Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Training Complex. This will entail relocating 200 pilot and maintenance instructor positions. About 2,200 personnel and 248 contractors will be assigned to this unit. About 120 student pilots and 668 student maintainers will attend the course on a daily basis.
2. Relocating the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group (Airborne) from Fort Bragg, NC. This will entail relocating 1,352 active duty positions and the Army may increase the number to 2,240 active duty members.
3. Relocating the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) National Command Region Conventional Armament Research Organization from Fort Belvoir, VA. About 36 people (21 government employees; 15 contractors) will be assigned to this organization.
4. Possible relocation of the AETC Altitude Chamber from Moody AFB, GA. Air Education and Training Command headquarters at Randolph AFB, Texas would prefer Eglin as the new site for this facility. Relocating the altitude chamber would support 400+ Combat Systems Operator students at NAS Pensacola who require altitude chamber training for aircrew qualification; the Joint Strike Fighter personnel at Eglin; and altitude chamber requirements for flying tenant units at Eglin.

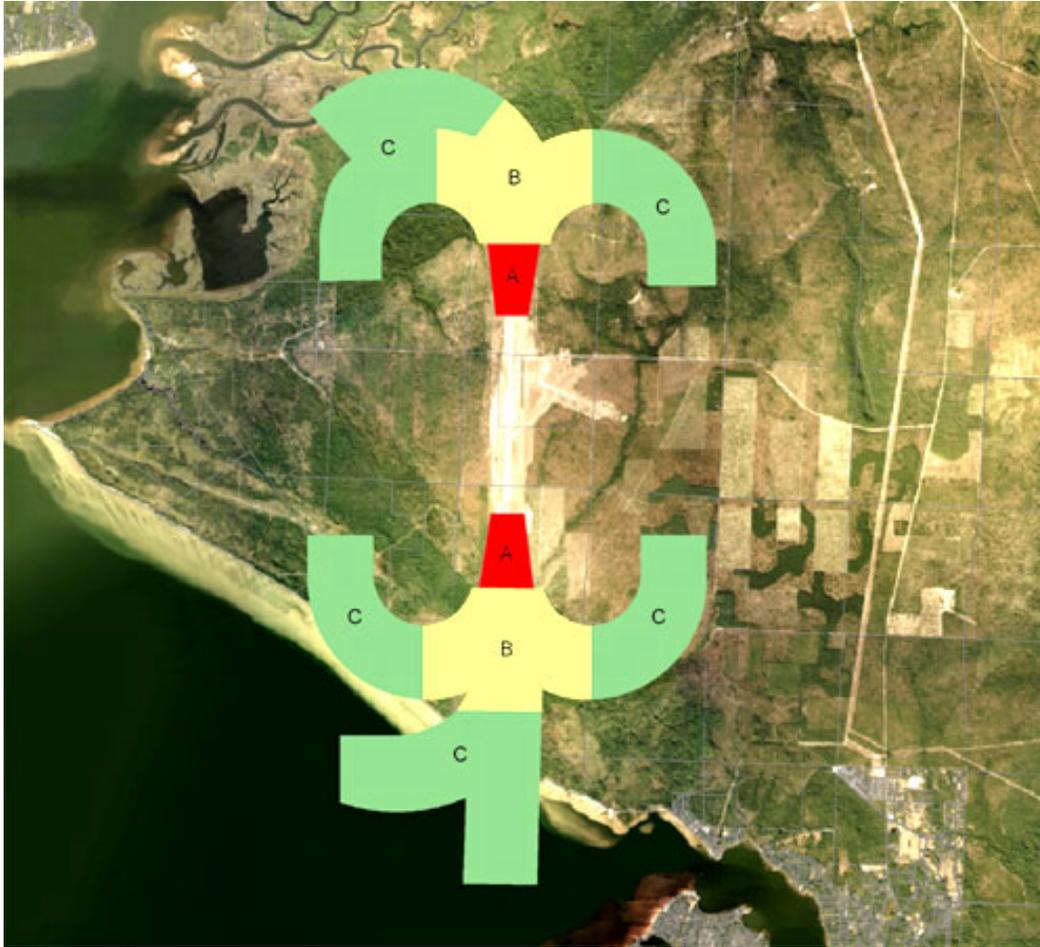
With Eglin playing a greater national military role, it is more important than ever to protect this valuable resource. Eglin spans three counties; therefore, to

adequately protect it will require cooperation from all three jurisdictions and their incorporated municipalities. Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties and their respective municipalities are jointly applying to the DoD's Office of Economic Adjustment for grants to conduct a tri-county Joint Land Use Study and a Growth Management Study for Eglin Air Force Base. Okaloosa County will take the lead in this effort. Through this joint, cooperative, military and community planning effort, growth conflicts can be anticipated, identified, and prevented. These actions will help protect the installation's enhanced military mission as well as the public health, safety, quality of life, and community economic stability.

*The Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) and the Environmental Noise Management Program (ENMP)*

The DoD recognized the problem of urban encroachment on installations, and in 1973 initiated the Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) and Installation Compatible Use Zone (ICUZ) programs. AICUZ is used by the Navy and Air Force, while ICUZ is used by the Army. ICUZ is now an integral part of a more comprehensive Environmental Noise Management Program (ENMP). Also, the Navy has added a Range Air Installation Compatible Use Zone study (RAICUZ) to delineate noise impacts from aerial firing ranges. The intent of these programs is to provide information to local governments about noise and accident potential from base operations, and to encourage communities to adopt land use controls that will ensure compatible development in areas adversely affected by military operations.

The AICUZ identifies Accident Potential Zones or APZ's for flight operations. There are three (3) categories; the Clear Zone, which has a high accident potential; APZ I, which has a significant accident potential; and APZ II, which has a measurable accident potential. The Clear Zone extends 3,000 feet beyond the end of the runway, APZ I extends 5,000 feet beyond the Clear Zone, and APZ II extends 7,000 feet beyond APZ I. Naval statistics show that between 1968 and 1982, 35.6% of flight operation accidents occurred on the runway; 20.1% occurred adjacent to the runway; 12.9 percent occurred in the Clear Zone; 6.3% occurred in APZ I; 2.8% occurred in APZ II; and 22.3% occurred outside all the zones. This data shows the importance of reducing incompatible land uses adjacent to military bases, especially those that conduct flight operations. The following picture illustrates the APZ's and how they relate to the airfield and the surrounding adjacent land. Zone A represents the Clear Zone, Zone B represents APZ I, and Zone C represents APZ II.



*Navy Outlying Landing Field Choctaw, Eglin Air Force Base, Florida*

*Joint Land Use Study Program*

The DoD initiated the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) program in 1985 in an effort to achieve greater application of the AICUZ/ENMP/RAICUZ program recommendations. The JLUS program utilizes the AICUZ/ENMP/RAICUZ data in a participatory, community planning context. The DoD's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) manages the JLUS program.

Each year the Military Departments (Army, Navy, Air Force) nominate bases for a JLUS. Selection is based on the presence of existing encroachment or the potential for it to develop in the near future. The OEA then meets with the base and community leadership to explain the purpose and process for initiating a study. In addition, there must be an indication of strong support from the base leadership. The base must ensure its staff participation throughout the study process, and a current AICUZ/ENMP/RAICUZ report must be available or near completion. Also, there must be a good community/base relations track record upon which to build a JLUS partnership.

A JLUS is a cooperative land use planning effort between an affected local government and a military installation. The recommendations from a JLUS provide a policy framework to support adoption and implementation of compatible development measures designed to prevent urban encroachment; safeguard the military mission; and protect the public health, safety, and welfare.

JLUS implementation measures may involve revisions to the community's comprehensive plan and traditional land use and development controls such as zoning, subdivision regulations, structural height restrictions, and promotion of planned unit development concepts. Additional actions may include amending local building codes to require increased sound attenuation in existing and new buildings, land exchanges, transfer of development rights, and real estate disclosure.

A JLUS is usually completed in 12 months. The JLUS effort can directly benefit both the jurisdiction and the military installation by:

- Protecting the health and safety of residents living or working near military installations;
- Preserving long-term land use compatibility between the installation and the surrounding community;
- Promoting comprehensive community planning;
- Encouraging a cooperative spirit between the local base command and the local community officials; and
- Integrating the local jurisdiction's comprehensive plans with the military installation's plans.

The data and analysis includes the BRAC statistics for Eglin Air Force Base and the Air Armament Command; the application for the Northwest Florida Tri-County Joint Land Use Study for Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton Counties; a powerpoint presentation from the Office of Economic Adjustment on Growth Management Planning and Compatible Land Use Planning; Resolutions supporting the Tri-County Joint Land Use Study and Growth Management Plan; and grant applications to the DoD's Office of Economic Adjustment for planning assistance for Joint Land Use Studies and Growth Management Planning assistance. (Appendices A(16) – A(18)).

On May 23, 2006, the Walton County Board of Commissioners signed Resolution 2006-51, whereby Okaloosa County, in cooperation with the Office of Economic Adjustment in the United States Department of Defense, has agreed to coordinate a Growth Management Plan (GMP) and Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) with Walton County; Santa Rosa County is also involved in the tri-county study. With the influx of personnel into the area due to BRAC relocations and the military's need to sustain training, readiness, and installation viability; it will be necessary to address planning issues such as traffic concurrency, urban growth, affordable housing, height restrictions, environmental protection and air space management.

The funding and the process for the JLUS will come from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). The entire process will take approximately twelve to eighteen months. The primary objective is to initiate the JLUS prior to the Growth Management Plan (GMP) effort to allow incorporation of the land use planning recommendations into the GMP. The JLUS will be a two step process. Once land uses and growth management guidelines are identified, the second step will involve formation of specific development regulations and land management implementation programs. The management plan will be needed to manage the overall growth planning process and to ensure that JLUS results are coordinated with and incorporated in the GMP.

Walton County will incorporate goals, objectives, and policies in its EAR-based amendments as needed to incorporate the recommendations of the JLUS.

## **ii. Emerald Coast Sustainable Committee**

Walton County, along with Escambia, Santa Rosa and Okaloosa counties, are located in Northwest Florida within the jurisdiction of the West Florida Regional Planning Council and form a contiguous planning area that will benefit from joint long-range planning for a sustainable future. The executive order establishing the Emerald Coast Sustainable Committee provides for:

- Managing growth that is important to Florida's economy, environment and quality of life.
- Local governments working together to adopt a regional approach to planning to meet future growth.
- The counties of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton are located in Northwest Florida within the jurisdiction of the West Florida Regional Planning Council and form a contiguous planning area that will benefit from joint long-range planning for a sustainable future.
- There is a significant military presence in the four-county region, including the United States Air Force at Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field, and Duke Field Air Force Reserve; the United States Navy at Pensacola Naval Air Station, Naval Hospital Pensacola, Corry Station at Pensacola, Whiting Field Naval Air Station at Milton, and The Navy School Explosive Ordnance Disposal at Eglin Air Force Base; the United States Army's Sixth Ranger Training Battalion at Camp J.E. Rudder on Eglin Air Force Base; and the United States Coast Guard at the Coast Guard Station in Destin.
- Eglin Air Force Base will be adding the Joint Strike Fighter Integrated Training Center, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the Conventional Armament Research Organization, and the AETC Altitude Chamber with the increase of 12,000 military and civilian personnel and their families by October 2009.
- Due to the latest base realignment and closures, Okaloosa County will gain by October 2009, the Army's Seventh Special Forces Group, including over 1,350 personnel.
- The four-county area is the location for eight military installations, and is the home of the largest Air Force Base in the United States Department of Defense, Eglin Air Force Base, covering 724 square miles of reservation and 123,000 square miles of water ranges in the Gulf of Mexico.

In 2004, the Florida Congress passed legislation that acknowledged the potential for negative impacts to occur when incompatible land development occurs close to military installation (F.S. 163.3175). The state found it "desirable for the local communities to cooperate with military installations to encourage compatible land use, help prevent incompatible encroachment, and facilitate the continued presence of major military installations." (Appendix A(34)).

The Executive Order allowed for Governor Bush to select a committee representative of the local government officials, the business community, school board officials, environmental groups, military base officials, and property

owners. Walton County appointees include Carlene Anderson, Pat Blackshear, William Maxson, William Buzzett and Daniel Uhlfelder. These committee members will work together to consider, evaluate, and make recommendations concerning issues of regional importance related to long-range planning to assure sustainable growth and development.

In its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will incorporate the findings and recommendations of the Emerald Coast Sustainable Committee into the goals, objectives, and policies of its comprehensive plan.

### **iii. Coastal Dune Lakes**

Within the confines of Walton County lie many ecological treasures. These attract visitors from all over the world, creating the 33rd fastest growing county in the nation (U.S. Census Bureau). While the beaches may receive the majority of the attention, many local residents value the coastal dune lakes as the county's most prized possession. Strung like watery pearls, this series of lakes adorn 26 miles of our world-famous white, sandy beaches. The lakes have been identified as globally rare and imperiled (S1/G2) by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). (Appendix E(10)). Our 15 named coastal dune lakes are rare natural systems. Similar ecosystems can only be found in the Florida Panhandle, Madagascar, Australia, New Zealand and the Northwest Pacific Coast of the United States.

The uniqueness of these lakes is most recognizably defined by their intermittent connection with the Gulf of Mexico. Upon favorable conditions through storm or tidal events, freshwater fed by the sand and gravel aquifer fills the lakes until the damming sands can no longer contain them. In one of the most majestic displays of nature, the lake water bursts through the dunes emptying into the Gulf of Mexico. In return, salt water from the gulf fills the void left behind by the lowered water levels of the lake. This exchange not only forms a brackish estuarine water-body, but creates a dynamic ecosystem that can change at a moment's notice – sometimes before your very eyes. For many residents and visitors it is the coastal dune lakes that are the aesthetic highlight of the area. When you witness the lakes' connecting outfall meandering its way through the dunes to spill into the Gulf of Mexico, there is absolutely no doubt that you are in Walton County.

Freshwater in the coastal environment provides important watering areas for wildlife, especially migrating birds. In addition to being the home of numerous freshwater fish and other animals, many of our coastal dune lakes function as mini-estuaries. Just like a bay, they can also be important nursery areas for marine animals including crabs and shrimp, as well as fish such as seatrout, drum, flounder and jacks. Walton County residents also have a long history of visiting the lakes. In his autobiography, published in "The Way We Were," Walton County pioneer Walker H. Reddick, Sr., describes how his family enjoyed vacationing at Oyster Lake for summer fun in the early 1900's. (Appendix H(7)). Many families today still enjoy these lakes. It is our goal to ensure that families enjoy them for generations to come. To achieve this, the County believes it must increase protection of the lakes. This report summarizes the current efforts Walton County is making to protect the coastal dune lakes insuring the future stability of these highly prized ecosystems.

### Current Protection Efforts

Walton County has attempted to protect its coastal dune lakes by adopting stringent protection measures specifically targeting the coastal dune lakes. In addition, the county initiated a Coastal Dune Lakes Taskforce in 2000, establishing a community forum to address issues impacting the lakes. The Taskforce eventually became the Coastal Dune Lakes Advisory Board (CDLAB). As a County Commission (BCC) appointed advisory board, the CDLAB is “dedicated to preserving, protecting, and enhancing the 15 Coastal Dune Lakes of Walton County.” The advisory board conducts public meetings on a monthly basis discussing the issues impacting the lakes, and advising the County on the necessary recourses.

The CDLAB’s first priority was to increase the very limited amount of scientific information available on the health of the lakes. In 2001, Lake Watch volunteers were recruited and trained to collect water samples at set stations within the coastal dune lakes in an effort to establish baseline data for water quality. In the latter part of 2001, the University of Florida IFAS Extension Service (UF-IFAS) partnered with a local non-profit scientific organization, the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA). Through this collaboration a half-time Coastal Dune Lakes Volunteer Coordinator was created and funded by Walton County and local contributions. In 2002, with a proven track record and the need for additional data, the Coastal Dune Lakes Volunteer Coordinator became a full-time position.



Photo Courtesy of Scott Jackson of Mindlace Photography for this presentation only. Please Do not copy or redistribute.

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Since then, CBA has produced a more comprehensive dune lake program with 55 stations being monitored on a monthly basis. On average this program contributes more than 1300 hours of community service through 50 community volunteers on an annual basis.

Despite these efforts, the rapid growth within the County continues to be a mounting threat to preserving the environmental stability of these important ecosystems. Changes in the baseline water quality data of some of the lakes, an increase in the presence of invasive/exotic plant species, and mounting community apprehension add weight and legitimacy to the county's growing concern in protecting the lakes. In response to the potential environmental and economic consequences tied to the lakes' health, the CDLAB requested the county to offset the pressure from this growth management issue by strengthening their protective efforts. Specifically, the CDLAB recommended in October 2005 a scientifically-based initiative that incorporates management, restoration, and preservation components to positively enhance the lakes. The proposal outlined a 4-year initiative to expand CBA's current Coastal Dune Lake Program and launch a community driven campaign to preserve the future of the coastal dune lakes. (Appendix E(18)).

While the county hopes that this initiative will inspire community stewardship, it is the county that bears the initial burden of starting this endeavor. In return, the county, in concert with the CDLAB, will be gathering public input through the development of lake management plans and annual stakeholder meetings, executing a scientifically-based list of projects to enhance the lakes, procuring grants designed to leverage and maximize county funds to implement the projects, and documenting and evaluating the program's efforts. These efforts will increase the foundation for CBA's Coastal Dune Lake Program, and lead to a more efficient use of the county's time and resources by establishing a community-driven effort to preserve the future of the coastal dune lakes.

An initial public meeting sponsored by the CDLAB was held on January 21, 2006 with approximately 60 community participants. During this session, facilitated discussions were held to identify the most important issues related to our coastal dune lakes. Meeting participants identified enforcement of existing regulations and management of outfall issues as their top concerns. The meeting was very successful in sparking ideas and concerns from the attendants, and served as the template for the individual lake meetings conducted a few months later. The minutes for the entire series of meetings are included in the county's data and analysis. (Appendix E(18)).

In April and May 2006, Phillip Ellis with CBA and Scott Jackson with UF-IFAS under the guidance of the CDLAB hosted a series of community meetings to initiate the community participation necessary for development of the management plans (Appendix E(18)). Their goal is to create a management plan

for each individual coastal dune lake by the end of 2006 through open participation of all property owners and stake holders. These discussions developed a prioritized list of community concerns that will be forwarded to a technical committee. The technical committee will draft detailed language for the management proposal. The draft management proposal will be presented at a community meeting in the latter part of 2006 for discussion, modification, and endorsement. Final management plans will then be submitted to the BCC for their action and direction. These lake management plans will serve as the foundation for future protection and restoration efforts. For current information on this project please visit the project website at <http://dunelakes.org>.

### Causes for Concern

The coastal dune lakes are extremely fragile ecosystems that are relatively diminutive in size and shallow in depth making them highly susceptible to changing conditions within their watershed. As the county continues to supply growing demands for updated infrastructure and accommodate the sheer number of new people moving to Florida each day, it is faced with new challenges in protecting these ecological treasures. As discussed in §VII(a), the population of Walton County is expected to grow significantly by 2025. How Walton County will establish the fine line between accommodating this growth and protecting the valuable natural resources that brought everyone here in the first place is the biggest issue facing us today.

In addition to new residents moving to the area, the county also has to accommodate its popularity as a tourist destination. The Panama City area is the second most visited destination in Florida by car, with Walton County having over 900,000 room-nights booked annually (Walton County Tourist Development Council). To deepen this concern the lakes are situated in the most highly developed and valuable land in Walton County. Their watersheds are one of the most heavily visited areas in Walton County, containing nationally known resorts such as Seaside, Watercolor, Rosemary Beach and the historic town of Grayton.

From a regulatory standpoint, the lakes are recognized as a significant resource. The majority of the lakes are classified as Outstanding Florida Waters because of their affiliation with the Florida State Park System (Lake Powell established its designation separately). Additionally, Western Lake is listed on the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (FDEP) 303d TMDL "Verified List for Group 3 Basins" as an estuary potentially impaired by historic chlorophyll count. The lakes are also identified as a valuable commodity in the Northwest Florida Water Management District's (NWFMD) Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan (SWIM). Most recently, the lakes were classified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the Corps of Engineers (COE) South Walton Area Mitigation Plan (SWAMP) as a high priority wetland. (Appendix E(7)).

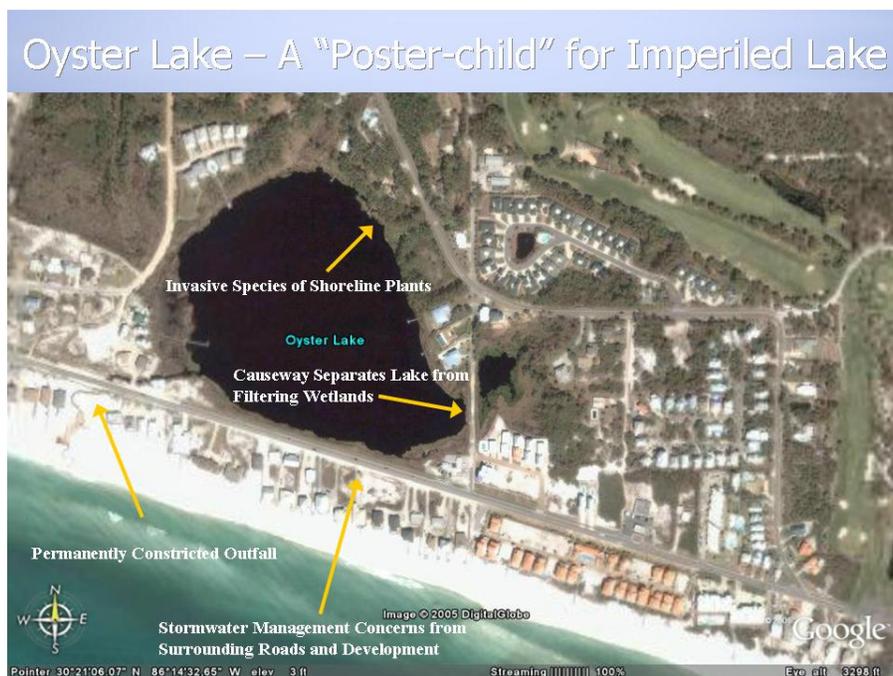
## Current Management Issues

### Oyster Lake

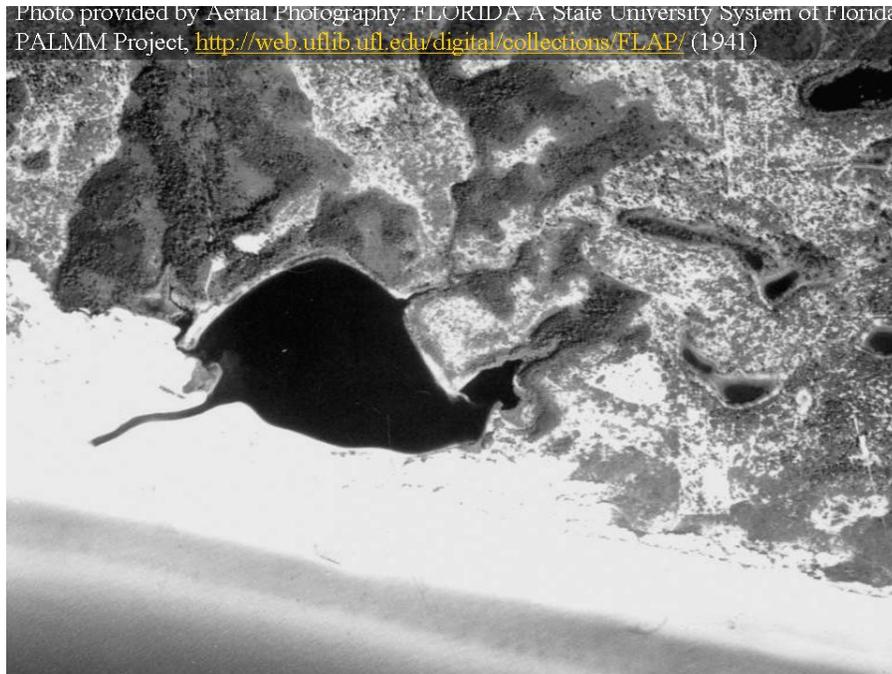
Oyster Lake is perhaps the best example of what can occur if the status quo is followed. (Figure 1). Without an active management plan these public assets are likely to be negatively impacted. Currently in Oyster Lake, there are numerous invasive species predominantly displacing native vegetation. One example in this lake is alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*). Like other non-native invasives, this plant gains a foothold and takes over the natural shoreline community. The shore diversity becomes limited and the associated wildlife is also effectively reduced.

Wetlands that filter the water and maintain water quality have also been eliminated. Through increased development and road construction the “kidneys” of the watershed have been removed. In this example a causeway was constructed severing some of the wetland from the lake in the eastern end.

One final feature to note is the lake’s migrating outfall “tail.” This is one of the defining features of the coastal dune lakes. As seen in Figure 2, the outfall historically was allowed to move freely through the beach area south of the lake. After a hurricane in the 1970s, a box culvert at fixed point was constructed for the Oyster Lake outfall. As a result the natural connection to the Gulf of Mexico was affected.



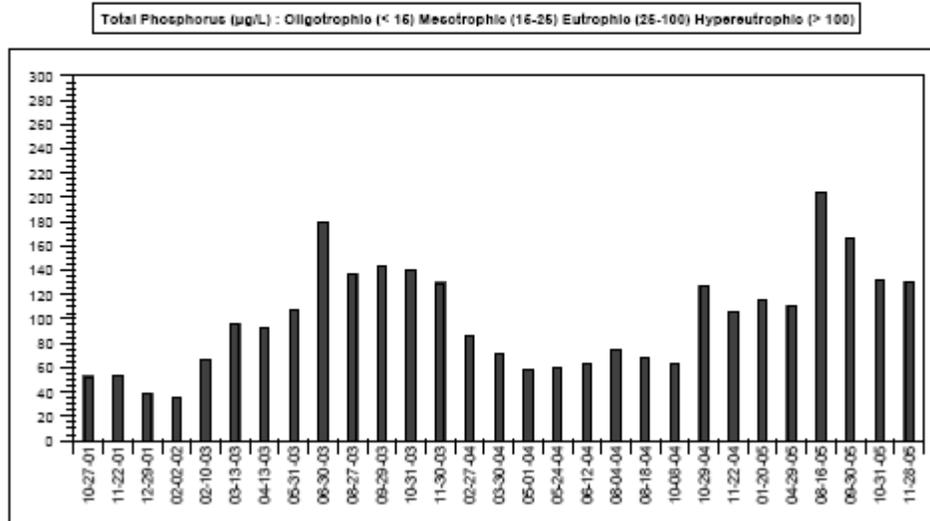
**Figure 1.** Oyster Lake Concerns : Base image is from Google Earth circa 2000 – 2004. Image highlights associated management issues regarding invasive species, wetland impacts, stormwater issues, and outfall management.



**Figure 2.** Historic Oyster Lake Watershed and Drainage Basin 1941. The base image is from a collection of aerial photographs housed at the University of Florida Library. The photograph provides a record of the intact wetland areas and unrestricted outfall connection.

## FLORIDA LAKEWATCH

Oyster / Walton County



**Figure 3.** Phosphorus Water Quality Data for Oyster Lake. Florida LakeWatch Oct 2001 – Nov 2005 indicates a trend of increasing nutrients entering the lake. Based on the most recent phosphorus data, Oyster Lake could be considered hypereutrophic. The estimated restoration cost for Oyster Lake is \$800,000.

### Eastern Lake Outfall (April – July 2005)

Based on news article accounts and reports from neighboring residents, a historic dune landward of the coastal construction line was cut to allow access to property adjacent to the Eastern Lake outfall. Sand was moved into the area to construct a “new” dune in the hope of protecting a home-site after the original dunes were destroyed by Hurricane Ivan (September 16, 2004). The restoration work was to conclude by May 1, 2005, the official start of turtle nesting season as determined by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission. A stop work order was issued by the county on May 5, 2005. While the issue was being settled between the property owner and regulators, Tropical Storm Arlene (June 11, 2005), and Hurricane Dennis (July 10, 2005) moved the loose sand into the end of Eastern Lake at the outfall. Subsequent emergency efforts to open the lake failed resulting in high water levels for a prolonged period.

A community meeting in February 2006 resulted in a plan to restore the outfall to the point where it could open and close again as it did prior to the storms. Currently (September 2006), the Eastern Lake outfall remains closed as the community awaits final approval for the proposed restoration plan. As a result of these events, surface salinity levels have declined. In an increasing freshwater environment a native submerged aquatic grass, Widgeon grass (*Ruppia maritima*), has proliferated along the shoreline since spring 2006. The

estimated restoration cost of Eastern Lake is \$19,000 for engineering, design, and survey, plus an unknown construction cost.

*Big Redfish Lake (January 2006)*

A violation of DEP permit during construction of adjacent development resulted in pollution and damage to sensitive headwaters and associated vegetation of Big Redfish Lake. Construction work had occurred without proper erosion control silt fencing in place. This action resulted in an enormous sediment load entering the area. In addition, point source pollution from construction activities was indicated by the presence of volatile petroleum products such as diesel fuel and hydraulic fluid.

Temporary stop work orders were issued. After submitting a restoration plan the contractor was allowed to resume construction. According to some of the environmental investigators it is doubtful this area will function naturally in the foreseeable future even after the restoration. The estimated restoration cost is still undetermined.



## Water Quality

The volunteer water quality monitoring program provides a beginning point in defining the current conditions of the Coastal Dune Lakes. To interpret the collected data in accordance with scientifically accepted standards the program utilizes the *State Trophic Index* for total phosphorus, total nitrogen, water clarity, and chlorophyll-A. The lack of historical water quality information makes it difficult to define the exact trophic range to target for lake management. However, because these ecosystems are located within relatively infertile sandy soils and based on data collected from lakes considered to have been minimally impacted, the desirable trophic range is assumed to be Oligotrophic. As evident from the data, the majority of our lakes now exist in the higher percentile of the Oligotrophic range with some even venturing into the Eutrophic and Hypereutrophic levels. Of specific concern are Oyster Lake with Eutrophic levels in total phosphorus and total nitrogen averages and Big Redfish Lake whose total nitrogen levels significantly increased in the spring of 2003. Eutrophic levels for the average total nitrogen in Alligator, Allen, Fuller, Little Redfish, and Morris demonstrate significant warning signs that may increase as development continues to occur within their watershed.

The data collected from this program only establishes baseline information for limited parameters. Other scientific analysis should be included in the future to create a more holistic picture of the lakes' ecological health. A summary of the data for the chemical parameters collected from this program is provided in Appendix E(15) along with graphs displaying the historical data and plotted trend analysis.

Walton County will incorporate goals, objectives, and policies in its EAR-based amendments as needed to further enhance the protection of the coastal dune lakes.

#### **iv. Morrison Springs Management Plan**

The Morrison Springs area was purchased by the State of Florida in June 2004 as part of the Florida Forever Program through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Land Acquisition. This 200-acre property was the largest intact, undeveloped privately-owned tract in Walton County with a second magnitude spring. The spring contributes flow to the Choctawhatchee River (a S.W.I.M. priority water body) via the Morrison Springs Run. Morrison Springs is the largest second magnitude spring in the NFWFMD area and discharges 10,100 cubic feet per second. The property was acquired with the express goal of preserving and protecting land around the spring from the effects of commercial, residential, and agricultural runoff; clear-cutting, and future private development.

The State of Florida subsequently entered into a lease with Walton County for management of the subject property with the requirement that a management plan be prepared and approved by the State of Florida. Walton County has drafted a management plan and submitted it to DEP for their review. (Appendix E(16)). A key component of the plan is for the subject property to be managed and maintained as a passive park. The Walton County Parks and Recreation Division will be charged with the management of the spring. Morrison Springs remains undeveloped and in a relatively natural condition surrounded by swamp on three sides. Only on the west side is there developable land, and at present this land is being used for small scale agriculture. Morrison Springs will be utilized for public outdoor recreation and conservation.

Although Morrison Springs is not within an aquatic preserve or an area of critical state concern, the site is located adjacent to the Choctawhatchee River Management Area owned by Northwest Florida Water Management District and is within 10 miles of the Ponce de Leon State Recreation area. A significant part of the Morrison Springs parcel is included in the Choctawhatchee River Outstanding Florida Waters designation (Rule 62-302.700(9)(i)7., Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.)). There have been recent unconfirmed sightings of the nearly globally extinct ivory billed woodpecker in the surrounding area. In addition, any surface waters on the site are classified as Class III waters, a statewide default classification. The acquisition of the Morrison Springs property was consistent with the intended proposed uses of conservation and recreation.

As a result of the data and analysis conducted in compiling the Spring Management Plan, Walton County now has in place greater measures to ensure the spring and its surrounding area is protected from the impacts of recreational activities and area development.

Walton County will incorporate goals, objectives, and policies in its EAR-based amendments as needed to ensure the elements of the spring management plan are implemented. Measures will thereby be in place to ensure

that Morrison Springs, one of our areas greatest natural resources, will continue to be protected from degradation of water quality and impacts of future growth.

## **v. Historical Board**

The Walton Board of County Commissioners unanimously supports an historic overlay district for the Point Washington area. The boundary has been identified and mutually agreed upon by the residents, county staff, and the Historic Point Washington Association. The county hosted a meeting on August 1, 2006 with some of the Historic Point Washington Association members, Eden State Park employees, and a few neighbors to identify issues, concerns, future goals, and direction. The group discussed the elements that the Historic Point Washington Association would like to see in the overlay district: scale or size, open space requirements, architectural design guidelines, height restriction, color palettes, and exterior materials. The county provided several examples of other historic district overlays for the attendees to review.

A copy of the overlay area map is included in the data and analysis, as is the outline from the August 1, 2006 meeting.

### **The Beginning**

In the late 1800's, Point Washington was a bustling lumber town with a population estimated between 1000 and 2000 people. Simeon Strickland was the owner of the local saw mill, and built a family home in the area over 100 years ago. The home was featured antebellum architecture with a wrap-around porch on both floors to provide for cross breeze in the summer's heat. The house was built as an exact replica of what now is called Eden State Park, which was formerly owned by Simeon Strickland's oldest daughter from his first marriage, Katie and her husband. The Strickland sisters, Julia and Helen resided in the home until their death. About 50 years ago the home fell in disrepair and the second floor and porches were removed. The home is now owned by family members and they are planning to restore the home back to its original design.

### **Eden State Park**

William Henry Wesley was born in Brunswick Georgia November 3, 1865. He came to Point Washington with his father, a Methodist minister, around 1890. The wife of William Wesley, Katie Marie Strickland Wesley ("Miss Katie"), was born in Point Washington on August 30, 1875, and married William Wesley in 1893. Katie was the daughter of Captain Simeon Strickland and his first wife, Louise Florence Wise Strickland.

Katie and William Henry had nine children and built the 5,500 square foot home, now known as Eden Gardens, between 1895 and 1897. The home two stories, a central hallway and stairs surrounded by four large rooms complete with fireplace on each floor. Seven rooms were used as bedrooms and the eighth served as a parlor. A separate kitchen, dining room and storage were attached in the back of the house and a windmill pumped water for the house.

William Henry Wesley became involved in the sawmill business with Simeon Strickland and built his own sawmill located where the dock and picnic area are located today. Finished lumber awaiting shipments by barge to Pensacola was stacked on wharves in the bayou. The remnants of some of the piling for the wharves are still visible today. Mr. Wesley died in 1947 followed by Mrs. Wesley in 1953.

The home was vacant for ten years until it was purchased by Miss Lois Maxon in 1963. Miss Maxon was a former reporter for the New York World Telegram and heir to manufacturing fortune of Maxon Corporation of Muncie Indiana. Miss Maxon spent a million dollars renovating the home, removing the two original chimneys and also removing a partition on the first floor to make the large music room, where she gave local children free piano lessons. She created kitchen and dining areas at the rear of the house by enclosing the porches on both stories. The final restoration looks more "Greek Gothic" than the original Victorian style of the Wesley's, but is still breathtaking.

The focal point of Eden State Park is the beautifully renovated home of Miss Maxon. The two-story house with elegant white columns and wrap-around porch surrounded by moss-draped live oaks and ornamental gardens inspires visions of hoop skirts, landed gentry and the original settlers to Point Washington. When you stand on the grounds you can still see on the old pilings of the saw mill. If you listen carefully on Sundays, you can hear the songs of worship coming from the Methodist Church. The property was donated to the state in 1968.

### The Post Office

In 1936 William Henry Strickland moved a small building he had used as lumber mill over to the ferry dock that was located at the end of CR 395 to be used as the local post office. Later Mabel Burlinson, his oldest daughter took over as postmaster, moving the building in front of her home across from the Methodist Church.

Helen Strickland was the Postmaster in Point Washington for many years. Miss Strickland received permission to open a post office closer to home so she could look after her ailing mother. She purchased an old cottage used by the mill workers from her half-sister Katie Wesley and had it relocated to the corner of her lot. Her niece Rita Strickland Cosson served as postmaster in the same building. Because the building does not meet current regulations and standards for post offices, it was scheduled to close July 31, 2006. The building is now owned by Tammie and R.J. Cummings. They are willing to keep the building and allow the Point Washington Historical Association to create a small historical museum with information about Point Washington history.

## B & B Cash Store

The B&B Store was owned by Bud Bullard and Willis H. Butler. Bud's daughter Edith fell in love with Willis's son Bert and they married in 1935. Their son, Albert Butler (still a resident of Point Washington) recalls that "Fred Mundy and Grandpa Bud would tell stories on the porch for hours about their fishing trips up the river. They sold Model T hubcaps, they were only three four inches in diameter. Bananas were hung and most of the food was sold in barrels." In 1957 Bert passed away and two years later Edith married Roy Burlison. The old B&B Store is still located on School Road and Gilmore Road and is owned by local residents of Point Washington. There was discussion at the August 1<sup>st</sup> meeting about a plan to reopen the store once the overlay district is in place.

## Methodist Church

This building was erected on land donated by General William Miller. The members donated their own time and materials to build the church. All of the lumber was milled locally at the Strickland and Wesley sawmills. The first church activity was a bible class formed in 1887 by Mr. Wilson. In 1888 the conference appointed a Mr. Daly to the Freeport Circuit and he and Mr. Wilson asked the horseriding Elder of the District to supply a minister for Point Washington.

In response to their request, the Presiding Elder contacted the Reverend John Wesley, an ordained clergyman, but not a member of the conference. Reverend Wesley moved to Point Washington, organized the church members, and asked that the church be admitted to the conference. It was included on the Freeport Circuit in 1893 with a Mr. G.N. Winslet providing services on the second Thursday night of each month, while Reverend Wesley continued to preach on Sundays. Reverend Wesley served the church until his death in 1901. Reverend Wesley's son, Stephen, lead services until his death in 1943.

The "Little White Church" in Point Washington is still an active, growing, fulltime parish of the Alabama- West Florida Conference with a rich history and church members who are ancestors of the first faithful group who started its worship. (Appendix H(8)).

## Other Historic Significant Structures

- W.H. Butler House: Located on Gilmore Road, built in 1920 by W.H. Butler, the original developer of Grayton Beach
- School located on Gilmore Road, Bay Elementary  
Being considered for inclusion into the National Register of Historic Places
- Bert Butler House- Built in 1920 as a boat workshop
- Aaron House- Built in 1935 by Bud Bullard as marriage gift to his daughter and her new husband

- Bullard House – Built in the 1880’s, possibly the oldest in Point Washington
- Wise House – Built in the 1880’s possibly another one of the oldest in Point Washington
- Methodist Church – Built 1894, land donated by General Miller, a General in the Confederate Army

The historical significance of Point Washington lies in age of the homes, the contribution to Walton County’s history, and the hearts of its long time residents. With so little of the county’s past preserved for future generations it is imperative that Point Washington be preserved and maintained. Eden State Park would not exist without the rich history of Point Washington and Point Washington’s history would be forever altered without Eden State Park and the beautiful Wesley/ Maxon home.

In its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will amend and revise its goals, objectives, and policies to further support the Point Washington historic district.

#### **vi. Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance**

As noted above, the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) is a local non-profit scientific organization. The CBA coordinates with the Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board to develop and monitor data on the health of the coastal dune lakes. They employ a full-time volunteer coordinator to manage the 50 volunteers who give more than 1300 hours of community service each year, monitoring 55 stations on the coastal dune lakes. In addition, the CBA provides implementation services for the county's NPDES program. (Appendix E(17)). The data collected by the CBA has been analyzed in this evaluation and appraisal report, and will be used as the basis for amended goals, objectives, and policies protecting the coastal dune lakes.

## **vii. Local Mitigation Strategy**

The local mitigation strategy is a plan that Walton County is developing to promote hazard mitigation and to manage post-disaster recovery. Developing these strategies in Florida is important because our state is vulnerable to many hazards. Our state is subject both to riverine flooding and coastal flooding. One indication of how vulnerable our communities are to flooding is the high number of national flood insurance policies statewide. Florida leads the nation in the number of flood insurance policies - with more than 40 percent of the total number of policies written.

Walton County is taking advantage of mitigation planning opportunities and will be ahead of the game. The county has the chance to initiate changes that can permanently reduce the risk of future losses -- an opportunity that is often lost in the rush to build back after a disaster to pre-disaster conditions. Walton County will be in a better position for obtaining mitigation funding that becomes available in post-disaster situations. By identifying and prioritizing projects prior to a disaster, Walton County will gather the kind of information that is typically required on applications for post-disaster funding. Because this information will have been collected and analyzed during "blue skies", Walton County will be able to quickly submit applications for disaster funds should they be impacted by an event.

To provide long-term disaster protection for Walton County and to complement the national and state mitigation strategies, Walton County needs their own mitigation strategies. Our local mitigation strategy will reflect the concerns unique to Walton County and will help identify mitigation opportunities -- before a storm hits.

Walton County is subject to severe weather and at the same time, the county is growing fast, with many people moving to the coastal areas along the bay and Gulf of Mexico. In some areas, the population is growing faster than the ability to evacuate and shelter people during emergencies. Growth in these areas also exposes billions of dollars of private property and public facilities and infrastructure to damage from coastal storms and flooding.

Walton County has experienced tremendous development within the past several years, not only along the coast, but within the central and northern part of the county. This increase in growth and traffic has the potential to slow hurricane evacuation times and thus increase Walton County's hazard mitigation potential. Walton County's only north/south evacuation route (US 331) is currently over capacity based on 2005-FDOT background traffic. In addition, this growth in population has also caused a corresponding growth in the infrastructure requirements (wastewater treatment plants, electrical utilities, roads, schools) to support this population. Currently Walton County is second to last in evacuation

times in Florida; it currently takes approximately 28.3 hours to evacuate the county. (See appendix \_\_\_\_\_), see Map 3 Walton County Evacuation Routes.

*Summary of projected damage estimates from tropical cyclone activity*

Type of Construction	Original Value	Tropical Storm	Cat 1	Cat 2	Cat 3	Cat 4	Cat 5
<b>Note: dollars \$ in millions</b>							
Wood Frame	\$ 1,905	\$ 26.3	\$128.3	\$ 354.2	\$ 745.7	\$ 1,319	\$ 1,850
Mobile Home	\$ 73.1	\$ 2.1	\$ 8.3	\$ 24.7	\$ 52.0	\$ 72.8	\$ 73.1
Commercial	\$ 614.9	\$ 2.6	\$ 19.0	\$ 61.7	\$ 153.0	\$ 313.8	\$ 567.3
Concrete Block	\$ 5.2	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.1	\$ 0.2	\$ 1.0	\$ 3.1	\$ 5.1

Note that a single tropical storm can cause over \$30 million dollars of damage in Walton County. If the County was to be hit by a major hurricane (category 3 or higher) damage estimates could easily exceed \$1 billion dollars. A more detailed description of potential damages by tropical cyclones is presented in the vulnerability assessment section of the local mitigation strategy document, included in the county’s data and analysis. This document presents the estimated damage in each section (Township-Section-Range) of the county for all tropical cyclones (tropical storms and hurricanes from category 1-5).

Walton County is planning to update the local mitigation strategy in January of 2007. This process will develop awareness of the various hazards facing Walton County, promote the implementation of recommended hazard mitigation strategies and help plan post-disaster recovery. Other elements of the local mitigation strategy include:

- **Activities to Promote Hazard Mitigation** - Describes the formation of the Walton County Local Mitigation Strategy Working Group (which included representatives of local governments and organizations), which guided the development of the strategy and preparation of submittals to DCA.
- **Public and Private Sector Participation** - Identifies existing intergovernmental agreements supporting mitigation, inventories coordinating agencies, and develops procedures to resolve conflicts. Ensures that a cross-section of the community, including major stakeholders, continue to have input into the mitigation strategy and encourages public participation.
- **Mitigation Goals** – Describes how the LMS Working Group developed guiding principles including reduction in the loss of life and property, protection of public assets, enhanced cooperation and responsible growth.



- **LMS Review Procedures** – Describes the LMS report development and review procedures for the community.
- **Vulnerability and Hazard Assessment** – Describes and displays the various types of hazards (includes maps of hurricane and tropical storm wind fields, storm surge areas, FEMA flood zones, historic tornado locations, and areas susceptible to wildfires) facing Walton County. Describes and displays all the locations of critical and non-critical facilities, repetitive loss properties, and historic flooding locations that are vulnerable to future natural disasters.
- **Project Priority Procedures** – Describes the LMS project review procedures to determine the project priority for the community.
- **Critical Facility Operations** – Describes the procedure for identifying critical facilities in the community

In its EAR-based amendments, Walton County will seek to incorporate a closer linkage between the local mitigation strategy, the post-disaster redevelopment policies, and the elements of the comprehensive plan. The capital improvement element will incorporate the projects given top priority in the hazard mitigation strategy. The land use and conservation elements will seek to direct high-density development away from vulnerable areas and to protect areas, such as coastal dunes and wetlands, that protect inland development from storm damage.

### **viii. Fire Wise Fire Prevention**

One of the areas of vulnerability that Walton County has not adequately addressed in the past is the potential for wildfire. The large tracts of natural land preserved in the state forest, state parks, and water management district lands, private conservation lands, the Eglin AFB reservation, and the remaining tracts of undeveloped land still in silviculture, all indicate a high potential for damage from wild fires. Walton County will be looking to adopt cooperative strategies, comprehensive plan elements, local mitigation strategies, and other planning approaches to promote a firewise community. Walton County will develop comprehensive plan goals, objectives, and policies to guide development of local wildfire mitigation ordinances, and will explore the relationships and potential conflicts between local ordinances. In the past, Walton County's vegetation preservation requirements, as they have been implemented, have increased the county's vulnerability to wildfire. Walton County will seek to promote neighborhood and landscape design, building construction practices, and materials that will reduce wildfire vulnerability.

## **ix. Historical, Archeological, and Cultural**

The locations of Historic & Archeological Resources in the county are reviewed through the use of the 2005 (or most currently available) Florida Master Site File GIS layers. The GIS layers are exempt from F.S. Chapter 119 governing public availability of government records because of the sensitive information these layers contain. These layers are only available to personnel who have been approved by the Florida Department of State to review those layers. Walton County's GIA department reviews these layers on each application for a development order to identify any potential archaeological and/or historic sites that would be affected by the proposed development. To identify potential sites, the GIA department reviews the following layers:

- Field Surveys
- Standing Structure
- Resource Group
- National Register of Historic Places
- Historic Cemeteries
- Archaeological Sites

Where a potential site is identified, a 50' buffer is required by policy C-3.3.2 of the comprehensive plan to insure protection of known archaeological resources. Once a potential site is identified, the parties involved are notified that an archaeological survey must be conducted and filed with the county by a certified archaeologist. A survey number, published date, and site id number are provided from the database.

In addition to these efforts to identify and protect historic resources, Walton County intends to develop a disaster plan for historic resources, with assistance from local groups and state agencies (including the Florida Division of Historic Resources and 1000 Friends of Florida). This plan will be incorporated into the comprehensive plan through the EAR-based amendments, in addition to being incorporated into local mitigation strategy and the post-disaster redevelopment plan. The plan will prepare emergency response plans for individual historic resources, expedite review of repair and reconstruction permits in the event of damage, and improve coordination between emergency management and historic preservation efforts within the community.

## VIII. Recommendations for EAR based Amendments

### a. Kimley-Horn Associates, Inc. Recommendations for Amendments

The following recommendations for EAR-based amendments were made by Kimley-Horn Associates during their overall review of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan. Staff comments on these recommendations are included in red text below each recommendation.

- **Restructure Policy L-1.1.1:** This issue relates to restructuring the existing land use categories based on allowable uses and general density and intensity. Due to the similarities between many of the categories, the possibility to collapse certain categories (e.g. certain conservation districts.) A decision on this matter is related to whether the Board decides to maintain separate land use classifications for North Walton and South Walton.

Staff agrees that many of the land use categories should be combined.

- **Delete “North” and “South” Walton distinctions:** Currently the Plan has two sets of future land use categories: North Walton and South Walton. The distinctions incorporate special planning work that was done in South Walton, as well as legal settlements that established specific development rights on certain properties in South Walton. The question has now arisen as to whether these distinctions should be retained. Some feel that “merging” the districts will dilute or eliminate a special character in South Walton. Others feel that the current system is somewhat redundant, and that both North and South Walton could benefit from having certain new districts available.

Staff believes that some of the FLU categories should be limited to particular geographic areas, and that the distinction between these categories should be maintained for those categories.

- **Determine future of Neighborhood Planning Areas:** During this update, a number of problems were identified regarding the implementation of the NPAs.
  - **(1)** The Neighborhood Planning Process envisioned by the Plan has not been implemented.
  - **(2)** The County may not be able to adequately fund this effort.
  - **(3)** Approval of new neighborhood serving commercial is complicated by plan policies that appear to be internally inconsistent.

- **(4)** Also, all new uses are treated as major development and require Board approval, which a disincentive to the development of convenient neighborhood services. All new neighborhood serving commercial must ensure compatibility and harmony of scale and character with surrounding development. Compatibility standards do not exist.

Some of these recommendations – e.g. the recommendation to develop compatibility standards – have already been addressed by the county through amendments to the land development code. Staff agrees that the remainder of these issues should be addressed through EAR-based amendments.

- **Change standards within Future Land Use Categories to better comply with intent of Future Land Use Categories:** Review has shown that some standards within the Future Land Use Categories do not further the intent of the Categories. Below is a list of potential changes to the Future Land Use Categories:

**(1)** General commercial is not allowed in mixed-use centers.

**(2)** Allow clustering in agricultural and environmentally sensitive districts.

**(3)** Allow multi-family as of right in Commercial. Recommended density is 4 du/ac.

Staff agrees that multi-family should be allowed in commercial. Staff feels that 4 units per acre are insufficient, and would suggest 10 – 12 units per acre as a more reasonable density.

**(4)** Increase residential density in TND FLUC.

**(5)** Increase intensity in Coastal Center.

**(6)** Decrease Coastal Center Mixed-Use intensity.

**(7)** Add residential as an allowable use in Village Mixed-Use.

- **Modify development standards in the Future Land Use Categories:** These development standards have been identified by the public as needing to be addressed:

**(1)** Consider increasing the commercial square footage limitation in the Estate Residential. The limit is now set at 5,000 square feet.

Staff believes that proper designation of appropriately-located parcels as general commercial would be a more appropriate way to address this issue.

**(2)** Affirm the permissibility of manufacturing in Business Park.

Staff believes that business park is not needed as a FLU category, and believes that industrial and commercial future land use categories suffice.

(3) Allow higher density in Urban Residential.

Staff concurs with this recommendation.

(4) Increase intensity in Village Center Mixed-Use Residential Future Land Use Category.

Staff concurs with this recommendation.

(5) Create New Town Center Plan for TC-1.

The Master Plan for Town Center One is close to adoption.

(6) Increase intensity for mobile home parks in Commercial.

Staff agrees that the commercial land use category should have residential density, and that the residential density should not be limited to affordable housing. The county intends to provide density bonuses for affordable housing to encourage this type of development.

(7) Add additional environmental concepts from the Town Center overall Plan Goals.

The Master Plan for Town Center One is close to adoption.

(8) Decrease open space requirement to 80% for Conservation Residential-2 and 75% for Conservation Residential-3.

Staff concurs with this recommendation, and also believes that the definitions of open space should be consistent between the various land use categories.

(9) Allow higher mixture of non-residential uses from 35% to 50% in Village Center Mixed-Use.

**\* Change density of Agriculture:** Most of the land designated for Large Scale Agriculture is planted pine. The outlook for the long-term viability of this use is not good. However, many farmers would like to keep their holdings in agricultural type uses. If some increased density could be provided to these properties, a farmer could obtain a reasonable return on his land and be able to help maintain the rural landscape.

- (1) Consider increasing the commercial square footage limitation in the Estate Residential. The limit is now set at 5,000 square feet.
- (2) The overall density in the district could be decreased from 1 unit per 40 acres to 1 unit per 20 acres. One unit per twenty acres is a reasonable agricultural density.
- (3) The Board could allow conservation subdivisions under regulated circumstances. Using conservation subdivisions, densities within the subdivision are higher than normally allowed in the future land use category, but most of the land is preserved as open space. For example, if 50 acres were dedicated to a conservation subdivision, 15 one-acre lots would be created and the remaining 35 acres would be placed in a conservation easement, preserving a buffer between the farm and the subdivision.

(4) Some land currently designated Large Scale Agriculture could be designated Transitional Agriculture. Currently, there are no areas designated Transitional Agriculture north of Highway 20. There appears to be land that meets the intent of the Transitional Agriculture. This designation would also have the benefit of providing more affordable housing opportunities in the County and more convenient services to residents of North Walton.

- **Determine Status of Conservation Districts:** The intensity standards were intended to be temporary. The Comprehensive Plan calls for performance standards to be adopted within six months of the plan adoption, with the criteria to include: land management techniques for natural systems, wildlife corridor protection, impervious surface limitations, site clearing, and setbacks and screening.
- **Better define Village Mixed-Use Category:** One public comment was that the Village Mixed-use Category needs to be better defined including location standards, density and intensity calculation methodology, perimeter buffers, and mix of uses.
- **Revise restrictions on housing uses in Commercial:** One public comment states that restricting housing uses to “affordable” is punitive and inequitable for the transitioning workplace to high density to lower density residential. All residential use in category should be 10 units/acre or more.
- **Address stormwater level of service:** The specific standard requiring new and existing infill residential development within improved residential areas or subdivisions prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan to meet new stormwater requirements has raised concerns. The interim Board direction related to this issue exempts infill development existing prior to adoption of the plan from meeting the requirements, the downstream impacts continue to exist. The issue would need to be further addressed during the EAR process.
- **Address provision of neighborhood parks:** Recreation PolicyR-1.2.3 requires neighborhood parks to be provided through the development review process. Currently, such a program is not in place. Upon development and implementation of a program, management and maintenance of the neighborhood parks are issues that would need to be addressed.

**b. County Staff Recommendations for Amendments**

Based on the detailed EAR report, the county staff feels that the following overall amendments to the Walton County Comprehensive Plan will be necessary as part of the county's EAR-based amendments:

- Revisions to the capital improvements element, including a financially feasible 10-year capital improvements program
- Implement, where supported by data and analysis, the suggestions made by Kimley-Horn and the wetlands workgroup for changes to the comprehensive plan
- Redraft, add, delete, and consolidate future land use categories
- Insure consistency between the comprehensive plan provisions governing scenic corridors and the scenic corridor land development code provisions
- Delete the language prohibiting transfer of density from flood zones to non-flood zones in agricultural land uses
- Create a bonus system to encourage consolidated preservation areas
- Add policies protecting heritage trees
- Remove language prohibiting rebuilding within a V or VE zone more than twice in every 100 years
- Clarify and amend the plan's environmental protection policies
- Amend objectives and policies to support proportionate fair share payments and establish a 10-year capital improvements program
- Strengthen objectives and policies protecting the coastal dune lakes
- Add goals, objectives, and policies concerning redevelopment, both in general and after storms
- Re-evaluate the potential urban service boundary in the Mossy Head area in light of expected proportionate fair share payments and the development of a 10-year capital improvements program
- Re-map the land uses across the county to better reflect existing and expected development patterns
- Re-evaluate the county's build-out analysis with the supporting 10-year capital improvements program
- Use data collected as part of the EAR to evaluate the build out of the existing and proposed FLUM and create amendments supporting creation of the needed infrastructure
- Link the FLUM to needed infrastructure improvements and the proposed 10-year CIP
- Include policies to implement the county's master stormwater plan with emphasis on protecting the coastal dune lakes

- Consider funding sources for stormwater management, including a stormwater utility
- Add goals, objectives and policies consistent with the county's water supply work plan and the Northwest Florida Water Management District's Regional Water Supply Plan
- Create additional policies supporting recreation planning
- Amendments related to the school concurrency pilot program
- Amendments clarifying the status of expired covenants and restrictions in determining the allowable uses, density, and intensity in areas designated residential preservation
- Amendments re-mapping commercial and mixed use areas that were created by now-expired covenants and restrictions in areas designated residential preservation
- Amendments setting out a methodology for determining the appropriate percentage of commercial in mixed use categories
- Alter requirements for commercial nodes to promote more functional commercial land uses where appropriate
- Update language concerning the Town Center One Master Plan
- Adopt a revised existing land use map and revised future land use map
- Ensure compliance with all new state statutes and regulations
- Adopt amendments ensuring compatibility with Eglin AFB and incorporating the outcome of the JLUS
- Incorporate any height restrictions requested by Eglin AFB pursuant to the height assessment requested by Walton County
- Add additional policies supporting affordable and workforce housing, especially those that are consistent with and support the Community Workforce Housing Innovation Program grants
- Adopt an amendment allowing mixed use/affordable housing developments in all future land uses except residential preservation, conservation residential, rural low density, rural residential, and agriculture
- Amend the policies governing farming and agriculture and clarify the limits to the county's regulatory authority
- Include revisions clarifying the extent of the coastal high hazard areas and the limits on development in those areas
- Include policies supporting a common traffic methodology with adjacent jurisdictions
- Adopt objectives and policies linking the county's local mitigation strategy, post-disaster re-development policies, and the comprehensive plan
- Adopt amendments linking the policies regarding development in flood zones with the new flood insurance rate maps that the county anticipates will be released shortly after the on-going map modernization program is complete

- Amend plan to incorporate any recommendations made by the Sustainable Emerald Coast Committee
- Amend plan to include policies supporting the Morrison Springs Management Plan
- Add additional policies to support the proposed Point Washington Historic Overlay District
- Include policies incorporating the Fire Wise recommendations
- Consider additional protection for historic and archaeological resources

As part of the preparation of this evaluation and appraisal report, the staff of the Walton County Division of Planning and Development Services has evaluated each goal, objective, and policy in the existing comprehensive plan to determine whether it has functioned as intended, or whether it needs to be amended during the EAR-based amendment process. The entire text of the current Walton County Comprehensive Plan is included below, with staff's comments and recommendations in red following each policy.

## **FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT POLICIES**

**GOAL L-1A: ACHIEVE A BALANCE AMONG VARIOUS LAND USES TO ACCOMMODATE A DIVERSITY OF TOTAL LIFE STYLES WHICH WILL FULFILL THE REQUIREMENTS OF COUNTY RESIDENTS FOR NORTH WALTON COUNTY;** and

**GOAL L-1B: IMPLEMENT THE TOWN AND VILLAGE CONCEPT IN SOUTH WALTON COUNTY THAT ACCOMMODATES DIVERSE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRATION AND AN EFFICIENT GROWTH PATTERN THAT COMBATS SPRAWL AND EMPHASIZES SUSTAINABLE, MIXED USE COMMUNITIES BASED ON NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN CONCEPTS;** and

**GOAL L-1C: PROTECT PEOPLE AND PROPERTY BY LIMITING PUBLIC EXPENDITURES IN AREAS SUBJECT TO DESTRUCTION BY NATURAL DISASTERS AND BY RESTRICTING DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES THAT WOULD DAMAGE OR DESTROY COASTAL OR NATURAL RESOURCES.**

### **Objective L-1.1A: Land Uses in North Walton County**

The County shall discourage urban sprawl and promote compact development and the conservation of working landscapes through such techniques as the designation of appropriate agricultural densities, cluster development, mixed use areas that allow residents to work, shop, live, and recreate within one compact area, and the establishment of rural hamlets that promote infill development in existing rural communities while preserving the surrounding rural land uses, including agricultural and silvicultural uses.

**Objective L-1.1B: Land Uses in South Walton County**

Development within South Walton County shall be based on a land use system that discourages sprawl and promotes economic opportunity, natural system diversity, strong community design principles, and provides development separation through public/private open space and land holdings.

**Policy L-1.1.1:** Development within the various land use categories depicted on the Future Land Use Map shall be governed by the following permitted uses and densities and intensities of use. These land use categories are grouped and identified below as: (A) Land Use Categories Exclusive to North Walton County; (B) Land Use Categories Exclusive to South Walton County; and (C) Land Use Categories Common to Both North and South Walton County.

**(A) NORTH WALTON COUNTY LAND USE CATEGORIES**

**(1) GENERAL AGRICULTURE (GA):** Rural areas characterized by smaller-scale agricultural activities, including timber production, and varied parcel sizes. (a) Uses allowed: Agriculture and silviculture activities; farm dwellings, including farmworker housing, and associated accessory structures that are related to and supportive of agriculture and silviculture. Land uses which shall be considered as functionally related to agriculture and silviculture activities shall be limited to the following:

1. Farm equipment sales and repair, kennels and veterinary services, sale of agricultural chemicals and supplies, feed sales, blacksmith and wood working shops, processing, storage, sale of agricultural products, outdoor recreational activities such as hunting or fishing camps, bait and tackle shops, shooting ranges, travel trailer parks and campgrounds connected to outdoor recreational uses, riding or boarding stables, and golf courses; cemeteries, communications facilities, small engine and auto repair shops, welding shops. Borrow pits shall be allowed as a special exception.<sup>1</sup> All land uses in General Agriculture shall be developed and operated as to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses, including compliance with Policies L-1.7.1, L-1.7.2 and L-1.7.3 of this Plan Element;
2. Home occupations which are clearly subordinate to the residential land use, and occupy no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the floor area of the residential dwelling on the site;

The policy regarding home occupations in areas designated general agriculture should be revised to allow the use of accessory buildings for home occupations. This policy should require a minimum acreage of 10 acres, and maintain the rule prohibiting employees outside of the family.

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<sup>1</sup> Borrow pits as a special exception were added by ordinance number 2005-31.

This would allow certain uses that are generally acceptable in agricultural areas, e.g. cabinet shops, upholstery shops, and beauty shops.

3. Community Facilities, which shall be defined as places of worship, community centers, and public or private schools and day care centers; and
4. Potable water, sanitary sewer, recreation, drainage, electrical and natural gas distribution, police and fire, public works maintenance, and road facilities which are necessary to serve land uses and development in the Large-scale or General Agriculture category, subject to the restrictions on the provision of potable water and sanitary sewer facilities contained in the Infrastructure Element.

(b) Density allowed: the density of development shall be determined according to parcel size proposed for development as follows: One dwelling unit per 10 acres, gross density, subject to any other provisions in the Comprehensive Plan that apply to the property. Dwelling units may be clustered on lots as small as one-half acre, provided that a plat is recorded which shows the remainder of the property, from which density is transferred, as a permanent open space tract reserved exclusively for agricultural, silvicultural, or conservation uses.

This policy needs to make clear that the seventy percent open space required below is not on the ½ acre lots, but rather refers to the entire parcel. Thus, the open space requirement would be met by the portion of the parcel that is designated for agriculture, silviculture, or conservation.

For lots of record as of December 28, 1996, of 20 acres or less, gross density for residential use shall be allowed at a density not to exceed 1 unit per 2.5 acres. Residential units may be clustered so long as the gross density is not exceeded.

Seventy percent of the development site must be retained in open space. Open space is the amount of the site that is devoted to passive recreation, resource protection, amenity and/or landscaped buffers. Open space shall include unpaved areas only, including: lawns, stormwater retention ponds, passive recreation areas and parks, wooded areas, and water courses. Open space does not include driveways, parking lots, or other surfaces designed or intended for vehicular travel.

This policy has functioned as intended, although staff is recommending that this category be combined with large scale agriculture. In addition, minimal changes to the uses allowed are needed to clarify the application of the family density exception policy. This policy should specifically note that multiple dwellings are allowed on a parcel subject to the gross density of the parcel.

**(2) ESTATE RESIDENTIAL (ER):** Lands that are in proximity to unincorporated municipalities and other urbanized areas. The purpose of this category is to direct new rural development toward these more urbanized areas, and away from agriculture areas in order to preserve the working landscape in the Large-Scale and General Agriculture categories. This category allows limited commercial uses and traditional types of subdivisions without a PUD requirement.

(a) Uses Allowed:

1. Agriculture and silviculture activities, including farmworker housing and associated accessory structures.
2. Residential uses: rural subdivisions such as estate, ranchette, duplexes or other subdivision types typical of rural development, provided that the density of each proposed development does not exceed 1 unit per 5 acres.

Residential uses need clarification regarding family homestead exception policy.

3. Commercial uses: Commercial uses may occupy up to 5 % of any geographic land use area designated as ER. Commercial developments shall be minor scale (less than 5000 square feet of gross floor area) and consistent with the character of existing neighborhoods and businesses. Commercial development may be located no closer than 1 linear mile from each area designated as Commercial on the Future Land Use Map, and shall be adjacent to improved (paved) collector or arterial roadways as measured from the closest boundary of the applicable commercial land use area. Not more than 15% of the frontage of a collector or arterial road shall be occupied by commercial uses within the ER land use category, irrespective of which side of the road it is located on. Commercial development other than home occupations is prohibited on interior subdivision lots.

(b) Density allowed: One (1) unit per five (5) acres.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. A density of one unit per five acres is not appropriate for “Lands that are in proximity to unincorporated municipalities and other urbanized areas.” The limited percentage of commercial (both the 5% of the land area and the 15% of the road frontage) has caused much difficulty in interpretation for staff, developers, citizens, and elected officials. Neither the comprehensive plan nor the land development code give methods for measuring these percentages. Interpretations have ranged from a percentage of the total area with this designation, a percentage of the contiguous area with this designation, or a percentage of the parcels with this designation, either in total or those that are contiguous.

Interpretations have also varied on whether the 15% limitation applies only to commercial uses in ER, or to all commercial uses on the road frontage. Nor is there any assurance that these limitations place commercial development in the most appropriate areas within the designation. Commercial development should be encouraged and supported at intersections and crossroads.

The county will consider consolidating this policy with other low-density residential future land use categories.

**MIXED USE CATEGORIES:** There are four types of mixed use land use categories depicted on the Future Land Use Map for North Walton County: (1) Rural Low Density; (2) Rural Residential; (3) Rural Village; and (4) Urban Residential. Development within these land use categories must ensure protection of natural resources, adherence to concurrency requirements, and harmonious site design. The County shall adopt land development regulations that will include standards for access, circulation, parking, landscaping, tree protection, and building placement. The uses allowed within the Rural Low Density, Rural Residential, Rural Village and Urban Residential land use categories are as follows:

Staff feels that some of these categories could be combined into a low-density mixed use category.

**(3) RURAL LOW DENSITY (RLD):** The purpose of this land use category is to recognize residential areas where the predominant lot size is approximately one (1) acre. The intent is to prevent further subdivision into smaller lots that would further degrade water quality from septic tanks, increase densities in floodplains and Coastal High Hazard Areas, or change the character of existing residential areas. The designation of new areas of RLD shall be based upon need, and shall be located only in areas suitable for this type of urban development. RLD land use areas will be designated in a reasonably compact configuration of urban land uses, where public facilities and services are available, and where the land uses are compatible with surrounding land uses.

This category (with a one acre minimum lot size) is not an urban category. Additionally, the new definition of coastal high hazard area in HB 1359 enacted during the 06 Florida legislative session is the surge area from a category one storm. Unless some land area with this designation falls within the coastal high hazard area, this reference should be deleted from the policy.

- o. Uses allowed: Residential and neighborhood scale businesses and public uses, such as churches or schools, provided that the nonresidential uses are compatible in scale and intensity with the character of the residential areas.

Residential uses need to include family homestead exception clarification.

(b) Density allowed: Maximum of one (1) unit per acre on central potable water; maximum of one (1) unit per five (5) acres where central potable water is not available.

(c) Intensity allowed: The intensity of nonresidential uses shall not exceed a floor area ratio of 50 percent (0.5 FAR).

An FAR of 0.5 is too high for RLD category.

(d) Mixture of uses: Residential uses shall account for approximately 95 percent of the total land area. To ensure a compatible mix of uses, landscaped buffers shall be required between residential uses and non-residential uses. The County will adopt land development regulations that will include additional standards for land coverage and building placement.

Need methodology for the 95 percent of total land area.

(e) Commercial uses: Commercial uses shall not occupy more than five percent of any area designated RLD. Commercial land uses shall be limited to collector and arterial road intersections, intersections of subdivision collectors and arterial or collector roads, and areas that are specifically designated and platted for neighborhood commercial uses as a part of PUD master plans. Commercial uses shall not occupy more than 15% of the frontage of any one mile segment of a collector or arterial roadway.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. One unit per acre is not normally considered "urban development." In addition, as discussed for Estate Residential, the measurement of percentages of commercial use within these categories has proved very troublesome. The 15% road frontage should not apply if commercial development is at crossroads or intersection as encouraged by other policies.

This category should be consolidated with other low-density residential or mixed use categories. In addition, the county will reconsider the percentage of residential vs. commercial and determine if the percentage requirement should be better defined or eliminated altogether.

**(4) RURAL RESIDENTIAL (RR):** Lands that are in proximity to unincorporated municipalities & other urbanized areas. The purpose of this category is to direct new rural development toward these more urbanized areas, and away from agriculture areas in order to preserve the working landscape in the Large-Scale and General Agriculture categories. This category allows limited

commercial uses and traditional types of subdivisions without a PUD requirement.

This category should begin the transition from agricultural to rural. The commercial use needs clarification in methodology. Residential uses need clarification regarding the family homestead exception and multiple dwellings on parcels.

(a) Uses allowed:

1. Agriculture and silviculture activities, including farmworker housing and associated accessory structures.
2. Residential uses: rural subdivisions such as estate, ranchette, duplexes or other subdivision types typical of rural development, provided that the density of each proposed development does not exceed 1 unit per 2.5 acres.
3. Commercial uses: Commercial uses may occupy up to 5 % of any area designated as RR. Commercial developments shall be minor scale (less than 5000 square feet of gross floor area) and consistent with the character of existing neighborhoods and businesses. Commercial development may be located no closer than 1 mile from areas designated as Commercial on the Future Land Use Map, and shall be adjacent to improved (paved) collector or arterial roadways. Commercial development other than home occupations is prohibited on interior subdivision lots. Not more than 15% of the frontage of a collector or arterial road shall be occupied by commercial uses, within any one mile roadway segment.

(b) Density allowed: One (1) unit per two and one-half (2.5) acres.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. One unit per 2.5 acres is not normally considered "urban development." In addition, the county will reconsider the percentage of residential vs. commercial and determine if the percentage requirement should be better defined or eliminated altogether.

**(5) RURAL VILLAGE (RV):** Permits predominantly residential development at a variety of densities up to a maximum of 2 units per acre.

(a) Uses allowed: Residential & neighborhood scale businesses & public uses, such as churches or schools, provided that the nonresidential uses are compatible in scale & intensity with the character of the residential areas.

(b) Density allowed: Maximum of 2 units per acre.

(c) Intensity allowed: The intensity of non-residential uses shall not exceed a floor area ratio of 50 percent (0.5 FAR).

(d) Mixture of uses: Residential uses shall account for approximately 95 percent of the total land area. To ensure a compatible mix of uses, landscaped buffers shall be required between residential uses and nonresidential uses. The County will adopt land development regulations that will include additional standards for land coverage and building placement.

(e) Commercial uses: Commercial uses shall not occupy more than five percent of any area designated RV. Commercial land uses shall be limited to collector and arterial road intersections, intersections of subdivision collectors and arterial or collector roads, and areas that are specifically designated and platted for neighborhood commercial uses as a part of PUD master plans. Commercial uses shall not occupy more than 15% of the frontage of any one mile segment of a collector or arterial roadway.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. In addition, the county will reconsider the percentage of residential vs. commercial and determine if the percentage requirement should be better defined or eliminated altogether.

**(6) URBAN RESIDENTIAL (UR):** Areas that would constitute reasonably compact additions to the urbanized areas surrounding municipalities, which do not constitute significant habitat, wetland, or flood hazard areas, and which are either served by public water or sewer systems, or where such systems are scheduled to be extended within five years.

(a) Uses allowed: Residential & limited supporting neighborhood commercial.

(b) Density allowed: Gross density shall not exceed four units per acre, although clustering may be allowed. Neighborhood commercial development shall ensure compatibility and harmony of scale and character. No more than five percent of the total area shall be in limited supporting neighborhood commercial.

(c) Density bonus for affordable housing: Multi-family affordable housing sites may be permitted at densities up to 10 dwellings/acre within the UR category subject to the following conditions: (a) at least 20% of the dwellings are for very-low, low-, and moderate-income housing; (b) the development is connected to a public water and sewer system; and (c) a building setback of at least 50 feet for every floor of building height is maintained, adjacent to lower-density residential uses, as well as the buffering measures required in Policy L-1.7.3.

The affordable and workforce housing bonus system and standards should be in a separate policy with FLUM categories identified for

consistency. This would eliminate confusion for user of document and the chance for error in future amendments to plan and code.

(d) Commercial uses: Commercial uses shall not occupy more than ten percent of any area designated as UR. Commercial uses shall be limited to collectors and arterial road intersections, intersections of subdivision collectors and arterial or collector roads, and areas that are specifically designated and platted for neighborhood commercial uses as a part of PUD master category. Commercial land uses shall be limited to collector and arterial road intersections, plans. Commercial uses shall not occupy more than 15% of the frontage of any one mile segment of a collector or arterial roadway.

(e) Connection to central water and sewer systems: Connection to central water systems shall be required for any residential development with a density over 2 dwellings per acre, and for any nonresidential development, if such service is available within one-quarter (1/4) mile; furthermore, dry lines (water and sewer) shall be installed for such development, if the extension of water or sewer lines to within 1/4 mile of the site is included in the Capital Improvements Plan of the appropriate utility provider.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. This category should be used as a transitional category between urban areas and rural areas. In addition, the county will reconsider the percentage of residential vs. commercial and determine if the percentage requirement should be better defined or eliminated altogether.

Urban residential, at four units per acre, would be considered a medium density category, and could be used as a transition between lower rural densities and higher urban densities in the nearby incorporated areas.

**(7) COMMERCIAL (CM):** The commercial land use classification is intended to provide for business uses that serve the community and the traveling public through the development of integrated commercial centers in North Walton County.

(a) Uses allowed: Business uses allowed in the commercial classification include offices, retail, lodging, restaurants, shopping centers, medical facilities, commerce parks or other similar business activities. Multifamily affordable housing projects are allowed, subject to the provisions of UR paragraph 4(c), above. Mobile home parks that are licensed by the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services are allowed at two units per acre. The land development regulations shall include standards for landscaping, access, circulation, signage and building and parking lot orientation for each area designated for commercial development.

Multifamily should not be restricted to only affordable and workforce housing and work /live projects should have density bonus system.

(b) Floor area ratios and intensities: In North Walton County, low to medium floor area ratios (0-.6) and intensities for development shall be established for 1/4 mile radius commercial nodes, as more fully described below. These floor area ratios as well as intensity designations for commercial development types shall be established in the land development regulations.

(c) Locational criteria: In north Walton County, 1/4 mile radius commercial nodes may be located at improved (paved) roadway collector and/or arterial intersections. Boundaries of commercial nodes shall be construed to follow the quarter-quarter section lines nearest to the radius, and shall be mapped as on the Future Land Use Map.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. The parcels surrounding collector and arterial intersections should be specifically mapped as commercial where appropriate. In addition, less intensive uses (e.g. single family residential) should be allowed within this category. The commercial category needs to be expanded to cover south Walton County. The affordable housing and workforce housing density bonus system should be in separate policy. The two units per acre density for mobile home parks or subdivisions is too low. The Kimley-Horn study indicated that no less than 10 units per acre should be considered in the commercial category. Research by staff indicates that density should be no less than 12 units per acre to achieve affordable and workforce housing. The commercial node methodology has caused problems with compatibility of residential areas and deemed some residential uses non-conforming. The methodology should be revised in EAR amendments.

**(8) MEDIUM INDUSTRIAL (MI):** Areas intended primarily for those operations which—by their inherent nature or by the virtue of the materials used, processes utilized, or products produced—generate noise, particulate matter, vibrations, odor, fumes, glare, and other hazards uncharacteristic of and incompatible with residential uses. Extractive and any heavy industrial uses are prohibited.

Uses allowed: Medium intensity manufacturing, fabricating or milling, outdoor storage, salvage yards, and light industrial uses.

Site standards: 0.6 floor area ratio; 0.8 impervious surface ratio.

This policy has functioned as intended, although the county may wish to combine this category with other industrial categories. The category name is confusing, and should be changed to limited industrial.

**(9) HEAVY INDUSTRIAL (HI):** Areas devoted exclusively to industrial development, allowing a mix of heavy, medium, and light industry, storage, distribution, and other industrial activities.

Uses allowed: Asphalt and concrete plants; Class I and Class II landfills; extractive uses; hazardous waste collection and handling.

Site standards: 0.7 floor area ratio; 0.85 impervious surface ratio.<sup>2</sup>

This policy has functioned as intended, although the county may wish to combine this category with other industrial categories.

## **(B) SOUTH WALTON COUNTY LAND USE CATEGORIES**

**(1) PRIVATE CONSERVATION (PC):** Areas with extremely limited development potential due to environmental sensitivity, including wetlands, floodplains, and privately owned natural reservations. Wetlands and floodplains will be depicted as overlays on the Future Land Use Map series. The boundaries of the floodplains designated for conservation shall coincide with the 100-year floodplain designated by FEMA and wetlands shall be depicted consistent with FLUE Objective L-1.10, and its associated policies. Land uses are limited to activities compatible with the conservation and protection of natural resources and wildlife habitats.

(a) Uses allowed: Residential, passive recreation, and silviculture.

(b) Density allowed: The density allocated to private conservation lands is one unit per 20 acres.

Ninety percent of the development site must be retained in open space and a maximum of 10 percent of the site may be cleared of natural vegetation. Open space shall include unpaved areas only, including stormwater retention ponds, passive recreation areas and water courses. Open space does not include driveways, parking lots or other surfaces designed or intended for vehicular travel. Septic tank drain fields shall not be permitted within wetlands and within wetland buffer areas, within 100 feet of the shoreline of the rivers and creeks or within the Private Conservation district. As an alternative, aerobic systems may be permitted in the buffer areas if a conventional septic tank cannot be sited on the property, where consistent with Chapter 10D-6, F.A.C.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. This category is redundant and should be consolidated with other conservation categories. Wetlands and floodplains are in a separate map series and

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<sup>2</sup> Policies L-1.1.1.A(8) and (9) were amended by Ordinance 2003-17 adopted October 7, 2003.

maybe used as an overlay in query and analysis and is part of map series not on FLUM. Policy needs correcting.

**(2) CONSERVATION RESIDENTIAL (CR):** Private, larger tract ownership intended for low density residential use and enhancement of natural resource conservation. This classification responds to a variety of circumstances such as limited development potential due to environmental sensitivity, including development constraints caused by the presence of salt marsh, wetlands, or floodplains. Land use is limited to low impact residential usage and activities compatible with natural resource and wildlife conservation.

(a) Uses allowed: Residential, passive recreation and limited silviculture activities. Commercial uses, existing as of the date of the adoption of this plan amendment, may be maintained at their current intensity, but may not be expanded to increase the existing floor area ratio or land coverage.

(b) Density allowed: The CR land use category shall consist of three subcategories, as follows: (1) CR1/10 (1 du/10 acres); (2) CR1/2.5 (1 du/2.5 acres); or (3) CR 2/1 (2 du/acre). These land use subcategories shall be designated on the FLUM as CR land use designations. With the exception of the various densities authorized by these land use subcategories, all other provisions of this plan shall uniformly apply including, but not limited to, limitations regarding density, buffering, density transfers and set backs for wetlands and floodplains.

(c) Conservation & Development Criteria:

1. For parcels with silviculture activities, property owners are encouraged to participate in the Department of Agriculture's Stewardship program.

2. Interim development criteria shall include a maximum of 10% clearance of natural vegetation and retention of 90% of the parcel in open space. Open space shall include unpaved parking and access, stormwater retention, water bodies and courses, passive recreation and silviculture. Buildings shall be located on the least sensitive part of the site and shall be subject to the density transfer provisions of L-1.10.4 of this element.

Open space should be defined in definition section for consistency throughout the plan element to element. Open space being defined differently in FLUM categories fuels confusion and non-compliance by staff and public.

3. Septic tank drain fields shall not be permitted within wetlands and within wetlands buffer areas or within 100 feet of the shoreline of the Bay, rivers and creeks within the Residential Conservation district. As an alternative, aerobic systems may be permitted within the buffer areas if a conventional septic tank cannot be sited on the property, where consistent with Chapter 10 D-6, F.A.C.

F.A.C. citation needs amending consistent with 9J-5 , F.A.C.

4. Within six (6) months of plan adoption, the County shall amend the Land Development Code to include a set of performance standards that allows development based on low/zero impacts, utilizing GIS/suitability methodologies. Criteria can include:

- a) Land management techniques for natural systems.
- b) Wildlife corridor protection.
- c) Impervious surface limitations.
- d) Site clearing.
- e) Setbacks and screening.

This provision needs to be clarified to reflect up to date site plan review process and land development code provisions.

5. For those areas designated CR 1/2.5, one (1) unit per 2.5 acres is the maximum density that can be achieved.

6. For those areas designated CR 2:1, two units per acre is the maximum density that can be achieved.

7. In addition to the foregoing, development within any area designated as Conservation Residential is subject to the wetlands protection provisions specified in Objective L-1.10 and Policies L-1.10.1 through L-1.10.5, inclusive.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. The wetlands protection and floodplain provisions of the code are very strict and adequately protect sensitive environmental areas from development. In addition, the 10% clearing criteria is unworkable where the density is CR 2:1, because infrastructure normally consumes 17 – 20% of a site. The 10% clearance and 90 % open space methodology needs clarification. Policy should be amended to delete the six month provision and reflect up to date site plan review process and land development code provisions.

**(3) NEIGHBORHOOD CATEGORIES:** The neighborhood concept is fundamental to creating walkable, mixed use, energy efficient communities in South Walton. Through the creation of Neighborhood Planning Areas, the County intends to preserve the sense of place and identity that is unique to South Walton and to promote neighborhood development. Development within Neighborhood Planning Areas will build upon the historical patterns of settlement in South Walton. Through infill development, expansion of existing neighborhoods, cooperative planning, and the use of traditional principles of community design, the goal of creating walkable, mixed use neighborhood communities in South Walton will be achieved.

The NPA should remain as a FLUM category. The infill subcategory has caused a significant amount of confusion and frustration by property owners and neighborhoods. Some of the confusion would be helped by the adoption of a low density residential (up to four units per acre) and a medium density residential (four – eight units per acre) categories. This would provide alternatives to the infill category for land use changes and would ensure compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods. A high density category already exists in traditional neighborhood of up to 10 units per acre. This would remove the difficulty of the compatibility analysis process. Staff understands that this may take a phased approach since many property owners are attached to the infill category.

**(a) NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREAS:** Neighborhood Planning Areas (NPA's) consist of existing platted or vested development, unplatted vacant areas, infill areas, and small neighborhoods. Each NPA is depicted on the FLUM as a discrete land use category and shall be developed to conform to neighborhood design principles of having an identifiable center, edge, and maximum size. Neighborhood boundaries may be roads, water bodies, subdivision boundaries, concentrations of development or small parcels, or greenbelts. Greenbelts may be State Forest, State Park and Recreation, Conservation Residential lands or golf courses (18-hole par three or championship courses). There are four (4) project types allowed within the NPA land use category: (a) RESIDENTIAL PRESERVATION (RP) AREA PROJECTS, (b) INFILL (IF) PROJECTS, (c) SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD (SN) PROJECTS, or (d) TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD (TN) PROJECTS. Each NPA project, regardless of type, shall be based, at a minimum, on the standards established in this section for the project type, or can be based upon a more specific Neighborhood Plan that conforms to the requirements stated herein. Nothing in this section shall preclude a property owner from developing a conventional subdivision. The maximum density for a conventional subdivision proposed within an area designated as an NPA on the FLUM is four (4) units per acre, based upon connection to central water and sewer. If central water and sewer is not available, the maximum density is two (2) units per acre. Maximum density on septic tanks may be increased to three (3) units per acre if connected to central water. Maximum density with central water may be increased to four (4) units per acre if dry lines (sewer) are installed and the extension of sewer to within 1/4 mile of the site is adopted within the Capital Improvements Plan of the appropriate utility provider, and the connection is mandatory when available.

1. General Regulations & Requirements Applying to All Development Projects within a Neighborhood Planning Area (NPA).

a. Neighborhood Plans. The County encourages the preparation of neighborhood plans to guide development within NPAs. To facilitate development based upon neighborhood plans, the County shall establish

a Neighborhood Planning Program. Plans for existing neighborhoods shall actively involve residents in plan preparation. The county also encourages the development of neighborhood associations to act as catalysts in the on-going Neighborhood Planning Program for existing neighborhoods. Each neighborhood, existing or proposed, shall have a plan based on a distribution of uses appropriate to its location, the natural environment, existing neighborhoods, the actual combination of uses, maximum density and compatibility of uses. The neighborhood plan shall, at a minimum, address the following:

- i. Minimum and maximum lot sizes.
- ii. Setbacks, build-to-lines and lot coverage.
- iii. Use mix for commercial and workplace, by size and location
- iv. Street widths and block sizes.
- v. Parking requirements.
- vi. Landscape and architectural controls.

The county supports neighborhood planning and has transmitted a plan amendment to establish neighborhood plans as overlay districts adopted as amendments to the land development code.

- b. Densities- The allowable densities within the NPA vary, depending upon location, infrastructure availability, environmental issues, and Development type. The general densities are defined as follows, but there may be specific density allowances within the various project types, as defined in the Density Bonus System (Policy L-1.1.2).
  - i. If central water and sewer is not available, the maximum density allowed is two (2) units per acre. Maximum density on septic tanks may be increased to three (3) units per acre if connected to central water. Maximum density with central water may be increased to four (4) units per acre if dry lines (sewer) are installed and the extension of sewer to within 1/4 mile of the site is adopted within the Capital Improvements Plan of the appropriate utility provider, and the connection is mandatory when available.
  - ii. Neighborhood residential areas with central water and sewer (excluding Infill areas) shall have a base density of four (4) units per acre, but may be developed at a density of up to ten (10) units per acre, if developed in conformity with the bonuses provided in Policy L-1.1.2 of this element.
  - iii. Development projects within one (1) mile of C30A or within a drainage basin of a coastal dune lake shall be at a density no greater than one (1) unit per (5) acres, unless connected to central water and sewer. However, this provision does not preclude the

development of a single family dwelling unit on an individual lot of record existing as of the date specified herein on a private well and/or septic tank if central sewer or water is unavailable. Owners of parcels in the Inlet Beach area, as depicted on the Inlet Beach Neighborhood Plan map, shall be able to develop their properties at densities that are achievable with on-site septic systems in accordance with Policy L-1.1B (3)(a).

- c. Compatibility — The compatibility of new development within existing neighborhoods shall be considered as part of any proposal for development within an NPA. Neighborhood Plans shall establish a specific combination and quantity of uses according to existing conditions, in effect preserving the existing character and ensuring compatible new development. New infill development (i.e., parcels 10 acres or less) is restricted to residential uses compatible in density, setback and height to existing residential. Unless developed as part of a detailed neighborhood design, no new commercial or workplace uses shall be established within a 250-foot buffer around Residential Preservation Areas within a NPA, except for Mixed Use Centers or Light Industrial land use areas designated as such on the FLUM. New residential projects over 2 stories shall be set back 50 feet from any Residential Preservation Areas that consist primarily of 1 or 2 story dwellings.

The policy regarding additional setbacks from RPA areas should be moved to a more prominent position so that it will not be missed by staff or developers.

- d. Access Standards — Access to commercial and workplace use in projects located along US 98 and US 331 shall be subject to the minimum spacing standards, joint driveway provisions and cross access easements of the Walton County Scenic Corridor Guidelines, as incorporated into the Land Development Code.

Access standards need to be clearly separated into a policy section so they are not missed by staff. The intent of this provision should be clearly articulated in the plan.

- e. Neighborhood-commercial uses may be allowed in some Neighborhood Planning Areas. The intent of allowing neighborhood commercial uses within selected areas is to offer neighborhoods opportunities to have needed goods and services within walkable distances. Neighborhood commercial uses are intended to peacefully coexist with their host neighborhoods.
  - i. Neighborhood-commercial projects that were constructed prior to June 1975 may rebuild to their original footprint and height

configurations and uses if they are destroyed by fire, hurricane, or other catastrophe.

- ii. Neighborhood commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, are to be permitted as conditional uses that are subject to public hearings by the Planning Commission and by the Board of County Commission.
  - iii. Neighborhood-commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, are to be permitted as major developments in the review process and subject to all requirements for documentation and public notice.
  - iv. Neighborhood-commercial projects established after November 11, 1999, are limited to neighborhood-serving retail and services, service businesses, restaurants, financial institutions, retail sales stores, grocery stores, bed-and-breakfasts, public uses, and civic uses.
  - v. Neighborhood-commercial development shall ensure compatibility and harmony of scale and character with surrounding development.
  - vi. Neighborhood-commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, shall have floor-area ratios that do not exceed 0.5 and impervious surface ratios of 0.6.
  - vii. Neighborhood-commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, are prohibited on interior streets in residential subdivisions, and they must abut paved roadways.
  - viii. To promote vertical mixed uses in South Walton County, neighborhood-commercial establishments are allowed to have living units above them.
  - ix. Neighborhood-commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, may be allowed on lots that are designated as commercial on recorded subdivision plats and/or by recorded covenants and restrictions that were recorded before December 28, 1992, provided that the uses do not conflict with the other provisions of this policy.<sup>3</sup>
2. In addition to the foregoing general requirements, the Density, Mix, and Standards for each specific type of Development Project allowed within a NPA are as follows:

**a. RESIDENTIAL PRESERVATION AREAS (RP):** Residential Preservation Areas consist of previously existing platted subdivisions and approved development projects which are vested or built out, or existing platted subdivisions that have infrastructure in place and are substantially sold and developed. Development within RP areas is limited to the type (residential, commercial, workplace, etc.), density, and intensity of development that is shown in the approved plat, development order, or recorded covenants and restrictions that were recorded before December 28, 1992. Unless specified otherwise on a

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<sup>3</sup> This policy was amended by ordinance number 2003-04.

previously approved development order, the land use within an area designated RP shall be one (1) dwelling unit per platted lot. Future development within an RP may proceed in accordance with the plan or development order, as originally approved. Neighborhood-serving commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, within RP areas are conditional uses governed by criteria set forth in Policy I-1.1B(B)(3)(a)b.e. RP project areas are identified as part of the County's Future Land Use Map series, and are adopted as discrete land use categories within the NPA. <sup>4</sup>

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Residential preservation was applied to many parcels that did not meet the criteria of existing platted subdivisions or approved development projects that are vested or built out. The adoption of a low density residential category would give these parcels an alternative to requesting infill. In addition, the clause tying density, intensity, and use to recorded covenants and restrictions, plats, etc. has proved very problematic for the county. The legislature has determined that expired covenants and restrictions may only be re-enacted through a specific process involving review and approval by the Department of Community Affairs. The Walton County Comprehensive Plan should not attempt to recreate those covenants and restrictions through a land use category. The county has already proposed a comprehensive plan amendment that would prohibit further subdivision of RPA lots under the family homestead exception.

**b. INFILL PROJECTS (IF):** Infill development generally consists of unplatted or vacant parcels of land surrounded by development on three or more sides, where the size of the undeveloped infill parcels is 10 acres or less for the total Infill area. IF project areas are identified as part of the County's Future Land Use Map series, and are adopted as discrete land use categories within the NPA. In addition to the general criteria for all development projects within a NPA provided above, Infill Projects are also subject to the following:

- i. New development must show its place within the neighborhood it infills, including the neighborhood's ultimate size, boundary and center, and shall be functionally related to the existing pattern of development and be compatible with that development.
- ii. Uses shall be primarily for residential and public uses. Civic uses are not required but may be approved by the County with a detailed plan and a demonstration of need.
- iii. Commercial projects permitted after November 11, 1999, shall be limited to neighborhood-serving commercial uses governed by criteria set forth in Policy I-1.1B(B)(3)(a)b.e. Existing commercial uses may be expanded, subject to a detailed plan, including buffers, interconnections, abutting uses, scale and character.
- v. Residential projects in Infill areas may develop at eight units an acre.

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<sup>4</sup> This policy was amended by ordinance number 2003-04.

- vi. Infill projects must conform with the following, as applicable:
  - a. Native vegetation must be reestablished in the buffer areas of the US 98/331 Scenic Corridor.
  - b. Residential projects within the US 98/331 Scenic Corridor must meet landscaping requirements of the US 98/331 Scenic Corridor Standards.
  - c. Residential projects within 300 feet of C30-A must have bike path connectors.
  - d. Drought-tolerant plant species must be used for landscaping within the Scenic 30-A Corridor buffer.
  - e. New residential developments in the US 331/98 Corridor and the Scenic 30-A Corridor must have sidewalks on both sides of new residential streets.

This provision conflicts with a land development code policy that allows sidewalk buyout and should be amended.

- f. To promote a traffic grid pattern, streets in new residential subdivisions must be coordinated with & interconnected to the street system of the surrounding area.
- g. New infill development south of C-30A that is adjacent to a single-family residence must set back an additional 10 feet for each story greater than that of the existing single-family residence.
- h. Infill projects shall assure compatibility through standards pertaining to building setbacks, building heights, landscaping, and architectural compatibility. The County will adopt detailed criteria to implement these standards in its Land Development Code within sixty days of adoption of this policy.
- i. To further promote the compatibility of new Infill projects with existing development, the developer must hold a community meeting that will take place following a pre-application conference with the County and before submitting a development order application. Topics covered in community meetings may include but not be limited to compatibility issues as listed in item “h” above.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Infill is generally a type of development, not a land use category. Infill has created issues for the county where proposed development was much denser than surrounding neighborhoods. The requirement that development be compatible has not completely addressed this problem especially with mixed use developments in primarily residential areas. Parcels with this designation should be redesignated low, medium, or high density residential or mixed use, as appropriate given the surrounding uses. Infill is not a FLUM category, it is a tool used in planning in urban areas to “infill” development where small parcels are remaining. The category allowing 10 acres or less is inconsistent with what “infill” is designed for in urban areas. Future requests to go to infill should be

encouraged to utilize the new proposed LDR, MDR, or other appropriate FLUM category.

**c. SMALL NEIGHBORHOOD (SN) PROJECTS:** Any proposal for a Small Neighborhood within a designated NPA must be based upon a specific plan and must be consistent with an adopted Neighborhood Plan, if available. SN project areas are identified as part of the County's Future Land Use Map series, and are adopted as discrete land use categories within the NPA. The SN must identify whether the proposed development is infill or new development, and it must identify its place within the Neighborhood Plan. In addition to the general criteria for all development projects within a NPA provided above, Small Neighborhoods are also subject to the following requirements:

- i. Parcel size may range from more than ten (10) to less than forty (40) acres.
- ii. Residential densities and unit types can be mixed subject to the bonus provisions of Policy L-1.1.2 of this Element.
- iii. Civic uses are allowed and public uses are required.
- iv. Commercial uses are allowable, limited to neighborhood-serving retail and services; FAR shall not exceed 0.5; the area may not exceed ten (10) percent of the project acreage; residential units may occur over the commercial and are encouraged.
- v. Workplace is prohibited, except as an extension of an existing use, subject to a detailed plan approved by the County. The detailed plan shall include buffers, interconnections, abutting neighborhood uses, scale and character.
- vi. To prevent strip commercial development, commercial uses shall only be located within 330 feet of existing commercial uses, or commercial use locations in an approved Neighborhood Plan, or the boundary of a Mixed Use Center FLUM category.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Many of the parcels with this designation were not large enough to support this type of development, or are already developed. Where the parcels have already been developed, subdivided, and sold, this designation is no longer an appropriate designation.

**d. TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT (TND) AREAS:** Traditional Neighborhoods are allowed and encouraged within the NPAs designated on the FLUM, which are not designated for RP, IF or SN. TND project areas are identified as part of the County's Future Land Use Map series, and are adopted as discrete land use categories within the NPA. This land use category consists of areas where the size of vacant parcels range from 40 to 160 acres. The Traditional Neighborhood mixes various distributions of the land uses, as set forth below. All development other than a conventional subdivision within TND

Areas shall comply with the Traditional Neighborhood land use and design standards established in this section, and with Traditional Neighborhood Development standards adopted as a part of the County's Land Development Code. New TND projects which propose developing structures greater than two stories in height shall, at a minimum, be set back 50 feet from the adjoining Residential Preservation Area boundary. These buffer requirements may be modified by the County Commission, if the County has adopted TND standards as a part of the Land Development Code, which include provisions addressing requirements for public notice and participation and compatibility review for reductions in these buffering requirements. Traditional Neighborhood plans must, at a minimum, be consistent with the uses, percentage distribution, and location requirements as set forth in this section. Any project designed as a Traditional Neighborhood Development must be connected to central water and sewer. A TND project shall have a base density of four (4) units per acre. To encourage development of TND projects, a TND project may be developed at a density up to ten (10) units per acre, if developed in conformity with the bonuses provided in Policy L-1.1.2 of this element. The following general regulations & requirements apply to all TND projects.

- i. Each TND project shall have its own plan based upon the upon criteria adopted for South Walton as part of the County's Land Development Code. At a minimum, each plan shall address the following:
  - a) Minimum and maximum lot sizes.
  - b) Setbacks, build-to-lines and lot coverage.
  - c) Use mix for commercial and workplace, by size, location, and identification of the specific types of uses allowed.
  - d) Street widths and block sizes.
  - e) Parking requirements.
  - f) Landscape and architectural controls.
- ii. Regardless of use, mix or size, Traditional Neighborhoods share several characteristics that enable them to be compact, and transit and pedestrian friendly. Streets terminate at other streets in an interconnecting network. On-street parking is encouraged on all local streets to distribute parking and to buffer pedestrian sidewalks. Block perimeters average no more than 1600 feet. Block lengths exceeding 500 feet provide a pedestrian path crossing; blocks with lots of 50' width or less have alleys. Similar land use categories face across streets; dissimilar land uses abut at rear lot lines. Lots and buildings front and have entries on streets or squares. The placement of residential and nonresidential land uses shall be such that pedestrian rather than vehicular access to nonresidential uses is facilitated and encouraged.

- iii. In addition to the foregoing, any Traditional Neighborhood Development plan must be based upon a mix of the following uses:
- a) Public Use:
    - 1) Includes streets, squares, parks, playgrounds, 18-hole par three or championship golf courses (as greenbelts only) and the like.
    - 2) Requires a minimum of 5% of the neighborhood area or three (3) acres (whichever is greater).
    - 3) Each project contains at least one (1) square, not less than one (1) acre in size, close to the center.
  
  - b) Civic Use:
    - 1) Community uses such as meeting halls, libraries, post offices, schools, child care centers, clubhouses, religious buildings, recreational facilities, higher education, museums, cultural societies, visual and performance arts buildings, municipal buildings, and the like.
    - 2) Requires a minimum of 2% and a maximum of 15% of the project area
    - 3) Civic uses are within or adjacent to squares and parks or on a lot terminating a street vista.
    - 4) Off-street parking is to the side or rear of the building and may be shared with other adjacent uses. Shared parking shall be permitted as defined in the Land Development Code.
    - 5) The maximum FAR is 1.0 for civic uses.
  
  - c) Workplace:
    - 1) Buildings for uses such as offices, artisanal, custom fabrication of home furnishings, clothing and clothing accessory manufacture, assembly of small household and business equipment, repair and service of household goods and small business equipment, office/warehousing and household and business services. Such uses shall only be allowed if they are of a neighborhood scale and neighborhood character. There shall be no outdoor storage, bulk storage, or storage of hazardous materials allowed. Such uses shall create no off-site impacts with regard to noise, particulate matter, vibration, odor, fumes, glare and fire hazard.
    - 2) Allows a minimum of 1% and a maximum of 25% of the project, subject to a detailed TN plan.

- 3) Off-street parking is to the side or rear of the buildings.
- d) Commercial Center: Buildings of a neighborhood scale or character primarily for business uses, such as retail, services, entertainment, restaurant, club, office, medical, artisanal, limited lodging, and residential use.
  - 1) At least 25% of the building area is designated for residential use, unless the site is less than two (2) acres.
  - 2) Requires a minimum of 2%, or one (1) acre, and a maximum of 20% of the project area, based on a forty (40) acre increment minimum.
  - 3) Requires front streets with parallel parking and sidewalks a minimum of 10' wide.
  - 4) Off-street parking is to the side or rear of the buildings and may be shared with other uses as defined in the Land Development Code.
  - 5) Limited lodging is a bed and breakfast in a single building which is residential in character
  - 6) Heights may not exceed four (4) stories.
  - 7) Entertainment and recreational uses such as sports clubs, fitness centers, dance schools, small theaters, small taverns and similar uses, but with no outdoor broadcasting or music.
  - 8) Commercial development which is located within the Scenic Corridor shall adhere to the Scenic Guidelines instead of 1), 3), and 4).
- e) Small Apartment Buildings and Townhouses:
  - 1) Buildings for residential uses including triplexes, townhouses and small apartment buildings; heights are limited to three (3) stories for townhouses and four (4) stories for small apartments.
  - 2) Buildings for residential use may have limited office and retail use, cafes, limited lodging [see d) 5) above], and artisanal uses, subject to the provisions of Policy L-1.9.6 of this element.
  - 3) All building area above the ground floor is designated for residential use.
  - 4) Outbuildings of a designated maximum size are permitted, as specified in the TN development plan.
  - 5) Residential uses shall not exceed maximum of 80% of the entire project.
  - 6) Requires front streets with parallel parking and sidewalks a minimum of six (6) feet wide.
  - 7) All off-street parking is behind the buildings except for on-street parking.

- f) Single Houses:
  - 1) Buildings for residential uses, including single family houses, duplexes and other compatible uses, subject to Policy L-1.9.6 of this element.
  - 2) All building area above the ground floor is designated for residential use.
  - 3) Outbuildings of a designated maximum size are permitted, as specified in the Plan.
  - 4) No more than 80% of the project area shall be residential.
  - 5) Lots face roads with required sidewalks a minimum of 6' wide on at least one side of the road and optional parallel parking.
  - 6) All off-street parking is to the side or rear of the building. Where access is through the front, garages or carports are located a minimum of 20' behind the building facade.
- g) Village-Scale Projects: A Village-Scale project is one that is greater than one hundred sixty (160) acres and is subdivided into more than one (1) neighborhood. Two (2) to three (3) neighborhoods, autonomous by identity and boundary, make a Village. All development projects that are greater than 160 acres in area shall be divided into neighborhoods, so that no neighborhood is greater than 160 acres, and each neighborhood shall meet the land use and design requirements for a Traditional Neighborhood.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Many of the parcels with this designation were not large enough to support this type of development, or are already developed. Where the parcels have already been developed, subdivided, and sold, this designation is no longer an appropriate designation.

**(5) COASTAL CENTER (CC):** This land use category is primarily residential, allowing medium densities and support uses. DRIs in this land use classification are subject to the approved Development Orders and build-out dates. Except for large planned developments, most development opportunities are infill. All development is required to be connected to a public water and sewer system, and shall comply with applicable provisions of the US 98 Scenic Corridor guidelines adopted by the County.

- (a) Uses in the Coastal Center include:
  - 1. Public uses are squares, parks and playgrounds.
  - 2. Civic uses include libraries, post offices, churches, and similar facilities.

3. Workplaces shall be limited to offices and artisanal uses.
  4. Commercial shall be for retail, entertainment, restaurant, services & lodging.
  5. Residential uses have a maximum density of eight (8) units per acre.
- (b) Development projects of 40 acres or more shall be required to be mixed use, and shall include a minimum of 10% and not more than 35% nonresidential uses.
  - (c) Access to commercial and workplace use in projects located along US Highway 98 & US 331 shall be subject to the minimum spacing standards, joint driveway provisions and cross access easements of the Walton County Scenic Corridor Guidelines, as incorporated into the Land Development Code.
  - (d) Each parcel or lot, except single family, with a public street frontage shall provide vehicular connections to abutting lots to limit access impacts on US Highway 98.
  - (e) Within the portions of the Coastal Center located to the north of Seaside and Seagrove, and to the east of Deer Lake, the land uses and development shall be governed by the agreement with the State of Florida which was executed as a part of the acquisition of the Topsail Hill and Deer Lake sites by the State of Florida, and adopted by the Court in the Consent Amended Final Judgment, Topsail and Deer Lake, in Case No. 94-923-CA, which is attached to this Plan as Attachment A, and hereby incorporated by reference. The provisions of this Plan, including but not limited to the provisions of the Coastal Center category, shall not apply to the areas described above to the extent that these provisions would be inconsistent with the above referenced agreement and judgment.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Walton County intends to create a mixed use/DRI category that will replace or supplement Coastal Center.

**(6) MIXED USE CENTERS (MU):** The intent of a Mixed Use Center land use category is to support the economic development strategy by providing a specific, defined location where multiple opportunities may occur for working, shopping, entertainment, lodging and living. These centers are the most intense activity centers and are intended to create a sense of place and identity. They can have regional or local significance. There are four types of Mixed Use Centers proposed for South Walton County: (1) Coastal Center Mixed Use

Center; (2) Village Mixed Use Center; (3) Town Center; and (4) Resort. Each MU Center will be designated and mapped on the FLUM by type.

- (a) Uses common to all the types of Mixed Use Centers:
  - 1. Public Uses
  - 2. Civic Uses
  - 3. Workplace, except warehousing
  - 4. Commercial
  - 5. Multifamily Housing

The definitions within the Neighborhood category, as set forth in the Section 2.d.iii.a-f, above, shall apply to these uses.

- (b) Locations are as depicted on the Future Land Use Map series. Additional locations may be located within South Walton County if they are supported by a market study and service area rationale. A Comprehensive Plan Amendment shall be required to create any new Mixed Use Center.
- (c) Shared parking will be allowed within a mixed use center.
- (d) A density of twelve (12) units per acre is allowed, so long as the units are integrated with compatible nonresidential uses to create the mixed use.
- (e) The Four (4) types of Mixed Use Centers are established as follows:

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended. Staff feels that these four categories should be one general mixed use category.

- 1. **Coastal Center Mixed Use (CCMU):** Area located west of the old/new US 98 intersection, as depicted on the FLUM. Coastal Center Mixed Use areas shall have a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 200 contiguous acres. Development Standards include:
  - a) Maximum height of four (4) stories.
  - b) The floor area ratio is .75.
  - c) The impervious surface ratio is .85.
  - d) The scale and uses at the edge shall be compatible with the abutting Coastal Center uses.
  - e) A detailed site plan is required.
  - f) Lodging means hotels and motels. Inns and bed and breakfasts can also be included.
  - g) Entertainment and recreation uses include amusement arcades, fitness centers, sports clubs,

nightclubs, indoor movie theaters, dinner clubs, small indoor theaters and restaurants with outdoor entertainment.

- h) Each parcel or lot, except for single family, shall provide vehicular connections to abutting lots as a way of limiting traffic congestion.
- i) This Mixed Use Center is subject to the US 98 Scenic Corridor guidelines when they are approved by the County.

**2. Village Mixed Use Center (VMU):** A center designed to serve a series of Neighborhoods. These Village Mixed Use Centers are located along C30-A and US 98). Development in these centers shall comply with applicable Scenic Corridor guidelines for these roads. The maximum area of any particular Village Mixed Use Center shall be 40 acres, and the minimum area of any new centers established after the date of this amendment shall be 5 contiguous acres. The development standards for uses within the Village Mixed Use Center are as follows:

- a) Maximum height of four (4) stories.
- b) The floor area ratio is 2.0.
- c) The impervious surface ratio is .85.
- d) Limited lodging means an inn of no more than seventy-five (75) rooms and can include full services, such as supporting restaurant use.
- e) Entertainment and recreation uses include sports clubs, health clubs, lounges, restaurants with limited outdoor entertainment, small indoor theaters and similar uses.
- f) The scale and uses at the edge shall be compatible with abutting neighborhood uses.
- g) The center shall be interconnected with abutting uses for car and pedestrian linkage.
- h) A detailed plan is required.

**3. Town Center (TC):** There are two Town Centers depicted on the FLUM. The first Town Center (TC1) is located at the west of US 331 and north of US 98.

- a. **TC1** shall develop pursuant to the criteria and standards forth below. The TC1 Town Center designation is created for the purpose of accommodating the new town at the northwest quadrant of U.S. 98 and U.S. 331. This is the only area on the FLUM which is designated as TC1. The TC1 Town Center shall be developed consistent with a South Walton New Town Master Plan of Development. This master plan will be developed in accordance with the multimodal transportation strategies of Objective T-1.6, which

encourages a balance of auto, truck, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit systems in Walton County. The master plan shall also be developed consistently with the strategies and principles of Objective R-3.3, which deals with the development of a trails and greenways system in South Walton County. This master plan shall also be developed in accordance with the design principles that guided the development of the October 31, 1996, South Walton New Town Master Plan.<sup>5</sup>

1. The underlying density for privately-owned lands within the area designated as TC1 shall be two (2) dwelling units per acre, until the master plan is approved, and the densities and conservation and development criteria of Neighborhood Planning Area shall apply.

2. Following completion and approval of the master plan, the densities, and intensities of land use within the TC1 land use area shall be as stated in the master plan, and shall be subject to all provisions, classifications, and criteria as set forth herein. General criteria for a detailed plan for the TC1 land use area include:

- i. A complete environmental analysis, the results of which shall become a part of the County's GIS. Comprehensive Plan provisions related to protection of wetlands, floodplains natural vegetation, and listed species habitat.
- ii. A detailed plan that applies the Neighborhood design principles is required. The plan shall meet the Special Regulations and Requirements of Policy L-1.1.1.6.d. of this Element. Interconnections to existing developments or established neighborhoods are required, unless physically prohibited. In accordance with the design parameters for Neighborhood, the Plan shall, depending upon size, incorporate:
  - Public Use (Neighborhood park, square, etc.)
  - Civic Use (Community Uses)
  - Workplace
  - Commercial Center
  - A Transit or Jitney Stop

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<sup>5</sup> TC1 was amended by ordinance number 2000-30, amendment 00-1.A.5

- Multiple Housing Types
  - iii. A Property Owners Association or similar entity to ensure long-term management and continuity is required.
  - iv. An affordable housing plan using a minimum 10% set-aside of units or fee in lieu of the provision of specific units; the Plan can include employment opportunities in the Workplace area.
  - v. A complete infrastructure & support system plan that minimizes capital costs and environmental damage.
  - vi. An environmental protection and enhancement plan directed toward watershed management of dune lakes wildlife movement and habitat protection and, if applicable, a burn plan coordinated with the Division of Forestry.
  - vii. A plan for sustainability and energy efficiency, including, but not limited to:
    - Solar orientation of buildings
    - Water conservation measures
    - Efficient equipment in residential units
    - Recycling plan
    - Community gardens
    - Site development innovations
    - Greenway or open space linkages
    - An “edge” management plan when the site abuts a State Forest or Park
3. For purposes of clarification, within the TC1 category for South Walton County, projects within the TC1 category may proceed in phases that are smaller than the required minimum area, provided that development conforms to the approved overall master development plan.
- b. **The second Town Center (TC2)** is located at the northwest corner of U.S. 98 and C.R. 30A. The second Town Center is established expressly for the purpose of accommodating the land uses and development that were agreed upon as a part of the acquisition of the Topsail Hill and Deer Lake sites by the State of Florida in the Consent Amended Final

Judgment, Topsail and Deer Lake, which was entered by the Court in Case No. 94-923-CA, which is attached to this Plan as Attachment A and hereby incorporated by reference. The use and development of TC2 shall be in accordance with the provisions of the agreement and judgment with the State of Florida. The provisions of this Plan, including but not limited to the provisions of the Town Center category, shall not apply to the area described above to the extent that these provisions would be inconsistent with the above-referenced agreement and judgment.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy has functioned as intended.

4. **Resort (R):** These areas are located on the eastern border of Grayton Beach State Recreation Area and to the immediate east of the Deer Lake State Park site. This category is established expressly for the purpose of accommodating the land uses and development that were agreed upon as a part of the acquisition of the Topsail Hill and Deer Lake sites by the State of Florida in the Consent Amended Final Judgment, Topsail and Deer Lake, which was entered by the Court in Case No. 94-923-CA, which is attached to this Plan as Attachment A and hereby incorporated by reference. The use and development of this area shall be in accordance with the provisions of the agreement and judgment. The provisions of this Plan, including but not limited to the provisions of the Resort category, shall not apply to the area described above to the extent that such provisions would be inconsistent with the above-referenced agreement and judgment.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy has functioned as intended.

- (7) **LIGHT INDUSTRIAL CENTER (LI):** Areas containing a combination of uses, such as offices and light industrial uses that limit or create no off-site impacts with regard to noise, particulate matter, vibrations, odor, fumes, glare and fire hazard.
  - a. **Uses Allowed:** Office/warehousing, wholesaling, light industry (product assembly), automotive maintenance and repair. Accessory uses allowed within a principal building include: personal services, business services, restaurants and cafes, newsstands, and similar support uses. Extractive and any heavy industrial uses are prohibited.
  - b. **Location Standards:** There are three (3) light industrial centers shown on the land use map. Additional sites must be located on no

less than a major collector and have immediate access to the regional road network, subject to a Plan amendment.

- c. Site Standards: The light industrial center shall have a maximum floor area ratio of .50 and an impervious surface ratio of .75. The Land Development Code shall be amended to define specific site standards for coverage, setbacks, parking and access. Buffers shall be used to screen these uses from abutting uses that are lower in intensity or density, per Policy L-1.7.3.

**(8) INDUSTRIAL (I):** Areas devoted exclusively to industrial development, allowing a mix of heavy and light industry, storage, distribution, and other industrial activities. Intensity of development, as measured by land coverage, shall not exceed 60 percent, meaning a maximum floor area ratio of 0.6.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy has functioned as intended.

**(9) COASTAL VILLAGE 1 (CV-1):** The Coastal Village mixed-use district is intended to provide a location where opportunities may occur for working, shopping, lodging, recreation and entertainment, and living. Coastal Village activity centers are intended to create a sense of place and identity. The Coastal Village district may serve regional or local needs, providing shopping, professional services, offices, institutional services, or recreational facilities within village centers. A range of uses is anticipated within the district, including mixed-use buildings with commercial and office uses mixed with residential uses. Residential units may be mixed within each block with commercial and office uses. The district permits residential development at a variety of densities up to a maximum of 1 unit per gross acre.

- a. Uses allowed: Single-family and multi-family residential uses are the primary uses within the district. Community-supporting and neighborhood recreation uses, golf courses, tennis and other outdoor athletic facilities, including trails, parks, playgrounds, water-dependent uses and activities, equestrian trails and stables, and indoor recreation uses are accessory to residential uses. Allowable non-residential uses will include public and civic uses such as churches, libraries, post offices, and schools, retail sales; hotels, motels, inns, and bed and breakfast facilities; restaurants; indoor amusements and theaters; financial institutions; and medical, personal and professional services, provided that these non-residential uses are compatible in scale and intensity with the character of the residential uses. Residential uses will also be allowed in commercial areas and in mixed-use buildings.

- b. Density allowed: The maximum density allowed shall be 1 dwelling unit per acre for the portion of the gross parcel area devoted to residential and accessory uses, with clustering encouraged to minimize impacts to environmentally sensitive lands.
- c. Intensity allowed: The intensity of non-residential uses on an individual non-residential development sites shall not exceed a 0.5 floor area ratio (FAR). The total non-residential building floor area within a parcel designated CV-1 shall not exceed the equivalent of a 0.05 FAR as applied to the maximum allowable non-residential area of a CV-1 district as set forth in paragraph (d).
- d. Mixture of uses: Allowable residential and accessory uses as defined in paragraph (a) above shall account for 85 percent to 95 percent of the gross parcel area designated CV-1. Allowable non-residential uses shall account for 5 percent to 15 percent of the gross parcel designated CV-1. Internal landscaped buffers shall be required between residential uses and non-residential uses, if necessary to achieve compatibility. Neighborhoods shall be designed to be interconnected for vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian access with minimum impacts to environmentally sensitive lands.
- e. Commercial uses: Commercial uses shall be limited to collector and arterial roadway intersections, intersections of subdivision collectors and arterial or collector roads, and areas specifically designated and platted for commercial uses as a part of PUD master plans. To limit linear and/or strip development and to provide for access management along thoroughfares, community-serving commercial uses shall be located in activity centers within a maximum of 1,320 feet either side of the intersections of arterial and/or collector roadways.
- f. Uses proximate to water bodies: Residential uses, recreational uses, water-dependent uses, water-related uses, and ancillary commercial uses, are allowed subject to all generally applicable plan policies as further limited by this policy. Recreational uses may include docks, piers, footbridges, boardwalks, boat-launching ramps, swimming pools, gazebos, picnic areas, playgrounds and ancillary uses. Development within the coastal dune lake protection zone on any coastal dune lake or tributary depicted on the map entitled Walton County Coastal Dune Lake System shall be subject to all generally applicable plan policies including, but not limited to Policies C-3.2.1, and C-3.2.8. In designated coastal dune lakes, docks shall not provide permanent mooring for watercraft with internal combustion engines, except for safety/rescue watercraft or water taxis. Fueling, refueling and boat repair activities shall be

prohibited, except for routine service and maintenance on allowed watercraft. All new development or redevelopment within this land use district shall be designed to avoid impacts on wetlands. During the site plan approval process, the County will ensure that the wetlands are avoided to the maximum extent practical. Wetland impacts, where unavoidable, shall require a permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as described in Coastal Zone/Conservation Policy C-3.2.2 Buffers shall be located around wetlands consistent with Coastal Zone/Conservation Policy C-3.2.1(c).

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended. Coastal Village is limited to one parcel of property in south Walton. This parcel should be given a mixed use category.

## **C. NORTH & SOUTH WALTON COUNTY LAND USE CATEGORIES**

**(1) LARGE-SCALE AGRICULTURE (LSA):** Areas now used and appropriate for continued use primarily in large-scale agricultural activities, including timber production.

- a. Uses allowed: Agriculture and silviculture activities; farm dwellings, including farmworker housing, and associated accessory structures that are related to and supportive of agriculture and silviculture. Land uses which shall be considered as functionally related to agriculture and silviculture activities shall be limited to the following:
1. Farm equipment sales and repair, kennels and veterinary services, sale of agricultural chemicals and supplies, feed sales, blacksmith and wood working shops, processing, storage, or sale of agricultural products; outdoor recreational activities such as hunting or fishing camps, bait and tackle shops, shooting ranges, and golf courses; travel trailer parks and campgrounds connected to outdoor recreational uses and riding or boarding stables; cemeteries, communications facilities, small engine repair, and welding shops. Borrow pits shall be allowed as a special exception.<sup>6</sup> All land uses in Large Scale Agriculture shall be developed and operated to ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses, including compliance with Policies L-1.7.1, L-1.7.2 and L-1.7.3 of this Plan Element;
  2. Home occupations which are clearly subordinate to the residential land use, and occupy no more than

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<sup>6</sup> Borrow pits as a special exception were added by ordinance number 2005-31.

twenty-five percent (25%) of the floor area of the residential dwelling on the site;

3. Community Facilities, which shall be defined as places of worship, community centers, and public or private schools and day care centers; and
  4. Potable water, sanitary sewer, recreation, drainage, electrical and natural gas distribution, police and fire, public works maintenance, and road facilities which are necessary to serve land uses and development in the Large-scale or General Agriculture category, subject to the restrictions on the provision of potable water and sanitary sewer facilities contained in the Infrastructure Element.
- b. Density allowed: 1 unit per 40 acres.
  - c. Creation of new parcels: The subdivision of parcels within the Large-scale Agriculture land use category shall not result in the creation of more than 50 new building lots during any calendar year.
  - d. Special considerations: Silviculture activities shall be conducted in a manner compatible with the conservation, protection and appropriate use of natural resources by applying best management practices. The following policies shall apply:
    1. Silviculture activities shall follow the best management practices outlined in the publications titled "Silviculture Best Management Practices Manual" (Revised 1993, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry) and the requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, F.S.

This policy has functioned as intended, although one agricultural category with a range of densities may be sufficient to serve the needs of Walton County.

- (2) **PUBLIC FACILITIES (PF):** Publicly-owned land intended for public facilities and services such as utility and solid waste facilities, prisons, maintenance and equipment storage areas, and transportation facilities. Intensity of development, as measured by land coverage, shall not exceed 75 percent, with a maximum building height of 36 feet (excluding towers).

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. There is

inadequate differentiation between public facilities and institutional uses, and these categories should be combined into one.

- (3) **INSTITUTIONAL (INST):** Land designated for major public and semipublic uses such as, churches, schools, medical facilities, government institutions, libraries, and similar public buildings. The category covers public and private uses. No residential density is assigned to this category. The maximum floor area ratio is 0.40 for these uses. The County shall amend its Land Development Code to incorporate specific site standards for the allowed uses.

The maximum FAR is too low to support institutional uses, and should be increased as part of the EAR-based amendments.

- (4) **PARKS AND RECREATION (PR):** Land devoted to parks and recreation facilities that are owned and operated by the County, or an agency of the County, for the purpose of active and passive use. Beach access is included in this definition. There is no residential density associated with this category.

This policy has functioned as intended, although this category could be combined with other institutional and government uses.

- (5) **CONSERVATION (CON):** Publicly or privately-owned land suitable for the protection of natural resources and passive recreational activities. There shall be zero density associated with this category except for conservation uses limited to public access and residential and nonresidential uses necessary to manage such conservation lands (e.g., ranger stations, research stations and park amenities). The provisions below apply to the following specific types of uses within the Conservation category:

1. State Forest: publicly-owned land utilized for natural and wildlife resource management and conservation, and passive recreation uses. These lands are managed by the State of Florida and may include timber harvesting as a part of its management responsibilities.
  - a. No density is given to this land use category, except for conservation use limited to public access and necessary support uses and structures (ranger stations, towers, recreational uses, greenways and amenities).
  - b. Management plans shall be prepared and publicly reviewed periodically to ensure compatibility with abutting uses.
  - c. Future State Forest lands shall provide development separation, focus upon

- ecosystem management and protect threatened and endangered species.
    - d. Conservation and passive recreation uses and necessary support uses and structures are allowed.
- 2. State Park and Recreation: Publicly owned lands that fall into categories of State parks, State recreation areas, State preserves and ornamental gardens. Such uses shall support the economic development and ecotourism goals of the County. This is further detailed in the Recreation, Open Space and Greenways element.
  - a. No density is given to this land use category, except for recreation and conservation uses as identified in the approved State management plans. Such uses include ranger stations, recreation facilities and amenities, recreational trails, greenways and camping facilities.
  - b. Management plans shall be prepared and publicly reviewed periodically to ensure compatibility with abutting uses.
  - c. Future State park and recreation expansion shall focus upon coastal resources and shall be an integral part of the County's tourism-oriented strategy while providing development separation.
  - d. Conservation and passive recreation uses and necessary support uses and structure.

This land use designation has functioned as intended, but should be combined with other conservation categories, with state park lands as a sub-category.

- (6) **BUSINESS PARK (BP):** The Business Park district is intended to provide a wide range of business, office, commercial, professional services, and manufacturing, and supporting civic, institutional, recreational, infrastructure, and open space uses and activities arranged within a contiguous campus setting. In order to foster a park-like environment, where vehicles and pedestrians can move freely within the project boundary, uses shall be connected by an internal network of roads and sidewalks. Supporting infrastructure, recreation, open space and green space may be included within these parks. Business Park areas shall have a minimum of 10 contiguous acres. Developments within this district are intended to be located on arterial highways or major collector roadways, as listed in the Traffic Circulation Element, with limitations on access provided to minimize traffic congestion and to control traffic

impacts within each development. Uses within the Business Park district will be required to provide buffers when adjacent to any residential use.

- a. Uses Allowed:
  1. Greenhouse, Nursery, Floriculture Production; and Agriculture
  2. Seafood Support Activities
  3. Utilities and Infrastructure Systems
  4. Construction and Specialty Trade Contracting
  5. Manufacturing
  6. Wholesale Trade
  7. Retail Trade
  8. Transportation and Warehousing
  9. Information and Communication Services
  10. Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, Leasing, & Rental Services
  11. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
  12. Health Care & Social Assistance
  13. Accommodations and Food Service
  14. Other Services:
    - A. Performing and Fine Arts Centers
    - B. Recreational Facilities and Open Space
- b. Intensity allowed: The intensity of uses shall not exceed a 0.15 floor area ratio (FAR) for a parcel designated BP. The intensity of use on any individual development site shall not exceed a 1.0 FAR.

The FAR standards are difficult to implement, and contradictory. These should be revised as part of the EAR-based amendments.

- c. Location standards: To limit linear strip development and to provide for access management along thoroughfares, commercial uses shall be located totally within business park campuses or in activity centers within a maximum of 1,320 feet on either side of the intersections of arterial and/ or collector roadways.
- d. Buffering standards: To ensure a compatible mix of uses, landscaped buffers shall be required between the Business Park uses and any adjacent residential uses. The buffer shall be at least 20 feet in width and include an opaque fence. For all other uses, the standards set forth in Policy L-1.7.3 shall apply. Interior storage yards shall be fenced and screened to minimize visual and noise impacts.

- e. Wetlands: All new development or redevelopment within this land use district shall be designed to avoid impacts on wetlands. During the site plan approval process, the County will ensure that the wetlands are avoided to the maximum extent practical. Wetland impacts, where unavoidable, shall require a permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as described in Coastal Zone/Conservation Policy C-3.2.2 Buffers shall be located around wetlands consistent with Coastal Zone/Conservation Policy C-3.2.1(c).

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended. This land use designation should be combined with a general commercial or industrial category, as appropriate.

- (7) LIGHT INDUSTRIAL (LI):** Areas containing a single use or combination of uses, such as offices, showroom/warehouse, and light assembly or storage uses that do not generate noise, particulate matter, vibrations, odor, fumes, glare, and other hazards incompatible with residential uses.

Uses allowed: Office, showroom/warehouse, wholesaling, light product assembly, building service trade, communications towers, automotive maintenance and repair, and the like. Accessory uses allowed within a principal building include: personal services, business services, newsstands, and similar support uses. Medium, extractive, and heavy industrial uses are prohibited.

Site standards: 0.5 floor area ratio; 0.75 impervious surface ratio.<sup>7</sup>

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended. Staff feels that this category should be combined with an overall industrial category.

- (9) NORTH BAY NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING AREA (NB/NPA)<sup>8</sup>**

The intent of the North Bay Neighborhood Planning Area (NB/NPA) is to promote orderly, compact growth in north Walton County by providing opportunities for residential, mixed-use, and community development in areas served by central water and sewer or where such systems are scheduled to be extended within three years, that do not contain significant habitat, wetlands, or other environmental resources, and that are proximate to municipalities or other urbanizing areas of north Walton County. Development within an area

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<sup>7</sup> Policy L01.1.C (7) was amended by Ordinance 2003-17 adopted October 7, 2003.

<sup>8</sup> The North Bay NPA categories were added by ordinance number 2005-30.

designated NB/NPA may not be developed with, or served by, septic tanks, on either a temporary or a permanent basis.

North Bay Neighborhood Planning Areas consist of three subcategories of land uses, which are to be depicted as discrete land use categories on the future land use map, as follows: (1) NB/NPA Residential; (2) NB/NPA Mixed Use; and (3) NB/NPA Rural Town Center:

Walton County recently created this land use as an extension of the neighborhood planning areas in south Walton County.

- (1) **NB/NPA RESIDENTIAL.** This land use category will allow higher density residential development on parcels ten (10) or fewer acres in size that are served by central water and sewer.
  - (a) Uses allowed: Single-Family Residential.
  - (b) Density allowed: Gross density shall not exceed four (4) units per acre. Clustering is encouraged, and may be required by the County, to protect significant habitat and wetlands and to avoid other areas of environmental concern.
  - (c) Intensity allowed: None. Commercial development is not allowed within the NB/NPA Residential subcategory
  
- (2) **NB/NPA MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL.** This land use category allows higher density residential development and neighborhood-serving commercial uses on parcels greater than ten (10) but fewer than one hundred (100) acres, that are served by central water and sewer.
  - (a) Uses allowed: Single and Multi-Family Residential.
  - (b) Density allowed: Gross density shall not exceed six (6) units per acre. Clustering is encouraged, and may be required by the County, to protect significant habitat and wetlands and to avoid other areas of environmental concern.
  - (c) Intensity allowed: Non-residential uses within this category shall be limited to neighborhood-serving and neighborhood-scale retail uses and services. Such non-residential uses may not exceed five (5) percent of the gross acreage of each designated NB/NPA Mixed Use Residential area. Intensity of development shall not exceed a Floor Area Ratio of fifty (50) percent (0.5 FAR), and an impervious surface area ratio

of sixty (60) percent (0.60 ISR). Building heights shall not exceed four stories, or 50 feet, whichever is less.

- (d) Locational criteria: Commercial uses, as described above, may only be located at collector and arterial road intersections, intersections of subdivision collectors and arterial or collector roads, or as part of a master plan if compatible with existing development and land uses.

- (3) NB/NPA RURAL TOWN CENTER.** This land use category is intended to direct growth into a limited number of large acreage rural town centers that are to be located and designed to prevent the fragmentation of existing agricultural areas, rural communities, significant habitat and natural resources, and to minimize the adverse impacts that uncontrolled sprawling development otherwise has on rural areas.

Each Rural Town Center (RTC) shall contain a minimum of 100 acres that are served by central water and sewer. Each RTC shall be designed around a core mixed-use area that affords maximum exposure to commercial, resort, office, and high density residential uses at a scale that will support and financially justify establishing the area as a Rural Town Center. Any area designated as an RTC that contains three hundred (300) or more contiguous acres may be designed to provide more than one core area, if such design will facilitate a more efficient and effective delivery of services and land uses. The core area(s) will serve as the employment center(s) for the RTC, providing for the highest density and intensity of development. Lower density residential neighborhoods within the RTC will be designed to surround the core area(s), and will be linked thereto by street grid networks, bike paths, and pedestrian paths. Residential and mixed-use development within the RTC will be organized around public spaces, such as village greens and squares, that will buffer the higher density and intensity development from lower density development. The lowest impact residential uses shall be located at the outer boundaries of the RTC.

Given the minimum acreage required for RTC designation, it is possible that the acreage will have multiple owners. If an RTC area is developed through a series of smaller development projects, each project within the RTC must have its own detailed plan of development that will be designed to achieve the overall economic, environmental, and aesthetic objectives of the RTC in its entirety. Each RTC area, and each development project contained therein, must be designed to work with the constraints and advantages presented by the surrounding area and existing site conditions, including vegetation, topography, drainage, wildlife, siting, and lighting considerations.

- (a) At a minimum, each plan of development within an RTC area shall address the following:
- (1) The specific uses proposed, lot sizes and location, and lot coverage;
  - (2) The internal road network proposed, including road widths and block sizes. Roads should be designed to retain their rural character and not be designed to the characteristics or standards for suburban commercial or subdivision streets;
  - (3) Proposed road and pedestrian interconnections to the abutting neighborhoods and the core area;
  - (4) Proposed parking standards and criteria;
  - (5) Abutting uses, including scale and character;
  - (6) Existing soils, topography and drainage;
  - (7) Existing vegetation and wildlife;
  - (8) Proposed landscape, buffering, and setback standards;
  - (9) Proposed architectural standards and controls;
  - (10) Proposed lighting standards and controls that preserve the rural character of the area by prohibiting light pollution through sky glow, glare, light trespass, and light clutter.;
  - (11) Required connection to public water and sewer;
  - (12) Proposed heights not exceeding four stories, or 50 feet, whichever is less; and
  - (13) Consistency with all other requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.
- (b) A minimum of five (5) percent and a maximum of (fifteen) (15) percent of the gross acreage of a Rural Town Center area shall be designed as the core area(s) of the RTC. The core area(s) will provide the opportunities for permanent and seasonal residents of the RTC to work, shop, live, and recreate by designing the core area to include a mix of the following uses:
- (1) Public Uses, including squares, parks, golf courses, pools, playgrounds, equestrian centers, marinas, and such other amenities, which shall comprise no less than five (5) percent of the core area(s);
  - (2) Civic uses, including churches, libraries, meeting halls, schools, government buildings, post offices, and the like, which shall comprise no less than one (1) percent of the core area(s);
  - (3) Commercial uses, including retail, entertainment, resort, lodging, restaurant, and services, and other non-residential uses as specified above. Intensity of development shall not exceed a Floor Area Ratio of fifty (50) percent (0.50 FAR),

and an impervious surface area ratio of seventy-five (75) percent (0.75 ISR). Outdoor broadcasting or music shall be prohibited for all commercial or other non-residential uses. Commercial uses shall comprise not less than fifteen (15) percent of the core area(s);

- (4) Multifamily housing, including condominiums, apartment buildings and townhouses with a maximum density of 8 units per acre. Clustering of residential multifamily development is encouraged to facilitate the creation of open space, public squares, parks, and to protect natural resources located within the core area. Multifamily housing shall comprise not less than fifteen (15) percent of the core area(s).

(c) Uses outside the core area(s) of a Rural Town Center (non-core uses) are authorized as follows:

- (1) Public Uses, including squares, parks, golf courses, pools, playgrounds, passive recreation areas, preserved natural resource areas, equestrian centers and other similar amenities. Public uses shall comprise a minimum of fifteen (15) percent of the non-core areas;
- (2) Civic uses, including churches, libraries, meeting halls, schools, government buildings, and post offices and the like. Civic uses shall comprise a minimum of five (5) percent of the non-core areas;
- (3) Home occupations, if the use will not create any off-site impacts because of noise, odor, fumes, vibration, lighting, glare, or signage, and if designed at a neighborhood scale and neighborhood character;
- (4) Residential uses, including single- and multi-family, with a maximum density of four (4) units per acre. Clustering of residential development is authorized, and may be required by the County, to facilitate the creation of open space, public squares, and the like;
- (5) Commercial uses are prohibited within the non-core area(s) of this NB/NPA Rural Town Center subcategory. Non-residential uses other than commercial, as specified in this section, shall not exceed a floor area ratio of forty (40) percent (0.40 FAR) and an impervious surface area ratio of fifty (50) percent (0.5 ISR).

**Policy L-1.1.2:** Density bonuses are used in South Walton to encourage development consistent with the intent of the Plan. Bonuses are not allowable without water and sewer. These bonuses shall not be available until the land development regulations are amended to incorporate the bonus system and to

provide detailed standards for the application of the bonus system. Based on the following point system, development within Neighborhood Planning Areas (excluding Infill areas) and TC1 can receive up to ten (10) dwelling units per acre.

1. To achieve the higher density, at least 30% of the points must come from one (1) or more elements of the Primary Category; the remaining points may come from the Primary or Secondary Categories. If fifty (50) percent of the points come from the Primary Category, an additional one (1) unit per acre is added, if the top allowable density has not been attained.
  - a. Primary Category
    - 1) Habitat Protection and Enhancement
    - 2) Right-of-Way-Dedication (Arterial or Major Collector)
    - 3) Greenway Corridor Dedication
    - 4) Scenic Corridor Enhancement
    - 5) Affordable Housing
    - 6) Pervious Surface Coverage
    - 7) Recycling Station
    - 8) Energy Efficiency
    - 9) Beach Access/Parking
  - b. Secondary Category
    - 1) Civic Use/Open Space Provisions in Excess of Minimums
    - 2) Grid Pattern with Interconnections
    - 3) Alleys
    - 4) Bike Path Connections to an Established Network
    - 5) Vertical Mixed Use
    - 6) Water Conservation
    - 7) Sidewalks on both sides of street
    - 8) On-Street (pervious) Parking
    - 9) Community Garden
    - 10) Community Compost Area
2. The County shall amend the Land Development Code to incorporate density bonus provisions that include:
  - a. Primary and Secondary Category definitions.
  - b. The total number of points for each category item.
  - c. The number of points required to achieve the density increases on a per unit basis, up to the maximum allowable for each Future Land Use classification.

The Density Bonus Categories, Worksheets & Definitions are found in the Appendix entitled Density Bonus Points, attached hereto and by reference incorporated herein. In addition to the bonus provisions provided herein and in

the Appendix, the County may add additional items to the primary and secondary categories to expand the bonus point system to accomplish the intent of establishing compact walkable neighborhoods, as provided herein. Such additional items may be adopted as part of the County's Land Development Code.

**Policy L-1.1.3:** Residential density, as established in L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2, is the relationship between the total number of dwelling units on a site and the gross acreage.

**Policy L-1.1.4:** Regardless of the density values established in L-1.1.1, and except as otherwise provided herein, no development is permitted within the 10-year and 25-year floodplains. Development within lands that are designated by FEMA as within the 100-year floodplain shall have a gross density of one (1) dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres, or the underlying density, whichever is less. Regardless of this density limitation, and with the exception of the Large Scale and General Agriculture land use categories, residential density may be transferred from the floodplain portions of the property to the upland portions of the property at a density of two (2) dwelling units per acre, or the underlying density, whichever is less, as applied to the entire property. Density within the 100-year floodplain in the General Agriculture land use category shall be one (1) dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres, and is not transferable. Density within the 100-year floodplain in the Large Scale Agriculture land use category shall be one (1) dwelling unit per forty (40) acres, and is not transferable.

Gulf front properties within the CCCL may develop at two (2) dwelling units per acre in the 100-year floodplain, or at the underlying density if development is transferred out of the floodplain.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Walton County is in the process of removing the references to the 10 and 25 year floodplains, which are not relevant to Walton County. Once the map modernization program discussed elsewhere in this report is complete, Walton County will seek to revise this policy to eliminate the incentive to fill a parcel and seek a conditional letter of map revision based on fill from FEMA. CLOMR-Fs remove a parcel from the 100 year floodplain, allowing a developer to claim the underlying density on a parcel. With the value of property in south Walton, it has become economically feasible for developers to fill entire sites to increase the available density. This results in damage to the floodplain far more severe than the same density built on pilings would.

**Policy L-1.1.5:** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this comprehensive plan, no development higher than four (4) stories, or 50 feet, whichever is less, shall be permitted south of Choctawhatchee Bay and the Intracoastal Waterway

from the Okaloosa County line to the Bay County line.<sup>9</sup> of not more than one (1) unit per 20 acres, unless otherwise specified in these Goals, Objectives and Policies.

**Policy L-1.1.6:** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this comprehensive plan, no development higher than four (4) stories, or 50 feet, whichever is less, shall be permitted south of Choctawhatchee Bay and the Intracoastal Waterway from the Okaloosa County line to the Bay County line.

This policy has functioned as intended and will be retained in the comprehensive plan. Eglin AFB has requested a letter from Walton County requesting a height assessment prior to completion of the joint land use study. This policy should also address the NB-NPA height limitation for areas north of the bay.

**Policy L-1.1.7:** Developments with a final development order issued on or before the adoption date of this comprehensive plan amendment where development had commenced and is continuing in good faith as of this date, or development authorized as a development of regional impact pursuant to Chapter 380, F.S., are vested. Pursuant to the doctrine of equitable estoppel, development may be deemed vested if a property owner has relied in good faith on an act or omission of the local government and on the basis of such reliance has made a substantial change of position such that it would be highly inequitable and unjust to deny the continued development of this property.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. The provision referencing equitable estoppel needs to be further clarified, consistent with Florida law.

**Policy L-1.1.8:** The County shall adopt an ordinance establishing the procedure for determining the vested status of development within the County. The ordinance shall include the following requirements: criteria for determining vesting that are consistent with L-1.1.7; procedures for an applicant to apply for a determination of vested rights & for the processing of such applications; and a deadline for all interested parties to apply for such a determination.

**Policy L-1.1.9:** Single lots of record which were established before December 28, 1992, are entitled to have constructed thereon at least one (1) single family dwelling unit. "Lot of record" shall mean an individual parcel of property owned before December 28, 1992, by the party seeking to construct a single family dwelling unit thereon, or under contract for deed according to which the purchasing party is seeking to construct a single family dwelling unit thereon, which parcel has been documented by a subdivision plat, deed, agreement, map survey or other drawing recorded in the official public records of Walton County

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<sup>9</sup> L-1.1.5 was amended by Ordinance 2002-14 adopted August 6, 2002.

before December 28, 1992; provided however that if the individual parcel owned is contiguous to other parcels owned by the same owner, then such owner shall only be entitled to construct one single family dwelling unit on the individual parcel and all contiguous parcels owned by the same owner. This policy applies as an exception to the density provisions contained in Policy 1.1.1 only, and all development must be consistent with the other provisions of this plan, including concurrency requirements.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Several of the provisions of this policy have proven difficult to interpret, and the language needs to be clarified. Ownership of the parcel should not be a consideration; if the parcel existed prior to the lot of record date. If platted contiguous parcels are owned by the same person, each parcel should still be entitled to have a single family home built there.

**Policy L-1.1.10:** Property developed and/or subdivided for the use of an immediate family member (grandparent, parent, stepparent, adopted parent, sibling, child, stepchild, adopted child, or grandchild of the person who conveyed the parcel to said individual) for their primary residence may be permitted as an exception to the density provisions contained in L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2, and such family member may be permitted to develop a single family residence on a smaller lot provided that any such development must be consistent with the other provisions of this plan, including concurrency requirements. This exception shall apply only once to any individual.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. This provision goes beyond the exemption allowed under state law, and should be amended in the EAR-based amendments for consistency with the state statute. In addition, whether this policy overrides other density provisions beyond L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2 has been questioned and this should be clarified.

**Policy L-1.1.11:** All existing and any new potable water wellfields permitted as community water systems, where recharge potential exists, shall have a minimum 400 foot zone designated around the perimeter of each such well within which landfills, mines, the storage, handling or processing of materials on the Florida Substance List or other restricted substances, agricultural chemicals, petroleum products, hazardous or toxic materials or waste, medical waste, pesticides, feedlots or other commercial animal facilities, wastewater treatment plants, percolation ponds and similar facilities, excavation of waterways or drainage facilities which intersect the water table and other noxious uses or activities which might impact the quality and quantity of potable water resources are prohibited (see Policy 9.1.1 of the Aquifer Recharge sub-element of the County Comprehensive Plan for additional wellfield protection standards).

This policy should be strengthened in the EAR-based amendments.

**Policy L-1.1.12:** The County shall enlist the cooperation of the NFWFMD to identify hydrologic cones of influence. Upon identification, maps of these areas shall be adopted as an amendment to the comprehensive plan. The wellfield protection measures set out in Policy 9.1.1 in the Aquifer Recharge sub-element of the County Comprehensive Plan will then be applied to the area within the cone of influence.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy L-1.1.13:** The County shall require development to provide adequate parking based on professionally accepted standards. The LDRs, adopted by the statutory deadline, shall include standards for parking lot design and access management, including shared driveways, in order to promote safe traffic flow consistent with the access management policies in the Traffic Circulation Element.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Objective L-1.2: Availability of Public Facilities**

Development orders and permits for future development shall be issued only if the public facilities necessary to meet the level of service standards are available concurrent with the impacts of the development. The land development regulations will ensure that there is suitable land available for needed utility facilities.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy L-1.2.1:** Upon the adoption of the Land Development Code by the statutory deadline, no development orders or permits shall be issued that would result in a reduction of the level of service below the standards adopted in the Walton County Comprehensive Plan.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy L-1.2.2:** Local utility services necessary to provide essential utility services to a neighborhood area may be sited in any land use district subject to the location criteria in the Land Development Code. Region-serving public facilities may be sited in appropriate areas, such as the light industrial and institutional land use districts.

This policy has functioned as intended.

### **Objective L-1.3: Historic Resources**

Site plans for new development shall be evaluated for identification of historic resources based on a professionally acceptable methodology. In cooperation with the Heritage Societies, complete a survey of historically significant sites and structures by 1995. Upon completion of the comprehensive survey, develop procedures for the protection of the identified significant sites and structures. Adopt interim measures to protect the historic sites and structures on the Florida Master Site File. Within South Walton County, the County shall protect the historic and archaeological assets of South Walton by identifying such resources, providing regulatory procedures and mechanisms, and incorporating them as a part of the economic development strategy.

This policy has functioned as intended, and, as discussed in the EAR text, the county has a GIS system in place to allow this policy to be implemented.

**Policy L-1.3.1:** By March 1, 1993, submit a grant application to the State Division of Historic Resources for funding of a matching archaeological site survey grant and a matching historic building survey grant to evaluate County sites on the Florida Master Site File, identify new sites, both structural and archaeological, and establish areas of historical site potential.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the grant application.

**Policy L-1.3.2:** In cooperation with the Heritage Societies of Walton County, a survey of historically significant sites and structures shall be completed by 1995.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the survey.

**Policy L-1.3.3:** Site plans for new development will be evaluated for identification of historic resources based on professionally acceptable methodology. Upon completion of the comprehensive survey, interim measures to protect the historic sites and structures on the Florida Master Site File shall be adopted.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the survey, and the county GIS evaluation process discussed in the EAR text.

**Policy L-1.3.4:** Upon the completion of a survey of historic properties, adopt an ordinance to preserve the significant historic sites and structures identified in the survey. The ordinance should ensure that the alteration or rehabilitation of historic properties does not undermine or obscure the historically significant features of the site.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the survey and adoption of the ordinance.

**Policy L-1.3.5:** Significant historical and archaeological sites, including but not limited to, sites on the Florida Master Site File, shall be protected by implementing the following:

1. After the identification and evaluation of the County's historic resources following the grant surveys, the County shall determine which structures or archaeological sites are deemed significant as judged in part by the criteria used during the surveys and adopt by resolution a local historic register and a map of designated sites.
2. As part of all site plan evaluations, County staff shall identify whether or not the proposed construction activity and/or final development would disturb a site listed on the Florida Master Site File and/or on the County Register. If so, the developer shall be notified and shall, in turn, notify the Florida Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation, Compliance Review Section and shall enter a binding agreement with the County in which the developer agrees to comply with the recommended course of action or mitigation requested by the Division prior to the development order being issued.
3. All developers shall affirm that they have notified the construction manager of the potential for artifact discoveries within the County. In the event of the discovery of artifacts of potential historical or archaeological significance during construction, the construction manager shall immediately suspend all disruptive activity within a fifty (50) foot radius<sup>10</sup> of the site of discovery and report the suspected finding(s) to the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, Bureau of Historic Preservation, Compliance Review Section and to the developer. From the date of notification, construction shall be suspended for a period of up to one-hundred-twenty (120) days to allow evaluation of the site and mitigation if necessary. The developer shall comply with the recommended course of action or mitigation requested by the Division and notify in writing the County Building Official of the action or mitigation requested.

Policy L-1.3.5(3), was amended by Ordinance 2005-36 to increase the required buffer from twenty-five feet to fifty feet and to incorporate the map series of Historic Sites for Policy L-1.3.5(1)..

**Policy L-1.3.6:** The criteria for evaluating historic resources as significant shall include but not be limited to the following adapted from the "Criteria for Listing" of the National Register of Historical Places:

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<sup>10</sup> The required buffer was increased from twenty-five feet to fifty feet by ordinance number 2005-36.

1. That the resource be associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history; or
2. That the resource be associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
3. That the resource embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction (e.g., historic district); or
4. That the resource yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.
5. Guidelines for evaluation and assessment of historical resources shall be based on but not limited to National Register Bulletin 15 (Guidelines for Applying National Register Criteria for Evaluation), the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Architectural and Engineering Documentation, and the Historic Preservation Compliance Review Program of the Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources, in particular Chapter 4, Standards for Conducting, Reporting, and Reviewing Archaeological and Historic Site Assessment Survey Activities.

This comprehensive plan policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy L-1.3.7:** The County shall encourage Heritage Societies of Walton County, and other interested participants, to develop a historic component to the tourism attractiveness of South Walton.

1. Develop a specific historic action plan.
2. Associate historic and archaeological structures on sites with the greenways network.
3. Prepare a "walking tour" or "historic trek" as a part of the proposed interpretive network.

This comprehensive plan policy has functioned as intended, as discussed further in other sections of this report.

**Objective L-1.4: Reduction of Blight & Non-Conforming Uses**

The County shall reduce instances of blight by 20 percent by the year 2000. Within North Walton County, landscaped buffers shall be required between all future developments to ensure compatibility of adjacent land uses. Nonconforming land uses shall not be expanded, and provisions for amortization of billboards shall be included.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the county's efforts to reduce blight and to reflect the county's future plans in this area. It

should also reflect that amortization of billboards is no longer an allowable procedure under Florida Statutes.

**Policy L-1.4.1:** By June 30, 1997, the County will inventory forty (40) percent of the housing stock to identify substandard units that are blighted. For each of the next three (3) years, an additional twenty (20) percent of the County's housing stock will be inventoried to identify substandard units. By June 30, 1997, the County will develop criteria and a numerical scoring system to determine the housing stock in need of conservation, rehabilitation, or demolition. The County will reduce instances of blight through a demolition program that will eliminate the number of vacant, dilapidated structures by twenty (20) percent and through the use of County funds and state or federal grants for the rehabilitation and redevelopment of blighted areas.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the county's inventory and its future plans in this area.

**Policy L-1.4.2:** Nonconforming land uses shall be governed by the following principles:

1. A nonconforming use cannot be expanded;
2. A nonconforming use which is discontinued for more than six (6) months may not be reestablished;
3. A nonconforming use which suffers damage of 50 percent or more of its fair market value may not be reestablished;
4. A nonconforming use which suffers damage of 50 percent or less of its fair market value to its pre-damage footprint and conditions;
5. Single-family homes existing as of the date of adoption of this ordinance are considered to be conforming uses not subject to be provisions of this policy; however, any redevelopment must meet all plan requirements. In addition, ordinary repair and maintenance of nonconforming uses is permitted.
6. Nonconforming billboards, within specified areas such as scenic corridors, shall be subject to amortization over a seven (7) year period, and these provisions shall be included in the LDR's, Sections 7.08.00 (Non-Conforming Signs) and 8.00.00 (Hardship Relief).

This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the county's efforts to reduce blight and to reflect the county's future plans in this area. It should also reflect that amortization of billboards is no longer an allowable procedure.

#### **Objective L-1.5: Protection of Coastal Resources**

Consistent with the recommendations of the Northwest Florida Coast Resource Management Plan and with the policies of this Comprehensive Plan for Walton County, Coastal Resources shall be protected. The County shall protect,

conserve or enhance coastal wetlands, coastal dune lakes, living marine resources, remaining coastal barriers, and wildlife habitats.

**Policy L-1.5.1:** The Northwest Florida Coast Resource Management Plan recommends the establishment of a coastal protection overlay zone. The County hereby adopts such a coastal protection overlay zone which extends seaward of the landward toe of the primary dune ridge or, where the toe cannot be determined, fifty feet (50') landward of the crest of the primary dune or twenty-five feet (25') landward of the top of the higher bluff regions where no primary dune exists. In this zone, the following shall apply:

1. No motor-driven vehicles are permitted to be driven on dunes with the exception of emergency vehicles responding to an emergency.
2. No activities shall be permitted which create erosion of dune or the dune system. Development within the coastal protection zone shall be limited to elevated boardwalks and other approved fences or structures that will enhance and protect the dune system. Natural dune vegetation within the overlay zone shall be disturbed only to the extent necessary to construct these boardwalks and related structures; however, in no case may more than 10 percent of the existing vegetation or dune be disturbed. All boardwalks and any other constructed features will be constructed to allow potential animal movement and to maintain density and vigor of vegetation and to prevent blowouts. FDEP Standards and Regulations shall apply to such construction.
3. The County's land development regulations shall include detailed design standards for all construction within the zone to ensure minimal disruption of the dune system. If these regulations render a property owner unable to build a single-family dwelling unit on an existing lot of record as of the date of plan adoption (December 14, 1990) that lies wholly within the zone, then the owner shall be allowed to construct a single-family residential dwelling unit, providing that the owner complies with all permit requirements of the FDEP and limits the extent of disturbance to the minimum area necessary to accommodate the dwelling unit and access driveway.
4. "Dune vegetation" shall be defined as all natural communities defined as "Coastal Uplands" by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Guide to Natural Communities of Florida (1990), including Beach Dune, Coastal Berm, Coastal Grassland, and Coastal Strand vegetation.

**This comprehensive plan policy has functioned as intended, but may need technical amendments as part of the EAR-based amendments.**

**Policy L-1.5.2:** The County shall not approve any construction seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line, including construction of coastal or shore

protection structures, until an applicant has received all necessary permits for such construction from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and from any other state or federal agency with permitting authority over such construction. The County shall issue no development order or permit for construction on a new parcel (that is, a parcel created after January 5, 1993) if such new parcel lies entirely seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line. All such development shall be consistent with policies as defined in Policies C.3.2.2, C.3.2.7, C.3.3.1, C.4.1.3 and C.4.2.1- 4.2.6.1 and C.4.3.2 and Policy 19.2.1 of the Walton County Capital Improvement Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

This comprehensive plan policy should be amended to recognize that a FDEP permit for construction seaward of the coastal construction control line requires a letter from the county stating that the proposed construction would not violate the Walton County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. The plan should provide criteria for when those letters are and are not appropriate.

#### **Objective L-1.6: Natural Resource Protection**

Site specific development shall be consistent with the Future Land Use Map and shall be coordinated with the topographic and soil conditions and natural resources on the site, with the availability of facilities and services, and with the protection of natural resources adjacent to the site. On-site provision of wastewater and drainage facilities shall also be responsive to natural resource conditions. Silviculture activities are to be conducted in a manner compatible with the need to protect, conserve, and appropriately use natural resources associated with wetlands and surface waters.

**Policy L-1.6.1:** The County's land development regulations shall be revised to be consistent with the resource protection standards in the Comprehensive Plan and shall address the protection of:

1. Beaches and dunes (Future Land Use Element Policies L-1.5.1, L-1.5.2 and Conservation/Coastal Zone Policies C-4.4.1-4.4.8).
2. Floodplains (Future Land Use Element Policies L-1.1 and L-1.2; Drainage Sub-Element Policies I-4.4.1 and Conservation/Coastal Zone Policies C- 3.2.3).
3. Wetlands (Future Land Use Policies L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2 and Conservation/Coastal Zone Policy C-3.2.3).
4. Shorelines (Policy C-4.1.1 and C-4.1.2).
5. Soil erosion and sedimentation control (Conservation/Coastal Zone Policies C-2.1.1, C.2.1.2, C-3.2.5, C-4.7.1, C-4.7.2 and C-4.7.3.)
6. Coastal dune lakefronts (Conservation/Coastal Zone Policy C-3.2.8).

This comprehensive plan policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy L-1.6.2:** The County will limit the disturbance of the natural topography by requiring that development be clustered on the portion of the site with least slope and by requiring that structures and roads be designed to maintain the natural topography to the maximum extent feasible. No construction or disturbance will be allowed in the natural outlet from a coastal dune lake. A buffer area of not less than fifty (50) feet of vegetated area will be left undisturbed along either side of the natural outlet from the lake.

This comprehensive plan policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy L-1.6.3:** Applications for Development Approval (ADA) for sites to be served by an on-site wastewater treatment system and located in areas identified in the soils map included in the County's Geographic Information System (GIS) as belonging to a soils series that poses moderate to severe limitations to development shall provide a detailed soils analysis that indicates soils suitability for construction and use of septic tanks and absorption fields. Development shall be clustered on the portion of site posing the fewest restrictions, based on the characteristics of the soils of the site. The site soils analysis shall be done in coordination with the Soil Conservation Service and the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. If the Board of County Commissioners, in coordination with SCS and HRS, finds that the soils are unsuitable for septic tanks, an aerobic system or other suitable alternative on-site wastewater treatment system shall be required.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Because of agency name changes, a text amendment is required to change the "Soil Conservation Service (SCS)" to the "Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)" and the "Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS)" to the Department of Health (DOH)".

**Policy L-1.6.4:** All development must conform to the level of service standards for drainage adopted in this plan (Drainage Policy I-4.1.1). By the statutory deadline for the adoption of land development regulations, the stormwater provisions of the Walton County Land Development Code shall be reviewed and revised (if necessary) to ensure consistency with the Northwest Florida Coast Resource Management Plan and the Drainage Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Development Code may be amended to identify provisions for conventional drainage. The Land Development Code may be waived if alternatives can be provided, such as elevated housing, or the use of low pressure access vehicles and/or open-grate parking slabs, and drainage requirements are not required.

## **Objective L-1.7: Compatibility of Adjacent Land Uses**

The compatibility of adjacent land uses will be ensured through the use of natural and man-made buffers.

**Policy L-1.7.1:** Ensure compatibility of adjacent agricultural and nonagricultural land uses and protection of the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the County by requiring buffers between the two. A buffer must be established between any new subdivision and active agricultural lands adjacent to such subdivision.

1. The purpose of the buffer is to protect the agricultural land use from the more intensive residential and/or commercial land uses associated with the subdivision. The buffer must function to:
  - a. Screen each land use, one from the other;
  - b. Provide protection to the nonresidential land uses from normal agricultural operations that may create nuisances and other adverse impacts, such as odors, noise, smoke, vibration, chemical spray, glare, or dust;
  - c. Provide protection to the agricultural land from intrusive activities of residential land uses, such as trespass, pets, vehicles, and noise; and
  - d. Minimize or eliminate any incompatibility between the uses so that the uses may be considered compatible and so that the long term continuance of both uses is not threatened by the negative impacts of adjacent land uses upon each other.
2. Buffers shall be a landscaped strip along parcel boundaries and shall serve as an attractive boundary of the parcel or land use and shall include landscaping and site barriers. Buffers shall be at least 50 feet in width; however, during the site plan approval process the County may require buffers larger than the minimum established in this policy, if deemed necessary to ensure the compatibility of adjacent land uses.

This plan policy should be clarified to specify that buffers are intended to be cumulative; that is, each property owner must provide the prescribed buffer on their property, without regard to the buffer being provided by adjacent properties. This policy should also clarify whether the buffer is from the existing land use or the future land use, and that buffers are required even when the adjacent property is undeveloped.

**Policy L-1.7.2:** Buffers will be created between development and environmentally sensitive areas, as specified in the Conservation/Coastal Zone Element Policy C-3.2.1, including wetlands, water bodies such as lakes and streams, dunes, coastal dune lakes, and wildlife habitat areas.

This policy needs to better define environmentally sensitive areas, and note that all property designated as conservation is considered environmentally sensitive.

1. The purpose of the buffer is to protect natural resources from the activities and impacts of development. The buffer should function to:
  - a. Provide protection to the natural resources from intrusive activities and impacts of development such as trespassing, pets, vehicles, noise, lights, and stormwater runoff.
  - b. Minimize the negative impacts of the uses upon each other or, preferably, to eliminate by the buffer such that the long-term existence and viability of the natural resources, including wildlife populations, are not threatened by such impacts and activities. Any incompatibility between the uses is eliminated and the uses may be considered compatible.
2. Buffers shall include:
  - a. Native species plant material, preferably xeriscape in nature, that is wildlife friendly.
  - b. Disallowing the use of noxious vegetation or trees.
3. The County shall amend its landscape ordinance to specify a list of acceptable xeriscape plant materials to be used and a list of noxious plant material to be prohibited in South Walton.
4. The buffer may be a landscaped natural barrier, a natural barrier or a landscaped or natural barrier supplemented with fencing or other man-made barriers, so long as the function of the buffer and intent of this policy is fulfilled. Buffers shall be at least 25 feet in width unless otherwise specified in these Goals, Objectives and Policies. However, during the site plan approval process the County may require buffers larger than the minimum established in this policy, if deemed necessary to ensure the compatibility of adjacent land uses.
5. Buffers shall emphasize vegetation that will serve as a habitat component for species likely to use the area.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address Policy L-1.7.2(3). The Land Development Code Section 5.01.01(D), Prohibited Plants is inconsistent with this policy because it does not include Mimosa (*Albizia julibrissin*). This understory tree is listed as a Category I Invasive Exotic Species with the Florida Exotic Plant Council and is included in Chapter 5.01.02(D)(2), LDC as an approved plant material for landscape buffers.

**Policy L-1.7.3:** The County shall require landscaped buffers between adjacent land uses of differing intensities to control the impact of the higher intensity use on the surrounding area. The buffer width requirements will vary depending on the difference in intensity of the adjacent uses and the type and configuration of trees, shrubs, or other materials used in the buffer, but will be no less than ten (10) feet. Trees and shrubs will be required to be planted within the buffer, based on standards as defined in the Land Development Code.

1. The buffers shall function to prevent nuisances and other adverse impacts, such as odors, noise, smoke, vibration or aesthetic value, on adjacent and nearby properties and adjacent roadways.
2. Between residential land uses, the buffer shall be at least 10 feet in width.
  - a. Between residential and commercial land uses, the buffer shall be at least 20 feet in width.
  - b. If required, the buffer between a mixed use development and any other land use shall be at least 20 feet in width.
  - c. Between industrial and any other land use, the buffer shall be at least 25 feet in width.
3. Nothing in this policy shall be interpreted to preclude the County from requiring buffers larger than the minimums established within this policy, if such requirement is deemed necessary and appropriate to ensure the compatibility of adjacent land uses.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. A buffer for conservation land use needs to be determined and included in this policy. This policy should also specify that buffers are intended to be cumulative; that is, each property owner must provide the prescribed buffer on their property, without regard to the buffer being provided by adjacent properties. This policy should also clarify whether the buffer is from the existing land use or the future land use, and that buffers are required even when the adjacent property is undeveloped.

**Policy L-1.7.4:** Compatibility shall be established between uses in a mixed use development and for commercial centers and workplaces within the Neighborhood classification. The intent of mixed use is to promote an integration of land uses, not require a separation.

1. Mixed use projects shall submit a detailed site plan to demonstrate effective alternatives to buffering, such as street alignment and orientation, screening, pedestrian continuity, building articulation, building heights at the edge of the project, and controlled window views.
2. Nothing in this policy is intended to prohibit cross access between abutting uses for automotive & pedestrian movement, if approved by the affected parties.

3. If a buffer is required between a mixed use project and an abutting property of lower intensity or density, the standards in L-1.7.3 shall apply.

This policy should clarify how buffers between mixed use projects and non-mixed use projects should be measured.

### **Objective L-1.8 Hurricane Evacuation**

Proposed developments, including proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Map, shall be coordinated with the recommendations of the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study.

This policy is in the process of being amended as part of the 06-01 amendment package.

**Policy L-1.8.1:** Proposed plan amendments which would increase densities within hurricane evacuation zones 1-7 as designated in the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study shall be subject to review and transportation impact analysis to determine their impact upon hurricane evacuation times and routes. Developments that will increase hurricane evacuation times shall be required to provide mitigation measures, such as transportation improvements, emergency van pools, and/or on-site emergency shelters. These measures must be designed to ensure no increase in evacuation times as a result of the proposed development.

**Policy L-1.8.2:** The Walton County Emergency Management Department shall be included as a technical advisor in the development review process.

**Policy L-1.8.3:** The County will improve its emergency shelter capabilities by retrofitting existing public buildings to better serve as severe weather shelters and by encouraging large scale developments to provide on-site severe weather shelters that are outside the Category One hurricane evacuation areas.

**Policy L-1.8.4:** Proposed amendments to the Future Land Use Map and to the comprehensive plan that increase residential densities and commercial intensities in South Walton County will be reviewed by the Walton County Division of Emergency Management to gauge their impacts upon the County's hurricane evacuation efforts.<sup>11</sup>

### **Objective L-1.9: Mixed-Use Areas/Land Development Procedures**

The concentration of development into mixed use areas and the preservation of the working landscape surrounding these areas is encouraged through the use of innovative land development procedures.

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<sup>11</sup> Policy L-1.8.3 and policy L-1.8.4 were amended by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-1.A.2

**Policy L-1.9.1:** The land development regulations shall include one or more of the following techniques to ensure adequate open space and well designed development: clustering of development (as described in Land Use Policies L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2); open space requirements (as described in Land Use Policies L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2); calculation of density and intensity for the gross site (as described in Land Use Policies L-1.1.1 and L-1.1.2); landscaped buffer requirements (as described in Land Use L-1.7.1-4), view preservation (as described in Land Use L-1.9.3), and preservation of coastal vegetation and dune lakes (as described in Conservation/Coastal Zone Policies C-2.3.1 and C-3.2.1).

**Policy L-1.9.2:** The County may nominate scenic corridors that also become eligible for State and federal designation as well, as cited in the Transportation Element, T-1.8.1.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It is not relevant to mixed use areas or land development procedures.

**Policy L-1.9.3:** The County establishes and approves Route 30-A as a Scenic Corridor in order to preserve visual access from the roadway to the Gulf of Mexico. The designation establishes the following, which shall be incorporated into the Land Development Code:

1. A 20' Scenic Corridor setback from the right-of-way, is required, and the native vegetation shall be maintained in the Scenic Corridor. The Mixed Use Centers depicted on the Future Land Use Map are not subject to the additional 20' setback.

This policy is confusing and should be deleted.

2. Walls are prohibited along the entire roadway.
3. Building placement standards and height limitations are to ensure that views will not be blocked.
4. More stringent sign and landscape requirements shall apply, including a prohibition against billboards.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It is not relevant to mixed use areas or land development procedures. Walton County intends to create a section of the comprehensive plan specifically addressing scenic corridors.

**Policy L-1.9.4:** The County establishes US 98 from Okaloosa County line to the Bay County line and US 331 from US 98 to the Choctawhatchee Bay as a Scenic Corridor to protect natural features and to promote economic development. This Scenic Corridor designation requires:

1. Adoption of a set of design guidelines for:
  - Special setbacks of up to 30', as defined in the guidelines
  - Architecture
  - Signage

- Landscaping
- Site Development Standards

These guidelines shall apply only to commercial properties abutting US 98, except for signage, which applies to all properties.

2. The County shall appoint a Design Review Board, made up of affected property owners and design professionals to administer the guidelines.
3. The guidelines and procedures shall be adopted as a part of the Land Development Code.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It is not relevant to mixed use areas or land development procedures.

**Policy L-1.9.5:** In mixed use areas, business or commercial uses shall be prohibited on interior residential subdivision streets, unless said uses are a part of an approved Neighborhood Plan or approved development plan within the applicable Neighborhood classification as specified in Policy L- 1.1.6 of this Plan. Village Mixed Use Centers are exempt from this policy.

**Policy L-1.9.6:** Within any residential area, a home occupation shall be allowed in a bona fide dwelling unit provided that the home occupation is clearly incidental and subordinate to the use of the property for residential purposes, does not change the outside appearance of the residential unit, does not occupy more than twenty-five (25) percent of the total floor area of the residence, does not result in an increase in expected traffic, and does not create interference to neighboring properties.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It is not relevant to mixed use areas or land development procedures. It should also be amended to reflect allowable home occupational uses in rural areas.

**Objective L-1.10: Protection of Wetlands**

Walton County shall protect and conserve wetlands. Alteration shall not result in an overall net loss of wetlands within the County. The measure of achievement for this policy shall be the amount of remaining wetland acres and the amount of restored and created wetlands of the same ecological type, productivity and function as compared to the number of acres existing as of the date of plan adoption.

**Policy L1.10.1:** For purposes of this Plan the term “wetlands” means the same as defined at §373.019(22), F.S.

**Policy L-1.10.2:** The County shall maintain a wetlands inventory overlay in the Geographic Information System (GIS), including those areas determined to be jurisdictional by appropriate regulatory agencies having authority to designate areas as wetlands and which exercise jurisdiction over the wetlands so designated (e.g., the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers). The wetlands GIS Layer shall be amended as necessary to include or exclude any areas added or removed or determined to be jurisdictional or non-jurisdictional by the above agencies.

**Policy L-1.10.3:** The specific boundaries of wetlands shall be determined through site-specific field inspections conducted by an applicant for a development order or development permit and shall be subject to review and approval by the County before the issuance of a development order or development permit. It shall be the responsibility of an applicant to submit documentation, exhibits, studies, etc., for the purpose of establishing the boundaries of wetland areas.

**Policy L-1.10.4:** The County will undertake a review of wetlands data and analysis regarding more environmentally significant wetland areas based on type, values, functions, sizes, conditions and locations of wetlands. Based on this review of analysis and data, the County will identify the more environmentally significant wetlands which have not been previously recognized and incorporated in the GIS data base.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. There is no clear definition of more environmentally significant wetland areas in the comprehensive plan. All wetlands considered more environmentally significant need to be clearly defined and identified and incorporated accurately in the GIS data base. A definition similar to “environmentally sensitive lands”, Rule 9J-5.003(41), Definitions, needs to be included in the Future Land Use section.

**Policy L1.10.5:** The County will review its existing process for issuing development orders and approval of future land use amendments to clarify and strengthen, if necessary, the specific use of wetlands data and analysis, including any new significant wetlands data resulting from Policy L-1.10.4 above, to ensure protection of the more environmentally significant wetlands.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. There are no sections in Land Development Code that strengthen the protection of more environmentally significant wetlands. Wetlands considered high quality need clarified protection standards adopted using the Florida Natural Areas Inventories State Ranking System as a guideline.

**Policy L1.10.6:** Development within a wetland shall conform to the following criteria.

1. All permits from an agency with jurisdiction shall be approved prior to the issuance of a final development order.
2. All new development or redevelopment shall be designed to avoid impacts on wetlands. During the site plan approval process, the County will ensure that the wetlands are avoided to the maximum extent practical. Wetland impacts, where unavoidable, shall require a permit from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as described in Conservation, Coastal Zone Policy C 3.2.2. When wetland impacts are properly avoided and properly permitted by state and federal agencies having jurisdiction the following are allowable uses:
  - a. Uses consistent with the underlying land use as depicted on the FLUM but densities and intensities may be limited in order to ensure protection of the more environmentally significant wetlands.
  - b. Access to the site.
  - c. Internal traffic circulation, where other alternatives do not exist, or for purposes of public safety.
  - d. Utility transmission and collection lines.
  - e. Pretreated stormwater management.
3. Wetland setbacks shall be required as specified in Conservation, Coastal Zone Policy C-3.2.1 (c).
4. No parcel shall be created after December 14, 1990 which consists entirely of wetlands, unless accompanied by a deed restriction which prohibits future development on the parcel.
5. Wetlands crossings that connect dry upland areas are permissible provided the natural water flow between wetlands is not interrupted.
6. All new development or redevelopment shall be designed to avoid impacts on wetlands. On lots or parcels where locally significant environmental resources exist and resulting development restrictions apply, owners or developers may use or be required to use the following innovative land development techniques.
7. The concept of clustering involves allowing development on the most suitable parts of a development site while avoiding environmentally sensitive areas of the site. In order for clustering to be allowed, the following criteria must be met:
  - a. The resource to be protected must be clearly identified.
  - b. Clustering must be limited to a single lot, piece or parcel of property rather than multiple parcels.
  - c. In order to determine the allowable development on a site, the number of units allowed for the whole parcel must be determined, subject to the availability of supporting facilities and services such as water and sewer, road capacity,

hurricane evacuation, fire protection, and public schools. This number of units will then be allowed on the portion of the parcel that remains after environmental resources are perpetually protected.<sup>12</sup>

8. To prevent all beneficial use of the property from being precluded due to wetland restrictions, i.e. there are no buildable upland areas and wetland impacts are not permitted by federal or state agencies, then the parcel shall be allowed to develop at a gross density of one (1) residential dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres.

The statement in Policy L1.10.6(2)(a), is in conflict with the Land Development Code. There is no definition for more environmentally significant wetlands in the comprehensive plan. A clear definition of more environmentally significant wetlands needs to be defined and include in this section.

**Objective L-1.11: Signs**

Sign regulations shall be established to complement the requirements of the building and electrical codes adopted by the County, including special provisions for Scenic Corridors.

**Policy L-1.11.1:** The Land Development Regulations shall establish guidelines for signs which address the following:

- a. General Provisions
- b. Exempt Signs
- c. Prohibited Signs
- d. General Regulations
- e. Permissible Temporary Signs
- f. Permanent Outdoor Advertising Signs
- g. Measurement Determinations
- h. Design, Construction, and Location Standards

All signs, including their supports, braces, guys and anchors, electrical parts and lighting fixtures, and all painted and display areas, shall be maintained in accordance with the building and electrical codes adopted by the County, and shall present a neat and clean appearance.

**Policy L-1.11.2:** For Scenic Corridors, the sign guidelines shall be amended to prohibit billboards, including an amortization period, and shall have more restrictive sign requirements based on the intent of the Scenic Corridor. A specific set of sign guidelines shall be prepared for each designated Scenic Corridor.

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<sup>12</sup> Ordinance number 2000-31 inserted the language concerning supporting facilities. See text amendment 00-2.A.2.

This policy needs to be updated to reflect that amortization of billboards is no longer allowed.

**Policy L-1.11.3:** General Principles for Future Land Use Map and FLUM Amendments in North Walton County. The evaluation of land use suitability in North Walton County shall be based in part, on the following principles.

1. Retain rural densities within major floodplain/wetland corridors, and in the major North-County wetland “bays”.
2. Do not increase densities within major undeveloped portions of the Coastal High-Hazard Area along Choctawhatchee Bay, particularly, where these areas are shown in FGFWFC Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas; reduce densities in these areas where there are large vacant parcels remaining (i.e., 40 or more acres).
3. Retain rural densities within areas that have concentrations of listed species, according to FGFWFC maps, or other professionally acceptable, competent, reliable data, particularly in Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas.
4. Retain rural densities in order to maintain the continuity of a “system” of interconnected lower-density environmentally sensitive areas, so that habitat areas do not become fragmented over time.
5. Prevent development extending along road corridors from bisecting and isolating habitat areas—or major wildlife corridors where these wildlife corridors cross roadways.
6. Ensure that sufficient upland areas adjacent to wetlands and floodplains are preserved, in order to protect a diversity of connected habitat types, and to protect species that utilize both wetland/floodplain and upland habitat, as well as listed species that predominately use upland habitat.
7. Direct development to areas that have traditionally been cleared, inhabited, and subdivided, plus a corridor of uncleared land around these areas.
8. Increase densities in the vicinity of DeFuniak Springs and other municipalities, to reflect actual development patterns, and to take advantage of water and sewer availability, on land that does not contain significant listed species habitat or corridors, or significant wetland or flood hazard areas.
9. Allowing FLUM densities to conform as much as practicable, to the existing pattern of parcels and lots, and existing and vested development.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs.

**Policy L-1.11.4:** Residential developments located in Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas identified by the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission can achieve a 100% residential density increase in allowable

residential densities if they cluster. This opportunity for density bonuses applies to the Estate Residential, General Agriculture, and Large Scale Agriculture future land use categories. To receive a density increase, a wildlife biologist will have to determine where the beset wildlife habitat exists, and development will have to be clustered away from the identified habitat. Within one year of adoption of this amendment, the County will amend its Land Development Code to address deed restrictions and/or conservation easements affecting properties using this clustering provision. The county will also establish a method in its Land Development Code for allocating different bonus percentages based on affected land use categories and the threatened and endangered species the clustering is designed to benefit.<sup>13</sup>

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs.

**Policy L-1.11.5** Future schools shall be an allowable use in land use categories but the Industrial, Private Conservation, and Conservation land use categories. Land use categories in which future schools may be located include Institutional, Large Scale Agriculture, General Agriculture, Estate Residential, Rural Low Density, Rural Residential, Neighborhood Planning Areas, Coastal Center, Coastal Center Mixed Use, Village Mixed Use Center, and Town Center. The Land Development Code may include standards for schools, consistent with the local government comprehensive plan.<sup>14</sup>

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs. A similar policy should be adopted in the public school facilities element.

**Policy L-1.11.6** Public schools are to be located in agricultural land use categories when no feasible site exists in nonagricultural categories, due to prohibitive land costs or location of available sites, and when necessary to service student populations in rural areas that are mainly located in agricultural areas. If no feasible site exists in nonagricultural categories, then a public school should be located in a portion of the agricultural FLUM category that is as close as possible to urban residential areas, and the land use on the site should be changed subsequently to an "Institutional" or other appropriate FLUM category. The local comprehensive plan intends for future schools to be sited as closely to urban residential areas as practical, preferably within walking and/or bicycle distance of the primary residential areas to be served. Public schools are to be located in agricultural land use categories only when no feasible site exists in nonagricultural categories, or when necessary to serve student populations in rural areas mainly located in agricultural areas.

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<sup>13</sup> Policy L-1.11.4 was amended by Ordinance 2002-14 adopted August 6, 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Policies L-1.11.5, L-1.11.6, and L-1.11.7 were added by ordinance 1999-17, adopted October 12, 1999.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs. A similar policy should be adopted in the public school facilities element.

**Policy L-1.11.7** When considering the acquisition and establishment of public facilities such parks, libraries, and communities centers, then County shall, to the greatest extent possible, select a location and/or design the facility in such a way that collocation of the facility with a public school is either achieved with an existing public school, or that the facility can be retrofitted for collation with a future public school.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs. A similar policy should be adopted in the public school facilities element.

**Policy L-1.11.8** The Inlet Beach Neighborhood Plan is hereby incorporated into the Walton County Comprehensive Plan as “Appendix B: The Inlet Beach Neighborhood Plan.”

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs.

**Policy L-1.11.9** Commercial development along U.S. 98 and C-30A that is allowed by the Inlet Beach Neighborhood Plan shall adhere strictly to the U.S. 98/U.S. 331 Scenic Corridor guidelines and to the C-30A Scenic Corridor guidelines.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs.

**Policy L-1.11.10** Residential developments located in Strategic Habitat Conservation Areas identified by the Florida Game & Freshwater Fish Commission can achieve a 100% residential density increase in allowable residential densities, if they cluster. This opportunity for density bonuses applies to the Estate Residential, General Agriculture, & Large Scale Agriculture future land use categories. To receive a density increase, a wildlife biologist will have to determine where the best wildlife habitat exists, and development will have to be clustered away from the identified habitat. Within one year of adoption of this amendment, the County will amend its Land Development Code to address deed restrictions and /or conservation easements affecting properties using this clustering provision. The County will also establish a method in its Land Development Code for allocating different bonus percentages based on affected land use categories & the threatened & endangered species the clustering is designed to benefit.

This policy should be moved to support an objective more appropriate to its subject matter. It has no relevance to signs.

## DENSITY BONUS POINTS

### PRIMARY CATEGORY

#### ITEM            POINTS

##### Habitat Protection

##### Enhancement

- 3 points for protecting or maintaining a known wildlife corridor.
- 3 points for an innovative mitigation, protection or enhancement measure.
- 2 points for reforestation with plant species specific to the site & known for habitat quality.

##### Right-of-Way Dedication (Arterial or Major Collector)

- 2 points for every 1/5 acre platted & deeded to County.

##### Greenway Corridors

- 1 point for every 1/5 acre provided.

##### Scenic Corridors

- 2 points for reestablishing native vegetation in the 20' setback along C30-

##### A.

- 2 points for residential projects to meet the Parkway landscape requirements of the US 98 Scenic Corridor Guidelines.

##### Affordable Housing

- 10% of project = 10 points
- 10-20% of project = 4 points (for increment)
- 20-30% of project = 3 points (for increment)
- 30-40% of project = 2 points (for increment)
- Each additional 10% = 1 point to a maximum of 25 points total.

##### Pervious Surface Coverage:

- 25% of paved area = 4 points
- 50% of paved area = 5 points
- 75% of paved area = 10 points

##### Recycling Station

- 2 points for a station

##### Energy Efficiency

- 2 points for site planning to maximize solar orientation.
- 2 points for employing the Florida BEERS Rating Guide and System and meeting the minimum standards.

3 points for improving the average efficiency by 15%.  
 3 points for improving the average efficiency by 25%.

**Beach Access/Parking**

10 points for providing the required minimum beach access and reserved parking spaces.

**SECONDARY CATEGORIES**

<b>ITEM</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
Civic Use, Open Space Provisions in excess of minimums *	1 point per 1/2 acre; maximum of 5 points.
Grid Pattern	2 points
Alleys	3 points
Bike Path (Connector)	2 points
Vertical Mixed Use	3 points
Water Conservation - plants	1 point - 50% drought tolerant
	2 points - 75% drought tolerant plants
	3 points - 100% drought tolerant plants
	2 points - Use of retention water for irrigation.
Sidewalks on both sides of streets .	2 points
On-street parking (pervious) .	2 points
Community Garden .	1 point
Community Compost Area .	1 point

**DEFINITIONS**

- Habitat Protection & Enhancement - Points shall be awarded for wildlife corridors as identified in the GIS; for special, innovative habitat mitigation measures designed to protect, attract or accommodate wildlife; and for reforestation with native species specific to the site and immediate environs.
- Right-of-Way Dedication – Density bonuses shall be awarded for land dedicated to the County for major and minor arterial roads and major collector roads that are part of the South Walton County Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element.
- Greenway Corridors – Points shall be awarded for dedication of greenway segments that transverse a site, as identified in the Park and Recreation Element.

- Scenic Corridors – Points shall be awarded for enhancement to the C30-A Corridor and for residential projects to meet the landscape requirements of the US 98 Scenic Corridor.
- Affordable Housing — Density bonuses shall be awarded for affordable housing. “Affordable housing” shall be defined in the Walton County Land Development Code, & its definition shall be consistent with s. 420.0004, F.S.
- Pervious Surface Coverage -- Density bonuses shall be awarded for use of pervious paving applications for parking areas, on-street parking & roadways.
- Energy Efficiency -- Points shall be awarded for solar orientation to maximize solar exposure; for employing the Florida Building Energy Efficiency System (BEERS) and meeting or exceeding the minimum standards.
- Beach Access/Parking - Density bonus points shall be awarded for the dedication of a minimum six- (6) foot-wide beach access to the Gulf; at least five (5) pervious parking spaces shall be provided, subject to approval and management by the TDC.
- Civic Use/Open Space Provisions in excess of minimums - Density bonus shall be awarded for open space land area that is common open space (open to public use) that is not covered with roads, buildings or impervious surface. This includes stormwater retention facilities, parks, scenic corridors, undisturbed wetlands, floodplain, greenways, golf courses, civic elements and common areas between attached multifamily buildings.
- Water Conservation - Density bonuses shall be awarded for projects that submit landscape plans that include the landscape material that is on the list of drought-tolerant plants; use of retention water for irrigation.
- Grid Pattern - Local streets forming traditional, 4-sided blocks. The corners of the blocks are roughly 90 degree angles.
- Bike Paths - Density bonuses shall be awarded for projects that have bikeway systems within the development and that are linked to a larger system of bikeways.
- Vertical Mixed Use - Mixed Vertical Construction can only be applied in Neighborhood or Coastal Center commercial centers, and only in those areas designed for commercial uses. To qualify for points using mixed vertical construction, each building must have at least two stories and a minimum of:

- a. 33% of the floor area designated for residential uses.
- b. 33% of the floor area designated for commercial/quasi-commercial uses.

- Recycle Station - Points shall be awarded for providing an on-site recycle station, coordinated with County requirements.
- Sidewalks - Points shall be awarded for having sidewalks on both sides of the street.
- On-Street Parking - Points shall be awarded for designating on-street parking in residential areas; pervious surfaces shall be used.
- Community Garden - Points shall be awarded for providing a community garden to be used by the residents of the neighborhood. A program for maintaining the garden shall be included.
- Community Composting Area - Points shall be awarded for providing a community composting area, with the compost to be used by residents and in common area maintenance.

**BONUS POINTS WORKSHEET**

	Town Center 1	Neighborhood Planning Areas
Density by Right*	4 units per acre	4 units per acre

Density based on bonus points	Number of points			
	10 points or more	5 units per acre	10 points or more	5 units per acre
	15 points or more	6 units per acre	15 points or more	6 units per acre
	25 points or more	7 units per acre	25 points or more	7 units per acre
	35 points or more	8 units per acre	35 points or more	8 units per acre
	45 points or more	9 units per acre	45 points or more	9 units per acre
	55 points or more	10 units per acre	55 points or more	10 units per acre

\*Based on availability of central water and sewer.

## COASTAL ZONE, CONSERVATION ELEMENT

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

#### **GOAL C-1: TO PROTECT, CONSERVE, & ENHANCE WALTON COUNTY'S NATURAL FEATURES.**

##### **Objective C-1.1: Resource Protection**

Enhance resource protection by utilizing development management techniques to control potential negative impacts from development and redevelopment.

**Policy C-1.1.1:** Limit the specific impacts and cumulative impacts of development or redevelopment upon wetlands, coastal dune lakes, water quality, water quantity, wildlife habitats of listed species, living marine resources, or other natural resources through the use of site design techniques, such as clustering, elevation on pilings, setbacks, and buffering. The intent of this policy is to avoid such impact and to permit Mitigation of impacts only as a last resort.

**Policy C-1.1.2:** The exception to the above policy shall be those isolated low-zero impact cottages or dwellings that comply with the intent and letter of the regulations but which also offer exceptional ecologic incentives as a compensation for their non-consumptive access to surrounding natural system values. These incentives shall be established by a comprehensive plan amendment, prior to their utilization.

Currently, there has not been a comprehensive plan amendment adopted to establish incentives.

**Policy C-1.1.3:** The channeling of untreated runoff which does not meet the drainage level of service standard established in this plan directly into water bodies or other environmentally sensitive areas by new development or redevelopment, new roads or road-building shall be prohibited.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address:

1. Coastal dune lake quality and seasonal fluctuations
2. Consistency with Northwest Florida Water Management District requirements
3. Wetland protection and erosion control requirements of NPDES

**Policy C-1.1.4:** The County shall assist in the application of and compliance with all state and federal regulations which pertain to endangered or threatened species, and guidelines which pertain to species of special concern listed by the Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission and will provide for protection of areas known to provide habitats for these species by not issuing any

development order or development permit until proof is provided by an applicant that all necessary state and federal requirements relating to such species have been met.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. Because of agency name changes, a text amendment is required to change the “Florida Game & Fresh Water Fish Commission” to the “Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission”.

**Policy C-1.1.5:** New developments with the potential to impact the quantity or quality of natural resources will be required to obtain the necessary permits from all applicable state and/or federal agencies (Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Northwest Florida Water Management District and/or U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) prior to the authorization of a development permit by the County.

**Policy C-1.1.6:** Development and redevelopment within a floodplain shall use construction techniques which protect the planned and existing development from flood hazards, maintain the natural function of the floodplain, and wetlands natural flow functions, and minimize development impacts to natural wildlife habitats.

**Objective C-1.2: Air Quality**

There are no air quality monitoring stations located in Walton County. However, it is the County’s objective to maintain the current standards of air quality in Walton County so as to not drop below minimum standards as established by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). This shall be accomplished through land development regulations which protect air quality, adopted by the statutory deadline, and throughout intergovernmental coordination mechanisms.

**Policy C-1.2.1:** Cooperate with any local state, or federal agency programs which monitor or otherwise contribute to air quality.

**Policy C-1.2.2:** Promote the implementation of bicycle paths, walking trails, carpooling, and other alternative modes of transportation where economically feasible.

**GOAL C-2: TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY CONDITIONS IN WALTON COUNTY**

**Objective C-2.1: STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

The County shall ensure that new development and redevelopment does not increase stormwater runoff or flooding problems. The level of service standards for drainage and stormwater management shall ensure that capacity of drainage

structures for roads and other development are designed to meet facility needs. The County shall adopt land development regulations to implement the standards established herein.

**Policy C-2.1.1:** The following level of service standards for drainage and stormwater management shall apply (See also Drainage Sub-Element of Infrastructure Element):

Water Quality & Quantity

1. (a) All new residential subdivisions;
- (b) infill residential development within improved residential areas or subdivisions existing prior to the adoption of this comprehensive plan;
- (c) all multifamily residential development (including duplex, triplex and quadraplex);
- (d) all new nonresidential development (other than agricultural); and any existing use meeting the criteria of (a), (b), (c), or (d) above that proposes alterations or activities resulting in an increase in runoff shall meet the following standards:

Each development shall be responsible for storing and treating all post-development runoff which exceed pre-development runoff. All storage facilities shall be designed with sufficient capacity to accommodate all runoff in excess of the runoff which would have resulted from the site if left in its natural, undeveloped condition, provided, however, that at a minimum, the first inch of rainfall will be retained. The storage capacity of all storage facilities must be at least as strict as FDEP Chapter 17-25, F.A.C., and FDOT Chapter 14-86, F.A.C., Rules for Drainage Connections (provided at end of this section). Post-development runoff shall be released at pre-development natural runoff conditions.

2. New Agricultural Land Uses, and existing agricultural uses that propose activities resulting in an increase in runoff, which are any new agricultural use exempt from FDEP rule 17-25, F.A.C., and which drain into a surface water, canal, or stream, or where drainage enters a ditch which empties into a sinkhole, surface water or stream, shall first allow the runoff to enter a grassed swale designed to percolate 80 percent of the runoff from a three year, one-hour design storm within 72 hours after a storm event.
3. Ongoing and New Agricultural Land Uses Agricultural and Silvicultural Practices shall be consistent with Best Management Practices recommended by the USDA Soil Conservation Service and US Forestry Service. All roads created under these land uses shall use culverts to assure natural drainage features are not destroyed. Silvicultural activities shall follow the best management practices outlined in the publications titled "1993 Silviculture Best Management Practices Manual" (Florida Department of Agriculture

and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry) adopted by reference herein, and the requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, F.S.

4. To ensure state water quality standards are not violated, all new development or redevelopment activities shall provide proof of FDEP permit under Chapter 17-25, F.A.C., or proof of exemption. All stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 17-3, F.A.C.
5. For all new road construction, or improvements to existing roadways:
  - a. All drainage swales and ditches shall be designed to convey the runoff generated from a 10-year, 24-hour storm event.
  - b. For local (not classified as County roads) roadways, culverts and cross drains shall convey the runoff from a 10-year, 24 hour storm event; for county roadways, culverts and cross drains shall convey the runoff from a 25-year, 24-hour storm event.
  - c. Where Florida Department of Transportation standards are stricter for a particular roadway, they shall be the standard.
  - d. Drainage design for all new state and county road construction shall be in accordance with county and state stormwater management requirements and shall ensure compatibility with Mosquito District structure.
  - e. All stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Rule 17-3, F.A.C.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. A text amendment is needed to note the following changes to state law: “Chapter 17-25, F.A.C.” to “Chapter 62-25, F.A.C.,” “rule 17-25, F.A.C.” to “rule 62-25, F.A.C.,” Chapter 17-25, F.A.C.” to “Chapter 62-25, F.A.C.,” “Chapter 17-3, F.A.C.” to “Chapter 62-302, F.A.C.” and “Chapter 17-3, F.A.C.” to “Chapter 62-302, F.A.C.” In addition, amendments need to address

1. stormwater facility operation and maintenance as it relates to
  - a. Accessibility
  - b. Fiscal viability of maintenance entity
  - c. Constructability

- d. Interaction with the Northwest Florida Water Management District – ERP, countywide Stormwater Management Plan and Stormwater Utility requirements.
2. Coordination of flood design, water quality, operation & maintenance, stormwater quantity, and erosion control and management requirements of the following governmental entities
  - a. Florida Department of Transportation
  - b. Florida Department of Environmental Protection
  - c. Northwest Florida Water Management District
  - d. Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board
  - e. Any applicable stormwater utility

**Policy C-2.1.2:** The County shall continue existing coordination mechanisms with the South Walton Mosquito Control District towards correcting any identified drainage problems.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Design requirements to establish and improve coordination and locations of stormwater facilities to provide better access by Mosquito Control.
2. Required maintenance access along all Mosquito Control ditches in Walton County especially in the south part of the county.

**Policy C- 2.1.3:** The County through its land development regulations shall provide incentives for use of pervious pavement.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address best management practices required for functionality, proper maintenance, standard design parameters and installation practices, and standards for stormwater regulations. It should also address the use of pervious pavers, porous pavement (concrete and asphaltic), and a methodology for calculating the effective impervious surface area ratio requirements of differing land use categories.

**Objective C-2.2: Surface and Groundwater Protection**

In order to protect water quality, the County shall protect all its surface waters and ground waters from the intrusion of pollutants which would lower water quality below FDEP’s current standards. Throughout the planning period, this shall be accomplished through regulation of land uses, intergovernmental coordination mechanisms, and eliminating stormwater pollution into surface waters.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address:

1. Stormwater facility operation and maintenance as it relates to
  - a. Accessibility
  - b. Fiscal viability of maintenance entity
  - c. Constructability
2. Interaction with the Northwest Florida Water Management District – ERP, countywide Stormwater Management Plan and Stormwater Utility requirements.
3. Coordination of flood design, water quality, operation & maintenance, stormwater quantity, and erosion control and management requirements of the following governmental entities
  - a. Florida Department of Transportation
  - b. Florida Department of Environmental Protection
  - c. Northwest Florida Water Management District
  - d. Coastal Dune Lake Protection
  - e. Stormwater Utility

**Policy C- 2.2.1:** Implement the policies in the Potable Water Sub-Element relating to methods to avoid salt water intrusion of well fields, including soliciting assistance from the Northwest Water Management District.

**Policy C- 2.2.2:** Promote the collection and recycling of hazardous wastes by providing public information on programs such as Amnesty Days and the locations of approved recyclers.

An Area of Special Concern (ASC) has been established by the Northwest Florida Water Management District to protect the water resources of southern Walton County from depletion, salt water intrusion or man induced contamination, or *from any* other activity that may substantially affect the quality or quantity of the water resources. Within such area, the NWF WMD has established lower permit thresholds, management (maximum) and minimum levels, and stipulates limiting conditions as necessary to monitor, manage, and control the use of water. Walton County shall cooperate with the NFWFMD in its enforcement of regulations regarding the ASC within the County and shall regulate land use and development accordingly.

**Policy C- 2.2.3:** The County shall enforce a minimum 400 foot radius protection zone around all public potable water wellfields. Within this zone, the storage or handling of hazardous materials and wastes, landfills and sewage treatment plants shall be prohibited.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Mapping wellfield protection zone facilities for stormwater regulations
2. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements

**Policy C- 2.2.4:** The County shall enlist the cooperation of the NFWFMD to identify existing cones of influence and areas of the County that provide groundwater recharge. Upon identification, maps of these areas shall be adopted as an amendment to the comprehensive plan. Land uses that discharge substances that could infiltrate and degrade the groundwater in these areas shall be prohibited.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Mapping well field protection zone facilities for stormwater regulations
2. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements

**Policy C-2.2.5:** The County shall adopt procedures for emergency water conservation in accordance with the plans of the Northwest Florida Water Management District.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Mapping well-field protection zone facilities for stormwater regulations
2. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
3. Definition of emergency water conservation standards and needs for stormwater regulations

**Policy C-2.2.6:** The County shall coordinate with all community water systems and utilities to implement a public education program regarding various methods of water conservation at the household and small business level. This program shall focus on the south Walton County area and shall include the distribution of material to seasonal and permanent residents, as well as business and commercial operations, identifying specific water conservation measures that they should undertake.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Mapping wellfield protection zone facilities for stormwater regulations
2. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements

3. Establishing timetable for implementing educational standards for stormwater regulations

**Policy C-2.2.7:** The County shall take measures to ensure that FDEP’s surface water quality standards are not degraded through development controls and the acquisition of properties adjacent to surface water bodies. The acquisition of such properties shall include stormwater management enhancements, and where appropriate, shoreline revegetation. <sup>15</sup>

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan
3. The County shall include requirements for the use of water efficient landscaping and xeriscaping in redevelopment and new development projects county wide

**Policy C-2.2.8:** The County shall participate and coordinate with the development and implementation of the Choctawhatchee River and Bay System Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan (SWIM).

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan

**Objective C- 2.3: Coastal Dune Lakes Protection**

The County will protect, assess and maintain the water quality in the coastal dune lakes.

**Policy C-2.3.1:** A standard for lake water quality will be obtained by assessing lakes in watersheds having development and in those where housing occurs on the perimeter of the lakes. The criteria values exhibited by the cleanest lakes will be the standards for all lakes. If the County adopts a storm water utility fee, the tasks specified herein will be paid for out of the collected fees.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

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<sup>15</sup> Policies C-2.2.7 and C-2.2.8 were amended by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-1.B.1

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Coordination with the Walton County Stormwater Management Plan
3. Coordination of Coastal Dune Lake outlets and shoreline development
4. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan
5. Establishing and monitoring lake water quality standards for stormwater regulations

**Policy C-2.3.2:** The parameters and criteria used by the Florida Clean Lakes Program will be the minimum used for the coastal dune lake's program. Additional criteria may be used where they are believed to be warranted and useful in maintaining the quality of the lakes. Where the criteria exhibited by the Clean Lakes Program and by the lakes are in conflict, the stricter standard will apply.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments. The Coastal Dune Lake Advisory Board has requested that the County strengthen its efforts to protect the coastal dune lakes. The data collected by the advisory board shows changes in the baseline water quality data of some of the lakes and an increase in the presence of invasive/exotic plant species. (See appendix \_\_\_\_). In addition, the amendment should address clarification of the comprehensive plan requirements and standards to comply with the Florida Clean Lakes Program standards for stormwater regulations

**Policy C-2.3.3:** Where chemical and biological criteria are options, the biological criteria will be run in parallel with the chemical criteria for one year to compare their relative value. It is presumed that the biological criteria will integrate more variables and probably be the more sensitive of the two approaches.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan

**Policy C-2.3.4:** It is recommended that a glass slide series exposed according to standard methods be analyzed for ash free dry weight and chlorophyll as a quick test for the relative eutrophic status of the lakes.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan
3. Consistency with current levels of technology

**Policy C-2.3.5:** It is recommended that a Hester-Dendy sampler be used in concert with the glass slide sampler to compare macro invertebrate species quality among the lakes and to assess whether the primary production changes are resulting in positive or negative shifts at the primary consumer level.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan
3. Consistency with current levels of technology

**Objective C-2.4: Primary Streams Protection**

The County will protect, assess and maintain water quality in the streams passing through the areas exposed to development pressure and those that will be exposed to development pressure within 5 years.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan

**Policy C-2.4.1:** A minimum number of sampling stations will be located near the mouth of the streams of interest and one station located above the development corridor associated with U.S. Highway 98.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with NFWFMD – ERP requirements
2. Integrate the ERP standards for stormwater regulations into the Comprehensive Plan
3. Consistency with current levels of technology

4. Modify stormwater regulations governing location, methodology, and frequency of sampling station data along with responsible

**Policy C-2.4.2:** The sampling parameters and techniques for this program will be the same as those listed for lakes.

**GOAL C-3: TO COOPERATE WITH AREA GOVERNMENTS IN EFFORTS TO REDUCE POLLUTION OF THE CHOCTAWHATCHEE BAY AND TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES.**

**Objective C-3.1: Choctawhatchee Bay**

The County will participate with Okaloosa County in programs to minimize pollution of Choctawhatchee Bay.

**Policy C-3.1.1:** New seawalls and upland retaining walls along Choctawhatchee Bay for existing lots of record in residential subdivisions shall be permitted in accordance with shoreline stabilization programs for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Newly platted subdivision lots along Choctawhatchee Bay must be of sufficient depth to meet the 50' buffering requirement of Policy C- 3.2.1.b. These newly platted lots are allowed to have upland retaining walls built landward of the mean high water line; however, new seawalls and new bulkheads are not allowed.<sup>16</sup>

**Policy C-3.1.2:** No pier, dock or walkway shall be located over submerged land which is vegetated with seagrasses except as necessary to reach waters at a depth of one foot below the lowest point of the boat, including the motor, at mean low tide. Boring to set pilings is allowed; however, any material removed must be disposed of at an upland site intended for this purpose. Unless vessel access would be prohibited, the docking terminus shall not be located over submerged vegetation areas, such as seagrass beds.

**Policy C-3.1.3:** Consistent with the Northwest Florida Coast Resource Planning and Management Plan the County shall limit the impacts of development and redevelopment on wildlife habitat, living marine resources, and beach and dune systems, through the following measures:

- a. a marina siting ordinance which minimizes estuarine pollution, as described in C-3.1.2;
- b. stormwater management requirements for all new development and redevelopment that prohibit on shore construction or lands uses that discharge untreated stormwater into areas containing seagrass beds, oyster reefs, other marine nursery areas, and waters of the state;
- c. wetland buffer requirements, consistent with C-3.2.1;
- d. Choctawhatchee Bay buffer requirements consistent with C-3.2.1;

and

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<sup>16</sup> Policy C-3.1.1 was amended by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-1.A.4.

- e. native vegetation protection requirements consistent with C-3.2.7.

Walton County will adopt land development code amendments to fully implement this policy.

**Policy C-3.1.4:** The County shall cooperate with Bay enhancement programs of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the Northwest Florida Water Management District, and other agencies to improve and enhance recreational fishing.

**Policy C-3.1.5:** The County shall cooperate with all appropriate agencies, such as the Department of Environmental Regulation, the FL Game & Freshwater Fish Commission, & the Northwest FL Water Management District, to provide the fullest protection to County, State & federally-owned resource-based recreation sites & natural reservations identified in the Conservation/Coastal Zone or Recreation/Open Space/Greenways Elements that have been set aside for the protection of natural resources & public recreation. Protection will be provided by prohibiting incompatible land uses adjacent to these areas. Development orders will ensure that activities that are inconsistent with the protection of adjacent natural resources are not permitted.

**Objective C-3.2: Protection of Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

The County will regulate development within and surrounding wetlands, dune systems, lake systems, river and bay systems, wildlife habitat, fisheries, living marine resources and habitat, flood prone areas and the 100-year floodplain in order to conserve, appropriately use, and protect these resources.

**Policy C- 3.2.1:** Wetlands; Choctawhatchee Bay; living marine resources; coastal barrier resources; coastal dunes and coastal dune lakes; habitat of endangered, threatened or of species of special concern listed by the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission and the natural vegetative communities are designated as environmentally sensitive lands, and shall be protected through overlay zones, buffers, landscaping, wetlands, marina protection, and stormwater management ordinances, and other land development regulations to protect the resource for future generations. The County shall establish the following buffer standards to protect environmentally sensitive lands:

- a. Inlets, creeks, rivers, coastal lakes: No development (other than boardwalks, docks or other shoreline access structures) shall be located within 50 feet of creeks and of rivers and 75 and 100 feet of coastal lakes as measured landward from the ordinary or mean high water line. Within these buffer areas, clearing of native vegetation shall be limited to 25 percent of the area.
- b. Choctawhatchee Bay: No development (other than boardwalks, docks or other public access structures) shall be located within 50 feet of the above. Within the 50 foot buffer, clearing of native vegetation shall be limited to 25 percent of the area.

- c. Wetlands: No development (other than boardwalks, docks or other shoreline access structures) shall be located within 25 feet of the above, as measured landward from the upland edge of the wetland. Within the 25 foot buffer, clearing of native vegetation shall be limited to 25 percent of the area.
- d. Silviculture: Consistent with Objective L-1.7 and Policy L-1.1.1 in the Future Land Use Element.
- e. Single family development on existing lots of record established before December 28, 1992, that lack sufficient depth to meet the above listed buffer requirements for inlets, creeks, rivers, canals, coastal dune lakes, and Choctawhatchee Bay shall be subject to a reduced buffer. A lot lacking sufficient depth means a lot that is 200 feet deep or less. Such lots shall be subject to a minimum buffer of 25' or 20 percent of the depth of the lots, whichever is greater. Clearing within this buffer setback shall be limited to a maximum swath of 10 feet for access purposes.<sup>17</sup>

After consulting with DEP, Walton County feels that the wetland buffer width should be addressed in the land development code so that in appropriate cases a variance could be granted. There is not an administrative remedy in the comprehensive plan to resolve conflicting environmental policies in situations where allowing an impact to the buffer would increase protection of other environmentally sensitive lands, allow protection of heritage trees, or reduce other environmental impacts.

**Policy C- 3.2.2:** All dredge & fill activities in wetlands is prohibited, except where a permit has been issued by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and/or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and where the applicant has demonstrated through professionally accepted and applied methodology that such activity will not negatively impact estuarine water quality, oyster beds, natural functions, or the habitat of any listed species. In such cases where the applicant demonstrates the above, wetlands lost shall be replaced or enhanced, at a minimum, at the ratios required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and FDEP. All such activities shall not be approved prior to permit approval from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and/or FDER. The County shall do all within its power to ensure the protection, conservation and appropriate use of wetlands not regulated by such agencies.

**Policy C-3.2.3:** Construction that occurs within the 100-year floodplain shall be regulated through the following guidelines:

- 1. Prohibition of new development in the FEMA V-Zone. Decisions regarding redevelopment within this zone shall be consistent with Policy C-3.2.2, and when permitted, shall be in accordance with all provisions of the floodplain ordinance. Standards shall not allow

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<sup>17</sup> Section e of Policy C-3.2.1 was amended by Ordinance 2003-4.

- structures to be rebuilt (under the definition of rebuild) more than twice in any 100 year period in the V-Zone;
2. Regardless of any of the density values established in L-1.1.1, and except as otherwise provided herein, no development is permitted within the 10- year and 25-year floodplains. Development within lands that are designated by FEMA as within the 100-year floodplain shall have a gross density of one (1) dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres, or the underlying density, whichever is less. Regardless of this density limitation, and with the exception of the Large Scale and General Agriculture land use categories, residential density may be transferred from the floodplain portions of the property to the upland portions of the property at a density of two (2) dwelling units per acre, or the underlying density, whichever is less, as applied to the entire property. Density within the 100-year floodplain in the General Agriculture land use category shall be one (1) dwelling unit per twenty (20) acres, and is not transferable. Density within the 100-year floodplain in the Large Scale Agriculture land use category shall be one (1) dwelling unit per two hundred (200) acres, and is not transferable.

Gulf front properties within the CCCL may develop at two (2) dwelling units per acre in the 100-year floodplain, or at the underlying density if development is transferred out of the floodplain.

3. Development of requirements for construction which protect health, safety and property: requirements shall be at least as strict as those recommended by the Federal Emergency Management Agency for local flooding and Coastal Construction Codes. Requirements shall protect natural functions of floodplains, including:
  - a. Structures and septic tanks shall be clustered on the non-floodplain portions of the site unless the property owner would be denied reasonable use of his property;
  - b. All structures in the 100-year floodplain shall be elevated on pilings to reduce the amount of fill; compensatory storage of filled areas shall be required to maintain flood storage capacity;
  - c. Where siting a septic tank in the 100-year floodplain is necessary to allow the owner reasonable use of the property, design shall be in accordance with the standards of Chapter 10D-6, F.A.C.; and
  - d. Consistency with water quality and quantity standards of the stormwater management level of service standard.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination of flood design, water quality, operation & maintenance, stormwater quantity, and erosion control and management requirements of the following governmental entities
  - a. F.E.M.A.
  - b. Community Rating System
  - c. Florida Department of Transportation
  - d. Florida Department of Environmental Protection
  - e. Northwest Florida Water Management District
  - f. Coastal Dune Lake Protection
  - g. Stormwater Utility
2. Minimize the amount of recurring damages through coastal standards for stormwater flood protection regulations

**Policy C- 3.2.4:** The County shall protect critical habitat of endangered, threatened and species of special concern through the requirements listed under C-3.2.7.

**Policy C-3.2.5:** The County shall coordinate with the Florida Marine Patrol, Department of Environmental Protection, the Marine Fisheries Commission, and other federal and state agencies to ensure protection of seagrass beds, oyster beds, sea turtle nests, fisheries and other living marine resources.

**Policy C-3.2.6:** The County shall request assistance from the Department of Environmental Protection, Tourist Development Council and local businesses in setting up displays and programs which increase public awareness of the need to protect coastal resources and other living marine resources, including:

1. protection of sea turtle nests, through neighborhood watch programs, fencing, waterfront lighting which does not distract hatchlings away from the ocean, and signage. The County shall initiate contact with the FDEP and request assistance in the development of a sea turtle nesting protection ordinance and shall adopt and implement such an ordinance by April 1, 1993;
2. protection of oyster beds, through maintenance of waterfront septic tanks, management of stormwater, pesticides and herbicide runoff; and
3. protection of seagrasses, through maintenance of waterfront septic tanks, management of stormwater, pesticides and herbicide runoff, and signage to warn boaters of shallow areas; and
4. protection of dune vegetation, through development of dune walkovers, signage programs and handouts on planting of native vegetation.

**Policy C- 3.2.7:** In order to protect native vegetative communities determined to be endangered, threatened or of special concern, as determined by the Department of Agriculture or Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, and as identified by FNAI, others, or in the County's GIS, as occurring in Walton County, including habitat of endangered, threatened or special concern designated species, all new development shall be required to comply with the following native vegetation requirements:

1. Native vegetation shall be identified on a site-by-site basis using the FNAI inventory, LANDSAT maps, soil surveys of the USDA Soil Conservation Service or other best available data source. The developer shall design and locate improvements to minimize the removal of natural vegetation. Because the clearing of land as an adjunct of construction is defined as development and requires a permit from the County, no land alteration, clearing or grubbing may be carried out prior to issuance of a final development order or development permit, including the issuance of a building permit;
2. For development in areas characterized by coastal uplands vegetative communities (dune vegetation) within the CCCL or CPZ, 95 percent of the dune vegetation on the site must be retained. "Dune vegetation" shall be defined as all natural communities defined as "Coastal Uplands" by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Guide to Natural Communities (1990), incorporated herein by reference, including Beach Dune, Coastal Berm, Coastal Grassland, and Coastal Strand vegetation. Within coastal uplands communities outside the CCCL or CPZ, 100 percent of the natural vegetation outside the building footprint (including parking and access areas) must be retained. One hundred percent of all additional landscaping material used on the primary dune system shall be composed of native plants adapted to soil and climatic conditions on-site. Vegetation for dune protection measures shall be limited to native salt-resistant species suitable for beach/dune stabilization. "Coastal Uplands" vegetative communities shall be those natural communities that are defined as coastal uplands in the Florida Natural Areas Inventory Guide to Natural Communities of Florida (1990), including Beach Dune, Coastal Berm, Coastal Grassland, and Coastal Strand vegetation, which is incorporated herein by reference.
3. For development on parcels of two acres or more in areas characterized by sand pine scrub, longleaf pine sandhill, or xeric oak scrub communities, 50 percent of the natural scrub vegetation on the site shall be retained. Where the natural community on one parcel is contiguous with natural community on one or more adjacent parcels, the developable portion shall be located to minimize disruption of this contiguity to the maximum extent

possible. This requirement shall be applied on a site-by-site basis and shall apply to public as well as private development. Within coastal dune lake drainage basins, the above-mentioned percentage of native vegetation shall be preserved, and in addition, the removal of native vegetation and its replacement by lawns and landscaping shall be kept to the minimum which is reasonably necessary to develop the property.

4. For development on parcels of two (2) acres or more in the mixed hardwood and pine native upland vegetation community, 25 percent of the natural community vegetation on the site shall be retained. Where the community on one parcel is contiguous with native plant community on one or more adjacent parcels, the developable portion shall be located to minimize disruption of this contiguity to the maximum extent possible. This requirement shall be applied on a site-by-site basis and shall apply to public as well as private development. Within coastal dune lake drainage basins, the above-mentioned percentage of native vegetation shall be preserved, and in addition, the removal of native vegetation and its replacement by lawns and landscaping shall be kept to the minimum which is reasonably necessary to develop the property.
5. The land development regulations shall provide standards for determining what species determine each vegetation category, and shall be consistent with the FNAI, LANDSAT, the County's GIS and other inventories.
6. Habitat for endangered, threatened or species of special concern listed by the Department of Agriculture or the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission. No land alteration activity is allowed which alters the ecological integrity, balance or character of land or water areas determined by means of the due process provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act to be critical habitat, or lands documented as utilized any federal or state designated species, except in cases where the developer commits to a plan approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission to relocate or recover the species to another parcel of land.
7. At least one-half of the native vegetation that is preserved pursuant to paragraphs 2., 3., or 4. above shall be preserved in a compact configuration, with an overall 20' width. The location of this vegetation shall provide separation between development projects, or shall be located so as to buffer or protect wetlands, listed species habitat, floodplains, dunes, bluffs, lakes, or public or private conservation areas.

8. Natural communities referenced in this policy shall be defined consistent with the descriptions of natural communities that appear in the Guide to Natural Communities of Florida, prepared by Florida Natural Areas Inventory (February 1990), incorporated herein by reference.
9. For parcels that contain less than 10 acres of the natural vegetative communities referred to in paragraphs 3. and 4. of this policy—based on the most extensive development order that includes the parcel, the developer and the County may agree to allow the developer to pay a fee equivalent to the value of the land area that would have otherwise been preserved based on the requirements of this policy. This fee shall be placed in a fund for the acquisition or recreational development of greenway corridors or other open space which would remain in a substantially natural condition.
10. For parcels that are located within a designated greenway corridor, as designated in the County's adopted FLUM series, the County and the developer may agree to count any area which is permanently dedicated to the public for use as a greenway toward meeting the vegetation preservation requirements established by paragraphs 3. and 4. above. As a further incentive, the County and developer may agree to reduce the remaining preserved area outside of the greenway dedication by an area which is equal to one-half of the area of the greenway dedication.

The percentage of required preservation and the location of required preservation will be re-evaluated and clarified as part of the EAR-based amendments.

**Policy C-3.2.8:** The coastal dune lakefront protection zone is defined as the zone beginning at the mean or ordinary high water line of the coastal dune lakes and extending 300 feet landward for all coastal dune lakes and their tributaries depicted on the map entitled: Walton County Coastal Dune Lake System. Development shall be allowed within this zone, so long as the following standards will be met:

1. Septic tanks: Septic tank drain fields must be located at least 100 feet from the ordinary or mean high water line, whichever applies;
2. Stormwater management: New lots shall be graded to ensure untreated stormwater runoff from lawn fertilizers, pesticides, or patios, driveways, etc. do not enter the lake. If regional stormwater facilities will not provide this standard, the lot shall utilize a vegetated swale and berm system, underground seepage system

or other stormwater treatment method between the developed area and the lake to hold and treat runoff, consistent with the level of service standard for drainage facilities adopted in this plan.

3. Erosion control: Specific erosion control measures shall be utilized during construction activity, such as staked and staggered hay bales, siltation barriers, floating silt and filter berms. Further, erosion and sedimentation controls shall be left in place until the disturbed areas are stabilized with permanent vegetation that will prevent the transport of sediment off site. In addition to erosion control during construction, stabilization of the shoreline shall be provided by limiting clearing of natural vegetation within 100 feet of the mean or ordinary high water line of the shoreline to 25 percent of the site.
4. Hazardous wastes: No land use shall be allowed within the zone which stores, handles or generates hazardous wastes.
5. Seawalls, bulkheads, revetments and rip-rap are not permitted.
6. Endangered Species: Native vegetative communities, including habitat for listed species, in this zone shall be protected in accordance with Policy C-3.2.7.
7. No new point or non-point sources of pollution shall be discharged into the lakes, such as treated wastewater effluent or untreated stormwater runoff.
8. Setback: all new development and redevelopment, including septic tank drain fields shall be setback from the mean high water line at least 100 feet.
9. Open Space: all new development and redevelopment shall preserve at least 75 percent of the portion of the parcel within the 300-foot protection zone as open space. Vegetative clearing within this preserved area shall be limited to that which is necessary to accommodate the 25 percent development that is permitted, plus a 10 foot cleared buffer immediately adjacent to buildings.

**Policy C-3.2.9:** Establish interlocal agreements with adjacent local governments that address the conservation, use, and protection of unique vegetative communities and water bodies that cross local jurisdictional boundaries.

This issue needs to be addressed as part of the inter-governmental coordination process through revisions to Walton County's interlocal agreements.

**Policy C-3.2.10:** The following standards shall apply to the land that is located within 150' landward of the mean or ordinary high water line of the Choctawhatchee Bay:

1. Septic tanks: Septic tank drain fields must be located at least 75 feet from the ordinary or mean high water line, whichever applies.
2. Stormwater management: Within the zone, new lots must be graded to ensure untreated stormwater runoff from lawn fertilizers, pesticides, or patios, driveways, etc., do not enter the bay. If regional stormwater facilities will not provide this standard, the lot shall utilize a vegetated swale and berm system or other stormwater treatment method between the developed area and the bay to hold and treat runoff, consistent with the level of service standard for drainage facilities adopted in this plan.
3. Erosion control: Specific erosion control measures shall be utilized during construction activity, such as staked and staggered hay bales, siltation barriers, floating silt and filter berms. Further, erosion and sedimentation controls shall be left in place until the disturbed areas are stabilized with permanent vegetation that will prevent the transport of sediment off site. In addition to erosion control during construction, stabilization of the shoreline shall be provided by limiting clearing of natural vegetation within 50 feet of the mean or ordinary high water line of the shoreline to 25 percent of the site.
4. Hazardous wastes: No land use shall be allowed within the zone which stores, handles or generates hazardous wastes.
5. Seawalls: New vertical seawalls and bulkheads shall be prohibited along Choctawhatchee Bay, unless the property is located directly in between two properties that have an existing seawall, provided that the length of the seawall does not exceed 150'. In other areas, alternatives such as revetments, riprap, native vegetation and other shoreline protection structures which serve to dissipate wave energies shall be required. New seawalls and upland retaining walls along Choctawhatchee Bay for existing lots of record in residential subdivisions shall be permitted in accordance with the shoreline stabilization programs for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the U.S. Army Corps of engineers. Newly platted subdivision lots along Choctawhatchee Bay must be

of sufficient depth to meet the 50' buffering requirement of Policy C-3.2.1.b These newly platted lots are allowed to have upland retaining walls built landward of the mean high water line; however, new seawalls and new bulkheads are not allowed.

6. Endangered Species: Native vegetative communities including habitat for endangered and threatened species, in this zone shall be protected in accordance with Policy C-12.2.7.
7. No new point or non-point sources of pollution shall be discharged into the bay, such as treated wastewater effluent or untreated stormwater runoff, unless permitted by FDEP.

**Policy C-3.2.11:** The County shall protect beach and shoreline ecosystems through buffer standards as established in Policy C-3.2.1, and where feasible, shall identify and pursue the acquisition of properties that contain or are adjacent to such ecosystems. The County shall target shoreline properties adjacent to Choctawhatchee Bay for acquisition as a primary means of protecting its shoreline resources. Where shoreline ecosystems have been degraded, the County shall take measures to restore the ecosystem in a manner that enhances or recreates a natural system.

**Policy C-3.2.12:** Within environmentally sensitive areas, particularly those in public ownership, the County shall actively take measures to remove invasive and exotic plant species. Where feasible, these areas shall be replanted with native species in a manner that will create or enhance natural ecosystem functions that would otherwise be expected to occur on these sites.<sup>18</sup>

**Objective C-3.3: Historic & Archaeological Resources**

The County shall protect, preserve or sensitively reuse historical and archaeological resources within the County, by regulating development which may impact such resources.

**Policy C-3.3.1:** If an archaeological site is located in close proximity to any proposed activity which may be permitted within the Coastal High-Hazard Area (such as recreational, coastal access or other related activity), no work shall be undertaken until the applicant consults with the Division of Historic Resources in developing a preservation plan for that resource. The map of known resources shall be maintained at the County Building Department, and must be reviewed during development proposals.

**Policy C-3.3.2:** All development (regardless of location) shall maintain a minimum 50 foot buffer from known archaeological uses.

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<sup>18</sup> Policies C-3.2.11 and C-3.2.12 were amended by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-1.B.1

**Policy C-3.3.3:** The County shall coordinate with the Division of Historic Resources to establish historic preserves or parks at sites of known historical or archaeological significance.

**GOAL C-4: TO PROTECT PEOPLE, AND PROPERTY IN THE COASTAL AREAS BY DEFINING APPROPRIATE LAND USE MECHANISMS LIMITING DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH HAZARD AREAS AND PROTECTING THE INTRINSIC COASTAL RESOURCES. TO LIMIT PUBLIC EXPENDITURES IN AREAS SUBJECT TO DESTRUCTION BY NATURAL DISASTERS, EXCEPT AS NEEDED TO CORRECT EXISTING POLLUTION PROBLEMS OR REDUCE HURRICANE EVACUATION TIME.**

**Objective C-4.1: Shoreline Land Uses**

During the development review process for all new development and redevelopment along shoreline areas, a shoreline use will not be approved if it decreases the amount of legal public access to beaches, lakes, bay and rivers, open waters and shorelines. Shoreline land uses shall not be allowed unless they ensure protection of wetlands, lakes, rivers and bay, endangered species and their associated habitat, grassbeds, oysterbeds, recreational and commercial fisheries, and improving or maintaining estuarine, surface and groundwater quality.

**Policy C-4.1.1:** Priority for depicting shoreline land uses on the Future Land Use Map shall be as follows:

1. conservation or recreation;
2. public access;
3. water-dependent commercial or industrial;
4. residential;
5. water-related commercial or industrial.

**Policy C-4.1.2:** All new or redeveloped (using rebuilding definition of Policy E-3-2) shoreline land uses shall:

1. Locate on existing upland areas;
2. Be constructed to conform to coastal construction building codes;
3. Be constructed in accordance with the policies for construction within the Coastal High-Hazard Area;
4. Demonstrate that existing public utilities, infrastructure and services are in place to support the proposed use;
5. Not be in conflict with existing, conforming, adjacent land uses;
6. Provide public access where traditional public access points are directly affected by the development;
7. Landscape using native plant species;
8. Provide for the treatment of all discharge, including stormwater runoff, from land uses into bodies of water to incorporate standards for treatment adequate to meet the County's adopted level of service standard for drainage facilities; and

9. Restrict impervious surface coverage consistent with standards adopted in land development regulations.

**Policy C-4.1.3:** All new, expanded or redeveloped marinas shall comply with the following criteria, based on the recommendations of the report by the Center for Aquatic Research and Resource Management, Florida State University, titled: Draft Final Report: "Choctawhatchee Bay Project," December 7, 1987:

1. Demonstrate the presence of upland areas which are large enough to accommodate all required utility and support facilities as well as enough parking to satisfy the projected demand based upon professionally accepted standards such those of the Institute of Transportation Engineers;
2. Provide a hurricane mitigation and evacuation plan;
3. Be located in proximity to existing channels so that minimum or no dredging shall be required for provision of docking facilities;
4. Have available sewage treatment facilities to serve the anticipated volume of waste consistent with County's adopted the level of service standard for sanitary sewer facilities;
5. Locate in areas having adequate water depth to accommodate the proposed boats use without disturbance of bottom habitats;
6. Delineate immediate access points with channel markers that indicate speed limits and any other applicable regulations;
7. Be sited in areas consistent with the land uses in the Future Land Use Map;
8. Locate in areas away from seagrass beds, oyster reefs and other important fish and shellfish spawning and nursery areas;
9. Demonstrate that it meets a public need thereby demonstrating economic viability/feasibility;
10. Dry (stacked) storage, elevator lifts, and other land-based alternatives are preferential to dredged basins wherever feasible alternatives are possible.

**Policy C-4.1.4:** Continued public access to beaches and shorelines, shall be ensured by requiring:

1. Developments which would preclude access to legally established public accesses shall not be approved unless a comparable alternative accessway that is equally convenient is provided as a condition of development consistent with Chapter 161.55(6), Florida Statutes;
2. Obtain title, easement, or other ownership interest, in areas where the public has established an accessway consistent with Chapter 161.55, Florida Statutes, and construct dune walkovers at these points;
3. Shoreline renourished at public expense shall have public access provided in accordance with Chapter 161.161, Florida Statutes and Department of Environmental Regulations.

**Objective C-4.2: Coastal High Hazard Area**

It is the County's objective to protect the population from the effects of hurricane storm damage by limiting development within the Coastal High-Hazard Area. Without this limitation, hurricane evacuation times, as well as the health and safety of that population allowed to develop within the Coastal High-Hazard area would be of concern to the County. Therefore, the County shall limit public expenditures that subsidize new development in the Coastal High-Hazard Area and the County shall direct future populations to areas outside the Coastal High-Hazard Area.

**Policy C-4.2.1:** The Coastal High-Hazard Area is defined as the area encompassed by the Category I storm surge area as depicted in the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study, June 1986.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Update of Hurricane Evacuation Study and surge analyses
2. Compatibility of the Coastal High-Hazard with land use densities, floodplain management requirements, and wetland protection criteria

**Policy C-4.2.2:** No public infrastructure shall be allowed in the Coastal High-Hazard Area, except for that needed to provide public access to the shoreline, to serve public parks that have been approved by the County or by state and federal agencies, and to protect or enhance natural resources. Provision of water and sewer service at private expense to existing lots of record at the time of adoption of this plan (December 14, 1990) is permitted, as long as such provision does not result in conflict with policies for: FDEP permit requirements for the Coastal Construction Control Line; criteria adopted for determining when structures can be rebuilt; coastal protection zone requirements in the land development regulations; and the state policy to limit public expenditures that subsidize development permitted in coastal high-hazard areas, except for enhancement of natural resources.

**Policy C-4.2.3:** New sanitary sewer facilities in the Coastal High-Hazard Area, installed in accordance with standards of C-4.2.2, shall be flood-proofed and backflow preventors shall be fitted on new septic tanks.

**Policy C-4.2.4:** The recommendations of any interagency hazard mitigation report which addresses future flood losses and is prepared in response to a Presidential Disaster Declaration shall be incorporated into the County's Disaster Plan.

**Policy C-4.2.5:** Permitting of new development and redevelopment in any of the Hurricane Evacuation Zones shown in Figure 34 of the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study (June 1986), shall not result in an increase in hurricane evacuation times, as of the date of adopted of this plan. Hurricane evacuation times as of the plan adoption date shall be defined as the clearance and evacuation times for a Category 3 storm with a forward speed of 15 miles per hour, a medium evacuee response, and occurring during a period of “High” Tourist Occupancy, as shown in Table VII-9A of the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study (June 1986). These clearance and evacuation times are 12 hours and 21.33 hours respectively. All development projects of 400 or more dwelling units or 280 or more lodging units located within evacuation zones shall be required to submit an analysis of hurricane evacuation times to determine whether the standards established above would be met. Within 1 year of any revisions to the Tri-State Hurricane Evacuation Study, the County, by using the data and methods in the revised study as a baseline, shall evaluate:

- (1) Whether the established hurricane evacuation time can be maintained, based on development order and permits that have been issued in evacuation zones, and shall not issue additional development permits, if indicated by this evaluation; and
- (2) Whether established hurricane evacuation times can be maintained, based the amount of development allowed by the Future Land Use Map in evacuation zones. The Future Land Use, Traffic Circulation, Coastal Management, and Capital Improvements Elements shall be amended accordingly, within 6 months, in order to ensure that evacuation time standards can be maintained or reduced. The feasibility and desirability of maintaining or reducing the established hurricane evacuation time shall be analyzed as a part of this process.

**This policy was amended in 2005.**

**Policy C-4.2.6:** The creation of new lots (through platting, lot splits, or other method) that lie entirely within the Coastal High-Hazard Area is prohibited. The creation of new lots contiguous to or partially within the Coastal High-Hazard Areas shall be prohibited unless the newly created lot contains sufficient buildable area outside of the Coastal High Hazard Area for the intended use.

### **Objective C-4.3: Post Disaster Redevelopment**

In order to reduce or eliminate exposure of human life and public and private property to natural hazards, the County will prepare a post-disaster redevelopment plan, or adopt the Regional Planning Council’s plan. The following policies shall become effective upon adoption of this plan (December 14, 1990) as interim measures for short-term recovery and long-term redevelopment activities prior to adoption of a formal post-disaster plan, consistent with the County’s Peacetime Emergency Plan.

**Policy C-4.3.1:** The following post-disaster actions shall be considered short-term recovery measures:

1. Damage assessment to meet post-disaster assistance requirements and to aid in post-disaster redevelopment decisions;
2. Debris removal;
3. Emergency protection measures including repairs to water, sewer, electric, and other public utilities to restore service;
4. Public assistance including temporary housing provision of food, water, toilets, and clothing.

This policy will need to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to reflect the county's revised local mitigation strategy (in process of being adopted) and post-disaster redevelopment plan (also in the process of being adopted).

**Policy C-4.3.2:** The process for making long-term redevelopment decisions specified in the County's post-disaster redevelopment plan shall be consistent with the following general guidelines and principles for the relocation, removal or modification of damaged structures:

1. The County adopts the following definitions for making decisions pertaining to redevelopment in the Coastal High Hazard Area. Based upon the following definitions, all rebuilding activities shall be subject to Coastal Construction Code Standards and Coastal High Hazard Area limitations:
  - (a) "Repair" means the restoration of a portion of the structure, including the foundation of the structure, to its original design configuration or an equivalent structural standard. Repair of a structure assumes that a significant portion of the structure, including its foundation, remains intact. If the supported structure or its foundation has collapsed to the point that either the supported structure or the foundation requires substantial rebuilding, then such activity shall not constitute repair. If a structure, as a result of damage to either the supported structure or the foundation, is no longer habitable such structure shall be presumed to require substantial rebuilding.
  - (b) "Rebuilding" means any construction activity, including alteration to an existing foundation, which would result in increased structural stability such that the survivability of the structure during a coastal storm is increased. Rebuilding shall also include any construction activity which, as noted above, involve the substantial rebuilding of either the supported structure or the foundation of the structure.
2. Rebuilding (as defined above) activities will be in accordance with FDEP's requirements for development seaward of the Coastal Construction Control Line, and all structural requirements of the County's Flooding and Coastal Construction Code. Further, prior to approving such redevelopment activities, the County shall require

the developer to provide documentation that the structure being built is a landward as possible from the FEMA V Zone and Coastal Construction Control Line. The applicant shall provide proof that the structure cannot be moved any further landward on the lot without causing harm to public health or safety. The County may vary building setback requirements in order to accomplish the intent of this policy.

3. The County shall keep a record of all repair and rebuilding activities. Structures may not be rebuilt “under the definition of rebuild” more than twice in any 100-year period in the V-Zone and Coastal Barriers Resource System.

This policy needs to be updated in the EAR-based amendments to be consistent with FEMA’s flood insurance program, especially the 50% rule.

#### **Objective C-4.4: Beaches and Dunes**

The county shall ensure protection and restoration to its dune and beach system through:

1. Locational criteria for siting of man-made beach access structures in the dune system; and promoting the use of revetments and other shoreline protection structures which serve to dissipate wave energies as an alternative to vertical seawalls;
2. Dune and revegetation programs, initiated through a survey which identifies dune erosion areas, and encompassing educational programs for private property owners, and cooperational programs from local and state agencies for publicly owned beachfront property.
3. Prohibiting development seaward of the Coastal Control Line (CCCL) and within the coastal protection zone (CPZ). If the CCCL is landward of the CPZ, then development between the CCCL and the CPZ must be consistent with Future Land Use Map and is subject to the permitting requirement of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
4. All new private Gulf-front development and redevelopment shall include elevated dune crossovers to provide private access to the beach.

**Policy C-4.4.1:** The County shall solicit assistance from the Department of Environmental Protection neighborhood and citizens groups in carrying out a survey of damaged or eroded dune areas.

**Policy C-4.4.2:** Using the results of the survey, the County shall solicit funds to restore degraded dunes and beaches, through implementation of a program for construction of dune walkovers for all public access areas and revegetation with native vegetation.

**Policy C-4.4.3:** The County shall enlist the assistance of the Tourist Development Council, neighborhood groups or citizen committees in developing an awareness program for protection and voluntary revegetation of dunes and beaches by residents and tourists.

**Policy C-4.4.4:** The County shall limit clearing of natural dune vegetation and other coastal upland vegetation and development on the primary dune in accordance with the provisions contained herein, including Policies C-3.2.7, 3.2.8, 12.2.7 and 4.2.5.

**Policy C-4.4.5:** The County shall coordinate with the Department of Environmental Protection and other applicable agencies and organizations to implement the Walton County Beach Restoration Management Plan (Prepared by FDEP, 1990). The County's restoration and protection program shall include provisions for increasing public access to the beach.

**This policy will need to be updated in the EAR-based amendments to reflect current studies and technical data.**

**Policy C-4.4.6:** The placement of colored or silty fill material within the coastal barrier resource system, coastal dune lakefront protection zone, coastal protection overlay zone or seaward of the coastal construction control line where the beaches may become discolored by such materials is prohibited.

**Policy C-4.4.7:** The County shall coordinate with the Department of Environmental Protection and the West Florida Regional Planning Council to develop guidelines for the transfer, storage, and treatment of hazardous wastes and the verification of disposal practices of small quantity generators.

**Policy C-4.4.8:** The County shall develop and implement a program to educate the public concerning the proper storage and disposal of household hazardous waste.

**Objective C-4.5: Mining**

The County shall protect and conserve native vegetative communities and the natural functions of soils and shall regulate mining by co-sponsorship of the Soil Conservation Service erosion control projects and land development regulations adopted by the statutory deadline.

**Policy C.4-5.1:** Mining operations shall prevent off-site erosion of soils and shall maintain a 50 foot buffer zone of existing vegetation around the perimeter of the site. Mining which will have an adverse impact on environmentally sensitive areas that cannot be restored shall be prohibited.

**Policy C-4.5.2:** Mine operators shall submit to the County a mine reclamation plan which shall be implemented within one year of the closure of the site. This reclamation plan shall include provision of revegetation of disturbed areas using native species.

**Policy C-4.5.3:** The county shall continue to cosponsor SCS erosion and sedimentation control programs.

**Objective C-4.6: Hurricane Evacuation**

In order to reduce hurricane evacuation times, the County will cooperate with the Florida FDOT in the widening of highways 98 & 331 in the S. Walton area.

**Policy C-4.6.1:** The County will ensure that the roadway improvements, identified in the Traffic Circulation and Infrastructure Elements, are consistent with the Capital Improvement Element of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan and are constructed in order to reduce evacuation times.

**Objective C-4.7: Level of Service Standards**

The County will not issue development orders for any development that results in the reduction of the level of service standards as identified in Policy C-4.6.1.

**Policy C-4.7.1:** The County hereby adopts the following level of service standards for sanitary sewer facilities in the Coastal Area: See Policy CI-1.3.3 of the Capital Improvements Element.

**RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS ELEMENT  
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES**

**GOAL R-1: TO DEVELOP A RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS (ROG) SYSTEM AS AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF AN OVERALL, COUNTY-WIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY.**

The following changes are recommended. **GOAL R-1: TO DEVELOP A RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS (ROG) SYSTEM AS AN INTEGRAL COMPONENT OF AN OVERALL COUNTYWIDE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**Objective R-1.1:** Walton County shall offer ecotourism attractor facilities for permanent and seasonal residents.

The following changes are recommended. Walton County shall continue to enhance, attract and offer eco-tourism ~~attractor~~ facilities for permanent ~~and~~ seasonal residents and tourists.

**Policy R-1.1.1:** The County shall support & assist, as appropriate, the completion of the State park, recreation, preserve & ornamental garden system.

The following changes are recommended: The County shall support and assist, as appropriate, the completion of the State parks and recreation. ~~preserve and ornamental garden system.~~

**Policy R-1.1.2:** The County shall encourage the State to promote private providers and concessionaires within State Park facilities.

The following changes are recommended. This policy needs to be removed. ~~The County shall encourage the State to promote private providers and concessionaires within State Park facilities.~~

**Policy R-1.1.3:** The County shall cosponsor the South Walton Environmental Awareness Center as a public/private partnership.

**Policy R-1.1.4:** By 1996, an interpretive network shall be established by the County and cooperatively managed between State and private interests.

The following changes are recommended. This policy needs to be deleted or "interpretative network" needs to be defined. ~~By 1996, an interpretive network shall be established by the County and cooperatively managed between State and private interests.~~

**Policy R-1.1.5:** Citizen Support Organizations (CSO) shall be encouraged to support the County's efforts in the designation, acquisition, and maintenance of state and county parks and greenway systems.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy R-1.1.6:** The Tourist Development Council shall target its marketing efforts to support the economic development thrust.

The following changes are recommended. The Tourist Development Council in addition to encouraging tourist development shall target its marketing efforts to support the economic development thrust in other areas, such as technology, medical, manufacturing and related businesses.

**Policy R-1.1.7:** The County and the Tourist Development Council shall promote the special natural and recreational features and historical areas to attract eco-tourists and benefit economic development.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**GOAL R-2: TO PROVIDE A RECREATIONAL SYSTEM THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS OF WALTON COUNTY.**

The following changes are recommended. **GOAL R-2: TO PROVIDE A RECREATIONAL RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF WALTON COUNTY.**

**Objective R-2.1:** Ensure that parks & recreation facilities are provided to adequately maintain the adopted level of service for park & recreational facilities.

The following changes are recommended. Objective R-2.1: Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are provided to adequately maintain the adopted level of service of 6.25 acres of park, open space and conservation per 1000 people. ~~For parks and recreational facilities.~~

**Policy R-2.1.1:** The County shall designate & acquire open space & natural reservations.

The following changes are recommended. Policy R-2.1.1: The County shall designate ~~and acquire~~ open space and natural reservations through acquisition methods to complete the recreational lands program; protect

important habitat and species; connect the beach and bay; and offer clear breaks in the development pattern.

“Natural reservations” needs to be included in a definitions section in the Recreation, Open Space and Greenways Element, as defined by F.A.C.

“Natural reservations” means areas designated for conservation purposes, and operated by contractual agreement with or managed by a federal, state, regional or local government or non-profit agency such as: national parks, state parks, lands purchased under the Save Our Coast, Conservation and Recreation Lands or Save Our Rivers programs, sanctuaries, preserves, monuments, archaeological sites, historic sites, wildlife management areas, national seashores, and Outstanding Florida Waters. This definition does not include privately owned land managed by a state agency on either a voluntary or a short-term contractual basis (Chapter 9J-5.003(78)).

**Policy R-2.1.2:** The County shall maintain and improve existing levels of beach and shore access routes and beach access facilities required to be identified in the conservation and coastal management element and access to waterways required to be shown on the future land use map.

The County shall maintain and improve existing levels of beach and shore access routes and beach access facilities. These access routes and facilities are required to be identified in the conservation and coastal management element and access to waterways and required to be shown on the future land use map.

**Policy R-2.1.3:** The County shall correct or improve existing deficiencies in parks & recreation facilities.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-2.1.3:** The County shall identify and correct or improve existing deficiencies in parks and ~~recreation~~ recreational facilities.

**Objective R-2.2:** Coordinate public and private resources to meet recreation demand.

The following changes are recommended. **Objective R-2.2: Coordinate public and private resources to meet future recreation recreational demand.**

**Policy R-2.2.1:** The County shall form alliances and partnerships with 1000 Friends of Florida, Florida Audubon, Trust for Public Lands, The Nature Conservancy, state agencies, private interests, neighborhood and homeowner

associations, local businesses and landowners, and the Chambers of Commerce to meet recreational demand.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-2.2.1:** The County shall form alliances and partnerships with 1000 Friends of Florida, Florida Audubon, Trust for Public Lands, The Nature Conservancy, state agencies, private interests, neighborhood and home-owner associations, local businesses and landowners, and the Chambers of Commerce to meet present and future recreational demand.

**Objective R-2.3:** Accessibility to key attractors shall be expanded and reinforced to ensure public access to identified recreation sites, freshwater beaches and shores.

The following changes are recommended. **Objective R-2.3:** By the year 2012, accessibility to key attractors, shall be expanded and reinforced to ensure public access to identified recreation sites, freshwater bodies, beaches and shores.

**Policy R-2.3.1:** The County shall continue the acquisition of beach access through purchase and the parkland dedication provisions of the LDRs.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-2.3.1:** The County shall continue the acquisition of beach access through purchase and the parkland dedication provisions of the LDRs and identify and pursue other methods of purchasing for the future.

**Policy R-2.3.2:** The TDC shall continue its program of beachfront access and park development, including parking.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-2.3.2:** The TDC (Tourist Development Council) shall continue its program of beachfront access and park development, including parking.

**Policy R-2.3.3:** The County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council, shall introduce the beach jitney/trolley to provide access to the beaches, especially along C30-A.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-2.3.3:** The County in coordination with the Tourist Development Council shall and private groups shall explore opportunities for a ~~introduce the~~ beach jitney/trolley system to provide access to the beaches and businesses especially along C30-A.

**GOAL R-3: ESTABLISH A PERMANENT OPEN SPACE SYSTEM TO COMPLEMENT THE NATURAL RECREATIONAL FEATURES OF WALTON**

**COUNTY.**

The following changes are recommended. No changes are recommended. Note Open Space is defined in Policy R-5.2.1.

**Objective R-3.1:** To create high land values through the provision of a permanent open space system.

The following changes are recommended. **Objective R-3.1: To create a high quality of life for future and present residents and land values through the provision of a permanent open space system.**

**Policy R-3.1.1:** The County shall support an acquisition and disposition strategy that creates permanent open space and recreation areas.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.1.1:** The County shall support an acquisition and disposition strategy that creates permanent open space ~~and recreation~~ recreational and conservation areas.

**Policy R-3.1.2:** The County shall permit neighborhood and village developments proximate to the permanent open space system.

The following changes are recommended. This section needs to be deleted. Neighborhood and village developments should be permitted based on compatibility, not open space. ~~Policy R-3.1.2: The County shall permit neighborhood and village developments proximate to the permanent open space system.~~

**Objective R-3.2:** Identify greenway systems to support ecotourism, environmental education, recreational opportunities, and habitat protection.

The following changes are recommended. **Objective R-3.2: Identify existing and future greenway systems to support and encourage ecotourism, environmental education, recreational opportunities, and habitat protection.**

**Policy R-3.2.1:** The County shall seek funds and conduct a study of the economic, recreation and environmental benefits of greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.2.1:** By the 2012, The County shall seek funds ~~and~~ to conduct a study of the economic, ~~recreation~~ recreational and environmental benefits of greenways.

**Policy R-3.2.2:** Seek state, federal and private funding to improve recreational facilities and acquire recreational and conservation lands within the

greenway system. Potential sources could include the Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.2.2: The County should continue to seek state State, federal Federal and private funding to improve recreational facilities and acquire recreational and conservation lands within the greenway system. Potential sources could include the Florida Recreational Development Assistance Program.**

**Policy R-3.2.3:** The greenway systems in South Walton shall have a north/south connection between the Gulf and Bay for wildlife and recreational purposes; and an east/west connection between Topsail Hill and the State Forest south of US 98 to provide habitat and resource protection and promote environmental education.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Objective R-3.3:** Coordinate public & private sources to develop greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Objective R-3.3: Coordinate public and private sources resources to develop greenways.**

**Policy R-3.3.1:** By December, 1996, the County shall appoint a Greenway Advisory Committee composed of forestry interests, waterfront property owners and residents, boaters, anglers, scientists and others who have expressed an interest in greenway development. The group will meet and make recommendations to the County for the adoption of appropriate greenway management and protection measures.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.1: By December, 1996, By 2012, the County shall appoint a Greenway Advisory Committee composed of forestry representatives interests, waterfront property owners and residents, boaters, anglers, scientists and others who have expressed an interest in greenway development. The group will meet and make recommendations to the County for the adoption of appropriate greenway management and protection measures.**

**Policy R-3.3.2:** The County shall coordinate with the Florida Greenways Commission to tie into its efforts to create a statewide network of greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.2: By the year 2012, the County shall coordinate with the Florida Greenways Commission to tie into its efforts to create a statewide network of greenways.**

**Policy R-3.3.3:** The County shall keep greenways as intact as possible to facilitate wildlife movement and maintain viable populations of designated species.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.3:** Wherever possible, the County shall keep greenways as intact as possible to facilitate wildlife movement and maintain viable populations of designated indigenous species to the area.

**Policy R-3.3.4:** The County shall limit clearing of native vegetation in the greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.4:** The County shall limit clearing of native vegetation in the greenways to reflect the requirements of the land development code and applicable comprehensive plan policies.

**Policy R-3.3.5:** The County shall work with public land managers, historians and users in developing signs to aid interpretation of the greenway's historic and natural sites and to provide continuity along the greenway. The County shall consider adopting an architectural theme for public use facilities in the greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.5:** The County shall work with public land managers, historians and ~~users~~ community members in developing signs to aid in interpretation of the greenway's historic and natural sites ~~and to provide continuity along the greenway.~~ ~~The County shall consider adopting an architectural theme for public use facilities in the greenways.~~

**Policy R-3.3.6:** The County will coordinate with citizens and state agencies to promote and conserve the designated South Walton greenways by incorporating appropriate management and protective measures into its local planning processes, and will coordinate with the Water Management District and adjacent local governments to incorporate complementary measures into their planning processes.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.6:** The County will coordinate with citizens and state agencies to promote and conserve the designated South Walton greenways by incorporating appropriate management and protective measures into its local planning processes. ~~and will~~ Coordinate with the Water Management District and adjacent local governments to incorporate complementary measures into their planning processes.

**Policy R-3.3.7:** On a continuous basis, any State lands that are disposed shall be evaluated by the County for the location of greenway corridors.

**Policy R-3.3.8:** Topsail Hill and the State Forest shall be connected by an east/west recreational greenway south of US 98 using disposed State properties as a base.

The following changes are recommended. This section should be deleted. ~~**Policy R-3.3.8:** Topsail Hill and the State Forest shall be connected by an east/west recreational greenway south of US 98 using disposed State properties as a base.~~

**Policy R-3.3.9:** The County shall prepare a survey of fee-simple and less-than-fee-simple acquisition methods.

The following changes are recommended. The following policy should be deleted. ~~**Policy R-3.3.9:** The County shall prepare a survey of fee-simple and less-than-fee-simple acquisition methods.~~

**Policy R-3.3.10:** The County shall prepare a series of watershed management plans to conserve the greenways and be related to the area's drainage needs.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy R-3.3.11:** The County shall encourage the linkage of greenways to parks, forests, other local greenways, schools, trails and habitat areas to other similar areas.

This policy has functioned as intended.

**Policy R-3.3.12:** The County and the State shall use the GIS database and map series to initiate and maintain a local greenway database.

The following changes are recommended. ~~**Policy R-3.3.12:** The County and the State shall use the GIS database and map series to initiate and maintain a local greenway database.~~

**Policy R-3.3.13:** The County shall sponsor workshops with local builders and developers to promote appropriate site planning, design and landscaping for residential, commercial and industrial development adjacent to the greenways.

**Policy R-3.3.14:** The County and the State shall use mitigation in regulatory programs to conserve the greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.14:** The County ~~and the State~~ shall use mitigation in regulatory programs to conserve the greenways and open space.

**Policy R-3.3.15:** The County shall work with the local school board and others to incorporate into local education programs the importance of conserving greenways.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.3.15:** The County shall work with the local school board ~~and others to incorporate into local to education~~ educate students programs in the importance of conserving greenways, open space and habitat for various indigenous species.

**Policy R-3.3.16:** Support the Acquisition and Disposition Plan as a means of achieving greenways development.

**Policy R-3.3.17:** The County and state agency staff shall generally utilize the following procedure and principles in planning, designating, acquiring, and developing the greenway system in Walton County:<sup>19</sup>

1. Overlay property ownership, land cover, habitat value, and acquisition/ disposition maps.  
**This policy has functioned as intended.**
2. Examine preliminary greenway map included in South Walton Trust Plan. Identify general areas that should be connected, and functions of potential greenway connections, e.g:
  - a. Protection of linear systems of wetlands, floodplains, rare habitat types, and listed species habitat (through consultation with FGFWFC and FDEP);
  - b. Wildlife corridors linking major habitat areas—to prevent isolation of wildlife populations;
  - c. Interconnection of upland and aquatic habitat;
  - d. Interconnection of state lands;
  - e. Provide recreational trails through or that utilize state lands;
  - f. Wetland and surface water buffers;
  - g. Provide buffers to sensitive areas of state lands;
  - h. Recreational trails and bikeways generally;
  - i. Providing a break between developed areas—to provide definition to boundaries of developed “neighborhoods”, and to break up the monotony of continuous development;
  - j. Provide public beach or waterfront access; and

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<sup>19</sup> Ordinance number 2000-30 deleted the word “south” before “Walton County.” See text amendment 00-1.B.1

- k. Provide pedestrian and bicycle transportation routes between developed areas, or between developed areas and public recreational areas.

This policy has functioned as intended.

3. Conduct on-site surveys of proposed greenway corridors, if desirable (to extent possible).

This policy has functioned as intended.

4. Identify desirable width of specific greenway segments, based on the functions identified in 2., especially, what is known about corridor widths needed for wildlife utilization.

This policy has functioned as intended.

5. Identify general greenway alignments, based on information gained from 1. through 4.

6. Where parcels within the general location of greenways are of sufficient size, align greenways so that they either:
  - a. Run through the middle or along the boundary of the parcel, thus fulfilling the applicable native vegetation/listed species/wetland protection requirements; or
  - b. Run along a boundary of the parcel, thus fulfilling the applicable native vegetation/listed species/wetland protection requirements, and are aligned back-to-back with like areas that would be dedicated on adjacent parcels (analogous to the way that thoroughfare rights-of-way are dedicated by properties adjacent to either side of a proposed centerline).

7. Where parcels within greenway corridors are too small to provide for the greenway, and allow for reasonable development of the parcel, provide for the following:

“Reasonable Development” should be further defined.

- a. Exchange for state land disposition parcels of equal or greater value; or
- b. Purchase of the parcel, through a fund that is established to collect fees-in-lieu-of on-site native vegetation preservation on other sites. These “sending sites” would generally be located in more intensely developed areas, where land values are substantially higher, and where habitat has already been degraded and fragmented to the point where on-site protection would be largely cosmetic, rather than functional. Collecting fees-in-lieu-of-land in these sending areas would allow for the purchase of larger

amounts of land in the “receiving areas”, compared to the amount of land that would have been preserved on the sending site, if the fees are based on the dollar value per acre of the sending site—and the number of acres for which relief from the preservation requirements have been granted.

8. Contact the property owners of the parcels identified in 7., and attempt to secure agreements regarding exchange or acquisition.
9. Include incentives in Comprehensive Plan and LDRs to encourage dedications, agreements, and exchange/acquisition pursuant to 6., 7., and 8. (refer to Policies C-3.2.7.9. and 10.).
10. Establish acceptable legal mechanisms for dedication of greenway corridors (fee simple dedication, right of way dedication, dedication of easement to Walton County and public, etc.). Establish circumstances and criteria under which each dedication mechanism would be acceptable to the County.
11. Identify state lands that should be retained, in order to provide for greenway connections, or where greenway easements or rights of way should be retained when SPAs are designed/approved/developed.
12. Map final greenway alignments, and list proposed acquisition methods for each segment, to maximum extent feasible, based on 1. through 11. Identify and map segments where final alignment or acquisition method are still unresolved.
13. Amend the Comprehensive Plan, and amend the LDRs, based on final greenways alignment and the acquisition methods that are established.
14. Revise the Acquisition/Disposition Plan, based on state lands to be retained by state or transferred to County, for use as greenways, as applicable.

#### **Objective R-3.4: Passive Recreation**

The County will recognize the value of very localized recreation and implement policies to protect and increase the value of the passive recreational experiences available in the immediate vicinity of dwellings, streets and other areas that are in continual view of humans during the normal course of their activities.

The following changes are recommended. The County will recognize the value of ~~very~~ localized recreation and implement policies to protect and

increase the value of the passive recreational experiences. ~~available in the immediate vicinity of dwellings, streets and other areas that are in continual view of humans during the normal course of their activities.~~

**Policy R-3.4.1:** A passive use recreational value survey similar to those conducted by the City of Seattle, Washington, will be conducted by County and state agency staff.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.4.1:** Every 7 years, a passive use recreational value survey similar to those conducted by the City of Seattle, Washington, will be conducted by County and state agency staff.

**Policy R-3.4.2:** An Urban Wildlife survey will be conducted by County and state agency staff, to assess the functional assistance needed in the area, including industrial rooftop in the Destin area known to be particularly important to the Least Tern for nesting habitat. The survey shall include polling of knowledgeable individuals such as agency personnel in the area and non-game officials of the FGFWFC operating in Panama City and in Tallahassee to constitute a first step in building a basis for action. This survey will be compiled by the end of 1995 and its recommendations will be considered during construction of all facilities. Creation of functional support for species that would stand to increase in population as a result of these actions will be used for mitigation as preferred alternative to area-based mitigation efforts.

The following changes are recommended. Every 7 years, an Urban Wildlife survey will be conducted by the County and in cooperation with state agency staff, to assess the functional areas ~~assistance needed in the area, including industrial rooftop in the Destin area known to be~~ particularly important to the Least Tern for nesting habitat. The survey shall include polling of knowledgeable individuals such as agency personnel in the area and non-game officials of the FGFWFC operating in Panama City and in Tallahassee to constitute a first step in building a basis for action. This survey will be compiled by the end of ~~1995~~ 2012 and its recommendations will be considered during construction of all facilities. Creation of functional support for species that would stand to increase in population as a result of these actions will be used for mitigation as preferred alternative to area-based mitigation efforts. Due to agency name changes, a text amendment is required to change "FGFWFC" to "FFWCC".

**Policy R-3.4.3:** The County and state agencies shall create an accounting system to assess the status of the passive recreational potential and the areas most occupied and viewed by human users. The primary developers of this accounting system should be the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fort Collins, CO. The process needs to be performed annually. The system should be designed both to assess the passive recreation experience provided by locally

occurring, easily viewed wildlife and to inform people of the experience that is possible in the area affected by this project.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.4.3:** ~~The County and with cooperation of state agencies shall create an accounting inventory system to assess the status of the existing passive recreational potential and the areas most occupied and viewed by people human users. The primary developers of this accounting system should be the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fort Collins, CO. The inventory process should be conducted every 7 years needs to be performed annually. The system should be designed both to assess the passive recreation experience provided by locally occurring, easily viewed wildlife and to inform people of the experience that is possible in the area affected by this project. The process should be used as one tool to evaluate passive recreation for the area and educate the public on the importance of passive recreation designated land in their areas.~~

**Policy R-3.4.4:** Upon acquisition of lands to be used as passive parks, the County shall evaluate the extent & location of appropriate recreational facilities consistent with observations areas, nature trails, boardwalks, & picnic areas. These facilities should be designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes impacts to the natural resources that occurs on or adjacent to the site.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.4.4:** Upon acquisition of lands to be used as passive Passive Recreation parks Parks, the County shall evaluate the extent and location of appropriate recreational facilities consistent with ~~observations~~ observation areas, nature trails, boardwalks, and picnic areas. These facilities should be designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes impacts to the natural resources that occurs on or adjacent to the site.

**Policy R-3.4.5:** Upon acquisition of lands to be used as passive parks, the County shall evaluate the extent and the location of appropriate recreational facilities consistent with the objectives of the park. Facilities to be considered should include wildlife/scenic observation areas, nature trails, boardwalks, and picnic areas. These facilities should be designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes impacts to the natural resources that occurs on or adjacent to the site.<sup>20</sup>

The following changes are recommended. This policy needs to be deleted it was repeated in R-3.4.4. **Policy R-3.4.5:** ~~Upon acquisition of lands to be used as passive parks, the County shall evaluate the extent and the location of appropriate recreational facilities consistent with the objectives of the park. Facilities to be considered should include wildlife/scenic observation areas, nature trails, boardwalks, and picnic areas. These~~

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<sup>20</sup> Policy R-3.4.4 and R-3.4.5 were adopted by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-1.B.1.

~~facilities should be designed and constructed in a manner that minimizes impacts to the natural resources that occurs on or adjacent to the site.~~

**Objective R-3.5:** Functional wildlife corridors will be retained where practicable for those species occurring in reasonably sustainable populations on the peninsula.

The following changes are recommended. **Objective R-3.5: Functional wildlife corridors will be retained where practicable for those species occurring in reasonably sustainable populations on the peninsula.**

**Policy R-3.5.1:** Strategies for the retention of these crossing points (for wildlife corridors) and their functionality will be developed by the County and state agencies not later than the end of 1999.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.5.1:** Strategies for the retention of ~~these crossing points (for wildlife corridors)~~ wildlife corridors and their functionality will be developed by the County and cooperation of state agencies. ~~not later than the end of 1999.~~

**Policy R-3.5.2:** Crossing points of existing paved roadways for those species of primary management interest will be known & added to the GIS data base by 1998.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.5.2:** Crossing points of existing paved roadways for those species of primary management interest will be known and added to the GIS data base. ~~by 1998.~~

**Policy R-3.5.3:** The potential for maintaining habitat quality functionality across paved road gaps in otherwise linked habitat area segments will be known by 2001.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.5.3:** The potential for maintaining habitat quality and functionality across paved ~~road gaps~~ roads in ~~otherwise linked habitat area~~ areas segments should be identified ~~will be known by 2001.~~

**Policy R-3.5.4:** The primary corridors will be determined as refinements from the habitat lineations generated as the habitat or GIS Biodiversity Map. Three primary patterns should be respected: 1) The high-dry longleaf pine/turkey oak ridge running east-west through the center of the project area; 2) An area along the beach dune line paralleling the coast; and 3) A corridor along the stream lines and associated wetlands and floodplains, which generally run north-south. The stream line corridor should include the stream, the associated shrubby-brushy area adjacent to the stream line and a strip of the upland that is amenable to easy fire management. The widths of these stream line corridors should be

evaluated based on the studies of wetland and surface water buffer zones that have been prepared by the Center for Wetlands at the University of Florida.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-3.5.4:** The primary corridors will be determined as ~~refinements~~ from the ~~habitat lineations~~ ~~lineation's~~ generated as the ~~habitat~~ GIS Biodiversity Map. The Three primary patterns should be looked at are respected: 1) The high-dry longleaf pine/turkey oak ridge running east-west through the center of the project area; 2) An area along the beach dune line paralleling the coast; and 3) A corridor along the stream lines and associated wetlands and floodplains, which generally ~~run~~ runs north-south. The stream line corridor should include the stream, the associated shrubby brushy area adjacent to the stream line and a strip of the upland that is amenable to easy fire management. The widths of these stream line corridors should be evaluated based on the studies of wetland and surface water buffer zones that have been prepared by the Center for Wetlands at the University of Florida.

**GOAL R-4: TO ENHANCE THE ECOLOGY OF SOUTH WALTON THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS DEVELOPMENT.**

The following changes are recommended, **TO ENHANCE AND CONTINUE TO MEASURE THE ECOLOGY OF SOUTH WALTON THROUGH THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND GREENWAYS DEVELOPMENT.**

**Objective R-4.1: Develop open space linkages within State-owned lands to maintain ecosystems.**

The following changes are recommended. Encourage and participate in creating ~~Develop~~ open space linkages within State-owned lands to maintain eco-systems.

**Policy R-4.1.1:** The County & the State shall utilize the State Forest and park holdings as a core open space system oriented toward resource protection.

The following changes are recommended. The County ~~and~~ will coordinate with the State ~~shall~~ to utilize the State Forest and park holdings as a core open space system oriented toward resource protection.

**Objective R-4.2 Encourage private conservation of natural resources.**

The following changes are recommended. Encourage private conservation of natural resources through methods and provisions in the Land Development Regulations.

**Policy R-4.2.1:** The Future Land Use Plan shall have designations to protect and enhance the natural resources of South Walton.

**Policy R-4.2.2:** The County and state agencies shall establish an incentive system to encourage private forest conservation.

The following changes are recommended. Need to define private forest conservation incentive system.

**Policy R-4.2.3:** By 1996, the County shall draft LDR provisions to protect natural resources within conservation residential areas through minimal impact development techniques.

The following changes are recommended. ~~By 1996, the County shall draft LDR provisions to protect natural resources within conservation residential areas through minimal impact development techniques. Define “minimal impact development techniques”~~

**Policy R-4.2.4:** The Department of Agriculture’s Stewardship Program will be used as a guide for local residents.

The following changes are recommended. This policy should be removed. ~~**Policy R-4.2.4:** The Department of Agriculture's Stewardship Program will be used as a guide for local residents~~

**Policy R-4.2.5:** By 1996, the County shall prepare LDR's that focus on pervious surface treatments, alternatives to septic tanks, non-point source pollution and site accessibility.

The following changes are recommended. ~~**Policy R-4.2.5**~~ **R-4.2.4:** By 1996, the County shall prepare LDR's that focus on pervious surface treatments, alternatives to septic tanks, non-point source pollution and site accessibility.

**Objective R-4.3:** Establish a linked recreation, open space and greenway system as development occurs throughout South Walton County.

The following changes are recommended. By the year 2012, establish a linked recreation, open space and greenway system as development occurs throughout South Walton County.

**Policy R-4.3.1:** The County shall encourage the linkage of open space.

The following changes are recommended. The following policy should be deleted. ~~**Policy R-4.3.1:** The County shall encourage the linkage of open space.~~

**Policy R-4.3.2:** The County's LDRs shall require and encourage creation of a linked system that provides environmental protection, open space, recreation space and special ambience in South Walton and ensures that the natural environment is preserved, enhanced and made usable for the natural and man-made environment. The surface water buffers and protection zones required by Policies C-3.2.1, C-3.2.8, and C-3.2.10, the floodplain areas protected pursuant to Policy C-3.2.3.2., the wetland areas protected pursuant to Policy L-1.10.4., and the habitat and vegetative communities protected pursuant to Policy C-3.2.7. shall be interconnected both within development sites and between adjacent properties, as well as public and private conservation lands, in order to create a linked system. The dimensions of these connections shall be sufficient to facilitate the movement of affected wildlife species, to the maximum extent possible.

This should be broken into two policies: ~~**Policy R-4.3.2**~~ **R-4.3.1:** The County's LDR's shall require and encourage creation of a linked open space system that provides environmental protection, ~~open space,~~ recreational space and ~~special ambience in South Walton and~~ that ensures that the natural environment is preserved and enhanced. ~~and made useable for the natural and man-made environment.~~ ~~**Policy R-4.3.2:**~~ The surface water buffers and protection zones required by Policies C-3.2.1, C-3.2.8, and C-3.2.10, the floodplain areas protected pursuant to Policy C-3.2.3.2., the wetland areas protected pursuant to Policy L-1.10.4., and the habitat and vegetative communities protected pursuant to Policy C-3.2.7 shall be interconnected both within development sites and between adjacent properties, as well as public and private conservation lands, in order to create a linked system. The dimensions of these connections shall be sufficient to facilitate the movement of affected wildlife species, to the maximum extent possible.

**Policy R-4.3.3:** The following uses shall be specifically permitted within the linked open space system, consistent with other provisions of the comprehensive plan:

- a. Wetlands
- b. Wetland mitigation
- c. Stormwater retention/detention
- d. Passive recreation
- e. Greenways
- f. Wildlife corridors
- g. Floodplains

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-4.3.3:** The following uses shall be specifically permitted within the linked open space system, consistent with other provisions of the comprehensive plan and any outside agencies.

**Policy R-4.3.4:** The County and state agency staff shall prepare a ROG Master Plan for the South Walton area, that includes the greenway system, state lands to be retained, County parks, private conservation areas, and areas that should be included in the linked open space system. Upon adoption of the ROG Master Plan by the County, the preserved areas referred to in Policy R-4.3.2. shall conform to the linked open space system in the ROG Master Plan, to the maximum extent possible.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-4.3.4:** By the year 2012, The County and state agency staff shall prepare a an ROG (Recreation Open Space & Greenway) Master Plan for the South Walton area, that includes the greenway system, state lands to be retained, County parks, private conservation areas, and areas that should be included in the linked open space system. Upon adoption of the ROG Master Plan by the County, the preserved areas referred to in Policy R-4.3.2 shall conform to the requirements of the linked open space system. in the ROG Master Plan, to the maximum extent possible.

**Objective R-4.4:** Ensure the provision of open space by public agencies and private enterprises.

**The following changes are recommended. By the year 2012, encourage and coordinate Ensure the provision of open space by public agencies and private enterprises.**

**Policy R-4.4.1:** All developments in South Walton County shall conform to a linked open space system consisting of the wetlands & 100 year flood prone areas, & other areas referred to in Policy R-4.3.2, including a connected bikeway/pedestrian system. Bicycle or pedestrian facilities that are dedicated for public use shall be required within the linked open space system, both within & between development projects, except where it is determined by a wildlife biologist that such activity would cause significant harm to the protection of listed species. These bicycle & pedestrian facilities shall be linked to the greenway system & to public conservation & recreation lands, wherever feasible.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-4.4.1:** All developments in South Walton County shall conform to a linked open space system consistent with consisting of the wetlands, and 100-year flood-prone areas, and other areas referred to in Policy R-4.3.2, Policies C-3.2.1, C-3.2.8, and C-3.2.10, the floodplain areas protected pursuant to Policy C-3.2.3.2., the wetland areas protected pursuant to Policy L-1.10.4., and the habitat and vegetative communities protected pursuant to

Policy C-3.2.7. **R-4.4.2** including a connected bikeway/pedestrian system. Bicycle or pedestrian facilities that are dedicated for public use shall be required within the linked open space system, both within and between development projects, except where it is determined by a wildlife biologist that such activity would cause significantly harm to the protection of listed species. These bicycle and pedestrian facilities shall be linked to the greenway system and to public conservation and recreation lands, wherever feasible.

**Policy R-4.4.2:** Preserved wetlands and 100-year floodprone areas of ten (10) acres or more, as well as preserved habitat and native vegetative community areas of ten (10) acres or more, within development projects shall be required to connect to and create a linked open space system.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-4.4.2 R-4.4.3:** ~~Preserved~~ Preserve wetlands and 100-year flood-prone areas of ten (10) acres or more, as well as ~~preserved~~ preserve habitat and native vegetative community areas of ten (10) acres or more. ~~within development projects shall be required to connect to and create a linked open space system.~~

**Policy R-4.4.3:** The standard of 6.25 acres per 1,000 people shall be met in the following manner:

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-4.4.3 R-4.4.4:** The standard LOS (Level of Service) of 6.25 acres per 1,000 people shall be met in the following manner:

Based on current LOS a table has been formatted below showing LOS requirements to 2025.

Year	2010	2015	2020	2025
Population	81,800	103,500	126,450	150,250
Exp LOS Park & Rec.& Open Space Acres	511	647	790	939

- a. As a part of the Parkland Dedication Ordinance, 50% of Park and Recreation space requirements shall be provided within specific developments and related specifically to that development, i.e. small neighborhood parks, tot lots, beach front accessways, water front activities, etc. These activities are encouraged to be placed within or adjacent to the “linked” ROG system.

- b. 50% shall be achieved by making a financial contribution for the acquisition and creation of community parks to serve more than one (1) neighborhood.
- c. Active and passive recreation activities shall be located as much as possible adjacent to and/or within (if accessible) wetland and 100-year floodprone areas to help create the linkage.

The following changes are recommended. Active and passive recreation activities shall be located as much as possible adjacent to and/or within (if accessible) wetland and 100-year flood-prone areas to help create a ~~the~~ linkage. Specifically permitted uses within wetland areas needs to be determined for active and passive recreational activities.

- d. A density transfer of one unit/acre of Wetland & 100-year floodprone area preserved within a development shall be granted when that space is linked to the overall ROG system as long as the usable acreage density does not exceed the density allowed within the applicable land use classification.

The following changes are recommended. A density transfer of one unit per acre of Wetland and 100-year flood-prone area preserved within a development shall be granted when that space is linked to the overall ROG (Recreation Open Space & Greenway) system as long as the useable acreage density does not exceed the density allowed within the applicable land use classification.

- e. Beach access points shall be placed every 1,000 feet as an area is developed.

The following changes are recommended. Beach access points shall be placed every 1,000 feet as ~~an~~ the coastal area is developed.

**GOAL R-5: WALTON COUNTY WILL EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL FOR OPEN SPACE SITES WITHIN THE COUNTY.**

The following changes are recommended. **GOAL R-5: BY THE YEAR 2012, WALTON COUNTY WILL EVALUATE THE POTENTIAL FOR OPEN SPACE SITES WITHIN THE COUNTY.**

**Objective R-5.1:** County will combine open space areas with recreation sites wherever feasible in future location of recreation sites or open space sites.

The following changes are recommended. **In all future developments, Walton County will combine open space areas with recreation sites**

**wherever feasible. in future location of recreation sites or open space sites.**

**Policy R-5.1.1:** The County will continue, through the development review process, to require the developers of Planned Unit Developments to provide reasonably convenient access from all occupied structures to common open spaces, such open spaces to preserve valuable site amenities such as trees, dunes, natural land forms and beach access.

The following changes are recommended. **Policy R-5.1.1: Through the development review process**, the County will continue ~~through the development review process~~, to require the developers of Planned Unit Developments to provide reasonably convenient access from all occupied structures to common open spaces. ~~such open spaces to preserve valuable site.~~

**Policy R-5.1.2:** The County adopts the following definitions and standards for open space, as follows:

The following changes are recommended. The following underlined definitions should be added.

Passive Recreation: - A passive recreation area refers a mix of uses in a neighborhood park, undeveloped land or minimally improved lands which includes the following: landscaped area, natural area, ornamental garden, non-landscaped green-space, stairway, decorative fountain, picnic area, water body, or trail without recreational staffing.

Active Recreation: – Active recreation refers to a mix of uses in a neighborhood park that includes the following facilities or facility types: athletic fields, building or structures for recreational activities, concession, community garden, courses or courts, children's play area, dog play area, or a bike path.

#### DEFINITIONS & STANDARDS:

Open Space: Undeveloped land suitable for passive recreation or conservation uses. Sub-categories shall include:

- **Corridor Open Space:** Land preserved as open space that runs along a right-of-way or any long linear open space through which people travel.
- **Pastoral Open Space:** Open space land preserved for the management, protection and prudent use of natural resources present on that land. Resource-based recreation may be allowed if compatible with the site.
- **Utilitarian Open Space:** Open space land reserved from intense development due primarily to public safety constraints such as

being prone to flooding, or sinkhole formation or having contaminated soil.

- **Habitat Open Space:** Open space that has been shown to reflect all life requisites (feeding, breeding, nesting and resting opportunities) for all life stages and their correct juxtaposition in time and space within an area suitable to maintain a minimum viable population of a particular species. These areas, after definition, will serve as management units for long-term maintenance of the species known to be sustainable in such areas.

These definitions and standards shall apply to all development, existing and future, including redevelopment. The County will include these definitions and standards in the Land Development Code to use the area due to the incorporation of structural and functional vegetation, water and other requisites necessary for their utilization and habitation.

**Objective R-5.2: The County will annually evaluate land for potential open space.**

The following changes are recommended. Every (7) years or every Evaluation and Appraisal Report Cycle, the County will annually evaluate land for potential open space.

**Policy R-5.2.1:** The County will annually evaluate the need for open space within the unincorporated area of Walton County.

Refer to strikethrough underlined language. Every (7) seven years or every Evaluation and Appraisal Report cycle, the County will annually evaluate the need for open space within the unincorporated area areas of Walton County.

**Policy R-5.2.2:** The County shall develop policies and procedures for the acquisition of land suitable for open space within unincorporated Walton County.

The following changes are recommended. The County shall use grants, general funds and donations as some of the methods develop policies and procedures for the acquisition of land suitable for open space within unincorporated Walton County.

**Policy R-5.2.3:** By 1996, all lands acquired by the State from Walton County for recreation and/or conservation purposes shall be designated as State Forest or State Park with the potential for resource-based recreational use.

The following changes are recommended Delete policy. Policy R-5.2.3: By 1996, all lands acquired by the State from Walton County for recreation and/or conservation purposes shall be designated as State Forest or State Park with the potential for resource-based recreational use.

**GOAL R-6: TO REINFORCE THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY THROUGH THE STRATEGIC PLACEMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY PARKS**

The following changes are recommended. **GOAL R-6: TO REINFORCE THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND RECREATION THROUGH THE STRATEGIC PLACEMENT AND PLANNING OF NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY PARKS.**

Definitions:

Community Park- Community parks shall be located to serve several neighborhoods or a village, they should link to a greenway or other open space, if applicable and be no less than (25) acres.

Neighborhood Park- Neighborhood parks shall be located central to a neighborhood, shall be provided through the development approval process and be no less than (15) acres.

**Objective R-6.1: The County shall require neighborhood & community parks as Walton County develops.**

**Policy R-6.1.1:** The County shall prioritize use of the Parkland Dedication funds to encourage & facilitate the development of community parks in the County.

**Policy R-6.1.2:** Use fifteen (15) acres as a minimum size for a neighborhood park and twenty-five (25) acres for a community park. Active and passive facilities shall be included.

**Policy R-6.1.3:** Neighborhood parks shall be located central to a neighborhood and shall be provided through the development approval process.

**Policy R-6.1.4:** Community parks shall be located to serve several neighborhoods or a village, and they should link to a greenway or other open space, if applicable.

**Policy R-6.1.5:** By 1997, work with the Walton County School Board to jointly fund and program park facilities.

The following changes are recommended. ~~By 1997,~~ Continue to work with the Walton County School Board to jointly fund and program park facilities.

**GOAL R-7: WALTON COUNTY SHALL PROVIDE ADEQUATE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE COUNTY AND VISITORS TO THE COUNTY.**

The following changes are recommended. **GOAL R-7: WALTON COUNTY SHALL PROVIDE ADEQUATE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE RESIDENTS AND THE VISITORS OF THE COUNTY. ~~AND VISITORS TO THE COUNTY~~**

**Objective R-7.1:** Walton County shall annually evaluate its system of parks and recreation to determine deficiencies and future needs, based on level of service requirements and design standards.

**Policy R-7.1.1:** The level of service for recreation shall be composed of a “core system” of parklands, with a minimum of 6.25 acres of recreation and open space per 1,000 population. More specific requirements as addressed to specific locations, population centers, and needs of age groups inhabiting those population centers will be addressed in the design standards to be developed and included in the Land Development Regulations.

The following changes are recommended. The level of service for recreation shall be composed of a “core system” of parklands, with a minimum of 6.25 acres of recreation and open space per 1,000 people in population.

More specific requirements ~~as addressed~~ as it relates to specific locations, population centers, and needs of age groups inhabiting those population centers will be addressed in the design standards to be developed and included in the Land Development Regulations.

**Policy R-7.1.2:** Design Standards for development of new recreation sites and redevelopment of existing recreation sites shall be developed and included in the Land Development Regulations.

**Policy R-7.1.3:** The County shall prioritize current deficiencies for renovation of existing recreational facilities. Criteria for deficiency ranking shall be developed and included in the Land Development Regulations.

The following changes are recommended. The County shall annually prioritize ~~current~~ deficiencies for renovation of existing recreational facilities. Criteria for deficiency ranking shall be developed and included in the Land Development Regulations.

**Policy R-7.1.4:** The County shall examine funding sources for future recreation through utilization of the Grants Department.

The following changes are recommended. Delete this policy; grants were included in Section R-5.2.2

**Policy R-7.1.5:** [ PLAT FEE.] The County shall continue to require subdividers to dedicate a minimum of 5% percent of the gross area of a subdivision development for public recreation purposes, including public beach accessways, or pay 5% of the assessed land value, as established in the Land Development Regulations.

**Policy R-7.1.6:** The County shall make parks a part of community design through its LDC. Parks shall connect to bikeways and greenways (mandatory linkage in development if bikeways and greenways exist).

**Objective R-7.2: The County shall annually designate target areas which are deficient in recreational opportunities.**

**Policy R-7.2.1:** The County shall coordinate the South Walton Tourist Development Council and the municipalities of Walton County in soliciting information regarding recreation from visitors and residents of Walton County, in order to target the recreational needs of the County.

The following changes are recommended. The County shall coordinate and participate with the South Walton Tourist Development Council and the municipalities of Walton County in soliciting information regarding recreation from visitors and residents of Walton County. This solicitation will be in order to target the future recreational needs of the County.

Please see attached CIP Schedule for park improvements

**Policy R-7.2.2:** The County shall evaluate population centers/clusters for placement of recreation facilities in areas deficient in recreation opportunities and rank the results in order of need.

The following changes are recommended. Every seven years or through the Evaluations and Appraisal Report Process, the County shall evaluate population centers or clusters for placement of recreation facilities. In the in areas found deficient in recreation recreational opportunities and the County shall rank the results in order of need.

Please see attached CIP Schedule for park improvements

**Policy R-7.2.3:** The County shall follow the Level of Service guidelines for recreational facilities as established in the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan (Policies R-4.4.3. and R-7.1.1) and include the design standards for recreation in the Land Development Regulations.

The following changes are recommended. The County shall follow the Level of Service guidelines for recreational facilities as established in the

Recreation and Open Space Element of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan (Policies R-4.4.3. and R-7.1.1). In addition, include the design standards for recreation should be established in the Land Development Regulations.

**Policy R-7.2.4:** The County shall annually examine the potential for pedestrian recreation in the form of bicycle paths and jogging paths in existing recreation and open space sites and will include pedestrian recreation in the performance standards for recreational facilities in the Land Development Regulations.

The following changes are recommended. The County shall annually examine the potential for pedestrian recreation in the form of bicycle paths and jogging paths in existing recreation and open space sites. ~~and These performance standards will be include included in the pedestrian recreation in the performance standards for recreational facilities in the Land Development Regulations.~~

**Objective R-7.3: Accessibility and Safety**

The County shall annually evaluate potential sites for future recreation.

The following changes are recommended. **The County shall annually evaluate potential sites for future recreation.**

**Policy R-7.3.1:** The County shall provide accessibility to future recreation sites, which shall include but is not limited to: acquisition of needed rights-of way, handicapped parking spaces, barrier-free access, operational automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian access, as established in the Land Development Regulations.

The following changes are recommended. The County shall provide for the safety of users of public facilities, which shall include but is not limited to: installation of signs, lighting, fencing and rails, as needed. Children's children's play areas to be located at least 100 feet from vehicular paths or separated by a barrier or buffer.

**Policy R-7.3.2:** The County shall provide for the safety of users of public facilities, which shall include but is not limited to: installation of signs, lighting, fencing and rails, as needed; children's play areas to be located at least 100 feet from vehicular paths or separated by a barrier.

**Objective R-7.4: Coordination**

The County shall coordinate plans for renovation of existing recreation sites and construction of future sites with the South Walton Tourist Development Council, and appropriate State Agencies.

The following changes are recommended. **The County shall ~~coordinate~~ participate in plans for renovation of existing recreation recreational sites and construction of future sites with the South Walton Tourist Development Council, and appropriate ~~State Agencies~~ state agencies.**

**Policy R-7.4.1:** The County Grants Department shall continue to coordinate funding cycles for recreation and open space with the South Walton Tourist Development Council.

**Policy R-7.4.2:** The County shall solicit input from the Tourist Development Council regarding policy and procedures for recreation in Walton County. The Tourist Development Council shall be included in the review process in an advisory capacity for new development or redevelopment which includes recreation.

### **TRAFFIC CIRCULATION ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES**

#### **GOAL T-1: PROVIDE A SAFE, COST EFFECTIVE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM WITH ADEQUATE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN PLACE CONCURRENT WITH THE IMPACTS OF DEVELOPMENT**

**Objective T-1.1:** Concurrency - Maintain the Concurrency Management System in place as new developments are proposed and old developments are modified.

**Policy T-1.1.1:** The County hereby adopts the following minimum peak hour levels of service standards for its roadways.<sup>21</sup>

County & State Roads Not on Florida Intrastate Highway System:

- C Principal Arterials  
(as shown on Future Traffic Circulation Map)
- D Minor Arterials and Collectors  
(as shown on Future Traffic Circulation Map)
- D State Road 20
- D US 90 from SR 187 to SR 285
- D SR 81 from SR 20 to Red Bay
- D

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<sup>21</sup> Policy R-1.1.1 was amended by ordinance number 2005-35.

State Roads on the Florida Intrastate Highway System:

- C US 98 from Okaloosa County Line  
to Bay County Line\*
- B US 98 from West End of CR 30A  
to Bay County Line\*
- C US 331 from Interstate 10 (SR 30) to  
US 98\*
- B Interstate 10\*

The LOS standard shall be interpreted and applied as follows:

\* Interstate 10, US 98, SR 20, and US 331 (south of Interstate 10) are designated as part of the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS). The FIHS LOS standards require all urban and transitioning urban roadways to operate at LOS "C" or better (F.A.C. Rule Chapter 14-94). Rural 2-lane roadways are required to operate at LOS "C" or better unless the roadway currently operates below LOS "C", in which case the roadway is allowed to "maintain" the current operating LOS. When such roadways are upgraded to four (4) or more lanes, the LOS standard shall become "B".

A failed or constrained road shall be considered concurrent if construction plans for road improvements that will make the road consistent with the adopted LOS are funded and are contained in the first three years of an adopted five-year work program.

**Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address**

- 1. Corridor Management**
- 2. Coordination with regional Planning Organization projects**
- 3. Implementation of new Concurrency Management LOS determinations**
- 4. Right-of-way constraints**

**Policy T-1.1.2:** Review of all proposed development for impact upon roadway level of service shall occur at the initial review of the project by the County Staff.

The policy has functioned as intended.

**Objective T-1.2: Planning Coordination - Throughout the planning period, coordinate with the plans and programs of the Ft. Walton Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Florida Department of Transportation's Five Year Transportation Plan, and the Northwest Florida Coast Resource Planning and Management Plan.**

**Policy T-1.2.1:** The County shall actively participate during all phases of the MPO's continuing transportation planning process through a representative involved in the process.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.2.2:** The County will review the annual updates of the Five Year Construction Plan to ensure that the best interests of the County are included in the Plan.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.2.3:** The County shall coordinate with the plans and programs of the Northwest Florida Coast Resource Planning and Management Plan through representation and active participation in the programs.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.2.4:** By April of each year, the County road maintenance department will perform an assessment of the condition of local roads and establish priorities for roadway improvements based on accepted engineering standards (FDOT Green Book) and in conformance with Florida Statute 336.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Capital Improvement Programs updates
2. Update to comply with SB 360

**Policy T-1.2.5:** Within six months of completion of any revised study for south Walton County by the MPO, this element shall be amended to incorporate the findings and conclusions of the study. The revised element will be consistent with and satisfy all Rule 9J-5 requirements, including the methodology used to project traffic circulation levels of service and systems needs. The Future

Transportation System Map and the objectives and policies will be amended to be consistent with the revised data and analysis.

**Objective T-1.3: Rights-of-Way - The County shall protect existing and future rights-of-way from encroachment in order to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the transportation system.**

**Policy T-1.3.1:** The County shall adopt and implement rights-of-way standards and minimum building setbacks.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with New Corridor Management and Access Management objectives
2. Coordination with the Transportation needs identified by the Build-out Analysis

**Policy T-1.3.2<sup>22</sup>:**

- (A) Whenever a tract or parcel of land located within the County is proposed for subdivision, replatting, or for development, and a portion of it is embraced within a corridor for a street or highway shown on a plan established and adopted by the County for the dedication of right-of-way within that corridor pursuant to any applicable legal authority; or
- (B) The County may require an applicant for subdivision approval, plat approval, development order approval, or any other permission to develop property, to dedicate for street or highway purpose the right-of-way within such corridor if the County allows the applicant to transfer density credits attributable to the dedicated right-of-way to contiguous land owned by the applicant. No right-of-way dedication shall be required pursuant to this Section unless the Board or County Commissioners or governing board or entity granting final subdivision approval, plat approval, development order approval, or other permission to develop property shall find:
  - 1) that the dedication does not result in the deprivation of a reasonable use of the original tract; and
  - 2) that the dedication is either reasonably related to the traffic generated by the proposed subdivision or use of the remaining land, or the impact of the dedication

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<sup>22</sup> Policy T-1.3.2 was added by ordinance number 2005-37.

is mitigated by other measures provided in this Section; or

- (C) If an applicant for subdivision approval, plat approval, development order approval, or any other permission to develop property, is not required to, but elects to, dedicate right-of-way within the corridor, the County may allow the applicant to transfer density credits attributable to the dedicated right-of-way to contiguous land that is part of a common development plan.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with New Corridor Management and Access Management objectives
2. Coordination with the Transportation needs identified by the Build-out Analysis
3. Clarification of language

**Objective T-1.4: Access - Throughout the planning time frame, the County shall provide a safe, convenient and efficient transportation system for motorized and non-motorized travel.**

**Policy T-1.4.1:** The County shall regulate the provision of roadway access to the State Highway System for all new development through the following management techniques:

- a) Limiting access to the State Highway System by controlling the number and location of site access driveways and other intersecting roads according to the procedures and standards outlined in FDOT Rule Chapters 14-96 and 14-97;
- b) Requiring shared driveways or cross-access easements for adjacent properties where the minimum driveway spacing requirements defined in FDOT Rule 14-97 cannot be met; and
- c) Promoting the use of parallel roads to optimize the number of site access driveways and intersecting roads, where necessary to maintain the safe and efficient operation of the transportation system.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with New Corridor Management and Access Management objectives
2. Coordination with the Transportation needs identified by the Build-out Analysis

**Policy T-1.4.2:** The Land Development Regulations, updated by the statutory deadline, shall provide standards for adequate and safe on-site vehicle circulation and parking for motorized and non-motorized travel.

**Objective T-1.5: Coordination With Future Land Uses - Through the planning time frame, the transportation system shall be coordinated with the land use designations on the Future Land Use Map. The transportation system elements shall complement the design of planned development regarding scale, composition and density. The application of multimodal transportation strategies will be considered as appropriate.**

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Support and encourage use of public rights-of-way in and through private developments
2. Establish standards and requirements for the use and construction of inter-development circulation roads and drives that are parallel to and supplemental to the main public thoroughfare system of local, collector, arterial, highway and interstate facilities.

**Policy T-1.5.1:** Roadway improvements shall be designed to provide sufficient capacity to accommodate traffic associated with the type and intensity of development as indicated on the Future Land Use Map.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.5.2:** Review of development proposals and plans for all single family subdivisions, multifamily residential, commercial, office or industrial uses shall include appropriate consideration of transportation impacts through the submission of a circulation, parking and access plan.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.5.3:** The County shall assist FDOT in developing roadway design plans for US 98 and plan and design additional parallel road systems that are consistent with the community vision and have adequate east/west capacity for both local and through travel.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Support and encourage use of public rights-of-way in and through private developments
2. Establish standards and requirements for the use and construction of inter-development circulation roads and drives that are parallel to and supplemental to the main public thoroughfare system of local, collector, arterial, highway and interstate facilities.

**Objective T-1.6: Multi-Modal System - A balance of auto, truck, bicycle, pedestrian and basic transit systems will be developed for Walton County to reduce total auto dependence, save energy and reduce excess travel.**

**Policy T-1.6.1:** Through the updated Land Development Regulations, require private developers to address pedestrian and bicycle circulation including internal walks, bicycle paths and storage areas, as well as linkage to other projects and transportation modes where possible.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.6.2:** Through the updated Land Development Regulations, require a minimum percentage of new developments be designed with compact, mixed use land use, to encourage non-auto travel for short trips.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.6.3:** Through a Municipal Services Taxing Unit or Special District, develop a transit or jitney system to serve many segments of travelers including, but not limited to children, seniors, tourists and employees.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.6.4:** Encourage travel reduction programs and techniques such as ridesharing, van pooling, flex-time employment and telecommuting.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Objective T-1.7: Energy Efficiency - The County shall develop policies and procedures to minimize pollution to and the use of the natural environment as related to the operation and maintenance of the transportation system and its supporting infrastructure.**

**Policy T-1.7.1:** The County shall conduct a study to establish parking ratios and design standards for roadways and parking areas that minimize impervious surfaces, thereby reducing water runoff, erosion and treatment facility needs.

The policy has functioned as intended

**Policy T-1.7.2:** The County shall optimize signal timing plans to reduce vehicular delay and vehicle emissions.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Coordination with New Corridor Management and Access Management objectives
2. Coordination with the Transportation needs identified by the Build-out Analysis

**Policy T-1.7.3:** The County shall encourage the development of multimodal travel modes to maximize energy efficiency.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Emerging multimodal travel needs throughout the entire county
2. Coordination with New Corridor Management and Access Management objectives
3. Coordination with the Transportation needs identified by the Build-out Analysis

**Objective T-1.8: Scenic Highways - For highways being considered for scenic designation, the County shall develop designation criteria and Corridor Management Plans for the preservation, maintenance, protection and promotion of those intrinsic resources within the corridor.**

**Policy T-1.8.1:** For each highway being considered for scenic designation, the following procedures shall be followed:

- a) A Scenic Highway Advisory Committee shall be formed to create a vision, set goals and objectives, evaluate intrinsic resources, develop a Corridor Management Plan and Action Plan, and establish a management entity for the scenic highway.

- b) The Advisory Committee shall coordinate the reconciliation of the Corridor Management Plan with the current Walton County Comprehensive Plan.
- c) The Board of County Commissioners must approve any scenic highway nomination and adopt the Corridor Management Plan by ordinance into the Walton County Comprehensive Plan in order for the local designation to go into effect.
- d) The management entity shall implement the Action Plan and provide an annual report on the effectiveness of the Corridor Management Plan.

The policy has functioned as intended

## **INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES**

### **A. POTABLE WATER SUB-ELEMENT**

#### **GOAL I-1: STRIVE TO PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY POTABLE WATER TO CURRENT AND FUTURE RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.**

##### **Objective I-1.1: Level of Service Standards**

Maximize the use of existing facilities and discourage urban sprawl by eliminating the use of individual potable water wells and package plants within existing and planned service areas and by prohibiting the extension of potable water facilities outside of existing and planned service areas as depicted on Map 4 in the Potable Water Sub-element. Where central facilities are available, the installation of individual wells and package plants is not permitted. In addition, the County shall ensure that unused capacity is committed prior to approval of new facilities.

**Policy I-1.1.1:** The following level of service standards are hereby adopted by the County and shall be used for determining the availability of service capacity: See Capital Improvements Element Policy CIE-1.3.3). These level of service standards shall be used unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed use utilizes less capacity through historic records or studies of similar uses.

**Policy I-1.1.2:** The County will develop and implement methodologies for determining available capacity and demand of a proposed development upon the water systems and coordinate with FDEP and the NFWMD to ensure future capacity and distribution systems are adequately provided.

**Policy I-1.1.3:** The County shall require the potable water utility providers to undertake an analysis of actual built densities in North and South Walton to establish a more empirical basis for projecting future demand.

**Policy I-1.1.4:** All improvements or expansions made to existing facilities shall be consistent with level of service standards.

**Policy I-1.1.5:** The County will implement procedures to ensure that at the time a development permit is issued, adequate water system capacity is available to meet the needs of the proposed development.

**Policy I-1.1.6:** The County will develop and implement procedures for updating facility demand & capacity information as development orders are issued.

**Policy I-1.1.7:** The provision of water service in the Phase II expansion area of the Mossy Head Water Works service area alone does not constitute a basis for increasing land use densities and intensities within that area of the Future Land Use Map. Further, central water service within the General Agriculture and Large Scale Agriculture land use categories will be limited to those households identified on a map prepared on February 26, 1996, which was submitted as part of a USDA Rural development grant application to fund the Phase II expansion.

**Policy I-1.1.8:** The provision of water service between the DeFuniak Springs city limits and the new hospital site alone does not constitute a basis for increasing land use densities and intensities on the Future Land Use Map. Approving a FLUM amendment based solely on the availability of central water could have the effect of creating strip development along US 331.

**Objective I-1.2: Ensure Adequate Capacity**

~~There are currently no deficiencies for potable water facilities in S. Walton County. However,~~ The County shall ensure adequate facilities are available for projected water facility needs through continued coordination ~~with the Florida Community Services Corporation and South Walton~~ all local Utility providers in carrying out its list of capital improvements in the Master Plan and annual compliance reports, and through the land development regulations. The land development regulations shall contain an annual monitoring program of ~~Florida Community Services Corporation and South Walton Utility~~ local utility provider improvements to ensure development does not take place unless the facilities are available concurrent with the impacts of development

**Policy I-1.2.1:** The County shall require through building permit review that all new construction activities utilize fixtures conforming to the following schedule of maximum water use, consistent with the FL Water Conservation Act:

Water Closets, tank type	3.5 gallons/flush
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Water Closet, flushometer or flush value	3.5 gallons/flush
Urinals, tank type	3.5 gallons/flush
Urinals, flushometer or flush value	5 gallons/flush
Showerheads	3.5 gallons/minute
Lavatory and sink faucets	2.5 gallons/minute

This policy needs to be amended to provide technically correct information.

**Policy I-1.2.2:** The County shall promote and encourage owners of agricultural land, through public awareness programs, to incorporate the water conserving methods of farming recommended by the Soil Conservation Service, and other Soil Conservation Service approved Best Management Practices.

**Policy I-1.2.3:** Future water demand for non-potable water uses shall be met through the use of water of the lowest acceptable quality for the purpose intended. To this end, developers requiring large amounts of water for use other than drinking water shall utilize reclaimed water from stormwater systems and treated wastewater.

**Policy I-1.2.4:** The land development regulations shall enforce limitations on clearing of native vegetation in the County to conserve water and promote use of drought tolerant plants for landscaping by provision of planting lists and other public awareness procedures.

The County shall include requirements for the use of water efficient landscaping and xeriscaping in redevelopment and new development projects county-wide

**Policy I-1.2.5:** The County shall coordinate with the Northwest Florida Water Management District to ensure that the provision of potable water facilities is consistent with the District's designation of South Walton County as an Area of Water Resources Concern. Public water supply systems shall be required to develop, adopt and implement water conservation plans and measures to promote water conservation and efficiency. The plans shall specifically provide for a reduction of landscape irrigation water uses. The County shall solicit the participation of the District in the siting of new potable water facilities based on standards which include, but are not limited to, the suitability of the aquifer, impact on salt water intrusion, and distance from hazardous wastes, landfills, and other incompatible land uses.

**Objective I-1.3: Water Conservation**  
By the year 2000, reduce potable water demand by 20 percent.

This provision should be amended to be consistent with the water providers' consumptive use permit conditions.

**Policy I-1.3.1:** The County will require that all new development install water conservation devices.

**Policy I-1.3.2:** The County will require retrofitting of water conservation devices.

**Objective I-1.4 Maximize Existing Facilities**

It is the County's objective to maximize use of existing facilities and discourage urban sprawl, through adoption of land development regulations by the statutory deadline which guide the provisions of services to unserved areas within the County. The regulations shall restrict installation of private wells where central facilities are available; coordinate density and intensity of development on the Future Land Use Map with availability of facilities or areas planned for facility expansion; require mandatory hookup where central facilities are available; ensure unused capacity is committed prior to approval of new facilities; and, ensure that new development pays a proportionate share in the extension of service.

**Policy I-1.4.1:** The County shall actively participate and aid the Regional Utility Authority in expansion of water services to South Walton County, and development of alternative water sources in north and south Walton County.

**Policy I-1.4.2:** Future development shall be consistent with the following guidelines:

1. Tie-in to the water facilities shall be required.
2. Water main oversizing shall be provided consistent with the County's overall plans for the area.
3. The Developer shall pay for line extensions sufficient for the development's need, and the County shall pay the incremental cost for the required oversizing.
4. All proposed development within South Walton shall coordinate with the utility providers to ensure that water facilities are extended in accordance with the County's objectives.
5. A joint Master Water System Plan shall be prepared and adopted by the Walton County Board of County commissioners prior to the end of calendar year 1995. This Plan shall identify water supply and treatment plant locations; the size and location of all water transmission lines; phasing plans; implementation schedule; financing plan and related information.
6. Development proceeding prior to this plan (being adopted) shall coordinate with the Utility providers to incorporate line oversizing, if required.

**B. SANITARY SEWER SUB-ELEMENT**

## **GOAL I-2: THE PROVISION OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE & EFFICIENT WASTEWATER COLLECTION, TREATMENT & DISPOSAL SYSTEMS.**

### **Objective I-2.1: Level of Service Standards**

Maximize the use of existing facilities and discourage urban sprawl by eliminating the use of septic tanks and package plants within existing and planned service areas and prohibiting the extension of sanitary sewer facilities outside of existing and planned service as depicted on Map 1 in the Sanitary Sewer Sub-element. Where central facilities are available, the installation of septic tanks and package plants is not permitted. The Department of Health, in accordance with the provisions of Subsection 381.00655(b), F.S., will determine when existing septic systems must connect to central sewer. Such determinations will be made in the public interest based upon public health considerations. Within existing and planned service areas where central sewers are not currently available, all new development must, where permitted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, install a dry line at the time of construction and connect to the central facility when available.

**Policy I-2.1.1** The County hereby adopts the following level of service standards, and shall adopt land development regulations which ensure that existing and projected needs are met through provisions which ensure that development orders are not issued which degrade the level of service standards. See CIE-1.3.3. These level of service standards shall be used unless the applicant can demonstrate that the proposed use utilizes less capacity through historic records or studies of similar uses.

**Policy I-2.1.2** The Land Development Code shall contain detailed methodologies for determining available capacity and the impact upon capacity of any proposed development.

**Policy I-2.1.3:** Use of on-site wastewater treatment systems shall be limited to the following conditions:

1. Existing septic tank and package treatment plants may remain in service until central service is available, as long as they perform satisfactorily in accordance with FDEP and FDHRS standards.
2. For areas not characterized by severely rated soils, use of septic tank systems for new development shall be limited to areas where central service or existing package plants are not available, in accordance with FDHRS septic tank rules, and shall only be permitted subsequent to the receipt of all applicable FDHRS and DEP permits.
3. Use of new package treatment plants shall be prohibited, unless it is the most environmentally sound alternative. Central facilities shall

be required in areas where septic tanks are prohibited due to severely rated soils, and for land uses proposing generation or processing of hazardous waste or high density or intensity use (based upon FDHRS and FDEP rules). The installation of such facilities should only be permitted by the County subject to the receipt of all applicable FDHRS and FDEP permits. When central facilities become available, developments shall be required to hook-up within a reasonable timeframe.

4. For areas characterized by severely rated soils, the County shall require that alternative types of septic tanks, including aerobic systems and alternative drainfields, be required for development proposing densities of greater than one dwelling unit per acre (unless central facilities are required by FDHRS).
5. The County shall pursue the feasibility of obtaining 201 facility plan monies and any other potential funding source for a county-wide master facilities plan.
6. Septic tanks which are proposed for nonresidential uses shall not exceed the sewage flow limitations of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services and the Department of Environmental Protection.
7. Any change of use for an existing dwelling from residential to nonresidential use shall certify that the proposed use will not result in the disposal of any hazardous wastes, consistent with Chapter 381.272, Florida Statutes.

**Policy I-2.1.4:** The provision of sewer service between the DeFuniak Springs city limits and the new hospital site alone does not constitute a basis for increasing land use densities and intensities on the Future Land Use Map. Approving a FLUM amendment based solely on the availability of sewer service could have the effect of creating strip development along US 331.

The need for this policy should be re-evaluated as part of the EAR-based amendments.

**Policy I-2.1.5:** The following priorities for replacing and correcting sanitary sewer facilities shall be implemented as follows:

1. The County shall, with assistance from the Regional Utility Authority, South Walton Utility Company and Florida Community Services Corporation, track facility demand and capacity information on a project by project basis as each development or building permit is submitted to ensure that issuance of the permit

will not degrade adopted level of service standards for existing facilities; and capital facilities are provided concurrent with the impacts of development.

2. The County shall require the sanitary sewer utility providers to undertake an analysis of actual built densities in South Walton to establish a more empirical basis for projecting future demand. See Policy I-1.1.3.
3. All improvements for replacement, expansion, or increase in capacity of facilities shall be consistent with adopted level of service standards.
4. The County shall establish inter-local agreements and other coordination mechanisms to ensure that private utilities coordinate with the Regional Utility Authority, regarding provision of sewer service to existing unsewered areas.

**Policy I-2.1.6:** Future development shall be consistent with the following guidelines:

1. Projects presently being processed for development approvals shall be allowed to proceed by providing septic tanks, until such time as central wastewater treatment can be provided, subject to meeting all local and state regulatory requirements.
2. A joint Master Wastewater System Plan shall be prepared and adopted by the Walton County Board of County Commissioners prior to the end of the calendar year.
3. By the end of calendar year, the Plan shall include the location and proposed size of treatment plants to serve development within the South Walton Service area; proposed method and location of effluent disposal; phasing plans; implementation schedule; financing plan and related information.
4. Development proposed after adoption of the Master Wastewater System Plan, shall provide wastewater service consistent with that Plan.

**Policy I-2.1.7:** The County shall support connection to central water and sewer along Choctawhatchee Bay by requiring utility providers to offer reduced tap fees, amortization of tap fee payments for low-to-moderate income residents, and other measures. In this effort, the County shall give particular consideration to extending sewer service to existing lots of record.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Policies I-2.1.7 and I-2.1.8 were amended by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-1.A.6.

**Policy I-2.1.8:** The County shall help fund the expansion of central water and sewer service to areas around Choctawhatchee Bay, along the Gulf front, along coastal dune lakes, and within floodplains through a variety of measures, including seeking state and federal grants and special appropriations.

### **C. SOLID WASTE SUB-ELEMENT**

**GOAL I-3: PROVIDE PROCEDURES AND FACILITIES FOR SOLID WASTE COLLECTION, TRANSFER AND DISPOSAL, WHICH CONSIDERS LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS WITHIN ECOLOGICALLY JUSTIFIABLE LIMITS.**

**Objective I-3.1: Solid Waste Reduction**

In order to extend the capacity of the existing landfill to meet level of service standards for future residents, the County shall develop a system of reduction of solid waste volumes through private or public recycling, resource recovery, or public information programs to reduce the waste stream 30 percent by 1997.

**Policy I-3.1.1:** The County shall continue construction of the recycling center to meet the recycling needs of the County.

**Policy I-3.1.2:** The County shall offer Amnesty Days at intervals during the year to encourage recycling of hazardous wastes and other hard to dispose of materials.

**Policy I-3.1.3:** The County shall increase public awareness of recycling needs and programs, through such techniques as: public meetings; advertisements; elementary school, library, and other public building displays; and, soliciting assistance from local church and civic groups.

**Policy I-3.1.4:** The County shall ensure waste tires and white goods (inoperative and discarded refrigerators, ranges, washers, water heaters, freezers and other similar domestic and commercial large appliances) are not disposed of in the landfill. The County shall provide for collection and recycling of waste tires and white goods, consistent with DEP requirements, Chapters 17701 (prohibitions) and 17-711 (waste tires), F.A.C.

**Policy I-3.1.5:** A level of service standard of 6 lbs. per capita per day is hereby adopted for solid waste facilities.

**Objective I-3.2: Disposal Capacity**

There are no solid waste deficiencies at this time, and none are foreseen throughout the planning time frame. However, it is the County's objective to ensure no deficiencies throughout the planning time frame through adoption of the following priorities:

**Policy I-3.2.1:** Through recycling programs aimed at reducing the waste stream 30 percent, the County shall ensure adequate capacity of the existing landfill.

**Policy I-3.2.2:** The County shall continue permitting procedures in coordination with Department of Environmental Protection to ensure necessary permits are obtained for additional areas.

**Policy I-3.2.3:** The existing monitoring wells will continue to be monitored in accordance with permit requirements to ensure there is no leakage to groundwater.

**Policy I-3.2.4:** The County shall determine whether existing closed landfills need additional monitoring for groundwater contamination. The County shall coordinate with DEP and other state and federal agencies to determine whether any funding and technical assistance would be available for a study of past use, underlying soil and geology, and need for additional monitoring. The County may solicit interested citizen groups and local business associations for assistance in finding grant money or other funds which may be available.

**Policy I-3.2.5:** Reuse old, closed landfill sites for recreation use if soils will allow such reuse.

#### **D. DRAINAGE SUB-ELEMENT**

**GOAL I-4: PROVIDE FOR DRAINAGE FROM EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND DEVELOPMENTS TO PREVENT PHYSICAL DAMAGE TO STRUCTURES, AND ENSURE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY.**

**Objective I-4.1: Level of Service Standards**

The County shall adopt land development regulations by the statutory deadline which ensure that new development and redevelopment does not increase stormwater runoff or flooding problems. The level of service standards for drainage shall ensure that the capacity of drainage structures for roads and other development are designed to meet facility needs

**Policy I-4.1.1:** The following level of service standard for drainage and stormwater management shall apply:

1. (a) All new residential subdivisions;
- (b) infill residential development within improved residential areas or subdivisions existing prior to the adoption of this comprehensive plan;

- (c) all multifamily residential development (including duplex, triplex and quadraplex);
- (d) all new nonresidential development (other than agricultural); and
- (e) any existing use meeting the criteria of (a), (b), (c), or (d) above that proposes alterations or activities resulting in an increase in runoff shall meet the following standards:

Water Quality and Quantity:

Each development shall be responsible for storing and treating all postdevelopment runoff which exceed pre-development runoff. All storage facilities shall be designed with sufficient capacity to accommodate all runoff in excess of the runoff which would have resulted from the site if left in its natural, undeveloped condition, provided, however, that as a minimum, the first inch of rainfall will be retained.

Storage Capacity:

The storage capacity of all storage facilities must be at least as strict as DEP Chapter 17-25, F.A.C., and FDOT Chapter 14-86, F.A.C., Rules for Drainage Connections (provided at end of this section). Post-development runoff shall be released at pre-development natural runoff conditions.

Our evaluation and analysis of the data we have collected indicates that this policy needs to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to address

1. Stormwater facility operation and maintenance as it relates to Accessibility
2. Fiscal Viability of maintenance entity
3. Constructability
4. Interaction with the Northwest Florida Water Management District – ERP, countywide Stormwater Management Plan and Stormwater Utility requirements.

Coordination of flood design, water quality, operation & maintenance, stormwater quantity, and erosion control and management requirements of the following governmental entities:

1. Florida Department of Transportation
2. Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3. Northwest Florida Water Management District
4. Coastal Dune Lake Protection
5. Stormwater Utility

2. New Agricultural Land Uses and existing agricultural uses that propose activities resulting in an increase in runoff:

Any new agricultural use exempt from DEP rule 17-25, F.A.C., and which drains into a surface water, canal, or stream, or where drainage enters a ditch which empties into a sinkhole, surface water or stream, shall first allow the runoff to enter a grassed swale designed to percolate 80 percent of the runoff from a three year, one-hour design storm within 72 hours after a storm event.

The policy has functioned as intended

3. Ongoing and New Agricultural Land Uses:

Agricultural Practices shall be consistent with Best Management Practices recommended by the USDA Soil Conservation Service and US Forestry Service. All roads created under these land uses shall use culverts to assure natural drainage features are not destroyed. Silvicultural activities shall follow the best management practices outlined in the publication titled "1993 Silviculture Best Management Practices Manual" (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry) and the requirements of Chapters 373 and 403, F.S.

The policy has functioned as intended

4. For all new road construction, or improvements to existing roadways:
  - a. All drainage swales and ditches shall be designed to convey the runoff generated from a 10-year, 24-hour storm event.
  - b. For local (not classified as County roads) roadways, culverts and cross drains shall convey the runoff from a 10-year, 24-hour storm event; for county roadways, culverts and cross drains shall convey the runoff from a 25-year, 24-hour storm event.
  - c. Where Florida Department of Transportation standards are stricter for a particular roadway, they shall be the standard.
  - d. Drainage design for all new state and county road construction shall be in accordance with county and state stormwater management requirements and shall ensure compatibility with Mosquito District structures.
  - e. All stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the

designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 17-3, F.A.C.

The F.A.C. code reference needs to be updated.

5. To ensure state water quality standards are not violated, all new development or redevelopment activities shall provide proof of DEP permit under Chapter 17-25, F.A.C., or proof of exemption. All stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 17-3, F.A.C., and the Capital Improvements Element of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan.

**Objective I-4.2: Correction of Existing Facilities**

The County shall correct existing drainage facility deficiencies through: cosponsoring of SCS erosion and sedimentation control programs, and water quality improvement programs; coordination with the South Walton Mosquito Control District; paving of roads according to adopted level of service standards and the schedule adopted in the Policy.

**Policy I-4.2.1:** Priorities for replacement, correction of deficiencies and providing for future facility needs shall be as follows:

1. Replacement and correction of existing facilities: When facilities must be replaced, they shall be constructed according to the adopted level of service standards.
2. Correction of any remaining deficiencies shall be through the following implementation measures:
  - a. New roads shall be constructed, and existing roads repaved, according to adopted level of service standards according to the time frame adopted in the Capital Improvements Element of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan.
  - b. The County shall continue to cosponsor SCS erosion and sedimentation control programs, and water quality improvement programs.
  - c. The County shall continue existing coordination mechanisms with the South Walton Mosquito Control District towards correcting any newly identified drainage problems.
3. Development orders for new development and redevelopment shall not be issued until the applicant provides proof of DEP permit or exemption, and proof of meeting adopted level of service standards for stormwater management.

4. The County shall seek coordination with the Choctawhatchee River Conservancy District towards developing a basin-wide program for water quality improvement. The County may enlist interested local citizens to coordinate such efforts.
5. The County shall request technical assistance from the Soil Conservation Service and County Extension Agent in the development of additional criteria and programs to prevent pollution associated with associated with agricultural land uses.
6. As soon as the DEP study of golf course chemicals is completed, the County shall request a copy of the study and review existing regulations for adequacy in regulating golf course runoff.
7. The development and adoption of a stormwater master plan for South Walton County shall be completed in its entirety or in phases, by the year 2000, which shall identify the stormwater quality and quantity deficiencies and needs within the portions of South Walton County designated for urban development (i.e., all land use categories other than Conservation). The stormwater master plan shall recommend needed drainage improvements, shall analyze the adopted level of service standard, and shall recommend alternative standards, if necessary. The Infrastructure and Capital Improvements Elements shall be amended based on the stormwater master plan, including the data and analysis, level of service standards, priorities for replacement of facilities, an analysis of the financial feasibility of correcting existing facility deficiencies, correcting existing facility deficiencies to the extent determined to be financially feasible, and providing for future facility needs. The Infrastructure and Capital Improvements Elements, including the Five-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements shall be amended, within twelve (12) months of the completion of the stormwater master plan, or any phase thereof, based on the findings and recommendations contained in the master plan.
8. The County shall adopt a Stormwater Utility Fee for South Walton County, which shall be sufficient to cover the cost of preparing stormwater master plans and monitoring stormwater-related conditions, as well as the cost of constructing and maintaining improvements to the stormwater management system.

**Objective I-4.3: Maximize Existing Facilities**

At this time, there are no drainage facilities with excess capacity; therefore, there is no way to maximize the use of existing drainage facilities. However, the County shall discourage urban sprawl and maximize use of future facilities

through flexibility in the land development regulations to allow drainage facilities to serve more than one function, and to promote the use of regional facilities where they will not contribute to urban sprawl.

**Policy I-4.3.1:** Planning of County-funded drainage facilities shall be in consideration of regional drainage needs. Oversizing of facilities to accommodate any regional needs should be a priority.

**Policy I-4.3.2:** The County shall provide incentives for use of pervious pavement in lieu of traditional asphalt in the land development regulations.

**Policy I-4.3.3:** By 1996, the County shall undertake an analysis of a stormwater impact fee to fund a regional drainage need study.

**This policy needs to be updated to reflect the results of the county's analysis.**

**Objective I-4.4: Protect Natural Functions of Drainage Features.**  
Future land uses shall not adversely impact the natural functions of drainage features.

**Policy I-4.4.1:** To protect the natural functions of floodplains and flood prone areas, dredge and fill and clearing of natural vegetation will be permitted only to that needed to accommodate the immediate development site, consistent with the type of uses permitted in such areas by this plan. All such activities will be conducted in a manner which maintains the natural topography and hydrological functions of floodplains. Residential, commercial and industrial structures, as defined in Policy L-1.1.1, shall be clustered on the non-floodplain portions of a parcel or, where the entire parcel lies in the floodplain, structures shall be elevated on pilings. Compensatory storage shall be required for all development located in floodplains. Septic tanks and package plants are prohibited in floodplains. No hazardous or toxic materials may be stored within the 100-year floodplain, as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

**This policy should be placed with other flood-plain related policies or sufficiently cross-referenced so that staff, citizens, and developers will be aware of these requirements.**

## **E. AQUIFER RECHARGE SUB-ELEMENT**

### **GOAL I-5: THE FUNCTIONS OF NATURAL GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS WITHIN THE COUNTY WILL BE PROTECTED & MAINTAINED**

**Objective I-5.1: Aquifer Recharge Protection**

All new development and redevelopment shall ensure that aquifer water quality and quantity is not degraded by requiring that post-development flow conditions shall not be less than pre-development conditions.

**Policy I-5.1.1:** The County establishes an interim 400-foot radius wellfield protection zone around all public drinking water wells, as defined in Chapter 10D-6, FAC., so as to ensure protection of the wellfields and associated cones of influence from potential contamination. The first 200 foot radius is established as a zone of exclusion where no development or redevelopment will be permitted. Within the remainder of the zone of protection, land uses will be regulated to prohibit the use, sale, storage or generation of hazardous material, hazardous waste or materials on the Florida Substance List and other polluting materials as well as wastewater treatment plants, percolation ponds, mines and the excavation of waterways or drainage facilities which intersect the water table. The County will prohibit development or redevelopment that would not maintain the quality and quantity of the supply of groundwater and surface water inflow to cones of influence that serve as recharge areas. Upon completion of detailed modeling study that identifies the cone of influence of a potable water wellfield, this plan will be amended to incorporate the results of such study.

**Policy I-5.1.2:** Industries and other businesses which use, sell or trade hazardous materials or generate hazardous waste shall be sited, designed, operated and monitored to ensure that releases of hazardous materials or waste do not degrade groundwater or surface waters. In addition, a spill containment, cleanup and reporting plan must be prepared. Reporting must be undertaken immediately to appropriate County and state officials. Furthermore, such industries and businesses shall not be located in floodprone areas, areas with severe or moderate limitations to the use of septic tanks, in areas of high or moderate aquifer recharge potential or within 400 feet of an existing or planned potable water well. Areas of "high or moderate aquifer recharge potential" shall be defined as those areas that are shown as the Floridian Aquifer High Recharge Area on the West Florida Regional Planning Council maps of Regionally Significant Resources (1996).

**Policy I-5.1.3:** No development shall be approved unless the quality and quantity of the supply of groundwater and surface water inflow to recharge areas are maintained. The level of treatment for stormwater (especially herbicides, pesticides, heavy metals and petroleum hydrocarbons), and waste water, including sanitary sewer effluent as well as other onsite activities, must ensure that the water quality of the recharge areas are not degraded. Septic tanks shall not be permitted within these areas.

**Policy I-5.1.4:** The County shall actively seek funds, in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, for an annual Amnesty Day residential and small quantity generator hazardous waste collection program.

**Policy I-5.1.5:** The County shall designate used oil and battery drop-off collection points for residential users.

**Policy I-5.1.6:** The County shall coordinate with the Department of Environmental Protection in the Small Quantity Hazardous Waste Generator Program which surveys monitors and inspects nonresidential small quantity generating businesses.

**Policy I-5.1.7:** Prior to issuance of a development permit for an activity or structure which involves the use or storage of hazardous materials, the County shall require the applicant to provide evidence of permitting by all regulatory agencies having jurisdiction.

## **HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES**

### **GOAL H-1: TO PROVIDE A BROAD CHOICE AND VARIETY OF HOUSING TYPES FOR EXISTING AND FUTURE RESIDENTS.**

**Objective H-1.1: Increase the housing supply to meet the diverse housing demands for changing population and economic characteristics.**

**Policy H-1.1.1:** Provide for all housing types, including mobile homes & manufactured housing, at locations designed to meet the total community needs.

**Policy H-1.1.2:** Promote infill of and extensions to existing neighborhoods.

**Policy H-1.1.3:** Allow a variety of units in a neighborhood setting, consistent with a neighborhood plan.

**Policy H-1.1.4:** Promote development of more family-oriented housing (single family structures with yards for children, close to parks and schools) to fulfill the needs of immigrating families.

**Policy H-1.1.5:** Provide opportunities for higher density (townhomes, multifamily) housing within the existing communities that meet the needs of smaller households.

**Objective H-1.2: Ensure housing choice for all citizens.**

**Policy H-1.2.1:** Promote equal access to an open housing market for all persons at all income levels, regardless of age, race, religion or ethnic background.

**Policy H-1.2.2:** Establish lines of communication between the County and various components of the housing industry.

**Policy H-1.2.3:** The County shall continue to eliminate barriers to open housing.

**Policy H-1.2.4:** Create a temporary advisory body to study specific problem areas of the disadvantaged and make recommendations to government and the housing industry.

**Policy H-1.2.5:** Assist lending institutions in drafting “Affirmative Action in Lending” plans.

**Policy H-1.2.6:** Provide zoning to accommodate all housing types and ranges of densities.

**Policy H-1.2.7:** Through redevelopment activities, provide timely review of residential developments for provision of adequate infrastructure so that developments of higher densities will have infrastructure in place to support the increased intensity of use.

**Policy H-1.2.8:** Permit development of housing, in accordance with projected densities and housing types.

**Policy H-1.2.9:** Amend LDC to include a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) district.

**Policy H-1.2.10:** Streamline permit procedures for housing development.

**Policy H-1.2.11:** Prepare and produce a project approval process flow chart to expedite development activities and set an approximate time-frame for completion of approval process for all projects designed to provide affordable housing for very-low, low, and moderate income persons, the elderly, the handicapped, and large families.

## **GOAL H-2: PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING.**

**Objective H-2.1: Encourage the provision of a minimum of 10% low and moderate income housing through applicable programs and incentive mechanisms.**

**Policy H-2.1.1:** Affordable housing units shall be distributed throughout South Walton. Do not concentrate affordable units in single development projects.

**Policy H-2.1.2:** Endorse private sector efforts to provide affordable housing through coordination of and technical assistance during project planning and/or funding application.

**Policy H-2.1.3:** Adopt county-wide land development regulations that shall continue to provide for affordable housing options such as. manufactured and modular housing, zero lot line housing, cluster housing and planned unit development.

**Policy H-2.1.4:** Establish a Housing Density Bonus System to reward residential developers with projects containing affordable housing initiatives. These bonuses will be actively encouraged in those areas that are already substantially developed and where there is excess capacity in the public infrastructure; and will be provided in newly developing areas consistent with public infrastructure availability.

This policy will need to be amended in the EAR-based amendments to reflect the county's proposed new bonus densities once the county has entered into a stipulated settlement agreement with DCA concerning the county's 2005 comprehensive plan amendment related to affordable housing.

**Policy H-2.1.5:** Enter into an interlocal agreement with other governmental agencies to provide notification from the appropriate agencies of unused or surplus buildings. Investigate properties for the adaptive reuse of buildings for affordable housing for very low, low and moderate-income persons or elderly housing developments.

**Policy H-2.1.6:** Establish a hospitality industry affordable housing group to develop a plan to deliver affordable housing for workers, as well as prepare a Transportation Strategy Plan.

**Policy H-2.1.7:** Develop private industry/governmental partnerships in the provision of housing and increase developer incentives to pursue lower income housing production.

**Policy H-2.1.8:** Utilize acquisition/disposition plan to assist in affordable housing provision.

**Policy H-2.1.9:** The County shall use the nonprofit Housing Development Corporation approach in housing delivery.

**Policy H-2.1.10:** The Future Land Use and Housing Element data and analysis, goals, objectives and policies, and future conditions maps shall be revised, based on the affordable housing needs assessment prepared by the Department of Community Affairs pursuant to section 163.3177(f), F.S. These revisions shall be done as a part of the 1997 EAR and EAR-based amendments, or not more than 1 year after the affordable housing needs assessment is available. These revisions are to be based in part, on the need for affordable

housing sites and affordable housing assistance needed to accommodate the number and type of dwellings indicated in the assessment.

This policy needs to be updated with current data from the Shimberg Center.

**Objective H-2.2:** By the year 2000, increase by 10% the number of affordable housing units for Walton County's existing and future population.

**Policy H-2.2.1:** Encourage "lower cost" housing through innovative construction techniques.

**Policy H-2.2.2:** Provide for government/private industry cooperation in exploring new technologies in residential construction and encourage a demonstration project by seeking special funds.

**Policy H-2.2.3:** Amend the LDC to reduce construction costs (smaller lots, waiver of impact fees, density bonus) and, therefore, consumer costs for housing.

**Policy H-2.2.4:** Conduct County/City/Home Builder Industry Seminars to consider building construction innovations.

**Objective H-2.3:** All State-owned properties disposed as neighborhood, conservation residential or coastal center shall have an affordable housing requirement.

**Policy H-2.3.1:** Set aside 10% of the units as affordable.

**Policy H-2.3.2:** Establish an affordable Housing Trust Fund from the sale of State lands.

**Policy H-2.3.3:** Establish a Housing Trust Fund through taxes, fees and other creative funding sources to create a constant revenue source for the production of low or moderate income housing.

**Policy H-2.3.4:** Review codes for restrictive and outdated construction regulations, utilizing existing or new advisory groups.

**Policy H-2.3.5:** The County shall establish an Affordable Housing Development Board to further the intent of Goal H-2. The duties of this Board shall include recommending changes to the Comp. Plan & Land Development Code to promote affordable housing within one year of adoption of this policy.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Policies H-2.3.5 and H-2.3.6 were added by ordinance number 2000-30, text amendment 00-00-1.A.3.

**Policy H-2.3.6:** The Affordable Housing Development Board shall recommend measures that applicants for development orders for large-scale developments can take to mitigate the impacts that their proposed projects will have upon the supply of affordable housing in the affected areas of the projects.

**Objective H-2.4: Housing Stock Inventory:**

By September 1, 1997, the County shall inventory vacant land and identify sites suitable for housing for low and moderate income persons. Provide options to developers and property owners to allow for greater densities, manufactured housing placement, and accessory apartments (granny flats) as affordable housing.

**Policy H-2.4.1:** Identify parcels by legal descriptions, metes and bounds, range and township, and/or lot and block, and antiquated subdivisions as part of the vacant land inventory.

**Policy H-2.4.2:** The vacant land inventory shall identify land-use categories, availability of services, natural limitations and recommended uses for identified parcels. Land use designations shall be revised, as needed, through the plan amendment process to allow for greater densities in areas identified in the inventory as satisfactory for affordable housing units.

**Policy H-2.4.3:** Maintain an inventory of substandard undeveloped lots. If funds and/or programs are available for upgrading such substandard undeveloped lots, pursue such funds for the provision of affordable housing units.

**Policies H-2.3.6 – H-2.4.3 should be updated and re-written in the EAR-based amendments to reflect up-to-date data as reflected in the data and analysis submitted with this EAR.**

**Policy H-2.4.4:** Adopt county-wide land development regulations that provide an adequate supply of residential land to accommodate the low and moderate income populations. Estimates of this population and their unmet needs should be updated annually based on U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development standards and analyses. Adequate sites will be provided by allowing density bonuses for developments providing affordable housing, permitting the siting of manufactured housing in residential districts, and accessory apartments, or other appropriate affordable housing techniques. However, in no case shall a density bonus result in an increase in the number of permitted dwelling units that is more than fifty percent (50%) higher than the underlying density permitted by the Future Land Use map within that residential district. In addition, no density bonus shall have the effect of increasing development within any environmentally sensitive area.

**Policy H-2.4.5:** Distribute publicly assisted housing equitably throughout the County to provide a wide variety of neighborhood settings for very low, low and moderate-income persons and to avoid undue concentration in single neighborhoods.

**Policy H-2.4.6:** Apply for and utilize Federal, State and/or local funding for site acquisition and improvement for low and moderate income housing and infrastructure.

**Policy H-2.4.7:** The County shall on an on-going basis, contact the State Housing Finance Agency for programs related to affordable housing: State Apartment Incentive Loan Program (SAIL), First-time home buyer program, HOME Program, Home Assistance Program (HAP), HOPE Funds, Elderly Assistance Program, etc.

**Policy H-2.4.8:** Multifamily affordable housing sites may be permitted at densities up to 10 dwellings/acre, within the Urban Residential category or in Commercial Nodes, subject to the following conditions: (a) at least 20% of the dwellings are for very-low, low-, and moderate-income housing; (b) the development is connected to a public water and sewer system; and (c) a building setback of at least 50 feet for every floor of building height is maintained, adjacent to lower-density residential uses, as well as the buffering measures required in Policy L-1.7.3.

### **GOAL H-3: TO INCREASE ENERGY EFFICIENCY OF HOUSING IN WALTON COUNTY.**

**Objective H-3.1: Continue to set high standards for planning and housing design that includes energy efficiency.**

**Policy H-3.1.1:** Encourage design and planning innovations in both housing types and site planning to produce visual, social and economic diversity.

**Policy H-3.1.2:** Revise land development regulations to recognize solar orientation and the cooling effects of less site coverage by impervious materials.

**Policy H-3.1.3:** Develop Design Handbook to assist developers by providing guidelines and examples to improve efficiency.

**Policy H-3.1.4:** Pursue State, Federal and local monies to construct a “demonstration” unit in South Walton County.

**Policy H-3.1.5:** The LDC shall provide local standards that require site design more suited to existing land conditions and blend into surroundings.

**Policy H-3.1.6:** The County shall encourage the use of recycled building materials.

**Policy H-3.1.7:** The County shall encourage energy-efficient housing with emphasis on alternative energy sources, such as solar and wind power.

**Policy H-3.1.8:** The LDC shall be amended to increase design flexibility (lot size, setbacks, shared driveways) in the provision of residential development.

**Policy H-3.1.9:** Utilize infill development based on Neighborhood principles in the Land Use Element.

**Policy H-3.1.10:** Conduct an energy efficiency seminar in concert with CHELCO and Gulf Power.

**GOAL H-4: TO SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE AND ELIMINATE SUBSTANDARD HOUSING CONDITIONS BY PROMOTING AND PARTICIPATING IN HOUSING CONSERVATION AND REVITALIZATION WITH A SYSTEMATIC PROGRAM TO MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK.**

**Objective H-4.1: Sub-Standard Housing:**

Inventory 25% of the County's housing stock by the year 1997, to identify substandard units as defined by the U. S. Census Bureau, "Measuring the Quality of Housing," and units qualifying for conservation, rehabilitation or demolition programs. Inventory an additional 10% of the County's housing stock each year thereafter, to identify substandard units.

This objective and its related policies should be updated and re-written in the EAR-based amendments to reflect up-to-date data as reflected in the data and analysis submitted with this EAR.

**Policy H-4.1.1:** Prepare a county-wide housing improvement program outlining actions and priorities.

**Policy H-4.1.2:** Continue to enforce the Walton County Nuisance Ordinance to ensure safe and sanitary housing conditions.

**Policy H-4.1.3:** Adopt criteria that define conditions warranting conservation, rehabilitation and demolition actions. Develop an evaluation system to classify housing stock as sound (maintenance), declining (rehabilitation), deteriorated (redevelopment).

**Policy H-4.1.4:** The County shall "monitor" those areas with sound housing conditions or only minor deficiencies.

1. "Monitor/maintenance" shall be applied as a strategy in areas with moderate deficiencies of housing units.
2. Spot rehabilitation of code enforcement should be undertaken to support monitoring actions.
3. "Maintenance/rehabilitation" shall be applied as a strategy in declining areas that have major deficiencies.
4. "Maintenance/rehabilitation/redevelopment" should be applied as a strategy in distressed areas.

**Policy H-4.1.5:** The County shall prepare detailed treatment plans for small areas of the community having the most serious housing quality problems.

**Objective H-4.2: Conservation and Rehabilitation:**

Implement conservation, rehabilitation or demolition programs to extend the useful life of the existing housing stock and stabilize or improve residential neighborhoods. The number of substandard units estimated to exist in unincorporated areas shall be reduced by 15% by the year 2000, as compared to 1990 estimates. By 1996, eliminate 20% of vacant, dilapidated structures identified by the County's Substandard Housing Inventory Program.

This objective and its related policies should be updated and re-written in the EAR-based amendments to reflect up-to-date data as reflected in the data and analysis submitted with this EAR.

**Policy H-4.2.1:** Apply for and utilize Federal, State and/or local funds for conservation, demolition, and rehabilitation activities.

**Policy H-4.2.2:** Review the Standard Building Code's Minimum Housing Code Standards. Adopt and enforce a Minimum Housing Code Ordinance for Walton County that meets the criteria of the standard building code.

This policy should be updated with the Florida Building Code language.

**Policy H-4.2.3:** Coordinate with appropriate local entities (Ex.: Walton County School Board, Homebuilders Association, etc.) to maintain and improve the quality of the existing housing stock.

**Policy H-4.2.4:** Adopt county-wide land use regulations that address the preservation of residential areas by providing for residential infill development and protecting residential areas from encroachment of nonresidential uses.

**Policy H-4.2.5:** Permit, on a demonstration basis, consistent with adopted LOS standards, mixed-use, cluster housing, or other residential reuses of the

existing housing stock, which will result in the removal of substandard housing units.

**Policy H-4.2.6:** Adopt an Abandoned Property Ordinance, Litter Ordinance, etc., to maintain the aesthetics of residential areas.

**Objective H-4.3: Formalize a coordinated code enforcement function within the County government.**

**Policy H-4.3.1:** Streamline administrative responsibilities and establish cost-effective procedures/resource allocations.

**Policy H-4.3.2:** The County shall coordinate housing referral service with social service agencies that provide assistance to lower income minority and elderly persons.

**Policy H-4.3.3:** Create a County position for a Housing Rehabilitation Officer to assist in code enforcement, rehabilitation work write-ups, inspections and housing referrals.

**This policy should be updated in the EAR-based amendments to reflect current county staffing and projects.**

**Objective H-4.4: Utilize available funding programs - local, state and federal - to implement a housing conservation program.**

**Policy H-4.4.1:** The County shall investigate and apply for all grant monies that will aid in increasing the supply of safe and affordable housing.

**Policy H-4.4.2:** Coordinate with the Tri-County Council by increasing communication with the County and the Council in order to ensure that all programs available for funding are being applied for.

**This policy should be updated in the EAR-based amendments to reflect that the county has active programs and communication with the Tri-County Council.**

**Policy H-4.4.3:** The County shall match CDBG funds as a local share against other grant programs for physical development and consideration.

**Policy H-4.4.4:** The County shall give priority to jointly-funded neighborhood improvement programs.

**GOAL H-5: TO IDENTIFY AND IMPROVE HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT STRUCTURES OF WALTON COUNTY.**

**Objective H-5.1: Inventory of Historic Resources:**

Complete, as part of a comprehensive survey of historical resources, an inventory of historically significant housing by the year 1995.

This policy should be amended to provide that the inventory will be completed by 2010.

**Policy H-5.1.1:** Submit applications for State and/or Federal funding to complete a comprehensive survey of Walton County's historic resources.

**Policy H-5.1.2:** Identify housing that merits protection or preservation due to its unique characteristics or representative nature. Identify these structures on a "Historic Resources Map" to be used as a reference in revising the County's Comprehensive Plan and applicable ordinances.

**Policy H-5.1.3:** The County shall investigate state agencies for possible funding and historic structure assistance.

**Policy H-5.1.4:** Coordinate historic resources with economic, educational, and tourist strategies.

**Policy H-5.1.5:** The School Board shall incorporate structures and history into educational curriculum.

This policy should be amended to reflect that the county will encourage the school board to address this. The county cannot mandate school curriculum.

**Objective H-5.2: Protection of Historic Resources:**

Develop procedures through the County's land development regulations for the protection of historically significant housing sites and structures, including structures that are significant examples of the architectural design of their period.

**Policy H-5.2.1:** Adopt an ordinance allowing for the timely evaluation of housing sites involved in public programs and projects for historical or architectural significance prior to alteration or demolition. Housing sites determined to be of historical or architectural significance shall be recorded prior to alteration or demolition.

The county will complete this ordinance as part of the EAR-based amendments.

**Policy H-5.2.2:** Any alteration or rehabilitation of historically or architecturally-significant housing shall be done in such a manner as to protect the structure's significance. Walton County shall adopt procedures that ensure that such significance is protected.

**Policy H-5.2.3:** Amend the Building Code Ordinance to include a delay-of-demolition provision for housing over 75 years old and/or housing found to be of historical or architectural significance. Preservation alternatives shall be evaluated and recording of the site shall be completed during the delay period.

This policy should be amended as part of the EAR-based amendments to reflect that the land development code, not the building code, will need to be amended to implement this policy.

**Policy H-5.2.4:** Identify areas with historic district designation potential and take measures to have the district placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Policy H-5.2.5:** Develop and adopt a Historic Preservation Ordinance.

The county is currently working on an historic preservation ordinance and any comprehensive plan amendments needed to support that ordinance will be included in the county's EAR-based amendments.

**Policy H-5.2.6:** Establish a Historic Tax Incentive Ordinance.

**Policy H-5.2.7:** Develop Architectural Guidelines Handbook for historic restoration.

These policies should be amended to reflect that these actions will be taken by 2010.

**Policy H-5.2.8:** The County shall seek feasible alternative for reuse of structure that contribute to the historical character of South Walton.

**GOAL H-6: TO MEET THE SPECIAL HOUSING NEEDS OF WALTON COUNTY'S ELDERLY, HANDICAPPED, & LOWER INCOME RESIDENTS.**

**Objective H-6.1: Special Housing Needs:**

By 1996, Walton County will facilitate meeting special housing needs through improved coordination of public, private and nonprofit sectors involved in housing production.

Walton County actively partners with private non-profit organizations that support special housing needs. This policy should be amended to reflect that coordination.

**Policy H-6.1.1:** Provide incentives to developers, such as the use of density bonuses and revised setbacks, to make their developments accessible to the physically disabled and/or handicapped.

**Policy H-6.1.2:** Request appropriate local agencies, such as the Area Agency on Aging, the Council on Aging, the Center for Independent Living, and the Association for Retarded Citizens, to review the Building Code Ordinance and recommend changes to meet the needs of the physically disabled and frail handicapped.

The Florida Building Code and the Federal ADA codes are mandated by law. This policy is superfluous and should be deleted.

**Policy H-6.1.3:** Request appropriate local agencies such as the Area Agency on Aging, the Council on Aging, the Center for Independent Living, and the Association for Retarded Citizens to provide estimates of the unmet housing needs of the populations that they serve and work with those agencies to identify means of meeting these unmet housing needs, including the creation of public/private partnerships for funding.

**Policy H-6.1.4:** Endorse private sector efforts to secure Federal and or State funds to provide housing for elderly, disabled and homeless citizens.

**Policy H-6.1.5:** The County shall host a forum of public, private, nonprofit sectors involved in housing production.

**Policy H-6.1.6:** Create public/private partnership for funding special housing needs program.

**Policy H-6.1.7:** Monitor the lending and subsidy programs of federal and state agencies such as the Farmers' Home Administration and the Florida Housing Finance Agency to determine the adequacy with which special housing needs are being met in Walton County.

**Policy H-6.1.8:** Update annually inventories of providers of special needs housing (group and foster homes, facilities for the homeless, etc.) including number and location.

**Policy H-6.1.9:** Apply for and utilize Federal and/or State funds that provide housing as a priority to the elderly and disabled.

**Policy H-6.1.10:** Develop location criteria for housing for the elderly or disabled that consider proximity to public transportation, recreation and health care facilities, shopping areas, banking facilities, and post offices.

**Policy H-6.1.11:** Assist local entities such as the Homebuilders Association in maintaining special needs housing units through measures such as expedited permitting and inspections.

**Policy H-6.1.12:** Coordinate with West Florida Regional Planning Council efforts to establish a regional clearinghouse to receive and disseminate information on housing opportunity ordinances, programs, and initiatives to encourage the development of housing units for special needs housing groups.

Walton County has a comprehensive plan amendment pending compliance that provides bonus densities for affordable housing. This policy will be updated during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect those density bonus programs.

**Policy H-6.1.13:** The County shall coordinate & attend periodic meetings with Homebuilders Assn. to update them on special housing needs & incentives.

**Policy H-6.1.14:** The County shall meet with WFRPC periodically to coordinate special housing needs information.

**Policy H-6.1.15:** Establish principles and criteria for proposed housing developments intended for persons with special housing needs, including the elderly, the handicapped, large families and rural and farm worker families. Criteria will include accessibility to transportation facilities, convenience to the location of commercial and health and day care facilities, the availability of infrastructure and applicable licensing criteria.

**Policy H-6.1.16:** Include in the county-wide land development regulations, site selection criteria for the location of housing for the elderly and institutional housing which shall consider accessibility, convenience and infrastructure availability.

**Policy H-6.1.17:** The County shall amend the LDC to include new principles and criteria for special housing needs.

**Objective H-6.2: Group Home Facilities:**

Identify sites for group homes by 1992 consistent with 89-372, Laws of Florida, at suitable locations to ensure that the needs of persons requiring such housing are met. Siting of homes and facilities serving in excess of 14 residents shall conform to zoning regulations applicable to multifamily uses and shall meet applicable licensing criteria established by the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services.

This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.

**Policy H-6.2.1:** Adopt county-wide land development regulations which:

1. Include a definition of the term “family” which addresses units other than those composed of blood relatives consistent with 89-372, Laws of Florida,
2. Establish non-discriminatory standards and criteria addressing the location of group homes and foster care facilities, serving in excess of 14 residents, and
3. Limit the number of group homes within a defined area, consistent with state law, to prevent over-concentration. A home that is located within a radius of 1,200 feet of another existing community residential home in a multifamily zone shall be an over-concentration of such homes that substantially alters the nature and character of the area. A home that is located within a radius of 500 feet of an area of single-family zoning substantially alters the nature and character of the area.

**Policy H-6.2.2:** Amend Walton County’s Fair Housing Ordinance to extend protection to families and the handicapped.

**Policy H-6.2.3:** Establish guidelines for exterior appearance of group homes for compatibility with neighborhoods.

**Policy H-6.2.4:** Develop location criteria for group homes and foster care facilities serving in excess of 14 residents that consider proximity to current and planned transportation assistance, recreation and health care facilities.

**This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.**

**Objective H-6.3: Relocation Housing:**

Provide relocation housing in a uniform and equitable manner, for persons displaced by public and private relocation housing programs and projects.

**Policy H-6.3.1:** Completion of a housing relocation plan shall be an element of any County program or project that requires relocation, and shall contain displaced by public and private relocation housing programs and projects.

**Objective H-6.4: Manufactured and Modular Housing:**

Identify and designate sites to meet the demand for manufactured and modular housing units and other special housing needs.

**Policy H-6.4.1:** Include in land development regulations siting criteria for manufactured or modular housing to meet the future demand for such housing types. General types of provisions or criteria will include but not be limited to

architectural standards consistent with the established character of the area. Design standards must require permanent enclosed foundations and exterior material appearance compatible with the existing residential area.

**Policy H-6.4.2:** Siting criteria for manufactured or modular housing will be used to meet the future demand for such housing types. General types of provisions of criteria will include minimum construction standards as stated by Florida law and U.S. DOT regulations. Manufactured housing, including modular units will be allowed in any land use designation permitting residential development under the same siting, density, and locational standards as conventionally-built housing as long as it meets Florida Law.

**Policy H-6.4.3:** Supporting infrastructure to manufactured or modular housing parks and subdivisions will be consistent with adopted LOS standards.

**Policy H-6.4.4:** The County shall continue to encourage manufactured housing as an affordable housing source.

**Policy H-6.4.5:** The County shall adopt mobile home park compatibility criteria by 1995.

This policy should be amended to require that mobile home parks be compatible with the surrounding area, or mitigate any incompatibility.

**Policy H-6.4.6:** The County shall develop and adopt architectural standards for manufactured and modular housing, to ensure that such housing is compatible with the area; however, these standards shall be consistent with ss.320.8285(5) and 553.38(2), F.S.

This policy will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to be consistent with current state law.

**Policy H-6.4.7:** The County shall develop and adopt design standards that require permanent enclosed foundations and exterior material appearance guidelines, for manufactured and modular housing; however, these standards shall be consistent with ss.320.8285(5) and 553.38(2), F.S.

This policy will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to be consistent with current state law.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES

### GOAL IC-1: IMPROVE THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF INTERLOCAL COORDINATION TO ENSURE IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL

**GOVERNMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANS AND TO RESOLVE ANY CONFLICTS THAT MAY ARISE.**

**Objective IC-1.1:** The County will execute interlocal agreements with the school board, municipalities and adjacent counties providing for close coordination and evaluation of development proposals.

This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.

**Policy IC-1.1.1:** General types of provisions that will be included in the interlocal agreement in order to advise the school board, adjacent counties, special taxing districts and municipalities of proposed developments which would impact their jurisdiction include:

1. Transmission of a monthly memo from the Walton County Planning Dept. &/or Planning Districts to the above entities and others on the Comprehensive Plan mailing list describing proposed developments and planning activities.
2. Provision for a feedback process/information exchange so the above entities can inform the Planning Department of any potential adverse impact(s) from proposed developments and/or conflicting planning activities through the Citizen Advisory Committees and the LPA as well as through public meetings with notices published in the weekly paper.

**Objective 1C-1.2: Coordination of Fire Districts**

County & fire districts will implement a communications agreement.

**Policy IC-1.2.1:** The County will coordinate fire protection service communications county-wide.

**Objective 1C-1.3: Conflict Resolution**

The County and all local governments will develop an informal conflict resolution process.

**Policy IC-1.3.1:** The Comprehensive Plan Committee will function as the initial agency to mediate comprehensive planning conflicts.

The membership and function of this committee needs to be further defined in the EAR-based amendments.

**Policy IC-1.3.2:** The informal mediation process established by Rule of the WFRPC will be used to mediate conflicts which cannot be resolved by the Comprehensive Plan Committee.

**Objective IC-1.4: Review of Development Proposals**

Within one year after adoption of this comprehensive plan amendment, the County will establish procedures to coordinate the impacts of development proposed by the Comprehensive Plan with the appropriate aspects of the affected municipalities and affected adjacent counties.

**This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.**

**Policy IC-1.4.1:** The County will establish the following general procedures whereby the affected municipalities and affected counties will be afforded the opportunity to review development proposals that affect the Choctawhatchee Bay and that affect development proposed in their Comprehensive Plan:

1. The Walton County Planning Department shall identify these types of planning issues and provide a structural framework for discussion of these issues with affected parties.
2. The issues will be developed by the Walton County Planning Department from reviews of development proposals and the Comprehensive Plan of each affected municipality or district.
3. Each affected municipality or district will be given the opportunity to address issues identified by the Walton County Planning Department and/or to identify their own issues to be addressed by the Planning Department.

**Policy IC-1.4.2:** The County will establish the following general types of procedures in their internal review of development proposals that identify the effects, if any, on the comprehensive plans of adjacent municipalities and adjacent counties:

1. The Walton County Planning Department shall identify comprehensive planning issues and provide a structural framework for discussion of these issues with affected parties.
2. These issues will be developed by the Walton County Planning Department from reviews of local comprehensive plans, plan amendments, land development regulations, development approvals, the Florida Department of Transportation Plan, and

other documents, as well as through coordination with other local governments.

3. Development proposals will be considered in context of each affected local government's comprehensive plan.

**Policy IC-1.4.3:** Mandated planning activities shall be coordinated with other local governments, school boards, and other units of local government providing service through a monthly exchange of information concerning planning activities (see Policy IC-1.4.1). Conflicts over planning activities and/or planning related issues shall be resolved through the West Florida Regional Planning Council's informal mediation process whenever possible.

**Policy IC-1.4.4:** The West Florida Regional Planning Council's Informal Mediation Process will be used for resolving annexation issues within Walton County provided that: (1) The WFRPC has determined that use of this process is appropriate; and (2) All parties to the dispute must agree to be bound by the WFRPC decision.

**Objective IC-1.5: Comprehensive Planning Forum**

Walton County shall coordinate its Comprehensive Plan with the plans of adjacent local governments, the School Board, and other units of local government providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of land through a regular comprehensive planning forum.

**This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.**

**Policy IC-1.5.1:** The Forum shall include representation from the Walton County Planning Department and/or Planning Districts, Public Works Department, the South Walton Tourist Development Council, North and South Walton Citizen Advisory Committees, the Walton County School Board: the Cities of DeFuniak Springs, Paxton and Freeport; the Counties of Okaloosa, Holmes, Washington, Bay, Covington County, AL, and Geneva County, AL; the Walton County Local Planning Agency (LPA); the Florida Department of Community Affairs; the West Florida Regional Planning Council, as well as any additional interested parties.

**Policy IC-1.5.2:** The Comprehensive Planning Forum will be hosted by Walton County and staffed by the Walton County Planning Department and/or Planning Districts and the Citizen Advisory Committees in particular, which will continue to provide input to the Department on planning issues.

**Policy IC-1.5.3:** The Comprehensive Planning Forum shall identify issues concerning comprehensive planning among jurisdictions and provide a structural

framework for the discussion and recommendation of mechanisms for intragovernmental and intergovernmental coordination.

**Objective IC-1.6: Setting Level of Service Standards**

Walton County shall coordinate the planning and provision of services with its three (3) municipalities and adjacent counties, and various agencies and districts within the County. Walton County shall also coordinate the establishment or revision of level of service standards for public facilities with any state, regional, or local entity having responsibility for such facilities.

This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.

**Policy IC-1.6.1:** Notify and request written comments from the cities of Freeport, DeFuniak Springs, and Paxton concerning all applications for land use amendments that are contiguous to their borders or within an area of planned annexation.

**Policy IC-1.6.2:** The comprehensive planning forum established in Objective IC-1.5 will coordinate programs of infrastructure development and improvement between the County, the municipalities, and local service providers so the adopted levels of service can be maintained throughout the entire County.

**Policy IC-1.6.3:** The County will request written comments from the state Department of Transportation, or the Department of Environmental Protection and the Northwest Florida Water Management District, as appropriate, concerning any proposed revision to the adopted level of service standards for roads, water, sewer, solid waste, recreation and open space, and drainage.

This policy is no longer needed because state law now mandates state agency review of all comprehensive plan amendments.

**CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS ELEMENT  
GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & POLICIES**

**GOAL CI-1: PROVIDE PUBLIC FACILITIES TO MEET EXISTING DEFICIENCIES AND MAINTAIN ADOPTED LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**

**Objective CI-1.1: Capital Improvements and fiscal resources shall be included in the Capital Improvements Element and shall be consistent with the needs identified in other elements of the comprehensive plan.**

**Policy CI-1.1.1:** Evaluation of capital improvement projects shall include the following criteria and shall be ranked in the following order of importance:

1. Elimination of capacity deficiencies and public hazards;
2. Accommodation of new development and redevelopment consistent with the Future Land Use Element and Map;
3. Financial feasibility and the impact on the County budget;
4. Compatibility with the Northwest Florida Water Management District and other state agencies providing public facilities within Walton County.

**Policy CI-1.1.2:** The maximum ratio of total debt service to total revenue shall not exceed 25%.

This policy will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to be consistent with current county policy.

**Policy CI-1.1.3:** Funding for infrastructure replacement and renewal shall be evaluated and allocated so as to minimize the operating costs and maximize the life of infrastructure.

**Objective CI-1.2: Public expenditures in the high hazard coastal area shall be limited to maintaining the existing service capacity, except for recreation facilities.**

This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be consistent with current state law.

**Policy CI-1.2.1:** Appropriations for capital improvement projects located in the high hazard coastal area shall be necessary to maintain the adopted level of service standards and shall be consistent with the Future Land Use Element and Map.

**Policy CI-1.2.2:** Adequate fees shall be assessed for new development in the high hazard coastal area to finance public facility improvements necessitated by new developments in order to maintain adopted level of service standards.

**Objective CI-1.3: Capital improvements shall be as shown in the attached table and on the attached Transportation Improvements Map:**

**Policy CI-1.3.1:** The five-year schedule of capital improvements shall reflect the needs identified in other elements of the adopted Comprehensive Plan and

shall be consistent with the county’s projected fiscal resources shown on Table 2, Walton County Revenue and Expenditure Projections.

**Policy CI-1.3.2:** Capital improvement projects (identified in Table 1) shall be included in the Walton County Capital Budget to be adopted concurrently with the annual County Budget.

**Policy CI-1.3.3:** Capital improvement projects adopted by the Walton County Capital Budget shall maintain at least the following level of service standards:

TRANSPORTATION LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS are set forth in T-1.1.1 in the Traffic Circulation Element.

INFRASTRUCTURE LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Sanitary Sewer Facilities

The County hereby adopts the following level of service standards, and shall adopt land development regulations which ensure that existing and projected needs are met through provisions which ensure that development orders are not issued which degrade the level of service standards.

Existing Facilities Level of Service Standard (gallons per capita daily)

Name

LOS

Camp Creek	85
DeFuniak Springs	85
Emerald Hills	85
Freeport Elementary	15
Freeport	66
Maude Sanders Elementary	15
Palms of Dune Allen	53
Sandcliffs	85
Sandestin	85
S. Walton Utility	95
Walton Correction	100
Walton High School	15

Future Facilities:

residential uses	100 gpcpd
nonresidential uses	

Minimum service shall be consistent with Table II, Chapter 10D-6, F.A.C. as follows:

<u>Type of Establishment</u>	<u>Gallons Per Day</u>
<b>Commercial:</b>	
Airports	
(a) per passenger	5
(b) add per employee (per 8 hour shift)	20
Barber and beauty shops (per chair)	100
Bowling alleys (toilet wastes only per lane)	100
<b>Country Club</b>	
(a) per resident	100
(b) per member	25
(c) per employee (per 8 hour shift)	20
<b>Dentist offices</b>	
(a) per wet chair	200
(b) per non-wet chair	50
Doctor offices (per doctor)	250
<b>Factories, exclusive of industrial wastes (gallons per employee per 8 hour shift)</b>	
(a) No showers provided	20
(b) Showers provided	35
<b>Food service operations</b>	
(a) Ordinary restaurant (per seat)	50
(b) 24 hour restaurant (per seat)	75
(c) Single service articles only (per seat)	25
(d) Bar and cocktail lounge (per seat)	30
(e) Drive-in restaurant (per car space)	50
(f) Carry out only	
(1) per 100 sq. ft. of floor space	50
(2) add per employee (per 8 hr shift)	20
Institutions (per meal)	5
<b>Hotels &amp; motels</b>	
(a) Regular (per room)	150
(b) Resort hotels, camps, cottages (per person)	75
(c) Add for establishment with self service laundry facilities (per machine)	400
Office building (per employee per 8 hour shift)	20

Service stations (per water closet & per urinal)	250
Shopping centers without food or laundry (per square foot of floor space)	0.1
Stadiums, race tracks, ball parks (per seat)	5
Stores (per square foot of floor space)	0.1
Swimming & bathing facilities, public (/person)	10
Theaters	
(a) Indoor, auditoriums (per seat)	5
(b) Outdoor, drive-ins (per space)	10
Trailer or Mobile Home Park (per trailer space)	200
Travel trailer or recreational vehicle park	
(a) Travel trailer (overnight), without water and sewer hookup (per trailer space)	75
(b) Travel trailer (overnight), with water and sewer hookups (per trailer space)	100
Institutional:	
Churches (per seat)	3
Hospitals (per bed) (does not include kitchen wastewater flows)	200
Nursing, rest homes (per bed) (does not include kitchen wastewater flows)	100
Parks, public picnic	
(a) with toilets only (per person)	5
(b) with bathhouse, showers & toilets (per person)	10
Public institutions other than schools & hospitals (per person) (does not include kitchen wastewater flows)	100
Schools (per student)	
(a) Day-type	15
(b) Add for showers	5
(c) Add for cafeteria	5
(d) Add for day school workers	15
(e) Boarding-type	75

The level of service standards adopted by the comprehensive plan for determining the availability of service capacity needs to be updated to reflect standard methodology currently in use that more accurately reflects average gallons per day per person usage.

The current comprehensive plan breaks down levels of service for existing facilities. This is an unrealistic and unacceptable method to determine availability of capacity at this time, especially in light of the extraordinary increase in number of existing facilities. It would not be feasible to list each commercial lodging, subdivision, restaurant, campground, golf club, and motel and its existing use to determine level of service.

A new method is necessary to ensure LOS requirements reflect the county's desire to adequately meet capacity requirements county-wide for a variety of typical uses. LOS methodology should accurately reflect the special needs of the coastal area and urban and rural areas as well.

A current estimate of mean equivalency of 350 GPD per person/per day county-wide for both commercial and residential use is one available figure. However, that figure does not accurately reflect outdoor and other uses, nor does it adequately reflect variances between the extremely rural and agricultural uses in North Walton and the very large area of concentrated population and seasonal commercial and residential uses in South Walton.

Ear-based plan amendments will detail reasonable and accurate LOS requirements to apply county-wide to ensure protection of resources as well as capacity needed throughout the planning horizon, with increases in LOS requirements in some areas based on expected population growth and decreases allowing for buildout in others.

#### Solid Waste Disposal Capacity 6 pounds/capita/day

#### Drainage Facilities

This objective and the related policies will be amended during the EAR-based amendment process to reflect current data and to be based on the correct technical criteria.

1. The following level of service standard for drainage and stormwater management shall apply:
  - (a) All new residential subdivisions;

- (b) infill residential development within improved residential areas or subdivisions existing prior to the adoption of this comprehensive plan;
- (c) all multifamily residential development (including duplex, triplex and quadraplex);
- (d) all new nonresidential development (other than agricultural); and
- (e) any existing use meeting the criteria of (a), (b), (c), or (d) above that proposes alterations or activities resulting in an increase in runoff shall meet the following standards:

Water Quality and Quantity:

Each development shall be responsible for storing and treating all post-development runoff which exceed pre-development runoff. All storage facilities shall be designed with sufficient capacity to accommodate all runoff in excess of the runoff which would have resulted from the site if left in its natural, undeveloped condition, provided, however, that as a minimum, the first inch of rainfall will be retained.

Storage Capacity:

The storage capacity of all storage facilities must be at least as strict as FDEP Chapter 17-25, F.A.C., and FDOT Chapter 14-86, F.A.C., Rules for Drainage Connections (provided at end of this section). Post-development runoff shall be released at pre-development natural runoff conditions.

- 2. New agricultural land uses and existing agricultural uses that propose activities resulting in an increase in runoff: Any new agricultural use exempt from DEP Rule 17-25, F.A.C. and which drains into a surface water, canal, or stream, or where drainage enters a ditch which empties into a sinkhole, surface water or stream, shall first allow the runoff to enter a grassed swale designed to percolate 80 percent of the runoff from a three year, one-hour design storm within 72 hours after a storm event.
- 3. Ongoing and New Agricultural Land Uses: Agricultural and Silvicultural Practices shall be consistent with Best Management Practices recommended by the USDA Soil Conservation Service and US Forestry Service. All roads created under these land uses shall use culverts to assure natural drainage features are not destroyed.
- 4. For all new road construction, or improvements to existing roadways:
  - a. All drainage swales and ditches shall be designed to convey the runoff generated from a 10-year, 24-hour storm event.

- b. For local (not classified as County roads) roadways, culverts and cross drains shall convey the runoff from a 10-year, 24 hour storm event; for county roadways, culverts and cross drains shall convey the runoff from a 25-year, 24-hour storm event.
  - c. Drainage design for all new state and county road construction shall be in accordance with county and state stormwater management requirements and shall ensure compatibility with Mosquito District structures.
  - d. Where Florida Department of Transportation standards are stricter for a particular roadway, they shall be the standard.
  - e. All stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 17-3, F.A.C.
4. To ensure state water quality standards are not violated, all new development or redevelopment activities shall provide proof of DE P permit under Chapter 17-25, F.A.C., or proof of exemption. All stormwater discharge facilities shall be designed so as to not degrade the receiving water body below the minimum conditions necessary to assure the suitability of water for the designated use of its classification as established in Chapter 17-3, F.A.C.

5.

Potable Water

The following level of service standards are hereby adopted by the County and shall be used for determining the availability of service capacity:

Existing Facilities (gallons per capita per day) Utility	Level of Service Standard
Argyle Water Systems	77
Bay Elementary School	108
Beachwood Villa	166
Black Creek Lodge	19
Camp Creek Water System	189
Chapman's Seafood Restaurant	21
Choctaw Beach Water System	162
City of DeFuniak Springs	230
City of Freeport 66	
Inlet Beach Water System	162
Juniper Lake Pines Subd.	625
Juniper Village Subd.	851
Lake Sharon Estates	528
Town of Mossy Head	162

Nick's Seafood Restaurant	20
Town of Paxton	152
Quail Run Subdivision	375
Sandcliffs Condominium	375
Santa Rosa Golf Club	133
Seagrove Beach Water Sys.	125
South Walton Utility Co.	120
Spanish Trl Scout Reserv.	75
Sun & Sand Motel	233
Ten Lakes Estates	89
Villa Tasso Water System	155
Willows Water Plant	102

Future Facilities

Residential uses 100 gpcpd

Nonresidential uses

Minimum service shall be consistent with Table II, Chapter 10D-6, F.A.C., as follows:

Type of Establishment	Gallons Per Day
Commercial:	
Airports	
(a) per passenger	5
(b) add per employee (per 8 hour shift)	20
Barber and beauty shops (per chair)	100
Bowling alleys (toilet wastes only per lane)	100
Country Club	
(a) per resident	100
(b) per member	25
(c) per employee (per 8 hour shift)	20
Dentist offices	
(a) per wet chair	200
(b) per non-wet chair	50
Doctor offices (per doctor)	250
Factories, exclusive of industrial wastes	
(gallons per employee per 8 hour shift)	
(a) No showers provided	20
(b) Showers provided	35
Food service operations	
(a) Ordinary restaurant (per seat)	50
(b) 24 hour restaurant (per seat)	75
(c) Single service articles only (per seat)	25
(d) Bar and cocktail lounge (per seat)	30
(e) Drive-in restaurant (per car space)	50

(f) Carry out only	
(1) per 100 sq. ft. of floor space	50
(2) add per employee (per 8 hr shift)	20
(g) Institutions (per meal)	5
Hotels & motels	
(a) Regular (per room)	150
(b) Resort hotels, camps, cottages (per person)	75
(c) Add for establishment with self service laundry facilities (per machine)	400
Office building (per employee per 8 hour shift)	20
Service stations (per water closet & per urinal)	250
Shopping centers without food or laundry (per square foot of floor space)	0.1
Stadiums, race tracks, ball parks (per seat)	5
Stores (per square foot of floor space)	0.1
Swimming & bathing facilities, public (/person)	10
Theaters	
(a) Indoor, auditoriums (per seat)	5
(b) Outdoor, drive-ins (per space)	10
Trailer or Mobile Home Park (per trailer space)	200
Travel trailer or recreational vehicle park	
(a) Travel trailer (overnight), without water and sewer hookup (per trailer space)	75
(b) Travel trailer (overnight), with water and sewer hookups (per trailer space)	100
Institutional:	
Churches (per seat)	3
Hospitals (per bed) (does not include kitchen wastewater flows)	200
Nursing, rest homes (per bed) (does not include kitchen wastewater flows)	100
Parks, public picnic	
(a) with toilets only (per person)	5
(b) with bathhouse, showers & toilets (per person)	10
Public institutions other than schools and hospitals (per person) (does not include kitchen wastewater flows)	100
Schools (per student)	
(a) Day-type	15
(b) Add for showers	5
(c) Add for cafeteria	5
(d) Add for day school workers	15
(e) Boarding-type	75
Work or construction camps, semipermanent (per worker)	50

Recreation Facilities

6.25 acres 1000 population

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Ear-based plan amendments will detail reasonable and accurate LOS requirements to apply county-wide to ensure protection of resources as well as capacity needed throughout the planning horizon, with increases in LOS requirements in some areas based on expected population growth and decreases allowing for buildout in others.

**Policy CI-1.3.4:** Capital improvement projects identified (in Table 1) shall provide the public facilities necessary to serve developments for which development orders were issued prior to the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

**Objective CI-1.4: Future development shall bear a proportionate cost of facility capital improvements, where necessary, to maintain adopted level of service standards.**

**Policy CI-1.4.1:** Utilize fees and special assessments to provide funding for future capital projects or debt service.

**Objective CI-1.5: Development orders or permits shall be issued consistent with the provision of needed capital improvements and adopted level of service standards.**

**Policy CI-1.5.1:** Land development regulations shall be adopted or amended to include a development review process to determine the availability of public facilities concurrent with the impacts of development.

**Policy CI-1.5.2:** Reviews of proposed developments shall be coordinated by the County Planning Department to determine the sufficiency of existing and planned infrastructure to serve the development.

**Policy CI-1.5.3:** If projected revenue sources are not obtained, capital projects not relied upon for concurrency will be delayed or level of service standards will be lowered through an amendment to the comprehensive plan.