

## FEBRUARY 4, 2003 – WORKSHOP

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Strategic Planning Workshop on Tuesday, February 4, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. at the Emergency Operations Center.

The following Board members were present: Tim Pauls, Vice-Chair, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen, and Commissioner Ro Cuchens. Mr. Michael Underwood, County Administrator, and Attorney Gary Vorbeck, Director of Legal Services were also present.

Vice-Chairman Pauls called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairman Jones and welcomed those in attendance. Commissioner Pauls turned the meeting over to Mr. Tony Arrant, Facilitator, to help the county set some goals. He stated that he would make an attempt to address the Mission Statement and to establish short-term and long-term priorities for the county. The result of today's meeting should bring guidance from staff through the budgeting process. It should also produce a report for the public.

Commissioner Rees commented that he attended the Economic Development meeting and reviewed their strategic plan. He stated that it would be good to make sure that there is not a lot of duplication of work regarding the Vision 20/20 plan, economic development plan, and the county's strategic plan. Mr. Arrant stated that he would attempt to help the county integrate their plan with the other plans. Commissioner Pauls stated that the county needs to assure that they remain consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Pauls also stated that there is a Capital Improvement Plan in the Comp Plan.

Mr. Alan Powdermaker stated that he would like to see each department's goals and objectives integrated into the master plan. Mr. Underwood stated that one goal of today's meeting is to develop a list of priorities for 2003/04 that can be taken to legislation for funding.

Commissioner Cuchens spoke about the urgent need to develop a plan to take care of infrastructure needs and the necessary funding sources. Mr. Barry and Mr. Imfeld are working on this issue to present back at a later date.

Mr. Little presented a handout listing the Goals and Objectives Accomplishments that have developed from the strategic planning sessions. He explained that the Vision 20/20 goals and the EDC goals are also listed. The list is a working document and will progress as various issues develop from the meetings.

The commissioners reviewed the strategic goal statement "To provide efficient and effective government services through responsive leadership". They agreed to add "...ensuring pride, preservation and conservation for Walton County".

Mr. Dan Scupin questioned what the overall county government philosophy is if a function can be done more effectively by the private sector. Discussion took place regarding effective government services and the need to provide public service, the role of the BCC as defined by Florida Statute 125, and the Home Rule.

Discussion occurred regarding roads/traffic circulation system. Mr. Barry explained the road paving plan and stated that he is in the process of preparing a recommendation on how to most effectively accomplish the paving. There are approximately 450 unpaved roads and this process will address about 125 miles of

paving. Mr. Barry stated that the plan includes paving, repaving, but no maintenance. He suggested that a condition survey be taken of all paved county roads.

Mr. Gene Ryan commented that the desires of the public should not be a major factor in the decision to pave a road. There are a number of factors that should be considered; one being maintenance cost.

Discussion was held regarding traffic circulation and whether or not there is a future plan to handle the circulation. Mr. Arrant questioned if there is a long-range plan to improve the capacity of the future traffic circulation system. Commissioner Pauls stated that it is in the Comp Plan, but is unsure what is being done about it. Mr. Barry reminded the Board that the Mac Bayou Study is taking place. Commissioner Rees stated that there are probably other sector studies that should occur in the near future.

Mr. Underwood stated that some of the priorities are the 6-laning of Highway 98, 4-laning of Highway 331, and the realignment and 4-laning of Highway 20. The commissioners concurred. Commissioner Pauls stated that the realignment of Highway 20 around Choctaw Beach should be part of a feasibility study for Eglin to consider. Mr. Ryan encouraged the commissioners to stay with the established road schedule. Commissioner Rees concurred that a better connector road is needed into Alabama. Mr. Arrant suggested developing a future traffic circulation system map that defines the goals for the entire planning period according to the Comp Plan.

The commissioners recessed briefly.

The second priority on the commissioner's list is to manage growth and quality of life. Commissioner Rees suggested adding neighborhood planning areas as a priority. Commissioner Pauls stated that a projection on growth and build-out should be

completed first. Mr. Underwood stated that a projection on growth would be difficult at this point with the limited amount of information that the county currently has. A completed GIS system would be necessary. He estimated that it could take at least a year before implementing a GIS program. Mr. Arrant recommended moving forward with obtaining the parcel data and land use data while continuing to work toward the GIS program. Mr. Underwood commented that the consultant has control over the data that has been obtained. Mr. Arrant stated that the county needs to have control over the information. Discussion continued regarding the components needed for a complete GIS system to meet the county's needs. The action step that needs to occur is that staff or the county's consultant would bring forward the future land use map before the Board to be ratified.

Another issue to be addressed is non-conforming land uses such as neighborhood plans. Mr. Underwood stated that the county does not currently have enough staff to do a neighborhood plan because of the devotion that is needed. Commissioner Rees commented on efforts that have occurred to develop a neighborhood plan. Discussion occurred regarding staff that has been hired in the recent past to undertake the task of developing a neighborhood plan. Mr. Arrant questioned if the Comp Plan defines what a neighborhood plan is and what the county wants to come from it. Commissioner Pauls read an excerpt from FLU 006 regarding neighborhood plans, which states that the county shall establish a neighborhood-planning program. Mr. Arrant stated that neighborhood-planning needs to be more clearly defined. Mr. Underwood reminded the commissioners that not only does staff work at their direction, but that the budget is also limited to what the Board agreed upon. Commissioner Pauls felt that this is the reason

that the Growth Management Director was hired; to oversee these types of projects. The commissioners agreed to establish a neighborhood-planning program as one of their priorities.

The third priority listed is to provide infrastructure for future growth. The commissioners reviewed the goals under Economic Development. A suggestion was made to submit a memorandum to department heads for their input for issues they may be dealing with that should be included. Mr. Underwood questioned if staff should be looking at other alternative uses for the old hospital. The county could lease the building to other agencies and not run the facility themselves. Mr. Underwood stated that the use of the building should be one that would enhance the neighborhood.

Mr. Marvin Collier, Construction Manager, stated that future growth of county facilities needs to be considered. Commissioner Pauls spoke about the future growth of the county taking place in Freeport and the room for future expansion at the South Walton Governmental Education Center.

Discussion occurred regarding Parks and Recreation and facilities and the appropriate department for it to fall under. Adult recreation was also discussed. They also discussed the goals set forth relating to water, sewer, utilities and other infrastructure. Commissioner Pauls stated that Regional Utilities and South Walton Utilities have performed capacity analysis studies. The question is how accurate the projections are.

Commissioner Pauls questioned Mr. Little regarding telecommunications. He stated that various individuals have asked about high-speed Internet service. He suggested developing a plan that would benefit the community.

In closing, Commissioner Rees stated that he felt that progress has been made. Mr. Crim reminded the commissioners to keep ADA accessibility requirements in mind when developing the plan. Mr. Infeld responded to questions by stating that this information will be used during the next budgeting cycle. Commissioner Pauls commented on having the goals and objectives broken down by department in order for each department head to know what the Board has agreed to.

The commissioners thanked everyone for their attendance and input. He stated that this would be a continuing process.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Workshop on Tuesday, February 4, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. in the Boardroom of the South Walton Courthouse Annex.

The following Board members were present: Larry Jones, Chair, Tim Pauls, Vice-Chair, Commissioner Lane Rees, Commissioner Kenneth Pridgen, and Commissioner Ro Cuchens. Mr. Michael Underwood, County Administrator, and Attorney Gary Vorbeck, Director of Legal Services, were also present.

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order.

Mr. Russ Barry, Public Works Director, presented information regarding the county's right-of-way policy. He introduced Mr. Dan Arner, County Engineer, who was present to discuss paving and design widths.

Mr. Arner explained that he previously presented his draft revision of the Land Development Code, which addressed lane widths and right-of-way policies. Mr. Arner stated that he has compared this information with surrounding counties, Department of

Transportation standards and ASHTO standards. He also read the minimum standards required by the Institute for Transportation Engineers.

Commissioner Pauls spoke about information he read in the Best Development Practices, which discusses road widths. He commented that Walton County's current code states that the driving surface of all streets shall be a minimum of 22 feet. Developers feel that 18 feet of paved surface is sufficient. Commissioner Pauls stated that Walton County does not have any flexibility in the code and there should be.

Mr. Arner stated that the research he performed shows that most engineers favor decreasing the width of roads for safety reasons. Mr. Arner recommended abiding by DOT guidelines. Commissioner Pauls spoke about residential development and more narrow streets stating that there should be more flexibility. Mr. Arner stated that he would put flexibility in his guidelines.

Mr. Arner spoke about the average daily traffic (ADT) count of less than 400 can be paved with a 10-foot width. More than 400 ADT requires a paved surface of 11-feet according to DOT. Mr. Underwood questioned if they are leaning toward a threshold of an ADT to determine the width of the road. Mr. Arner stated that it would just be a guideline to use, but he would recommend not paving less than 10 feet in width. Commissioner Pauls stated that it also depends on the length of the street and how much development is on the street.

Commissioner Pauls suggested that each commissioner meet individually with Mr. Arner to discuss their recommendations. Commissioner Rees stated that he would like to see the county move forward with setting the guidelines. The commissioners concurred that they are looking for flexibility in the 22-foot width requirement and that

they would like to see ADT's. Commissioner Pauls also stated that the right-of-way should also be sufficient to accommodate storm water runoff without it being too wide. Mr. Arner stated that the policy presented does provide flexibility on right-of-ways, but not paving width. Commissioner Pauls commented that the public should be made aware of the changes that are occurring.

Mr. Mike Richards, CELCO, appeared before the Board to voice concerns regarding the right-of-way policy. The commissioners asked Mr. Richards to give his suggestions to Mr. Arner. Commissioner Rees questioned Mr. Richards regarding the possibility of underground utilities in the future. Mr. Richards stated that underground utilities are almost cost prohibitive unless the developer wants to pay the additional costs.

There being no further business, the commissioners recessed until their 5:00 meeting.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Larry D. Jones, Chairman

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Martha Ingle, Clerk of Court