



Comprehensive Plan 2009



2.9 COASTAL MANAGEMENT

For purposes of this element the "coastal planning area" shall include all estuarine or oceanic water bodies and shorelines adjacent thereto; tidally-influenced state submerged lands; marine wetlands; water-dependent or water-related facilities located on estuarine or oceanic water bodies; public access facilities to estuarine or oceanic water bodies, and; the land area included within the hurricane vulnerability zone.

Goal 1: Protect coastal barrier islands and maintain or improve estuarine environmental quality by planning for and where appropriate restricting development that would damage these resources, while also providing public access for recreation purposes.

***Objective 1.1** Require development to protect beaches or dunes, to restore altered beaches or dunes, and to comply with construction standards which minimize the impacts of man-made structures on beach or dune systems to the maximum extent practicable.*

Policy 1.1.1 Ensure compliance with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) regulations that require location of construction a sufficient distance landward of the beach to permit natural shoreline fluctuations and to preserve dune stability. Construction may occur to the extent that the natural storm buffering and protection capability of the dunes is not diminished.

Policy 1.1.2 If development regulations render a property owner unable to develop the land at the highest intensity and density allowed by the land use category, because such development will degrade or alter beaches or the dune system, then the owner shall be allowed to construct a single-family residential dwelling unit that limits the extent of disturbance to the minimum area necessary to accommodate the dwelling unit and access driveway. If more intense development is desired, the Board of County Commissioners must first approve a plan for restoration of the altered beaches or dunes.

Policy 1.1.3 For areas south of U.S. Highway 98, all areas within 200 yards of the Choctawhatchee Bay and system including the Sound, and all of Okaloosa Island, construction materials that permanently discolor the sand are prohibited. The Munsell Soil Color Charts will define discoloring materials.

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Policy 1.1.4 The removal of white sand from Okaloosa Island shall be prohibited.

Policy 1.1.5 The County will encourage activities that protect and rebuild coastal dunes. This will be accomplished by continuing, or supporting the continuation of, activities by private and public agencies for dune restoration purposes, installation of sand fences on public and private properties, and enforcing restrictions regarding the destruction of sea oats and requiring the planting of sea oats by new development in coastal areas. All activities will be coordinated with the Guiding Principles of the Local Mitigation Strategy.

Policy 1.1.6 New access to the beach will be confined to elevated structures, subject to Florida Department of Environmental Protection approval and compliance with ADA requirements.

Policy 1.1.7 Cooperate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to re-nourish public beaches using white sand made available by maintenance dredging of Choctawhatchee Bay, Santa Rosa Sound, or other water bodies within or near Okaloosa County.

Objective 1.2 *Preserve and protect the environmental quality of estuarine environments, coastal wetlands, living marine resources, and coastal barriers by prohibiting or restricting development, or by limiting specific impacts and cumulative impacts of development or redevelopment.*

Policy 1.2.1 Implement all policies in the Conservation Element that are applicable to limiting specific and cumulative impacts due to development or redevelopment upon wetlands, water quality and quantity, wildlife habitat and living marine resources, including estuaries within the jurisdiction of more than one local government.

Policy 1.2.2 With respect to acquisition, the County, where feasible, shall protect environmentally sensitive coastal areas unduly threatened by development, through acquisition, establishment of public or private conservation easements, purchase of development rights, or through other available means as deemed appropriate.

Policy 1.2.3 The County will establish and implement a program that provides for the removal of invasive exotics from County-owned land and the replanting of native vegetation.

Policy 1.2.4 The County will encourage existing development and require new development to plant or replant native vegetation where appropriate, including seagrass beds and other types of shoreline, aquatic and upland vegetation.

Policy 1.2.5 All sewage treatment and public water supply systems within a Coastal High Hazard Area shall be flood-proofed to prevent infiltration of surface water expected under storm conditions or shall be otherwise designed to function when submerged under such storm conditions, consistent with the Local Mitigation Strategy Guiding Principles.

Policy 1.2.6 Septic tanks shall be prohibited in coastal high hazard areas, unless prohibition would create a taking.

Policy 1.2.7 Coordinate with the following existing resource protection plans: Choctawhatchee River and Bay S.W.I.M. Plan, Pensacola Bay S.W.I.M. Plan, FDEP Ecosystem Management Plan, West Florida Strategic Regional Policy Plan, Rocky Bayou Aquatic Preserve Management Plan, and the Northwest Florida Resource Management Plan, and the Local Mitigation Strategy.

Policy 1.2.8 Shoreline armoring should be discouraged in favor of alternative methods of enhancing shoreline stability that minimize erosion and allow for the growth of emergent shoreline grasses.

Objective 1.3 *Increase the amount of public access to the beach or shoreline, especially on Okaloosa Island, consistent with estimated public need.*

Policy 1.3.1 The County shall continue to maintain and enhance the public beach access ways (freeways) on Okaloosa Island. (Note: These freeways are 100' pedestrian rights-of-way providing access to the beach.)

Policy 1.3.2 The County shall continue to enforce the public access requirements of the Coastal Zone Protection Act of 1985 and shall include pursuing the acquisition of additional public access to gulf, bay and estuarine shorelines.

Policy 1.3.3 Development or redevelopment of gulf-front and shoreline parks shall provide linkage to multi-modal transportation facilities, as appropriate, and shall accommodate bicycle facilities, sufficient parking, and beach or shoreline access facilities, including those for the handicapped.

Policy 1.3.4 The County will continue to participate in and apply for State and Federal grant programs to construct beach walkovers, boat launching facilities, and parking facilities on Okaloosa Island and other areas deemed appropriate.

Goal 2: Protect human life and property, including historic resources, in locations subject to destruction by hurricanes in Okaloosa County.

Objective 2.1 *Direct population concentrations away from Coastal High Hazard Areas through implementation of the future land use map, through acquisition of land, and through implementation of the Local Mitigation Strategy.*

Policy 2.1.1 The Coastal High Hazard Area is hereby defined as the evacuation zone for a category 1 hurricane as established on the surge zone maps of the regional hurricane evacuation study.

Policy 2.1.2 New structures, other than dune walkovers, and structures needed to accommodate conservation and passive recreation uses, are prohibited within the portion

of the Coastal High Hazard Area lying within the FEMA V Zone, unless all Department of Environmental Protection Coastal Construction Control Standards and FEMA Special Hazard Area Minimum Construction Requirements are met.

Policy 2.1.3 New high-density residential development (over 25 units per acre) shall not be permitted within the Coastal High Hazard Area (CHHA) except on Okaloosa Island where leases supported by the covenants and restrictions have been previously granted. New nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and hospitals are required to be located outside of the CHHA and the 500 yr floodplain, wherever possible. In addition, these facilities shall provide an evacuation plan. Future residential land use in the CHHA shall be limited to the following densities:

- a. In CHHA's outside of Okaloosa Island new development shall be limited to low and medium density (maximum 16 units per acre): and
- b. On Okaloosa Island high density residential development (limited to 40 units per acre in the FLUE) shall be permitted only in Zones B-2 and B-3 as identified in the officially recorded "Santa Rosa Island Plat Map and Protective Covenants and Restrictions."

Objective 2.2 *Protect property within Coastal High Hazard Areas from coastal flooding, storm surge and high winds through implementation of construction standards.*

Policy 2.2.1 Enforce rigorous development standards consistent with the County's NFIP and the CRS program for flood hazard reduction including: location of buildings landward of the reach of the mean high tide; requirement to elevate structures one (1) foot above base flood elevation as specified on F.E.M.A. maps; anchoring standards to resist flotation, collapse, and lateral movement; prohibiting fill used as structural support in V zones, and; prohibiting alteration of sand dunes which would increase potential flood damage.

Policy 2.2.2 Ensure compliance with Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Coastal Construction Control Line (CCCL) regulations and Florida Building Code wind load requirements.

Objective 2.3 *Limit public expenditures that subsidize development permitted in coastal high hazard areas, and give priority in shoreline development to those land uses that are dependent on or related to water access and to developments that comply with performance standards.*

Policy 2.3.1 Public funds shall be expended in the coastal high hazard area only for development that: complies with land use densities/intensities adopted in the

comprehensive plan; produces no adverse affects to the surrounding land uses or the environment without approved mitigation plans, and/or; furthers opening up the waterfront to public access.

Policy 2.3.2 Public shoreline development within coastal high hazard areas will be based on the following priorities:

- a. Water-dependent recreational, commercial and light industrial uses; and
- b. Water-related recreational, residential, commercial, and light industrial uses

Policy 2.3.3 Provide for the siting of water-dependent and water-related uses through the zoning guidelines consistent with the appropriate future land use districts.

Policy 2.3.4 Shoreline development must comply with performance standards that address lot coverage, vegetated buffers, stormwater management, and erosion and sedimentation controls.

Policy 2.3.5 Siting of marinas will be coordinated with all applicable state and federal agencies using the most current available data regarding locations of seagrass beds or other environmentally sensitive habitats. Before additional marinas are developed they must demonstrate compliance with the following criteria:

- a. Land use is compatible with surrounding land uses;
- b. Upland support services are available;
- c. A hurricane contingency plan is in place;
- d. Water quality concerns have been addressed;
- e. A plan is in place for mitigation activities in the event that the environment is adversely affected;
- f. Availability for public use;
- g. Economic need and feasibility for the facility have been established; and
- h. An educational plan for users regarding impacts to natural resources of the system.

Objective 2.4 *Development will be allowed in Coastal High Hazard Areas only if it meets all other policies of this comprehensive plan and will not create a deficiency in the adopted minimum LOS standards.*

Policy 2.4.1 LOS standards in the coastal high hazard area shall be consistent with those established for inland areas of the County, and infrastructure needs shall be fulfilled.

Policy 2.4.2 Funding for required infrastructure shall be phased to coincide with demand generated by development or redevelopment in the coastal high hazard area, consistent with the densities and intensities proposed by the future land use plan and with coastal resource protection and safe evacuation activities.

Objective 2.5 *Maintain or reduce hurricane evacuation times as established in the Northwest Florida Hurricane Evacuation Re-Study through appropriate land use and transportation planning and/or through development mitigation measures.*

Policy 2.5.1 The County will adopt and implement a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan that is consistent with the updated data contained in the Northwest Florida Hurricane Evacuation Re-Study.

Policy 2.5.2 Coordinate with the Okaloosa-Walton TPO, FDOT, and the Alabama Department of Transportation in evaluating major evacuation routes and determining where deficiencies occur and where operational improvements can be made to maintain or reduce hurricane evacuation times.

Policy 2.5.3 Proposed plan amendments which would increase densities within the Coastal High Hazard Area 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 private on-site emergency shelters intended specifically for the needs of the development, designed to ensure no increase in evacuation times as a result of the new development.

Policy 2.5.4 New public emergency shelters shall be built or designated outside of the CHHA, with the exception of private, on-site emergency shelters built pursuant to Policy 2.5.3.

Objective 2.6 *Implement recommendations in the County's Local Mitigation Strategy and post-disaster redevelopment plan to reduce the risk from riverine and coastal flooding and hurricane wind forces to life, property and critical infrastructures.*

Policy 2.6.1 Implement the Guiding Principles enumerated in the adopted Okaloosa County Local Mitigation Strategy through completion of the list of disaster mitigation projects in the County which have been identified, analyzed, and ranked. The adopted Strategy includes a plan for annual evaluation and enhancement of the Strategy itself, which will ensure that a complete and current plan is in place to address mitigation activities. The Local Mitigation Strategy implements the following list of adopted Guiding Principles:

1. Protect human life and private property from the effects of disaster events;
2. Reduce public expenditures due to damage from disaster events;
3. Adopt land use regulations that support sustainable communities;
4. Protect environmentally sensitive areas;
5. Monitor and protect the natural resources of Okaloosa County;
6. Mitigate potential losses through administrative measures; and
7. Coordinate with private sector to mitigate losses.

Policy 2.6.2 The County shall continue its participation in the National Flood Insurance Program in conformance with Public Law 93-288 and the Community Rating System Program.

Policy 2.6.3 Immediate recovery actions needed to protect the public health and safety shall take priority in permitting decisions following hurricane storm events or natural disasters. Such priority actions will include, but not be limited to, debris removal; roadway and infrastructure repair; water use restrictions, if necessary; access restrictions, if required to protect lives or property, and other similar activities needed to assure the safe movement of people, goods and supplies within the impacted area. Long-term repair or recovery actions, such as relocating infrastructure, rebuilding of damaged structures and the like, will be distinguished from the short-term actions herein described.

Policy 2.6.4 If rebuilt, structures which suffer substantial damage in excess of 50% of their appraised value shall be rebuilt in accordance with all applicable land use and building code requirements, and construction activities must meet FEMA's Special Hazard Area Minimum Construction Requirements.

Objective 2.7 *Provide for redevelopment of deteriorating urban waterfronts and protection or sensitive preservation and reuse of historic resources in the coastal planning area.*

Policy 2.7.1 The Future Land Use Element shall identify areas within the coastal planning area needing redevelopment and the County shall enforce "The Standard Code for the Elimination or Repair of Unsafe Buildings" regulations to eliminate unsafe conditions and pursue funding to provide incentives for the rehabilitation and/or construction of appropriate structures to meet current construction regulations.

Policy 2.7.2 Continue to coordinate with the Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources, to identify, locate and map areas and sites of archaeological and historic resources in the coastal planning area.

Policy 2.7.3 Establish performance standards for development and sensitive reuse of historic resources that may include at a minimum:

- a. No identified or known archaeological sites shall be excavated, or altered other than by a professional archaeologist utilizing acceptable techniques;
- b. All known or potential archaeological sites shall be surveyed for significance, and;
- c. Areas surrounding identified sites of historic resources shall be protected against encroachment of incompatible activities and land uses.