

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT

I. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This Conceptual Framework describes what the Intergovernmental Coordination Element is and how Wakulla County has approached this element to meet its particular situation and needs.

The General Purpose section describes in general terms what coordination is and why it is necessary.

The Scope section describes the bounds of this element. This element is concerned with specific subjects, coordinating entities and the relationships of those entities.

The Coordination Relationship Criteria section describes what is required for a specific goal to be met. The coordination relationships which are operationalized through various mechanisms and processes must meet certain criteria for the specific purpose to be achieved.

The Planning Process section describes the two major planning steps which are necessary for the creation of this element, including joint identification and analysis of issues, and joint agreement mechanisms and a process to address conflicts.

The Strategic Approach section describes the difficulties of implementing a comprehensive intergovernmental coordination program and the strategic approach used by Wakulla County to overcome these difficulties.

The Organization section describes the organization of the element, including the data and analysis, strategies, and proposed Goals Objectives and Policies.

A. General Purpose

Coordination is working with others toward the achievement of a common goal. The basic premise of coordination is that the common goal cannot be achieved by one party acting alone. The achievement of the common goal requires cooperative coordinated actions on the part of the involved parties.

The goal may be the resolution of a problem or the creation of some new process or product which meets a need and improves upon the present situation. The achievement of the goal may result in a mutual benefit to the involved parties or may be directed toward the overall public good.

B. Scope

The scope of this element is defined by the subjects for which coordination is required, the entities with whom coordination is executed, and the status of the relationship.

1. Subject

The subjects for which intergovernmental coordination is required are drawn directly and exclusively from the Wakulla County Comprehensive Plan elements. These subjects are Future Land Use; Transportation; Housing; Infrastructure; Conservation; Coastal Management; Recreation and Open Space; Capital Improvements; Public School Facilities, and Economic Development. Each subject may have one or more issues which require intergovernmental coordination. These issues may be existing or anticipated.

2. Entities

The entities with whom coordination is executed are all of those entities having a direct interest in the issue being addressed. In other words, the coordinating entities will vary from issue to issue. Taken as a whole, these entities include all adjacent local governments; the school board and other units of local government; and coordinating regional, state, and federal agencies.

3. Relationships

The status of an intergovernmental coordination relationship which is operationalized through various mechanisms and processes may be described as follows:

- a. No awareness or recognition of the intergovernmental issue by one or more of the involved entities.
- b. Awareness and recognition of the issue but no cooperative communication.
- c. Cooperation communication and negotiation exists which has good potential for resulting in resolution of the issue. This may range from being informal and unstructured and occurring on an issue-by-issue basis to being very structured with strict protocol and address issues in a comprehensive manner. Examples include: committees, councils, boards, task forces, citizen groups and newsletters. The prospect for successful and better resolution of the problem normally increases as communication is formalized.
- d. Coordination actions concerning only the subject matter. For example, joint funding for projects, compensation for impacts, voluntary mitigation of impacts, and interlocal planning agreements can be formalized through legal agreements, franchise agreements, contracts memorandum of understanding, rules, regulations, resolutions, ordinances and standard operating procedures.

e. Final resolution of an issue brought about by establishment of consistent goals, objectives and policies regarding the subject.

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element must establish coordination relationships described in “c” and “d” above. In other words, the element may not establish final solutions to issues requiring intergovernmental coordination, but does establish the means by which these solutions can be sought.

C. Specific Purpose

The specific purpose of the Intergovernmental Coordination Element is to establish intergovernmental coordination mechanisms, processes and procedures to achieve the goals and objectives of the Wakulla County Comprehensive Plan. When Wakulla County’s goals and objectives are incompatible with the goals and objectives of other entities, inter-governmental coordination shall be used to resolve the incompatibility while remaining true to Wakulla County’s goals to the maximum extent feasible. Whenever possible, solutions should be sought which are beneficial to all involved entities.

The specific purpose and legal basis of this element is described in Paragraph 163.3177(b)(h), F.S., and Rule 9J-5, F.A.C. The legal authority for establishing interlocal agreements, commissions, boards, councils, processes, mechanisms, and procedures are referenced appropriately in the text of the element.

D. Coordination Relationship Criteria

Intergovernmental coordination relationships, which are implemented through various mechanisms and processes, have been established or are being sought to meet all of the following criteria:

1. Cooperation

All entities should have a willingness to work together. This is facilitated by an analysis which clearly describes the issue and shows a potential mutual benefit from coordinated action. This is also facilitated by the efficiency and convenience of the relationship described below.

2. Effective

The effectiveness of a coordinated relationship is ultimately determined by whether the problem is solved or need is met. To achieve this, the coordination mechanism or process must have a resolution point. In other words, the process should not be open ended without a formalized decision step. At some point in time in the process, a recommendation and decision must be forthcoming concerning the issue. This is facilitated by a tangible, formalized mechanism or process as opposed to undefined, undirected and unorganized communication.

3. Efficient

The many complex issues and varied grouping of entities required to address the issues provide many opportunities for confusion, duplication of effort and communication failure. Each possible issue-entity link cannot be efficiently or even practically addressed by individual mechanisms.

Efficient intergovernmental coordination in this complex environment requires a strategic matching of issues and involved entities with a minimum of mechanisms and processes. In this way, a manageable number of mechanisms and processes can be utilized to address all issues.

4. Convenient

Convenience is described in terms of ease of access and ease of use. Mechanisms and processes should allow easy participation by all entities with direct interest in the issues at hand. The format, structure, frequency of use and other characteristics of the mechanism or process should be designed for easy access and use.

E. Planning Process

The Planning process has been crafted to address the scope, specific purpose, and coordination relationship criteria as described above. The most critical aspect of the planning process is the absolute requirement for cooperation among the involved entities. Therefore, Wakulla County has made a deliberate and intensive effort to work cooperatively with other entities during the development of the element.

1. Joint Identification and Analysis of Issues

Wakulla County will meet with all entities to assure that all existing and anticipated issues have been identified. An effort was made to ascertain all impacts that the goals, objectives, policies and development proposed in the Wakulla County Comprehensive plan would have on other entities. The contribution of all other entities was sought in analyzing the issues.

2. Joint Agreement on Mechanisms and Processes to Address Issues

Clearly, in order for the implementation of this element to have any prospect for success, the coordinating entities must first agree on the method and means of coordination. Wakulla County will do this on major issues and formalize its commitment to coordinate by the adoption of objectives and policies which bind Wakulla County to act toward their fulfillment.

F. Strategic Approach

One of the major difficulties in implementing a comprehensive intergovernmental coordination plan is the multitude of variables and links which compose the intergovernmental system. First, there is a range of entity types. Generally, the range goes from entities with which Wakulla County has frequent contacts and many commonalities to entities with which Wakulla County has few contacts and almost no commonalities. For example, Wakulla County works closely with the cities in the County, but until recently did not work closely with state agencies or adjacent counties. Second, some issues require the involvement of many entities while other issues require coordination with only a few entities. For some issues, the participation of a particular entity depends upon various factors contingent on particular situations. For example, county/city agreements normally only require coordination between the city and county, but level of service issues may or may not involve cities, state agencies, regional agencies, utilities and the school board. Further, it is often difficult to design and implement resolution processes which are compatible with the goals, objectives and policies of other entities. In order to manage

this complex system of intergovernmental links, the following approach has been developed by Wakulla County.

Individual problems and needs have been aggregated into broader issues to take advantage of common factors and provide for a more consistent analysis. For example, the issue of level of service for transportation is composed of numerous problems and needs related to particular roadways. The grouping of these under one issue reduces duplication of effort and provides for a more comprehensive analysis and a greater understanding of links and possible tradeoffs within the transportation system. But, most importantly, it provides the foundation for determining appropriate mechanisms and processes to address the issue, as described next.

Once issues have been identified and analyzed, it is possible to then consider what type of mechanism or process can best be used to address the issue. This decision should be considered from a broad, strategic perspective. There are three strategic considerations to make. First, the extent and variability of participation should be considered. The mechanism or process should be structured to accommodate the variability of participating entities. Second, the extent of organization and protocol, ranging from formal to informal should be considered. Generally, relationships which require ongoing and frequent interaction are best served by a more formalized organization and protocol. Infrequent relationships and occasional issues do not require and are not efficiently served by formalized organization and protocol. Finally technical and political aspects should be considered. Highly technical issues, such as those involving level of standards, require participation by staff professionals capable of analyzing technical aspects. Issues which require policy decisions should be addressed by administrators, boards of commissions having the requisite authority to make the appropriate policy decisions. In many cases, mechanism must address both the technical and political aspects of an issue.

The strategic approach used by Wakulla County is further explained in the last section of the data and analysis section.

G. Organization

1. Data and Analysis

Issues may be derived from a problem or need related to the achievement of an element's objectives. An incompatibility with the plans created by other entities or jurisdictions may also present new scenarios that present additional issues. These issues may be existing or anticipated.

The description of each issue will include all requirements of Rule 9J-5.015, F.A.C., data requirements, and analysis requirements. Each issue included is developed as follows:

- a. **Description:** Description of an existing problem and/or a potential future problem. This includes a reference to incompatible goals, objectives, policies and development.
- b. **Coordinating Entities:** Inventory of coordinating entities and identification of the County office with primary responsibility for coordination.

c. Coordination Mechanism: Description of existing coordination mechanisms and an analysis of their effectiveness. The mechanism can be tangible, such as a committee, council, board, task force, citizens group, newsletter, or office; or intangible, such as a legal agreement, franchise agreement, contract, memorandum of understanding, rule, regulation, resolution, ordinance, standard operating procedure, process or protocol. In some cases, the mechanism contains tangible and intangible components.

d. Nature of the Relationship: Description of the nature of the relationship which states the way in which entities interact with each other; i.e., communicate on, cooperate on, mediate on, regulate, or resolve each particular subject. In other words, for a particular subject, the nature of the relationship describes how information is exchanged, agreements are reached, solutions are implemented, monitored and revised. The description could include discussions on frequency of interaction, duration of agreement, and involvement of multiple entities.

e. Recommendations: Review of the strategic aspects of the issue, including the extent and variability of participation, the extent of organization and protocol desired, and the technical and political nature of the issue. Use the strategic review to recommend a mechanism or process which is appropriate and meets the aforementioned coordination relationship criteria. When possible, reference the appropriate Wakulla County Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives or policies which will be facilitated by intergovernmental coordination. Finally, describe consistency with the Apalachee Regional Strategic Policy Plan, and in particular show how the plan has guided, directed or facilitated the intergovernmental coordination effort.

2. Strategies Section

All of the issues are summarized on a matrix section which illustrates the various links between entities, issues and the recommended mechanisms and processes for addressing the issue.

3. Goals, Objectives and Policies

This is the only portion of the element which is adopted and as such, is the most important part of the element. A goal is defined as the long-term end for which programs or activities are directed. The ultimate long-term end of this element is in one respect the goal of comprehensive planning, which is described by the goals and objectives of the Wakulla County Comprehensive Plan, other comprehensive plans in the area of concern, the Strategic Regional Policy Plan and the State Comprehensive Plan. More specifically, the goal of this element is to achieve the above ultimate goal through intergovernmental coordination activities.

From the County's perspective, the primary goal of intergovernmental coordination is to achieve the other goals and objectives in the County's Comprehensive Plan. However, Chapter 163, F.S., and Rule 9J-5, F.A.C., requires more. Therefore, the goal must include the resolution of incompatible goals, objectives, policies and development with other jurisdictions and should also seek to support the goals of the Regional Strategic Policy Plan and State Comprehensive Plan. An objective is defined as a specific, measurable, intermediate end that is achievable and marks progress toward a goal. For this element, objectives are tangible mechanisms and processes which can be used to achieve the goal. Two general types of objectives have been established. External mechanisms and processes provide for coordination links directly with other entities. Internal mechanisms and processes provide for coordination directly with outside entities.

Internal mechanisms also provide for coordination within the local government to support the external objectives.

II. INVENTORY OF COORDINATING AGENCIES

A. Adjacent Local Governments

1. Sopchoppy and St. Marks

Wakulla County coordinates various service provisions in areas of mutual concern through both formal and informal agreements with Sopchoppy and St. Marks. These areas of mutual concern include the provision of potable water, roadway maintenance, mosquito control, and building inspection.

2. Leon, Jefferson, Franklin and Liberty Counties

Currently, Wakulla County does not have verbal or written intergovernmental agreements with Jefferson, Franklin or Liberty Counties. The County has an interlocal agreement with Leon County regarding Comprehensive Plan Amendment 03-1.

3. Wakulla County School Board

The Wakulla County School Board operates as a special purpose district with the County boundaries delineating the district's jurisdiction. The independently elected School Board has the authority to raise revenue by collecting taxes and to build and operate the County's school system. The School Board coordinates with St. Marks and Sopchoppy to obtain potable water service and independently coordinates with them when new school construction activities occur within a city limits. Wakulla County has existing interlocal agreements with the School Board.

B. Regional Agencies

1. Apalachee Regional Planning Council

Regional planning councils are area associations composed mainly of elected officials representing local governments in a specific region of the State. There are eleven regional planning councils in Florida. Wakulla County lies within the nine county Apalachee Regional Planning Council. The Council provides various planning and technical assistance functions to local governments. The Council also prepares a Regional Strategic Policy Plan as required by Section 186.507, F.S. Local plans are mandated to be consistent with the State Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 187, F.S.) and appropriate comprehensive regional policy plans. In this way, the goals, objectives, and policies of plans prepared by each level of government are complementary rather than competitive.

The Planning Council is also responsible for reviewing Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) pursuant to Chapter 380, F.S. This review process applies to "any development which, because of its character, magnitude, or location, would have a substantial effect upon health, safety, or welfare of citizens of more than one county." The Regional Planning Council's primary function is to determine the positive and negative impacts of the proposed development and prepare a report with recommendations to the local governments that mitigates a DRI's adverse impacts.

In addition, the Apalachee Regional Planning Council is responsible for reviewing all applications for federal assistance where the federal program requires regional clearinghouse review. Basically, the purpose of this review process is to insure that the proposed project is in compliance with regional and local plans and programs. The ultimate objective of this process is to provide for intergovernmental coordination.

2. Northwest Florida Water Management District

The Northwest Florida Water Management District was established by the Water Resources Act of 1972. The District's responsibilities include water resource planning and permitting for some water use, well drilling, and surface water storage.

C. State Agencies

1. Florida Department of Transportation

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is responsible for planning, constructing and maintaining the state road system. Given the very close interrelationships and interdependence between land use and transportation, it is important that the coordination of local and state plans be achieved in both areas.

FDOT regulates access to and maintenance of state roads. Before new development may have access to a state road, the developer must present plans for review to the Department. It also may influence drainage adjacent to state roads by regulating the amount of stormwater flow into its stormwater systems or roadside ditches. New developments are required to obtain a drainage plan approval from the FDOT.

2. Florida State Clearinghouse

The Florida State Clearinghouse is responsible for reviewing all applications for federal assistance where the federal program requires state clearinghouse review. Basically, the purpose of this review is to insure that the proposed project is in conformance with state plans and programs. The ultimate goal of the review process is to provide for intergovernmental coordination.

3. Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

The Department of Community Affairs is the designated state land planning agency. The Department of Community Affairs' responsibilities include reviewing local comprehensive plans to determine if such plans are consistent with Chapter 163, P.S., the Strategic Regional Policy Plan, the State Land Development Plan, and the State Comprehensive Plan. Copies of the Wakulla County Comprehensive Plan must be provided for this purpose to DCA prior to the plan's adoption and for compliance review after adoption.

4. Department of Environmental Protection

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is primarily a permitting organization with respect to environmental quality. The FDEP plans and manages Florida's air and water quality within the guidelines of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency. Plans and management strategies for achieving air and water quality goals have been set at both the federal and state levels. Many of these programs strive to maintain or improve air and water quality by

regulating the discharge of pollutants into water and air. Dischargers of pollutants must receive permits from the FDEP.

5. Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Forestry, has responsibility for forest management assistance and provides fire protection and forestry management services to forest and wildlife areas in the County.

7. Florida Division of Historic Resources

The Florida Department of State, Division of Historic Resources, has the responsibility of providing the Master Site File to Wakulla County with a description and location of sites for planning purposes.

D. Federal Agencies

1. Department of the Interior
2. Department of Agriculture
3. Farmer's Home Administration
4. Environmental Protection Agency
5. U.S. Army, Corps of Engineers

E. Utilities

Electrical power is supplied in Wakulla County by Progress Energy (Florida Power) and Talquin Electric Cooperative. Power reliability is reported to be much better than normally available in other large rural areas because of the excellent maintenance program of both companies. Water is received from several private and public sources. They include Talquin Electric, City of Sopchoppy, Panacea Area Water System, and City of Tallahassee Water.

III. ANALYSIS

This section analyzes intergovernmental coordination issues as they relate to each element of the Comprehensive Plan.

A. Future Land use

1. Issue: Discouraging Inconsistent Land Use Practices

Description: The Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Future Land use Element provides general guidelines for discouraging inconsistent land use practices, thus ensuring that Wakulla County remains an attractive and safe place to live. In the past this was accomplished through the County Land Development Code.

Coordinating Entities: Offices with primary responsibility - Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks; Franklin, Jefferson, Leon, and Liberty Counties.

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship: To prevent inconsistent land use practices between Sopchoppy, St. Marks, and the County, the County Planning Commission is represented by Planning Commission Board members from Sopchoppy and St. Marks. No coordination agreements currently exist between Wakulla County and Franklin, Jefferson, and Liberty Counties. An interlocal agreement with Leon County addresses anticipated transportation impacts from the Sustainable Community Future Land Use Category, as required by a Stipulated Settlement Agreement (SSA).

Intergovernmental coordination is needed when implementing the zoning map and land development codes. Wakulla County, as per a written interlocal agreements with the cities of St. Marks and Sopchoppy, issues building permits and subsequent inspections for new construction after being notified by the respective cities that issuance of the permit is in conformance with the County zoning map.

Recommendations: The interlocal agreements for these services is considered adequate and there is no need of modification.

2. Issue: Municipal Annexations

Description: Municipal annexations cause land use problems as well as affect the provision of adequate public facilities and services.

Coordinating Entities: Offices of Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Cities of St. Marks and Sopchoppy.

Coordinating Mechanisms and Nature of the Relationship: No mechanism as been established concerning annexations.

Recommendation: At this time, land use problems and the provision for timing of facilities as an intergovernmental issue has not existed. Eventually coordination may be necessary. This issue is highly technical. It is recommended that the Planning Commission be used to establish procedures in the case of annexations to resolve land use and LOS issues as they occur.

3. Issue: School Board Coordination

Description: The Wakulla County School Board has the primary responsibility for identifying school facility needs and construction activities within Wakulla County including St. Marks and Sopchoppy. When appropriate, the County School Board coordinates with St. Marks and Sopchoppy before implementing new school construction activities. Chapter 1013, Part III, F.S. (2009), provides for coordination between school board planning and construction activities and local comprehensive plans.

Coordinating Entities: Offices with Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Wakulla County School Board; Cities of St. Marks and Sopchoppy.

Coordinating Mechanism and the Nature of the Relationship:

An interlocal agreements exist between the County and the School Board regarding provision of sewer facilities. Additionally, an interlocal agreement exists between Wakulla County, the Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks, and the School Board regarding planning for public school facilities.

Recommendation: Coordination of the School Board and local governments should occur in accordance with the existing interlocal agreements.

B. Housing

Issue: Promoting Safe, Adequate, and Affordable Housing

Description: The County's housing and building codes are also utilized by St. Marks and Sopchoppy, and are enforced by the Wakulla County Building Department to ensure safe and adequate housing. The coordination mechanism is a formal interlocal agreement between St. Marks, Sopchoppy, and Wakulla County.

Aside from the zoning and code enforcement program, there is little intergovernmental coordination between the cities and county to promote affordable housing. This was partially due to the lack of funds in the County to produce adequate public housing. The cities and the County governments rely on and will continue to rely on various federal and state programs to provide adequate housing in the County as well as provide incentives to private sector developers. Programs that the County relies on include the Community Development Block Grant and the Section 8 Existing Rental Housing Assistance program. These programs are addressed and furthered in Policy 1.2 and 1.3 of the Housing Element.

Coordinating Entities: Offices with Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Wakulla County Building Department; Cities of St. Marks and Sopchoppy; Department of Community Affairs; Department of Health

Coordinating Mechanism and the Nature of the Relationship:

Coordinating mechanisms are very unstructured and are timed based on the availability of public funds for housing with no local funding and associated coordination. Lack of coordination has not caused problems due to housing assistance being from federal and state sources and local. An on-going relationship between the cities and County could promote the provision of safe and affordable housing through coordination of grant applications and the development of education programs such as a Citizen Housing Committee to study and disseminate information about the wide variety of housing assistance available to qualified residents.

C. Transportation

1. Issue: Maintenance and upgrading of roads in Wakulla County.

Description: Routine maintenance of roadways for all roadways in Wakulla County, including St. Marks and Sopchoppy, is conducted through the Wakulla County Road and Bridge Department by way of an agreement between the County and cities. The method of coordination is a formal written agreement whereby St. Marks and Sopchoppy are responsible for identifying road maintenance problems and the County makes appropriate repairs with County personnel and equipment.

Coordinating Entities: Offices with Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Road and Bridge Department; the Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks, Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department.

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship: The coordinating mechanism is loose and generally is based on the discretion of Wakulla County Road and Bridge Department staff as to which roads are in most need of grading depending upon use and deterioration caused by rainfall or other weather related conditions.

Recommendations: The existing coordination mechanism is considered adequate and in no need of modification. This written agreement between the County, St. Marks and Sopchoppy is consistent with the following state and regional goals:

Subparagraphs 187.201(19)(a)3, and 187.201(19)(a)13, F.S., and Regional Goal 19.2.1.

2. Issue: Level of Service (LOS) Standards for Shared Facilities (City/County Roads)

Description: A number of roadways under the County road system, maintained by the County, pass through municipal boundaries. The County has established specific level of service standards for all of its collector and arterial roadways for the purpose of operations and maintenance as well as for the purpose of issuing development orders, as required by Rule 9J-5.005(3), F.A.C. All roadway collectors and arterials that pass through St. Marks and Sopchoppy have an acceptable level of service based on DOT standards as well as the adopted level of service adopted for those roads as shown in the Transportation Element of this plan (Policy 1.1.2).

Coordinating Entities: Office of Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Road and Bridge Department; Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship: No coordination mechanism exists. The lack of coordination has not caused problems because usage of shared roadways by the cities and County is so far below capacity of the roadways that coordination has not been needed. If LOS problems do occur, the responsibility of making improvements to County roads would be by the County through the Road and Bridge Department.

Recommendation: Coordination of St. Marks and Sopchoppy with the County regarding LOS issues only needs to be informal through the next planning period due to a projected acceptable LOS for all shared facilities within the County.

3. School Board Coordination

Description: New families make up a significant portion of the new population moving to Wakulla County increasing the need for new schools since the year 2000. Important transportation issues include the impact of school facilities on level of service and most importantly traffic safety issues for students including adequate locations of bus stops and safe bus routes to ensure safe travel. Highway 365 and U.S. 319 are major routes for school bus travel. Through coordination with the School Board, the County has incorporated into the Transportation Element improvements to these roads, as well as others not as significant, to ensure safe bus pick-up and transport of students. This coordination will continue between the Planning Department and School Board as provided in Chapter 1013, Part III, F.S. (2009).

Coordinating Entities: Office with Primary Responsibility Wakulla County School Board; Wakulla County Planning Department; Cities of St. Marks and Sopchoppy; Florida Department of Transportation, Wakulla County Road and Bridge Department

Coordinating Mechanism and the Nature of the Relationship:

A interlocal agreement exists regarding school facility planning with the School Board, the County, St. Marks, and Sopchoppy. Another interlocal agreement exists between the School Board and the County regarding the provision of infrastructure.

Recommendation: Public school issues usually affect both the County and the cities within the County. Coordination should continue to occur as described in the existing interlocal agreements and in the Public School Facilities Element.

D. Infrastructure

1. Issue: Potable Water

Description: Potable water is primarily supplied by five water systems, three privately owned and two public systems (St. Marks and Sopchoppy). The Sopchoppy Water System serves Sopchoppy as well as areas in unincorporated Wakulla County. Water is supplied by these systems for residential and commercial customers who agree to pay the installation fee and monthly service charge. Demand on each of these systems is far below existing capacity and is projected to remain as such through the next planning period.

Coordinating Entities: Office with Primary Responsibility Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; City of Sopchoppy Public Works; Panacea Water System; Talquin Electric; City of Tallahassee Water

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship:

An interlocal agreement exists between the County and the City of Sopchoppy regarding the

provision of water services to portions of unincorporated Wakulla County. Other coordination is informal. The County has allowed expansion of water service by verbal agreement for all systems with the current coordination mechanisms being considered adequate. The County coordinates strongly with Panacea Area Water system. This relationship is due to County reliance upon water from the privately owned Panacea Area Water System. Through a written agreement, the County allows the water system to control customer billing on the County's wastewater system in Panacea.

Recommendation: Coordination has been informal and simple but has worked well and is not in need of any modifications. Coordination with Sopchoppy should occur in accordance with the existing interlocal agreement.

2. Issue: Wastewater Service

Description: Wakulla County only has one regional sewer system. This system serves coastal areas in and adjacent to Panacea. Due to the isolated area that the system serves and the small size of the system, coordination with adjacent local governments and cities within the County has not been necessary.

Coordinating Entities: Office with Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department, Panacea Area Water System

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship: There is written agreement between Wakulla County and the Panacea Area Water System which allows customer billing by the Panacea Area Water System.

Recommendation: The coordination between the Panacea Area Water System and Wakulla County is generally good and is not in need of modification.

E. Conservation

Issue: Protection of Flood Prone Areas and Wetlands

Description: Flood prone areas and wetlands are best preserved for conservation for many reasons. The County and cities within the County have the coordination responsibility for permitting development in wetland areas. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection permits dredge and fill activities and wastewater discharge proposals that may affect wetlands areas. The Northwest Florida Water Management District issues surface water management permits. The Florida Department of Health Services the use of septic tanks.

Although the various agencies have a common goal of protecting the environment from inappropriate development and adverse impacts, permitting procedures among the agencies may at times conflict. As it stands, developers must seek permits from individual agencies where different rules and regulations sometimes conflict. The County requires that the developer obtain permits from all other applicable agencies before issuing a County permit. There is often very little direct contact between the entities. A method or mechanism of coordination needs to be instituted to address these conflicting requirements. An additional problem is the lack of organization and protocol.

Coordinating Entities: Offices with primary responsibility - Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks; Counties of Franklin, Jefferson, Leon and Liberty; Apalachee Regional Planning Council; Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Northwest Florida Water Management District; Department of Health; Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship:

Currently there is no coordination mechanism to address the protection and conservation of the river systems and their associated habitats. This lack of a mechanism has hindered the County in coordination with governmental agencies. Wakulla County and the various agencies control certain aspects of the river systems. In the past, there has been no formal relationship among these entities as each one generally addresses the particular concern relevant to their agencies. Recommendation: The general recommendation for initiating action on this issue is for the Planning Department to take a more active role in the process. The issue could be approached through a river management plan or some type of joint planning agreement developed under the sponsorship of the Apalachee Regional Planning Council. The following recommendations are compatible with the following objectives in the Conservation Element: Conserve, protect and appropriately manage the natural resources of Wakulla County to ensure the highest environmental quality possible.

The county should increase coordination based on the following regional and state policies: Regional Policy 16.2.1.2, Regional Policy 10.1.1.2, Regional Policy 10.1.1.3, and Paragraph 187.201(b)25, F.S.

F. Recreation and open space Element

1. Issue: Coordinating Countywide Recreational Needs

Description: To better serve future recreational needs, the County, cities and School Board have formulated a method for meaningful citizen participation. The County currently has a Recreation Board that addresses various recreational issues. The Board also performs the long range planning for recreational facilities.

Coordinating Entities: Office of Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Recreation Department; the Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks; Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship: Coordination is generally informal and takes place through the Recreation Board, which is coordinated by the Recreation Department which consists of representatives from Sopchoppy and St. Marks. The Board deals with issues which are generally focused on program planning. No other significant coordination exists.

Recommendation: To better serve the future recreational needs, the County, Cities and School Board should continue to improve a method of citizen participation. The County Recreation Department has input through the Recreation Board in a coordinated manner with all the above mentioned entities to assist in decisions regarding: activities within proposed facilities, the

recreational needs of special population groups, and the coordination of recreational programs and Localities with the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the School Board.

2. Joint Use of Recreational Facilities

Description: Wakulla County, St. Marks, and Sopchoppy have a written interlocal agreement for sharing recreational facilities. Sopchoppy provides tennis courts for the only public tennis facility in the County. Wakulla County provides the balance of public recreational facilities.

Coordinating Entities: Office of Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Recreation Department; Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; the Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks; the Department of Environmental Protection

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship:

Written agreements have been made regarding joint use of tennis courts in Sopchoppy and the County supplies all other facilities. The coordination is informal, ongoing, and functional.

Recommendations: The County should continue the same arrangement and coordinate more with the School Board to increase access to school board facilities.

G. Capital Improvements Element - Shared Solid Waste Facilities

Description: Wakulla County provides solid waste disposal service in the County. The County is currently developing a recycling facilities site at the Lower Bridge Landfill and is working to complete a transfer station by 2010.

Coordinating Entities: Office with Primary Responsibility - Wakulla County Solid Waste Department; Wakulla County Planning and Community Development Department; the Cities of Sopchoppy and St. Marks; Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Coordinating Mechanism and Nature of the Relationship: The County provides solid waste landfill facilities by ordinance for Sopchoppy, St. Marks and the unincorporated County. This relationship remains adequate and is expected to continue into the future.

Recommendations: Coordination on this issue is limited to the County, Sopchoppy and St. Marks. One of the major concerns is the cost of solid waste disposal facilities and the need for capital facilities planning. The Apalachee Regional Policy Plan provides guidance and direction which cut costs and add to efficiency of managing solid waste through the following regional policies:

13.2.1.1 - Develop incentives and disincentives for governments, commercial enterprises, and individuals to increase development of new resource recovery/recycling efforts and to expand existing recovery/recycling operations.

13.2.1.3 - Ensure maximum efficiency in waste management through interstate, intergovernmental, and interagency coordination of waste management (disposal and resource recovery/ recycling) programs. Coordination will increase among state and local governments to

plan ongoing strategies for waste management and recycling. Coordination should be directed through the Solid Waste Department.