

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2021 11:27 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Roads

-----Original Message-----

From: Mary Sanders <mary.anne.sanders@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, February 8, 2021 1:21 PM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Roads

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Please do not let roads be built through Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park. Please preserve these priceless areas for future generations.

Thank you,
Mary Sanders

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Friday, February 12, 2021 8:25 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Mobility Study

From: Buz Livingston <buz@livingstonfinancial.net>
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2021 4:30 PM
To: Tony Anderson <AndTony@co.walton.fl.us>; Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Cc: Mike Barker <barmike@co.walton.fl.us>; Danny Glidewell <glidanny@co.walton.fl.us>; Trey Nick <nictrey@co.walton.fl.us>; Boots McCormick <mccboots@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Mobility Study

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Commissioners:

Thank you for serving our community. I want to talk to you today about proposals for the mobility study.

I've lived in Walton County longer than any other place in my adult life. My wife was the accounting manager at Seaside in 1999. It was a horrible place to work, but that's another story.

I am strongly opposed to a road through the state forest. Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park are the largest undisturbed tract of conservation land in South Walton. A road would fragment habitat and disrupt the hydrology for wetlands and Eastern Lake and Deer Lake, two of our rare Coastal Dune Lakes. Also, existing trails and primitive campsites would be affected. Instead of improving traffic, other roads will increase congestion on 30A.

It's not just my opinion. In 2019, the Florida Forest Service wrote that Florida Forest Service does not favor constructing a new road on or across Point Washington State Forest. It was acquired as part of the South Walton Ecosystem Conservation and Recreation Lands project to conserve unique coasts and forests, protect several rare plants and animals, including the largest population of endangered Curtiss' Sandgrass **in the world**, and provide a scenic area for recreational activities. The state also mentioned a road would harm the water quality and quantity and decrease aquifer recharge.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me, either by phone or email.

G.M. Livingston, III (Buz)
CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™
SOUND ADVICE...CLEAR DIRECTION
WWW.LIVINGSTONFINANCIAL.NET
850.267.1068
850.496.1235 (CELL)
866.889.0480 (EFAX)

Confidentiality Notice: This email may contain personal data. Please respect the recipient's privacy.

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 12:10 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Opposition to Proposed Road through Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park

From: Preston Robertson <preston@fwfonline.org>
Sent: Thursday, February 18, 2021 11:12 AM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Opposition to Proposed Road through Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park

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Please note the strong opposition of the Florida Wildlife Federation, an apolitical, non-partisan conservation organization, to the proposed road through Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park. Not only does this unneeded roadway serve as yet another mortality factor for wildlife, it also denigrates some of the last remaining natural lands on the peninsula. Moreover, I suggest that the Conservation and Recreational Lands (CARL) bonds, which were used to purchase the Forest, be examined to see if this road is in violation of bond covenants.

Please preserve something for ourselves and future generations. Don't build this road.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Preston T. Robertson



Preston T. Robertson | *President & CEO*
[Florida Wildlife Federation](#)
Office: (850) 656-7113

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Thursday, February 25, 2021 8:01 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Road Through The Forest

From: moranob@gmail.com <moranob@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2021 6:49 PM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Cc: Alan Ficarra <qualityhammer@gmail.com>
Subject: Road Through The Forest

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In regard to the proposed/potential 'road through the forest', South Walton Community Council asks the Commissioners and Planning Department to please take a careful look at all alternative routes for any connector road, including the viability of putting the road on **private property**. The road that is proposed in the Mobility Study would negatively impact Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park and SWCC feels a very high burden must be met before use of well established conservation lands is considered.

In particular, St. Joe owns the property just to the east of Deer Lake State Park and this land, which is already partly developed and slated for further development, could potentially house a connector road while preserving our conservation lands. Kristen Shell has stated that St. Joe's development north of 98 in eastern South Walton and western Bay County will bring 300,000 people to the area. As a major contributor to the need for new road capacity, it seems appropriate for St Joe and St. Joe land be considered as a primary part of the solution.

By way of background, we remind the Commissioners that in May of 2019 when the Atkins Study held an Agency meeting, ALL federal and state agencies involved in the management of Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake Park spoke on the negative impacts of the proposed road and on the state statutes that protect these conservation lands.

Regards,

Alan Ficarra

President

Karen Owens

From: inflhs@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 1:37 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: mobility plan

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To: The Walton County Board of County Commissioners and the Walton County Planning Commission.

Was it at church, at home or at school? Probably all three! Anyway as kids we were preached at about the importance of choosing the hard right over the easy wrong.

Sometimes easier said than done! Like with your South Walton dilemma. Even the easy wrong will make lots of folks cry. I'm talking about putting roads and infrastructure through state forests, messing up bird and animal life and allowing more and more development.

It's attrition. But it's certain. And the certainty is that your kids will tell their kids how wonderful the South Walton area used to be—before the over-development and the disappearance of beautiful natural areas and life forms.

I hope you choose the hard right. But as elected folks you'll have to do something. Maybe the initial answer is adding more and well-publicized outlying parking areas with frequent multi-stop public transit. You're smart! And you have good advisors. Put your heads together.

Thanks for reading this!

A former Walton County resident—the best place we ever lived!

Don Schroeder
324 Stillwater Cove
Destin, FL 32541

Karen Owens

From: inflhs@aol.com
Sent: Saturday, March 13, 2021 1:46 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: mobility plan

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To the Walton County Planning Commission and the Walton County Board of County Commissioners:

As a former resident of Walton County and the one who started the campaign to purchase what is now Camp Helen State Park, I am opposed to any mobility plan that would use any part of state forests, state parks or state lands.

These state owned properties were acquired over the years with help from dedicated grassroots folks. These folks envisioned that all such lands would be protected and preserved forever. The protection of birds and other forms of animal life is also a part of that obligation

Mobility in South Walton is certainly a tremendous problem but to disturb and disrupt in anyway state owned land is simply wrong.

Sincerely,

Helen Jane Schroeder
324 Stillwater Cove
Destin, Florida 32541

March 11, 2021

Ms. Kristen A. Shell, AICP
Walton County Planning Department
Walton County Planning Commission
Freeport, FL 32439

Via: Kristen Shell (SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us), Karen Owens (owekaren@co.walton.fl.us)

RE: Comments on the Proposed Walton County Mobility Plan

Dear Ms. Shell,

As a retired Environmental Specialist III (natural area biologist) for the Florida Park Service, District 1 Administration with 20 years of service, as a concerned citizen and part of a current user group of the natural areas of Deer Lake State Park and Point Washington State Forest, please accept my comments on the Walton County Mobility Plan as presented in a public workshop on February 2, 2021.

While I understand and have experienced the congestion and traffic issues which can hamper both emergency and convenience mobility on portions of CR 30A, I oppose Walton County's plan to remedy the situation by creating new and paved access corridors into and through Deer Lake State Park and Point Washington State Forest. I urge you to fully address these issues by directing alternative transportation within the existing right of way of the CR and US Hwy corridors.

These park and forest lands were identified by the Conservation and Recreational Lands program and were purchased with public funds to be preserved and be managed in perpetuity and available to the public as examples of original Florida Panhandle ecosystems. This complex ecosystem is made up of a mosaic of natural communities which provide habitat for a myriad of native plant and animal species. (Note: look this number up in the management plans)

Additionally, the Park and Forest provide a critical catchment and storage area for an unimpeded, continual seepage and surficial flow of fresh water essential to the health of several Globally Imperiled Coastal Dune Lakes. This exceptionally high level of near surface fresh water which benefits the swales and dunes in the Beach Dune natural community. The flow seeps southward under the primary dunes and percolates into the Gulf of Mexico as Submarine Groundwater Discharge (SGD) which is essential to the health of the sandy, nearshore, marine ecosystem.

Placement of additional transportation corridors in the forest and park will disrupt and redirect the natural surface and near surface flow of fresh water across the land and fragment the natural vegetative communities which form essential wildlife habitat.

Access for residents to enjoy the activities, which are approved for the Forest and Park, is currently adequate and the proposed corridors are not contained in the proposed development of the Approved Unit Management Plans for these State Lands.

In summary, I urge you to avoid using these natural public lands to remedy transportation problems associated with ever increasing development needs and increasing population of residents and visitors.

Look to privately owned land to create new corridors and supplemental access paths. Save our publicly owned natural areas for future generations of Floridians and preserve the uniqueness and charm of South Walton County.

Sincerely,

John Bente

Florida Park Service (retired)

Resident of NW Florida since 1970



March 12, 2021

Dear Walton County Planning Commission,

The **Lake Powell Community Alliance** (LPCA) is a community initiative dedicated to preserving the water quality and biodiversity of the globally rare and imperiled Lake Powell ecosystem through education, habitat restoration, watershed-based planning and community partnerships. For over twenty years our volunteers have been performing water quality monitoring on Lake Powell through the University of Florida's LAKEWATCH Program.

Although preservation of Lake Powell water quality is the cornerstone of our efforts, we are compelled to challenge any actions that may have potential adverse effects on any of our coastal dune lakes and watersheds.

More promotion warrants more protection! Our community is experiencing exponential growth and the pressures to our natural resources are becoming increasingly difficult to mitigate. We're losing our balance. Conservation of our native biodiversity is up to all of us. We must make decisions to protect our natural habitats.

The LPCA is opposed to the construction of roads proposed through Pt. Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park.

Please include in the file of record and provide to the Planning Commission, and the Walton County Board of Commissioners in all packets created.

Sincerely,

Emily Ellis
LPCA Vice-Chairperson

LPCA
P. O. Box 611112
Inlet Beach, FL 32461
"JOIN the TEAM - KEEP it CLEAN"

Lake Powell Community Alliance Inc. is a 501(c3) not-for-profit organization. EIN# 20-3730450

Karen Owens

From: tgdingledy@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Thomas DINGLEDY
<tgdingledy@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 12:39 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

One of the main reasons we purchased our home in Walton County 19 years ago was because of its unspoiled nature. We did not choose to live in Destin or Panama City as the congestion and lack of natural spaces is evident; those cities have become more like Orlando than the scenic beauty we enjoy along the CR 30-A corridor. More roads and the attendant traffic and congestion they bring will literally spoil what attracts folks to visit and stay in Walton County. It will, in my opinion, destroy the very thing that attracts people to the area.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Thomas DINGLEDY
94 N Ryan St Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-7527 tgdingledy@aol.com

Karen Owens

From: dogspotann@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Ann Thompson
<dogspotann@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 11:57 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Upon first moving to the area in 2005 there has been a tsunami of development. The main reason for relocating back here after living in Sarasota for a bit was the natural, unplanned growth of the forest, existing wildlife and exquisite vistas of seas of palmettos.

There is already too much development!

IDEA:

Like Pensacola, put a toll booth at every entrance to 30 A.

Why would you want to increase traffic on 30 A instead of decrease?

Of course anyone needing to travel on a daily basis could pay a small annual fee.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,

Ann Thompson

9 Brentwood Ln Unit 399 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-4478 dogspotann@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: vaughan@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Vaughan Greene
<vaughan@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 11:29 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Ms. Vaughan Greene
217 Walton Rose Ln Inlet Beach, FL 32461-7249 vaughan@vaughangreene.com

Karen Owens

From: Richard@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Richard Fowlkes
<Richard@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 2:16 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Sincerely,
Mr. Richard Fowlkes
66 Sand Dunes Rd Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-5118 Richard@AustinDouglas.net

Karen Owens

From: mahermjm@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of mary j maher
<mahermjm@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 2:19 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Sincerely,
mary j maher
885 Alaqua Dr Freeport, FL 32439-2424
mahermjm@aol.com

Karen Owens

From: mpetraitis@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Mary-Ann Petraitis
<mpetraitis@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 2:49 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Sincerely,
Mrs. Mary-Ann Petraitis
50 Redfish Cir Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-4514 mpetraitis@me.com

Karen Owens

From: nevermore@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Christine Hightower
<nevermore@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 3:33 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Sincerely,
Mrs. Christine Hightower
257 Amelia Ln Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-5604 nevermore@bellsouth.net

Karen Owens

From: dillardtami@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tami Dillard
<dillardtami@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 4:28 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Sincerely,
Mrs Tami Dillard
215 Prairie Pass Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-8955 dillardtami@gmail.com

March 16, 2021

David M. Clausen
224 Masters Court
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459

Karen Owens
Planning Coordinator
Walton County Planning and Development Division

Dear Ms. Owens,

I am a Walton County resident and also President of the Choctawhatchee Audubon Society, which covers Okaloosa and Walton Counties. Choctawhatchee Audubon is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society, one of the nation's oldest conservation organizations and an especially respected conservation group in Florida with a long history in the state. I am writing this letter to comment on Walton County's proposed "Mobility Plan" in South Walton.

First, I want to acknowledge that I agree with some of the proposed transportation alternatives in the plan. For example, the new connector road proposed between Sugar Rd. and Thompson Dr. is needed from a safety standpoint. This was demonstrated by last May's wildfire that came dangerously close to Sugar Dr., which presently has only one egress to S.R. 98. If this egress had been blocked by fire, there would have been no way for residents of Sugar Dr. to evacuate. A new, alternative connection from Sugar Dr. to Thompson Rd. is therefore needed. Since it appears this connector would cross part of the Pt. Washington State Forest, the county would have to compensate for loss of forest land by purchasing additional land to be included elsewhere in the forest.

However, I am strongly opposed to two of the proposed roads/paved "trails, lanes or ways" in the Mobility Plan, and this is the primary reason I am submitting this letter. These two routes are: 1) the "Seagrove Forest Road and Seagrove Forest Trail & Multimodal Lanes", and 2) the "Watersound Forest Beach Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way." The former would entirely traverse land in Pt. Washington State Forest, and the latter would mostly traverse land in Deer Lake State Park.

Both routes would transit lands purchased by the state of Florida for conservation and recreation purposes. The June 6, 2015 "Ten-Year Land Management Plan for the Point Washington State Forest" states:

The Forest was acquired as part of the South Walton County Ecosystem Conservation and Recreation Lands project. The primary goals of the project are to: 1) conserve a part of this unique coast and the forests behind it, linking three state parks; 2) protecting several rare plants and rare animals such as the Choctawhatchee beach mouse and red-cockaded woodpecker; and

3) providing residents and tourists a scenic area in which to enjoy many recreational activities, ranging from hunting and fishing to hiking, picnicking, and sunbathing.

Likewise, the December 16, 2016 “Unit Management Plan for Deer Lake State Park” states:

The purpose of Deer Lake State Park is to conserve and protect unique water resources and natural communities, including coastal dune lakes, within a rapidly growing region, while supporting resource-based public outdoor recreation opportunities for area residents and visitors.

Neither of these plans mentions possible use of land for future transportation corridors, and it can be concluded that when the State Forest and State Park were established there was no intention to ever permit such use.

The area of Pt. Washington State Forest east of C.R. 395 and south of S.R. 98, together with adjoining Deer Lake State Park to the east, is by far the largest contiguous area of conservation land in South Walton County. If the “Seagrove Forest Road and Seagrove Forest Trail & Multimodal Lanes” and the “Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe’s Parkway Multimodal Way” were built, significant fragmentation of the forest habitat would result. There has been much biological research that shows habitat fragmentation has an adverse effect on biodiversity and ecosystem health. For example, many animals such as the black bear (which inhabit the forest and state park) need a relatively large area to successfully roam and feed. This area would be much reduced by wide paved roads and cart paths dividing it into smaller parcels.

Pt. Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park contain a number of unique, endangered/threatened species of plants and animals. These include the largest single population of Curtiss’ sand grass in the world, white-fringed orchid, white-topped pitcher plant, gopher tortoise, and possibly red-cockaded woodpecker. Ongoing habitat restoration in Deer Lake State Park may lead to increased numbers of gopher tortoises and eventual nesting of red-cockaded woodpeckers. New roads through these conservation lands would certainly not be beneficial to these threatened species. Increased road kill would be expected for gopher tortoise.

Our coastal dune lakes are one of the treasures of South Walton. Pt. Washington State Forest east of C.R. 395 contains most of the drainage area for Eastern Lake, and Deer Lake State Park contains all of the drainage for Deer Lake and most of the drainage for Camp Creek Lake. The hydrology of these lakes is complicated and cryptic. Although some of the drainage into the lakes consists of small, intermittent streams, much of the drainage appears to be sub-surface water movement or “leakage.” Construction of major roads and paved cart paths across these drainages, with associated culverts, roadside ditches, and retention ponds will result in altered hydrology, with unknown and possibly adverse effect on the dune lakes. Traffic on the roads would introduce hydrocarbon pollution into the lakes’ drainage in the form of oil runoff, tire rubber, etc.

The most egregious proposal is that of the “Watersound Beach Forest Trail” and the “Watersound/St. Joe’s Parkway Multimodal Way” through Deer Lake State Park. State Parks should be held to an even higher conservation standard than State Forests. Although these proposed routes might sound appropriate for a state park as they are called “trails” or “ways,” in reality they are not designed for recreation within the park. Instead, their primary intent is to convey people from new developments north of S.R. 98 to the beaches along C.R. 30a south of the state park. The “Multimodal Way” proposal would allow golf carts and shuttles to transit through Deer Lake State Park along a paved “trail” that would essentially be a road without cars. This is not an appropriate use for a state park.

I want to repeat a phrase that I heard someone say at a public hearing at the Dune Lakes Elementary School in 2019. The large contiguous area of Pt. Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park constitutes a last “oasis” of pristine conservation land in South Walton that will be increasingly surrounded by development. We are especially fortunate to have preserved this land, and other communities would be envious to have such a large tract for recreation and to protect native wildlife and plants. The logo for Walton County is “Pride – Preservation – Conservation.” Please abide by this logo, and preserve and conserve Pt. Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park!

Sincerely,
David M. Clausen

Karen Owens

From: littleweeble@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Julia Roberts
<littleweeble@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 10:12 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

No roads through State Forest or Wildlife Management areas!!

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Julia Roberts
260 E Pinewood Ln Inlet Beach, FL 32461-9130 littleweeble@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: wrtnls@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Lisa Lathan
<wrtnls@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 3:29 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Sincerely,
Mrs Lisa Lathan
234 Melrose Ave Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-0627 wrtnls@yahoo.com

Karen Owens

From: murdock1020@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Debbie murdock <murdock1020@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 3:30 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Sincerely,

Debbie murdock

306 Flatwoods Forest Loop Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-8851 murdock1020@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: chesser@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Christy Lynn Chesser
<chesser@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:00 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Sincerely,
Christy Lynn Chesser
84 N Dothan Ave Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-6360 chesser@earthlink.net

Karen Owens

From: ecoranger@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Salem Tillman
<ecoranger@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 4:18 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Sincerely,
Ms. Salem Tillman
495 Brighton Cv Freeport, FL 32439-2343 ecoranger@hotmail.com



PO Box 1182
Panama City, FL 32402

March 15, 2021

Dear Walton County Planning Commission,

The Bay County Audubon Society is a member of the Northwest Regional Conservation Committee of Audubon Florida. A priority for this committee is to promote maintenance of the outstanding level of biodiversity in the Florida Panhandle. Although primarily known as a birding organization, Audubon has come to learn that birds inform us about the health of our environment and its response to environmental stresses. Further, we now understand that all aspects of our ecosystem are truly interdependent and respond to environmental change in ways that are not easy to predict. Among the various threats to our environment, habitat fragmentation is the most damaging stressor. Ironically, this is the one threat that can be ameliorated by responsible community planning.

Walton County's Proposed 2040 Mobility Plan aims to provide a vision, over the next 20 years, for how the County's transportation system will transition from one focused primarily on automotive traffic towards a multimodal system to support alternate vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The proposed Mobility Plan details a network of new or expanded roads, trails, and multimodal travel lanes. While the need for a responsible mobility plan is obvious to anyone who has occasion to drive along scenic 30A, many of the currently proposed roads clearly fail to take into consideration the fragility of our local ecosystem. **The most problematic are those elements that propose to cut through state forest, threaten vulnerable habitat and species, and undermine Walton County's natural resilience.** A realistic vision for Walton County's future must be one that balances growth with protecting our public lands, discouraging development in vulnerable areas, and conserving pristine natural areas for present and future generations to enjoy.

Point Washington State Forest is a mosaic of sandhill, basin swamps/titi drains, wet flatwoods, wet prairie and cypress swamps. It provides habitat for rare species, including Southeastern American Kestrel, gopher tortoise, flatwoods salamander, white-topped pitcher plant, and the world's largest population of Curtiss' sand grass. Two roads are proposed in the Mobility Plan that intersect Point Washington State Forest. Construction of these roads will result in significant negative environmental impact to State Forest land.

The Seagrove Forest Road is a new two-lane divided road. This road would divide the contiguous main body of the State Forest just west of Deer Lake State Park, traversing the entire distance from U.S. 98 to 30A. The proposed route goes directly through wetland areas of the Point Washington State Forest that contain endangered plant and animal species. Our site visit to this area strongly suggests that the efficient construction of the road could not avoid these sensitive areas. ***This is the worst of the proposed intrusions into the State Forest yet proposed; it is extremely destructive.***

The Point Washington Connector is a new two-lane road that would bisect and fragment an entirely intact area of the State Forest north of U.S. 98, including an area with developed and in-use recreational facilities (multi-use trails) consistent with the forest ecosystem.

New or expanded roads in the proposed Mobility Plan that intersect the State Forest will result in significant negative impacts to the environment. Therefore, Bay County Audubon strongly opposes their construction.

Deer Lake State Park protects rare coastal dune lakes, features stunning landscapes, and pristine beaches. The Park's wet prairie and seepage slope habitats are exceptionally high in imperiled plant species richness, including several species of pitcher plants, Curtiss' sandgrass, Green milkwort, rosebud orchid, white-fringed orchid, and Panhandle meadow beauty. The park's beach dune is home to three imperiled plant species, Cruise's goldenaster, Godfrey's goldenaster, and Gulf Coast lupine. Large-leaved jointweed occurs in scrubby flatwoods nearer the Gulf of Mexico.

Over the last few years, approximately \$8 million has been awarded to Deer Lake Park to restore its natural wetland environment. This funding is provided by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund. Future plans include seeking additional funds to extend the restoration efforts in Deer Lake State Park to include the wetlands in Grayton Beach State Park, and ultimately, Point Washington State Forest. These restorations will provide significant additional Federal funding to the area, keep South Walton beautiful, and support critical biodiversity. The abundance and population health of these plants are already showing significant improvements in response to restoration of wet prairies.

Wildlife will also suffer from implementation of the proposed Park and Forest roads. Deer Lake Park provides over half a mile of quality sea turtle nesting habitat. Loggerhead sea turtles are the primary nesters, however green sea turtles, and leatherback sea turtles occasionally nest there as well. The open beach along the Gulf of Mexico and the adjacent beach dune community provides shorebird nesting habitat for State-threatened Snowy Plovers and Least Terns. Bald Eagles that nest just north of the dunes are currently being monitored by members of Audubon's Eagle Watch. Although no longer listed as endangered, our National bird remains a protected species and delight Deer Lake beach visitors.

The Watersound Beach Forest Trail and the **Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Ways** are components of the Mobility Plan that will intersect the Northeast region of Deer Lake State Park. These roughly parallel "roads" will connect U.S. 98 to 30A. The 10-14 ft. wide "shared use forest trail" will allow skating, scooters, bicycles, and pedestrians. The 8-foot wide multimodal ways will allow golf carts, electric bikes and scooters, and alternative vehicles. These elements of the Mobility Plan are not consistent with the mission of State Parks to balance environmental and recreational activities. They serve only to provide a transportation corridor.

Topsail Hill State Park

Two new 10-14' wide shared use trails are also proposed in Topsail Hill State Park. Although the details of these roads are not entirely clear, many of the same management objectives of the State Park Service raised above and shared at Topsail Hill would be compromised. The beauty of Topsail Hill would be adversely affected by habitat fragmentation which would lead to impaired water quality and compromise of endangered species.

The proposed incursions into our State Parks is strongly opposed by Bay County Audubon, other Conservation organizations, local Citizen Groups, and the Department of Environmental Protection.

The downstream effects of the habitat fragmentation that would result from the new roads described above will not only undermine significant Federal investment into preservation critical wetlands, but also threaten the water quality of several Coastal Dune lakes, and endanger successful breeding efforts of endangered bird species.

Threats to Water Quality

Concurrent with improved health of imperiled wetland plants, storm water "processed" in the wetlands improves the quality of the water that ultimately drains into the Coastal Dune Lakes. Deer Lake Park's local watershed extends into the adjacent Point Washington State Forest. Various drainage routes ultimately discharge purified water into Camp Creek Lake and Deer Lake, both of which are part of the rare Coastal Dune Lake system in Bay and Walton County. Lake Powell, which occupies both counties, is classified as an Outstanding Florida Water. Fragmentation of this habitat resulting from ill-conceived road installation and the inevitable pollution that accompanies roadway use endanger the water quality of the rare coastal dune lakes, and the Gulf of Mexico, with which the dune lakes periodically communicate.

Prescribed Burning

An important element of State Forest and State Park management is the use of prescribed burning. Briefly, the strategy of prescribed burns is to mimic the natural occurrence of fires to reduce underbrush and to restore the forest habitat for “fire-dependent” species. Importantly, prescribed burns also protect surrounding residential areas by reducing the fuel available for consumption by unplanned natural or unintentional wildfires that result from human error.

Deer Lake State Park is partitioned into management zones including those designated as burn zones. Prescribed fire is planned for each burn zone on the appropriate interval. Each annual burn plan is developed to support and implement the broader objectives and actions outlined in the Park’s required ten-year management plan.

Balancing prescribed burn needs for optimal park management will be significantly impeded by the introduction of recreational roads through areas that need to remain as natural as possible to preserve a healthy Forest ecosystem.

The Choctawhatchee River Ecosystem situated at the eastern end of Choctawhatchee Bay is owned by Northwest Florida Water Management District and the Wildlife Management Area is administered by FWC. It consists of 63,000 acres of conservation land. The tract, a maze of wetlands, upland forest island, and intertwined stream channels, is one of the largest contiguous blocks of state conservation lands in NW Florida.

The Walton County 2040 Mobility Plan proposes a four-lane West Bay Parkway and a two-Lane SR 81 Extension. This ambitious and costly new highway system would bisect the Water Management and Wildlife Management Areas, slicing through river public land acreage owned by the Water Management District (WMD) and paralleling the WMD river swamp acreage all the way to Interstate 10. This project would transform this road into a major new artery connecting the coast and U.S. 98 to Interstate 10 and requires a filled causeway and/or bridge through Choctawhatchee River conservation lands causing further fragmentation of critical habitats. **Therefore, Bay County Audubon also opposes this proposal.**

In closing, we respectfully request you remove these controversial elements from the Mobility Plan and work with community groups to develop environmentally sound alternatives that will improve the quality of life for the citizens of Walton County, its many visitors, and enhance the special natural environment that makes SoWal such an incredibly desirable destination.

Please include this document in the file of record and provide it to the Planning Commission, and the Walton County Board of Commissioners in all packets created.

Sincerely,

Norman F. Capra

Norman F. Capra, PhD
Regional Conservation Committee Representative
The Bay County Audubon Society

Karen Owens

From: slee@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Skylar Lee <slee@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 7:34 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

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Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

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Sincerely,
Skylar Lee
27 Lily Ln Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-8856 slee@traylor.com

Karen Owens

From: joanlwasser@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Joan Wasser
<joanlwasser@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 7:51 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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one of many letters you'll receive, I'm sure. But PLEASE consider Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

Joan Wasser

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Sincerely,

Joan Wasser

379 Tumblehome Way Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-2921 joanlwasser@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: lccgone@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Linda Cox
<lccgone@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:06 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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The 30A area is one of the most unique places in Florida and the whole of the United States. Yes, people love to come here for what it is. The very idea of slicing up the state forest will be devastating. It would not just be a path or road in the midst of the forest but will eventually become one continuous commercial stretch to accommodate the masses.

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Sincerely,
Linda Cox
301 Jack Knife Dr Inlet Beach, FL 32461-8577 lccgone@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: irenediamond03@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Irene Diamond
<irenediamond03@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:33 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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These beautiful areas are what draws the tourists. One sure way to kill our main industry is to ruin the natural beauty of the area.

Sincerely,

Irene Diamond

Grayton Beach

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,

Irene Diamond

165 Pine St Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-8812 irenediamond03@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: davisj2@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Sharon Davis <davisj2@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 8:52 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Sincerely,
Sharon Davis
16 Deer Moss Ln Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-3540 davisj2@me.com

Karen Owens

From: khasbrouck@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kathy Hasbrouck
<khasbrouck@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 17, 2021 9:50 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Kathy Hasbrouck
292 Seabreeze Cir Inlet Beach, FL 32461-7010 khasbrouck@mchsi.com

Karen Owens

From: lbelote@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Lew Belote
<lbelote@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 7:13 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

The problem on 30-A is two fold: Golf carts which are blocking traffic flow and should not be on the roads and limited access to get off of 30-A to 98. The road beside the powerlines near Old Florida Fish House should have been built years ago, so you cannot start on this fast enough.

30-A does not need to be widened. If we get cars to 98 sooner and get golf carts off the road, then traffic will move smoothly on 30-A. The hell with the environmentalists who are against everything.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,

Mr. Lew Belote

63 Anchor Rode Cir Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-2953 lbelote@yahoo.com

Karen Owens

From: Tammy Perkins <tammy.perkins@mchsi.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 8:07 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Fwd: Microsoft Word - 2040 Mobility Plan_Parking and Mobility_Feb2021Update.pdf
Attachments: Microsoft Word - 2040 Mobility Plan_Parking and Mobility_Feb2021Update.pdf

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In the attached Mobility Plan Feb 2021 Update Document the parcel marked "top priority" is on a piece property that is single family land use located on 395. When was this parcel legally changed from single family to TND? I would like to see all documentation on this land use change as I was never legally notified of this change. I should have been notified since I own the property adjacent to this parcel. Also, if this is TND then the county 250ft buffer for unlike uses should come in to play on this parcel.

This document states that this is 5 acres and they will only develop 1 acre and leave 4 acres undisturbed to serve as a buffer to the neighboring properties. The undisturbed property cannot be built on because it is wetlands. It in no way serves as a buffer to the residential neighbors. The land has been clear cut all the way to the property line of Sugarwood Beach where the residential lots are located.

This property is completely inappropriate for a multi level parking garage and does not have a land use to support it. How could this even be considered since its surround by single family neighborhoods? This would devalue my property that I have owned for over 25 years.

The land at Watercolor Crossings is a much better choice as it is a commercial property and already has these types of activities and does not back up to residential. It also has a traffic light to help manage the traffic on to 395.

>
>
>
> Tammy Perkins
> 850.625.8784
>

Karen Owens

From: Andrew Carpenter <carpentera@un.org>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 8:26 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Fw: Microsoft Word - 2040 Mobility Plan_Parking and Mobility_Feb2021Update.pdf
Attachments: Microsoft Word - 2040 Mobility Plan_Parking and Mobility_Feb2021Update.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

In the attached Mobility Plan Feb 2021 Update Document, the parcel marked "top priority" is on a piece property that was officially designated as single family land use.

When was this parcel legally changed from single family to TND?

I would like to see all documentation on this land use change as I was never legally notified of this change. I should have been notified since I own a property adjacent to this parcel. Also, if this is TND then the county 250ft buffer for unlike uses should come in to play on this parcel.

This document states that this is 5 acres and they will only develop 1 acre and leave 4 acres undisturbed to serve as a buffer to the neighboring properties. The undisturbed property cannot be built on because it is designated as wetlands. It in no way serves as a buffer to the residential neighbors. The land has been clear cut all the way to the property line of Sugarwood Beach where the residential lots (including my home) are located.

This property is completely inappropriate for a multi-level parking garage and does not have a land use to support it. How could this even be considered since its surrounded by single family neighborhoods? This would devalue my property and that of neighbors who all pay local taxes. Where has our representation been in this matter?

The land at Watercolor Crossings is a much better choice as it is a commercial property and already has these types of activities and does not back up to residential. It also has a traffic light to help manage the traffic on to 395.

Democracy and public trust die with decisions like this being made in the dark and for the benefit of a few privileged individuals. Elected representatives are duty-bound to bring full transparency to these matters and represent the people who actually live in Walton County; not those who simply conduct business there, particularly those who do so at the expense of its residents and everything that make Walton County special.

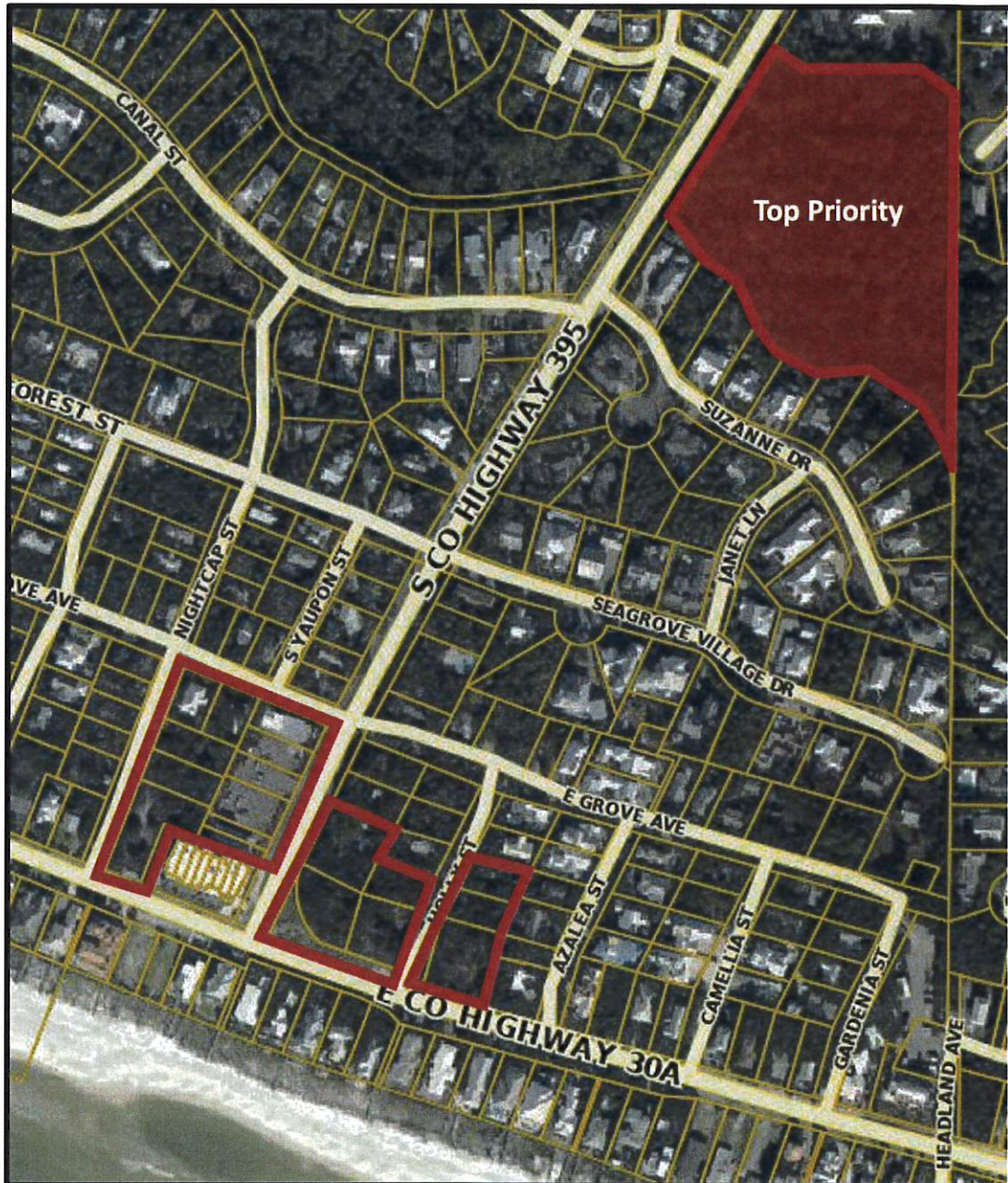
Yours faithfully,

Andrew Carpenter

477 Wood Beach Drive

PARKING & MOBILITY HUBS: 30A & SCENIC HWY 98

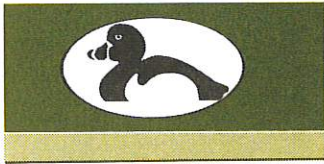
The 1st parcel is roughly five (5) acres in size and is located off 395, north of 30A. This location would be ideal to serve visitors coming from US 98 without the need to access 30A. This parcel does have significant environmental constraints which would require the construction of a multi-level parking garage on roughly one (1) acre and leave the remaining four (4) acres undisturbed. The undisturbed area would provide a buffer to adjacent residential uses and environmentally sensitive areas. This parcel will require the construction of multimodal lanes on 395 to connect to 30A. If right-of-way exist, the construction of multimodal ways on 395 to accommodate autonomous transit shuttles and neighborhood electric vehicles would be ideal.



PARKING & MOBILITY HUBS: 30A & SCENIC HWY 98

There are several smaller parcels near the 30A and 395 intersection that could either be combined to create a Community Mobility Hub or would serve as locations for Neighborhood Mobility Hubs. There are other parcels greater than one (1) acre in size in the Gulf Manor neighborhood. However, locating a Community Mobility Hub in Gulf Manor would have an impact on the surrounding neighborhoods that would need to be mitigated and would likely be meet with neighborhood opposition. Should the parcels identified in the graphic on page 13 be unavailable, there are several larger undeveloped areas within Watercolor that could potentially serve as a Community Mobility Hub. These parcels, while not ideal, are a fallback option for consideration.





United Waterfowlers – Florida, Inc.

The VOICE of Florida waterfowlers

March 12, 2021

Kristen Shell, Planning Manager
Walton County Planning and Development Division
842 State Highway 20 East, Unit 110
Freeport, FL 32439

Dear Ms. Shell,

UNITED WATERFOWLERS-FL, INC. (UW-F) is a 501 (c4) not for profit representing duck hunters and all hunters promoting conservation of Florida's natural resources. We have learned of a plan to build the Seagrove Forest Road and Seagrove Forest Trail through the Point Washington State Forest, Point Washington Wildlife Management Area and Deer Lake State Park. UW-F opposes this construction that destroys the natural habitats of these areas and fractures the connectivity of the habitats. The proposed road and trail would fragment the area's largest continuous tract of forest.

The primary goals of the management of the South Walton County Ecosystem project are to conserve and protect environmentally unique and irreplaceable lands that contain native, relatively unaltered flora and fauna representing a natural area that is rare within a region to conserve and protect significant habitat for native species, endangered and threatened species. This project goes against these primary goals.

These natural areas provide the natural watershed for the globally significant Deer Lake and Camp Creek coastal dune lakes. The proposed roadways and hardscapes would increase pollution via runoff, plastic and other road borne trash, degrading the water quality and harming native waterfowl and wildlife. The presence of the road and trail would make the crucial prescribed fire program more difficult to maintain on a regularly scheduled basis.

The barrier fences, paved surfaces and traffic would reduce the opportunities for recreational activities by all outdoor enthusiasts. Frankly, there seems to be no positive reason or any need for this destruction of natural habitats for "transportation". UNITED WATERFOWLERS-FL, INC. requests that the proposed Seagrove Forest Road and Seagrove Forest Trail be removed from the Walton County Mobility Plan.

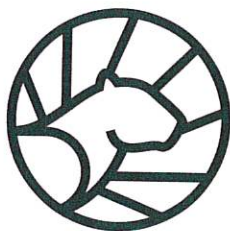
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Newton E. Cook
President

P.O. Box 16205 • Plantation, FL 33318 info@unitedwaterfowlersfl.org

www.unitedwaterfowlersfl.org



Florida Wildlife Federation

Preston T. Robertson, President & CEO
P.O. Box 6870
Tallahassee, Florida 32314-6870
(850) 656-7113
floridawildlifefederation.org

Ms. Kristen Shell
Walton County Planning Manager
842 Hwy 20 East, Unit 110
Freeport, FL 32439

March 10, 2021

RE: Opposition to Proposed Road through Point Washington State Forest/Deer Lake Park

Dear Ms. Shell:

Please note the Florida Wildlife Federation's (FWF) strong opposition to the proposed road through Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake Park. FWF has a long history of involvement protecting the remaining natural lands of south Walton County even as this area grows in population. Allowing this roadway in order to save a few minutes driving time for travelers would mean the permanent bisecting and degradation of an irreplaceable natural resource that provides public recreation and water recharge.

Moreover, the proposed roadway would greatly diminish the extremely rare coastal dune lake system that is the jewel of South Walton.

On behalf of approximately 60,000 members and supporters of all political stripes, I ask that you please eliminate this proposed road from planning so as to retain these areas of natural beauty for ourselves, future Floridians and our tourism-based economy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cordially,

Preston T. Robertson
President and CEO

Karen Owens

From: terigagliardi@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Teri Gagliardi
<terigagliardi@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 9:11 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Teri Gagliardi
827 Eden Dr Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-5960 terigagliardi@ymail.com

Karen Owens

From: judymckeown@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Judy McKeown
<judymckeown@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 12:13 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

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Sincerely,
Ms Judy McKeown
60 Montigo Ave Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-7360 judymckeown@msn.com



Northwest Florida Office

1294 Avondale Way | Tallahassee, Florida 32317-8451 | tel 850.528.5261

www.defenders.org

March 18, 2021

Ms. Kristen A. Shell, AICP
Walton County Planning Department
Walton County Planning Commission
Freeport, FL 32439

Via: SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us and owekaren@co.walton.fl.us

RE: Comments on the Proposed Walton County Mobility Plan

Dear Ms. Shell and Ms. Owens,

On behalf of Defenders of Wildlife (Defenders), please accept these comments concerning the proposed Walton County Mobility Plan which potentially impacts Point Washington State Forest, Deer Lake State Park, Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area, Nokuse Plantation and Devil's Swamp Mitigation Bank. We ask that you please forward this letter to the Walton County Planning Commission and include it within the public record for its March 23, 2021 meeting. Founded in 1947, Defenders of Wildlife is a national non-profit conservation organization focused solely on wildlife and habitat conservation and the safeguarding of biodiversity. Defenders of Wildlife has 400 members and supporters in Walton County and over 124,000 in Florida.

Defenders strongly opposes the establishment of any additional highways, roads and paved or hardened "trails" through Point Washington State Forest, Deer Lake State Park, Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area, Nokuse Plantation and Devil's Swamp Mitigation Bank. Additional roads and paved trails open to motorized vehicles are an incompatible use of state lands and conservation easement areas and could not satisfy the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund's (Governor and Cabinet) Incompatible Use Policy of Natural Resource Lands. We would actively oppose any additional highways, roads and paved trails open to motorized use through these state lands before the Florida Acquisition and Restoration Council and the Board of Trustees.

New highways, roads and paved motorized trails fragmenting the largest contiguous tracts of these protected conservation lands and habitats are incompatible with the major or primary purpose for which these lands were acquired: to conserve the unique South Walton County ecosystem linking three state parks and protecting 25 rare species including the endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker and the Reticulated flatwoods salamander, the threatened gopher tortoise, eight threatened or endangered plant species and five species of invertebrates. Additionally, we are concerned the widened roads will induce additional development to areas adjacent to the public and private conservation lands creating additional constraints for managing these fire-dependent areas using prescribed fire.

We recommend the county consider the practicable alternative of widening existing highways and restoring fragmented habitat connectivity to provide a net positive benefit to these state lands. On six separate occasions, 187 acres of state forest land have already been transferred to Walton County for the Tourist Development Council, Mack Bayou Fire Station, Walton County Sheriff, the Blue Mountain Landfill and for a sewer easement.

Defenders encourages Walton County to not pursue any new highways, roads and paved trails that further fragment the largest remaining tracts of state and private protected forest habitats in South Walton County. Please instead focus on improving and creating transportation alternatives that provides public access to Walton County's beaches while restoring habitat connectivity.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Kent L. Wimmer, AICP
Senior Representative, Northwest Florida
kwimmer@defenders.org

Karen Owens

From: christianhaynes@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Christian Haynes
<christianhaynes@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 6:14 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Please don't make our beautiful natural resources suffer for the advancement of more humans moving into and traveling our County roads. When so congested, people will just stop coming, which is a plus plus for all who live here and our trees, animals and air.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

Ms. Christian P. Haynes
South Walton County resident since 1960

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Ms. Christian Haynes
55 Blue Wave Dr Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-4543 christianhaynes@mchsi.com

Karen Owens

From: Hiscpa@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of John Dillard
<Hiscpa@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 8:36 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
John Dillard
215 Prairie Pass Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-8955 Hiscpa@yahoo.com

Karen Owens

From: larondasellsseagrove@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of LP Kallmeyer
<larondasellsseagrove@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 12:10 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

Already visitors are complaining about how the quaintness that drew residents and visitors is changing.

Stop the growth and preserve the specialness! We do not have the infrastructure to continue adding more traffic and homes.

Please stop destroying this beautiful special place.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,

LP Kallmeyer

375 Somerset Bridge Rd Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-6423 larondasellsseagrove@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 12:29 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: remove the mobility study from our forestland

From: richard airis <rich@asaproductions.com>
Sent: Friday, March 19, 2021 11:46 AM
Subject: remove the mobility study from our forestland

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

please remove the proposed mobility plan that is directed at our south walton county state parks and forest that is up for review these coming months. i, as well as many here in walton county, look at this 'bulldozing' of our bio-diverse lands as an abomination and should be removed as you move forward with other mobility considerations outside our protected land.

as you must be aware, it will only be a matter of a few years and these spaces will be the last vestiges of green spaces rich in bio-diversity in south walton. the decisions today will have a far reaching effect on its future.

richard airis

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 11:28 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Fwd: Walton mobility plan

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: endlessbountyfarms@gmail.com
Date: March 19, 2021 at 7:25:33 PM CDT
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: **Walton mobility plan**

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

It's unconscionable to even consider paved roads thru the state forest. There's a reason why these areas were protected in the first place and it wasn't to add more roads and vehicles. More roads lead to more development and congestion. The impacts on natural habitat, wildlife, and water quality go without saying.

Limit the cars on 30a. Add mass transit. It works in Metro areas. It will work here. Walton county needs vision with an environmental ethic. It doesn't need to look like the rest of Florida with its unending urban sprawl and vehicular congestion.

Thank you. John Hefty.

Sent from my iPhone

Karen Owens

From: spinal1011@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Matt Murdock <spinal1011@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 12:23 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Dr. Matt Murdock
306 Flatwoods Forest Loop Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-8851 spinal1011@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: dlburbank67@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Donna Burbank <dlburbank67@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 20, 2021 3:35 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life. If this is to get more people down to the Watersound Beach Club, put it on St. Jo property and not the State Forest land.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Donna Burbank
PO Box 1491 Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-1491 dlburbank67@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: teamlonergan@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Kim Lonergan
<teamlonergan@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 7:19 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Kim Lonergan
18 Gulf Dunes Ln Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-4448 teamlonergan@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: gretchenpeters57@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Gretchen Peters
<gretchenpeters57@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 10:08 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

I strongly oppose the building of new roads through state forest. The only hope of preserving what makes our area special to residents and tourists alike is to protect our natural spaces. If we don't, we will become another Orlando and lose all that is precious.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Gretchen Peters
23 Seagrove Village Dr Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-6384 gretchenpeters57@gmail.com

Karen Owens

From: tkfigueredo@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Tracy Figueredo
<tkfigueredo@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 10:20 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Tracy Figueredo
170 Morgans Trl Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-6765 tkfigueredo@hotmail.com

Karen Owens

From: barrywalsh@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of James Walsh
<barrywalsh@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 10:47 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Please help preserve our State Forests! I walk our lab on the trails in Deer Lake SP, Grayton SP and several others. The natural beauty of these trails is stunning. Visitors I have shown these trails to cannot believe we have this in our 'backyard'. I can't imagine losing this incredible natural resource that adds so much to the 30A and Walton County experience. Thanks for considering this issue that has so much importance to so many of us locals!
James Walsh

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
James Walsh
23 Seagrove Village Dr Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-6384 barrywalsh@me.com

Karen Owens

From: Candis Harbison <candis1@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 1:50 PM
To: Karen Owens; Kristen Shell
Subject: Mobility Plan

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Please distribute this email to all planning commission members.

Dear Planning Department and Planning Commission,

I am adamantly opposed to the "Mobility Plan" under discussion this week. This plan is an outrageous attempt to destroy all that is good about Walton County. Much tax money and private money has been spent to restore the seepage slope ecosystem that these roads would slash across, bisecting the drainage basin. I am one of the 300+ families who are members of Bay County Audubon Society, which has submitted a well-researched and factual letter in opposition to the plan. Please consider it carefully. We cannot sacrifice the good of all for the short-term economic benefit of a few.

Candis Harbison

Karen Owens

From: Anita Page <ruelpage1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 5:57 PM
To: Karen Owens
Cc: Kristen Shell
Subject: Mobility Plan Comments for PC meeting for March 23 Special Meeting

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To: Planning Commission

I do not support the proposed road and various trail and path proposals in the Point Washington State Forest (PWSF) and state parks and ask that they be removed from the Mobility Plan.

The focus of the Mobility Plan is developing multiple ways for people to travel between destinations. The State conservation lands have an entirely different purpose: (1) to restore, maintain and protect in perpetuity all native ecosystems; and (2), integrate human use that is passive and compatible with the overarching goal of ecosystem conservation.

Conservation lands were not intended to be used as travel corridors. They are biodiverse ecosystems that support a diversity of life. For people they ARE a destination which provides people an experience that does not exist in Walton County outside of their boundaries. Restoring and maintaining habitat requires a delicate balance to ensure human use does not degrade fragile ecosystem cohesion.

Proposed infrastructure impacts in a conservation parcel must (1) fulfill a legitimate need and (2) be compatible with the purpose for which the land was purchased and is managed.

The proposed road and multiple "forest paths", "shared use trails" and "multimodal lanes" in the Mobility Plan will fragment ecosystems, and will negatively impact significant watersheds, water flow, wetlands, ponds, longleaf pine, and other environmentally sensitive lands including restoration areas. They will also potentially complicate fire response, overload designated carrying capacity and degrade the experience many people seek in going into the forests.

The proposed uses by scooters, e-scooters and ultimately shuttles and golf carts are not passive compatible uses. There are multiple locations for those activities. There are not multiple locations for walking, hiking or biking in a biodiverse longleaf forest ecosystem.

The PWSF and the parks already have numerous trails and roads for passive public use. The PWSF alone has over 27 miles of trails, not including the connector to the Grayton Beach State trails. The trails are accessed through 8 trailheads located on Satinwood Drive, CR 83, 283 and 395 and McQuade Bayou.

Forest trails are designed to avoid sensitive habitat, use disturbed habitat where possible and create minimum impact to the trail surface and surrounding habitat. For these reasons they are mostly single-track, not 8 to 14 feet wide as proposed in the Mobility Plan.

There are 7 vehicular access points in the PWSF. The roads are predominantly old logging roads, many of which are open to public vehicle use. The primary road goes from CR 83 to CR 395. All of the forest roads are open to hikers and bicyclists. Fire breaks can also be used when not employed for fire or management uses.

The Mobility Plan's proposed two lane paved road through both the PWSF and Deer Lake State Park does not further, and in fact, violates the goals and objectives for the forest purchase and management.

The damage from the construction of the road goes well beyond the two lanes. Fill and/or bridging, stormwater retention, shoulders and other requirements, future repairs and maintenance will be a continuing destructive impact in that area. The public use of the road as a transportation corridor will subject the ecosystem and the multiple species who live there to litter, pollutants, exhaust fumes, noise, light, road kill etc.

Public impatience with traffic is not a justification for the destructive impacts to a state conservation parcel. Moving people to and from the beaches and CR 30A is a development challenge that must be solved on county land or the private land of a developer seeking the corridor.

Being geographically restrained by water and bridges, which are also used by Bay and Okaloosa County, the major bottleneck to a hurricane evacuation out of South Walton is US 98. As 98 fills, the secondary roads leading to 98 gridlock as this proposed road will, potentially stranding people in the forest if the evacuation window closes. Having lived in a primary evacuation zone since 1982, I believe Emergency Management's evacuation zone timing remains the critical key to hurricane evacuation.

The proposed road will do little, if anything to increase overall ambulance response time. From the proposed road intersection with US 98 it is approximately 16 miles to Sacred Heart Hospital in Santa Rosa Beach and 14 miles to the free standing ER on Panama City Beach. This travel time can be significantly reduced by locating an ER, such as a free-standing ER, and perhaps a fire station in this rapidly developing area. Placing emergency response services closer to where needed would be more effective than constructing a new road that is only 4.2 miles from the current paved Watersound PKWY.

Desired private or county infrastructure should be part of a private development site plan or part of the county's roads plan for county property. The Mobility Plan is an opportunity for the county, private interests and the public to look into the future, not the past, to develop creative ways to move people to and from the places they tend to use.

The PWSF and State Parks are among the 26 Panhandle biological "hot spots", regions with significant levels of biodiversity that are threatened by human habitation. These conservation lands make priceless contributions to quality of life, recreation, protection of vital wetlands and Coastal Dune Lake watersheds, air filtration, stormwater absorption, and the intrinsic beauty of South Walton. People problems should be solved where people are. I ask that you remove the transportation facilities proposed through state lands and do the work necessary to prevent these fragile lands from being converted to more urban transportation uses.

Respectfully submitted,

Anita Page
Walton County Resident

Karen Owens

From: zfamily2@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Julie Ziomek <zfamily2@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 21, 2021 8:58 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

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Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

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We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Julie Ziomek
33 River Oats Ln Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459-4856 zfamily2@msn.com

3435 Blueridge Drive
Pensacola, FL 32504

Dear Walton County Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my opposition to the Walton County Mobility Plan which is being considered by the Walton County Board of County Commissioners. My perspective is as the Chairman of the Audubon Florida Northwest Florida Regional Conservation Committee, which includes members of Audubon Chapters living in Walton County. I have a MS degree in Biology with a focus on forest ecology that sharpens my perspective.

I have reviewed the various elements of the Mobility Plan and have recently walked portions of Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park to provide myself a sense of the properties owned by the citizens of Florida that will be affected by construction of the various roads, paths, and walkways in the proposal.

My overall objections to the mobility plan include:

a) the plan will result in fragmentation of intact ecosystems of the state forest, state parks, and eventually the property in the NWFL Water Management Area that will lead to degradation of the ecological integrity of those lands. Fragmentation is known to lead to an ecological condition called "edge effect" that results in invasion of the landscape by plant and animal species foreign to the native landscape and eventual loss of native species.

b) plans that result in expanding and hardening of surfaces of the landscape will result in alteration of watersheds in lands north of Route 98 that will negatively affect the flow of both surface and ground water that is the lifeblood of the dune lakes to the south of Route 98, features that are *unique in the western hemisphere* to Walton County. These lakes are national treasures and should be defended and protected from long-term degradation by Walton County leaders.

I respectfully request that you remove the elements I view as controversial from the Mobility Plan and work with community groups to resolve your traffic dilemma in an environmentally sound manner. Please include this document in the file of record and provide it to the Planning Commission and the Walton County Board of Commissioners in all packets created.

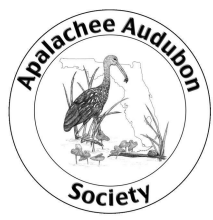
Sincerely,

James A. Brady

James A. Brady, MS

Chair, Northwest Florida Regional Conservation Committee

Audubon Florida



Apalachee Audubon Society
PO Box 1237 Tallahassee FL 32302-1237

March 22, 2021

Ms. Kristen A. Shell, AICP
Walton County Planning Department
Walton County Planning Commission
Freeport, FL 32439

Via: ShelKristen@co.walton.fl.us and owekaren@co.walton.fl.us

RE: Comments on the Proposed Walton County Mobility Plan

Dear Ms. Shell and Ms Owens,

On behalf of the Apalachee Audubon Society please accept these comments concerning the proposed Walton County Mobility Plan. The Apalachee Audubon Society is a nonprofit organization representing over 800 members in the eastern Panhandle. Our focus is protecting the rich biodiversity of the Florida Panhandle through education, appreciation and conservation. We are very concerned about the impact of the proposed Mobility Plan on Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park. We wish to associate ourselves with the more detailed comments previously submitted by the Bay County Audubon Society.

Any proposed development, such as the proposed Mobility Plan, which impacts the State Forest must consider why these lands were protected in the first place. The primary goals of the Point Washington State Forest are clearly spelled out in the Management Plan-- "(1) conserve a part of this unique coast and the forests behind it, linking three state parks; (2) protecting several rare plants and rare animals such as the Choctawhatchee Beach Mouse and Red-cockaded Woodpecker; and (3) providing residents and tourists a scenic area in which to enjoy many recreational activities ranging from hunting and fishing to hiking, picnicking, and sunbathing." From its inception, the project recognized that the protection of the state parks and their unique dune lakes was directly linked to protection of the forest and ensuring connectivity. The proposed Mobility Plan is inconsistent with these purposes. The proposed new highways, roads and paved motorized trails would fragment the largest contiguous and most biodiverse tracts of these protected conservation lands. The ecological harm of such forest fragmentation is well-established, *See e.g. Larry D. Harris, The Fragmented Forest: Island Biogeography Theory and the Preservation of Biotic Diversity*, University of Chicago Press 2013.

The residents of Walton County are very fortunate to have such wonderful conservation lands in their backyard; they have rallied time and time again to protect these lands from encroachment. However, they are not alone in their efforts. It has been a concern of the larger conservation community in Florida since the land that was to become Point Washington State Forest was

purchased at the last moment on the steps of the Walton County Courthouse by George Willson, one of Florida's greatest conservationists, acting for the Nature Conservancy. Ultimately, it was the people of the State of Florida who shouldered the cost of preserving these lands for future generations. In another forty years, there will be little land left in Florida in an undeveloped state outside of our public and private conservation lands. Point Washington State Forest and the State Parks are a priceless legacy which should be left to future generations intact. We strongly urge Walton County not to pursue any new highways, roads and paved trails that further fragment the largest remaining tracts of state and private protected forest habitats in South Walton County.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Williams, Chair

Apalachee Audubon Society Conservation Committee

Patrice Couch - 144 My Way, #E - Santa Rosa Beach, FL - 32459

March 22, 2021

Walton County Planning Commission
Walton County Planning Department:
Kristen Shell, Planning Manager
Karen Owens, Planning Coordinator

Via: owekaren@co.walton.fl.us, shekristen@co.walton.fl.us

RE: Walton County Mobility Plan - Opposition to Proposed Transportation Facilities through Public Conservation Lands

Dear Ms. Shell and Ms. Owens:

As a Walton County property owner, regular visitor to state parks and forest, and a professional biologist (28+ years), I am writing to express my strong opposition to the placement of new transportation facilities through the Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake and Topsail Hill Preserve State Parks, and Choctawhatchee River Water and Wildlife Management Areas. I respectfully ask that you forward this letter and attachments to the Walton County Planning Commission before the March 23, 2021, hearing and include it in the record of public comments.

I strongly urge you to cease efforts to use state conservation lands for transportation facilities and forward the Mobility Plan to the Board of County Commissioners with the recommendation that these controversial facilities be removed. This would allow the elements of the Plan with broad public support to move forward while allowing more time to consider alternatives. With the exponential growth that is underway and on the horizon, it is more important than ever to make sure these lands remain protected.

The Mobility Plan needs to consider viable alternatives to urbanizing state-owned forest, parks, and wildlife and water management areas. If the 300,000+ permanent residents mentioned at the 30A Workshop are coming to South Walton County, then a two-lane road will over-promise and under-deliver, and may actually increase the amount of traffic.¹

In addition, the County is staking a claim to lands that they don't own or manage. These state-owned lands were purchased for specific purposes, none of which involve urban transportation uses. In 2019, at least two state agencies went on record to state that they did not support the construction of a road through the Point Washington State Forest or Deer Lake State Park. These letters from the Florida Departments of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Environmental Protection are attached and are incorporated into my public comments, as they include the detail needed to fully comprehend the damage that will result from transportation facilities you propose. Any amenities added to state conservation lands must be promulgated by the managing agencies in a specific public process in accordance with detailed management plans that consider all the potential impacts, and so while the facilities you are proposing through state lands may sound good on the surface (low-hanging fruit), in reality, they are not easily obtainable and do not provide timely, meaningful, tangible solutions to your infrastructure needs.

I think everyone who has enjoyed the privilege of visiting or residing in Walton County can relate to the "Sense of Place", the feeling one gets when driving across Choctawhatchee Bay and along Scenic 30A and visiting the majestic parks, forest, and Coastal Dune Lakes unique to this community. We have the good fortune to benefit from the preservation of these natural areas and we

¹ See *Generated Traffic and Induced Travel*, Implications for Transport Planning, March 16, 2021. Todd Litman, Victoria Policy Institute.
<https://www.vtpi.org/gentraf.pdf>

have a responsibility to be good stewards because these lands define Walton County's "Sense of Place". If our state forest, state parks, and wild public lands are allowed to be used to solve land use problems in an attempt to address short-comings in our transportation system, the uniqueness of Walton County will be degraded, forever. There will be no going back. Walton County will continue to become more overdeveloped like its neighbors along the Panhandle and it will lose its charm and appeal for residents and visitors alike until there is nothing left to cherish.

To be clear, we are not just talking about simple roads. These facilities will have a large footprint. In the case of the "Seagrove Forest Road", as one example, it is a two-lane road, plus a 10-14 foot wide Trail, plus a 5-6 foot wide Multimodal Lane, all together in parallel. Once you include all the required infrastructure such as stormwater drainage, lighting, signage, fences, and lane buffers, you will have a footprint conceptually up to 150 feet wide², plus the associated noise, light, and water pollution. People living near this area will no longer enjoy the relative peace and quiet they are accustomed to having. In addition, the area proposed for the road consists of a vast network of wetlands that is not suitable for road construction³; therefore, it would likely be very expensive even if you were successful in jumping through the numerous hoops to get it approved and permitted.

Please Add These Alternate Solution Concepts to the Mobility Plan:

- **Bring emergency services closer to the people to reduce emergency transit time:** It's counterintuitive to build new roads when the most populous communities along 30A built in Neo-Traditional Neighborhood Design were intended to get people out of cars. Isn't that the point, to create walkable, sustainable communities where the services needed are within a short distance? Instead of trying to solve a land use issue with transportation, solve it with land use. The Mobility Plan should identify parcels close to and along the 30A corridor that are available to build at least one stand alone emergency room and law enforcement and fire department substation(s). The travel distance and time from 30A to the nearest emergency room is already too great, and that won't be corrected with the addition of another road.
- **Add dedicated emergency lanes along 30A AND one connecting 30A to US 98 to reduce emergency transit time. Work to identify parcels for a north-south lane on private land that could be used for this singular purpose.** This may require converting one of the lane concepts proposed along the 30A right-of-way to a dedicated emergency use only. As it has been mentioned multiple times by planning staff that a main contributor to road capacity will result from development of the Bay-Walton Sector Plan, the County should work with the St. Joe Company to place an emergency use only lane on their land. One option could be a north-south connector located east of Deer Lake State Park in which the northern end of the lane where it intersects US 98 could house additional emergency services. The dedicated emergency lane could lead directly from 30A to a stand alone ER and other emergency substations on US 98. This is a real solution to reduce emergency transit time and would have the additional benefit of creating jobs and serving the population as the region grows.
- **Increase road capacity of the existing Watersound Parkway.** This would be another opportunity for private-public partnership. If as stated at public workshops, the Bay-Walton Sector Plan and Walton County DSAP will generate traffic causing level of service failures, then the St. Joe Company should be more responsible for the infrastructure they need. We should not have to sacrifice our state parks and state forest to serve that development. You must work to plan for the desired growth and take care of our natural areas at the same time.
- **Update the county's hurricane/emergency evacuation model and plan. Include anticipated population growth and its effect on clearance times and adopt a strategic, carefully**

² See Public Meeting Documents (Typicals_08.21.2019) at <https://www.co.walton.fl.us/1256/South-Walton-Connector-Road-PDF>

³ See attached wetland map, courtesy of Audubon Florida, March 2021.

sequenced evacuation plan. Refer to Florida's Monroe County plan as they perform this function where roads are severely limited.⁴

- **Allow sufficient time for the multimodal concepts proposed outside of state-owned lands to work to alleviate traffic concerns, before proposing impacts to conservation lands.**
- **Ask your engineering team to develop other alternatives that stay in the current transportation footprint.** At the workshop, it was mentioned that Walton County has hired the best transportation planners/engineers in the state of Florida. Figure out a better way. Do not ask your constituents to sacrifice any more of our state forest or state park lands.

Walton County must place more thought into balancing transportation needs with protecting the public lands that are fundamental to maintaining the ecology, scenic beauty and quality of life unique to this community. You must discourage development in vulnerable areas and conserve our beloved parks and forest for future generations to enjoy.

I ask the Planning Department and Planning Commission to recommend removal of the facilities in the table below to allow more time to develop realistic alternatives that the public and state agencies can support.

Facility	Area Impacted	Mobility Plan (Map)
Seagrove Forest Road	Point Washington State Forest, Point Washington Wildlife Management Area	South Walton Roads Plan
Seagrove Forest Trail	Point Washington State Forest, Point Washington Wildlife Management Area	South Walton Walking & Bicycling Plan
Seagrove Forest Multimodal Lanes	Point Washington State Forest, Point Washington Wildlife Management Area	South Walton Micromobility & Microtransit Plan
Watersound Beach Forest Trail	Deer Lake State Park	South Walton Walking & Bicycling Plan
Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Ways	Deer Lake State Park	South Walton Micromobility & Microtransit Plan
Topsoil Trail (x2)	Topsail Hill Preserve State Park	South Walton Walking & Bicycling Plan
SR 81 Extension	Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area, Choctawhatchee River Wildlife Management Area	South Walton Roads Plan

Thank you for the opportunity to provide public input.

Sincerely,

Patrice Couch
Patrice.Couch@gmail.com
(850) 866-8909

Attachments:

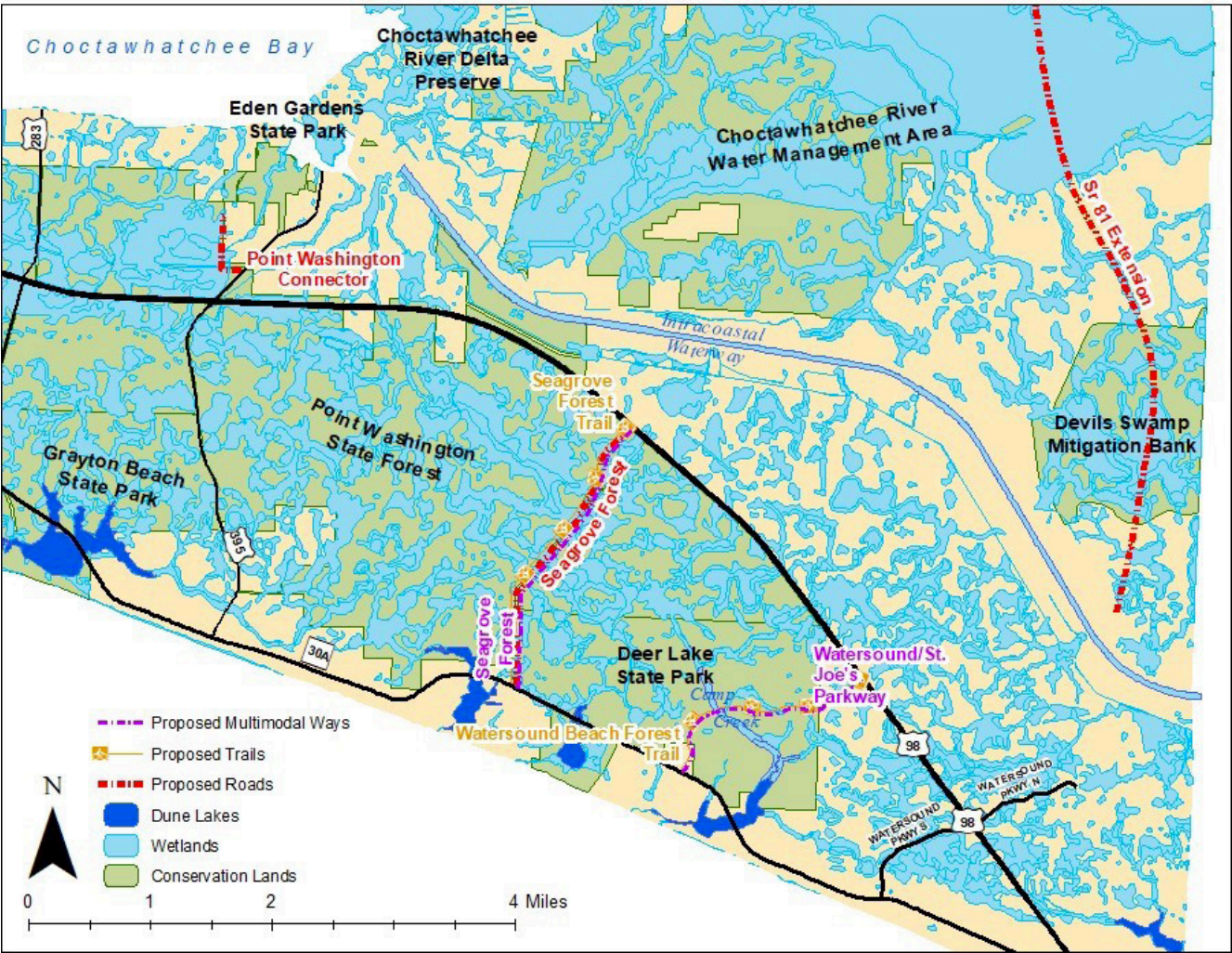
1. Map: Wetlands and Public Land Boundaries in relation to proposed facilities
2. State agency letter: 2019, FDACS
3. State agency letter: 2019 FDEP

cc: Walton County Board of County Commissioners

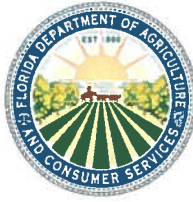
⁴ See Florida Statewide Regional Evacuation Study Program, Regional Behavioral Analysis Summary. http://www.sfrpc.com/SRESP%20Web/Vol1-11_ChIII.pdf

The map below includes the problematic proposed roads, trails, and multimodal ways and lanes, as well as the wetlands that these proposed roads will interrupt. This includes creeks and marshes located within state-preserved natural areas and beyond.

Walton County Mobility Plan: Proposed Roads, Trails, & Ways



Source: Audubon Florida, March 2021



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES COMMISSIONER NICOLE "NIKKI" FRIED

April 19, 2019

Mr. Greg Garrett, PD&E Project Manager
Atkins North America, Inc.
2639 North Monroe Street, Building C
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Mr. Garrett:

Thank you for providing the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Forest Service (FFS) the opportunity to comment on the Advance Notification package for the South Walton Connector Road project in Walton County, Florida. The following will serve as the FFS official response to the Advance Notification.

The Florida Forest Service does not favor the construction of a new road on or across Point Washington State Forest; although we would be open to discussion on Alternative 4. The forest was acquired as part of the South Walton County Ecosystem Conservation and Recreation Lands project with primary goals to: 1) conserve a part of this unique coast and the forests to the north; 2) protect several rare plants and animals, including the largest population of the endangered Curtiss' sandgrass in the world; and 3) provide residents and tourists a scenic area in which to enjoy recreational activities. Additionally, Point Washington State Forest directly abuts three state parks, providing connectivity and more contiguous conservation land. Construction of a new road across the forest is inconsistent with the purpose for acquisition and would significantly impact the Florida Forest Service's ability to properly manage the forest and its resources.

Point Washington State Forest is already highly fragmented to the west of US 331 and CR 83 and a new road facility would only further fragment the forest, particularly in the most contiguous portion. Further, the Florida Forest Service manages Point Washington State Forest with prescribed fire to reduce fuel loads and preserve native flora and fauna; enhancing conservation value and reducing the danger of wildland fire to the residents surrounding the forest. Utilizing prescribed fire on this forest is already very challenging given the high-density Wildland-Urban Interface surrounding it, and adding a road is very likely to reduce the amount prescribed fire applied each year. Any reduction in prescribed fire will lead to an increase in fuel loading, which could lead to an increase in wildfire occurrence and intensity.

The portion of Point Washington State Forest over which the majority of alternatives are proposed to traverse is a mosaic network of uplands and interwoven wetlands, and none of the proposed alternatives avoid impacting wetlands. Any wetland that is altered or removed to build

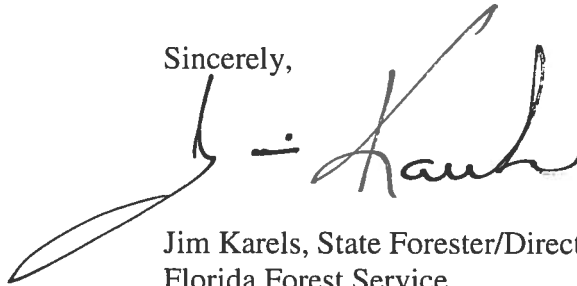
Mr. Greg Garrett
April 19, 2019
Page Two

a road will have a negative impact on the water quality and quantity in the area; reducing water available for aquifer recharge and increasing contaminants in runoff. Within the uplands, particularly on the eastern portion of the forest where the road is proposed, is the single largest population of Curtiss' sandgrass in the world. While this species is currently state-listed as endangered, any loss of habitat and impact to the population could lead to federal listing and further management and development restrictions. Point Washington State Forest is also in FWC's Western Panhandle Bear Management Unit in an area where bears are particularly abundant. Construction of the proposed road through the forest would almost certainly increase the rate at which bears are struck by motor vehicles.

Recreation activities on Point Washington State Forest are also likely to be negatively affected. Directly, all but one alternative will impact trails or campground access roads, requiring these roads/trails to be relocated, causing a further impact. Indirectly, hunting opportunities may decrease or become degraded with increased vehicle traffic and noise through the forest, and any resulting decrease in use of prescribed fire will lead to habitat degradation and succession of undesirable species.

While the Florida Forest Service does not favor the construction of a new road through Point Washington State Forest, we remain open to further discussion on this topic. Should you have any questions regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact the Florida Forest Service's Forest Ecologist, Brian Camposano at Brian.Camposano@FreshFromFlorida.com or (850) 681-5890.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jim Karels", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the left.

Jim Karels, State Forester/Director
Florida Forest Service

JRK/bjc

cc: Erin Albury, Assistant Director
Johnny Sabo, Chief, Field Operations
Jimmy Roberts, Chief, Forest Management
Keith Rowell, Land Programs Administrator
Ken Weber, Deputy Chief, Region 1
Brian Camposano, State Forest Ecologist



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF Environmental Protection

Marjory Stoneman Douglas Building
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Jeanette Nufiez
Lt. Governor

Noah Valenstein
Secretary

April 30, 2019

Mr. Chris Stahl, Environmental Manager
Florida State Clearinghouse
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 47
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

RE: Proposed South Walton Connector from CR 30A to US 98 PD&E Study

Dear Mr. Stahl:

GENERAL

The Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP) within the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is pleased to provide the following comments regarding the proposed South Walton Connector from CR 30A to US 98 PD&E Study. Pursuant to Sec. 258.037, F.S., the Division of Recreation and Parks is mandated to "acquire typical portions of the original domain of the state...of such character as to emblemize the state's natural values; conserve these natural values for all time". Furthermore, the Mission of DRP is to "provide resource-based recreation while preserving, interpreting and restoring the natural and cultural resources."

CONFLICTS

We feel that any impacts to public conservation the lands managed by DRP, including Grayton Beach State Park or Deer Lake State Park, from the proposed project would be in conflict with our mission and legislative mandate and is therefore not supported by the Division. The following concerns are an initial analysis of likely impacts to Division-managed lands:

- The 2,009 acres comprising Deer Lake State Park were identified by the CARL (Conservation and Recreational Lands) program in the early 1990's based on exceptional habitat diversity and species richness as well as being a large contiguous tract (with Point Washington) which is unique for the coastal region.
- Since acquisition, DRP has improved the property including major restoration of biological function and species composition within 15 natural communities. Many of these natural communities are imperiled globally because of rarity. The proposed roadway and associated stormwater infrastructure would bisect the park, severely degrading both habitat and watershed continuity.
- Together with the adjacent Point Washington State Forest, Deer Lake State Park protects 100% of the stream fed watersheds for Deer Lake and Camp Creek Lake, both of which are designated as Outstanding Florida Waters (OFWs). The proposed roadway would result in the same impacts observed in other coastal dune lakes where upstream

watersheds have been bisected by linear corridors. These impacts include light and noise pollution, water quality degradation, colonization by invasive species, plastics and other roadway-borne trash that degrade water quality and habitat conditions within the lakes and their outfalls. All of these factors reduce the quality of critical nesting habitat required for imperiled shorebirds.

- The Division is midway through a \$7 million comprehensive restoration of the Park's coastal dune lakes watershed through partnerships with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Atlanta Botanical Gardens. This project has been ongoing for over five years. Included in this project are over 300 acres of wet prairie and seepage slope that are among the most species-rich habitats in all of North America. These globally imperiled natural communities are home to several hundred species of flora including rare and endemic carnivorous plants and ground orchids. The success of the restoration is evident with the presence of endangered pitcher plant and newly discovered endangered plants including white fringed orchids, pine lilies, butterworts, sundew and others. The ongoing hydrologic restoration directly enhances the endangered (G2/S1) coastal dune lakes, thereby having a larger impact on our nesting shorebirds and water quality impacting the Gulf of Mexico. This on-going restoration project would be severely compromised by the hydrological disruption associated with the proposed roadway and may jeopardize future grant funding opportunities.
- Deer Lake State Park has recently been approved by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) as a recipient site for displaced gopher tortoises. This designation was the direct result of decades of habitat restoration within the park's contiguous expansive sandhill natural community. Additionally, this evaluation included the relative remoteness of habitats from local roadways. Both criteria would be compromised by the construction of any public roadway through the park.
- The majority of Deer Lake State Park consists of fire-dependent natural communities that require frequent prescribed burning to maintain natural processes such as cycling of nutrients, blooming/fruitleting of grasses and forbs, maintenance of proper species proportions, reduction of hazardous fuels, and the perpetuation of increasingly rare longleaf pine ecosystems. The proposed roadway would require critical smoke sensitive area setbacks that would severely impact or preclude the Division's ability to safely apply prescribed fire and effectively manage these natural resources.
- Deer Lake State Park and Grayton Beach State Park are comprised of state-owned, conservation lands owned by the Board of Trustees and managed by DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks. Any road construction project contemplated over these conservation lands would require an upland easement from the Board of Trustees and would require prior approval by the Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC). ARC would evaluate the project based on the Board of Trustees' Linear Facilities Policy (LF Policy) and determine if the project meets, or doesn't meet, the criteria outlined in the LF Policy. Specifically, the project does not meet the policy test of "Avoidance" which states, in part, "Owners and operators of linear facilities must avoid location on natural resource lands unless no other practical and prudent alternative is available and all steps to minimize impacts...are implemented". There are several other proposed routes that would have less, or no impact on state park conservation lands.

April 30, 2019
Mr. Chris Stahl
Page 3

RECOMMENDATIONS

These lands were acquired and held in public trust due to the importance of this natural system, its globally significant and rare communities, intact hydrology, and imperiled species. It was for these reasons the Division recently declined reconnaissance surveys for the proposed connector road through Deer Lake State Park (attached). ✓

Based on the legislative mandate to protect and preserve Board of Trustees lands, the Division of Recreation and Parks cannot support the development of a road/linear facility bisecting Deer Lake State Park nor the associated watershed and contiguous habitat in Point Washington State Forest. The negative impacts would have long-term effects with the destruction of publicly funded restoration efforts, fragmentation of a predominately intact ecosystem making resource management activities including invasive species control and fire management difficult and expensive, and ultimately cause severe degradation to the contiguous natural system.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,


Parks Small
Assistant Division Director
Division of Recreation & Parks

PS/jp/v

Attachment

@ Meeting w/ Parks Field Staff



Gregg Walker
Assistant Bureau Chief
Bureau of Natural & Cultural Resources
Florida State Parks

Florida Department of
Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 530
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Phone: 850-245-3113
Cell: 850-445-3448
Gregg.Walker@FloridaDEP.gov



Daniel Alsentzer
Planning Manager
Office of Park Planning
Division of Recreation and Parks

Florida Department of
Environmental Protection
3800 Commonwealth Blvd., MS 525
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

Phone: 850-245-3073
Mobile: 850-339-5414
Fax: 850-245-3074
Daniel.Alsentzer@FloridaDEP.gov

Karen Owens

From: lynn marcoux <lynnmarcoux@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 5:01 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Please Consider

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello,

I am writing to raise awareness and concern over the elements that propose to cut through state forest, threaten vulnerable habitat and species, and undermine Walton County's natural resilience.

I believe we can work together to create roads while still honoring and protecting our public lands, discouraging development in vulnerable areas, and conserving pristine natural areas for present and future generations to enjoy.

Please consider a revision in the Mobility Plan for Walton County.

Respectfully,

Lynn Marcoux
401.559.7120

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 8:38 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: :Mobility plan

From: Alison Schultz <aschultzus@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 3:14 PM
To: www.co.walton.fl.us/112/Commissioners@aol.com
Cc: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: :Mobility plan

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NEVER UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD INFRASTRUCTURE BE ALLOWED IN STATE
PARKS OR STATE FOREST.

Alison Schultz

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 8:43 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: The Mobility Plan - State Parks & Forests

From: Stacy Jacob <SLJacob@leyendeckergroup.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 2:12 PM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: The Mobility Plan - State Parks & Forests

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As a property owner in the 32459 zip code, please remove all infrastructure in State Parks and Forest from the Mobility Plan. Thank you.

Stacy Leyendecker Jacob
President, Leyendecker Management Services
713-975-6600

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 8:45 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Mobility plan

From: saait@aol.com <saait@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 1:19 PM
To: www.co.walton.fl.us/112/Commissioners@aol.com; Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Mobility plan

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NEVER UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD INFRASTRUCTURE BE ALLOWED IN STATE PARKS OR STATE FOREST.

Please remove all infrastructure in state parks and state forests from Mobility Plan.

Anne and Bill Schultz

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 8:45 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Public Hearing - Mobility Plan

From: Gregg Moreau <coast.life@ymail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 22, 2021 12:53 PM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>; Tony Anderson <AndTony@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Public Hearing - Mobility Plan

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr Anderson and Ms Shell,

Pursuant to the pending public hearing related to the proposed Mobility Plan and Fee, please accept my position on this proposal.

I strongly support the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan Goal C-1: *"To promote the conservation, use, and preservation of the County's natural resources to plan for and where appropriate, restrict development activities where such activities would damage or destroy natural resources"*.

It is my understanding that the current Mobility Plan includes several "multimodal lanes" such as Seagrove Forest, that traverse through State Parks. Accordingly, I disapprove of any infrastructure and/or activity that "would damage or destroy natural resources".

I feel there are many positive elements within the Mobility Plan that can be implemented without compromising our State Parks or other natural resources.

Respectfully,

Gregg J Moreau
324 Seabreeze
Seacrest FL

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 3:11 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Mobility Study Comment

Please make sure commission has this tonight

From: soappedaler <soappedaler@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 18, 2021 8:31 AM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Mobility Study Comment

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.



March 17, 2021

Dear Commissioners,

All infrastructure proposed on Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, Grayton Beach State Park, Deer Lake State Park and Point Washington State Forest in the Walton County Mobility Study must be removed. The County has no jurisdiction over these conservation and passive recreation lands; this land is owned by the citizens of Florida, and is managed by State Agencies under the Florida Statutes.

Bulldozing through one of North America's most biodiverse ecosystems for a highway is the most egregious part of the proposal! Impacts of hardened surfaces in the largest tract of conservation land in South Walton will directly impact wetlands and adversely affect the Deer Lake and Eastern Lake coastal dune lakes and watersheds. The Peach Creek wetlands and watershed will also be impacted.

Walton County and developers have attempted to fracture and take parts of Point Washington State Forest and our State Parks since the Topsail/Point Washington Conservation land purchase in 1992. Most of Topsail Preserve, Grayton Beach and Deer Lake State Parks, and Point Washington State Forest were purchased with Preservation 2000 funds. Activity and use are restricted by covenants used to secure these funds to the "purpose for which they were acquired"; that purpose is specifically conservation and passive recreation.

The Florida Division of Recreation and Parks and Florida Forest Service employ professional planners and biologists who carefully consider the resource and proposed uses before locating trails or other facilities in the parks and forest.

Management plans guide the land uses and must be adhered to under Florida Statutes. *The proposed 98-30A connector and other transportation corridors will impede the management of these State Parks and Forest.*

There is a falsehood/myth that the proposed 98-30A Connector road is for “public safety”. Some residents believe it will relieve traffic issues during heavy tourist season. The reality is St. Joe’s development north of 98 near the north end of the proposed road is bringing 300,000 people to the area. Kristen Shell stated this in the Mobility Study Workshop. Seaside owns 3 acres adjacent to the proposed road’s southern end at 30A. The Eastern Lake area would be gridlock.

Walton County’s public safety concerns should have been addressed when the County was overdeveloping and over promoting South Walton. Several solutions that can be done now are as follows:

- Use the proposed autonomous vehicle/bus lane in the Mobility Study as an emergency vehicle lane. Take back all of the county ROW on 30A that has been allowed to be used for parking and landscaping by businesses and residents.
- An emergency vehicle lane could be placed on the western side of St. Joe’s Watersound golf course, on their property.
- Straighten out Watersound Parkway for better traffic flow, as suggested by Commissioner Glidewell, to facilitate better traffic flow, improving travel time in the eastern end of South Walton.
- Prohibit the use of golf carts on 30A.

Why wasn’t public safety considered when the land uses were increased? Why wasn’t public safety considered when density was increased? Why wasn’t public safety considered when set-backs were reduced? Why wasn’t public safety considered when wetlands were filled? Why wasn’t public safety considered when density was transferred? Why wasn’t public safety considered when ROW was allowed to be use as parking or landscaped?

Lack of planning by Walton County is not a reason to take conservation land.

The power line easement is a private easement purchased by Alabama Electric prior to the State purchasing Point Washington State Forest. The land under the easement is continuous habitat and ecosystems of the Point Washington State Forest and Deer Lake State Park. The mowing done by the utilities mimics the restoration efforts being done at Deer Lake State Park by Atlanta Botanical Gardens.

At the May 2019 Agencies Coordination Workshop, a part of the Atkins Study, the utility companies in attendance, along with all state and federal agencies responsible for management of the State Forest and Parks stated that they did not support the construction of roads. From the meeting minutes, **“the environmental agencies were opposed to any alternative through State Park Service or State Forest land.”**

All infrastructure proposed on Topsail Hill Preserve State Park, Grayton Beach State Park, Deer Lake State Park and Point Washington State Forest in the Walton County Mobility Study must be removed.

Celeste Cobena, Chair

Beach to Bay Connection, Inc

Let it be Forest

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 8:23 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Proposed road through the state forest

From: Arix Zalace <arix@lastra.life>
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2021 11:26 PM
To: Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Proposed road through the state forest

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Kristen,

I just wanted to state my households opposition to the proposed road that would go through the State Forest and Deer Lake State Park. This is some of the most critically endangered ecosystem environments in North America. Many people do not realize that the Panhandle is a biological hotspot, containing more biodiversity of anywhere in North America. It also contains some of the highest numbers of endangered species of plants and animals in all of North America. Putting a road through the state forest and state park will have devastating consequences to these ecosystems. This devastation can not be mitigated. All you have to do is drive up and down the county roads that are already going through the state forest and you will see the incredible amount of garbage and road kill that is present. The county already can not keep up with this garbage clean up. It will all end up in the state forest.

My family owns and operates three businesses in South Walton and we pay a lot of taxes to the county each year. We are very strongly opposed to putting a new road through the state forest.

Sincerely,
Arix Zalace

--

Arix Zalace
Owner Lastrå Life LLC
69 Camellia Cove
Santa Rosa Beach, FL
32459
P: 850-855-9641
arix@lastra.life
www.lastra.life

Karen Owens

From: Kristen Shell
Sent: Friday, March 26, 2021 8:23 AM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: FW: Mobility Plan - Proposed Forest Road

From: ts1987@windstream.net <ts1987@windstream.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2021 5:16 PM
To: Boots McCormick <mccboots@co.walton.fl.us>; Danny Glidewell <glidanny@co.walton.fl.us>; Mike Barker <barmike@co.walton.fl.us>; Trey Nick <nictrey@co.walton.fl.us>; Tony Anderson <AndTony@co.walton.fl.us>; Kristen Shell <SheKristen@co.walton.fl.us>
Subject: Mobility Plan - Proposed Forest Road

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

My name is Shirley Laszcz and my husband and I own a home in Watersound West. We have attended the mobility plan presentations via Zoom.

We believe that a mobility plan makes sense for Walton County. The traffic congestion on 30A near Seaside is extremely frustrating and if Walton County can introduce different modes of transportation in some of the more denser areas of 30A (Rosemary, Seaside, Watercolor), then we're all for it.

Our opposition to the mobility plan is the proposal to create one or more "forest" roads/trails through Deer Lake State Park and Pt Washington State Park. The state parks and forests, and the dune lakes, are the crown jewels of Walton County. The mere suggestion of constructing new roadways through the parks is irresponsible for current and future generations of our citizens. I can personally tell you that although I live near the proposed Seagrove Forest road, I would still drive down to either 395 or Watersound Parkway to get to Route 98 because it's shorter in distance. A proposed forest road will only cause increased congestion near Lakewood Drive in Seagrove.

I think that the BCC should approve to move forward with the Mobility Plan with any mention of new forest roads/trails removed. This is the right thing to do. As elected officials, I believe that you owe it to the citizens that you represent to help conserve and preserve our unique environment. Do you want to be remembered 20 years from now as the guys that said it's ok to destroy the beautiful wildlife and plant refuge that we currently enjoy? I think not.

How about some quick wins? First, repair the bike trail. It is in terrible shape and after any rain, the puddles that accumulate on the trail make it impassable. Secondly, add 1 or 2 lanes to the existing Watersound Parkway. St Joe should support this proposal since it's their developments that are adding urgency to the mobility issues in Walton County. Third, let's put the brakes on some of the new development in South Walton. Do we need another Prominence? This particular development has really added strain to beach access, the golf cart problems, and traffic.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I think you will receive wide support and acceptance by removing the creation of forest roads/trails from the Mobility Plan.

Sincerely,

Shirley Laszcz

Karen Owens

From: tylertents@everyactioncustom.com on behalf of Nancy Oconnor
<tylertents@everyactioncustom.com>
Sent: Monday, March 29, 2021 1:55 PM
To: Karen Owens
Subject: Protect Walton's future, say no to roads that threaten our natural resources

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Planning Coordinator Karen Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. As we look towards Walton County's future, it is imperative that we balance growth with protecting our public lands. The Mobility Plan solves some of the challenges the County faces and will continue to face; however, it also includes some proposed roads, trails, and lanes that will create a future of problems for Walton County, including species and habitat loss, exacerbated urban growth pressures, and weakened resilience. In particular, the Seagrove Forest Road, Trail, and Multimodal Lanes; Watersound Beach Forest Trail and Watersound/St. Joe's Parkway Multimodal Way; Point Washington Connector Road; and West Bay Parkway and SR 81 Extension are of concern.

Protecting Point Washington State Forest and Wildlife Management Area, Deer Lake State Park, and the Choctawhatchee Bay Water Management Area and Wildlife Management Area is critical for Walton County's future. These natural areas provide habitat for wildlife and plants, offer ecosystem services like floodwater storage and groundwater recharge, create recreational opportunities, and form an essential part of the County's character and way of life. I have lived in the Inlet for 30 years and am very concerned about exploiting our beautiful land just to allow more and more rapid growth in the area. please let us take a moment pause and look at the big picture.our environment is one of the few that have the dune lakes and beautiful habitat for the creatures who have been here long before the indian habitats and those now.

We don't have to choose between stewarding our natural resources and adapting to growth. We look forward to discussing alternatives to these roads, trails, and lanes in the Mobility Plan that will allow us to adapt to the County's growth, support public safety and quality of life, and protect the natural areas that Walton County's people and wildlife depend on.

Sincerely,
Ms. Nancy Oconnor
174 Walton Palm Rd P C Beach, FL 32461-7311 tylertents@embarqmail.com



Northwest Florida Office

1294 Avondale Way | Tallahassee, Florida 32317-8451 | tel 850.528.5261

www.defenders.org

April 8, 2021

The Honorable Trey Nick, Chair
The Honorable Michael Barker, Vice Chair
The Honorable Tony Anderson
The Honorable Danny Glidewell
The Honorable William McCormick
Walton County Board of County Commissioners
DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Via: nictrey@co.walton.fl.us; barmike@co.walton.fl.us; andtony@co.walton.fl.us, glidanny@co.walton.fl.us; and mccboots@co.walton.fl.us

RE: Comments on the Proposed Walton County Mobility Plan

Dear Chairman Nick and County Commissioners,

On behalf of Defenders of Wildlife (Defenders), please accept these comments concerning the proposed Walton County Mobility Plan which potentially impacts Point Washington State Forest, Deer Lake State Park, Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area, Nokuse Plantation and Devil's Swamp Mitigation Bank. We ask this letter to be included within the public record for your April 27, 2021 meeting or when the Mobility Plan is discussed. Founded in 1947, Defenders of Wildlife is a national non-profit conservation organization focused solely on wildlife and habitat conservation and the safeguarding of biodiversity. Defenders of Wildlife has 400 members and supporters in Walton County and over 124,000 in Florida.

Defenders strongly opposes the establishment of any additional highways, roads and paved or hardened "trails" through Point Washington State Forest, Deer Lake State Park, Choctawhatchee River Water Management Area, Nokuse Plantation and Devil's Swamp Mitigation Bank. Additional roads and paved trails open to motorized vehicles are an incompatible use of state lands and conservation easement areas and could not satisfy the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund's (Governor and Cabinet) Incompatible Use Policy of Natural Resource Lands. We would actively oppose any additional highways, roads and paved trails open to motorized use through these state lands before the Florida Acquisition and Restoration Council and the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund (the Governor and Cabinet).

New highways, roads and paved motorized trails fragmenting the largest contiguous tracts of these protected conservation lands and habitats are incompatible with the major or primary purpose for which these lands were acquired: to conserve the unique South Walton County ecosystem linking three state parks and protecting over 25 rare species including the endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker and the Reticulated flatwoods salamander, the threatened gopher tortoise, eight threatened or endangered plant species and five species of invertebrates. The proposed realignment and four-laning of State Road 81 and County Road 3280 and a new highway crossing the Choctawhatchee River fragmenting its vast, undisturbed bottomland wetland would be devastating to sensitive ecosystems. The proposals will induce additional development to areas adjacent to the public and private

conservation lands and be incredibly disruptive to their protection and management creating additional constraints for using prescribed fire to manage these fire-dependent areas.

We recommend the county consider the practicable alternative of widening existing highways and restoring fragmented habitat connectivity to provide a net positive benefit to these state lands. On six separate occasions, 187 acres of state forest land have already been transferred to Walton County for the Tourist Development Council, Mack Bayou Fire Station, Walton County Sheriff, the Blue Mountain Landfill and for a sewer easement.

Defenders encourages Walton County to not pursue any new highways, roads and paved trails that further fragment the largest remaining tracts of state and private protected forested and wetland habitats in South Walton County. Please instead focus on improving and creating transportation alternatives that provides public access to Walton County's beaches while restoring habitat connectivity.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Kent L. Wimmer". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kent L. Wimmer, AICP

Senior Representative, Northwest Florida

kwimmer@defenders.org

CHAPTER 3. CONCURRENCY AND MOBILITY FEE

3.00.00. GENERALLY

3.00.01. *Purpose and Intent*

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the requirements and procedures necessary to implement the concurrency provisions of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan and to establish a Mobility Plan and Fee in Walton County as the County's transportation mitigation program. Specifically, this chapter is intended to ensure the availability of public facilities and services and the adequacy of those facilities at adopted levels of service concurrent with the impacts of development. This intent is implemented by means of a concurrency management system that will measure the potential impact of a development upon the adopted minimum acceptable level of service for potable water, sewer, solid waste, stormwater management, parks and recreation, and roadway facilities as provided in the Walton County Comprehensive Plan. As detailed below and consistent with Chapter 1, less than minor and minor developments require the issuance of a development order by the Director of Planning and Development Services, or designee, before development can commence or any permits can be secured from the county for construction of an approved minor project. A major development requires the rendition of both a final order by the Board of County Commissioners and a development order by the Department of Planning and Development Services before development can commence or any permits can be secured from the county for construction of an approved major project. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07)

3.01.00. TRANSPORTATION CONCURRENCY REVIEW— PREVIOUS PROPORTIONATE FAIRE SHARE PROGRAM

3.01.01. *Expiration of Transportation Certificate of Concurrency for Application for Minor or Major Development; Approval*

- A. ~~General Applicability. Every application for the approval of a less than minor, minor or major development, unless otherwise exempt, must include a transportation concurrency analysis that is consistent with Chapter 3 of the Land Development Code and the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual. Transportation concurrency analyses shall be received as part of the application for development approval by the Department of Planning and Development Services (department), and reviewed by the county's transportation concurrency manager. Once an application for less than minor, minor or major development order approval is determined to be complete, consistent with the requirements of Chapter 1 of this Code, the transportation concurrency manager shall review the traffic analysis based on the date, and in the order, the complete application was received and logged in by the department. If the transportation concurrency manager approves the traffic analysis, the department shall issue the applicant a certificate of concurrency that temporarily reserves transportation capacity for the proposed project in the county's Transportation Concurrency Management System (CMS) database for a six-month period. A certificate of concurrency for transportation issued under the County's previous proportionate fair share program shall automatically expire at the conclusion of this six-month period, except as otherwise provided herein. Upon expiration, any traffic capacity reserved for a proposed project by the~~

~~certificate of concurrency shall be released from reservation and the county's CMS database will be updated to reflect this released, unused capacity. In the event the transportation concurrency manager disapproves of an applicant's traffic analysis or determines that the analysis is deficient, the applicant shall have 30 days following notification to revise the analysis and/or correct any deficiencies. Thereafter, any subsequent submittal to revise the analysis or correct any deficiencies shall be treated as re-submittals, and the traffic analysis shall be reviewed based on the date the re-submittal was received and in the order logged in by the department.~~

- B. Less than Minor and Minor Development. For a minor development as defined in Chapter 1 of this Code, a certificate of concurrency shall automatically expire six months after it is issued unless:

(1) the Technical Review Committee has completed its review of the complete application and provided its comments and recommendations to the director;

(2) the director has approved the application for less than minor or minor development approval; and

(3) the department has issued a development order for the approved less than minor or minor project. In that circumstance, the certificate of concurrency shall be automatically extended and shall remain valid until the development order expires. A certificate of concurrency shall automatically expire simultaneously with the expiration of the development order, unless:

(a) the infrastructure improvements committed to secure the development order for the minor development have been fully completed within the two year period following the issuance of the development order; or

(b) as applicable, the applicant has timely paid the project's nonrefundable proportionate fair share in full accordance with the requirements of Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual. If either criterion is timely satisfied, the development order shall be deemed vested for traffic concurrency for the approved project.

- C. Major Development. For a major development as defined in Chapter 1 of this Code, a certificate of concurrency issued under the County's previous proportionate fair share program shall automatically expire six months after it is issued unless: (1) the Technical Review Committee has completed its review of the application and provided its comments and recommendations to the director; and (2) the director has issued his or her report recommending approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the application to the Planning Commission. In that event, the certificate of concurrency shall be automatically extended for an additional six-month period to facilitate timely review of the application by the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners consistent with the requirements of this Code, and the board's issuance of a final order. Except for final orders issued for a phased project, as more particularly described below, a final order approving a major development application shall be valid for a period of two years from rendition; and may be renewed for an additional year. A certificate of concurrency for a

major development shall automatically expire simultaneously with the expiration of a final order unless:

(1) within this two-year period the applicant secures the requisite development order for the project and completes all of the site's infrastructure improvements; or

(2) as applicable, the applicant timely pays the project's non-refundable proportionate fair share in full in accordance with the requirements of Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual. If either criterion is timely satisfied, the development order shall be deemed vested for traffic concurrency for the approved project.

D. Exception. Any Final Order that has an expiration date of September 1, 2008 through January 1, 2012, may be extended and renewed for a period of two years following its date of expiration. Final Orders that are extended will continue to be governed under the rules in effect at the time the Final Order was issued. The holder of a valid Final Order eligible for the two-year extension shall notify the County authorizing agency in writing no later than December 31, 2009, and request the extension. If the applicant fails to secure the requisite development order for a major development within two years from rendition of a final order, the certificate of concurrency shall automatically expire at the conclusion of this two-year period. Thereafter, an applicant seeking to secure approval for the project after the expiration of a certificate of concurrency shall be required to submit an updated traffic concurrency analysis to reflect then current conditions, for which a reasonable fee shall be assessed for the cost of the new review. Based on approval of the updated analysis by the traffic concurrency manager, the applicant shall be required to apply for an amended final order from the Board of County Commissioners to address any deficiencies identified in the updated analysis, and to pay the project's additional proportionate fair share, as warranted, as a condition precedent to securing a development order for the project. In the event a minor or major development order is challenged pursuant to F.S. Section 163.3215, the timelines for the expiration of the development order and certificate of concurrency, as detailed above, shall be tolled until all legal challenges are exhausted.

1. Master Development Phased Projects. A final order approving a major development application for a phased project, referred to herein as a "master development", other than a planned unit development, which is addressed in Chapter 2 of this Code, shall be valid for a period of two years from rendition. A certificate of concurrency for a phased project shall automatically expire simultaneously with the expiration of the final order for the master development unless the applicant secures the requisite development order for the project within this two-year period, and
2. Completes the infrastructure for all phases of the master development, as approved; or
3. Pays the master development's non-refundable proportionate fair share in full for all phases of the master development in accordance with the requirements of Appendix C.3; or
4. Completes, at a minimum, the site's infrastructure improvements for the first phase of the

approved master development and/or timely pays the master development's non-refundable proportionate fair share for the first phase of the master project, as applicable, in accordance with the requirements of the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual; and

5. Enters into a development agreement in accordance with the requirements of F.S. Sections 163.3220--163.3243, wherein the county and the applicant agree to a schedule for the timely construction and completion of the infrastructure for each remaining phase of the approved master development and/or the timely payment of the non-refundable proportionate fair share for each of the remaining phases of the approved master development. For purposes of this section, "timely completion" of the site's infrastructure means that construction of the infrastructure for each phase of the master development is scheduled to commence, and commences, within one year of completion of the prior phase, and is scheduled to be completed, and is completed, within two years of the scheduled commencement date for that phase. The certificate of concurrency shall expire automatically if any phase of the master development is not timely completed in accordance with the timelines adopted in the development agreement. Upon the expiration of the certificate of concurrency for a master development, any unused traffic capacity reserved by the certificate for the remaining phases of the master project will be released from reservation and the county's CMS database will be updated to reflect this released, unused capacity.
6. Expiration of Transportation Certificate of Concurrency for Preexisting Final Orders. An applicant with a final order issued or rendered by the Board of County Commissioners prior to the date of this amendment, but who has not secured a development order as of this date, shall have traffic capacity temporarily reserved for the project, as approved, for three years commencing on the date of adoption of this amendment, subject to the following conditions and limitations:
 - a. A detailed traffic concurrency analysis was submitted with the application for major development approval which was approved by the transportation concurrency manager, as evidenced by the issuance of a certificate of concurrency and/or the reservation of transportation capacity in the county's Transportation Concurrency Management System concurrent with the issuance or rendition of the final order by the Board of County Commissioners;
 - b. The certificate of concurrency for the approved final order shall be deemed valid for a period of three years from the date of adoption of this amendment;
 - c. The applicant secures the requisite development order for the approved project within this three-year period and completes all of the site's infrastructure improvements; or as applicable, the applicant timely pays the non-refundable proportionate fair share in full for the approved project in accordance with the requirements of the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual;
 - d. The certificate shall automatically expire at the end of this three-year period if the applicant fails to secure a development order for the approved project in accordance

with the requirements of this Code and this section; and

- e. Upon the expiration of this certificate of concurrency, any traffic capacity reserved for the project by the certificate of concurrency will be released from reservation and the county's CMS database will be updated to reflect this released, unused capacity. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07; Ord. No. 2009-04, Section 1, 4-14-09; Ord. No. 200915, Section 1, 9-8-09)

~~3.01.02. Burden of Proof~~

~~The burden of showing compliance with the adopted levels of service and meeting the concurrency evaluation shall be upon the applicant. The Director of Planning and Development Services will assist in the preparation of the necessary documentation and information. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07)~~

3.02.00. EXEMPTIONS

Any person seeking an exemption from the terms of this chapter shall submit substantial competent evidence to the Director of Planning and Development Services to demonstrate the entitlement to the exemption. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07)

3.01.04. Exempt Activities

The following development activities shall be deemed to be exempt from the provisions of this chapter:

- A. Development with a development order issued on or before the adoption date of this amendment to this Code, if:
 - 1. The project's infrastructure improvements were completed prior to expiration of the development order; or
 - 2. The project's infrastructure improvements substantially commenced and were continuing in good faith toward completion prior to the expiration of the development order to such an extent that any development rights conferred by the unexpired development order have vested. Development rights vest under this section when the Board of County Commissioners makes a determination that the person alleging vested rights:
 - a. Has relied in good faith;
 - b. Has relied upon some act or omission of the government; and
 - c. Has made such a substantial change in position or incurred such extensive obligations and expenses that it would be highly inequitable and unjust to destroy the rights he or she has acquired. It shall be the duty and responsibility of the person alleging vested rights to demonstrate affirmatively the legal requisites of vested rights. The board shall adopt administrative procedures to afford due process to persons alleging vested rights. For purposes of this section, the purchase price of the property, the expense of securing development order approval, or the mere

existence of land use or zoning prior to the effective date of this section shall not be determined to vest any development rights.

B. Development with a development order for a development of regional impact adopted on or before the adoption date of this Code, unless the development order:

1. Expressly states otherwise;
2. Expires according to its terms and has not been extended;
3. Is amended, but only as to the amended portions of the development order; or
4. Is invalidated in whole or as to the invalidated parts, in part.

C. ~~Construction of public facilities that are identified in the capital improvements element of the Walton County Comprehensive Plan that are required in order to achieve level of service standards adopted in the comprehensive plan pertaining to public facilities and services.~~

D. ~~De Minimis Developments, i.e., projects of such low intensity or density so as to have a de minimis impact, if any, upon the level of service standards for roadways set forth in the Walton County Comprehensive Plan. For the purposes of this chapter, de minimis developments are defined in Section 6.A of the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual as follows:~~

1. ~~The impact of a single family home on an existing lot of record, or the replacement of an existing dwelling unit when no additional dwelling units are created, will be exempt from the transportation concurrency requirements of this chapter.~~
2. ~~Developments generating less than five trips during an average weekday PM peak hour will be considered to have a de minimis impact on the Transportation Concurrency Network. However, a PM peak hour trip distribution, consistent with Section 10 of the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual will be provided by the Applicant (or conducted by County staff) to adequately account for committed demand in the Walton County Concurrency Management System. These external project trips will be assigned only to the directly accessed segment on the Transportation Concurrency Network. No further review of the transportation impacts of a de minimis development will be required and a final concurrency determination may be issued subject to other provisions contained elsewhere in the Walton County Land Development Code. Specific parameters for defining de minimis impacts on a given roadway segment in the County's Transportation Concurrency Network are defined in Section 11.C.1.a of the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07).~~

3.03.00. GENERAL CONCURRENCY REVIEW

3.03.01. *Generally*

Walton County shall use the procedures listed below to determine compliance of an application for a development order with this concurrency management system. At the time of application for a development order, a concurrency evaluation shall be made to determine the availability of the facilities or services required to be concurrent. An applicant for a development order shall provide the county with all information required to enable the concurrency evaluation to be made. Upon receipt of a complete concurrency review application, the Director of Planning and Development Services shall perform the concurrency evaluation for each of the public facilities and services. A concurrency review application shall not be deemed complete until all applicable permits, verification letters or other proof has been submitted pursuant to section 3.03.02 below. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07)

3.03.02. *Level of Service Standards*

The Walton County Comprehensive Plan establishes level of service standards for transportation, drainage, potable water, sanitary sewer and recreation. The Concurrency Review shall evaluate all development projects to ensure compliance with the level of service standards established by the Comprehensive Plan below.

A. Transportation. Walton County shall implement a Concurrency Management System, with the application of Transportation Element polices of the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code provisions to ensure adequate provisions to ensure adequate Level of Service (LOS) are maintained on the network as follow:

1. All County roadways within Walton County as identified in the Concurrency Management System shall operate at a peak hour Level of Service D, with the exception of the following constrained roadways:
 - a. CR 30A US 98 on the West End to US 98 on the East End
 - b. CR 2378 Okaloosa County Line to US 98 on the East End
2. All State roadways identified in the Concurrency Management System shall operate at automobile peak hour service D, except State Highway system (SHS) facilities shall operate at peak hour level of standards consistent with **Rule 14-94, F.A.C.**
- ~~3. Developments that are determined to be creating a level of service deficiency shall be required to contribute a proportionate share of the necessary improvements to correct the deficiency.~~

B. Sanitary Sewer Facilities. 100 gallons per capita per day (GPCPD). The County shall adopt land development regulations which ensure that existing and projected needs are met through provisions which ensure that development orders are not issued which degrade the level of service standards. Minimum service shall be consistent with Table II, Chapter 10D-6, F.A.C.

- C. Solid Waste. Disposal Capacity 6 pounds per capita, per day
- D. Drainage Facilities. Walton County shall maintain a level of service standard, for new and existing development, based on the following stormwater quantity and quality criteria:

Design Storm Frequency and Water Quality Treatment VolumesFACILITY	ATTENUATION / DESIGN STORM	WATER QUALITY TREATMENT
Bridges	50 Year	N/A
Canals, ditches, or culverts for drainage external to the development	25 Year	N/A
Cross drains, storm sewers	10 Year	N/A
Roadside swales for drainage internal to the development	10 Year	N/A
Detention/Retention basins with positive outfall	25 Year ^{1,2}	1" / 0.5" ^{3,4,5}
Detention/Retention basins without positive outfall	100 Year ¹	1" / 0.5" ^{3,4,5}

¹See Policy I-4.5.8.B

²See Policy I-4.5.8.C

³See Policy I-4.5.8.D

⁴See Policy I-4.5.8.E

⁵See Policy I-4.5.8.F

- E. Potable Water Facilities. 100 gallons per capita per day (GPCPD). Consistent with the County's adopted Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (WSFWP) incorporated by reference in the FLUE Policy L-1.14.2, development orders are not issued which degrade the level of service standard. The County hereby adopts a minimum standard of 20 pounds per square inch (psi) and 650 gallons per minute (gpm) for potable water lines, or a higher standard as determined by the County Fire Department to be necessary.
- F. Recreation Facilities. The County will maintain a minimum of 6.25 acres to 1,000 population level of service for recreation facilities.

3.03.02. Evaluation

~~A. Roads. The Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual provides details for conducting and reviewing a transportation concurrency analysis.~~

B. Potable Water

1. Submittals. The applicant for a development order shall submit, along with the application for a development order, proof that sufficient capacity exists as demonstrated by one of the following:
 - a. If the service provider is other than an onsite potable water well, documentation will be required from the provider that the project is within its service area and that it has the capacity to serve the project as proposed, at or above the adopted level of service. If the ability of a provider to serve a proposed project is contingent upon planned facility expansion, details regarding such planned improvements shall also be submitted. Prior to the issuance of a final development order by the county, the applicant may be required to provide evidence of a contract with the service provider, indicating the provider's commitment and ability to serve the proposed project; or
 - b. Permits issued by the Northwest Florida Water Management District for a potable water well to serve the development.
 - c. For owner-occupied mobile homes, a notarized affidavit from the applicant that there is an existing functioning potable water well on the site.
2. Presumption of Available Capacity. A presumption of available capacity shall be rendered by the Director of Planning and Development Services upon receipt of one of the above.

C. Wastewater

1. Submittals. The applicant for a development order shall submit, along with the application for a development order, proof that sufficient capacity exists as demonstrated by one of the following:
 - a. If the proposed service provider is other than an onsite septic system, documentation will be required from the provider that the project is within its service area and that it has the capacity to serve the project as proposed, at or above the adopted level of service. If the ability of a provider to serve a proposed project is contingent upon planned facility expansion, details regarding such planned improvements shall also be submitted. Prior to the issuance of a final development order by the county, the applicant may be required to provide evidence of a contract

with the service provider indicating the provider's commitment and ability to serve the proposed project; or

- b. All applicable HRS permits for an onsite septic system, pursuant to Rule 10D6, F.A.C., are obtained.
2. Presumption of Available Capacity. A presumption of available capacity shall be rendered by the Director of Planning and Development Services upon receipt of one of the above.

D. Stormwater Management

1. Submittals. The applicant for a development order shall submit, along with the application for the development order, proof that an application has been submitted to the FDEP. Prior to the issuance of a development order, the applicant must provide the following:
 - a. All applicable department of environmental protection (DEP) permits for stormwater management systems are obtained; and/or
 - b. All applicable department of transportation (DOT) permits for stormwater connections, pursuant to Rule 14-86, F.A.C. are obtained; and/or
 - c. All applicable Northwest Florida Water Management District (NFWWMD) permits are obtained.
2. Presumption of Available Capacity. A presumption of available capacity shall be rendered by the Director of Planning and Development Services upon receipt of the applicable DEP, DOT, and/or NFWWMD permits.

E. Solid Waste

1. Countywide Presumption of Available Capacity. Based upon the data and analysis supportive to the Walton County comprehensive plan, adequate capacity exists for estimated demand for solid waste services through the planning period. Therefore, a presumption of available capacity for all development shall be rendered by the Director of Planning and Development Services for the period beginning on the adoption date of this Code and through the submission of the first concurrency management system annual report. At such time, and for each subsequent annual report, the available capacity for solid waste shall be reassessed, and a determination made as to whether the presumption of available capacity is to be continued.

F. Recreation and Open Space

1. Parks and recreation impact fees are used to fund acquisition and expansion of parks and recreation service-related capital assets required to address the additional parks and recreation service demand created by new growth. Developers are required to dedicate a minimum of 5% of the gross area of a residential development or mixed use

development with a residential component for public recreation purposes, which may include public beach access ways. Developers shall have the option of providing land off-site that is of similar value that is usable for park and recreational facility development and that is located within a one mile radius of the proposed development. Alternatively, the developer of a residential development or mixed use development with a residential component shall pay cash in an amount equal to 6% of the assessed land value, as provided by the Walton County Property Appraiser, of the unimproved land.

3.03.03. Minimum Requirements for Concurrency (Determination of Availability)

In order to obtain a certificate of concurrency, one of the following conditions must be satisfied for each of the public facilities and services, and such condition given in the certificate of concurrency:

A. For potable water, sewer, solid waste & stormwater, at a minimum, provisions in the county Comprehensive Plan that ensure that the following standards will be met will satisfy the concurrency requirement:

1. The necessary facilities and services are in place at the time a development order is issued; or
2. A development order is issued subject to the condition that the necessary facilities and services will be in place when the impacts of the development occur; or
3. The necessary facilities are under construction at the time a development order is issued; or
4. The necessary facilities and services are guaranteed in an enforceable development agreement that includes the provisions of section (A) (1)-(3) above. An enforceable development agreement may include, but is not limited to, development agreements pursuant to F.S. Section 163.3220, or an agreement or development order issued pursuant to F.S. Ch. 380. The agreement must guarantee that the necessary facilities and services will be in place when the impacts of the development occur.

A. For Parks and Recreation. The concurrency requirement may be satisfied by complying with the Walton County Comprehensive Plan impact fee provision.

~~B. **For Roads.** The concurrency requirement may be satisfied by complying with the standards above or implementation of one or more mitigation strategies as described and identified in Section 14 of the Walton County Transportation Concurrency Management System Methodology and Procedures Manual. In addition, in areas in which Walton County has committed to provide the necessary public facilities and services in accordance with its five-year schedule of capital improvements, Walton County may satisfy the concurrency requirement for roads by basing this concurrency management system upon an adequate capital improvements program and schedule which, at a minimum, include the following provisions: —~~

~~1. The capital improvements element and a five-year schedule of capital improvements, in~~

addition to meeting all of the other statutory and rule requirements, must be financially feasible. The capital improvements element and schedule of capital improvements may recognize and include transportation projects included in the first three years of the applicable adopted Florida Department of Transportation five-year work program;

a. The 5-year schedule of capital improvements must include:

- i. Necessary facilities to maintain the adopted level of service standards to serve the proposed development; and
- ii. Necessary facilities required to eliminate those portions of existing deficiencies which are a priority to be eliminated during the five-year period under the Walton County comprehensive plan's schedule of capital improvements;
- iii. A realistic, financially feasible funding system based on currently available revenue sources that must be adequate to fund the public facilities required to serve the development authorized by the development order and which public facilities are included in the five-year schedule of capital improvements;
- iv. The five-year schedule of capital improvements must include the estimated date of commencement of actual construction and the estimated date of project completion;
- v. The five-year schedule of capital improvements must demonstrate that the actual construction of the road facilities must be scheduled to commence on or before the third year of the five-year schedule of capital improvements; and

3.03.04. Strategies to Rectify Lack of Concurrency

Should a development not pass the above concurrency evaluation, several strategies may be used to rectify this, including the following:

- A. A plan amendment that lowers the adopted level of service standard for the affected facilities and/or services.
- B. A reduction in the scale or impact of the proposed development.
- C. Phasing of the proposed development.
- D. Implementation of one or more mitigation strategies as described and identified in Section 14 of Appendix C.3. (Ord. No. 2007-10, Section 1, 7-10-07)**

3.04.003.03.05. APPEALS

Appeals related to determinations of concurrency shall be made pursuant to the provisions in section 1.15.09.

3.04.01 MOBILITY FEES**3.04.01 Authority**

- A. This Section shall be known and may be cited as the "Walton County Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Ordinance."
- B. Walton County has the authority to adopt this article pursuant to Article VII of the 1968 Florida Constitution and Chapter 125 of Florida Statutes.
- C. Planning for new multimodal projects needed to serve new growth and development that generate the need for additional multimodal projects and the implementation of these projects through the comprehensive planning process, is a responsibility of the County under Section 163.3161 et seq., Florida Statutes, and is in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of the County.

3.03.02 Intent and Purpose

- A. This article is intended to impose a mobility fee, payable prior to issuance of a building permit, in an amount based upon the average amount of new person travel demand attributable to new development and the average cost of providing the multimodal capacity needed to serve such new person travel demand. This article shall not be construed to authorize imposition of fees related to multimodal project needs attributable to existing development.
- B. This article is intended to allow new development and redevelopment in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan to share in the burdens of growth. New development and redevelopment shares in this burden by paying a pro rata share of the reasonably anticipated costs of multimodal projects needed to accommodate the person travel demands created by new development and redevelopment as well as by complying with other appropriate development approval conditions. This article is intended to provide flexibility to address the needs of individual developments that, because of location, timing, or other characteristics, require different treatment in the form of reduced fees or supplemental requirements.
- C. Towards this end, the mobility fees are replacing Walton County's transportation concurrency and proportionate share system and are based upon the calculation methodology incorporated in the "Walton County Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Technical Report" dated April 2021, prepared by NUE Urban Concepts, LLC.

3.04.03 Definitions - Refer to Chapter 9 of this Code for the definition of terms used in this Section.

3.04.04 Adoption of Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Technical Report - The mobility plan and mobility fee report entitled "Walton County Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Technical Report – April 2021," prepared by NUE Urban Concepts, LLC, is hereby adopted. This adoption includes, but is not limited to, the following: the multimodal projects included in the mobility plan, the basis of the assumptions, conclusions and findings in such study as to the basis of the mobility fee, the methodology for calculating the mobility fee, the person miles of capacity assigned to multimodal capital improvements and the person travel demand assigned to various land use categories. The study presents the technical analysis and detailed methodology supporting the Walton County Mobility Fees consistent with the multimodal projects included in the 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan. The 2040 Walton County Mobility Plan consist of nine (9) separate plans, a plan of multimodal projects for future consideration, and tables identifying specific multimodal projects

reflected on the plans and multimodal projects consisting of services and programs not reflected on the plans, such as wayfinding programs and autonomous transit shuttles. The technical report shall be maintained and made available by the County upon request.

3.04.05 Mobility Fee Imposition

A. The mobility fee imposed by this Article shall apply to new applications for building permits and special use permit applications for a change in use submitted on or after Day Month Year.

- (1) This Ordinance shall not be imposed on building permits otherwise necessary for:
 - (a) Room additions, remodeling, rehabilitation or other improvements to an existing structure, provided there is no increase in person trips or person travel demand and no increase in square footage for non-residential uses and no increase in the number of dwelling units for residential uses; or
 - (b) Room additions, remodeling, rehabilitation or other improvements to an existing structure, provided there is a demonstration the changes are needed to an existing residence to accommodate a mobility impaired person or home care that requires additional space to live or recover for medical reasons; or
 - (c) Rebuilding of a damaged or destroyed structure, whether voluntary or involuntary, provided there is no increase in the intensity of use or no increase in square footage for non-residential uses and no increase in the number of dwelling units for residential uses; or
 - (d) A change in occupancy that does not generate additional person trips or person travel demand or any increase in square footage for non-residential uses or increase in the number of dwelling units for residential uses.
 - (e) Accessory buildings that do not result in an increase in person trips or person travel demand will be exempt from the fee (e.g. detached garage, sheds, parking structures, covered parking).
- (2) There is hereby imposed upon all impact generating land development activity as herein defined a mobility fee assessed at the time of building or special use permit application and due prior to the issuance of a building or special use permit, and no building permit or special use permit shall be issued until said mobility fee shall have been paid except as otherwise herein provided. Mobility fees are assessed at the mobility fee rate in effect at the time of permit application. If the permit is for less than the entire contemplated development, the fee shall be computed for the amount of development covered by the permit. The obligations for payment of mobility fees shall run with the land.
 - (a) Any developer, who, prior to the effective date for mobility fees, paid County proportionate may be eligible for a pro-rata credit. The Administrative Manual shall detail the requirements for a proportionate share credit agreement and said agreement shall be required prior to issuance or utilization of any credit. The credit shall also be adjusted to account for service charges, or payment of the service charges based on the amount of credit provided.
 - (b) Additionally, the mobility fee will be imposed for any structure that is altered, expanded or replaced that results in an increase in person trips and person travel demand over the existing land use.

- (c) The mobility fee is calculated on the basis of the person travel demand generated from the land use. If the person travel demand increases due to a change in size or use, the mobility fee due shall be the incremental difference resulting from the alteration, expansion or replacement as determined by the Mobility Fee Schedule, less the mobility fee that would be imposed under the applicable rate prior to the alteration, expansion or replacement.
 - (d) In the event that there is a change in use that results in a decrease in person travel demand generated by the previously allowed use, the applicant shall not be entitled to a refund or credit.
 - (e) A structure or use of land that is inactive and has been abandoned for a period of more than three (3) years shall not be considered an existing or active use for purposes of calculating mobility fee off-sets. The mobility plan and mobility fee are to be updated every three (3) years and person travel demand is measured on a yearly basis. Therefore, person travel associated with the use is no longer captured in collected data travel demand which is used to plan for future needed mobility projects. The burden of demonstrating the existence of a use or structure shall be upon the fee payer where an off-set request is made.
 - (f) For uses and structures considered to be active, any previous payment of proportionate share or mobility fees under this article may be credited against the appropriate mobility fees owed as a result of a change of use or reestablishing a use of land or structure that has been vacant but not considered abandoned.
 - (g) Any request for credit or offsets of a mobility fee shall be made prior to submittal of a building permit application and shall be resolved prior to issuance of a building permit, unless otherwise stated in a written agreement per the applicant and the County per the requirements detailed in the Administrative Manual. Any off-sets or credits not so claimed shall be deemed waived by the fee payer.
 - (h) Vacation rentals shall pay a mobility fee per room, except for kitchens and bathrooms or unenclosed accessory spaces. The conversion of any existing residential use shall be required to pay the difference between a mobility fee based on the square footage of the home and the mobility fee based on the number of rooms for the vacation rental.
- B. Any person who shall initiate any new impact generating land development activity, except as otherwise provided for herein, shall pay a mobility fee as set forth in the following Mobility Fee Schedule:

<u>MOBILITY FEE SCHEDULE</u>			
	<u>PLANNING AREAS</u>		
<u>Schedule of Land Uses</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>Central</u>	<u>North & North Central</u>
<u>RESIDENTIAL / LODGING USES PER UNIT OF MEASURE</u>			
<u>Residential ¹ per sq. ft.</u>	<u>\$1.25</u>	<u>\$1.00</u>	<u>\$0.50</u>
<u>Overnight Lodging ² per room</u>	<u>\$1,907</u>	<u>\$1,526</u>	<u>\$763</u>
<u>Boutique Overnight Lodging ³ per room</u>	<u>\$1,127</u>	<u>\$901</u>	<u>\$451</u>
<u>Recreational Vehicle Park ⁴ per space or lot</u>	<u>\$1,423</u>	<u>\$1,139</u>	<u>\$569</u>
<u>INSTITUTIONAL USES PER SQ. FT.</u>			
<u>Community Serving ⁵</u>	<u>\$0.83</u>	<u>\$0.66</u>	<u>\$0.33</u>
<u>Long Term Care ⁶</u>	<u>\$1.08</u>	<u>\$0.87</u>	<u>\$0.43</u>
<u>INDUSTRIAL USES PER SQ. FT.</u>			
<u>Industrial ⁷</u>	<u>\$0.70</u>	<u>\$0.56</u>	<u>\$0.28</u>
<u>Commercial Storage ⁸</u>	<u>\$0.31</u>	<u>\$0.25</u>	<u>\$0.12</u>
<u>RECREATION USES PER UNIT OF MEASURE</u>			
<u>Marina ⁹ per berth</u>	<u>\$216</u>	<u>\$173</u>	<u>\$86</u>
<u>Outdoor Commercial Recreation ¹⁰ per acre</u>	<u>\$1,282</u>	<u>\$1,025</u>	<u>\$513</u>
<u>Indoor Commercial Recreation ¹¹ per sq. ft.</u>	<u>\$1.84</u>	<u>\$1.47</u>	<u>\$0.74</u>
<u>OFFICE USES PER SQ. FT.</u>			
<u>Office ¹²</u>	<u>\$1.28</u>	<u>\$1.03</u>	<u>\$0.51</u>
<u>COMMERCIAL & RETAIL USES PER UNIT OF MEASURE</u>			
<u>Local Retail ¹³</u>	<u>\$1.36</u>	<u>\$1.08</u>	<u>\$0.54</u>
<u>Retail ¹⁴</u>	<u>\$2.71</u>	<u>\$2.17</u>	<u>\$1.08</u>
<u>Motor Vehicle & Boat Cleaning ¹⁵ per stall</u>	<u>\$4,408</u>	<u>\$3,526</u>	<u>\$1,763</u>
<u>Bank Drive-Thru or Free-Standing ATM ¹⁶ per lane / ATM</u>	<u>\$7,253</u>	<u>\$5,802</u>	<u>\$2,901</u>
<u>Quick Service Restaurant Drive-Thru ¹⁷ per lane</u>	<u>\$18,210</u>	<u>\$14,568</u>	<u>\$7,284</u>
<u>Pharmacy Drive-Thru ¹⁸ per lane</u>	<u>\$2,971</u>	<u>\$2,377</u>	<u>\$1,188</u>
<u>Motor Vehicle Fueling Position ¹⁹ per fueling position</u>	<u>\$7,391</u>	<u>\$5,913</u>	<u>\$2,956</u>

MOBILITY FEE SCHEDULE FOOTNOTES

¹ Residential mobility fees shall be calculated per sq. ft., excluding the square footage of unconditioned garages and unenclosed porches. Residential includes all types of residential include single family, multi-family, active adult, and mobile homes. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Code 200 Series, excluding Codes 253, 254, 255, 260, and 265. Tiny homes or container homes would also be considered residential.

² Overnight Lodging mobility fees shall be calculated per room, excluding kitchens and bathrooms. Lodging includes inns, motels, hotels, resorts, time shares and vacation rentals. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Code 300 Series. Any residential use considered a vacation rental for purposes of County approvals, permits, or reviews would be considered overnight lodging.

³ Boutique Overnight Lodging includes unique, one-of-a-kind specialty accommodations, limited to a single lodging operation statewide and nationally. Any specialty accommodations with more than one operation, or affiliated with a national or international hotel chain, or exceeding 100 rooms shall not be considered boutique. A traditional bed & breakfast establishment, not considered a vacation rental, would be considered boutique.

⁴ Recreational Vehicle Parks include all uses that accommodate permanent or temporary placement of vehicles on a lot or in a designated space. Parks would include any residential use with permanently affixed wheels that allow for relocation without the need to remove any coverings of wheels or the under carriage, including RVs, travel trailers, and tiny homes on wheels.

⁵ Community Serving mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include community uses that are intended to be non-commercial and non-retail. Uses include day care, adult care, places of assembly, places of worship, lodges, clubs, community centers, performing arts centers, community theaters, non-profits, civic minded uses, museums, libraries, and private pre-K to 12 schools. The uses generally fall under the ITE Land Use Code 500 and 600 Series.

⁶ Long Term Care mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include assisted living, congregate care, and nursing homes. The uses include ITE Land Use Codes 253, 254, 255 and 620.

⁷ Industrial mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include assembly, brewing, distilling, distribution, fabrication, manufacturing, specialty contractors, trades, utilities and warehouses. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Codes 000 and 100 Series, excluding Code 151.

⁸ Commercial storage mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and any acreage used for unenclosed material and vehicle storage, sales and display shall be converted to square footage. Commercial storage is commonly referred to as min-warehouses, and include boat, car, and RV storage, along with any other outdoor storage for personal property. Commercial storage uses fall ITE Land Use Code 151.

⁹ Marina mobility fees shall be calculated on a per berth or dock basis for the storage of boats. The mobility fee for berths or docks is considered an additive fee, with any office, retail or restaurant uses required to pay the applicable per square foot mobility fee rate for the building. Marina uses fall ITE Land Use Code 420.

¹⁰ Outdoor Commercial Recreation mobility fees shall be calculated on acre basis, including the acreage of any buildings or other vertical structures. Outdoor commercial recreation includes outdoor non-public parks, baseball and soccer fields, driving ranges, golf courses, multipurpose amusement uses (min-golf, go-carts, etc), paintball, shooting ranges, tennis, racquetball, pickerel, and basketball courts. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Code 400 Series.

¹¹ Indoor Commercial Recreation mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include indoor recreation uses such as athletic clubs, bowling, billiards, climbing walls, health and fitness centers, gyms, studios, and trampoline parks. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Code 400 Series, excluding Codes 440, 444, and 445. Indoor arcades and multifunction entertainment venues would be considered retail uses.

¹² Office mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include general office, professional offices, financial institutions, higher education, medical offices (clinics, dentist, emergency care, hospitals) and veterinary offices. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Codes 600 and 700 Series, excluding Code 620 and including Codes 911 and 912.

¹³ Local Retail mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include locally owned entertainment, personal service, retail, restaurant, and service uses. Local is defined as a commercial or retail use with five or fewer location statewide, no national locations, non-chain and non-franchisee owned. The square footage shall be based on gross sq. ft. under roof or canopy and all areas used for outdoor display, sales, seating, and storage not under roof or canopy.

¹⁴ Retail mobility fees shall be calculated on a per square foot basis and include entertainment, personal service, retail, restaurant, and service uses. The square footage shall be based on gross sq. ft. under roof or canopy and all areas used for outdoor display, sales, seating, and storage not under roof or canopy. The uses fall under the ITE Land Use Codes 800 and 900 Series, excluding Code 911 and 912 and including Codes 440, 444, and 445.

¹⁵ Motor Vehicle & Boat mobility fees shall be calculated based on the number of stalls, lanes, or drive-thrus associated with the cleaning, detailing, washing and waxing of motor vehicles and boats. The mobility fee is an additive fee and is assessed in addition to the retail fee per square foot for any building which will be occupied and be used for interaction with customers. Buildings for storage or maintenance of equipment would be considered ancillary to the use itself and would not be assessed a mobility fee per sq. ft. based on the applicable retail rate.

¹⁶ Bank Drive-Thru Lane or Free-Standing ATM per lane or ATM shall be assessed a mobility fee per drive-thru lane or free-standing ATM. Each bank building shall pay the office rate for the square footage of the building. The mobility fee is an additive fee and is assessed in addition to the office fee per square foot for any bank or financial use building. The free-standing ATM is for an ATM only and not an ATM within or part of a building such as a walk-up ATM directly attached to or located within a bank or another non-financial building, such as an ATM within a grocery store.

¹⁷ Quick Service Restaurant Drive-Thru mobility fee shall be assessed per lane. Any drive-thru associated with a quick service restaurant (aka fast food or fast casual) will be an additive fee in addition to the retail fee per square foot for the quick service restaurant building. The number of drive-thru lanes will be based on the number of lanes present when an individual places and / or picks-up an order. The restaurant drive-thru rate applies for any type of retail building, whether a convenience use, multi-tenant or free-standing building.

¹⁸ Pharmacy Drive-Thru mobility fee shall be assessed per lane. Any drive-thru associated with a pharmacy will be an additive fee in addition to the retail fee per square foot for the pharmacy building. The number of drive-thru lanes will be based on the number of lanes present when an individual places or pick-up a prescription or item.

¹⁹ Vehicle Fueling Position mobility fee shall be assessed per fueling position. Rates per vehicle fueling position apply to any retail uses with vehicle fueling, whether a convenience store, gas station, general store, grocery store, supermarket, superstore, variety store, wholesale club or service stations with fuel pumps. In addition, there shall be a separate retail fee per square foot for any building. The number of fueling positions is based on the maximum number of vehicles that could be fueled at one time.

The Administrative Manual shall detail the calculations for each mobility fee land use and the common land uses that fall under each land use category. The Manual shall also detail how additive mobility fees are to be calculated.

3.04.06 Mobility Fee Determination.

- A. The mobility fee shall be determined using the land use categories in the Mobility Fee Schedule per Section 3.04.05 B.
- B. In the event a project involves a land use not contemplated under the mobility fee land use categories adopted in Section 3.04.05 B., the mobility fee administrator shall determine the mobility fee utilizing the closest land use category in the Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee Technical Report adopted in Section 3.04.04.
- C. In the event of a development that involves a mixed-use project, the mobility fee administrator shall determine the mobility fee based on each separate mobility fee land use category included in the proposed mixed-use project.
- D. The mobility fee will be determined using the appropriate rate.
- E. Alternative mobility fee or special mobility fee determinations authorized.

In the event an applicant believes that the cost to mitigate the impact of the development of improvements needed to serve the applicant's proposed development is less than the fee

established in this Section, the applicant may request consideration of and submit an alternative mobility fee or special mobility fee determination request, along with an application and review fee as determined by the County, and support materials to substantiate the request to the mobility fee administrator pursuant to the provisions of this section. If the mobility fee administrator finds that the data, information, assumptions, formulae and methodology used by the applicant to calculate the alternative mobility fee or special mobility fee satisfy the requirements of this Section, the alternative mobility fee or special mobility fee shall be deemed the mobility fee due and owing for the proposed development.

1. Procedure for review of alternative mobility fee or special mobility fee determinations.

The mobility fee administrator is responsible for calculating mobility fees in accordance with the provisions of this Section. If an applicant believes project impacts are lower than justified by the findings of this Section, or believes the proposed use is incorrectly assigned as identified in the mobility fee schedule, or that the assumptions that derive the mobility fee are not applicable to a specific proposed land use, an adjustment to the fees may be requested along with an application and review fee. The mobility fee administrator shall determine whether the request shall be reviewed as either an alternative mobility fee determination or a special mobility fee determination, based upon the impact of the proposed land use on the County mobility. The process for reviewing alternative mobility fee determinations is listed below in Section 3.04.06 A. 2. The process for special mobility fee determinations for minor projects with significantly less impacts is found in Section 3.04.06 B.

2. Alternative mobility fee determination.

- (a) The alternative mobility fee determination shall be based on data, information, assumptions, formulae and methodology contained in this article and the mobility fee study referred to in Section 3.04.04 herein, or independent sources, provided that:
 - (i) The independent source is (an) accepted standard source of transportation engineering or planning data or information; or
 - (ii) The independent source is a local study carried out by a qualified planner or engineer pursuant to an accepted methodology of planning or engineering;
 - (iii) Where different data, information, assumptions, formulae or methodology are employed such differences shall be specially identified and justified.
- (b) An alternative mobility fee calculation shall be undertaken through the submission of an application for review of an alternative mobility fee determination for the mobility fee component for which an alternative mobility fee calculation is requested. A developer shall submit such an application prior to submittal of a building or special use permit application or as otherwise agreed to in a mobility fee agreement. The County may submit such an application for any proposed land development activity for which it concludes the nature, timing or location of the proposed development makes it likely to generate impacts costing substantially more to remedy than the amount of the fee that would be generated by the use of the mobility fee schedule included in this article.
- (c) Within twenty (20) days of receipt of an application for review of an alternative mobility fee determination, the mobility fee administrator, shall determine if the

application is complete. If the mobility fee administrator determines that the application is not complete, a written statement specifying the deficiencies shall be sent to the applicant. The application shall be deemed complete if no deficiencies are specified. The mobility fee administrator shall take no further action on the application until it is deemed complete.

- (d) When the mobility fee administrator determines the application is complete, the application shall be reviewed and a written decision shall be rendered in thirty (30) days on whether the mobility fee should be modified, and if so, what the amount should be.
- (e) If the mobility fee administrator finds that the data, information, assumptions, formulae and methodology used by the applicant to compute the alternative mobility fee calculation satisfies the requirements of this article, the re-determined mobility fee shall be deemed the mobility fee due and owing for the proposed land development activity. This adjustment in the fee shall be set forth in a mobility fee agreement which shall be entered into pursuant to Section 3.04.17.
- (f) A determination by the mobility fee administrator that the alternative mobility fee re-determination does not satisfy the requirements of this article may be appealed to the County Commission.
- (g) The applicant shall be responsible for the full costs that the County may incur to review the alternative mobility fee data and methodology which may include consultant and legal costs. Payment will be due at the time of the request for the alternative calculations.
- (h) An applicant who submits a proposed alternative mobility fee pursuant to this section and desires the issuance of a building permit or special use permit prior to the resolution of the pending alternative mobility fee shall pay the applicable mobility fee prior to, or at the time said applicant desires the building permit. Said payment shall be deemed paid "under protest" and shall not be construed as a waiver of any rights. Any difference in the amount of the mobility fee after the determination of the pending alternative mobility fee shall be refunded to the applicant.

F. Special mobility fee determination.

An applicant may request a special mobility fee determination for smaller, less intense projects when data and information are presented that substantiates that a project has unique characteristics other than those upon which the mobility fee calculation was based. It is the applicant's responsibility to submit adequate justification and support data to substantiate a lower impact to mobility fee administrator. The mobility fee administrator may review the request and ask for additional information. The applicant is responsible for additional costs that the County may incur to review these special requests, including consultant and legal costs. Payment will be due at the time of request for the determination.

3.04.07 Presumptions, agreements and security requirements.

- A. A proposed development shall be presumed to generate the maximum impact generated by the most intensive use permitted under the applicable land development regulations such as the Comprehensive Plan or zoning regulations or under applicable deed or plat restrictions.

B. In lieu of the payment of fees as calculated in Sections 3.04.05 B. or 3.04.06 A. 2. of this Chapter, any applicant may propose to enter into a mobility fee agreement with the County designed to establish just and equitable fees or their equivalent and standards of service appropriate to the circumstances of the specific development proposed. Such an agreement may include, but shall not be limited to, provisions which:

1. Modify the presumption of maximum impact set forth in subsection (a) of this section and provide a mobility fee which may differ from that set forth in section 3.04.05 B. or 3.04.06 A. 2. of this Chapter by specifying the nature of the proposed development for purposes of computing actual impact, provided that the agreement shall establish legally enforceable means for ensuring that the impact will not exceed the impact generated by the agreed upon development;
2. Permit the construction of specific improvements in lieu of or with a credit against the mobility fees assessable and/or pursuant to a payback schedule, allow the developer to recover the actual cost of such improvements in excess of the amount which would have been assessed by this article as subsequent users of such improvements obtained building permits and pay mobility fees.
3. Permit a schedule and method for payment of the mobility fees in a manner appropriate to the particular circumstances of the proposed development in lieu of the requirements for payment of the fees as set forth in Section 3.0.05, provided that security is posted ensuring payment of the fees, in a form acceptable to the County, which security may be in the form of a cash bond, surety bond, irrevocable letter of credit, negotiable certificate of deposit or escrow account, or lien or mortgage on lands to be covered by the building permit.

C. Any agreement proposed by an applicant pursuant to this subsection shall be presented to and approved by the County Commission prior to the issuance of a building permit. Any such agreement may provide for execution by mortgages, lienholders or contract purchasers in addition to the landowner, and may permit any party to record such agreement in the official records of Walton County, whichever applicable. The County Commission shall approve such an agreement only if it finds that the agreement will apportion the burden of expenditure for new facilities in a just and equitable manner.

3.04.08 Mobility Fee Credits.

A. Only multimodal projects included in the capital improvements program are eligible for mobility fee credits. An applicant may request that the County Commission add multimodal projects to the capital improvements program. The multimodal projects requested for inclusion in the capital improvements program shall be based upon the mobility plan. The Administrative Manual shall detail the information required to request multimodal projects be added to the capital improvements program for purposes of establishing mobility fee credits. Multimodal projects identified as needs or for future consideration as part of the mobility plan are not eligible for mobility fee.

B. An applicant may request credit against any mobility fee assessed pursuant to this article in an amount equal to the cost of off-site multimodal projects or contributions of land, money or services for multimodal projects contributed or previously contributed, paid for or committed to by the applicant or his predecessor in interest. The credit is subject to the multimodal project being included in the capital improvements program or the County Commission amending capital improvements program to include the multimodal project. For off-site multimodal projects that are a condition of any development order issued by Walton County

- for the same development or for excess capacity created by the applicant or his predecessor in interest where such excess capacity is provided at the request of the County Engineer or through a development order, the off-site multimodal projects shall be required to be included in the capital improvements program to receive credit.
- C. Multimodal projects required to meet minimum required Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code requirements are not eligible for any credit. Site access improvements for turn lanes, sidewalks, bike lanes, paths, trails, mobility hubs, round-a-bouts or traffic signals internal to the development, along the adjacent boundary of the development, at development entrances, or immediately adjacent to the development and considered site-related are not eligible for any credit.
- D. The amount of developer contribution credit to be applied to the mobility fee shall be determined according to the following standards of valuation:
1. The appraised fair market land value of the contributed parcel as of the date of building permit, agreement to contribute, or contribution, whichever is earlier, as determined by an M.A.I. appraiser selected and paid for by the applicant. In the event the mobility fee administrator with the appraised value, he may engage another appraiser and the value shall be an amount equal to the average of the two (2) appraisals. No credit should be granted pursuant to this section unless the cost of the improvements were paid for and the contributions made within the last five (5) years; and
 2. The cost of off-site multimodal projects shall be based upon documentation certified by a professional engineer or registered planner, and such documentation shall be reviewed and approved by the County engineer. The County reserves the right to require the developer to competitively bid in accordance with the County Code, in which case the credit shall be limited to the actual cost or 100 percent of the lowest responsible bid amount, whichever is less. All bidders shall be qualified to construct the off-site multimodal projects. The Administrative Manual shall provide additional detail on the types of documentation to be provided and detail the cost components of multimodal projects that may be eligible for credit; and
 3. The Administrative Manual shall detail additional requirements for credit documentation and the options available and process for any excess mobility fee credit.
- E. Previous development permits or agreements prior to adoption of the mobility fee ordinance wherein proportionate share mitigation was specified and paid or obligated to be paid shall be binding as to any building permit already issued on land subject to the development permit. Multimodal project required by previous development permits shall not be given a credit unless they meet the requirements of subsection (a) above, or are included in a developer agreement with the County, or meet the requirements and provide documentation detailed in the Administrative Manual. Any request for credit for proportionate share shall meet the requirements and provide documentation detailed in the Administrative Manual.
- F. Credit for contributions, payments, construction or dedications of a mobility fee shall not be transferable to another property where a mobility fee is imposed, unless provided for in a developer agreement or as required by Florida Statute. Credit shall first be used for the full development potential of the project for which the development was approved, before any excess credit can be considered for transfer to another property. The establishment, tracking and agreement to allow credit transfer shall be consistent with the processes and requirements detailed in the Administrative Manual.

3.04.09. Mobility Fee Benefit Districts.

- A. The establishment of mobility fee benefit districts is the best method of ensuring that the mobility fees paid provide a benefit to the development which paid the mobility fees. The mobility fee benefit districts shall be based on the County's four Planning Areas established in the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan and any municipality which opts-in to the County's Mobility Fee system.
- B. The mobility fee benefit districts provide a clearly defined boundary for the expenditure of mobility fee revenue. Using the mobility fee benefit districts ensures that funds paid by development are spent on projects to accommodate person travel demand, providing a reasonable nexus between the expenditure of mobility fee revenue and the development for which the mobility fees are paid.
- C. Based upon the foregoing, the mobility fee study concludes that the County should establish four mobility fee benefit districts, plus one benefit district for each municipality which opts-in to the County System. The boundaries of the mobility fee benefit district shall be the same as the four (4) Planning Areas established in the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive plan and the geographic boundaries of any municipality that opts-in to the County Mobility Fee System. Geographic boundaries of municipalities may expand or contract due to annexation or de-annexations.

3.04.10 Mobility Fee Funds Accounts

There are hereby-established mobility fee fund accounts for each mobility fee benefit district. For accounting purposes, the mobility fee funds shall be considered special revenue funds. Mobility fees collected from property located in a mobility fee benefit district shall be deposited into the corresponding mobility fee fund. Funds withdrawn from these accounts shall be used solely in accordance with the provision of Sections 3.04.09 and 3.04.11. Any municipality that collects mobility fees shall be required to establish and maintain a mobility fee fund account for each mobility fee benefit district within the municipality.

3.04.11 Mobility Fee Expenditures

- A. Amounts on deposit in the mobility fee fund account shall be used by the County solely for developing multimodal projects or for financing directly, or as a pledge against bonds, revenue certificates and other obligations of indebtedness, the costs of multimodal projects, or portions thereof, that are located in the mobility fee benefit district from which the funds were collected, that are included in the County's capital improvement element and plan and mobility plan, and benefit new development and redevelopment located within the mobility fee benefit district. The same requirements shall apply to any municipality that opt-in to the County's Mobility Fee system.
- B. All funds shall be used exclusively for the multimodal projects, identified in a mobility plan, for which they were collected.
- C. The amounts on deposit in the mobility fee fund shall not be used for an expenditure that would be classified as a transportation operation and maintenance expense, unless expressly included in the mobility plan with justification for using funds for operation and maintenance of a multimodal project.

- D. Funds withdrawn from these accounts must be used solely in accordance with the provisions of this Section. The disbursal of such funds shall require the approval of the County Commission upon recommendation of the County Administrator. The interlocal agreement between the County and any municipality that opts-in to the County Mobility Fee shall contain provisions related to expenditure of funds.
- E. Any funds on deposit not immediately necessary for expenditure shall be invested in interest-bearing accounts. Funds may be pooled for investment provided all income derived from the fund's assets shall be deposited in the applicable fund account.
- F. Funds may be expended on multimodal projects along US 331 from adjacent mobility fee benefit districts as US 331 traverses all four mobility fee benefit districts. Funds collected within a mobility fee benefit district may be expended on multimodal projects within a municipality that opts-in to the County's Mobility Fee system and is located within or adjacent to the Planning Area used to establish the County's mobility fee benefit districts. Funds collected within a municipality may be expended outside the municipal boundary on multimodal projects that provide a travel benefit to the municipality.

3.04.12 Mobility Fee Refunds.

A. The fees collected pursuant to this article shall be returned to the then present owner of the development if the fees have not been encumbered or spent by the end of the calendar quarter immediately following seven (7) years from the date the fees were collected, or if the development for which the fees were paid was never begun, in accordance with the following procedure:

1. For purposes of this section, fees collected shall be deemed to be encumbered or expended on a "first in-first out" basis, i.e. the first money placed in a fee fund shall deemed to be the first money expended or encumbered. The following procedure will apply for requests for eligible refunds:

(a) The then present owner must petition the County Commission for the refund within one (1) year following the end of the calendar quarter immediately following seven (7) years from the date on which the fee was received.

(b) The petition must be submitted to the County Administrator and must contain:

- i. A notarized sworn statement that the petitioner is the current owner of the property or his authorized agent;
- ii. A copy of the dated receipt issued for payment of the fee or other competent evidence of payment;
- iii. A certificate of title or attorney's title opinion showing the petitioner to be the current owner of the property or his authorized agent;
- iv. A copy of the most recent ad valorem tax bill; and
- v. A copy of the building permit or development agreement pursuant to which the mobility fees were paid.

(c) Within sixty (60) days from the date of receipt of petition for refund, the County Administrator or his designee shall advise the petitioner and the County Commission of the status of the fee requested for refund. For the purposes of determining whether fees have been spent or encumbered, the first money placed in a trust fund account shall be deemed to be the first money taken out of that account when withdrawals have been made in accordance with Section 3.04.09.

- (d) When the money requested is still in the trust fund account and has not been spent or encumbered by the end of the calendar quarter immediately following ten (10) years from the date of the fees were paid, the money shall be returned with interest at the rate of one (1) percent per annum.
- (e) When a refund is requested because construction was never begun, all development order approvals shall have expired and the applicant shall execute an agreement acknowledging the expiration of development order approval.
- (f) A request for a refund of mobility fees must be made one (1) year from the issuance of the building permit or special use permit or six (6) months from the expiration of the permit whichever is later only if no development activity has started. The refund amount will be less ten (10) percent of the fees that were ultimately to have been paid, regardless of the amount actually paid. If the applicant does not apply within the time limits stated above, there will be no refund.
- (g) Any municipality that opts-in to the County's Mobility Fee system shall comply with all refund request within the municipality per the requirements of Section 3.04.12.

3.04.13. Effect on land development regulations.

- A. The payment of mobility fees does not ensure nor grant compliance with the County's land development regulations, including regulations relating to transportation corridor management, access management, substandard roads, secondary access, timing and phasing, and, where applicable, development of regional impact review. However, if such regulations require transportation mitigation for the same impacts addressed through the payment of mobility fees, such regulations shall be deemed to provide for mobility fee credit against imposed mobility fees consistent with state and federal law and this Chapter.
- B. The listing of a land use in the mobility fee schedule is solely for purposes of establishing the applicable mobility fee schedule for such use, and such listing does not mean that the land use is permitted or available under applicable zoning and Comprehensive Plan requirements. In addition, the listing of the land use in the mobility fee schedule shall not be considered evidence that the land use is appropriate in any land use classification or zoning district.

3.04.14 Administrative Manual and Service Charges.

- A. The County shall prepare and periodically update a Mobility Fee Administrative Manual that addresses day to day administration and the implementation and update of the mobility plan and fee. The Administrative Manual shall address assessments, credit and off-set request, fee and land use determinations, special studies, fee expenditures and monitoring. The Administrative Manual shall be accepted by resolution of the County Commission.
- B. The County shall prepare and periodically update Mobility Fee service charges to ensure that the County's general fund does not bear the full burden of administering and implementing the mobility fees; provided that the service charges does not exceed the County's actual costs of administration and implementation of the mobility fee system Per Section 163.31801, Florida Statute. Mobility Fee service charges shall be in addition to the imposed mobility fee and shall account for future updates of the Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee in the service charge determination. The Mobility Fee service charge shall be accepted by resolution of the County Commission.

3.04.15 Annual report.

The County, and any municipality that opts-in to the County's Mobility Fee system, shall comply with all audit requirements of Florida Statutes. The County and shall include in its annual Capital Improvements Plan update an accounting of projects funded by mobility fees. The annual budget shall indicate mobility fee revenues and expenditures.

3.04.16 Review and update.

- A. The Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee shall be updated by the County at least once every three (3) years. The Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee shall be reviewed annually during either the capital improvements budget process or the preparation of the mobility fee annual report. The review shall include a recommendation regarding the need to update the Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee earlier than the three year schedule due to factors such as increased cost, amendments to the Future Land Use Element and Map that result in the need for additional infrastructure, the addition or subtraction of multimodal projects to the Mobility Plan and Capital Improvements Program with a cumulative cost of more than \$20 million, and the update of professional technical reports such as the ITE Trip Generation Manual or Highway Capacity Manual used in the calculation of a mobility fee. The review and updates shall consider all factors utilized in the most recent computation of mobility fees. However, in the event that a full reevaluation and updates are not complete within the required three (3) year period, the last adopted mobility fee shall remain in effect until the reevaluation is complete.
- B. To ensure that mobility fees keep pace with inflation, on January 1st of each calendar year, starting in 2022, the mobility fees in section 3.04.05 B. shall increase by the projected rate of inflation for the upcoming calendar year as determined by the most recent FDOT Transportation Cost Report Construction Cost Inflation Factors released on or about August of each calendar year. Should FDOT cease to report, then annual inflation factor adjustments shall be based on either the national Producers Price Index for transportation projects or the Consumer Price Index.
- C. The County shall update the mobility fees in section 3.04.05 B. on or before September 30th of each calendar year, starting in 2021, and shall advertise the fees in a publication of general circulation available to County residents and businesses or as permitted by State Statute, on the County's website. The advertisement shall be published and/or posted 90 days prior to the increase of the Mobility Fees.
- D. The requirements of section 3.04.16 A. and B. shall serve as the statutorily required notice to the public that mobility fees will increase on an annual basis, adjusted for inflation and this section shall be deemed to address Statutory requirements that notice be provided 90 days prior to an increase in a mobility fee. The notice requirement of Section 3.04.16 B. is provided as a courtesy reminder only.
- E. Updates to the Mobility Plan and Mobility Fee that result in an increase in Mobility Fees shall be required to provide 90 days' notice before the increased fees are assessed on new development and redevelopment per Section 163.31801, Florida Statutes.

3.04.17 - Development agreements.

- A. An applicant may enter into a development agreement with the County to establish mobility fees or to provide equivalent multimodal projects necessary to serve new development.

- B. Any agreement proposed by an applicant pursuant to this section shall be presented to and approved by the County Commission prior to the issuance of a building permit or special use permit. Any such agreement shall provide for execution by any mortgagees, lienholders, or contract purchasers in addition to the landowner, and shall require the applicant to record such agreement in the public records of Walton County. The County Commission shall approve such an agreement only if it finds that the new agreement will apportion the burden of expenditure for new facilities in a just and equitable manner, consistent with applicable Florida Statutes, case law and this article.

3.04.18. – Interlocal agreements.

The County, and any municipality that opts-in to the County's Mobility Fee system, shall enter into an Interlocal Agreement that addresses, but is not limited to, administration, collection, expenditure, implementation, interpretation, notice, prioritization of multimodal projects, and updates. The County shall prepare and adopt the Interlocal Agreement and transmit to the legislative body of municipalities for adoption.

3.04.19 - Vested rights.

- A. It is not the intent of this article to abrogate, diminish or modify the rights of any persons that have vested rights pursuant to a valid governmental act of the County. An applicant may petition the County Commission for a vested rights determination which would exempt the applicant from the provisions of the article. The County shall evaluate the petition and submit a recommendation to the County Commission based upon the following criteria:
- (1) A valid, unexpired governmental act of the County, authorizing the building for which applicants seeks a certificate of occupancy, exists.
 - (2) Expenditures or obligations made or incurred in reliance upon the authorizing act are reasonably equivalent to the fee required by Section 3.04.05 B.
 - (3) That it would be inequitable to deny the applicant the opportunity to occupy a previously approved building under the conditions of the previous approval by requiring the applicant to comply with the provisions of this article.
- B. If an applicant has previously entered into a development agreement with the County with conditions regarding off-site multimodal projects, the applicant or applicant's successor in interest may request a modification of the prior development agreement in order to bring the conditions into consistency with this article. Applicant must file a request for such modification with the development review committee within one year of the effective date of this article.

3.04.20 - Penalty.

Violations of this article shall constitute a misdemeanor enforceable in accordance with section X-X of the County Code, or by an injunction or other legal or equitable relief in the circuit court against any person violating this article, or by both civil injunctive and criminal relief.

3.04.21 - Reserved.

