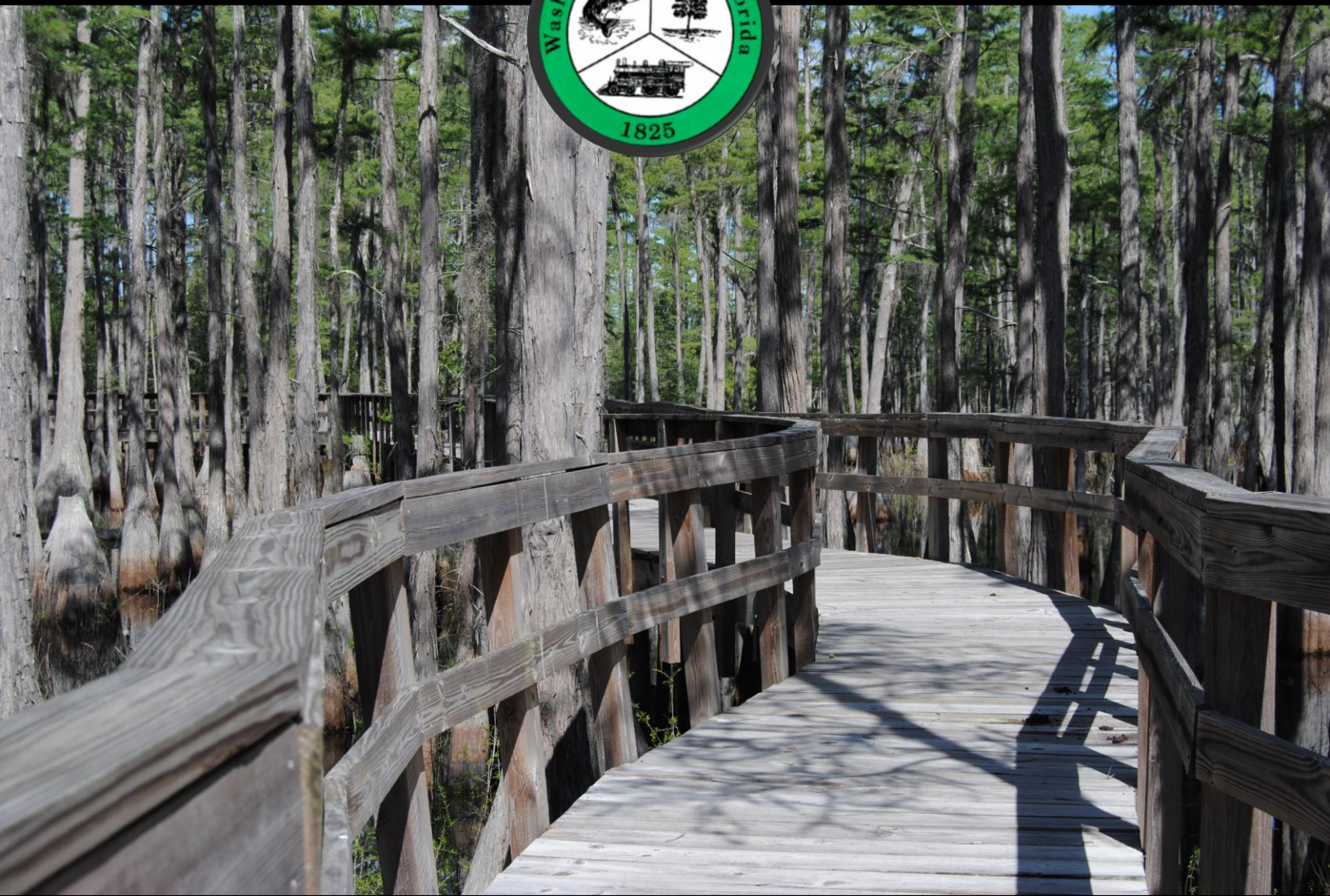


# Washington County, Florida



## Annual Report

FY 2016-2017





## WELCOME TO WASHINGTON COUNTY

### Washington County BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



District 1  
**Alan T Bush**



District 3  
**Tray Hawkins**



District 2  
**Charles Kent, Chairman**



District 4  
**Todd Abbott, Vice Chair**



District 5  
**Steve Joyner**

As a non-chartered county, Washington County residents cast their vote for all Districts during an election year. The County Commissioners serve a four-year term with the Districts alternating every two years. The position of Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners is voted on every November by the sitting County Commissioners.



*Washington County Administrator  
Allen J. Massey*

Greetings from Washington County!

We are pleased to present the 2016-2017 Annual Report for Washington County, Florida. Our Staff has worked diligently throughout the year documenting the successes of each department. We sincerely hope that you find the following pages informative.

As employees of Washington County, we strive to be the best possible stewards of taxpayer money. Under the leadership and forward-thinking of our Board of County Commissioners, the following pages demonstrate our commitment to achieve our goals for the residents of our beautiful county.

It has been a great year for our county and we will continue working to bring even more improvements to our infrastructure, which leads to more jobs and better opportunities for our residents.

Again, it is our pleasure to provide this Annual Report. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us at 850-638-6200. Remember, we work for YOU!

Sincerely,

*Allen J. Massey*

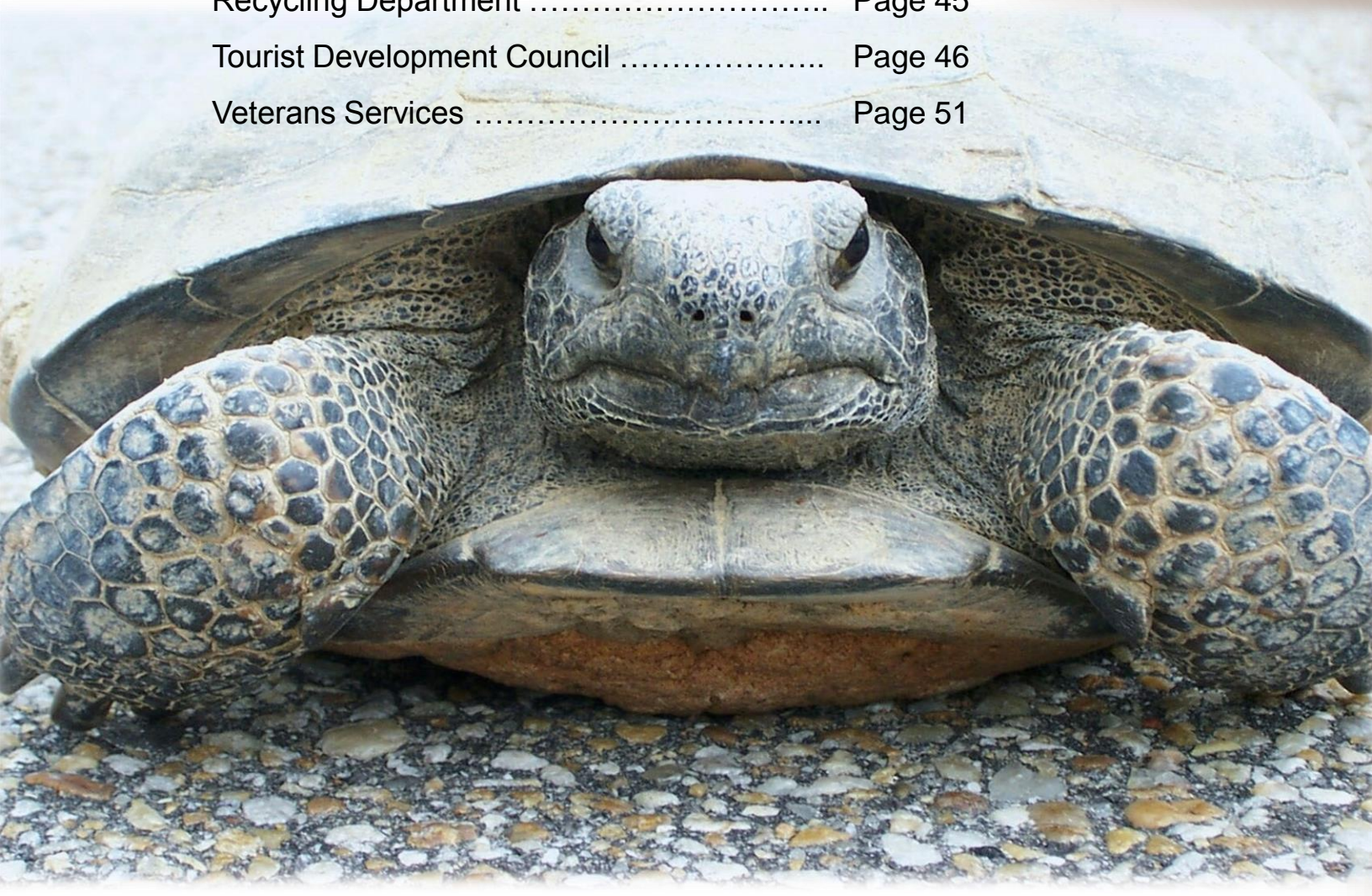






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## AGRICULTURAL CENTER

### UF/IFAS Extension Washington County

#### Total Clientele Contacts

Field/Office Consultations	Group Learning Event Participants	Phone/Email Consultations	Social Media Engagement	Educational Materials Created
695	11,995	2,729	11,872	172

#### Total Volunteer Hours

Number of Volunteers	Hours Worked	Dollar Value of Hours
101	5,484	\$132,384

#### Clientele Outcomes

Clients reporting an increase in knowledge or skill	88%
Clients reporting a change in behavior or attitude	71%
Clients adopting best practices resulting in societal, economic or environmental benefits to county	64%

#### Impact Reports

##### Family/Consumer Sciences, Judy Corbus

The Washington County SHIP Program distributed \$90,000 in down payment and closing cost assistance funds to nine first-time homebuyers. The value of the land and houses purchased in Washington County equals \$411,984. This infusion of money into the economy of Washington County through the sale and repair of these houses provided income for local realtors, appraisers, surveyors, home inspectors, title companies, lenders, insurance companies, contractors, tradesmen, and other housing industry professionals, which, in turn, benefited the overall local economy. The homeowners are building wealth as they build equity in their homes, preventing the deterioration of houses that possibly would sit vacant because they were on the market, enjoying a better quality of life through safe housing that meets current building codes, supporting their county, city, and public schools through ad valorem property taxes, and contributing to the overall stability of their community as homeowners.

##### 4-H Youth & Volunteers, Julie Pigott Dillard

UF/IFAS Research has shown that volunteer satisfaction is essential to retaining volunteers (Terry et al., 2013). Training provides volunteers with the capacity to be successful in their volunteer roles and increases overall volunteer satisfaction (Hager & Brudney, 2004). By providing a variety of training options and delivery modes, 24 trainings were provided throughout the year reaching 90 youth and adult volunteers in Washington County. Of these volunteers, 99% continue to serve (n=89). By retaining these volunteers, the 4-H program was able to reduce the economic costs associated with recruiting, screening, orienting, training and supporting new volunteers. A Stanford University study estimated the financial costs of not retaining a volunteer after the first year of service to be as much as \$12,000/volunteer (Eisner, Grimm, Jr., Maynard & Washburn, 2009). While one volunteer chose not to stay in a club leader role due to health reasons, she chose to remain a volunteer with middle management type duties directly assisting the 4-H Agent. Additionally, these volunteers contributed 4,055 hours of continued service to the Washington County 4-H program. The economic value to Washington County is estimated to be \$89,534.40, based on \$22.08 per hour established by the Independent Sector (2015).





**Agriculture & Natural Resources, Mark Mauldin**

Data indicates that as a result of group leaning activities and individual consultations 36 Washington County producers exhibited a practice change relating pasture soil fertility management. Depending on soil type and nutrient level, pasture fertilization can be responsible for the majority of forage production (when compared to unfertilized land). Maintaining adequate soil fertility also increases forage health and persistence, and reduces weed pressure. Pasture fertilization is necessary but it is expensive and can be ineffective if not done correctly. Working with producers, and utilizing soil test results and fertilizer recommendations, the agent has improved the forage production while maximizing the benefit per dollar spent on fertilizer.

**Horticulture, Matthew Orwat**

Professionals who are licensed and applying chemicals according to the law receive a benefit in terms of increased wages. In 2016, a landscape and groundskeeping worker made an average of \$11.26 per hour. A trained individual earning Limited Category Pesticide Certification, which requires handling, spraying, and applying pesticides, makes \$4.27 more per hour (\$15.53) than the previous mentioned category of workers. (<http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center/statistical-programs/occupational-employment-statistics-and-wages>). By providing CEU and certification programs, 263 individuals have now increased their earning potential. In addition, participants applied the information taught in these programs resulting in greater benefit to the environment. Pesticide education and safety training concepts are critical to eliminating or reducing the incidence of unintended exposure to humans and the environment. Pesticide applicators are responsible for deciding whether or not to use a pesticide product; therefore it is the responsibility of the user to apply it as intended by the manufacturer and as required by federal/state pesticide safety and use laws. Extension training programs in pesticide education addressing proper use, personal safety, and protection of wildlife and the environment in the Panhandle has resulted in a better educated and qualified workforce capable of safer handling and application of chemical pesticides and the prevention of unintended releases into the environment.

**UF/IFAS Extension Washington County****Faculty**

Julie Pigott Dillard, County Extension Director & 4-H Agent

Judy Corbus, Family/Consumer Sciences Agent

Mark Maulin, Agriculture/Natural Resources Agent

Matthew Orwat, Horticulture Agent

**Support Staff**

Nikki Enfinger, Secretary

Cynthia Jackely, Part-time Secretary





## BUILDING DEPARTMENT

### Overview

The Building Department administers all permits involving contracting through the County. The purpose of this process is to ensure the protection of life and property. The process begins with the submittal of construction documents, which are reviewed for compliance with applicable building codes and standards. Approved projects are issued a building permit allowing construction to begin and conduct field inspections to monitor compliance.

### Responsibilities

The Building Department is responsible for the administration and enforcement of all laws regulating construction. The department would include autonomous capability for examination of plans, calculations, and specifications for compliance with the building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, and gas codes.

### Highlights and Accomplishments – Fiscal Year 2017

The Washington County Building Department had several Commercial projects that were under construction and completed. The Washington County Courthouse was issued a Certificate of Occupancy on October 26, 2016, Fast Lane Drive Thru was issued a Certificate of Occupancy on March 22, 2017 and First Baptist Church was issued a Certificate of Occupancy on May 10, 2017. A building permit was also issued for a new Dollar General Store in Caryville, Florida on April 7, 2017 and completed on August 24, 2017.

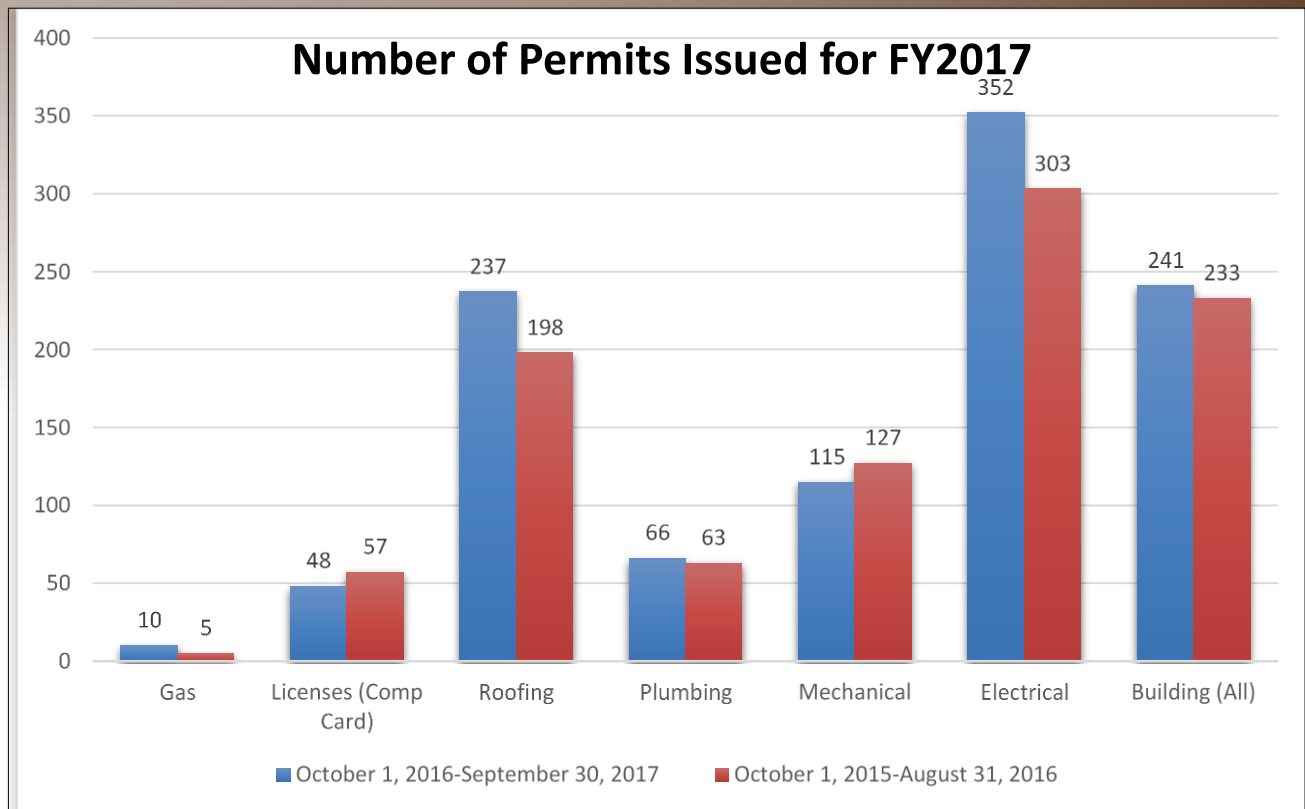
Construction activity increased this year compared to last fiscal year. The following document indicates the actual building construction activities within the County including the issuance of permits and the associated inspections and fees generated from this activity.

### Beginning October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017, the Building Department:

**Issued a total of 1,021 permits, including:**

- 241 Building Permits
- 352 Electrical Permits
- 115 Mechanical Permits
- 66 Plumbing Permits
- 237 Roofing Permits
- 10 Gas Permits

Resulting in **\$144,911** in revenue for the county to date, including License Fees.



A total of 48 Licenses (Comp Cards) were issued in Fiscal Year 2016-2017. On the new construction front, a total of 44 Single Family Dwellings and 42 Mobile Homes were issued in Fiscal Year 2016-2017.

### **Beginning October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2017, the Building Department:**

Performed a total of **1,024** inspections, including:

- 675 Building Inspections
- 240 Electrical Inspections
- 5 Mechanical Inspections
- 14 Plumbing Inspections
- 87 Roofing Inspections
- 3 Gas Inspections

### **Ongoing Projects**

A new permit has been issued for a new Telecommunications Tower, located at 5008 Burns Lake Rd, Caryville, Florida.





## 2017-2018 Goals

- Continue to monitor the computer and technology needs of the department, In addition, monitor the progress of computer information sharing between all of the county departments.
- Continue to meet with Planning and other Departments to coordinate processes and encourage cooperation for efficiency of services.
- Continue to monitor the Building Department staffing issues to ensure excellent customer service to the citizens of Washington County.

*Washington County is proud of the progress that was made this year. The County is looking forward to moving even further ahead in the next year.*





## Code Enforcement

Law enforcement officials understand the important relationship between crime, blight, and code enforcement. Code enforcement is a valuable place-based approach to addressing neighborhood blight. The one Code Enforcement Officer employed by Washington County has performed over 145 inspections for the calendar year. The vehicle miles travelled average 825 miles per month. Field inspections remain a top priority while providing exceptional customer service responding to the needs of the county.

The goal to create and sustain vibrant, healthy neighborhoods continues to be a challenge and the abatement activities continue to be on-going to reach this goal. To spend more time in the field and responding to calls results in enhanced customer service for Washington County citizens. The work orders for trash and litter removal were 91 cases this year and many were closed out within 48 hours. Over 206 yards of trash and debris were removed from the county's right of way as a result of these cases.

The Code Enforcement division has a webpage that depicts the commitment to stay focused on the big picture. Long-term success depends on effective enforcement of blight within the county. Through the webpage, educating the public will be an ongoing task.

The Code Enforcement Officer maintains a network of contacts, including the Health Department, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Washington County Sheriff's Office, Waste Management, Gulf Coast Electric and various interoffice departments within. This networking provides assistance when owners fail to meet their obligations.

With the addition of the Special Magistrate, Washington County will continue to enforce the ordinances set forth by the BOCC. The county has the task of encouraging negligent owners to carry out their responsibilities to keep their properties in a trash-free condition.

Training attended by the Code Enforcement Officer this year included:

- Surveillance Awareness
- Hurricane Preparedness
- Ethics in the Sunshine State

Anticipated Training for 2018 includes:

- International Code Council  
Property Maintenance Certificate







## Economic Development

2016 was a very good year for Economic Development in Washington County. The groundwork put into place is just as – if not more – important than attracting a new business at this time.

1. Beginning in 2014, the WCEDC realized the most important focused task before the County was to address its lack of infrastructure on the west side of the County, particularly down SR 79. The WCEDC has been working with both the City of Bonifay and Holmes County on the SR 79 Corridor Project. Several accomplishments have occurred:

- The award of a \$1 million appropriation from the state of Florida. This funding is to be managed by the FDOT District 3 Office. We saw this as unusual as FDOT does not normally engage in water and sewer projects. The Planning Committee members, Jim Town and Ted Everett, recognizing the need for a neutral agent to represent the committee with FDOT, reached out to Opportunity Florida as a credible and respected partner. The committee was successful in securing approval of the three governmental entities body to allow Opportunity Florida to act as its agent on this project. A series of meetings with Dustin Castells (FDOT) resulted in an agreement between FDOT and Opportunity Florida to allow the funding mechanism to begin.



- Opportunity Florida will work with Attorneys Neighbors & Giblin & Nickerson to direct them on all the legal components that will have to be created in order to establish the Authority (and the creation of a special district). These legal documents will create Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Planning and Zoning Rules, Impact Fees and other required elements. As the legal firm works on these documents, they will bill Opportunity Florida and then Opportunity Florida will bill DOT for reimbursement. This will relieve the Counties and City governments of any administrative responsibilities.
- Once these documents are created, the governmental bodies can adopt a second intra-local agreement which then creates the Authority. The Authority will be comprised of one representative from each of the City & County Boards as well as appointment of one businessperson from each County. The playbook will then be given to the Authority and it will be the entity that will actually initiate the construction of the water and sewer lines.

- We have enclosed an updated spreadsheet showing the financial business model for the SR 79 Corridor Project. Please note that assumptions are based on receiving an additional \$1.9 million from the State through the Florida Growth Jobs Fund. This project has been favorably received by the decision makers in Tallahassee who are very pleased that three governmental entities have joined together to solve an issue.
  - In conjunction with all the above, the Planning Committee has worked with the West Florida Regional Planning Council to submit a technical assistance grant proposal that will write the planning and zoning rules that will be used within the overlay map (the geographical area that the authority will oversee). It is important to note that all of the Planning And Zoning rules within the corridor will need to be adopted by each of the governmental entities individual Planning And Zoning Departments.
  - We are currently awaiting a decision from DEO on this proposal. The Planning Committee is looking at a 5-6 month timeline when all the legal documents will be completed. At that time, we are optimistic that we will be able to present the second inter-local agreement for the County Boards and the Bonifay City Council to review and approve. The Planning Committee is very pleased with the support all of governmental entities have shown this Project and Committee.
2. On the other side of the County, the City of Chipley's efforts to bring water and sewer down Hwy 77 is almost completed according to the Chipley City Administrator.
- However, the one looming issue that will have a serious effect on this project is the need of a large enough spray-field that is needed to increase sewer capacity. As it currently stands, the City of Chipley is looking at 5 smaller sites (less than 100 or so acres) to be purchased and used as a spray-field.
  - The current problems they are facing involve landowners asking for quite a bit of money above the appraised value of the land. This additional cost of the land above the appraised value would be an additional cost to the City.
  - The City will need much more spray-field capacity to meet the future demands of growth down the Hwy 77 corridor. The solution would be to have the County and City come to an agreement, via a MOU, that would bind them together to seek out a very large tract of land that has very good percolative qualities and then to seek grants together that would finance the pipe that would needed to get the grey water to the site. The State is always looking for communities to look for solutions that will solve a problem for the long term. They do not want to fund project which only address short-term problems. For this reason, the WCEDC suggests looking at land south of Wausau in and around Sunny Hills which has an appropriate type of land. The Washington County WCEDC has made overtures to the City to help in any way possible to help them in any capacity needed.
3. The WCEDC is not just focusing on Hwy 79 and Hwy 77. We wish to offer assistance to a project that is currently being handled by Jim Town. There is still some money in the rural infrastructure program and to that end; the WCEDC will be working with Mr. Town on applying for \$650,000 from the program. This money would pay for the water and sewer lines to cross the bridge just north of Vernon and could potentially increase the time frame for construction of phase one of the project.





4. Additionally, the WCEDC has been working with David Melvin, Melvin Engineering, Richard Williams and Roy Baker of Opportunity Florida to create a legislative bill that would be filed by FL Representative Brad Drake that would ask that legislation be created which would allocate 5% of the 25% of unallocated funds from the BP Fund to be set aside for the 10 rural counties within the Opportunity Florida footprint. The WCEDC Director has read the proposed bill and is urging Rep. Drake to file the bill. It will be a long shot for the Legislators to approve this bill and Florida's Great Northwest and the Triumph Committee are not in favor of filing the bill. Their concern is that it might reopen the legislation that was created to give the 8 Gulf Coast Counties 75% of all the BP funding. Many conversations have been held on this subject but we have concluded that in order to affect change and be heard at the State level, we have no choice but to file this bill.
5. In addition to the above, the WCEDC has replied to several leads, all involving the Enola Buildings. In both cases, the companies were also looking at 5 or more other states. The main issue with the Enola buildings & warehouses is that they do not have a central sprinkler system. With no sprinkler system in place, companies fear loss of goods and or a higher fire insurance premium. I have discussed this with the owner and it could be put in the warehouses but only with the right deal and the patience of a company willing to wait until it could be completed.
6. In another area, the WCEDC has been working with Leotta Sites and Designs to determine several legitimate sites within Washington County that could be marketed by his firm and the State of Florida as well as Opportunity Florida. Having spoken with Victor Leotta in recent days, we have agreed to seek a meeting with the Washington County Planning & Zoning Department after the first of the year to discuss zoning changes and placing the appropriate sites in the comprehensive plan for Washington County that would direct developers to those particular sites. This ultimately will be reviewed by the BOCC for approval.
7. We have just completed a website for the SR 79 Corridor Project as well. The WCEDC applied for and received a marketing grant from Enterprise Florida to build this site. The WCEDC worked with our Florida Panhandle Technical College to use video from their Drone class to show the entire corridor to potential developers. The website also includes the minutes from the Planning Committees meetings as well as all RFP's that have been sent out and their replies. This website was designed to bring developers' attention to what we are creating.
  - A new WCEDC website is being developed at this time and is 50% complete. This new website will feature sites, water and sewer information and demographics from our County. It will be a more focused and comprehensive site.



8. Lastly, the Washington County WCEDC and its Executive Director continue to look ahead at the needs for Washington County not for just the present, but for the next 5 to 10 years. It is apparent that we are making progress but there is more to be done.
- Once the County obtains its industrial park, we will begin a marketing campaign. In addition to marketing the industrial park, we can focus on a 56-acre tract of land-zoned industrial as well.
  - After the completion of the SR 79 Corridor Project, it will be our goal to then begin discussions to bring water and sewer to the Ebro area. The Executive Director has had conversations with the attorney for the Northern Trust family land in that area and he is aware of our intentions. The Knight Family will play a large role within the process of bringing water and sewer to that area as will the County. The WCEDC can see the day that we pursue an option on several hundred acres in the Ebro area. This can then begin the grant writing process to procure the necessary funding. FDOT has already begun looking at old studies on widening Hwy 20 at that intersection and beyond. Once this happens or is in a 5 year planning cycle by FDOT, this area will have unlimited potential for warehousing, distribution, commercial and residential growth.

With the BOCC focusing on what it will take to bring in growth and with the desire of the Washington County Economic Development Council to procure funding for projects and give direct assistance to any and all that seek it, to move the County forward. The WCEDC and the entire Council are very positive on what we can achieve for Washington County.





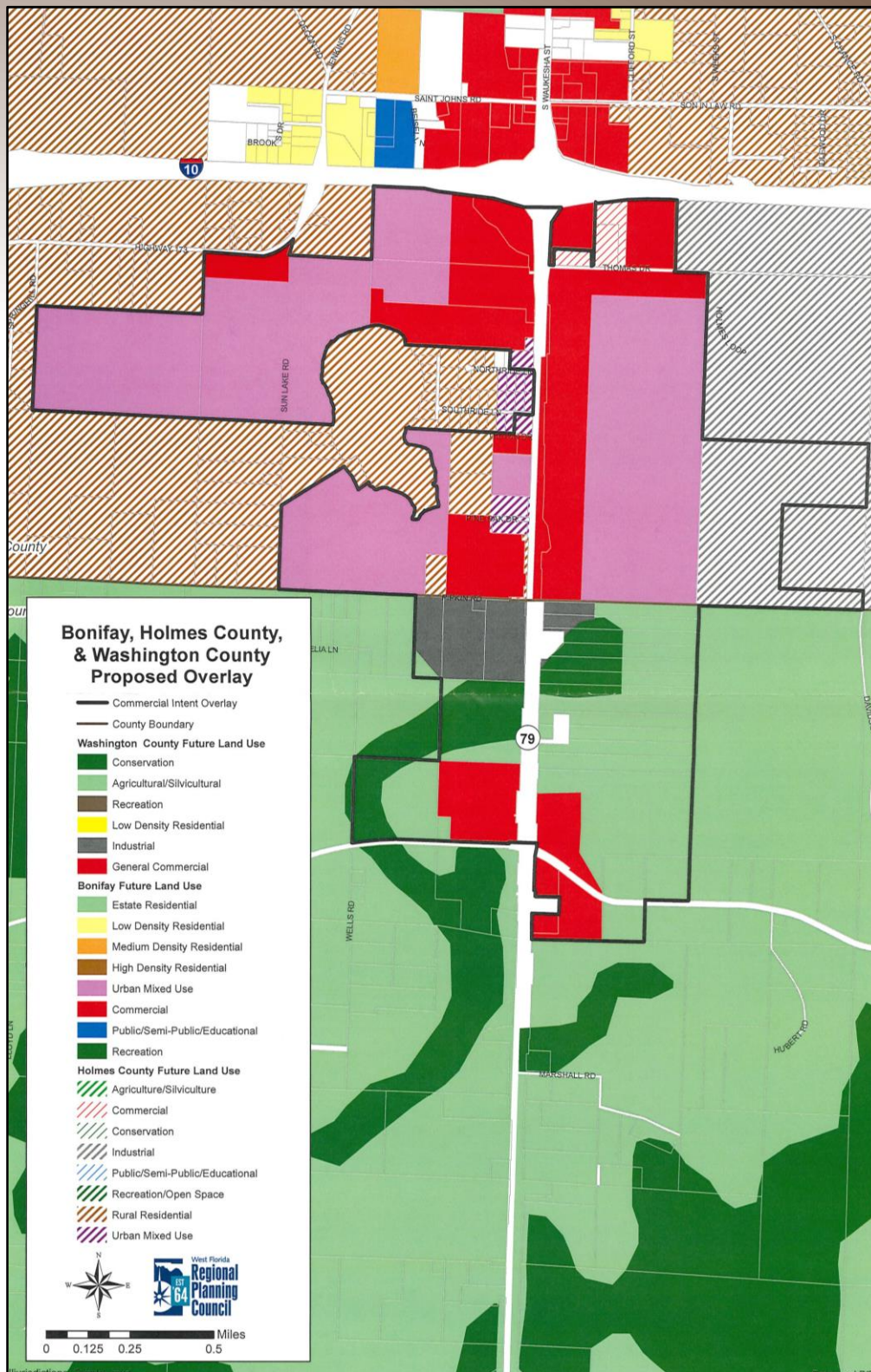
**PRELIMINARY - FOR ILLUSTRATION & DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY**

**70 CORRIDOR AUTHORITY BUDGET PROJECTION**

Committee A.B.

Committee B.B.

	11/17 - 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## Emergency Management

The Emergency Management staff operated on a budget of \$211,051; a State Grant (EMPA) of \$105,806, a Federal Grant (EMPG) of \$43,570, and a local match of \$61,675. All funds were expended. Mandatory Scope of Work deadlines for all deliverables were met.

A total of 53 training hours were logged by EM personnel over the past year. Training courses included:

- Emergency Management Technology Training
- Emergency Management Accreditation Program Training
- IS-200.b- ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incident
- IS-100.b- Introduction to Incident Command System
- IS-800.b- National Response Framework, an Introduction
- IS-700.a- National Incident Management System (NIMS) An Introduction
- L124 EMAP Accreditation Orientation/Assessor Training Combined Course

Conferences attended included the Current Issues in Emergency Management Conference, the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association Conference, and the Mid-Year FEP A Conference. Plan review/updates were completed including the EOC Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), the Logistics Plan, and the Shelter Standard Operating Guide. The Local Mitigation Strategy was updated. In addition, a Flood Response SOG was developed and adopted by the BOCC and Sheltering MOUs with the Washington County School Board and the American Red Cross were Executed, as well.

Four (4) Emergency Plans for Assisted Living Facilities were reviewed, as well as the Emergency Plan for the Washington County Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

The Department participated in the Statewide Hurricane Exercise conducted by the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM), conducted an EOC Communications Exercise, and hosted two field exercises with members of the 9Pt Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne).

In preparation for the 2017 Hurricane Season, an EOC Activation Workshop/Exercise and an Emergency Support Function Workshop/Exercise were held.

This year, through an agreement with the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Washington County implemented a mass notification system. AlertWashington, powered by Everbridge, was put in place to notify residents about severe weather, evacuations, and other types of emergencies. Messages are sent to residents on their preferred contact paths to ensure real-time access to potentially lifesaving information. Over the past several months, the staff has received extensive training on operation of the system. We continue to encourage residents to sign up for notifications through social media campaigns, distribution of brochures, and outreach events. Over 700 citizens have registered for notifications.

Three (3) community outreach events were attended by EM personnel to provide preparedness and recovery material, as well as information on AlertWashington.

Along with the attendance to numerous local and regional meetings, our office attended and participated in committee meetings as required including:

- Development Review Committee meetings
- Community Traffic Safety Team meetings (Serve as Vice-Chair, Secretary)
- Communications Committee meetings (Serve as Secretary)
- Long Term Recovery Organization meetings (Serve as Secretary)
- Local Mitigation Strategy meetings (Serve as Vice-Chair, Secretary)

In addition, the following response activities occurred:

October 2016 – Chlorine Gas Leak at the Caryville Water Treatment Plant (*support*)  
March 2017 – Two (2) I-10 Accidents (*support*)  
March 2017 – Potential Hazmat Package on Hwy 90 near Caryville (*support*)  
September 2017 – Hurricane Irma (*LSE, Level 3 EOC Activation, Shelter Support*)  
October 2017 – Hurricane Nate (*LSE, Level 2 EOC Activation*)





## Fire Services

The Washington County Fire Services is committed to serving Washington County and surrounding area counties with the highest level of life and property protection. We will achieve this by providing excellent and compassionate service in an atmosphere that encourages *innovation, professional development* and *diversity*.

The mission of the Fire Services is to protect the lives and property of the citizens of Washington County from fires, natural disasters, and hazardous materials incidents; to save lives by providing emergency first responses; to prevent fires through prevention and education programs; and to provide a work environment that values cultural diversity and is free of harassment and discrimination.

We provide quality service, professional fire protection and life safety measures to meet the needs of our communities. Our values are: Diversity, Strength through diversity, Respect, Trust, Support and Honor – both internal and external, and Teamwork. Our team members are our most valuable assets. We strive for excellence.

The Washington Fire Service is made up of a group of dedicated personnel that represent the diversity of the community. These persons work every day of the year to improve the quality of service provided to the communities. I am proud to serve this community with the quality of persons that personally give so much back to the community.

## Departments

Chipley Fire  
Country Oaks Fire  
Ebro Fire  
Five Points Fire  
Greenhead Fire  
Hinson Cross Roads Fire  
Orange Hill Fire  
Vernon Fire  
Washington Co Fire (Caryville)  
Washington Co Fire (Sunny Hills)  
Wausau Fire

Chief Floyd Aycock  
Chief John Thompson  
Chief Wade Moon  
Chief Myron Pierce  
Chief Jim Palmer  
Chief Lee Duke  
Chief Jeromy Hayes  
Chief Mike Owens  
Chief Austin Pugh  
Chief Al Gothard  
Chief Sam Rudd





All Washington County fire departments normally maintain a 12 to 15 personnel roster; those personnel are trained in the State of Florida Firefighter 1 training standard. This will require each member to obtain a 206 hour certificate from the Standards and Training Bureau on fire tactics. The course ranges from using (PPE) Personal Protective Equipment; hoses and ladders. All students have to complete a set of drills and a live burn building to receive their certificate. Every year the State of Florida Fire College puts on a Volunteer weekend; starting Sept 14-18 the state has been offering this weekend to personnel across Florida for free training and give personnel a set of (PPE) from head to toe for completing their training. Each member after completing training receives a certificate from the Bureau of Standards and Training. Weekends and other training opportunities have saved thousands of dollars in the county educating the first responders. Washington County fire departments has in the past sent several members to this volunteer weekend each year for advance training or continuing education for those members.

Fire service demands continuing training for each member on an annual basis, from medical first response to structure fires; there is no routine call for the first responders. Washington County Board of County Commissioners stands behind all the first responders in this county and their training to better serve the citizens of Washington County.

## **Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response**

In November 2015, Washington County Board of County Commissioners was granted a 1.16 million dollar federal grant from FEMA. The grant is designed to staff qualified stations with personnel on a daily basis for eight hour shifts. The personnel has to be a level 2 or level 1 Florida Firefighter; depending on the level the firefighter will be paid based on his or her certification. While staffing these stations the personnel are required to perform daily station duties and equipment checks.

### **The goal of SAFER is to:**

- Assist local fire departments improve and restore staffing and deployment capabilities so they may more effectively and safely respond to emergencies.
- Improve ability of the fire departments to assemble a sufficient number of firefighters at a structure fire in compliance with NFPA 1710 and 1720.
- Assist fire departments ensure that all first-arriving apparatus are staffed with a minimum of two qualified personnel who are capable of initiating the suppression response.
- Improve firefighter safety by meeting minimum staffing guidelines.

With the qualified stations being staffed, response to calls in those areas have increased in a timely manner. Normally when a call comes in, Washington County Sheriff's Office dispatch will page out the closest volunteer station to the call, while having the Vernon station and Sunny Hills station staffed; those two stations will have a faster response time. Volunteers working during day time hours have to travel to station then travel to the call with a fire unit.

Average volunteer response time on any particular day could be from 7 to 9 minutes to station before driving to the call.



## Emergency Calls Answered

Washington County Fire Services answer any type of calls of citizens in need. The scope of their duties range from structure fire to woodland fires. Personnel are trained to handle simple public assistance calls to extricating patients from vehicle crashes. Personnel are also trained in First Responder; this will allow personnel to respond to assist EMS units on medical calls.

Fire services personnel will be activated to be prepared for a possible severe storms entering the county area, personnel will assist citizen with evacuations' or assist power companies with power lines down. Personnel also assist other local agencies with removal of trees' or debris obstructing roadways so citizens and other emergency crews have passable roadways.

## Types of Training

Fire services personnel is required to attend a 40-hour Forestry class. This trains personnel on how to attack and contain a woodland fire. By taking this class by forestry instructors will also certify personnel to volunteer their services to assist large wildland fires in other states under the direction of Division of Forestry.

Another mandatory training that is required for each member is (T.I.M.) Traffic Incident Management class. This class is offered through Florida Department of Transportation, this training teaches personnel on the safety of working crashes on the Florida highways.

This training demonstrates the placement of emergency vehicle, to traffic cone setup and personnel directing traffic around a traffic crash scene.

Hazardous Material training is also a requirement for each fire personnel; personnel learn how to identify placards, which steps to take for public safety. This class also teaches personnel how to read shipping documents and contents of a shipment, how to determine which is a safe distance for evocation, clean up measures etc.

First responder is another course that is required for volunteer personnel; the course outlines what a volunteer firefighter should provide for basic life supporting measures until emergency personnel arrive on the scene. Personnel has to show how to perform CPR and proper placement of an AED. Volunteer personnel also learn how to use Jaws of Life, how to stop bleeding and many other



## Special Events

Washington County fire departments are involved in civic activities and special events in their communities. Local departments also host fall events such as holiday parades and school homecoming parades. Departments also participate in the Relay for Life during the month of October. The Chipley Fire Department is one of the hosts for the Watermelon Festival. Wausau Fire hosts the Possum Day Festival with a 5k run, different type of vendors with arts and crafts, gospel singing groups and a possum auction. The departments have their own outreach programs they offer different times of the year. Fire Prevention programs for the local schools is the leading community service that provides leadership and fire education.





## Grants /Special Projects

The Grants/Special Projects Department of the Washington County Board of County Commissioners is responsible for identifying, applying, and managing all federal and state grant programs. In addition, the department ensures grant reimbursements and mandatory progress reports are completed within each grant's unique timeframe. The department is also responsible for ensuring that all grant activities progress in compliance and with funding requirements in accordance with applicable federal, state, and local statutes, as well as County policies and procedures.

Karen Shaw has served as Grants/Special Projects Coordinator for the past three years and serves as Chairman of Washington County's Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Committee, and is a member of the Community Traffic Safety Team.

Currently, the Grants Department manages over \$4 million in current grants, and is monitoring an additional \$17 million in pending grants. This report contains grant activities in alphabetical order from October 2016 through present time in Washington County.

These grants include:

- Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant
- Consolidated Small County Solid Waste Management Grant (Recycling Grant)
- County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP)
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)
- Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP)
- Florida Job Growth Grant Fund
- Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP)
- Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)
- Health Care Responsibility Act (HCRA)
- Legislative Requests
- Local Agency Program (LAP)
- Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) Grant
- Safe Routes to School
- Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant (SAFER)
- Small County Outreach Program (SCOP)
- Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP)
- State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
- Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA)

The Grants/Special Projects Department of the Washington County Board of County Commissioners strives to exceed the expectations of the County Administrator, County Commissioners, and the stakeholders of Washington County as they relate to the duties of the department. With the highest standards of moral and ethical values and principles, the department pledges to help Washington County grow and prosper.



## **Consolidated Small County Solid Waste Management Grant**

Also known as the county's Recycling Grant, this annual grant is issued through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and subsidizes the operation of Washington County's Recycling Center with \$90,909.00 annually. The grant funds three employee salaries with fringe benefits calculated at 12.25 percent.

On June 28, 2017 the Grants Department submitted for a reimbursement of \$48,888.72. The remaining \$42,020.28 was requested on Oct. 6, 2017.

The Grants Department and the Recycling Center Manager completed the FY16-17 recycling grant work plan and are awaiting a 2017/2018 Contract from DEP. The full \$90,909 is expected for 2018.

## **County Incentive Grant Program**

The County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP) is funded through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and was created for the purpose of providing grants to counties to improve a transportation facility (including transit) that is located on the State Highway System (SHS) or which relieves traffic congestion on the SHS per Florida Statutes.

On January 26, 2016, the County entered into an agreement with FDOT for the resurfacing of Kirkland Road. The agreement amount is for \$250,374.00. This is typically 50/50 matching grant. However, FDOT is funding the entire project.

The proposed project includes resurfacing Kirkland Road for a total length of 4,101 feet with the installation of a double 48" RCP cross drain and FDOT index 250 headwalls. Additional improvements include thermoplastic striping, building out the shoulders, sodding and signage.

Under the contract, the project is expected to be completed on or before December 31, 2017.

## **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**

On October 1, 2015, Washington County applied for Agriculture Education and Promotion Facility Request for Funding through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), asking for \$700,000 to build a new Agricultural Center. On May 4, 2016, the County Coordinator was notified by the FDACS office that Washington County would be awarded \$300,000. After much discussion, the Board of County Commissioners agreed to ask the state to hold the money, and the County would reapply during subsequent grant cycles until enough funds were accumulated to build a new Ag Center. However, the next grant cycle was unsuccessful due to the lack of a satisfactory match. The property is not owned by the County and cannot, therefore, be used as a funding match.

The \$300,000 from the 2016 FDACS remains on hold until additional funding is secured to build a new agriculture center. In October 2017, the County submitted a Legislative Request for \$2,517,500.00 per Senator George Gainer's request.



## **Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP)**

The Florida Boating Improvement Program through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission provides funding through competitive grants for boating access projects and other boating-related activities on coastal and/or inland waters of Florida.

On June 21, 2017 the Florida Boating Improvement Program (FBIP) Evaluation Committee met to score the applications for fiscal year 2017-18 funding. Based on scores and project ranking, Washington County received notification on October 16, 2017 that the Culpepper Landing Boat Ramp project has been awarded up to \$134,122 in funding.



## **Florida Job Growth Grant Fund**

The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund is a new economic development program designed to build on Florida's success and economic prosperity. In its first year, the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund will provide \$85 million for public infrastructure and job training projects that support growth and employment in Florida's diverse industries.

In August 2017, the Grants Department submitted a request to the Florida Job Growth Fund asking for \$1,988,648.00 to help fund the construction of water and sewer infrastructure for the Highway 79 Corridor Authority Project. The application is awaiting the Governor's decision.

## **Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program**

The Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) is a competitive, reimbursement grant program through the Florida Department of Environmental Protection that provides financial assistance for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation.

The Grants Department is assisting the City of Vernon in managing two recreational site projects with awards of \$50,000 each.



## Hazard Mitigation Grant Program

Offered through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the purpose of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) is to help communities implement hazard mitigation measures following a Presidential major disaster declaration. Hazard mitigation is any action taken to reduce or eliminate long term risk to people and property from natural hazards.

Washington County entered into an agreement with FEMA to fund design, engineering, permitting, study and survey for improvements to the intersection of Gainer Road and Joe Neel Road totaling \$9,000.00. However, the construction phase was halted in February 2017 due to the County's inability to obtain all of the required rights-of-way.

In 2018, pending a disaster declaration, the Grants Department plans to seek Board permission to apply for an HMGP grant to fund an emergency generator for the Washington County Health Department. The anticipated amount is \$15,000.

## Health Care Responsibility Act

Health Care Responsibility Act (HCRA) was enacted in 1977 in order to assure that adequate and affordable health care is available to all Floridians. All Florida counties are required to participate.

Washington County is required to budget \$100,000 each year to reimburse participating hospitals for qualified indigent emergency services or pre-approved non-emergency care. The Grants Department receives HCRA applications from participating hospitals and has 30 days to determine eligibility of each applicant by verifying income, assets, and proof of residency. Once eligibility is determined, the applicant and hospital are notified by the Grants Department in writing. If the applicant is determined to be eligible, the hospital has six months to send to the county a completed UB-04 form (invoice). Using code guides of Medicare reimbursement rates and interactive calculators provided by the state, the Grants Department calculates the total amount due to the hospital and requests a check from Board Finance.

Since October, 2016 to present, Washington County has received 19 applications and paid participating hospitals a total of \$30,996.24 for indigent care. Also during this time, a total of 11 applications were denied by the Grants Department due to applicants not providing necessary information to determine eligibility or were found financially ineligible.

## Legislative Requests

On October 15, 2017, Washington County submitted four Legislative Requests to the Florida House and Senate. These requests were for:

- Washington County Agricultural Center: Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering in the amount of \$2,517,500.00.
- River Road Paving Improvements: Engineering and construction activities for 2.5 miles of new paved roadway in the amount of \$4,239,195.00.
- Greenhead Road Project: Design Engineering and Plans Preparation, Construction, and Construction Engineering and Inspection Activities in the amount of \$4,721,806.33.





## **Local Agency Program**

The Local Agency Program (LAP) provides towns, cities and counties funds to develop, design, and construct transportation facilities with federal funds. FDOT is the steward of the federal funds and is responsible for oversight of funded projects on behalf of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA.)

The Grants Department was notified by the FDOT in October, 2015 that Washington County's Safe Routes to School applications for sidewalks along South Blvd. (from SR 77 to Hoyt Street) and along Hoyt Street had been approved for funding. FDOT subcontractors designed the project and the County entered into a construction agreement in February 2017 in the amount of \$454,900.00. The contract expires on Dec. 31, 2017.

Also in February 2017, the County was notified that its Safe Routes to School application for sidewalks to be continued along Pine Avenue and Usery Road had been selected for funding. The FDOT contract amount is for \$21,200.00 and also expires on Dec. 31, 2017. FDOT has scheduled Construction funding in the amount of \$149,000.00 for FY2019.

## **Northwest Florida Water Management District Agreement**

Washington County and Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWFMD) have a local government agreement in place where NFWFMD agrees to provide \$200,000 for streambank restoration, protection, repair and improvements to the Hightower Landing, Spurling Landing and Live Oak Landing recreation areas in the Holmes Creek Water Management Area.

Records indicate that \$60,635.00 has been reimbursed since the agreement was executed in 2012. Several agreement extensions have been approved following the original 24-month agreement. The latest agreement extension expired in September, 2017.

For FY 2016, the County was reimbursed \$100,842.40 for boardwalk and improvements at Live Oak Landing and Hightower Landing.

## **Safe Routes to School**

Safe Routes to School is a funding program offered through the Florida Department of Transportation with the goal of getting more students walking and bicycling where it is safe and to fix the conditions where it is not safe.

In August 2017, the Grants Department was notified that its application for the continuation of sidewalks from South Boulevard at Hoyt Street to Kirkland Road, and along Kirkland Road, had been ranked second out of 11 applications in the District.

Design will be funded in 2019 in the amount of \$162,000.00 and construction in 2021 in the amount of \$555,000.00.



## Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grant

On August 28, 2015, the Grants Department received official notification from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security that Washington County was a FY 2014 recipient of a Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant issued through the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The total amount of the award is \$1,161,868.00 with a grant period of Nov. 21, 2015 through Nov. 20, 2019.

To date, the following reimbursements have been issued:

Stipends for Stand-by Volunteers	= \$169,819.00
PPE for new recruits	= \$91,123.00
Marketing	= \$23,520.00
Training for Volunteers	= \$13,603.00
Fire Services Salary	= \$75,963.00
Admin Scheduling Program	= \$3,990.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>= \$378,018.00</b>

Washington County's goal is to recruit 22 new volunteers each year. To date, a total of 78 new recruits have been added to the volunteer fire department rosters of Washington County.

Washington County Volunteer Fire Department, Florida: EMW-2014-FF-00339  
POP: 11/21/15 - 11/20/19

Line Item Name	Stipends for Volunteers	PPE for Volunteers	Volunteer Recruitment Marketing Program	Training For Volunteers	R&R Officer	Admin / Scheduling Software				TOTAL
Budget object Class										
Original Award	\$581,200	\$165,788	\$60,080	\$104,000	\$250,800					1,161,868.00
Amendment1				(\$8,000)		\$8,000				0.00
REVISED AWARD	581,200.00	165,788.00	60,080.00	96,000.00	250,800.00	8,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,161,868.00
Year 1										0.00
11/21/15-12/1/15			\$11,760							11,760.00
12/23/2015	\$8,000									8,000.00
1/22/2016						\$1,995				1,995.00
2/3/2016				\$698						698.00
3/18/2016	\$9,650				\$23,416					33,066.00
4/11/2016		\$32,278								32,278.00
4/17/2016	\$11,900									11,900.00
5/29/2016	\$10,900									10,900.00
6/7/2016	\$7,700			\$3,471						11,171.00
7/21/2016		\$9,108								9,108.00
8/10/2016	\$10,800			\$4,755						15,555.00
9/6/2016	\$7,700				\$13,312					21,012.00
10/14/2016	\$7,950			\$150						8,100.00
11/18/2016	\$6,700									6,700.00
12/8/2016	\$16,069									16,069.00
1/11/2017	\$6,900									6,900.00
1/27/2017	\$8,500		\$11,760		\$18,570					38,830.00
3/15/2017	\$11,650			\$1,492		\$1,995				15,137.00
4/20/2017	\$7,650									7,650.00
5/9/2017	\$6,300			\$1,770						8,070.00
6/30/2017	\$5,600				\$20,665					26,265.00
7/25/2017		\$49,737								49,737.00
8/30/2017	\$15,050			1,267						16,317.00
10/13/2017	\$10,800									10,800.00
Total Spent	169,819.00	91,123.00	23,520.00	13,603.00	75,963.00	3,990.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	378,018.00
Balance	411,381.00	74,665.00	36,560.00	82,397.00	174,837.00	4,010.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	783,850.00





## Small County Outreach Program

The purpose of the Small County Outreach Program (SCOP), administered through FDOT, is to assist small county governments in repairing or rehabilitating county bridges, paving unpaved roads, addressing road-related drainage improvements, resurfacing or reconstructing county roads, or constructing capacity or safety improvements to county roads.

In March 2017, the County submitted SCOP applications for Greenhead Road in the amount of \$2,592,562.41 and River Road in the amount of \$1,753,499.21. Neither project was selected for funding and both were submitted for 2017 Legislative Requests.

Current and future SCOP projects include:

- **Kent Road** – While this project was not scheduled for funding until FY 2019, FDOT issued an Agreement on July 31, 2017 allowing the County to proceed on or before November 1, 2017 with design plans to be completed by December 31, 2019. Actual construction will commence no later than January 1, 2019 and be completed by December 31, 2019. Reimbursement for these expenses from FDOT will be available in fiscal year 2019. The purpose for the agreement is to allow the County sufficient time to obtain necessary rights-of-way.
- **Buckhorn Boulevard** – Flexible Pavement Reconstruction engineering and design in the amount of \$315,000 is scheduled for funding in FY 2019. Construction is scheduled for 2021 in the amount of \$2,832,000.00.

## Small County Road Assistance Program

The purpose of the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP), administered through FDOT, is to assist small county governments in resurfacing and reconstructing county roads.

In April, 2017, Washington County submitted **Obie Street** and **Bonnett Pond Road** for potential SCOP projects. Both were selected for funding for FY 2018 in the amounts of \$99,751.00 and \$1,179,728.00, respectively.

Also slated for FDOT design funding in 2018 is **CR 277 Cope Road** in the amount of \$136,685.00.



## State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program

Florida Housing administers the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, which provides funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership. The program was designed to serve very low, low, and moderate income families.

SHIP funds are distributed on an entitlement basis to all 67 counties in Florida. The minimum allocation is \$350,000, which is what Washington County receives. The Grants Department directs potential participants to the West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC), which administers Washington County's program at no cost to the county. WFRPC is paid through administrative funds as part of the grant.

The Grants Department serves as liaison between the County and WFRPC, as well as the County and the Commissioner-appointed Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC). The AHAC, made up of local professionals and residents who have a vested interest and knowledge of Washington County's housing situation, meets periodically to discuss Washington County's Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) and makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

Over the past year, the Washington County's SHIP program has paid \$221,501.33 for emergency housing rehabilitation on 10 homes and assisted nine residents with purchase assistance totaling \$90,000.00. In addition, Washington County is currently processing its first Replacement Housing application.

## Transportation Alternatives Program

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is administered through the FDOT and focuses on expanding alternative modes of transportation.

Following direction from Washington County's Community Traffic Safety Team, the Grants Department is researching solar lighting for the purpose of lighting the Falling Waters Road multi-use path, which is an allowable expense through TAP. The project cost is approximately \$50,000.

## Volunteer Fire Assistance Program

The Grants Department assisted three Washington County volunteer fire departments with Volunteer Fire Assistance Program (VFA) 50/50 matching grants.

- Country Oaks received \$2,007.50 to help fund the purchase of five Motorola 7550 Radios and chargers.
- Sunny Hills received \$1,920.00 to help fund 10 Motorola M-6 Pagers with chargers.
- Caryville received \$1,483.50 to help fund two Motorola 7550 Radios and one Ramfan Vent PP Fan.





## Human Resources

The Board of County Commissioners strives to create a workplace that is diverse and provides opportunities for advancement for the most qualified employees. Being a rural county limits the pool of potential employees, due to private businesses and larger cities in neighboring counties offering higher salaries and competitive benefits. Competing against larger counties is challenging, but the new hires for 2016-2017 have been high quality with post high school education and certifications that add expertise to the county workforce.

### Current Workforce Composition Age and Years of Service

Age	<5 yrs	5-9.9 yrs	10-14.9 yrs	15-19.9 yrs	20-24.9 yrs	25-29.9 yrs	30-34.9 yrs	35+	Total	Percentage of Total Labor Force
<20	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1.1%
20-24	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2.2%
25-29	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3.3%
30-34	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	7	7.8%
35-39	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2.2%
40-44	1	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	5	5.6%
45-49	7	3	3	2	1	1	0	0	17	18.9%
50-54	7	2	3	5	1	0	1	0	19	21.1%
55-59	6	1	1	1	2	3	0	1	15	16.7%
60-64	7	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	11	12.2%
65-69	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	5.6%
>70	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	3.3%
<b>Total</b>	43	12	14	10	5	4	1	1	90	
<b>Percentage of Labor Force</b>	47.8%	13.3%	15.6%	11.1%	5.6%	4.4%	1.1%	1.1%		100.00%

### Ethnic Breakdown

Ethnic Category	Number	Percentage
White Male	49	54.44%
White Female	28	31.11%
Black/African American Male	7	7.78%
Black/African American Female	2	2.22%
American Indian Male	3	3.33%
American Indian Female	1	1.11%
<b>Total</b>	90	100.00%



## Separations

### FY Comparison of Separations

TYPE OF SEPARATION	FY	WM			WF			BM			BF			IM			IF		
		14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17
DROP RETIREMENT		0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SERVICE RETIREMENT		0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PERMANENT VOL RESIGN		0	3	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PROBATIONARY VOL RESIGN		0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY VOL RESIGN		1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PERMANENT DISMISSAL		1	2	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PROBATIONARY DISMISSAL		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TEMPORARY DISMISSAL		1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DEATH		0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS		3	8	9	3	2	3	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Recruitment & Selection

- Advertised a total of 18 positions, including 1 Senior Management positions. We had 15 New Hires and 3 promotions. One position was not filled.
- Advertised Firefighter positions under Safer Grant – We interviewed 6 applicants and hired 5.
- 27 pre-employment physicals, including 19 firefighters

## FY Comparison of New Hires

FY	WM			WF			BM			BF			IM			IF		
	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17	14/15	15/16	16/17
	7	9	10	3	5	3	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

## Drug Testing

- 27 Pre-employment, this includes Firefighter positions
- 25 Random Drug Tests and 4 Random Breath Alcohol Tests
- 8 Post Accident

## Benefits

Benefit premiums were negotiated by our Agent of Record, Robin Riley, Vice President - Employee Benefits, Brown & Brown - Public Risk Insurance Agency with only a slight increase in Health Insurance premiums for this year. There was no increase to the employee portion of the premium as the BOCC absorbed the entire increase. We also changed to Guardian for Dental and Vision Insurance and the premiums decreased slightly while maintaining the same coverage level.

We received a steady stream of phone calls, emails and walk-ins from employees requesting assistance with benefit related issues. In order to maintain compliance with the Affordable Healthcare Act, the Human Resources Office has submitted numerous detailed employee census reports.

## Risk Management

- 5 Property Damage Claims (County) settled totaling \$104,450.99





## Library Services

The Washington County Public Library (Library) strives to **Educate, Enlighten, and Empower** all individuals who seek its services. The mission statement is critical in ways the Library has enriched the lives of those who have walked through its doors during Fiscal Year 2017. This report gives a basic overview of how staff has demonstrated its vision and commitment to public service.

Numbers are a critical component of any organizational strategy. For a public library, statistics allow for the creation of quality information, which results in an investment that is visible to taxpayers. There are six core statistics used within the library: registered library card patrons; overall library visitors; total circulation of inventory; programs and attendees, and; technology assistance. From October 1, 2016, to September 30, 2017, the Washington County Public Library generated the following numbers:

- Library card patrons – 12,417
- Library visitors – 56,227
- Total Circulation – 49,416
  - Electronic Circulation- 9,018
- Programs -219
  - Attendees – 6,215
- Technology Assistance Session- 396
- Computer Sessions – 8,776



### Future Planning

Sweeping changes were implemented this fiscal year that resulted in increased service to citizens of the county. As of October 1, 2016, Washington County Public Library exited the Panhandle Public Library Cooperative System (PPLCS). The Library underwent a transition period during fiscal year 2017 as it migrated out of PPLCS into a stand-alone county library system. This resulted in more local control of operations that allowed for increased efficiency and better return on investment for taxpayer dollars. Diligence on the part of library staff ensured that the majority of library patrons saw no disruption in service.

Increased local level of effort from the Washington County Board of County Commissioners resulted in additional funding by the State of Florida to provide library services. Due to an increase in the Library's budget two years ago, the State Aid to Public Libraries Grant ensured that the Library received 50 cents for every dollar that was contributed by the County was returned instead of 25 cents for every dollar that was received in previous years.

The Library also began to plan for the future by submitting a Public Library Construction Grant to the State of Florida for \$500,000, to expand the Chipley Library facility. The Department of State's Division of Library and Information Services ranked the Washington County Public Library number two on the grant list to be submitted to the Florida State Legislature for the approval in the 2017 legislative session. Advocacy efforts were undertaken by library staff, the Friends of the Washington County Public Library, and citizens of the county. Letters, phone calls, and visits to elected state officials requested that the funding be passed. Unfortunately, despite all efforts, the Florida State Legislature elected not to fund the Public Library Construction Grant program. The Library has already resubmitted the application for the coming fiscal year and will continue to pursue the project.

## Educate

Due to increased demand on children's services and a desire to continue to supplement the educational services provided by the local schools, parents & caregivers, and other invested agencies, the Library budgeted an additional full-time youth instructor position. This staff member is based at the main facility in Chipley and is in charge of all children's programming done at the main branch. By adding this additional position, the youth services manager can now assist other branch locations with increased youth classes and programs designed to provide the necessary skills for success.

Partnership with the Washington County School District has continued to grow. The Vernon Elementary School's 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Author Study completed its third year in fiscal year 2017. Each month during the school year, the 1<sup>st</sup> grade class visits the Sam Mitchell Public Library in Vernon, learning critical thinking skills and evaluation of literature while they learn about a new author. With the award of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) program to the school district, the Library was able to provide access to a learning musical performance by Matthew Gurnsey, for Saint Patrick's Day that taught children about Celtic, Irish, and Scottish music. Children in the afterschool program in third through fifth grade at both Kate Smith Elementary School and Vernon Elementary School enjoyed the music. The Library also did a six week pilot project with the CCLC program at Kate Smith Elementary School to provide additional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (S.T.E.M.) education. This project will continue into the next fiscal year.

## Enlighten

For adults using the Washington County Public Library, there were multiple opportunities throughout the year for enlightenment. Computer classes at the Chipley Library have become a mainstay of our technology training for adults. Device Advice, our one-on-one technology assistance sessions continue to be very popular for those looking to learn about their new smartphone, tablet, or ereader. As always, library staff are available to provide assistance with internet, email, or printing questions that library patrons may have. While the Library has seen a small decrease in the number of computer sessions this fiscal year, there has been an increased demand in those accessing our wireless networks available at all library locations.

Technology enlightenment has not been all that the Library has offered. This year saw the beginnings of a monthly craft class for adults designed to teach a new skill or provide a spark of imagination for those looking to be creative. Craft classes covered a range of projects. Halloween mason jar luminaries, mesh Christmas wreaths, making your own stationary, and button crafts were a few of the projects that were offered at no cost to library patrons who registered for the classes. The Library also provided several musical programs for free throughout the year that provided an opportunity to listen to a classical guitarist or a folk music duo.

## Empower

This fiscal year the Library took an active role in examining how we could empower our citizens within the county. Partnerships were essential in this endeavor. The Library collaborated with the United Way of Northwest Florida to help with the tax season. The United Way received a grant that allowed them to provide an online portal with staffed assistance by phone. This allowed people to file their taxes for free, with questions answered by certified tax preparers. The Library promoted this service within all of its Library locations and on its website to ensure that people were aware of this program. This allowed many people to come into the library, use a computer, and safely file their taxes.





Empowerment also came to parents and caregivers in the form of a summer partnership with Feeding the Gulf Coast (formerly Bay Area Food Bank). The State of Florida has a child food insecurity rate of 24.9%. This means that over 1 million children in Florida experience hunger each year. This is especially true in the summer time as children are out of school and parents have increased demands on their household budgets to pay for food, daycare, and other necessities.

By partnering with Feeding the Gulf Coast as a participant in the United States Department of Agriculture's Summer Feeding Program, the Library provide a total of 1,180 meals at 5 locations across the county tied in with our summer reading program. This allowed parents and caregivers to not have to worry about the child in their life going hungry. There was no cost associated with participating in the program for the library or the county.

The Library will go forward into the future educating, enlightening, and empowering all that seek us!





## Planning Department

The Washington County Planning Department is responsible for the implementation of Washington County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code (LDC). The Department conducts technical review of regulated development activities which are located within the unincorporated areas of Washington County, Florida, as well as, within the municipalities of Caryville, Ebro, Wausau and Vernon and is responsible for providing staff recommendations to the Washington County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. The Planning Department administers Land Use Certificates, Development Orders and Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code Amendment, maintains the County's fixed assets inventory and records retention schedule and provides interdepartmental support for services such as building permits, driveway permits, road name changes, addressing applications and public records requests.

### **Department Staff**

County Planner, Steve Cramer  
Planning Secretary, Brandi Lowery

The County Planner provides technical review of all regulated development activities and Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code amendments and provides staff recommendations to the Planning Commission and to the Board of County Commissioners based on the developments conformance to the Land Development Code, consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and compliance with local, state and federal regulations.

The Planning Secretary carries out all administrative functions of the Planning Department, and supports the County with tasks such as building permitting and administration, fixed assets inventory, public records requests, records retention and interdepartmental payment processing and application transmittal.

### **Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to review and consider proposals for regulated development activities within the jurisdiction of Washington County for consistency with the Washington County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. The Planning Commission typically meets on the first Tuesday of each month; however, meetings are subject to change or may be cancelled due to a lack of a quorum or agenda items. The Planning Commission is charged with vetting most developments for recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners; however, in some cases, the Planning Commission may have authority to take final action.

Planning Commission Members, as of July 31, 2016

NAME	POSITION
ROGER HAGAN	District 1
JAMES USSERY	District 2
AL KEOWN, CHAIRMAN	District 3
JIM ACKERMAN	District 4
DAVID MORRIS, VICE CHAIRMAN	District 5
JOHN GAY	At-Large
MIKE PARK	School Board

## Accomplishments and Milestones – Fiscal Year 2017

The Washington County Planning Department accomplished the following during FY2017:

- **IWORQ Permitting System** – To improve project tracking and save money on time and paper, the Planning Department has converted from a paper filing system to an electronic filing system. This process now allows the Department to communicate electronically with applicants, as well as state and county agencies and departments such as the Florida Department of Health, Building Department, E-9-1-1 Addressing Department and Public Works Department. All applications and associated documents are electronically sent via iWorQ.

## Services Provided

The Planning Department provides pre-permitting services by reviewing proposed developments within unincorporated areas of Washington County, Florida, and the municipalities of Ebro, Caryville, Vernon and Wausau for compliance with the Washington County Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code (LDC) and recommendation to the Washington County Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners, as applicable. The Department also provides periodic review and updates of local plans and ordinances including, but not limited to, the Washington County Comprehensive Plan and LDC.

The following activities are regulated and/or administered by the Planning Department:

- Land Use Certifications
- Future Land Use Map Amendments
- Land Development Code and Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments
- General, Minor and Major Development Review
- Subdivisions and Property Division Review
- Plat Vacations/Right-of-Way Abandonment
- Development of Regional Impact Developments
- Flood Zone Determination Letters
- Elevation Certification Review
- Alcoholic Beverage Certifications
- Nursing Home Certifications
- Variance Requests
- Land Use Letters





## Other Services

In addition to planning services, the Planning Secretary also serves as the Public Records, Records Retention, and Fixed Assets Liaison for Washington County, and provides back-up staff report for the Building Department and Administration Office. The Secretary is responsible for providing back-up for public records requests (with the exception of staff-related inquiries which are handled by the Human Resources Department), overseeing Washington County's records retention schedule and fixed asset inventory and responding to an estimated fifteen (15) to thirty (30) inquiries per day related to the issuance of building permits and processes. In addition, the Planning Department also transmits applications and processes fees for interdepartmental tasks including driveway permits, road grading fees, road name change applications and Emergency 911 (E911) address applications. In an effort to provide a "One-Stop Shop" for citizens, the Planning Department provides administrative support to the Public Works Department and E911 for these services, and fees are credited to these entities accordingly.

## Community Involvement

### Neighborhood Information Meetings

Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendments, Subdivisions, and Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) are subject to a Neighborhood Information Meeting (NIM). NIM's provide an opportunity for neighbors surrounding a proposed development to learn more about the project and express questions or concerns related to the proposal. The owners of property located within 300-feet of a proposed development receive notification of the NIM via certified mail, and the applicant and Planning Department collaborate to inform the public of the development which is proposed to occur within their neighborhood. NIM's typically occur after the proposal has been reviewed by County Staff and prior to a Planning Commission Public Hearing.

### Public Notification

FLUM Amendments, Subdivisions, DRI's, Plat and Right-of-Way Abandonment and Variances require public notification of public hearings via newspaper advertisement and some require on-site signage, and/or adjoining property owner notification. All development activities requiring Planning Commission and/or Board of County Commissioner approval, as indicated below, are subject to public hearing.

## Planning Review Requirements

Planning Commission or BCC Approval	Staff Approval Only	Upon Request
Future Land Use Map (FLUM) Amendments	Land Use Certificates	Land Use Letters
Subdivisions	Property Divisions	Flood Zone Letters
Plat Vacations/ROW Abandonment	General Developments	
Minor Developments	Alcoholic Beverage Certification	
Major Developments	Nursing Home Certification	
DRI Developments		
Variance Requests		

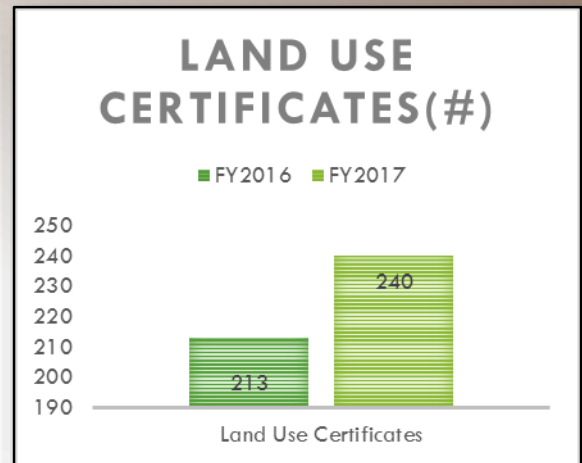
## Fiscal Year Activity

### General Activities

The most common activities carried out by the Planning Department includes processing and reviewing applications for Land Use Certificates and providing procedural information to prospective developers and local citizens on local land development regulations. These processes can be greatly time intensive as they often times require an extensive analysis of individual site characteristics and must be assessed on a case-by-case basis. On a daily basis, the Planning Department responds to approximately fifteen (15) to thirty (30) inquiries via phone, email and/or in-person meetings.

### Land Use, Alcohol Zoning and Nursing Home Certificates

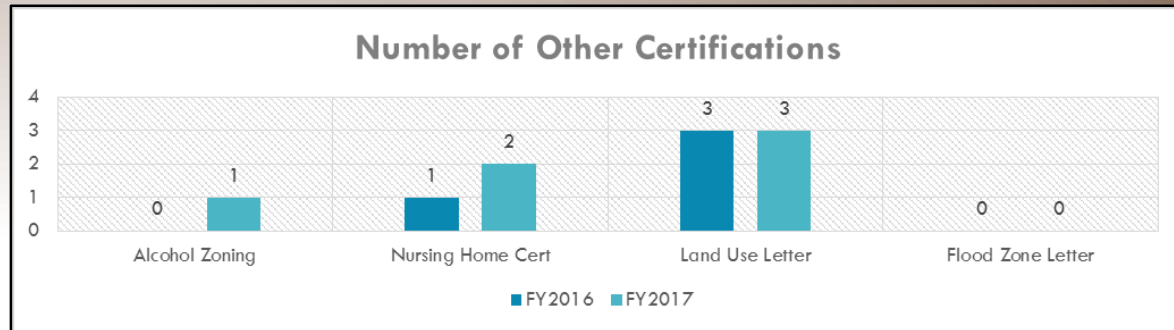
Land Use Certificates certify that proposed developments conform to Land Development Code regulations, are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and are required prior to the issuance of an E911 address, utility and/or building permit. The Washington County Planning Department has processed 240 applications for Land Use Certificates, compared to 213 applications during FY2016.



Occasionally, the Planning Department will certify alcohol zoning and nursing home certificates for new establishments which intend to sell alcoholic beverages and/or offer nursing home services. The Department will also provide Land Use Letters which include information on the allowable uses and permitted densities, or intensities of a specific development site, upon request. Flood Zone Letters may also be provided with includes information on allowable development within on-site flood zones of a development site; however, no flood zone letters were issued during FY2016 or FY2017.



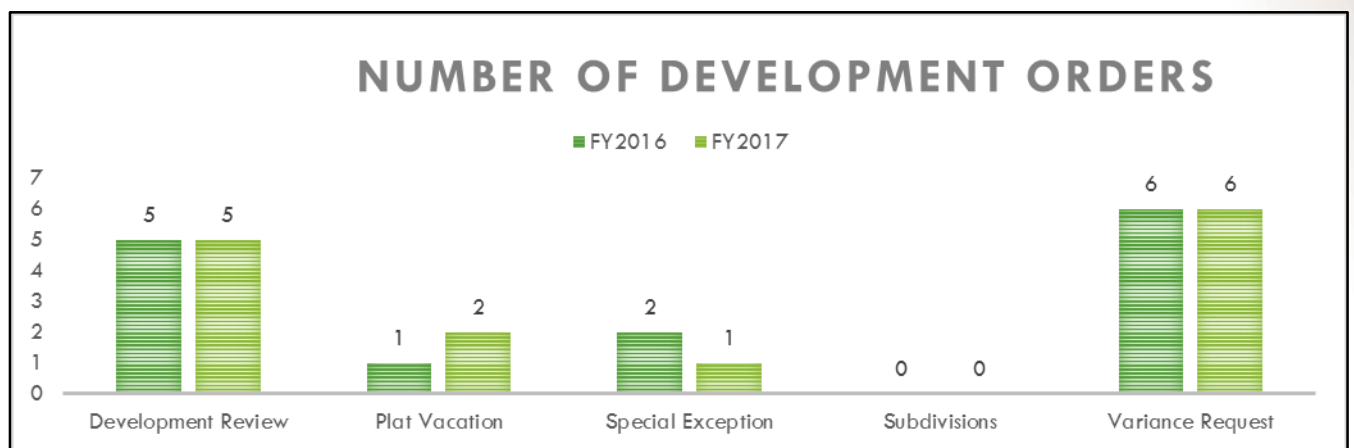
## Development Orders



Development Orders provide County approval of site plans, variance requests, special exception requests and subdivision plats and permits to allow an **applicant to proceed with obtaining the necessary construction permits from the Building Department for building erection, mobile home installation, and utility construction. Development orders may contain conditions that the applicant must meet prior to receiving a building permit or conditions which may run with the land.** (See Appendix A for a list of all proposed Development Orders which were considered during FY2016 and FY2017).

## Plat Vacate and Roadway Abandonment

Local citizens and/or developers may petition for a Plat Vacate or Roadway Abandonment in accordance with LDC Section 10.03.03. In most cases, a Roadway Abandonment is requested when the applicant no longer wishes for the County to maintain the road. A Plat Vacate is requested when the applicant no longer wishes to continue the use of their lot that lies within a recorded plat. The Planning Department provides technical review of all Plat Vacate and Roadway Abandonment requests and coordinates public notification and public hearings.





## Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code Amendments

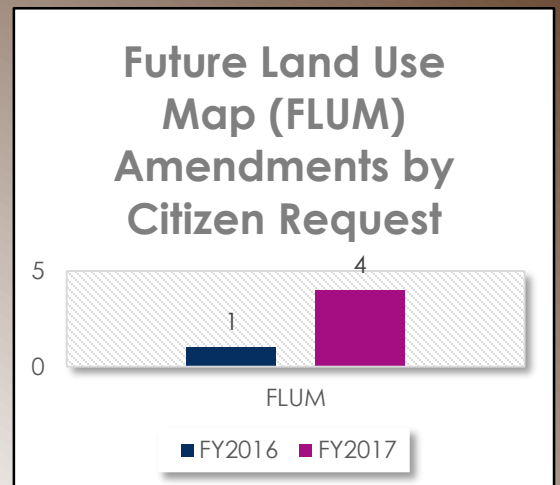
Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code amendments may be initiated by the County or requested by an applicant, and may be applied to textual provisions or provide an update to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). Generally, County-initiated amendments seek to correct an error on the FLUM or provide clarification or updates to outdated or poorly-defined provisions. These documents are periodically reviewed by Planning Department Staff and updated, as needed, and as funds become available.

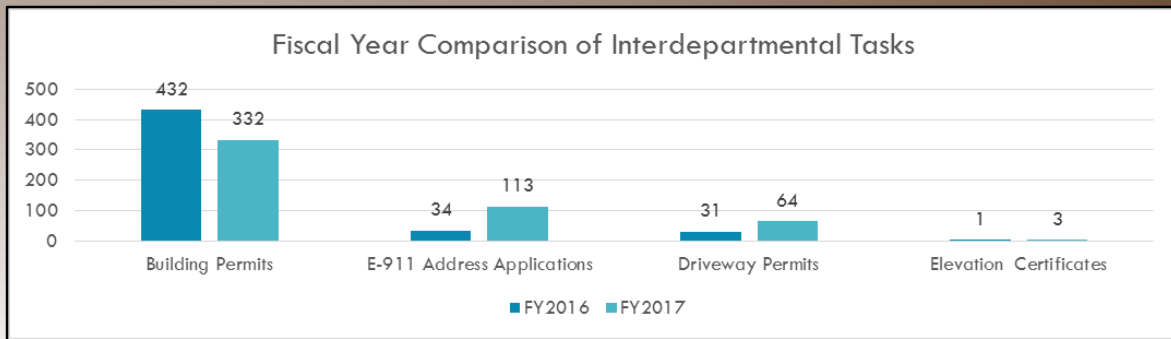
Local citizens and/or developers may petition for a FLUM Amendment in accordance with LDC Section 10.02.02. In most cases, a FLUM Amendment is requested when a FLUM designation does not allow for a proposed land use or development density or intensity. The Planning Department provides technical review of all FLUM amendment requests and coordinates public notification and public hearings. *(See Appendix A2 for a list of all proposed FLUM Amendments which were considered during FY2016-FY2017).*

In addition, the Department provided technical support for a proposed Medical Cannabis Ordinance and Floodplain Management Ordinance Update. The Washington County Board of County Commissioners extended the moratorium regarding Medical Cannabis; however, the Floodplain Management Ordinance was approved on August 24, 2017, by the Washington County Board of County Commissioners. On September 14, 2017, the Florida Department of Emergency Management notified the County of the approval of meeting the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program.

### Other Tasks

In an effort to create a “One-Stop Shop” for development-related permitting requests, the Planning Department processes and transmits payment and applications for other County Departments including Building, Emergency 911, and Public Works.

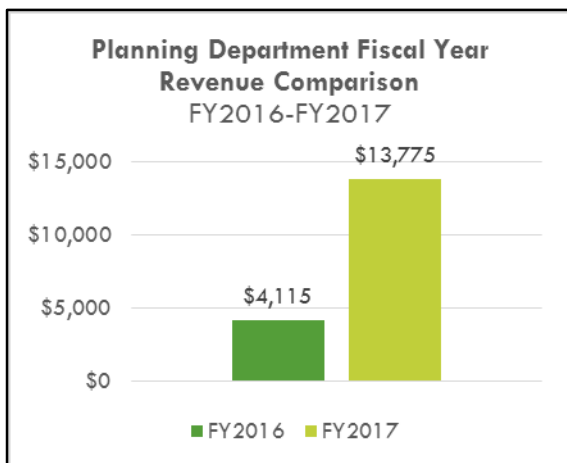




To date, the Planning Department processed approximately 512 applications/requests related to the building permits, elevation certificates, E911 address applications and driveway permits.

### Planning Department Fiscal Year Revenues

Planning Department sources of revenue include application and filing fees for land use letters, flood zone verification letters, alcoholic beverage certifications, assisted living/nursing home certifications, and development activities requiring Planning Commission and/or Board of County Commission Approval.



**\$13,775 was assessed for the processing of planning-related application and filing fees, compared to \$4,115 in FY2016.** Effective May 1, 2016, applications for land use certificates were assessed a twenty-dollar (\$20) application fee, in accordance with a fee schedule amendment adopted by the Washington County Board of County Commissioners on April 21, 2016. Prior to May 1, 2016, however, no fees were assessed for land use certificates. The increase in land use certificate revenues are likely the result in revenue increases during future fiscal years.

*(See Appendix B, Fee Schedule Comparison for FY2016-FY2017).*



## Appendix A1: Development Order Justification Table (FY2017)

Development Description	Review Type	Planning Commission Review Date	Status
<b>Minor Subdivision Requirement – Dawkins Street, Vernon</b>	Variance Request	November 3, 2016	Tabled by the Town of Vernon
<b>Nonresidential Addition – Pioneer Road, Wausau</b>	Minor Development Review/Variance	November 3, 2016	Approved
<b>Telecommunication Tower – Horne Place, Chipley</b>	Special Exception	January 10, 2017	Approved
<b>Dollar General – Old Spanish Trail</b>	Minor Development Review/Variance	March 7, 2017	Approved
<b>Chipola Timber Harvesting, Inc – Highway 90, Chipley</b>	Minor Development Review	April 4, 2017	Approved
<b>Grace &amp; Glory Fellowship Hall, Ballfield, &amp; School (Phase 1) – 912 Brickyard Road, Chipley</b>	Minor Development Review	April 4, 2017	Approved
<b>Minimum Lot Size Requirement – Bruner Dairy Road</b>	Variance Request	July 11, 2017	Approved
<b>Petition of Plat Vacate – St. Mary's Road</b>	Plat Vacate	August 1, 2017	Approved
<b>Nonresidential Building Addition – Main Street, Vernon</b>	Minor Development Review/Variance Request	August 17, 2017	Approved

## Appendix A2: Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code Amendments FY2016 to FY2017

Amendment Type	Description	Planning Commission Review Date	Status
<b>Future Land Use Map</b>	FLUM Amendment (Small Scale) Low-Medium Density Residential & General Commercial to General Commercial	December 6, 2016	BCC Adoption
<b>Future Land Use Map</b>	FLUM Amendments (Small Scale) – Agricultural/Silvicultural to Public/Semi-Public	April 18, 2017	BCC Adoption
<b>Future Land Use Map</b>	FLUM Amendments (Large Scale) – Multiple Uses	July 11, 2017	BCC Adoption and State Approval
<b>Future Land Use Map</b>	FLUM Amendment (Small Scale) – Agricultural/Silvicultural to General Commercial	July 11, 2017	BCC Adoption





## Appendix B: Fee Schedule Comparison (FY2016 to FY2017)

Fee Type	FY2016		FY2017		Change (\$)
Land Use Certificate	\$20		\$20		No Change
Land Use Letter	\$10		\$10		No Change
Flood Zone Letter	\$15		\$15		No Change
Alcoholic Beverage Certificate	\$50		\$50		No Change
Assisted Living/Nursing Home Certificate	\$25		\$25		No Change
FLUM Amendment (<20 Acres)	\$250		\$250		No Change
FLUM Amendment (>20 Acres)	\$1,000		\$1,000		No Change
FLUM Amendment (Industrial, Mining, Landfill)	\$3,000		\$3,000		No Change
Development of Regional Impact	\$5,000		\$5,000		No Change
Plat Vacation	\$200		\$200		No Change
ROW Abandonment	\$200		\$200		No Change
Special Exception	\$750		\$750		No Change
Special Exception (Cemetery Only)	\$250		\$250		No Change
Minor & Major Development Review	\$250		\$250		No Change
Variance	\$50		\$50		No Change
Single Lot Subdivision	\$50		\$50		No Change
Cemetery Plat Review	Half of Plat Review Fee		Half of Plat Review Fee		No Change
Plat Review	Preliminary	Final	No Change	Final	No Change
2-10 Lots					No Change
Without Improvements	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	
With Improvements	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	
11-25 Lots					No Change
Without Improvements	\$350	\$350	\$350	\$350	
With Improvements	\$400	\$400	\$400	\$400	
26-50 Lots					No Change
Without Improvements	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500	
With Improvements	\$550	\$550	\$550	\$550	
51-75 Lots					No Change
Without Improvements	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750	
With Improvements	\$850	\$850	\$850	\$850	
76-100 Lots					No Change
Without Improvements	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	
With Improvements	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	
Over 100 Lots	Add \$25 Per Lot		Add \$25 Per Lot		No Change





## Public Works

### WORKFORCE

- 45 employees
  - 1 employee out due work related injury
  - 3 shop employees
  - 1 sign maintenance
  - 2 temporary employees
  - 4 administrative



### ROADS MAINTAINED

- 340.9 miles paved roadway
- 508.9 miles unpaved roadway (includes road with milled asphalt surfaces)

### BRIDGES MAINTAINED

- 49 (inspected by FL DOT)
- 10 (not inspected by FL DOT) constructed between 1975 and 1979

### FILL OPERATIONS

- Average cubic yards of filled hauled: 96,824 (60/40 sand clay mixed dirt from county owned borrow pit)
- Average cubic yards of fill excavated from ditches and outfalls, hauled to borrow pits: 40,964

## BUDGET

Operational budget:	\$3,301,749.00
Shop:	\$ 501,375.00
Inmate Crews:	\$ 220,201.00

### FEDERALLY DECLARED DISASTERS

- (FEMA4138DRFL) July 2013 flooding event: All work has been completed, final documentation and closeouts are being compiled.
- (FEMA4177DRFL) April 2014 flooding event: Three small projects remain open.
- (FEMA4337DRFL) Hurricane Irma

### Reimbursement for costs incurred (current fiscal year for FEMA4137DRFL only)

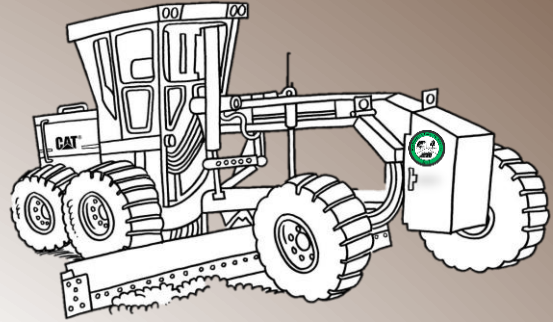
- \$1,478,160.79

## DRAINAGE

- Culverts installed or replaced: 38

## ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

- Milled asphalt was placed on:
  - Dupree Road
  - Union Hill Road
  - New Prospect Road
  - Archie Sapp Road
  - Wes Nelson Road
  - Gilbert's Mill Road
  - Miller Lane 3/10
  - Chance Road 2.1
  - Buddy Road



Sod Farm stockpile (for future use) 2,662.1 tons

### Shop maintains a fleet consisting of:

- |                            |                         |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|
| • 12 motor graders         | • 1 service truck       |
| • 2 front-end loaders      | • 14+ pickup trucks     |
| • 3 excavators             | • 9 vans                |
| • 4 backhoes               | • 2 chippers            |
| • 4 tractors w/mowers      | • 4+ mowers             |
| • 2 tractors w/boom mowers | • 2 vibratory rollers   |
| • 2 dozers                 | • 1 rubber wheel roller |
| • 14 dump trucks           | • 2+ equipment trailers |
| • 1 flat-bed dump truck    | • 1 water truck         |
| • 1 tractor/trailer        | • 1 fuel truck          |

Mowers are responsible for mowing the shoulders of all paved county maintained roads, with the exception of those in Sunny Hills that are under contract, the remainder of the roads in Sunny Hills are mowed by the County. They mow the landfill (Mud Hill) and sod farm.

Maintain caution lights at Pioneer Road and Hwy 77, Moss Hill Road and Hwy 77, Douglas Ferry Road and Hwy 79, Douglas Ferry Road and Pate Pond Road, signal light and advance warning lights at Hwy 79 and Hwy 20, signal light at Orange Hill Road and Brickyard Road.

Average handling 66 telephone requests and/or complaints each week.







## Recycling Department

The Washington County Recycling Department continues to offer Washington County residents a convenient place to dispose of recyclable items. As indicated by the chart below, the center had a very busy year. One highlight of FY 2016-2017 took place on April 1, 2017 when the Washington County Board of County Commissioners hosted an Amnesty Day for our residents. A total of 35,195 pounds of household hazardous waste was removed from our county.

	Cardboard	Mixed Paper	White Paper	Steel Cans	Plastic	Aluminum Cans
October 2016	42,440	11,125	3,216	756	1,556	3,290
November 2016	28,483	6,986	1,999	312	1,403	1,757
December 2016	31,397	6,393	3,357	1,961	2,080	2,130
January 2017	43,582	5,613	1,850	954	738	3,921
February 2017	29,919	6,051	1,799	1,263	1,536	1,409
March 2017	38,711	7,130	2,865	620	2,310	2,375
April 2017	33,300	8,505	2,489	1,285	1,450	2,006
May 2017	34,440	5,547	3,628	810	2,200	2,143
June 2017	41,808	9,514	4,564	1,042	1,536	1,461
July 2017	34,359	4,431	2,511	1,072	1,485	3,763
August 2017	40,953	5,456	2,525	1,078	2,008	1,854
September 2017	34,439	3,818	1,342	785	1,365	2,893
<b>Totals</b>	<b>433,831</b>	<b>80,569</b>	<b>32,145</b>	<b>11,938</b>	<b>19,667</b>	<b>29,002</b>
** all quantities are measured in LBS**						

Free!

Let's clean up Washington County!

Washington County  
Household Hazardous Waste

Amnesty Day

Saturday, April 1, 2017  
8 a.m. until noon

Washington County Recycling Center  
3115 FL 77, Chipley, FL 32428

**Hazardous Household Materials and other toxic wastes accepted include:**

- Pesticides
- Insecticides
- Pool Chemicals
- Solvents
- Fertilizers
- Spot Removers
- Paint
- Stale Gasoline
- Used Oil
- Paint Thinners
- Antifreeze
- Rechargeable Batteries (automotive included)
- Brake Fluid
- Paint Strippers
- Furniture Polish
- Engine Degreasers
- Tires (Limit 5 passenger vehicle tires or smaller per household; there will be a \$2 charge for each additional tire)

Bring your plastic soda and milk jugs, newspapers and cardboard! Also accepting old appliances, computers and components, microwaves and TVs! No gas cylinders or explosives!

For more information, please call 850-638-6058

\* Conditionally-exempt Small Quantity Generators (small businesses, schools, growers, etc.) may dispose of hazardous waste at a reduced rate. Please call 850-638-6058 for a drop-off time.

**Sponsored by the  
Washington County  
Board of County Commissioners**

**Washington County's  
Recycling Center staff  
includes:**

James Shouppe, Supervisor  
Fred McSwain  
William Wages  
Robert Carswell



## Tourist Development Council

The Washington County TDC has completed another successful fiscal year for tourism in Washington County. Many of their accomplishments are a continuation of projects from past years, such as the event advertising grant program, the day trip program and their partnership with RiverWay South Apalachicola Choctawhatchee, Inc. These projects, along with its annual marketing plan, create awareness of Washington County's unique tourism assets and annual festivals and events to potential tourists.



The TDC continued its event advertising grant program whose goal is to aid new events in becoming self-sufficient and promotes growth with longer standing events. The TDC also partners with Falling Waters State Park to produce two events annually: Washington County Heritage Festival in April and Rock the Falls Music Festival in October. Hotel occupancy rates were up by 13.6% during the Washington

County Heritage Festival and 12.3% during Rock the Falls Music Festival. Other major festivals that the TDC has assisted in the past were also showing increases in hotel occupancy rates during their event weekends. The Panhandle Watermelon Festival showed an increase of 5.6% and the Wausau Fun Day & Possum Festival had an increase of 3%.



The TDC joined RiverWay South Apalachicola Choctawhatchee, Inc. in 2010 in an effort to promote and educate the region on its rural tourism opportunities. This organization gives Washington County an opportunity to market and promote on a larger scale. The Director of the Washington County TDC currently serves as its President and the organization now encompasses 10 counties, adding Bay County this fiscal year. Other counties involved in the organization are Walton, Holmes, Jackson, Gadsden, Calhoun, Liberty, Gulf and Franklin as well as several state agencies such as the Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) and the Apalachee Regional Planning Council (ARPC).



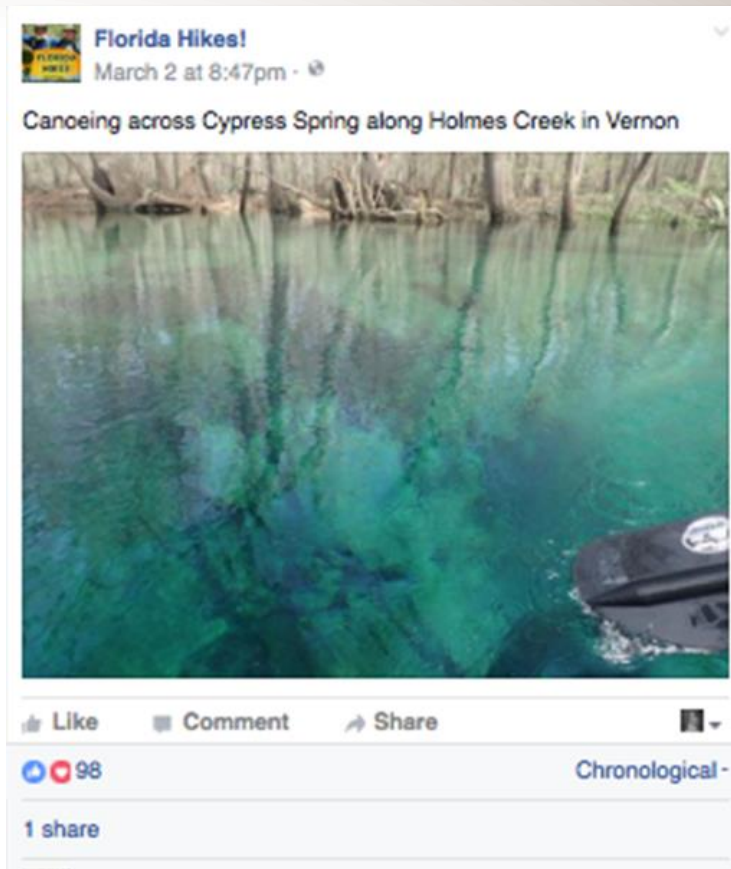
The organization acquired a three-episode fishing show called Kayak Bassin on the World Fishing Network that began airing August 2017. The show highlighted fishing on the Apalachicola and Choctawhatchee Rivers as well as Seminole Lake in Jackson County. They also helped to negotiate a contract with TripShock, the Gulf Coast's #1 booking website for activities and lodging, which will drive more traffic to outfitters during off season. Now they are currently in talks with CrowdRiff, a user generated content company that offers a networked software that can be used for advertising and promotion by every county in the region.





In March, the TDC Director helped to develop a four-day FAM tour of Jackson, Washington, Holmes and Walton counties with Laurie Rowe Communications.

The tour was comprised of travel bloggers that included Sandra Friend and John Keatley, of the Florida Hikes! Blog, travel and lifestyle blogger, Melody Pittman and Christine Tibbetts, Destination Editor for travelingmoms.com. This tour generated 832,541 digital impressions with a total estimated value of \$6,852.



In 2010, the TDC created a tri-county day trip program that put together a plan to attract a tour operator to run tours in the three-county region year-round. Due to the economic recession, this program has changed and currently only two of the three original counties are still working on the program, Washington and Jackson.

The two TDC's offer a Snowbird tour of each county that has grown in attendance over the years. In 2017, Washington County held its tour on January 26 and included stops at Maphis Nursery & Tree Farm, Falling Waters State Park, the Washington County Historical Society Museum and Three Oaks Winery

The TDC produced its very first Washington County Visitor's Guide this fiscal year. The Council utilized the Washington County News for production and printing of the guides. Front and back cover artwork was purchased from JonMonFish Imagery of Gulf Breeze.

The images are of Cypress Spring in Vernon and Gainer Spring in Econfinia Creek, respectively. Guides will be distributed to the five Official Florida Welcome Centers located at I-95, I-75, I-10, US 231 and Tallahassee, 11 military base Leisure Travel Offices within a 200-mile driving radius, as well as all lodging, dining and attractions in Washington County.


On January 10 & 11, 2017, the TDC hosted a FAM tour for the staff of the I-10 and US 231 Welcome Centers. The TDC Director accompanied the group to Sunshine Riding Trails, a Lunch & Learn at the Washington County Historical Society Museum, a guided tour of Falling Waters State Park and a winery tour of Three Oaks Winery in Vernon.

**\$59**  
per person.


## Historical & Nature DAY TRIP

### Washington County • Thursday, January 26, 2017


**Maphis Nursery & Tree Farm**  
www.maphisnurseryandtreefarm.com  
Come for a great day of excitement and help prepare corn for grinding. Experience the joy of separating it into a daily breakfast food and bread for a real southern meal. Fry the fresh ground corn bread and taste the home-made jellies, honey and cane syrup straight from the farm. Save room for the homemade butter that you will make to sample on the grits and bread.




**Falling Waters State Park**  
www.floridastateparks.org/fallingwaters  
Discover what makes this park so unique as you take a guided tour with a Florida Park Ranger. See the tallest waterfall in Florida as it cascades and disappears into a sinkhole. While strolling through the park, you'll hear tales of a civil war era grist mill, the first oil well in the state and the 5,000 year history of Indians that called these lands home. The park also offers camping, swimming, fishing and other nature based activities for your enjoyment.



**Washington County Historical Museum**  
www.washingtoncountyhistoricalsociety.org  
Established in 1825, Washington County, located in the heart of the Florida panhandle, is rich in natural and cultural history. The museum was conceived 30 years ago to preserve the stories of the county's past. You'll see one of the largest Turpentine displays in the area, learn why Kudzu, the plant that ate the south, got its start here as well as the many stories of the people and places that make Washington County so unique.



**Three Oaks Winery**  
www.threeoakswinery.com  
Located in Vernon, the Biddle family has been producing their wines for over twenty years. With a line of their own Conquistador and Muscadine grapes, they have created a line of wines that are smooth and refreshing. Along with touring the winery and a free wine tasting, Three Oaks also has a gift shop called "The Grapevine" offering candles, wine accessories, party favors and more.



**Price includes breakfast, lunch, snacks and all private tours in Chipley**

FOR MORE INFORMATION & BOOKINGS  
**TAMMY'S JOURNEYS** • 217 Miracle Strip Pkwy SE, Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548 • (850) 243-3809  
*In cooperation with Washington and Jackson County TDC*





The TDC worked in conjunction with RiverWay South and Holmes and Walton counties to host the first Annual Choctawhatchee River Fest at Morrison Springs Recreation Area. The festival included a fun paddle, a fishing tournament, a children's fishing rally hosted

by Bass Pro Shops, and water related vendors, outfitters and organizations. The purpose of the event was to promote the Choctawhatchee River as a leisure activity destination for locals and tourists as well as the importance of conserving its natural resources.



### **FY 2016-17 Washington County Lodging Averages (Credit: STR Reporting):**

Average Yearly Occupancy Rate: **49.53%**

*\*National Average = 62.2%*

Average Yearly ADR (Average Daily Rate): **\$65.90**

*\*National Average = \$110.35*

Average Yearly RevPAR (Revenue per Available Room): **\$32.99**

*\*National Average = \$68.64*

### **FY 2016-17 Washington County TDT Revenue:**

Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept
\$7,105.19	\$7,518.15	\$5,666.72	\$6,000.29	\$5,270.77	\$5,673.08	\$8,355.90	\$7,941.54	\$8,212.87	\$9,570.32	\$11,870.43	\$5,617.91
8.43%	15.36%	1.61%	6.94%	12.96%	-8.33%	1.07%	-2.22%	12.76%	2.71%	2.27%	-24.70%

**Total Revenue: \$88,803.17**

**1.87% growth over last fiscal year revenue**







## Veterans Services

Washington County currently has a veteran population of 2,530. The largest portion being those that served during the Vietnam War. As time progress we are starting to see more Desert Storm and OIF and OEF veterans.

In the past year, this office has filed 6,000-plus claims to the VA for disability, education and healthcare. We see an average of 200 veterans in the office per month and field 300 phone calls about veteran's benefits. Last year, the office was able to obtain **\$1,500,000.00** for veterans, which increased our yearly total to **\$13,000,000.00**.

The Veterans Benefits Administration is currently working on the hiring of several new Judges to help with the large backlog of appeals. The hiring of 13 new judges should insure that appeals claims move at a faster rate. This office has some appeals claims that take five to seven years before the veteran receives an answer from the court of appeals.

This office has worked closely with Congressman Dunn's staff on congressional inquiries for claims that need the attention and assistance of the Congressman's office. Combined we have been successfull on helping veterans get new prostatic and settle claims in a rapid matter to help veterans before they become homeless.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the funding for a memorial bench, which was carved by a local artist and is displayed in the main lobby of the Annex. This was dedicated by the Commissioners, Congressman Dunn's office and Florida Senator George Gainer with the attendants of 50 plus local veterans.



### **Veterans Healthcare**

This office has also assisted in helping veterans navigate the veteran's choice program. We have help fix hundreds of healthcare claims to insure the VA pays the medical bills so our local healthcare providers will continue to except the choice program insurance.

The outlook for the upcoming years will present more challenges at the healthcare see changes that will affect the way our veterans receive care. We have taken all necessary steps to ensure we adapt to the change so veterans receive the highest quality of care with the lowest impact.

### **Sims Veterans State Nursing Home**

As a member of the Friends of Sims our group accepts donation and we help to purchase items need to make the lives of the veterans that reside in the facility more comfortable, This year we have raised over 50 thousand dollars, which has helped to provide a higher quality of life for the veterans that reside at the nursing home.

**Christopher A. Hyatt**  
**Washington County Veterans Service Office**





Visit our website at:  
[www.washingtonfl.com](http://www.washingtonfl.com)

