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**INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT**

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**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this section of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report is to examine the Infrastructure Element of the Washington County Comprehensive Plan for its successes and shortcomings. While discussed briefly in this section, identified major issues will receive further examination in the Identified Issues Section of the report.

**II. INTRODUCTION**

This document has been prepared by the Washington County Planning Commission, the West Florida Regional Planning Council and the Washington County Planning Department in cooperation with other County agencies. While many issues will be presented in this section, those identified at the scoping meeting will be presented and further elaborated on in the Identified Issues Section the report.

**III. THE EXISTING SYSTEM ANALYSIS §.163.3191(2)(c), F.S.**

**A. Sanitary Sewer Subelement.**

1. General Evaluation - Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element. §163.3191(2)(h), F. S. The County does not have a Wastewater Facilities Plan, as the County has not chosen this as an option to be considered by the County. However, as the potential for development increases and the need for economic development become more critical, the Board has reconsidered this option and has placed a feasibility study and service area identification project on the Capital Improvements Element schedule with the funding source yet to be determined. There is no master Wastewater Facilities Plan or a Reuse Master Plan.
  - a. Central Wastewater Treatment Systems (WWTP). Currently, there are only three WWTP's in the County.
    - (1) Chipley. City of Chipley (not under this Plan) has a wastewater treatment system and is presently in the process of upgrading the system and constructing spray fields to eliminate any discharge of treated effluent into Holmes Creek.
    - (2) Vernon. The Town of Vernon successfully completed an upgrade and installation of spray fields to eliminate discharge into the Holmes

Creek. During the period prior to and during the upgrade, no new hookups were allowed within the service area of the Town of Vernon. Building permits are now being issued again, and the moratorium as issued by the Department of Environmental Protection has been suspended.

(3) Sunny Hills. There is a central wastewater treatment facility within the Sunny Hills subdivision operated with Aqua Utilities. Aqua is currently doing an engineering study as to the feasibility of increasing the capacity of this unit to serve the subdivision and other outlying parcels at this time.

b. Package Treatment Plants. Package treatment plants are essentially small treatment systems which have a collection network, treatment plant and disposal system. Currently, there are only three site-specific plants located within Washington County.

- (1) Department of Corrections
- (2) Caryville Vocational Center Package Treatment Plant
- (3) Washington County Kennel Club Package Treatment Plant

c. Septic Tanks. Washington County does not operate a central sewer system; however, septic tank systems are used throughout the county's more isolated areas to serve single housing units. The Washington County Health Department issues permits for septic tanks throughout the County. No building permits are issued by the Washington County Building Department until the septic tank permit is issued. This serves to ensure that occupancy of residential and/or the operation of commercial businesses will not occur until such time that a properly functioning septic tank system is in place.

2. Issues - Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element. §163.3191(2)(e) and (g)

a. Waste Water Treatment Plants. There are no issues with the WWTP's located in Vernon, as treated effluent is now being directed to the new sprayfield located east of the town. Issues with the City of Chipley are being addressed by the city council and will be resolved with the completion of the plant upgrade and installation of the city's spray field. This resolution is expected within the next 18 months. Aqua Utilities, Inc., a contractor furnishes services in Sunny Hills, and while the corporation has stated their intent to upgrade the system, no formal plans have been filed with the County. If Aqua Utilities, Inc., cannot fulfill the obligations to the Sunny Hills subdivision; caution must be used in approving any other developments that state intentions to tapping into the Sunny Hills sewer system.

- b. Package Treatment Plants. There are no identifiable issues.
  - c. Septic Tanks. Water quality problems may arise when septic tank systems are not adequate to treat the amount of waste placed in it, if the system is used to dispose of waste that cannot be treated by the system, or if the drainfield allows for rapid movement of the effluent into the aquifer. Growth and new development has increased the density within the County, thus increasing the proliferation of septic tanks throughout the County. This poses the potential of causing a widespread degradation of ground water and potable wells by increasing the nitrates and other substances contained therein. There is a risk of large amounts of partially treated wastewater flowing into shallow wells, and for this reason, it is important to limit the density in areas where septic tank systems are located. The County should discourage development in areas that can only be served by individual septic tanks as opposed to central wastewater treatment facilities. Development near or in those areas that currently supply wastewater treatment services should be encouraged by the County. The City of Chipley and the Town of Vernon are the only two municipalities that provide sewer service. In addition to encouraging development in those areas served by a central sewer service, the County should proceed to initiate an engineering study to identify areas within the County that would benefit from a central WWTP and seek the necessary to ensure these facilities will be available no later than 2030.
3. Proposed Changes - Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element. §.63.3191(2)(i), F.S.
- a. The County should proceed to identify areas within the County that would benefit from a central WWTP and seek the necessary funding after and engineering study to ensure that these facilities will be available no later than the year 2030.
  - b. The County should look at reducing the maximum number of subdivision lots that are allowed in a clustered subdivision without central water or wastewater treatment. Currently, it is 49 lots accessed by continuous paved roads or 10 if accessed on unpaved roads. The number of lots in a major clustered subdivision should be limited to 25 and a minor subdivision at 6 lots. This will serve to discourage urban sprawl.
  - c. Aqua Utilities reports that that a study system expansion within Sunny Hills at this time. They do not plan to upgrade/expand the current system based on the current needs. Failure of Aqua Utilities to upgrade facilities may delay further development in the Sunny Hills subdivision lots as there is no water available to some lots if central water and central wastewater treatment concurrency cannot be met.

B. General Evaluation - Solid Waste Sub-Element. §.63.3191(2)(h), F. S.

1. Solid Waste Disposal. Washington County does not have an active landfill and there are no plans to allow this land use in the future. Washington County Ordinance 88-4 established the requirement for solid waste disposal by requiring a waste disposal system permitted and approved by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. The original system established within the County required mandatory garbage service, but this did not work well and the requirement was rescinded following legal proceedings and pressures from the public. Washington County negotiated an exclusive agreement with Waste Management, Inc., in 1994 and that agreement currently remains in effect for the municipalities and the unincorporated areas of the County. While Chipley is not affected by this agreement, they also have an exclusive contract with Waste Management, Inc., through the date of this report.

a. Refuse Pickup Service. The users of the service contract directly with Waste Management, Inc., and the County is not actively involved with the collection of solid waste. Those choosing not to use the service have the option of disposing of their solid waste directly at the landfill. County personnel only become involved when customer service complaints arise that cannot be settled between the collector and the customer. Fee increases are in accordance with fluctuations in the Consumer Price Index for the Pensacola area, with a minimum of 3 percent and up to a maximum adjustment of 7 percent in any single year. Any other fee increase exceeding 3 percent must have the approval of the Board of County Commissioners. There are no transfer stations within the County and the solid waste is taken directly to the Springfield Landfill in Jackson County, as there are no active landfills in Washington County. Waste Management, Inc. operates the landfill and reports that there is enough capacity there to continue the current levels of service for another 47 years. There is currently no alternative plan for solid waste disposal.

Waste Management (WM) reports 6,215 residential households formed their customer base for all of Washington County (to include all municipalities and Chipley) during the 2006 calendar year. During that calendar year, there were approximately 11,225 residential household within the county that amounted to a 55 percent usage. During that period of time, Waste Management reports that 6,766 tons (13,532,000 pounds) was collected during this period. WM reports that 38.5 pounds of waste are disposed from each customer during the week. This averages to be about 5.5 pounds of solid waste generated by each residential household on a daily basis or 2.29 pounds. There is no indication as to how the balance of households (5,040) disposes of their solid waste. This may be a source of concern over the next years as growth continues in the County. Initially, there was mandatory garbage pickup required, but this rule was rescinded by the Board of County

Commissioners due to the widespread objections of residents of the County. If one is to use WM’s figures, the current LOSS of five pounds per day per capita, the LOSS is being met. Population wise, 1.57 pounds per capita per day is actually being generated, with the current LOSS being sufficient.

- b. Recycling. The recycling program is fully funded by a solid waste grant and efforts will continue to retain this funding for the future. The recycling plant is physically located on SR 77 south of Chipley and is easily accessible from every part of the County.

During the period of January 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006, 1, 42,939 tons of waste was recycled through the Washington County Recycling Center. Table 10-1 provides a breakdown of the collections. The center operates 6 days a week and sponsors two amnesty days per year. The following constitutes the collection during January 1 – December 31, 2006.

Table 10-1. January 1 – December 31, 2006 Recycling Materials Collected in Washington County	
Materials	Total Tons
Newspapers	347
Glass	807
Aluminum Cans	130
Plastic Bottles	590
Steel Cans	417
Cardboard	1,734
Office Paper	303
Yard Trash	5,084
C&D Debris	289
White Goods	403
Tires	390
Process Fuel	0
Other	32,862
<b>TOTAL TONS</b>	<b>42,939</b>
Source: Department of Environmental Protection, 2008	

- 2. Issues – Solid Waste Sub-Element. §163.3191(2)(e) and (g) . While the current recycling program seems to be working well, it is a limited program with no provision curbside service, individual household recycling containers, or convenient drop-off locations around the County. Recycling customers must travel from remote parts of the County to deposit goods at the single recycling center located south of Chipley on SR 77. This often results in discarded items on the rights-of-way,

streams, and wooded areas. Lack of strategically placed drop-off locations results in the storage of items ready for disposal on private property as it becomes more convenient to store items rather than make the trip across the County to the Recycling Center.

3. Proposed Changes – Solid Waste Sub-Element. §.63.3191 (2)(i), F. S. The current program should be expanded into a more user-friendly operation by providing strategically located bins for recycling deposits in the more remote parts of unincorporated Washington County and the municipalities. A suggested date for accomplishment of this goal is 2012. It is possible that available County-owned lands can be utilized. While the availability of funding for any such expansion is currently not available, grants and other funding should be actively pursued. Due to the rural nature of the County, it may not be practical to provide curbside service to all areas of the County at the present time; however, it is important that in areas where it is feasible that this service be provided to those areas identified as County resources and funding become available. The County should continue to promote recycling through a public education program.

C. Hazardous Waste.

1. General Evaluation – Hazardous Waste Sub-Element. §.63.3191(2)(h), F. S. As noted in the Conservation Element, policies have been established to ensure that hazardous waste is disposed of in an acceptable manner. Throughout the planning period the County and the municipalities continued to prohibit the disposal of hazardous wastes into the public sewer system, canals, ditches and sanitary landfills, or any other unacceptable method of disposal of hazardous waste, and will continue to diligently promote acceptable hazardous waste disposal. As stated above, the County continues to hold hazardous waste amnesty days at least twice a year -- once in the spring and once in the fall. This has proved to be a very effective program for the county and should be continued and fully funded. The County should continue to seek funding as need from FDEP's local Hazardous Waste Collection Grants Program to manage hazardous wastes. The WFRPC is under contract with the State of Florida to do SQG in Washington County. A percentage the businesses are monitored every year with the master list of generators being maintained by the Planning Council.
2. Issues - Solid Waste - Sub-Elements. §.63.3191(2)(h), F. S.
  - a. There have been some problems with illegal dumping, and where possible, resolved by the County code enforcement office. If the perpetrator of illegal dumping can be identified, that person is notified of the violation, ordered to clean it up and informed of the possible criminal charges that can be filed as a result of dumping garbage.
  - b. Waste Management, Inc., states that there is available capacity in the current landfill in Jackson County to adequately manage solid waste disposal for at

least 47 years. It may be that the County will want to start early on to identify means of disposal other than a landfill, perhaps utilizing an existing incinerator in Bay County if it should be operational and have the operating capacity when the need arises.

*Recommendation: By the year 2025, the County will conduct a study to determine an alternate method of solid waste disposal other than landfills. This system may be a combination of recycling, reuse, or a contractual arrangement with an incinerator corporation*

- c. Recycling efforts are funded by solid waste grants as they become available. Efforts to seek and apply for this type funding should continue. The County should also look at financially supplementing the operation of Recycling and extending the services, especially curbside services in the more built up areas of the County.

*Recommendation: This policy should be added to the policies:*

*It will be the policy of the County to pursue an program of recycling that will establish drop off points for the public's use with the ultimate goal being a county-wide recycling pickup program.*

3. Solid Waste - Proposed Changes. §.63.3191(2)(i), F. S.

- a. The County should examine and study the possibilities of establishing curbside service for pickup of separated and identifiable recycling products (glass, paper, white goods, etc.).
- b. Collection points for recycling should be set up around the county, especially in the more remote sections of town.
- c. Efforts should continue to seek the necessary grant funding to finance the program in the County.
- d. A supplemental method for code enforcement should be considered by the County to more effectively address illegal dumping within the County.
- e. Innovative methods to make the recycling programs self-supporting and self-sufficient.
- f. Long-range plans for disposal of household waste and garbage should be addressed by the County to address method of final disposition of collections of waste.

D. Stormwater Management Sub-Element.

1. General Evaluation – Stormwater Management. §.63.3191(2)(h), F. S. Water flowing overland during and immediately following a storm event is called

stormwater drainage or stormwater runoff. Under the effect of gravity, the drainage flows toward sea level through depressions and channels, which comprise the drainage system of an area. The drainage system may consist of natural features, man-made features, or a combination of both. The County is prone to different types of flooding caused by flooding of the Choctawhatchee River and Holmes Creek and periodic heavy rainfall.

- a. Flooding. The County has a substantial portion of land located within the floodplain. In total, approximately 88,170 acres of the County are subject to flooding (22.5%). Caryville has 1,498 acres of floodplain land, Ebro (405 acres), Vernon (854 acres), Wausau (274 acres) and Chipley (233 acres). Accordingly, there is a high chance of reoccurrence. Some degree of flooding occurs at least once a year within the County. Hurricane-induced rains present flooding problems due to low-lying areas filling up too fast, especially along the Choctawhatchee River and adjacent areas. Many of the lakes and water retention pools are also impacted and allow over-flowing water to flood surrounding areas. Although the majority of population and business centers are not in floodplains, impact to roadways, some businesses, and homes stress already overburdened transportation facilities within the County.

Vulnerability is tempered somewhat as the overwhelming majority of land located in flood prone areas are undeveloped. More than any other natural or human-caused catastrophe, flooding has plagued Washington County's citizens, emergency operations, and mitigation efforts throughout the history of the community.

Past flooding has caused great devastation to homes, public buildings, and residences near the Choctawhatchee and other rivers in Washington County, especially in the Caryville and River Road areas. Interstate 10 was closed for a period of time because of damage to the bridges over the Choctawhatchee River. Hundreds of residents were displaced from homes, only to return to total devastation. Even homes built to the "100-year base flood elevation standards" received water. Roadways to include Millers Ferry Road, Shell Landing Road, River Road, and CR 284, along with roads, along with residences, in parts of Vernon, Yankee Town, and the Town of Caryville were heavily impacted along with the by the July 1994 flooding.

- b. Urban Runoff. Another cause of flooding in the County is urban runoff. The City of Chipley experiences the majority of this problem. Development in filled wetlands in combination with storm water runoff from homes, streets, and commercial districts, has caused damage to homes and a few businesses in Chipley. Alligator Creek and Helms Branch receive urban runoff from Chipley. Mitigation purchases of properties as

well as ditch cleaning efforts have solved some of these problems, but some homes continue to be victims of flooding.

- c. Existing Stormwater Management Facilities. These facilities consist of swales and open ditches built over the development life of the County. This system is maintained by the Washington County Public Works Department. The County, in coordination with FEMA has made significant stormwater management facilities improvements County-wide. New subdivisions are required to address stormwater runoff in their initial application, with plans consisting of swales, ditches, and holding ponds. While the rural nature of the County might reduce the need for a County-wide plan, the expected upsurge for development and the demand for building sites, serves to accentuate the continued need for this plan. The County, through the Local Mitigation Strategy program, has prioritized the County's need for a stormwater and drainage plan. This project also appears on the County Capital Improvement Element schedule as a project to be addressed by the County.
2. Issues – Stormwater Management. §.63.3191(2)(e) and (g). These issues will also be discussed in the Identified Issues of this report.
    - a. Impact. The impacts of flooding can be severe, as in the case of the Town of Caryville, devastating homes and requiring large expenditures of money to buy out, elevate or relocate homes and businesses. Flooding in Washington County impacts the local economy by causing dollars to be spent on relief and reconstruction needs, rather than contributing to savings or long-term financial planning by families and businesses. The public tax base of the county is also harmed during each flood event.
    - b. Repetitive Flooding. Repetitive flooding of properties can be a consequence of flooding. A repetitive loss structure is one for which two or more National Flood Insurance Program losses of at least \$1,000 each have been paid over a ten-year period. According to the State of Florida Mitigation Plan (2004), Washington County had 5 repetitive loss structures that resulted in losses of approximately \$221, 516. There are other structures within the County that qualifies for buyouts, but funding is lacking to complete the buyouts. Currently, no funds are available for FEMA buyouts. A master list of potential buyouts of repetitive losses is maintained in the current Local Mitigation Strategy Plan that identifies these properties should the money become available. The Washington County Public Works Department maintains repetitive losses for transportation facilities.
    - c. Complacency. Drought and drought-like conditions serve to lull buyers/sellers/developers into believing that the flood maps are erroneous and the property where development is being planned is in fact not prone to flooding. Education along with presence of flood areas as evidenced by the

flood maps must be made available to public. For new development, the susceptibility to flooding is initially identified by the Planning Department when the land use application (first step in the permitting process) is presented to them for approval. If identified as possibly being in a flood zone, the land use application is marked that a flood elevation certificate is required. The building department then requires the applicant to present this certificate indicated the amount of elevation required before the building permit is issued. In all other areas of the County, site visits, as approved by the Board of County Commissioners, are required by the building official/inspector prior to the issuance of a building permit to ensure that the topography of the land is such that the structure to be built will not be subject to flood. Additionally, the Washington County Health Department makes an onsite visit to ensure that the septic system and potable water well are placed, along with the structure, so as to minimize any future problems caused by flooding. Combined documents, the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code, and the new Flood Ordinance all work together to discourage development within the floodplains of the County.

- d. Development within the Floodplains. For new development, the susceptibility to flooding is initially identified by the Planning Department when the land use application (first step in the permitting process) is presented for approval. If identified as being in a flood zone, the land use application is marked that a flood elevation certificate is required. The building department then requires the applicant to present this certificate indicated the amount of elevation required before the building permit is issued. In all other areas of the County, site visits, as approved by the Board of County Commissioners, are required by the building official/inspector prior to the issuance of a building permit to ensure that the topography of the land is such that the structure to be built will not be subject to flood. Additionally, the Washington County Health Department makes an onsite visit to ensure that the septic system and potable water well are placed along with the structure, to minimize any problems caused by flooding. Combined documents, the Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code, and the new Flood Ordinance all work together to discourage development within the floodplains of the County.

Development in flood areas is discouraged by the Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, and the County flood ordinance revised in 2006. All contain restrictions on development in flood areas and serve to protect public resources, life, and property. The County adopted a Local Mitigation Plan in 2005 that expands on many of the mitigation issues facing the County.

- e. Local Mitigation Plan. Many of these issues are covered in the Washington County Mitigation Strategy Plan adopted in April 2005. That plan is the written product of planning efforts undertaken by the Washington

County Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Committee to mitigate the effects of natural hazards within Washington County, the City of Chipley, the Town of Ebro, the Town of Wausau, the Town of Vernon, and the Town of Caryville. This document includes a detailed description of the Local Mitigation Strategy Committee, its history, participant composition, responsibility for development of the strategy, need for public input, procedures, bylaws, and planning process utilized in the formation of the strategy. The strategy describes the natural hazards each community within Washington County has the potential to face, historical occurrences of each hazard and the vulnerabilities to them that increase its risk. Based on the hazards analysis for these communities, the strategy includes the LMS Committee's mitigation goals, its procedures for proposing and prioritizing actions to accomplish those goals, and the list of initiatives that the multi-jurisdictional LMS Committee supports for the pursuit of outside funding. In addition, it outlines the Committee's procedures for updating the strategy within the five-year update cycle (2005-2010), as well as methods for inclusion of mitigation elements into or from other community plans. The Strategy wraps up with the corresponding dates of initial adoption by each participating jurisdiction.

- f. Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides all participating Regular Program participating communities with copies of their flood maps. The maps are generally kept in the Washington County Planning Department with copies furnished to all municipalities and County libraries. The department assists the public in reviewing the maps and will, upon request, issue a flood letter of opinion based on the flood map information. These requests are usually in response to the mortgage company's requirement for flood insurance, but might also be in conjunction with the issuance of a building permit.

If a property owner/applicant/developer disagrees with the opinion of the Planning Department, or the requirement to purchase flood insurance and there is evidence that the building or proposed building is not in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) on the effective FIRM, hire a professional engineer/surveyor to further delineate his property to validate the zone which would apply to a particular parcel of land. If the applicant still does not agree with a professional engineer/surveyor's opinion, then the property owner/applicant/developer may choose to make application for a Letter of Map Amendment (LOMA) for determination by FEMA as to whether the property and/or building is located within the SFHA.

The current map system is not digitized and is bulky and awkward to use. The maps consist of 15 individual panels to include one index. Locating properties on the maps is confusing and difficult as roads, streams, and monuments are not identified and make the identification of site-specific

property difficult. The FIRM for Washington County was last updated in 1991. Based on the experiences of floods and tropical storms during the previous planning period and the current planning period there have been no revisions to the FIRM. However, this process is scheduled to begin in 2008. The Building, Planning, Emergency Management, and Public Works departments will provide available data to assist FEMA and Northwest Florida Water Management District in updating the FIRM. These departments along with the County Engineer will prioritize additional areas of the County to be added to the flood maps. Requests for general exceptions to the policy that all building permits are issued strictly in accordance with requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and the policies set forth in the Land Development Code and the Flood Ordinance should never be honored.

- g. Need for Drainage Plan for County. Roadways built below flood levels create a risk of trapping people in vehicles. Flooding and stormwater runoff impacts residential structures and agricultural communities by running crops, hay supplies, production operations. Mosquito infestations are a concern following flooding. Ditches and swales are often overburdened during flooding and heavy rains causing overflow of water onto adjacent property and the County roadways.
- h. Land Purchases. NFWMD purchased land within the Chotawhatchee River/Holmes Creek drainage basin to mitigate future drainage issues caused by development and timber harvesting. The agency has also purchased land in the Econfina Watershed to further protect the area and the potable water supply of Bay County. The County has not exercised any options to purchase land that demonstrates vulnerability to any stormwater runoff whether from natural causes for urban runoff. This is due to the limited nature of funding that the County has with many of the improvement projects within the County relying on grants. The County had the opportunity to purchase Cypress Springs, but lacked funding. Another opportunity arose to purchase Becton Springs (adjacent to Cypress), and again the lack of funding prevented this from happening.

3. Proposed Changes – Stormwater Management. §.63.3191 (2)(i), F. S.

- a. The County is in need of a Stormwater/Drainage Plan for the County. The Grants Department should continue to search for grants that offer funding for plan engineering and study. This area of study will include:
  - (1) Identification of potential flood hazard areas and major drainage outfalls.

- (2) The evaluation of major outfalls to pass a 25-year storm runoff and recommendations for improvements to prevent flooding.
- (3) Right-of-way requirements for major outfall systems.
- (4) Outfall improvements cost estimates.
- (5) Funding for improvements.
- (6) Further evaluation of restrictions and criteria for future development to minimize the storm runoff pollution reaching the receiving bodies of water.
- (7) Techniques to prevent storm and urban runoff pollution.
- (8) Evaluate areas that the County should consider as Conservation areas.
- (9) Evaluation of all best management techniques to protect all eco-sensitive areas within the County.
- (10) Cooperation with agencies to update the current FEMA Flood Maps..

E. Potable Water Sub Element

1. General Evaluation – Potable Water Sub-Element. §.63.3191(2)(h) F. S. Washington County, along with Northern Okaloosa, Holmes and parts of Bay County obtain their water supply from the Floridan Aquifer. Due to concerns regarding protection of groundwater, greater care must be exercised to protect the quality of potable water for the County and surrounding areas. Development remains the main contributor toward the deterioration of groundwater quality. Northwest Florida Water Management District monitors the water usage in Florida with the Panhandle divided into seven water supply planning regions across the sixteen counties in the area. Washington County is part of Region IV along with Holmes, Jackson, Calhoun, and Liberties counties. The District’s water supply assessment, completed in 1998 and updated in 2003, concluded that demands now and in the future is within the capacity of the Floridan Aquifer. These counties do not currently require development of alternative water supplies or a regional water supply plan. However, the District administers well construction and consumptive use permitting to help ensure that the water resources and existing legal users are protected.
  - a. Individual Wells. By far the most utilized source of delivery in the County, the number of wells is widespread throughout the unincorporated areas of the County. Due to the rural nature and size of the area, and the desire for large lots, most residential lots exceed the one acre minimum building lot size and utilize wells as their water source with this method has worked fairly efficiently. There is no central water system in the County, but, as the density

of the County increases, use of septic tanks will adversely affect the quality of well water. Due to the existing drought conditions, some individual wells have suffered reduced or loss of water to individual homes in the County. Northwest Florida Water Management District reports in their report of 2006 that no water supply plan is required for Washington County. .

- b. Central Water System. The Land Development Code rules require a central water system for densities over the one unit per acre rule. These rules have been sufficient in the past to protect the water supply and to ensure efficient delivery of water to homes. However, the increase of development requires the County to encourage development to locate where municipal or central water is accessible. No new areas should undergo a land use changes to a density higher than one unit per acre without access to a central water supply.
2. Issues – Potable Water Sub-Element. §163.3191(2)(e) and (g). There is a plentiful supply water sources within the County. However, there is no central water system that will ensure delivery of potable water to areas with increasing development and the non-urban areas of the County. It is vital that the County pursue the need to provide a suitable potable water supply system for the County.
  3. Proposed Changes. §.63.3191(2)(i), F. S. Every attempt to identify viable funding sources should be identified to ensure that this project receives high priority. Most importantly, grants should be actively pursued that will provide the funding for this essential need for the County. In addition, coordination with the private sector is a tool that should be pursued. The necessary study to identify the areas of the County with the greatest demonstrated need for a central potable water system should begin no later than 2009.

Table 10-2. Central Water Levels of Service for Washington County Municipalities					
Area	Year	Population	LOS		
Chipley	2005	4,570	95	5,490	0.60
Caryville	2005				
Vernon	2005				
Wausau	2005				
Sunny Hills					
Source:					

F. Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Subelement.

1. General Evaluation - Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Subelement. §163.3191(2)(h), F. S. The groundwater system underlying Washington County generally consists of three aquifers: 1) the surficial or water table aquifer; 2) the upper

Floridan aquifer; and 3) the lower Floridan aquifer. The water table aquifer lies just below the land surface and extends throughout the County. It is open to infiltration from rainfall in varying degrees, depending on the percolation characteristics of surface soils and the extent of impervious surfaces, which have been created in the urban areas of the County. The water table aquifer and surface water systems are interconnected throughout Washington County, with the aquifer contributing to base flow levels of the surface waters. The majority of rainfall infiltrating the water table aquifer travels in a southwesterly direction from higher elevations to natural discharge areas such as lakes, streams or marshes.

The Floridan Aquifer lies below the water table aquifer. NFWMD research indicates that areas of any potential recharge, high or low, should be administered so that no contaminants reach the aquifer. Alterations of recharge areas have taken place around developed areas, especially Chipley, where urban development has occurred. The greatest concentration of impermeable surfaces is within the downtown area of Chipley (surrounding the junction of US 90, SR 77, and the railroad tracks) and near SR 77 and Brickyard Road (shopping center and hospital). This type of developed area also occurs in and around Ebro where the Ebro dog track is, and in Vernon in the area where schools exist, although not to the extent found in Chipley. The only development of this type within the unincorporated area section of the County is located adjacent to Chipley at the Florida Department of Transportation complex located on east SR 90. The future home of Lewis Bear Distribution Center adjacent to the dog track in Ebro will also be paved creating additional impermeable surface in that area.

Corn, soybeans, and the raising of livestock (dairy cows) are the primary agricultural industries in the County. There is some contamination potential in groundwater from these activities. The County should continue, through the Agriculture Extension Agent, to promote *Water Quality/Quantity Best Management Practices for Florida Vegetable and Agronomic Crops*. The County also makes this publication available on the planning page of the County's website.

The overall intent of federal and state regulation of groundwater aquifers is the protection of public drinking water supplies from contamination. The protection of water table levels and the regulation of aquifer withdrawals are primarily under the domain of the Northwest Florida Water Management District, while water quality is regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The County designates the Well Field Protection Zone on all existing potable well fields which supply water for public consumption. The wellhead protection zone lists activities that are prohibited within the radius. In addition, restrictions for areas of moderate to high groundwater recharge have also been established, limiting impervious surfaces to 75% of the total acreage, prohibiting certain land uses, and prohibiting application of domestic and industrial wastes.

2. Issues - Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Sub element. §.63.3191(2)(e) and g. The maps appearing in the Comprehensive Plan depicting the *Areas of Aquifer Recharge in Washington County* are illegible and need to be replaced. This map needs to be revised using the Northwest Florida Water Management District map.

The increase of development in the County can be expected to impact the Floridan Aquifer. As development occurs, impervious surfaces increase and can reduce available natural recharge. In addition, the increased use of septic tanks can be detrimental to the groundwater resources of the County. Without a central wastewater disposal system, this situation will not improve and will continue with the proliferation of septic tanks. It can be expected that the groundwater and surface water will be adversely impacted with the continued use of septic tanks.

3. Changes - Natural Groundwater Aquifer Recharge Sub-Element. The map as indicated in above *Issues* will need to be updated in the Plan. Rule changes since 2000 need to be incorporated into the element.

The County should seek funding for and actively pursue the establishment of a central wastewater treatment facility. Two items appear on the Capital Improvements Element schedule which will have great impact on the protection of the County's groundwater and the Floridan Aquifer. In addition, coordination with the private sector is a tool that should be pursued to assist in this endeavor. The necessary study to identify the areas of the County with the greatest demonstrated need for a wastewater treatment system should begin no later than 2009.

- G. Electrical Power. The electrical power network of the county is not currently part of the Comprehensive Plan's Infrastructure Element; however, it is felt that comment should be made regarding the status of power companies. Recent growth and expansion of transportation facilities warrant comment regarding the status of this infrastructure. Gulf Power's electrical facilities providing service in Washington County consist of 4 distribution substations, 2 transmission substations, and over 65 miles of high voltage transmission line. The total peak electrical demand in the county is approximately 20 megawatts. Gulf Power shares in providing service to the customers in the northern part of the county with West Florida Electric Cooperative while service in the southern part of the county is shared between Gulf Power and Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative. Currently, the general growth potential in Washington County is sparse and predominately rural in nature. The majority of the growth in Washington County will likely affect West Florida Electric and Gulf Coast Electric, in the southern part of the County. In review of the five-year substation plan, Gulf Power does not foresee a need to construct a new substation.

**IV. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY AND THE MUNICIPALITIES OF CARYVILLE, EBRO, VERNON AND WAUSAU**

The following assessment of the Infrastructure Element is presented to analyze the Element as it relates to the major issues listed in the Identified Issues section of this EAR, as well as to assess the overall performance of the Element. Specific attention has been placed on Identified Issue 6, 8 & 9. These Identified Issues address the protection of open space, the revision of the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code and the Public School Facilities Element. Objective 1-4, below, called for policies to ensure the continuation of the recycling program in the County. This Objective ensures the continued improvement to all land within the County to include the open space as well as the continued protection valuable natural resources. Each Objective of this Element has been assessed to determine if further revision is necessary for both the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Code.

**GOAL 1:** The County and municipalities shall provide needed public facilities in a manner that ensures protection of investments in existing facilities, and which promotes orderly growth.

**Objective 1-1:** The County shall, in coordination with the municipalities, implement adopted procedures to insure that, at the time a development order or development permit is issued, adequate facility capacity is available or will be available at the adopted Level of Service Standard concurrent with the impacts of development.

**Policy 1-1a:** The following Levels of Service Standards are hereby adopted by the County and municipalities, and shall be used for determining the availability of service capacity:

INFRASTRUCTURE LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS		
Sanitary Sewer	Location	Level of Service Standards
	City of Chipley	As established in the City of Chipley’s Comprehensive Plan. Washington County hereby adopts the same LOS as the City of Chipley for facilities extended into unincorporated Washington County.
	City of Vernon	80 gpcpd
	Sunny Hills	100 gpcpd
	Onsite Sewage Septic Tanks and not served by central sanitary sewer	1.0 per 0.5 acres in parcels of record as of the adopted date of this Plan. Otherwise 1 septic tank per acre
<b>Potable Water</b>	City of Caryville	125 gpcpd
	Sunny Hills Subdivision	200 gpcpd
	City of Chipley	115 gpcpd As established in the City of Chipley’s Comprehensive Plan. Washington County hereby adopts the same LOS as the City of Chipley for facilities extended into unincorporated Washington County.

	Town of Vernon	75 gpcpd
	Town of Wausau	146 gpcpd
<b>Solid Waste</b>	County-wide	5.0 lbs per capita per day

Policy 1-lb: Any extensions of existing sanitary sewer services into the unincorporated areas of Washington County shall be in accordance with the adopted Level of Service Standard of the specific facility.

*There has been no extension of any sanitary sewer services from any municipality into the unincorporated sections of Washington County. Therefore, the Level of Service Standard has not been affected by extension of services into new areas. The development of the NRPI property purchased from the Sunny Hills developer, Deltona Corporation, has been deemed to have vested rights; therefore, septic tanks are allowable. The developers and Aqua Utilities should be encouraged to extend wastewater treatment facilities to this area.*

Policy 1-lc: Package sanitary sewer treatment systems shall only be permitted in accordance with FDEP standards and the LOS standards for such facilities shall be established on an individual basis in accordance with FDEP guidelines and the demands placed on each such facility.

*While proposed, there have been no new package plants installed within any of the municipalities or the unincorporated sections of Washington County. Any anticipated plants will be constructed in accordance with the prevailing guidelines of the State and County.*

Policy 1-ld: The following tiered Level of Service Standards for stormwater management are hereby adopted for the County and municipalities, and they shall be used for determining the availability of service capacity as well as for evaluating development applications relative to the onsite provision of stormwater management facilities and associated water quality control.

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Design Capacity</b>
Stormwater Management	Development fronting or contributing to stormwater on principal or minor arterial roadways	LOS A for 50 year, 24-hour storm event and treatment retention/detention systems as required by LDRs and State regulation (i.e., 17-25-FAC – without exemptions)
Stormwater Management	Development fronting or Contributing to stormwater on collector roadways	LOS A for 25 year, 24-hour storm event and treatment retention/detention systems as required by LDRs and State regulation (i.e., 17-25-FAC – without exemptions)
Stormwater Management	Development fronting on local streets and residential neighborhoods (including new subdivisions)	LOS A for 15 year, 24-hour storm event and treatment retention/detention systems as required by LDRs and State regulation (i.e., 17-25-FAC – without exemptions)
Stormwater Management	In agricultural and silviculture areas and along dirt roads in unsubdivided areas	LOS A for 10- year, 24-hour storm event and in accordance with Division of Forestry Best Management Practices (as specified below)

Best Management Practices (in accordance with the Division of Forestry's Silviculture Best Management Practices Manual) shall be complied with to control agricultural runoff, erosion and sedimentation from agriculture and silviculture lands and unpaved roads. These implementing mechanisms include, but are not necessarily limited to, such provisions as the following:

- a. Water turnouts and broad based dips being used to direct runoff and sediment from dirt road surfaces into the surrounding woods and away from surface waters;

*This policy is being met by the County, but will be further discussed in the Identified Issues section of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report.*

- b. Water bars being utilized to perform the same function for skid trails and fire breaks;

*The County is meeting this Policy.*

- c. Structural solutions such as properly controlled vegetated swales, detention and retention ponds, etc., are being utilized when necessary;

*The County is meeting this policy*

- d. Dirt roads being closed and stabilized with vegetation when they are no longer in use; and

*The County is meeting this policy.*

- e. Dirt roads, skid trails, and fire trails being avoided in environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 1-le: To ensure that Best Management Practices are followed, the County Road and Bridge Department shall be responsible for inspecting once every two (2) years all existing dirt roads constructed in the County. The Department should coordinate such inspections with the Division of Forestry, and should review and approve all new dirt roads constructed in the County.

*The Washington County Public Works Department rotationally inspects all bridges and roads within the County as well as roads that might be maintained within any municipality. No new dirt roads are allowed within the County for the purposes of development. This policy is serving the County well in that the inventory of dirt roads is being reduced both by not accepting dirt roads and an ongoing paving program of existing dirt roads. GASB has ensured that the roads have been inventoried and a list of those roads available both to governmental agencies and the public.*

Policy 1-lf: In agricultural areas, Best Management Practices shall also be complied with, and the County shall coordinate with the Soil Conservation Service to ensure that each farm has, and is compliant with, an approved U.S. Soil Conservation Service Plan.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 1-1g: All adopted Land Development Regulations (LDR's) including regulations governing the provisions and/or construction of stormwater management facilities shall be consistent with State regulations (Chapter 17-25, F.A.C.). *This policy is being met by the County with further discussion in the Identified Issues of this report.*

Policy 1-1h: All stormwater management facilities shall be constructed so as not to cause or contribute to a violation of water quality standards in the waters of the State.

*All developers of subdivision are required to submit construction plans detailing stormwater management facilities prior to the approval or construction of any new facilities or installation of any new subdivision. Both the Public Works Department and the County Engineer review these plans and provide professional opinions as to the suitability of the proposed construction. The permitting process for individual residential or commercial construction also involves review of stormwater management facilities.*

Policy 1-1i: Future pollutant load reduction goals for the area's surface waters developed as part of the SWIM program shall be incorporated into the adopted LOS standards for stormwater management.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 1-1j: The County Building Inspector shall, working in concert with the Planning Commission, track facility demand and capacity information as development applications (for development orders and permits) are submitted, to ensure compliance with the Concurrency Management System.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 1-1k: All improvements for replacement, expansion, or increase in capacity of facilities shall be compatible with the adopted Level of Service Standards for the facilities.

*These improvements are permitted through the Northwest Florida Water Management and the Department of Environmental Protection. While the County occasionally receives and reviews the applications when furnished a copy of permit application, there is no procedure in place that will ensure that the County is made aware any improvements once installed. More effective tracking using the Black Bear permitting program can be utilized to track permits and approval of new residential and commercial Development. The Planning Department should continue to compare capacity with new development requirements as a part of the review process to ensure that Level of Service Standards is consistently met.*

Policy 1-1l: The County shall coordinate through the development approval process with its municipalities owning and operating infrastructure facilities, to ensure that proper Levels of Service

Standards are maintained in keeping with the Future Land Use Element and Capital Improvement Element of this Plan.

*Vernon and Chipley have both water and sewage facilities. Both have received funding to increase the capacity and efficiency of their facilities, and those appear to be working well for both. Chipley, through their development approval process, routinely reviews each request for development approval to ensure that proper Levels of Service Standards are maintained with the County not involved in that process except for the issuance of the building permit. The Town of Vernon approves all development orders based on availability capacity prior the issuance of any building permits. Vernon is attempted to get funding to aid in the relocation/replacement of their utilities infrastructure as it becomes displaced by the four-lane project of SR 79. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report*

*Caryville and Wausau both have central water systems with no indication that capacity is a problem; however, there may be a future problem with the age of the infrastructure and both towns will want to examine problems surrounding the aging facilities. While there is negligible growth in and around Caryville, future demands on the system dictate that the system be upgraded and improved. Wausau is another story; growth is expected to continue there at a steady pace and infrastructure should be closely monitored and improvements made that will ensure that capacity and proper Levels of Service Standards can be met.*

Policy 1-lm: Prior to the execution of future contracts and/or agreements with private contractors for solid waste collection services, the County shall execute an agreement between the County and Springhill Regional Landfill and/or the Bay County Incinerator to ensure the allocation of specific facility capacity to serve the solid waste disposal needs of Washington County.

*Waste Management, Inc., has verified capacity to serve Washington County for 47 additional years. There is an active on-going agreement with Regional Springhill Landfill. While these assurances have been made, the County needs to continue to monitor the capacity at this facility. While there is a 47-year capacity at the current landfill, the County will need to look to the future to plan for disposal of future solid waste generated in the County.*

Policy 1-ln: The County shall continue to prohibit disposal of all hazardous waste in landfills and shall continue to annually inspect 20% of all small quantity hazardous waste generators to ensure that such hazardous waste is being collected by a licensed collector/hauler.

*There are no active landfills in Washington County. Amnesty Day two times a year, gives the residents an opportunity to dispose of hazardous wastes. West Florida Regional Planning Council is under contract with the State of Florida to do SQG in Washington County and maintains the master list of generators.*

Objective 1-2: The County and municipalities will maintain a five-year schedule of capital improvements for public facilities to be updated annually.

*All improvements will be added to the Capital Improvements Element schedule that is now being updated on an annual basis.*

Policy 1-2a: Proposed capital improvement projects for this element will be evaluated and ranked in the following manner:

- Level 1: To protect public health and safety, to fulfill the County's and municipalities commitment to provide facilities, or to preserve full use of existing facilities.
- Level 2: To increase efficiency and reduce operation costs and maintenance.
- Level 3: To extend facilities within service areas.

Objective 1-3: The County currently requires and shall continue to require the conservation of water resources by implementing Policies 1-3a through 1-3b.

Policy 1-3a: During periods of water shortage or drought, the County shall initiate procedures to restrict potable water usage and agricultural irrigation in keeping with the Water Shortage Restrictions contained in the Northwest Florida Water Management District's Water Shortage Plan, dated March, 1992. Such procedures shall be advertised through public notice.

*The County follows the directives of NFWMD with regard to drought. Drought, or below average amounts of annual rainfall, is particularly devastating to farmers, dairies, poultry operations, hay production, water wells, and the local economy. Closely associated with drought are increased wildfire risks and impact to the silviculture economy of private land owners. Irrigation of lawns can occasionally cause lower water pressure on public water systems, thus increasing the risk to firefighter's combating urban or wild land fires. Drought can also cause abnormal animal movement as wildlife begins to seek water sources near areas of human population and development. Overall, all residents, businesses, and governmental operations are vulnerable to drought. The greatest risks are considered to be in the agricultural community, and to those relying on private wells or public water systems as drinking water sources. For the public, the risk of fire is probably the greatest threat. The impacts to county emergency management can be minor where coordination with the Florida Department of Agriculture would provide financial relief, or major where wild land fires develop with limited local water resources available to contain the incident. The county anticipates the need for outside financial or resource assistance in some severe droughts, and potential substantial help in all major severity events of drought.*

*Recommendation: The County should develop policies to guide the County through periods of severe drought.*

Policy 1-3b: In order to conserve potable water, the County shall continue to require compliance with the Water Conservation Act of 1982, which requires that all new construction activities and additions to existing structures utilize fixtures conforming to the following schedule of maximum water use:

Water Closets, tank type	3.5 gallons/flush
Water Closets, flushometer or flush valve	3.5 gallons/flush
Urinals, tank type	3.5 gallons/flush
Urinals, flushometer or flush valve	3.5 gallons/flush
Showerheads	3.5 gallons/minute
Lavatory and sink faucets	2.5 gallons/minute

*As recommended in the Conservation element, the above standards should be replaced as follows:*

Maximum Flow Rates and Consumption for Plumbing Fixtures and Fixture Fittings	
PLUMBING FIXTURE OR FIXTURE FITTING	MAXIMUM FLOW RATE OR QUANTITY"
Lavatory, private	2.2 gpm at 60 psi
Lavatory, public, (metering)	0.25 gallon per metering cycle
Lavatory, public (other than metering)	0.5 gpm at 60 psi
Shower head"	2.5 gpm at 80 psi
Sink faucet	2.2 gpm at 60 psi
Urinal	1.0 gallon per (flushing cycle
Water closet	1 .6 gallons per flushing cycle
For SI: 1 gallon = 3.785 L, 1 gallon per minute = 3.785 <i>Urn</i> 1 pound per square inch = 6.895 kPa. a. A hand-held shower spray is a shower head. b. Consumption tolerances shall he determined from referenced standards.	
Source: Florida Building Code – Plumbing (as provided by the Washington County Building Department.	

Objective 1-4: The County shall maximize the use of solid waste facilities by continuing to implement a county-wide recycling program in order to effectively reduce the volume of solid waste, as required by the Solid Waste Management Act of 1988 (as amended).

*This policy is being met by the County.*

Policy 1-4a: The County and municipalities shall continue to actively encourage and educate the public regarding solid waste recycling.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

GOAL 2: The County and municipalities shall provide sanitary sewer, solid waste, stormwater management, and potable water facilities to meet existing and projected demands identified in this plan.

Objective 2-1: Existing and future deficiencies shall be corrected/prevented by:

- a. Continually identifying sources of ground water inflow and infiltration, and develop a program through adoption of the LDR's and the Capital Improvement Element of this Plan and the City of Chipley's Comprehensive Plan for rehabilitation and future prevention;
- b. Cleaning and maintaining existing drainage canals; and
- c. Permitting new development only in accordance with State and Federal regulations and this Plan.

The County is meeting this policy.

Policy 2-1a: Projects shall be undertaken in accordance with the schedule in the Capital Improvements Element of this Plan.

The County is meeting this policy.

Policy 2-1b: No development orders or permits shall be issued for new development which would result in an increase in demand such that the facilities would become deficient (i.e. fall below adopted LOS).

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Objective 2-2: The County shall continue to work in concert, through existing intergovernmental mechanisms, with the County Health Department and the State Department of Environmental Protection to ensure that mandatory requirements for siting, installation, inspection, operation, and maintenance of onsite wastewater treatment systems are implemented and maintained.

Policy 2-2a: Use of onsite wastewater treatment systems (including septic tanks and package treatment plants) shall be limited to the following conditions:

- a. Existing septic tank and package treatment plants may remain in service providing they are functioning properly in the manner designed and are located in a suitable soil environment;
- b. Use of septic tank systems for new development shall be limited to the County areas presently not served by central sewer service and shall only be permitted subsequent

to the receipt of all applicable permits, and in accordance with the densities established in Policies 3-1 through 3-11 of the Future Land Use Element;

- c. New construction and/or major renovation (more than 50% of structural value of property) located in areas served by central sewer service systems shall be required to connect to central service; and
- d. Use of package treatment plants shall be limited to development in areas presently not served by central sewer service and to provide pretreatment of sewage prior to discharge into central sewer systems. The installation of such facilities should only be permitted subject to the receipt of all applicable permits, and the treatment facility shall be established on an individual basis in accordance with FDEP permitting requirements.
- e. Issuance of septic tank permits shall be prohibited in areas designated on the Future Land Use Map as commercial and/or industrial areas where the use involves the generation, handling, storage, and/or use of hazardous materials in its operation.
- f. In accordance with the existing Subdivision Ordinance, the installation of sewage disposal systems requiring soil absorption systems shall be prohibited by the Planning Commission where such systems will not function due to high ground water, flooding, or unacceptable soil characteristics.

*The County is meeting the policy. However, the following (f) needs to be clarified.*

*Recommendation: Item (f) should read:*

*In accordance with rules of Land Development Code and the Washington County Flood Ordinance, the installation of sewage disposal systems requiring soil absorption systems shall be prohibited by the Planning Commission where such systems will not function due to high ground water, flooding, or unacceptable soil characteristics.*

Objective 2-3: The County shall improve the management of stormwater and the protection of water resources by implementing the following policies.

Policy 2-3a: The County and municipalities shall implement adopted LDR's which shall include provisions for stormwater management.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 2-3b: The County and municipalities shall require implementation of the Division of Forestry Best Management Practices as provided by Stormwater Management Level of Service Standards defined in "Infrastructure" Policy 1-ld.

The County is meeting this policy.

Objective 2-4: The County and municipalities (including Chipley) shall maintain established coordinating procedures the development review and approval process to ensure that public facilities (including sanitary sewer, drainage, and potable water facilities) are available to meet future needs.

Policy 2-4a: Throughout the planning period the County Building Inspection Department shall continue to serve as the centralized point for final review of all development orders and permits.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 2-4b: The County Building Inspection Department shall continually monitor development activity and shall annually furnish each operating entity for public sewer and potable water service with a quantitative report of the number of development permits issued in the County as well as in each municipality.

*The County is meeting this policy.*

Policy 2-4c: Each operating entity for public sewer and potable water service shall correspondingly provide the County Building Inspection Department with annual reports of facility capacity and use.

*Recommendation: This function is currently being accomplished by the Planning Department. The policy should read as such.*

Policy 2-4d: To accurately track development activity by location, the County Building Inspection Department shall record location information (i.e., section, township, range, subdivision, name of municipality) on each development permit issued (including the new siting of mobile homes).

*The County is generally meeting this policy. However, the use of the Black Bear tracking program should be reviewed to ensure that it is being utilized to its maximum and that all employees are trained appropriately to fully realize the benefits offered.*

Policy 2-4e: The County shall install and maintain a computerized Development Permit Tracking System.

*This policy is being met by the County with the implementation of the Black Bear program to track and issue permits. However, the use of the Black Bear tracking program should be reviewed to ensure that it is being utilized to its maximum and that all employees are trained appropriately to fully realize the benefits offered*

Policy 2-4f: The extension of municipal services to areas outside municipal boundaries will be permitted only if such extensions will not promote urban sprawl.

*This policy is being met by the County, but is expected to become more of an issue as developable land disappears and growth occurs. This will be further discussed in the Identified Issues section of this report.*

Objective 2-5: The County and municipalities (including Chipley) shall coordinate to ensure that urban sprawl is discouraged through the utilization of all public facilities, including sewer, potable water, and stormwater management facilities to the greatest extent possible and by implementing Policy 2-5a.

Policy 2-5a: This objective shall be achieved through the implementation of the following:

- a. Policy 2-4f above;
- b. Policies contained in this Plan related to provisions for the siting of onsite and package wastewater treatment systems;
- c. The density classifications and geographic land use distributions established in the Future Land Use Element of this Plan; and
- d. The unified Land Development Code

*This policy is being met by the County, but is expected to become more of an issue as developable land disappears and growth occurs. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report*

GOAL 3: The County and municipalities shall regulate land use to protect the functions of natural drainage features and natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas.

Objective 3-1: Consistent with level of service standards for drainage, nonstructural approaches to stormwater management shall be permitted in new development to allow for aquifer recharge.

Policy 3-1a: The county and municipalities shall allow for nonstructural stormwater management systems in new development. Nonstructural approaches shall include, but not be limited to, grassed swales and waterways, earthen retention facilities, berms, etc. Such systems shall meet federal, state, and local regulations, as applicable.

*The County is meeting this Policy. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report in relation to a county-wide drainage plan.*

Policy 3-1b: Prohibit the alteration of natural watercourses and floodways, unless in the case of a finding of overriding public interest. An overriding public interest shall be based upon reducing the hazards of flooding in areas of development existing prior to the adoption date of this comprehensive plan.

*This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report in relation to a county-wide drainage plan.*

Policy 3-1c: The county and municipalities shall protect the functions of all natural drainage features (such as streams, lakes, wetlands, and estuaries, etc.). The purpose of such protection is to allow for the natural treatment and recharge of water from overland flow, to reduce sedimentation, siltation, and soil erosion, and to allow for the retention, infiltration, evapotranspiration, and evaporation of water, as well as wildlife habitat and floodplain protection.

*This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report. A county-wide drainage engineering study is included on the Capital Improvements Element schedule.*

*Policy 3-1d: Recognize that periodic flooding is natural and acceptable, and therefore, in order to prevent damage to property and life, require that all development within the 100 year floodplain be in compliance with Washington County's adopted LDR's (including their FEMA Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance) and state and federal regulations, and that no development shall serve to increase the height and/or velocity of regulatory floods.*

*This policy is closely monitored by the County flood coordinator (Building Official) and the Planning Office (in the approval of Certificates of Land use). This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report*

Policy 3-1e: Require that all proposed building and development within the 100 year floodplain shall be constructed consistent with established state and federal standards regulating development within designated floodplains.

*A comparison is made of proposed development with the FEMA Flood Information Map (FIRM) by the Planning Department to determine what flood zone is present. If there is a flood zone, then the requirement that a Flood Elevation Certificate be required before the building permit is issued is placed on the approved land use certificate. The building inspector then makes a site visit as does the Department of Health inspector to determine the suitability of the site for placement of any structure.*

Objective 3-2: The County shall establish procedures/mechanisms to protect and enhance the natural functions of the natural groundwater aquifer recharge areas and potable water wellfields by implementing the following policies:

Policy 3-2a: The County and municipalities shall maintain wellhead protection zones in the Land Development Regulations.

*The County is meeting this Policy. The Future Land Use Maps clearly indicate these areas.*

Policy 3-2b: Land Development Regulations,, shall require that structures and septic tanks be setback from public and private wellheads in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 10D-6 and 10D-4 F.A.C.

*The County is meeting this Policy with a 500-foot setback required.*

Policy 3-2c: Moderate to high recharge zones of the Floridan Aquifer shall be conserved and protected from contamination and restricted recharge through the implementation of Policy 6-11 contained in the Future Land Use Element.

*The County is meeting this Policy. Further comments appear in the Future Land Use Element of the Evaluation and Appraisal Report. All developers are required to comment on the location of their development in relation to the moderate to high recharge zones of the aquifer.*

Policy 3-2d: Upon completion of the Groundwater Basin Recharge Resource Availability Inventory (GWBRAI) and any SWIM program projects related to Washington County, the County and municipalities shall coordinate with the NFWFMD to ensure that recommended amendments to this Plan and the LDR's are incorporated in future revisions.

*The County is meeting this Policy. Washington County has developed policies and guidelines based on Northwest Florida Water Management District's programs to manage and regulate groundwater aquifer recharge and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) objectives.*

Policy 3-2e: The natural functions of wetlands (i.e., groundwater recharge, wildlife habitat, floodplain protection, etc.) shall be conserved by limiting future development in such areas in concert with the conservation land use classification found in the Future Land Use Element of this Plan.

*The County is meeting this policy. However, the county should reexamine their setbacks and consider increasing them, especially when septic tanks will be utilized on properties adjacent to or in close proximity to these areas. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report*

Policy 3-2f: Structures within 500 feet of a public potable water wellhead will be given priority for the construction of sewer pipelines when such facilities become available in a given locality. Such structures will be given one year to connect to the sewer from the date of notification of availability.

*The County is meeting this policy. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report.*

Policy 3-2g: The LDR's, shall be amended to include provisions for plugging of abandoned wells prior to issuance of development orders or permits.

*The County is meeting this policy. There is an approved policy in the Washington County Operational Manual adopted by the BCC in March 2001, allowing the Public Works Department to perform this type of work as identified.*

Policy 3-2h: Land Development Regulations, to be adopted by October 1, 1991, shall prohibit the siting of potentially adverse land uses, such as dry cleaning facilities, package treatment plants, gasoline stations, etc. within 500 feet of a public potable water wellhead.

*The County has met this policy.*

*Recommendation: This policy should have mining operations added to the list of adverse land uses.*

*Currently, the CIP list contains the funding for an engineering study to examine the feasibility and identification of the areas of the county that would benefit from the construction of central utilities. This is important to the County as the growth expands to the portions of the county that are not served by central water and wastewater treatment facilities. Areas of the County where the need for the extension of existing services or construction of new facilities is demonstrated are identified as:*

*•Town of Ebro. The town council has conducted several visioning forums and utilities' workshops to find viable solutions to the situation they find themselves in with the advent of the new Bay County International Airport less than 20 miles away and no central utilities' infrastructure or funding in place to support the expected growth. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report*

*•Town of Vernon. The disruption of the town due to the SR 79 four-lane project through the center of town will prove to be a challenge for the town as they seek funding to relocate and replace the infrastructure that is now in place. While the economic well being of the community is a factor, there is also a humanitarian aspect here that cannot be overlooked as a community changes its entire small town makeup. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report.*

- SR 77 Corridor South of I-10. The lack of central water and sewage negates the construction of any major commercial development to include motels, restaurants, and other facilities designed to serve travelers on I-10. The County needs to coordinate future efforts with the city to extend the utilities into this area. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report.*
- Southeastern Washington County. Aqua Utilities serves Sunnyhills, but currently does not serve any development outside of the boundaries of the subdivision. The infrastructure and capacity both need improvement, and as such should appear on the CIE schedule. Extension of their services through increase of capacity and upgrading of infrastructure should be encouraged by the County. This will be discussed further in the identified issues of this Evaluation and Appraisal Report.*

*The following policies should be added to this element:*

*It will be the policy of the County to specifically strive for county-supported libraries to be located no more than 30 minutes driving time from any one residence in Washington County.*

*It will be the policy of the County to increase the minimum square feet of library space currently available in the County from 10,000 square feet to 18,400 to meet current population standards.*

*It will be the policy of the County to ensure that future sites for library facilities are selected based on growth, population and placement of new elementary schools.*

*It will be the policy of the County to ensure that 3 volumes per capita or 69,000 volumes as a minimum is available for public use.*