Joint Workshop of the Local Planning Agency and Board of County Commissioners

February 13, 2020
Board of County Commissioners Meeting Room
6:00 PM

AGENDA

I. Presentation by Molly Mowery and Kelly Johnston regarding Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire in Baker County

II. Review Proposed Policy Amendments to 2040 Plan based on November 14 Workshop Direction
   A. Reduce Minimum Lot Size in AG B to 5 acres
   B. Establish Private Subdivision Standards / Allow Unpaved Roads
   C. Establish driveway spacing on collectors and arterials
   D. Establish De minimis and Exemption standards for transportation concurrency
   E. Establish limits on the quantity of development permitted prior to Central Water & Sewer connection.
   F. Eliminate School Concurrency
   G. Eliminate reference to the I-10 Variance
   H. Extend Phase 1 expiration for Jackson-Shaw IDN
   I. Address master plans currently required in each IDN

III. Additional Items related to Energy Conservation

IV. Sanderson Community Plan- Interstate Related Commercial Land Use

V. Consideration of Economic Development Goals, Objectives and Policies

VI. Consideration of revisions to the data and analysis of the Economic Development Element- Alternative Futures.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners
   Land Planning Agency

FROM: Susan L. Fraser
   Community Development Department

RE: Review of November 14 Workshop Discussion
    Future Land use and Transportation Amendments
    2040 Comprehensive Plan

The following items are a continuation of discussion at the November 14 Joint Workshop on Future Land Use and Transportation Amendments. Changes proposed as a result of the November 14 Workshop discussion are shown in red; stricken / underlined text in black illustrates amendments considered and accepted at the November 14 Workshop.

A. Reduce Minimum Lot Size in AG B to 5 acres
C. Establish driveway spacing on collectors and arterials

In summary, 5 acre lots would be permitted within the AG B Land Use designation. In coordination, the land development regulations will be amended to increase to 400 feet the minimum lot width for all lots (including family lots, medical hardship lots and homestead lots), that access a county maintained paved or unpaved road. Temporary family lots must have shared driveways with the primary residence on the parcel.

Section 30-2 of the LDRs would be expanded to provide for review and inspection of driveway permits for compliance with distance standards.
Definition of minimum lot width in the LDRs would be expanded to identify that it is applicable to the frontage where access is provided to the parcel (right of way or easement) and the minimum width must be maintained throughout the parcel.

Additional discussion was requested on the following:

1. The proposed 400 foot minimum lot width would potentially exceed that of adjacent parcels when the property is zoned RCMH 2.5. An exemption seems appropriate.

   The following amendment to the Nov 14 language is proposed such that the 400 foot lot width applies only when the land use is Agriculture (see Attachment B):

   **Sec. 24-192. - RCMH 2.5 Residential Conventional and Mobile Home District.**

   (e) Setback and other standards.

   (1) Minimum lot requirements (width, depth and area).

   a. Width: 200 feet; 400 feet when and the land use is AG A or AG B and direct access is provided from a county or state collector or arterial road, including access to family lots, temporary family lots, medical hardships, and homestead divisions.

   b. Area: 2.5 acres.

   c. Depth: 300 feet.

B. Establish Private Subdivision Standards / Allow Unpaved Roads

In summary, private subdivisions of up to 10 lots wherein no platted lot is less than 5 acres in area would be permitted within the AG B Land Use designation. Access to all lots within the Private Subdivision are provided from a private road within the platted subdivision. Potential amendments to the land development regulations were discussed in detail to allow a full understanding of the scope of regulations and requirements that would apply to the proposed Private Subdivision.

Changes to the Dec 10 LDR text were requested and are reflected in Attachment A. Approach to Private Subdivisions.

Additional discussion was requested on the following:

1. **What improvement standard would apply to the private road within the private subdivision?**

   The FDOT has identified Optional Base Groups that establish the improvement standard for . A committee of county staff and the development community should be convened to develop the specific design standards applicable to the private roads contemplated for the private subdivision. Amendments to Section 24-354 that provide for the desired private road design are needed.
The standards established in the LDRs should address stormwater management associated with the private road improvements; protection of county right of way drainage was discussed.

2. How will extension of the length of the private road (to an excess of 2,000 feet) be accomplished/ permitted?

The extension would only be permitted as a public or private road improved to paved road standards. The future right of way should be secured at the time of the plat of the private subdivision: dedication to Baker County with reverter to private road right of way if private road status is retained under a replat would insure the needed right of way is available for connection in the future.

Maintenance of access to property outside the platted subdivision may be required to provide access to land that becomes landlocked by virtue of the plat. If the subdivision road were a public road, access could be afforded over the public right of way; how can access be negotiated/provided given that the right of way will be private and maintenance will be an ongoing obligation of the lots with access? The LDRs implementing the Private Subdivision standards will need to address control of access through the Private Subdivision from adjacent, non-platted lands; see potential amendment implementing access by county permit under the definition of Private Subdivision in Attachment A.

D. Establish De minimis and Exemption standards for transportation concurrency

In summary, the county will apply the old Chapter 380.06, Florida Statute DRI thresholds to transportation concurrency and will establish QTI exemptions to support economic development.

In addition, the county will not undertake traffic counts; development subject to transportation concurrency will be required to collect current traffic count data as part of the concurrency application and review.

1. At the November 14 Workshop, it was identified that a 5 mile impact area would not adequately address the impacts of a proposed large development (those subject to transportation concurrency). In response, a larger impact area should be considered.

Policy H.1.12.4 was proposed to be amended in the staff materials generated for the Nov 14 Workshop as follows:

**Policy H.1.12.4 Determining Available Capacity Current LOS for Proposed Development County Roads**

Applications for transportation concurrency shall include developer collected traffic counts on all segments of the County’s Road Network within a 5 mile impact area of any development access. Said counts shall be for the PM Peak Hour and shall be applied in the Through traffic counts and studies, that includes a detailed road capacity analysis provided in the application shall be created to determine the
availability of capacity to serve the proposed development on the state and county current LOS for roadways within Baker County.

The impact area for traffic generated by a development subject to transportation concurrency must be meaningful; too small and impact mitigation will be insufficient to address potential deficiencies generated by the proposed development and too large will burden the proposed development beyond financial feasibility.

Under the Question 21 standards in Rule 9J-2 (the old DRI rules), the traffic impact area was defined by the amount of traffic generated; project traffic was distributed to the state and local road network to all links wherein the project traffic was 5% or greater of the adopted maximum service volume. Impacts were mitigated when the project traffic was “significant” (5% or more) and adverse (caused the link to exceed its adopted maximum service volume). For DRI projects, traffic was typically distributed beyond the boundary of the county in which the project was located, hence the name, Development of Regional Impact. This approach to development subject to transportation concurrency in Baker County would no extend the analysis beyond the county line but would capture impacts to the many rural roads in the county. The list of roads potentially included in the analysis would be the County Road Network in the Traffic Circulation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Policy B.1.1.9 is proposed to be amended to identify the impact area for development subject to transportation concurrency:

**Policy B.1.1.9  Required Traffic Counts for Annual Monitoring of LOS**
The County shall require applications for transportation concurrency to provide current traffic counts on local roads within the impact area for the proposed development. The impact area shall include all state and local road segments identified in the Baker County Concurrency Road Network identified in Appendix B of this Element on which the development traffic is significant. Significant shall be defined as 5% or greater of the adopted maximum service volume for the road segment. maintain and enhance as necessary, a comprehensive traffic counting system for annually monitoring the level of service on the County roadway system; in addition, the County shall require developers to provide traffic counts on County roads within proposed project areas consistent with the adopted Concurrency Ordinance.

2. Policies B.1.4.2 and H.1.12.9 are proposed to be amended to identify the transportation de minimis standard as follows:

**Policy B.1.4.2  LOS Criteria for Development Approval**
The County shall condition ensure that no development receives final development approval on the approval of a Concurrency Reservation Certificate, where the proposed project will reduce the level of service of the roadway below the established level of service unless, when a project would lower the level of service below the established level of service, the development approval shall be conditioned on the roadway improvements being programmed or constructed.

**Policy H.1.12.9  De Minimus Impacts**

January 6, 2020 Workshop
Staff Report - Review of Nov 14 Discussion
For the purpose of issuing a development order or permit, a proposed development may be deemed to have a de minimus impact and not be subject to the concurrency requirements of subparagraphs 9J.5.0055(3)(c)1., 4., F.A.C., only if all of the conditions specified in subsection 163.3180(6), F.S., are met. [Section 163.3180(6), F.S.]. A method for tracking de minimus projects will be incorporated into the concurrency management system project tracking spreadsheet or database.

Development that exceeds the following de minimis thresholds shall be subject to transportation concurrency:

Office development – any proposed office building of park that encompasses 300,000 or more square feet of gross floor area or is equal to or greater than 30 acres in area.

Retail and service development – any proposed retail, service, or wholesale business establishment or group of establishments which deals primarily with the general public onsite that encompasses more than 400,000 square feet of gross area or provides parking spaces for more than 2,500 cars, or is equal to or greater than 40 acres in area.

Industrial development - any proposed industrial development that encompasses more than 500,000 square feet of gross area.

Recreational vehicle development - any proposed recreational vehicle development planned to create or accommodate 500 or more spaces.

Multi-use development - any proposed development with two or more land uses where the sum of the percentages of the appropriate thresholds identified for any single use is equal to or greater than 145 percent. Any proposed development with three or more land uses, one of which is residential use containing at least 75 dwelling units, where the sum of the percentages of the appropriate thresholds identified for any single use is equal to or greater than 160 percent. This threshold is in addition to and does not preclude a development from being subject to transportation concurrency under any other threshold.

Residential development - 250 dwelling units.

The thresholds established above shall apply to the cumulative sum of all development approvals within a property based on the boundary of the property as of December 31, 2019.

3. Policy H.1.6.2 is proposed to be amended to provide a transportation concurrency exemption for locally desired development pursuant to Section 163.3180 (6)(e)4 and (6)(f)3, FS.

Policy H.1.6.2
Condition new development on the requirement Require all developers or builders to prove to the County’s satisfaction that infrastructure supplying the needed levels of
service will be available concurrent with development impact before a development order is issued.

The following development represents economic development opportunities for Baker County by providing permanent employment expansion opportunities for the County’s citizens and encouraging new or expanded businesses within the County to help reverse the daily commute out of the County and as such shall be eligible for an Exempt Transportation Concurrency Certificate if the proposed development would otherwise be subject to transportation concurrency pursuant to Policy B.1.4.2 of the Traffic Circulation Element.

**QTI Business Exemption.** At any time prior to the approval of final construction plans for eligible non-residential development as defined below, the developer may request approval of a QTI Business Exemption to transportation concurrency. Such application must be approved by the BCC prior to the approval of final construction plans.

The QTI Business must occupy the structure(s) for which the Exemption is requested and must:

1. Create a minimum of ten new permanent jobs or a ten percent increase in existing employment (whichever is greater) with each job paying (excluding benefits) at least 125% of the County’s then applicable average private sector wage, as determined by Enterprise Florida or its statutory successor. For the purposes of this exemption, a permanent job means any filled full-time position offered by the QTI Business, new to the County, and occupying the structure(s) for which the Exemption is requested and in place no later than one year following the Electric Clearance Permit for the construction and maintained for a period not less than five years.

   The QTI Business seeking a QTI Business Exemption to Transportation Concurrency shall file an application with the County that provides information determined to be necessary to insure compliance with the conditions of the exemption, including a compliance monitoring plan.

Additional non-policy changes to the amendments proposed at the November Workshop are recommended:

**Policy H.1.12.2**

In furtherance of Traffic Circulation Policy B.1.1.1, any section of any roadway may operate at a level of service lower than the base LOS if capacity improvements, which will raise the LOS of said roadways to the base LOS standards, are programmed for construction in year three of Baker County’s adopted capital budget, the FDOT Five-Year Work Program, or contractual commitment to program construction within three years of the impacts that require the improvement to maintain the adopted LOS has been made.
Attachment C identifies proposed changes to the 2040 Plan to implement the de minimis standards and QTI Exemption.

E. Establish limits on the quantity of development permitted prior to Central Water & Sewer connection.

In summary, the county will not condition development within the IDNs on the provision of central water and sewer however large development will be required to consult with the county prior to approval to determine if central services are feasible. The LDRs will be amended to identify standards for review and assessment of feasibility.

**Policy A.1.6.2 Development Infrastructure Requirements**

The County shall promote compact growth within the Development Areas and Development Nodes by (1) providing provisions within the Land Use Regulations that require development to use central water/sewer as a condition for development of central water/sewer and (2) promoting the establishment of franchised or public water/sewer districts, whereby the cost of providing public facilities and services that benefit new development is born by those individuals who receive direct benefit.

**Policy A.1.10.6 Development Standards* for: Mixed-Use, Industrial, and Commercial**

A. Proposed development in the Mixed Use, Commercial or Industrial land use categories that generates a wastewater treatment demand equal to or in excess of 2,000 GPD either individually or when aggregated with the proposed development in an approved master plan shall coordinate with the County to determine the feasibility of participation in the establishment of a publicly–owned or investor–owned sewerage system. The County shall undertake a Central Water and Sewer Feasibility Study in 2020 and the recommendations of the study shall serve to guide a determination of feasibility for central services to a proposed development subject to this policy.

[All development] within the urban growth area shall be served by public or private central water and sewer services prior to issuance of certificate of occupancy. All development shall be conditioned upon the availability of central wastewater and potable water utilities at the adopted level of service.

F. Eliminate School Concurrency

Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Capital Improvements Element and Public School Facilities Element recommended by staff at the November 14 Workshop implement the elimination of public school concurrency.
Communication with the School District to coordinate this amendment is recommended.

G. Eliminate reference to the I-10 Variance

References to the I-10 Variance are deleted, consistent with the staff recommendations presented at the November 14 Workshop.

H. Extend Phase 1 expiration for Jackson-Shaw IDN

In summary, the expiration date for the Jackson Shaw IDN is extended to 2025. The only other change to Policy A.1.10.15 is shown below (reviewed on November 14):

Pursuant to the terms of this Policy A.1.10.15, the developer is required to provide Baker County, the NEFRC, and the DEO CA annual progress reports regarding the status of the IJR process, commencing in 2020 within one year of the effective date of 2007-10 and on each one-year anniversary thereafter.

I. Address master plans currently required in each IDN

References to the requirement for a master plan are revised consistent with the staff recommendations presented at the November 14 Workshop to require a Conceptual Master Plan prior to any development in an IDN; the conceptual plan will identify access and potential uses and may be amended as development occurs, with county approval. The LDRs should be amended to identify the review process, level of detail and information required for a Conceptual Master Plan.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

The county has adopted objectives and policies related to energy and water conservation. These policies are no longer required by Chapter 163. Consideration should be given to amend to make them discretionary or to delete the requirements. The adopted objectives and policies are provided for review below:

**Objective C.1.3 Create Guidelines for Energy and Water Conservation for Housing**

By year-end of 2013, the County shall create energy efficiency and water conservation guidelines for new residential development and housing rehabilitation in Baker County.

**Policy C.1.3.3 Initiate this Criteria for Minimal Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation Work Order Program for Certificate of Occupancy Eligibility**

Within two (2) years, the County shall continue to implement a minimal “Energy Efficiency and Water Conservation Work Order” for new residential construction and residential rehabilitation projects that must be met before a Certificate of Occupancy is issued for each dwelling unit. The work order shall require the installation and inspection of the following:
- Compact Fluorescent Lights (CFLs)
- Faucet Aerators
- Low Flow Shower Heads
- Water Saving Toilets
- Energy Star labeled appliances according to the rating established by the Environmental Protection Agency, which use less energy than other products, thereby saving money on utility bills, saving energy, and helping to protect the environment.
- Domestic Hot Water (DHW) Temperature & Insulation Wrap
- Domestic Hot Water (DHW) Pipe Insulation Wrap
- Heating, Ventilation, Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Filter & Duct Sealing
- Florida Friendly Landscaping
Divide the subdivision of land into two types:

(1) The term "subdivision" means the division of a parcel of land, whether improved or unimproved, into three or more lots or parcels of land, for the purpose of transferring fee simple ownership, whether by deed, or other recorded instrument whether or not improvements are required. The term "subdivision" does include:
   i. by preliminary exemption, the division of any lands which are greater than ten acres in size.
   ii. the term "subdivision" also includes a re-subdivision of previously subdivided parcels;
   iii. major subdivisions, as defined herein; and
   iv. private subdivisions, as defined herein.

Major subdivision means a subdivision as defined in this section whereby all road improvements are required to be paved pursuant to this chapter, whether subdivision road improvements lie within private or public rights of way. The division of a parcel of land, whether improved or unimproved, into three or more lots or parcels of land, for the purpose of transferring fee simple ownership, whether by deed, or other recorded instrument that may, because of direct access to an existing county-maintained road, be accomplished without the construction of road improvements may be eligible for review as Minor Development.

Private subdivision means a subdivision as defined herein subject to the following conditions. Any subdivision inconsistent with the conditions below shall be a Major Subdivision.

1. No lot in the plat shall be less than five acres in area.
2. Access to any lot shall not be provided from an existing county road and shall instead be provided by private road right of way that extends for a distance no greater than 2,000 feet from its intersection with a county maintained road. Extension of said right of way to a length greater than 2,000 feet shall require improvements applicable to a major subdivision, including but not limited to paving and access standards which shall be applied to the existing private subdivision and the proposed expansion.
3. No greater than ten platted lots may be included within the boundary of the private subdivision and are served by the private road. Once platted, each platted lot in a Private Subdivision may be split no more than one time without a replat and only for the creation of a family lot. At no time shall greater than 20 lots access a private road within a Private Subdivision. All Major and Private subdivisions shall meet the applicable standards set forth in this chapter.
4. Future access to adjacent property shall be protected by the dedication of an unimproved public right of way extending from the cul de sac to the external boundary of the private subdivision. Baker County may approve by permit access to the private road via the unimproved public right of way for no greater than one
dwelling unit; access to any use other than residential (including agricultural use) shall be prohibited.

- Requires both types to be platted and recorded.
- Maintains minor development review for Major Subdivision without road improvements
- Limits Private Subdivisions to ten platted lots; allows each platted lot to be divided one time for family lot creation only without a replat (still subject to family lot standards).
- Limits length of private road in Private Subdivision to 2,000 feet one quarter mile.
- Prohibits extension of access to lots outside the platted subdivision or future extension of the private, improved dirt road unless road is paved and plat is expanded.

Determine where Private Subdivisions may be created.

A Private Subdivision street may access a county-maintained existing paved or unpaved road that lies within a public right of way provided and the street meets the standards established in Section 24-354 (e) for such connections.

- Allows private subdivisions on unpaved but county maintained roads provided the road lies within a county owned right of way (not within an easement).

Establish the design standards for Private Subdivisions

The arrangement of the road right of way within a private subdivision shall provide for a single road centerline with no intersections, terminating in a cul-de-sac that provides fire access turn around. The maximum length of the private street within said right of way shall not exceed 2,000 feet as measured to the center of the cul de sac. The cul de sac shall be no more less than 200 feet from any boundary of the private subdivision. Access to an individual lot within the private subdivision shall not be limited to access from the private road. Access to the private street from lands not within the private subdivision is prohibited whether by easement or other non-formal arrangement except as provided herein via the unimproved county right of way established by plat; private subdivisions on adjacent lands may be combined provided the maximum combined length does not exceed 2000 feet and the combined number of lots served by the private road is 20 or fewer. The street arrangement shall not cause hardship to owners of adjoining property when they plat their own land and/or seek to provide convenient access to it.

- Would not allow loop roads
- Would not allow internal intersections.
- Would not allow extension of a road in a Private Subdivisions to provide access to surrounding land not in the subdivision except for access granted by permit over the county unimproved right of way that would be required to be dedicated by plat for a single dwelling unit on an adjacent property landlocked by the creation of the Private Subdivision.

Add definition of convenient access.
Convenient access shall be determined to be provided to property adjoining a proposed private subdivision when an access easement is provided from the private street cul de sac of a private subdivision to the external boundary of the private subdivision.

Establish the road improvement standards applicable to Private Subdivisions

Private Roads within a Private subdivision shall meet the standards for a two lane local road with the travel surface constructed to the FDOT Optional Base Group standard specified in Section chip seal standards. The 100 feet immediately adjacent to a county maintained paved road shall be paved to county standards.
Increase lot width in all zoning districts if access is provided from County/State maintained road. Provides incentive to provide access from other than county/state road.

*Minor development* means a commercial parcel less than five acres or a residential subdivision of less than ten lots, with direct access onto a county-maintained paved road, and where no improvements are to be constructed and access to the county-maintained paved road is limited to one residential driveway per 400 feet or one commercial driveway per minor development.

(e) *Access.* All proposed development shall meet the following standards for vehicular access and circulation. All projects shall have access to a public right-of-way.

1. **Separation of access points by functional class of roadway.**
   
   a. Unless otherwise approved by the county engineer, the separation between access points onto arterials and collector roadways, or between an access point and an intersection of an arterial or collector with another road for an arterial road shall be 4300 feet and for a collector road the distance between access points shall be 400 feet. *Shared driveways for individual residential lots and for non-residential development shall be required in order to maintain 400 feet of separation; parcels created prior to December 31, 2019 may apply for a variance with relief limited to the minimum required to provide legal access. Variance relief sought from this provision of the LDRs shall not be granted if shared driveways provide the minimum separation established.*

2. **Access to residential lots.** All lots in a proposed residential subdivision shall have frontage on an internal street with access from an existing county maintained, paved road meeting the requirements of this chapter except that rural residential subdivisions of one unit per 7½ acres or lower density platted as Private Subdivisions may take access from the private road within said subdivision, a private paved road. The private paved road shall meet the requirements of this chapter and must be approved by the county engineer.

**DIVISION 4. - SPECIFIC DISTRICTS**

Sec. 24-189. - AG 20 Agricultural District.

(a) *Scope and purpose.* This section applies to the AG 20 Agricultural District. The purpose of classifying land and water areas within this district is to protect viable long-term agricultural/forestry lands classified as land use category Agricultural A under the comprehensive plan from encroachment of incompatible land uses and by encouraging agriculture and related uses. Family lots, temporary family lots, medical hardships, homestead division, and any divisions of less than 20 acres are all prohibited. One dwelling unit per parcel will be permitted and each parcel shall have immediate access to an existing county or state maintained road. *Direct access to a county or state collector or...*
arterial road is limited to one driveway per lot unless additional farm access is approved pursuant to Section 30-2. Minimum lot size is 20 acres. Development must meet building codes and have a county department of health approved well and septic tank installation. Accessory uses and special uses are also permitted. All land divisions smaller than 20 acres are required to conform to subdivision requirements.

Sec. 24-190. - AG 10 Agricultural District.

(a) Generally. This section applies to the AG 10 Agricultural District. This district is similar to the AG 20 district; however, the minimum lot size is ten acres. Development must meet building codes and have a county department of health approved well and septic tank installation. It applies to parcels under one ownership which are less than 320 acres at the time of adoption of the comprehensive plan and which are used for cultivation of silviculture crops, row crops and/or livestock within the Agricultural A land use category of the comprehensive plan. Accessory uses and special uses are also permitted. Direct access to a county or state collector or arterial road is limited to one driveway per lot unless additional farm access is approved pursuant to Section 30-2.

(f) Setback and other standards.
(1) Minimum lot requirements (width, depth and area).
   a. Width: 200 feet; 400 feet when direct access is provided from a county or state collector or arterial road, including family lots, temporary family lots, medical hardships, and homestead divisions.
   b. Depth: none.
   c. Area: ten acres.

Sec. 24-191. - AG 5.75 Agricultural District.

(a) Generally. This section applies to the AG 5.75 Agricultural District. The purpose of classifying land and water areas within this district is to preserve the rural and open character of lands within the Agricultural B land use category of the comprehensive plan and to provide for permanent residential housing in conjunction with agricultural uses. Furthermore, this district is to be used to protect agricultural lands from premature development. One unit per 5.75 acres to one unit per 19 acres will be permitted. Development must meet building codes and have a county department of health approved well and septic tank installation. Accessory uses and special uses are also permitted. Direct access to a county or state collector or arterial road is limited to one driveway per lot, subject to a permit pursuant to Section 30-2.

(f) Setback and other standards.
(1) Minimum lot requirements (width and area).
   a. Width: 200 feet; 400 feet when direct access is provided from a county or state collector or arterial road, including family lots, temporary family lots, medical hardships, and homestead divisions.
   b. Area: 5.75 acres.
Sec. 24-192. - RCMH 2.5 Residential Conventional and Mobile Home District.

Generally. The provisions of this section apply to the RCMH 2.5 Residential Conventional and Mobile Home District. The purpose of classifying land and water areas within this district is to provide a transition between agriculture and residential uses and to accommodate large lot residential development of single-family conventional and mobile homes within the Very Low Density land use category of the comprehensive plan. One unit per 2½ acres will be permitted. Development must meet building codes and have a county department of health approved well and septic tank installation. Accessory uses and special uses are also permitted. Direct access to a county or state collector or arterial road is limited to one driveway per lot, subject to a permit pursuant to Section 30-2.

(e) Setback and other standards.

(1) Minimum lot requirements (width, depth and area).

a. Width: 200 feet; 400 feet when direct access is provided from a county or state collector or arterial road, including family lots, temporary family lots, medical hardships, and homestead divisions, and the land use is AG A or AG B.

b. Area: 2.5 acres.

c. Depth: 300 feet.

- Provide same standard in each zoning district.

Expand Driveway Permit authority to include review of spacing.

Sec. 30-2. - Driveway permits.

(a) As used in this section, unless a different meaning is required by the context:

Permit means a driveway permit issued from the county planning and zoning department upon the recommendation of the road superintendent to private landowners authorizing a single driveway crossing per residential lot across a county-owned right of way to the travel lane of the adjacent road and requiring said private landowners to install culverts or other material in county road ditches to create driveways to private property.

- Expand review to engineering or CDD to confirm compliance with spacing standards.
The Florida Statute requires that the adopted level of service applied to development within a jurisdiction can be reasonably met. A comprehensive plan that imposes transportation concurrency shall identify facilities necessary to meet the adopted levels of service during a 5-year period.

1. **The policies of the Traffic Circulation Element establish the minimum LOS for transportation facilities. Policies require the maintenance of the Peak Hour LOS and allow any particular section of road to operate at an LOS below the LOS if the segment is programmed for construction within year one (proposed to be changed to within the first three years) of the County CIP. Statutory requirements for the Capital Improvements Element and the 5 Year CIP establish how projects necessary to maintain the adopted LOS are to be recognized:**

Traffic Circulation Policy B.1.1.2 specifically allows for the operation of a road at an LOS below the adopted standard:

**Policy B.1.1.2 Criteria to Allow Operation of Roadway at Lower LOS**

Any section of any roadway may operate at a level of service lower than the adopted base LOS standard if capacity improvements, which will raise the LOS of said roadways to the adopted base LOS standards are programmed for construction within the first three years in year one of Baker County’s adopted capital improvement plan, or, if a State roadway, are programmed within the first three years of the FDOT Five-Year Work Program, or a contractual commitment has been made to improve the roadway to the adopted correct LOS.

2. **Policy B.1.1.6 requires that the necessary road facilities will be in place when the impacts of the development occur. This requirement applies to any development, whether de minimis or exempt. The theory is that de minimis development will be captured in traffic counts taken on a regular basis. The traffic counts are used to anticipate deficiencies in order to allow the county to fund improvements in advance of the actual exceedance of the LOS volume. Policy B.1.1.9 requires traffic counts be undertaken annually; this is proposed to be revised to require applicants to undertake traffic counts on impacted road segments.**

**Policy B.1.1.6 Transportation Facility Criteria for a Development Permit**

The County shall ensure that the necessary transportation facilities, including paved motorized and non-motorized vehicle parking, are in place when a development permit is issued or a development permit is issued subject to the condition that the necessary transportation facilities will be in place when the impacts of development occur.

**Policy B.1.1.9 Required Traffic Counts for Annual Monitoring of LOS**

The County shall require applications for transportation concurrency to provide current traffic counts on local roads within the impact area for the proposed development. The impact area shall include all state and local road segments identified in the Baker County Concurrency Road Network identified in Exhibit C of this Element on which the
development traffic is significant and adverse. Significant shall be defined as 5% or greater of the adopted maximum service volume for the road segment. Maintain and enhance as necessary, a comprehensive traffic counting system for annually monitoring the level of service on the County roadway system; in addition, the County shall require developers to provide traffic counts on County roads within proposed project areas consistent with the adopted Concurrency Ordinance.

Exhibit C to the Traffic Circulation Element to be adopted.

Objective B.1.2 Annually Update the Capital Improvements Plan
The County shall periodically identify transportation improvement needs and establish a priority schedule to be included in the Capital Improvements Plan. Transportation projects included in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) shall comprise the Baker County Transportation Improvements Program (TIP), identified within the Capital Improvements Element, to be updated annually based on available traffic data, land development proposals, and as dictated by County budgeting priorities and needs.

Policy B.1.2.1 Periodically Update the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
The County shall establish and maintain a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and shall establish a mechanism whereby the plan is periodically updated and prioritized transportation improvements included in the CIP according to the criteria specified in Policy B.1.2.2.

3. The burden to provide improvements necessary to maintain the adopted LOS lies with the local government; under Policy B.1.4.1, failure to maintain the adopted LOS is intended to halt the issuance of permits.

Policy B.1.4.1 Ensure Roadway Capacity Availability for Proposed Development
The County shall implement its TIP utilizing available revenues and review development proposals subject to concurrency based on the requirements of the county site plan review and approval ordinance to ensure the availability of existing roadway capacity to serve project traffic and maintain acceptable operating conditions.

Policy B.1.4.2 LOS Criteria for Development Approval
The County shall condition ensure that no development receives final development approval on the approval of a Concurrency Reservation Certificate, where the proposed project will reduce the level of service of the roadway below the established level of service unless, when a project would lower the level of service below the established level of service, the development approval shall be conditioned on the roadway improvements being programmed or constructed.

Development that exceeds the following de minimis thresholds shall be subject to transportation concurrency:

Office development – any proposed office building of park that encompasses 300,000 or more square feet of gross floor area or is equal to or greater than 30 acres in area.
Retail and service development – any proposed retail, service, or wholesale business establishment or group of establishments which deals primarily with the general public onsite that encompasses more than 400,000 square feet of gross area or provides parking spaces for more than 2,500 cars, or is equal to or greater than 40 acres in area.

Industrial development - any proposed industrial development that encompasses more than 500,000 square feet of gross area.

Recreational vehicle development- any proposed recreational vehicle development planned to create or accommodate 500 or more spaces.

Multi-use development- any proposed development with two or more land uses where the sum of the percentages of the appropriate thresholds identified for any single use is equal to or greater than 145 percent. Any proposed development with three or more land uses, one of which is residential use containing at least 75 dwelling units, where the sum of the percentages of the appropriate thresholds identified for any single use is equal to or greater than 160 percent. This threshold is in addition to and does not preclude a development from being subject to transportation concurrency under any other threshold.

Residential development- 250 dwelling units.

The thresholds established above shall apply to the cumulative sum of all development approvals within a property based on the boundary of the property as of December 31, 2019.

**Policy H.1.2.1 Implementing the Concurrency Management System**

Annually, the County shall review the list of inefficient, worn-out or obsolete facilities subject to concurrency that are projected to become infrastructure deficiencies within the subsequent five year period, requiring upgrading or replacement before the year 2014.

4. In implementing the Concurrency Management System, adopted policies provide that the County will ensure that development orders and permits are issued in compliance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the comprehensive plan to provide new or upgrades in infrastructure and support locally desired development, pursuant to Section 163.3180 (6)(e)4 and (6)(f)3, FS.

**Policy H.1.4.2 Compliance with Concurrency Management System**

Require the County to certify that required levels of service will be maintained consistent with 9J-5.005(2)a, b, and c, and the County Concurrency Management System before the project is permitted to be heard by the Board of County Commissioners for approval of development orders, or issuance of building permits.

**Policy H.1.12.2**

In furtherance of Traffic Circulation Policy B.1.1.1, any section of any roadway may operate at a level of service lower than the base LOS if capacity improvements, which will raise the LOS of said roadways to the base LOS standards, are programmed for.
construction in year three one of Baker County’s adopted capital budget, the FDOT Five-Year Work Program, or contractual commitment to program construction within three years of the impacts that require the improvement to maintain the adopted LOS has been made.

**Policy H.1.12.3**

The County shall not issue a building permit or other development order to a project subject to transportation concurrency in any case where the above standards for roadway levels of service within the County are exceeded.

5. *The county has elected to create a transportation concurrency exemption for locally desired development.* Pursuant to Section 163.3180 (6)(e)4 and (6)(f)3, FS, the County has elected to create a transportation concurrency exemption for locally desired development. Policy H.1.6.2 is proposed to be amended to implement the exemption:

**Policy H.1.6.2**

Condition new development on the requirement that developers or builders prove to the County’s satisfaction that infrastructure supplying the needed levels of service will be available concurrent with development impact before a development order is issued.

The following development represents economic development opportunities for Baker County by providing permanent employment expansion opportunities for the County’s citizens and encouraging new or expanded businesses within the County to help reverse the daily commute out of the County and as such shall be eligible for an Exempt Transportation Concurrency Certificate if the proposed development would otherwise be subject to transportation concurrency pursuant to Policy B.1.4.2 of the Traffic Circulation Element.

**QTI Business Exemption.** At any time prior to the approval of final construction plans for eligible non-residential development as defined below, the developer may request approval of a QTI Business Exemption to transportation concurrency. Such application must be approved by the BCC prior to the approval of final construction plans.

The QTI Business must occupy the structure(s) for which the Exemption is requested and must:

1. Create a minimum of ten new permanent jobs or a ten percent increase in existing employment (whichever is greater) with each job paying (excluding benefits) at least 125% of the County’s then applicable average private sector wage, as determined by Enterprise Florida or its statutory successor. For the purposes of this exemption, a permanent job means any filled full-time position offered by the QTI Business, new to the County, and occupying the structure(s) for which the Exemption is requested and in place no later than one year following the Electric Clearance Permit for the construction and maintained for a period not less than five years.
The QTI Business seeking a QTI Business Exemption to Transportation Concurrency shall file an application with the County that provides information determined to be necessary to insure compliance with the conditions of the exemption, including a compliance monitoring plan.
December 31, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners  
   Land Planning Agency

FROM: Susan L. Fraser  
   Community Development Department

RE: Sanderson Community Plan- Interstate related Commercial Land Use  
   2040 Comprehensive Plan

The County adopted the Sanderson Community Plan in June 2018, incorporating a land use category of ‘Interstate Related Commercial’ into the comprehensive plan. The adopted 2040 Plan does not establish the uses permitted in this land use category or the intensity / density of use permitted. In the absence of these standards, the Future Land Use Element does not meet the requirements of Section 163.3177 (6)(a), Florida Statutes:

(6) In addition to the requirements of subsections (1)-(5), the comprehensive plan shall include the following elements:

(a) A future land use plan element designating proposed future general distribution, location, and extent of the uses of land for residential uses, commercial uses, industry, agriculture, recreation, conservation, education, public facilities, and other categories of the public and private uses of land. The approximate acreage and the general range of density or intensity of use shall be provided for the gross land area included in each existing land use category. The element shall establish the long-term end toward which land use programs and activities are ultimately directed.

1. Each future land use category must be defined in terms of uses included, and must include standards to be followed in the control and distribution of population densities and building and structure intensities. The proposed distribution, location, and extent of the various categories of land use shall be shown on a land use map or
map series which shall be supplemented by goals, policies, and measurable objectives.

The County has the option to implement or delete the Interstate Related Commercial (IRC) land use category (and if eliminated, remove it from the FLUM) as follows. This land use designation is 5,142.83 acres in area. Each option outlined below requires a comprehensive plan amendment to accomplish, with notice provided to the property owner(s):

1. Retain the designation on the FLUM and develop standards for development required by Section 163.3177. One approach is to modify the standards applicable to the Mixed Use Land Use category to reflect potentially higher densities/intensities of use for application in the IRC land use designation. The Sanderson Plan includes the designation of 14.72 acres of Mixed Use land use currently; clearly the intent was not to just apply the MU designation to the 5,000+ acres designated for IRC land use. Establishing these standards should be accomplished with community and landowner participation. There are 81 parcels assigned the IRC land use designation under the Sanderson Community Plan.

**Policy A.1.10.3 Mixed Use**

This land use category is appropriate within or immediately adjacent to the urban growth area in locations where central water and sewer infrastructure exists or is planned to be in place commensurate with the timing of development impacts, and along arterial or collector roads where adequate capacity and public facilities are available, or planned to be available to meet the impacts of the proposed development as defined in the Baker County concurrency management program.

The purpose of Mixed Use is to encourage and foster the integration of uses both horizontally and vertically to reduce the need for automobile travel by providing workforce housing in close proximity to places of employment and other services.

Density and intensity of land uses permitted within this category shall include a variety of at least three different land uses (to qualify as “mixed use”) at the following minimum proportions of land area:

A. Twenty (20%) percent residential, twenty (20%) percent nonresidential and ten (10%) percent open space.
B. No single land use may exceed seventy (70%) percent of the land area involved in the specific area designated or in the particular amendment.
C. Open space may include trails, passive recreation area, squares, upland buffers, linear open space that may include such features as walkways, bike paths, greens, plazas and other similar amenities, and up to seventy-five (75%) percent of preserved wetlands.
D. Housing options may range from single family detached and attached units to multi-family units.
E. Clustering of residential units and housing types is permitted and encouraged to maximize open space and to make efficient use of infrastructure.
F. Agriculture, Commercial, Conservation, Governmental, Industrial, and Institutional uses are allowed within the non-residential portion of the Mixed Use land use category.
Residential use shall be permitted at a maximum density of ten units per gross acre of MU land use and a minimum density of six units per net acre of residential use within the MU development. Non-residential intensity shall not exceed that established for the Commercial and Industrial land use categories on a net acre basis.

**Policy A.1.10.6 Development Standards for: Mixed-Use, Industrial, and Commercial**

The following standards shall apply to development within the Mixed-Use, Industrial, and Commercial land use categories:

A. The County shall permit individual wastewater disposal systems (septic tanks) for development in the Mixed Use, Industrial and Commercial categories subject to the conditions in B. below and provided that site and soil conditions are suitable for on-site sewage treatment plant (septic tank) use as determined by the requirements of Chapter 62, FAC. Minimum design flows for septic systems shall be based on the estimated daily sewage flow as defined by Chapter 64E-6.008, FAC, System Size Determination, as it may be amended from time to time.

The County shall permit individual potable water wells provided that such wells are allowed as regulated by County land development regulations, Health Department and applicable State standards.

All uses within the Mixed Use, Industrial and Commercial land use categories within the Urban Growth Area shall be required to be served by central sewer and potable water service, when available. Available shall be as defined by Section 381.0065(2)(a), Florida Statute. The FDEP and/or the County Health Department may waive the requirement of mandatory onsite sewage disposal connection if it determines that such connection is not required in the public interest due to public health considerations.

B. Proposed development in the Mixed Use, Commercial or Industrial land use categories that generates a wastewater treatment demand equal to or in excess of 2,000 GPD either individually or when aggregated with the proposed development in an approved master plan shall coordinate with the County to participate in the establishment of a publicly–owned or investor–owned sewerage system.

C. {All development in the Mixed Use, Commercial or Industrial any land use category} shall have access to paved roads. All internal roads shall be paved to County standards. Primary ingress/egress from development area to external roadways shall be required to be improved in accordance with County standards and centralized to minimize the number of access points to external roadways. All development shall meet FDOT access guidelines when a project directly accesses a state road.
D. Future right-of-way for roads and improvements generally identified in the Baker County Thoroughfare Master Plan adopted pursuant to Ordinance 2007-28 shall be protected from development.

E. As part of the site plan approval process, the County shall ensure that adequate right-of-way is available to support the location and construction of future roadways and other improvements identified on the Thoroughfare Master Plan.

F. To promote opportunities for affordable workforce housing, preserve open space and groundwater recharge areas, and promote the efficient use of infrastructure, the County shall encourage clustering of development within Mixed Use areas.

G. If there is residential land use included in a mixed-use development, residential and non-residential portions of the development shall be linked internally by streets, sidewalks, and in some cases by a separate system of pedestrian, bike, and/or low speed vehicle paths to encourage multi-modal transit options. Industrial uses within a mixed use development shall not be located adjacent to residential uses without providing a buffer between the uses that is adequate to mitigate incompatibilities based on the intensity and type of industrial use permitted.

H. No development activities shall take place in jurisdictional wetlands unless permitted by the ACOE or the SJRWMD prior to development permit issuance by the County.

2. Amend the FLUM to eliminate the designation. No further action is required to develop standards for development under the category. This amendment would reduce the area of the Sanderson Community Plan to 1,450.86 acres (total of 6,593.69 acres less 5,142.83 acres of IRC).
December 31, 2019

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners  
Land Planning Agency

FROM: Susan L. Fraser  
Community Development Department

RE: Economic Development Element  
2040 Comprehensive Plan

The Evaluation and Appraisal Report resulted in no amendments to the Economic Development Element of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan; the adopted Economic Development Element of the 2040 Plan is attached.

The ED Element is based on a study completed in 2006 and amended in 2010/2011 called the Baker County Alternative Futures Study / Urban Growth Strategy Study. This Alternative Futures Study is adopted as an appendix to the ED Element. Data that supports the study is the 2000 Census, stakeholder interviews and two community meetings held in August 2005.

The data on which the study is based is dated and in some cases has been revised in the 2019 Evaluation and Appraisal Report:

The Alternative Futures Study identifies the then BEBR population projection of 32,000 persons for the year 2030 but goes on to state that “This population projection is inconsistent with the growth that the County expects. To date growth has been limited by not only low market demand, but by the availability of county-wide public services. Baker County is just now being approached by large development in the form of Developments of Regional Impact.” The 2019 EAR accepts the BEBR High population projections and establishes the 2030 County population projection as 33,600 persons increasing to 38,000 persons in 2040.

Housing Characteristics described in the study are indicative of the housing situation in 2010 when the study was last updated as are the number of home sales and sales prices.
Economic Characteristics are based on 2004 and 2005 data with the BEBR 2002 Long-Term Economic Forecast being cited; employment trends information was developed in 2005.

While the data cited in the Alternatives Study is dated, the vision established in subsequent sections of the Alternatives Study is likely still relevant, representing a delay in implementation rather than any change in direction through 2040. The importance of central water and sewer was recognized in the study 2006 and remains a top priority today:

“Lacking county-wide public water and sewer availability, the opportunity for mixed-use development is greatly diminished. And clustering and mixed-use developments must be confined to Macclenny and Glen St. Mary, assuming the availability of capacity. As previously mentioned, pursuant to S. 21-32 Water and sewer services outside the city limits for the City of Macclenny, contiguous properties to the municipal boundaries that seek water and sewer must voluntarily seek annexation into the city. Essentially, the current situation in the County is such that future development will be dictated by either the municipal regulations of Macclenny and Glen St. Mary, or on an individual project basis through development agreements.”

In the original 2005-2006 study, four conceptual Baker County futures were presented to project participants for future Baker County growth to gauge how participants prefer to see Baker County develop. The alternative community development styles presented were: rural community, bedroom community, full-service community, and a hybrid mix of two or more of these development styles. Each are described and the long-term implications of each are outlined (pages 14-18 of Appendix I to the ED Element, attached).

The study makes recommendations that support a vital future for Baker County in each of the following four areas:

A. Centralized Water and Sewer
B. Land Use
C. Economic Development
D. Transportation

The goal of this initial workshop on the Economic Development Element is to review the recommendations for each and determine if they continue to represent the best future for Baker County. Each member of the BCC and LPA is encouraged to review the recommendations and identify any specific changes that they believe will better reflect the plans for the county through the extended planning period of 2040.

After a presentation by Darryl Register, we will utilize a process of individually recording recommended changes / observations about each of the four areas identified above and posting them to support facilitated discussion of consensus recommendations that can be further researched by staff and the Economic Development Council / Chamber to produce amendments to the adopted ED Element goals, objectives and policies for further review.

Review of the Future Land Use and Transportation policies of the 2040 Plan has resulted in a recommendation for an exemption to transportation concurrency for QTI projects. This proposed amendment is to Capital Improvements Policy H.1.6.2:
Policy H.1.6.2
Condition new development on the requirement to require all developers or builders to prove to the County’s satisfaction that infrastructure supplying the needed levels of service will be available concurrent with development impact before a development order is issued.

The following development represents economic development opportunities for Baker County by providing permanent employment expansion opportunities for the County’s citizens and encouraging new or expanded businesses within the County to help reverse the daily commute out of the County and as such shall be eligible for an Exempt Transportation Concurrency Certificate if the proposed development would otherwise be subject to transportation concurrency pursuant to Policy B.1.4.2 of the Traffic Circulation Element.

QTI Business Exemption. At any time prior to the approval of final construction plans for eligible non-residential development as defined below, the developer may request approval of a QTI Business Exemption to transportation concurrency. Such application must be approved by the BCC prior to the approval of final construction plans.

The QTI Business must occupy the structure(s) for which the Exemption is requested and must:

1. Create a minimum of ten new permanent jobs or a ten percent increase in existing employment (whichever is greater) with each job paying (excluding benefits) at least 125% of the County’s then applicable average private sector wage, as determined by Enterprise Florida or its statutory successor. For the purposes of this exemption, a permanent job means any filled full-time position offered by the QTI Business, new to the County, and occupying the structure(s) for which the Exemption is requested and in place no later than one year following the Electric Clearance Permit for the construction and maintained for a period not less than five years.

The QTI Business seeking a QTI Business Exemption to Transportation Concurrency shall file an application with the County that provides information determined to be necessary to insure compliance with the conditions of the exemption, including a compliance monitoring plan.
Economic Development Element
Goals, Objectives and Policies
of the
Baker County 2040 Comprehensive Plan
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Alternative Futures 2006 – Revised 2010/2011
Nature-Based Tourism and Job Creation
Introduction

Baker County is one of Florida's Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO), a designation that should help the County compete effectively in today’s ever changing economic landscape. According to the Governor’s Executive Order, this designation notes that Baker County is “struggling to maintain, support or enhance job creating activity or to generate revenues for education and other critical government services such as infrastructure, transportation and safety.” As the Executive Order further notes, these challenges threaten both the “well-being and viability” of Baker County. Although the RAO designation qualifies the County for special assistance from the Governor's Office, as well as from other state and regional agencies and organizations, it leaves the principal task of creating an economically viable community to Baker County.

I. Economic Development Element

Goal I.1. Facilitate a Positive Business Environment
Facilitate development of a positive business environment to attract and expand diverse business opportunities to enhance the economic prosperity of Baker County, grow the County’s tax base, and better distribute the tax burdens of growth and development.

Objective I.1.1 Develop an Economic Development Program
Develop a comprehensive economic development program for the County.

Policy I.1.1.1 Fund Economic Analysis for Baseline
The County shall fund and develop an economic analysis to serve as the baseline for improving economic activity within the County.

Policy I.1.1.2 Conduct Cost/Benefit Analysis for Financial Incentives to New Businesses
The County shall conduct a cost/benefit analysis of any financial incentives proposed to be provided by the County to support the retention, expansion, or development of local business or to attract new business. Such analysis shall factor in the financial costs as well as the social equity and environmental impacts of proposed incentives.

Policy I.1.1.3 Coordinate Activities with Baker County Economic Development Commission (EDC)
The County shall coordinate its economic development activities with the Baker County Economic Development Commission (EDC), its municipalities, and the appropriate federal, state, regional, and local agencies.

Policy I.1.1.4 Support EDC Strategic Plans
The County shall support the activities of EDC to develop and implement a strategic plan for county-wide economic development.

Policy I.1.1.5 Focus Economic Activities on Job Creation
The County shall coordinate with the EDC to revise economic development strategies to create a synergistic effort to attract target businesses to the County with a focus on job creation.

**Policy I.1.1.6**
The County shall encourage the allocation of resources for the retention, expansion, and development of local businesses and the recruitment of new businesses and industries.

**Policy I.1.1.7** Facilitate Infrastructure Development
The County shall expand its economic base by facilitating the development of infrastructure to support business and industrial ventures.

**Policy I.1.1.8** Minimize Costs to Taxpayers for Infrastructure Development
The County shall promote methods of financing infrastructure and public services to minimize costs to current and future taxpayers.

**Policy I.1.1.9** Prioritize Attracting Distribution and Logistics Industries
The County recognizes distribution and logistics industries as valuable economic assets to the community and region. Development of such ventures through expansion, development, and recruitment of appropriate businesses and industries and training facilities shall be given high priority.

**Policy I.1.1.10** Support Foreign Trade Zone Business and Industry
The County shall encourage businesses and industries that contribute to the flow of income into the local economy by producing goods and services imported into the County as part of Foreign Trade Zone #64 for assembly and export through such firms as could be encouraged to locate or expand into the County. Through Foreign Trade Zone 64 participation, the County seeks to create and maintain new employment opportunities by encouraging operations in the United States and Baker County that for Customs reasons might otherwise have been carried on abroad to:

- Retain existing jobs and attract new jobs
- Create company investment in the local community
- Facilitate improvements to local infrastructure
- Increase local purchases of goods and services

**Policy I.1.1.11** Support Minority Businesses
The County shall support local and minority business efforts, by implementing purchasing policies that provide the maximum opportunity for increased participation by local, small, and minority-owned businesses.

**Policy I.1.1.12** Encourage Community Development Block Grants
The County shall initiate efforts and support the efforts of other agencies to obtain grant monies (e.g., Community Development Block Grants) and other funds designed to assist local economic development projects.
Objective I.1.2  Diversify the Local Economy
Diversify the County’s economy.

Policy I.1.2.1  Support Existing Economic Development
The County shall promote economic development efforts that build on and complement existing commercial, industrial, agricultural, and other natural assets in the local economic system.

Policy I.1.2.2  Support Port-Related Commerce
The County shall encourage the development and expansion of port-related commerce.

Policy I.1.2.3  Prioritize Transportation Corridor Industries
The County shall prioritize the land use planning of sites having high visibility and close access to the Baker County transportation corridor formed by I-10, US90, and the rail line for development by logistics and transportation industries.

Policy I.1.2.4  Promote Nature-Based Tourism Destination
The County shall promote Baker County as a tourism destination with an emphasis on nature-based tourism, and tourism-related businesses that complement the County’s natural resources.

Policy I.1.2.5  Promote Local Agriculture Industry
The County shall encourage industries that create or augment a market for local agricultural products to locate in or expand in Baker County.

Objective I.1.3  Encourage Economic Opportunity at All Levels
Encourage economic opportunities for all economic segments of the County. Particular emphasis shall be given to activities that increase economic opportunities for persons at or near the poverty level and to activities that encourage commercial and industrial uses to:

a. increase per capita incomes for the County
b. decrease percentage of persons living at or below the poverty level
c. decrease unemployment rates.

Policy I.1.3.1  Prioritize Support for High-Wage Industries
The County shall give priority support to businesses and industries that meet the demands of the existing labor force by providing employment opportunities and equitable salaries.

Policy I.1.3.2  Encourage Businesses to Train Workers
The County shall encourage businesses and industries to locate in Baker County that are willing to participate in the training of skilled and unskilled workers.

Policy I.1.3.3  Support “Home-Based Businesses”
The County shall encourage and allow flexibility in the development of "home-based businesses" consistent with public health and safety concerns. Home-based businesses are
defined as a business or commercial activity conducted on a residential property which is accessory to the residential use of that property.

**Goal I.2. Encourage New Jobs Compatible with Growth and Environmental Goals of the County**
Encourage the creation of permanent, value-added jobs compatible with the growth management and environmental goals of the County.

**Objective I.2.1 Encourage Good Corporate Stewardship**
The County shall encourage new businesses and industries developing and locating in the County (and the expansion of existing businesses and industries) to contribute to maintaining a clean environment (air, water, soil) and will work with business to provide the necessary infrastructure and compatible land uses. Each employer shall be a good neighbor by preventing or appropriately mitigating adverse impacts on the environment.

**Policy I.2.1.1 Adopt Standards and Procedures for Development**
The County shall adopt objective standards and procedures for decisions on applications for development approval for business and industrial uses that correspond to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.

Such standards and procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness in facilitating the permitting process, protecting the environment, and adhering to technological changes and changes to Federal or State rules regarding environmental protection and energy conservation.

**Policy I.2.1.2 Maintain Interlocal Agreement for Water Services**
The County shall maintain an interlocal agreement with the City of Macclenny to provide public water and wastewater facilities for areas adjacent to existing service boundaries for the City’s public facilities.

**Policy I.2.1.3 Ensure Capacity Availability – Land and Transportation**
Through the development review process, the County shall ensure that adequate land and transportation capacity are available for present and future employment generating land uses.

**Policy I.2.1.4 Encourage Business and Industry within the Urban Growth Boundary**
The County shall encourage the development and expansion of business and industry in appropriate locations that make efficient use of existing public services and infrastructure or that generate new public services and infrastructure to serve a greater area of the County.

**Policy I.2.1.5 Enforce State and Federal Hazardous Waste Procedures**
Industries or businesses generating hazardous wastes shall follow procedures and guidelines for the use, storage, and disposal of such materials as set forth in State and Federal Rules.
**Policy I.2.1.6  Reduce Energy Consumption with Reduced Commute Times**

The County shall reduce total per capita energy consumption by reducing commuting time to work by creating more in-county jobs for county citizens.
I. General Information and Introduction

Baker County, located thirty minutes west of the Jacksonville metropolitan area and JaxPort along the I-10 freight corridor, is a rural county that has experienced a relatively low growth rate because much of the land historically is owned by large timber companies. In the last ten years the timber companies have sold-off vast tracts of undeveloped lands previously in pine silviculture production. Before the economic downturn, in Baker County there had been an uptick in job development with the location of Wal-Mart Distribution Center and Hanson Tile Company in the County. Also, there was a jump in the number and magnitude of new housing proposals, although approvals were exacerbating labor force exportation to Jacksonville.

As the economy improves, development pressures return, and JaxPort expansion takes off, the market conditions in Baker County are prime for port-related development. The County is aggressively pursuing port-related, logistics and transportation industries to build jobs in Baker County. With large tracts of undeveloped lands that are amenable for inland port, secondary manufacturing, and master-planned communities, the County is poised to encourage development that promotes interconnectivity between developments, preservation of open space, and sustainability; while encouraging industrial/commercial growth along the transportation corridor.

II. The Process

The original Alternative Futures process was a multi-phased project: data collection/information gathering, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, community meetings, and a final report and recommendations phase undertaken in 2006 just before the economic crash. The data collection/information gathering phase was ongoing throughout the alternative futures process from primary and secondary data sources, such as the statistical data from the 2000 US Census.

For the stakeholder interview phase, one-on-one interviews were conducted with key informants that had knowledge of the community. Included in the sample of stakeholders were local/regional government officials and staff, land developers, a hospital administrator, and business leaders. Three focus group meetings disseminated the information collected from the stakeholder interviews and provided information about the possibilities for Baker County’s future. Methods to achieve the alternative futures were given so that local stakeholders could be made aware of the tools available to make a difference in their community’s future.

The community-meeting phase consisted of two meetings, both of which were held in August of 2005. The purpose of this phase was to educate the public and participants about the alternative futures of Baker County and to gather opinions from the public. Specifically, the facilitators sought to understand how attendees perceived the then
current Baker County quality of life and services provided, whether Baker County was prepared to handle future needs/demands, and how local citizens and leaders believed Baker County would grow versus their ideals of how they wanted to see Baker County develop.

These visioning exercises were augmented and updated in 2008-2009 during the Reality Check and First Coast Reality Check regional visioning exercises facilitated by the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council that effectively convinced Baker County leaders and citizens to raise sites and goals to a regional level rather than only county-wide.

III. Population

Baker County is comprised of 585 square miles and has a population of approximately 24,000 people in 2004 (in July 2009: 26,336), which equates to an approximate density of 38 – 40 (45 in 2009) persons per square mile (note: the State of Florida averages 296 persons per square mile). The number of persons per household was slightly higher in Baker County (2.86) versus in the state (2.46) in 2000. (Florida County Rankings 2004/2009).

The Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) projects the population in 2030 to be approximately 32,000 people (see: Figure 1, *Population Projections*). This population projection is inconsistent with the growth that the County expects. To date growth has been limited by not only low market demand, but by the availability of county-wide public services. Baker County is just now being approached by large development in the form of Developments of Regional Impact.

**FIGURE 1: Population Projections**
Baker County as compared with Florida’s population / land area is illustrated below:

Table 1: Baker County as compared with Florida: 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Rank in state</th>
<th>Percentage of state</th>
<th>Land area 1/ (square miles)</th>
<th>Persons per square mile</th>
<th>Rank in state</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>17,071,508</td>
<td>(X)</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>53,937.2</td>
<td>316</td>
<td>(X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>23,383</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>585.3</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 2004 Florida Statistical Abstract)

Baker County’s population is distributed as follows:

Table 2: Population: County / Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>22,259</td>
<td>23,383</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen St. Mary</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macclenny</td>
<td>4,459</td>
<td>4,855</td>
<td>8.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>17,327</td>
<td>18,035</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2003, there were 15 births per 1,000 persons. The birth rate differed by race: 15.5 for whites and 12.5 non-white. This birth rate led to a total of 353 births in 2003, of which 6 were of children of Hispanic origin.

In 2003, the birth rate for every 1,000 teenage girls ages 15-19 is 70.1, which means that 7% of teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are became mothers in Baker County in 2003. Of this group, 73.8% are unwed mothers and 26.2% have had previous births. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

Two-hundred and seventy four couples married in Baker County in 2003, and 135 couples got a divorce. Between 2002 and 2003, this represents a 12.3% increase in the marriage rate and a decrease of 6.9% in the number of divorces. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

Children

Of the 2002 divorcing couples, 75 had children, meaning that the minimum number of children affected by the divorces were 118. Between 2002 and 2003, out of the 6,217
children in Baker County, there were 318 reported cases of child abuse, making the abuse rate 6% for the year. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

**Elderly**

In 2002-03, 397 cases of elderly abuse were reported. This is a rate of 17.5 cases per 1,000 citizens aged 65 and over. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

**Social Service Characteristics**

In the 2002-03 fiscal year, 143 families received Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

**IV. Housing Characteristics**

Traditionally, the rate of homeownership is higher in Baker County (81.2%) than in Florida (70.1%). Also, homes are generally less expensive in Baker County than the Florida average: the Baker County median value of the owner-occupied housing units was $80,900 in 2000, whereas it was $105,500 in the State of Florida. In 2002 and 2003, 492 mobile home tags and 403 mobile park tags were sold (Florida County Rankings 2004). It is important to realize that more than 50% of the local housing stock is mobile homes rather than traditionally built homes and that there are less than 100 multi-family units available in the county.

**Residential Development**

Cedar Creek and Navona Creek were large DRIs proposed to be developed with residential and commercial in several phases. These projects were lost in the financial down-turn of 2008-2010. The Cedar Creek property has been split between two owners. With the County, these owners are moving toward abandonment of the DRI and possible new residential land use projects at a much more conservative level or large lot division to offer the property to smaller developers. The current owner of the previously named “Navona Creek” property has proposed several ten (10) acre subdivisions along paved county roads, again to a much more conservative scale than the DRI level of development previously planned.

In 2010, there were no large scale plan amendments and only four small scale plan amendments submitted. Three of these are to change zoning to industrial, commercial, and one to institutional. The Trustees of Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF—DOC), Department of Corrections rezoned a 20 acre parcel for a 480 bed, re-entry processing facility slated for development in the next five years. Residential growth is at a stand-still for the moment except for ongoing projects.

Residential developments that were previously approved or are pending in Baker County from 2005 until 2009 are listed below in Table 3A.
### Table 3A: Developments – 2005 - 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number of Dwellings per current or previous land use / zoning district</th>
<th>Number of dwellings per proposed land use / zoning district</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blair Nursery</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanderson Farms</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen St. Mary Nursery</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern States Nurseries</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Plantation</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Glen Estates</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creekside Oaks</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greystone</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber Lane</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Ridge</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper Creek III</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypress Pointe</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandes Pointe</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Oaks</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaning Oaks</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling Meadows</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creekside Town Houses</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypress Pointe Town Houses</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Course</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhoden</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Florida Heritage</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>10.75</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Economic Characteristics

The median household income in 2005 was $51,400.00. In 2004, Baker County had a 92.51 FCRPI (Florida County Retail Price Index): goods and services in Baker County cost 7.5% less than the state average. The Florida County Wage Index (FCWI) measures the relative wages paid to a worker performing an identical job. Baker County had a FCWI of 97.18 in 2004, meaning that Baker County residents earn 2.8% less than the state average for an identical job.

BEBR 2004 Retail Price and Wage Indices

The Florida County Retail Price Index (FCRPI) is a measure of the relative income required to purchase the same bundle of goods throughout the state. In 2004, Baker County had a 92.51 FCRPI, which means that goods and services in Baker County cost 7.5% less in Baker County than the state average. With this FCRPI, Baker County ranks 40th out of the 67 Florida Counties in terms of the costs associated with goods and services.

The Florida County Wage Index (FCWI) measures the relative wages paid to a worker performing an identical job. Baker County had a FCWI of 97.18 in 2004, meaning that Baker County residents earn 2.8% less than the state average for an identical job. This puts Baker County 25th highest paid out of Florida’s 67 counties. When the FCRPI and FCWI are combined, deductions can be made about the quality of life in Baker County. Overall, Baker County residents are paid nearly as much as the state average (only 2.8% less), but goods cost considerably less than the state average (7.5% less). This combination makes Baker County a desirable place to live.
BEBR 2002 Long-Term Economic Forecast

In its Long-Term Economic Forecast 2002, Volume 2- State & Counties,** the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida ranks Baker County as one of the ten Florida counties with the largest shares of state government earnings. According to BEBR, these counties are expected to experience employment growth through 2015 of 26%, but are not anticipated to match the statewide average job growth (30%). While Non-Agricultural Wage and Salary Jobs are forecasted to increase by 26%, personal income is expected to go up 151%. Additionally, taxable sales are forecasted to double (104% increase). (**This report has been discontinued.2010)

Table 4: BEBR Long-Term Economic Forecast for Baker County, 2002.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Ag &amp; Salary Jobs</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>6,400</td>
<td>6,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Income (in millions)</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxable Sales (in millions)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Projected unemployment rate for 2010 at 4.1% - actual is approximately 9.1%.

Employment Trends

In 2005 the total employment in Baker County was expected to steadily rise through 2049. The projection trends for Private Non-Farm Employment followed the total employment projection trends by slowly increasing during this planning period. Public Administration Employment was and still is projected to slightly taper off from 2045 to 2049. Farm Employment is expected to continue to slowly decline throughout the planning period.
The problem with BEBR forecasts is that they depend only on historical data and do not/cannot take into account events such as the hard economic downturn of the last few years or the pending positive variables such as the expansion of the Jacksonville port or the development of nature-based tourism within the expanding County park system. This type of economic development has no history in Baker County and therefore is difficult to quantify or project into the future.

Personal Income & Taxable Sales
Personal income is projected to steadily increase through 2015 from $552 million in 2005 to $717 million in 2010 to $957 million in 2015. This represents an increase of 73% between 2005 and 2015. Accordingly, taxable sales are also projected to steadily rise 48% between 2005 and 2015 to $186 million in 2015. However, the projected increase in taxable sales (+48%) does not keep pace with the expected rise in personal income (+78%).

The above figures illustrate that the average wage earner in Baker County has been paid slightly less than a similar employee in his/her field when compared with Florida as an aggregate. However, that same Baker County wage earner is paying less for goods and services and less for housing than his/her peers outside of the county. However, in 2002, the per capita income, on average, for a citizen of Florida was $29,758.00, but only $20,618.00 for the average Baker County resident (source: 2004 Florida Statistical Abstract). Baker County also has, on average, more persons per household than the average for Florida as a whole.
VI. Infrastructure

Centralized Water and Sanitary Sewer
At this time, the lack of a county-wide centralized public water and sanitary sewer facility is prohibiting the County from developing with more urban-like growth and creating a challenge for industrial growth. The City of Macclenny has a publicly owned municipal water and sewer facility that provides water and sewer for the City of Macclenny, the town of Glen St. Mary, and several limited properties in unincorporated Baker County. However, with the development pressures mounting in both the cities and the County, Macclenny’s consumptive use permit will not be able to handle the future growth without expansion.

In the meantime, in order for developments to be served by water and sewer that are not located within the municipal limits of Macclenny, the following applies:

S. 21-32 Water and sewer services outside the city limits

(a) The applicant requesting such services is economically able to have such services provided by the city, and is not an economic burden to the city.
(b) If such applicant is contiguous with the city that the applicant must first apply for voluntary annexation before the services will be furnished.
(c) If the applicant is not contiguous with the city they must in writing agree that when the applicant's property becomes contiguous with the City of Macclenny, the applicant will forthwith apply for voluntary annexation.
(d) If the applicant is not contiguous with the city, the city must apply a surcharge of additional fifty (50) percent as allowed by Florida Statutes for such water and sewer services.

Essentially, the above requirements simultaneously promote the geographic and population expansion of Macclenny, but also limit the ability of Baker County to develop logistics and transportation based industry. The result is that the urban services boundary must, at this time, evolve from the geographic service boundaries of Macclenny.

Attachment ‘B’ to this summary illustrates the old (2005) proposed urban service boundaries. A submitted application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) contiguous to Glen St. Mary was proposed to utilize surplus sewer capacity for 150 single-family units, although the total PUD build out is proposed at 250 units. The balance of the units, or 100 homes, would be placed on individual septic systems. Should the County determine that it is in the public’s health, safety and welfare to mandate phasing of the proposed developments to coincide with the capacity for centralized public sewer, a substantial portion of the proposed development would be deferred until more capacity is made available.

Developing a sustainable community implies that future developments will maintain the Levels of Service identified in the Capital Improvement Element (CIE) of the
Comprehensive Plan. Baker County has current Level of Service (LOS) standards identified both in the Comprehensive Plan (CIE) as well as in the Land Development Regulations (Article V). As county-wide water and sewer services are not offered at this time, levels of service are maintained through individual well and septic systems.

Consequently, development is constrained and Baker County is either restricted to large-lot developments, which is indicative of the historic development pattern of unincorporated Baker County: Baker County has a density of 40 persons per square mile (see: 2004 Florida Statistical Abstract), which is far less than the state average for density per square mile and/or wait until the City of Macclenny’s public utilities system can serve the project.

The alternatives are to seek federal and/or state assistance and work for private-public partnerships to bring central or regional water/sewer service forward more quickly to meet the required time line for the needs of third party logistics companies that will be part of the port expansion.

Public Schools

Concerned about the impacts on the public school system, Baker County includes the School Board in the review of all proposed developments. As a result of the partnership, the School Board has determined that the schools are near operational capacity. Therefore, in conjunction with State law and the need to more accurately measure the LOS for the schools, the School Board contracted with a consultant to develop a public school facilities concurrency program, which has been adopted and is in effect.

VII. Public Input

For the initial visioning process, there were three public meetings: June 8, 2005, June 20, 2005, and April 24, 2006. In addition to the public meetings, the NEFRC garnered input from the community in the form of stakeholder interviews. The following questions contained in the stakeholder interview survey are relevant to the Urban Services Boundary and vision plan for Baker County:

- As Baker County develops, which of the following are the most important issues facing local governments, and why?
- Which of the following government services do you have concerns about, and why?

The two top issues facing local governments identified in the stakeholder interviews are land use and transportation. Economic Development and Environment were third and fourth respectively. The two government services identified as being most critical were roads and sheriff’s department. Fire service, public utilities, emergency services and parks/recreation were also identified.

Sixty-three percent of those interviewed stated that their preference for continued development in Baker County should be “self-sustaining.” Twenty-five percent stated
that Baker County should remain a rural community. The idea of a self-sustaining community reaches beyond the scope of an urban services boundary, although it is a fundamental aspect of planning for future growth. The question that needs to be addressed is how does an urban services boundary relate to creating a sustainable community?

As a part of the community survey, participants were asked three open-ended questions that were intended to allow a wider range of responses. While there was some variety in responses, there were common responses that could be grouped.

The most common responses to the question, “Are there qualities / attributes that are important to you that you would like to see maintained into the future?” centered on the rural / country / small town atmosphere, with twenty-seven related responses. The natural environment (8 responses), the quality of Baker County schools (7 responses) and the sense of community that Baker County residents enjoy (13 responses) were also popular answers. These responses indicate that Baker County residents enjoy their community, natural environment and way of life, and want to see that maintained into the future.

When asked, “What kind of services would you like to see more of in the County?,” there were a wider variety of answers. The most common answers given were related to public utilities/ water & sewer service (9 responses), recreational opportunities (9 responses), restaurant or dining experiences (8 responses), and more training / education (8 responses). However, participants also said they would like to see more cultural, police / fire, medical, entertainment, road, employment, and senior citizen services.

Participants were asked, “What kind of services would you like to see more of in the County?” in order to gauge what services respondents feel are lacking in Baker County.

Vision
Several county-wide development scenarios were presented to the public on the June 20, 2005, public presentation of the Baker County Alternative Futures Study. Each scenario represented a particular development pattern: rural, bedroom community, full service community, or hybrid of all three, which would include provisions for new urbanism. It was the community’s vision to promote the later of the scenarios, whereby Baker County would be a mixture of rural, bedroom and full service development.

Several density scenarios were presented, and are illustrated herein:
The above development pattern is promoted by remaining large lot land use and zoning in place and by leaving public service capital unfunded. While large lot development is appropriate and a fundamental aspect of Baker County, this type of development does not promote clustering and limits the ability of the county to grow. It also limits the ability for non-residential development because commercial development tends to follow population.

Photograph 2: Density 8 units / acre
Generally, seven to eight units per acre is considered to be low density; although, in unincorporated Baker County this is considered a relatively higher density pattern. Density is contingent upon the availability of public services.

Photograph 3: Density 21 units / acre

As illustrated in Photograph 3, higher densities (i.e., +20 units per acre), result in either the development of row houses, town houses, or apartments / condominiums. The higher density development introduces the ability to promote neo-traditional neighborhoods or new urbanism land development patterns that promote mixed use. However, it is not in keeping with the local vision of a rural county.

Photograph 4: Mixed-use development
As illustrated in Photograph 4, in mixed use communities, buildings can contain a mix of uses with residential typically occupying the top floors and office/retail at ground level. This type of development is ultimately contingent upon the availability of full urban services. However, land use and zoning are also essential in promoting this type of development.

Lacking county-wide public water and sewer availability, the opportunity for mixed-use development is greatly diminished. And clustering and mixed-use developments must be confined to Macclenny and Glen St. Mary, assuming the availability of capacity. As previously mentioned, pursuant to S. 21-32 Water and sewer services outside the city limits for the City of Macclenny, contiguous properties to the municipal boundaries that seek water and sewer must voluntarily seek annexation into the city. Essentially, the current situation in the County is such that future development will be dictated by either the municipal regulations of Macclenny and Glen St. Mary, or on an individual project basis through development agreements.

In order to promote logistics and transportation related industry, the county must aggressively create a business environment that supports private-public partnerships to develop water/sewer facilities to serve industrial/commercial ventures in the I-10, national southern freight corridor.

VIII. Alternative Futures:
In the original 2005-2006 study, four conceptual Baker County futures were presented to project participants for future Baker County growth to gauge how participants prefer to see Baker County develop. The alternative community development styles presented were: rural community, bedroom community, full-service community, and a hybrid mix of two or more of these development styles.

A. Rural Community
Generally, residents of rural communities in Northeast Florida have homes that are situated on large lots that are five acres or more per dwelling unit. This is the historical development of Baker County, with lot sizes usually ranging from one to twenty acres per one dwelling unit in the unincorporated area of the county with water well and septic tanks.

While a portion of residents may prefer this development style, because it does not promote much of a tax base, it is difficult for the governments of rural communities to fund essential public services. There is a greater cost per resident for road development and maintenance, developing central sewer, and water infrastructure, and providing school services. Because residents are dispersed, providing health, education, cultural, and senior services within a reasonable distance to rural residents is nearly impossible for local government.
Currently and historically Baker County faces these challenges, as evidenced by over 400 miles of unpaved roads and the lack of central water and sewer because there is an insufficient tax base in the community to fund these services in unincorporated Baker County. To preserve the rural character of the County, which a large number of residents would like to see, the County could allow large lot land use and zoning classifications or conservation designations on the Baker Future Land Use Map and the Baker County Zoning Map. Within these conservation designations, the County has the option to create scenic corridors / greenways and trails that will benefit of Baker County residents and begin to attract nature-based tourists – a growing segment of tourism in Florida.

If the County leaves the road, water, and sewer infrastructure un-funded; there are greater constraints on development because of the lot size requirements for a permit for a private well and septic tank. However, local residents are not discouraged by the lack of paved roads even though dirt roads are a hazard for fire and emergency services providers.

Innovative planning techniques are being researched to preserve Baker County’s rural nature such as, conservation easements and the Florida Rural Stewardship Program. And new Goals, Objectives, and Policies in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan amendments support architectural controls and aesthetic guidelines, to be implemented through the County’s land development regulations to preserve the look of a rural community while improving the quality of life, health, and safety of the community.

Long-Term Results of Rural Community Development

If homes continue to be developed on one to ten acre lots in unincorporated Baker County, installation of central water/sewer, and paved roads by the County will not be feasible.

While each homeowner will have a substantial amount of land for themselves, most working residents will continue to have to commute a substantial distance to their place of employment if they do not work in agriculture, at their home, or at the jobs that are currently in existence in Baker County, unless the County can attract new industries to the area.

Additionally, essential public services (police, emergency services, fire, schools) and other public services (libraries, cultural services, senior services) will be either limited or located far away from rural residents until there is more local acceptance of greater residential density. This is an important issue when residents need assistance in an emergency from the police, EMS, or firefighters.
B. Bedroom Community

Northeast Florida has many bedroom communities, which result from the suburban, conventional style of development. In this development style, land uses are strictly separated so that housing is not in near proximity to commercial and other uses. This development style necessitates automobile or bus transit for every day employment, shopping, and leisure activities. Conventional subdivision design has been the status quo for housing development since World War II. Baker County permits this type of development to occur on one to five acre parcels resulting in Baker County exacerbating urban sprawl by being a large-lot bedroom community to the Jacksonville urban core. In 2010, approximately 51% of Baker County workers commute to the City of Jacksonville, for work; approximately thirty-eight minutes to the heart of Jacksonville, according to MapQuest (www.mapquest.com).
Like most development styles, there are both advantages and disadvantages to Baker County as a bedroom community. Families typically may approve of this development style for several reasons: it results in each home having an individual yard, the single-family home may be more affordable since it is a well-established housing product, there is more of a sense of privacy and independence, and since developers and regulators are acclimated to this development style, it is usually the ‘easier’ development type to propagate. However, beyond a lack of character and focal points, this development style does not preserve natural resources, it increases traffic congestion, and increases the cost for public infrastructure which eventually raises the cost of living or decreases the quality of life.

Long-Term Results of Bedroom Community Development
If the status quo, conventional subdivision development design is perpetuated in Baker County, it will significantly affect how residents live. Each family will have a yard, and experience the privacy associated with conventional subdivisions. From their homes, residents will almost always need to get into their cars to take their children to school, to go to work, and to take care of daily needs. Biking and walking cannot be used for transport, except by fortunate school children that are within biking distance of their school, and instead will only be used for recreation and exercise.

Employment will be located outside of Baker County for a majority of residents; so, over half can expect a commute of approximately 40 minutes to and from work. Many working parents will be geographically separated from their children as they leave their children in Baker County and go outside of the County for work.

C. Full Service Community
Full service communities offer the opportunity for residents to live, work, and play in one community due to both the diversity of land uses and their proximity to one another. Full service communities reduce traffic congestion because residents make fewer automobile trips, and the automobile trips made are for shorter distances. Recognizing that all full-service communities do not look the same, the density at which a community is developed determines how the community functions. Baker County has a large quantity of vacant, developable land in comparison with other Florida counties, which gives the community leeway in deciding how communities should be formed, and makes this point is particularly relevant.

To illustrate, consider two Northeast Florida examples: the City of St. Augustine (St. Johns County) and Fleming Island Plantation (Clay County).
The City of St. Augustine was founded in 1565, which makes it the oldest enduring settlement in America. The plan for the town is created to Governor Gonzalo Mendez de Canzo, who formulated the layout in the late sixteenth century. (City of St. Augustine). Visitors to St. Augustine notice the narrow streets, closeness of shops and restaurants, ease of walking and biking, and difficulty of automobile use. The City of St. Augustine is an example of a dense full-service community that was necessitated by the lack of technology available to settlers in the late sixteenth century.

Near Green Cove Springs, Fleming Island Plantation is a newly built full-service planned community that is much less dense and less architecturally diverse than the City of St. Augustine. Residents may have to drive a short distance to reach school, employment centers, or community facilities, but community facilities are available within the Fleming Island Plantation subdivision.

Full-service communities offer more employment, entertainment, and transportation options to residents than bedroom communities. The higher density and intensity of a full-service community encourages pedestrians, cyclist, and transit use. In full-service communities, it becomes more difficult to use automobiles due to the more dense and intense nature of the developed streets.

IX. Recommendations

A. Centralized Water and Sewer
King Engineering has developed the “Baker County – Water, Wastewater and Reclaimed Water Master Plan” for Baker County. The Master Plan addresses service area, flow projections, proposed water system, proposed wastewater system, proposed reclaimed water system, institutional considerations, and implementation program.

Proposed in the document is a regional system concept in which Baker County will be divided into two sub-regional service areas consisting of a westerly and an easterly service area. Although Baker County has financial constraints that inhibit a County-initiated system; a private-public partnership could be negotiated for future acquisition of the systems by the County. At the initial stages of development, and until such time as they are acquired by the County, the County shall maintain a “technical and managerial” role.
B. Land Use

Much of the land in unincorporated Baker County is classified as agriculture. The State of Florida is concerned about the loss of farm lands that could be used for food production to urbanized use. In Baker County, although there is a bulk of land designated as some type of “agricultural” land use, most of it is either state or federal managed forest or private silviculture – planted pine for many generations. Although it looks green on an aerial photograph, it is mostly pine trees, not old-growth forests, not natural Florida hammocks, and not food or cattle producing farmland. In fact, there is only one dairy farm in the county and that farm can no longer be run profitably due to regulations regarding pollution and the small amount of productive truck farmland is slowly moving to organic production.

In a survey of land use changes in Baker County for the ten year period between 2001 and 2010, the number of acres that changed from Agricultural (Ag A or B) to Residential was 2,160.81 acres. The number of acres with land use change from Agricultural to Commercial or Industrial was 2,036.13 acres. However, the number of Agricultural acres that changed to Conservation or Recreation was 2,049.10 acres! A total of 6,146.04 acres left the agricultural designation, with 4,196.94 going to non-open space designations and 2,049.10 to open space designations. This survey demonstrates a rather slow and balanced change of land from predominantly silviculture (not prime agricultural) to residential, commercial, industrial, and conservation/recreation in a 2:1 ratio. If the numbers were averaged over the ten year period, the annual number of acres changing from agricultural to other land use is approximately 625 acres annually, but 205 of those acres are going to recreation and conservation – open space uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ag to Res</th>
<th>Ag to Ind/Comm/Inst'l</th>
<th>Ag to Rec/Cons (Open Space)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>72.05</td>
<td>44.06</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>9.60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>116.6</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>594.82</td>
<td>23.28</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,015.69</td>
<td>34.04</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>75.19</td>
<td>33.64</td>
<td>1,631.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>100.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>24.79</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>1,850.00</td>
<td>383.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>39.38</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Acres changed**: 6,246.06

The next map depicts the conservation efforts in Baker County and illustrates clearly that the County has only limited lands available for development concentrated along the transportation corridor.
Further analysis will show that even within the proposed new 2010 urban growth boundary, wetlands and conservation limit the number of acres available for
development such that increased density of commercial/industrial development will be necessary.

1. The “Future Urban Development Expansion Overlay” contained in the Comprehensive Plan was eliminated and the 2006 Baker County Alternative Futures Study yielded an Urban Growth Boundary. This boundary is being revised to an Urban Growth Area that promotes job development in the transportation and logistics industries along the I-10 National Freight Corridor as depicted here.

![Urban Growth Boundary Map]

2010 – Urban Growth Boundary Master Plan
C. Economic Development

The 2000 Census found that 51.7% of Baker County workers age 16 and over commute outside the County. The mean travel time for these workers was 32.7 minutes in 2000. Of those, 16.3% carpool, and only 0.2% of this population use public transportation. In 2005-2006, sixty-three percent of the citizens interviewed stated that their preference for continued development in Baker County should be “self-sustaining.”

In the regional visioning project of 2008-2009, “Reality Check” Baker County participants continued to hold this preference, but also agreed with regional leaders that logistics and transportation industries will become regional economic drivers as the Port of Jacksonville expands to a deepwater port with post-Panamax ships in this eastern seaboard port of call.

Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) designation from the State of Florida.

Baker County is within one of the designated Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) as designated by Florida’s Governor. RACECs are regions comprised of rural communities adversely affected by severe or chronic economic distress, extraordinary economic events, or natural disasters. The RACEC designation entitles these regions to assistance for economic development initiatives.

RACECs as defined by Florida Statute 288.0656: ‘Rural area of critical economic concern’ means a rural community, or a region composed of rural communities, designated by the Governor, that has been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster or that presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.” This economic distress is determined through factors including low per-capita income, low per capita taxable values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly earned wages as compared to the state average, high percentages of the population receiving public assistance, high poverty levels as compared to the state average, and a lack of year-round stable employment opportunities.

From a statutory perspective, the general effects of being within a RACEC are (1) increased grant amounts, waiver of match, priority for grants; and (2) comprehensive plan flexibility. Being designated a RACEC also affects the school district.

Statistical Analysis: This data compares Baker County to the state of Florida as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baker County</th>
<th>Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per-Capita Income:</strong></td>
<td>$ 26,173</td>
<td>$39,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployment:</strong></td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly Earned Wages:</strong></td>
<td>$ 570.25</td>
<td>$822.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population Receiving Public Assistance:</strong></td>
<td>0.94%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population Below the Poverty Line</strong></td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sources: 2008 Census Estimates, LAUS, Workforce Indicators).
C. Inventory natural resources and plan for preservation.

Baker County is home to the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge and the Osceola National Forest, but land for additional parks is being identified. Baker County has significant waterway resources: the St. Mary’s River and Ocean Pond. These two water bodies were the most common answers provided to the survey question, “What area(s) of the County would you like to see preserved as conservation lands?”

However, more than two-thirds of land in Baker County is government-owned and controlled conservation forest, undevelopable and that doesn’t include the wetlands.

D. Transportation

Working with FDOT for a variance of the Level of Service (LOS) on I-10, the County recently developed a Concurrency Management System as part of its preparation to attract logistics and transportation industries to the county. The County also has a Proportionate Fair-Share Ordinance incorporated into the Land Development Regulations to assist with the funding of much needed infrastructure.

Recommendations

1. The County should partner with private developers, other municipalities, and government agencies to fund improvements to the transportation corridor for the movement of people and freight.
2. The County should consider including mandates for interconnectivity between developments and joint-share mandates for off-street parking facilities and shared drive-ways.
3. The County should adopt typical street sections into the Land Development Regulations to define roads to be styled as rural and roads to function as connectors for high load trucks for the interstate movement of freight.
4. The County should consider adopting an alternative transportation network (trails, bikeways, sidewalks, and greenways) to encourage local multimodal projects and energy conservation.

E. Rural Character Sustainability

Baker County has retained a rural feel and character. Many current residents want development to respect their choice of lifestyle. Accordingly, rural land use patterns should: (1) promote traditional rural lifestyles; (2) maintain traditional rural landscapes; (3) discourage sprawl; and (4) protect surface water flows and groundwater recharge areas.

Rural areas are characterized by low density residential dwellings, farms, forests, mining areas, outdoor recreation and other open space activities. Commercial uses are small in scale in urbanized areas. Industrial uses are related to and dependent on either natural resources (nature-based tourism) or within the urban development boundary and along the transportation corridor.
APPENDIX I  ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Recommendations

1. The County should maintain natural vegetative buffers along collector and arterial roadways.

2. The County should adopt aesthetic design guidelines to define and maintain the County’s rural character.

3. The County should limit curb-cuts along US 90.

4. The County should explore the development of local natural resources for a tourism income stream based in the natural Baker County areas.

5. The County should utilize the Water, Waste Water and Reclaimed Water Master Plan to ensure sufficient public utilities to support development at higher densities.

REFERENCES


February 7, 2020

MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of County Commissioners
   Land Planning Agency

FROM: Susan L. Fraser
       Community Development Department
       Kristin Murray
       Community Development Director

RE: Joint Workshop - February 13, 2020
   Future Land Use and Transportation
   Economic Development

Attached are a series of documents intended to complete the review and discussion on the subjects of future land use and transportation within the 2040 Comprehensive Plan; this discussion having been continued from the January 6 Joint Workshop.

New material is provided for review and discussion related to the Economic Development Element of the 2040 Plan. A copy of all of the goals, objectives and policies of this element is provided as is a list of GOPs for focused discussion. Changes to the data and analysis of the ED Element are proposed; these changes are provided in strike and underline format.
2040 Economic Development
Policy Review

Future Land Use Element

Policy A.1.8.4  **Adopt and Implement Development Design Standards**
As a result of the County’s Urban Growth Strategy and Alternative Futures Studies, the County, by 2012, shall adopt development design standards to be applied within the urban area to promote quality public and private gathering spaces; pedestrian oriented spaces, vertical and horizontal integration, infill and redevelopment, and special standards of design.

Policy A.1.8.5  **Implement the Urban Growth Strategy**
As a result of the County’s revised Urban Growth Strategy and Alternative Futures Studies, the County, by 2012, shall adopt comprehensive plan policies that address the protection of rural areas, such as, but not limited to limited commercial, residential, and viable agricultural/silvicultural uses: large buffers; setbacks; conservation areas; mitigation banking opportunities by basins; limits on infrastructure urbanization; opportunities to recreate and experience the natural environment; and the protection of watershed, drainage, and wetland systems.

Economic Development Element

**Objective I.1.1  Develop an Economic Development Program**
Develop a comprehensive economic development program for the County.

Policy I.1.1.1  **Fund Economic Analysis for Baseline**
The County shall fund and develop an economic analysis to serve as the baseline for improving economic activity within the County.

Policy I.1.1.7  **Facilitate Infrastructure Development**
The County shall expand its economic base by facilitating the development of infrastructure to support business and industrial ventures.

**Objective I.2.1  Encourage Good Corporate Stewardship**
The County shall encourage new businesses and industries developing and locating in the County (and the expansion of existing businesses and industries) to contribute to maintaining a clean environment (air, water, soil) and will work with business to provide the necessary infrastructure and compatible land uses. Each employer shall be a good neighbor by preventing or appropriately mitigating adverse impacts on the environment.

Policy I.2.1.1  **Adopt Standards and Procedures for Development**
The County shall adopt objective standards and procedures for decisions on applications for development approval for business and industrial uses that correspond to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations. Such standards and procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness in facilitating the permitting process, protecting the environment, and adhering to technological changes and changes to Federal or State rules regarding environmental protection and energy conservation.

Policy I.2.1.2  **Maintain Interlocal Agreement for Water Services**
The County shall maintain an interlocal agreement with the City of Macclenny to provide public water and wastewater facilities for areas adjacent to existing service boundaries for the City’s public facilities.
Economic Development Element
Goals, Objectives and Policies
of the
Baker County 2040 Comprehensive Plan
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Alternative Futures 2006 – Revised 2010/2011
Nature-Based Tourism and Job Creation
Introduction

Baker County is one of Florida's Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO), a designation that should help the County compete effectively in today’s ever changing economic landscape. According to the Governor’s Executive Order, this designation notes that Baker County is “struggling to maintain, support or enhance job creating activity or to generate revenues for education and other critical government services such as infrastructure, transportation and safety.” As the Executive Order further notes, these challenges threaten both the “well-being and viability” of Baker County. Although the RAO designation qualifies the County for special assistance from the Governor's Office, as well as from other state and regional agencies and organizations, it leaves the principal task of creating an economically viable community to Baker County.

I. Economic Development Element

Goal I.1. Facilitate a Positive Business Environment
Facilitate development of a positive business environment to attract and expand diverse business opportunities to enhance the economic prosperity of Baker County, grow the County’s tax base, and better distribute the tax burdens of growth and development.

Objective I.1.1 Develop an Economic Development Program
Develop a comprehensive economic development program for the County.

Policy I.1.1.1 Fund Economic Analysis for Baseline
The County shall fund and develop an economic analysis to serve as the baseline for improving economic activity within the County.

Policy I.1.1.2 Conduct Cost/Benefit Analysis for Financial Incentives to New Businesses
The County shall conduct a cost/benefit analysis of any financial incentives proposed to be provided by the County to support the retention, expansion, or development of local business or to attract new business. Such analysis shall factor in the financial costs as well as the social equity and environmental impacts of proposed incentives.

Policy I.1.1.3 Coordinate Activities with Baker County Economic Development Commission (EDC)
The County shall coordinate its economic development activities with the Baker County Economic Development Commission (EDC), its municipalities, and the appropriate federal, state, regional, and local agencies.

Policy I.1.1.4 Support EDC Strategic Plans
The County shall support the activities of EDC to develop and implement a strategic plan for county-wide economic development.

Policy I.1.1.5 Focus Economic Activities on Job Creation
The County shall coordinate with the EDC to revise economic development strategies to create a synergistic effort to attract target businesses to the County with a focus on job creation.

**Policy I.1.1.6**
The County shall encourage the allocation of resources for the retention, expansion, and development of local businesses and the recruitment of new businesses and industries.

**Policy I.1.1.7 Facilitate Infrastructure Development**
The County shall expand its economic base by facilitating the development of infrastructure to support business and industrial ventures.

**Policy I.1.1.8 Minimize Costs to Taxpayers for Infrastructure Development**
The County shall promote methods of financing infrastructure and public services to minimize costs to current and future taxpayers.

**Policy I.1.1.9 Prioritize Attracting Distribution and Logistics Industries**
The County recognizes distribution and logistics industries as valuable economic assets to the community and region. Development of such ventures through expansion, development, and recruitment of appropriate businesses and industries and training facilities shall be given high priority.

**Policy I.1.1.10 Support Foreign Trade Zone Business and Industry**
The County shall encourage businesses and industries that contribute to the flow of income into the local economy by producing goods and services imported into the County as part of Foreign Trade Zone #64 for assembly and export through such firms as could be encouraged to locate or expand into the County. Through Foreign Trade Zone 64 participation, the County seeks to create and maintain new employment opportunities by encouraging operations in the United States and Baker County that for Customs reasons might otherwise have been carried on abroad to:

- Retain existing jobs and attract new jobs
- Create company investment in the local community
- Facilitate improvements to local infrastructure
- Increase local purchases of goods and services

**Policy I.1.1.11 Support Minority Businesses**
The County shall support local and minority business efforts, by implementing purchasing policies that provide the maximum opportunity for increased participation by local, small, and minority-owned businesses.

**Policy I.1.1.12 Encourage Community Development Block Grants**
The County shall initiate efforts and support the efforts of other agencies to obtain grant monies (e.g., Community Development Block Grants) and other funds designed to assist local economic development projects.
**Objective I.1.2  Diversify the Local Economy**
Diversify the County’s economy.

**Policy I.1.2.1  Support Existing Economic Development**
The County shall promote economic development efforts that build on and complement existing commercial, industrial, agricultural, and other natural assets in the local economic system.

**Policy I.1.2.2  Support Port-Related Commerce**
The County shall encourage the development and expansion of port-related commerce.

**Policy I.1.2.3  Prioritize Transportation Corridor Industries**
The County shall prioritize the land use planning of sites having high visibility and close access to the Baker County transportation corridor formed by I-10, US90, and the rail line for development by logistics and transportation industries.

**Policy I.1.2.4  Promote Nature-Based Tourism Destination**
The County shall promote Baker County as a tourism destination with an emphasis on nature-based tourism, and tourism-related businesses that complement the County’s natural resources.

**Policy I.1.2.5  Promote Local Agriculture Industry**
The County shall encourage industries that create or augment a market for local agricultural products to locate in or expand in Baker County.

**Objective I.1.3  Encourage Economic Opportunity at All Levels**
Encourage economic opportunities for all economic segments of the County. Particular emphasis shall be given to activities that increase economic opportunities for persons at or near the poverty level and to activities that encourage commercial and industrial uses to:

a. increase per capita incomes for the County
b. decrease percentage of persons living at or below the poverty level
c. decrease unemployment rates.

**Policy I.1.3.1  Prioritize Support for High-Wage Industries**
The County shall give priority support to businesses and industries that meet the demands of the existing labor force by providing employment opportunities and equitable salaries.

**Policy I.1.3.2  Encourage Businesses to Train Workers**
The County shall encourage businesses and industries to locate in Baker County that are willing to participate in the training of skilled and unskilled workers.

**Policy I.1.3.3  Support “Home-Based Businesses”**
The County shall encourage and allow flexibility in the development of "home-based businesses" consistent with public health and safety concerns. Home-based businesses are
defined as a business or commercial activity conducted on a residential property which is accessory to the residential use of that property.

**Goal I.2. Encourage New Jobs Compatible with Growth and Environmental Goals of the County**
Encourage the creation of permanent, value-added jobs compatible with the growth management and environmental goals of the County.

**Objective I.2.1 Encourage Good Corporate Stewardship**
The County shall encourage new businesses and industries developing and locating in the County (and the expansion of existing businesses and industries) to contribute to maintaining a clean environment (air, water, soil) and will work with business to provide the necessary infrastructure and compatible land uses. Each employer shall be a good neighbor by preventing or appropriately mitigating adverse impacts on the environment.

**Policy I.2.1.1 Adopt Standards and Procedures for Development**
The County shall adopt objective standards and procedures for decisions on applications for development approval for business and industrial uses that correspond to the County's Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Regulations.

Such standards and procedures shall be reviewed on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness in facilitating the permitting process, protecting the environment, and adhering to technological changes and changes to Federal or State rules regarding environmental protection and energy conservation.

**Policy I.2.1.2 Maintain Interlocal Agreement for Water Services**
The County shall maintain an interlocal agreement with the City of Macclenny to provide public water and wastewater facilities for areas adjacent to existing service boundaries for the City’s public facilities.

**Policy I.2.1.3 Ensure Capacity Availability – Land and Transportation**
Through the development review process, the County shall ensure that adequate land and transportation capacity are available for present and future employment generating land uses.

**Policy I.2.1.4 Encourage Business and Industry within the Urban Growth Boundary**
The County shall encourage the development and expansion of business and industry in appropriate locations that make efficient use of existing public services and infrastructure or that generate new public services and infrastructure to serve a greater area of the County.

**Policy I.2.1.5 Enforce State and Federal Hazardous Waste Procedures**
Industries or businesses generating hazardous wastes shall follow procedures and guidelines for the use, storage, and disposal of such materials as set forth in State and Federal Rules.
Policy I.2.1.6 Reduce Energy Consumption with Reduced Commute Times

The County shall reduce total per capita energy consumption by reducing commuting time to work by creating more in-county jobs for county citizens.
I. General Information and Introduction

Baker County, located thirty minutes west of the Jacksonville metropolitan area and JaxPort along the I-10 freight corridor, is a rural county that has experienced a relatively low growth rate because much of the land historically is owned by large timber companies. In the last ten years the timber companies have sold-off vast tracts of undeveloped lands previously in pine silviculture production. Before the economic downturn, in Baker County there had been an uptick in job development with the location of Wal-Mart Distribution Center and Hanson Tile Company in the County. Also, there was a jump in the number and magnitude of new housing proposals, although approvals were exacerbating labor force exportation to Jacksonville.

As the economy improves, development pressures return, and JaxPort expansion takes off, the market conditions in Baker County are prime for port-related development. The County is aggressively pursuing port-related, logistics and transportation industries to build jobs in Baker County. With large tracts of undeveloped lands that are amenable for inland port, secondary manufacturing, and master-planned communities, the County is poised to encourage development that promotes interconnectivity between developments, preservation of open space, and sustainability; while encouraging industrial/commercial growth along the transportation corridor.

II. The Process

The original Alternative Futures process was a multi-phased project: data collection/information gathering, stakeholder interviews, focus group meetings, community meetings, and a final report and recommendations phase undertaken in 2006 just before the economic crash. The data collection/information gathering phase was ongoing throughout the alternative futures process from primary and secondary data sources, such as the statistical data from the 2000 US Census.

For the stakeholder interview phase, one-on-one interviews were conducted with key informants that had knowledge of the community. Included in the sample of stakeholders were local/regional government officials and staff, land developers, a hospital administrator, and business leaders. Three focus group meetings disseminated the information collected from the stakeholder interviews and provided information about the possibilities for Baker County’s future. Methods to achieve the alternative futures were given so that local stakeholders could be made aware of the tools available to make a difference in their community’s future.

The community-meeting phase consisted of two meetings, both of which were held in August of 2005. The purpose of this phase was to educate the public and participants about the alternative futures of Baker County and to gather opinions from the public. Specifically, the facilitators sought to understand how attendees perceived the then
APPENDIX I  ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

current Baker County quality of life and services provided, whether Baker County was prepared to handle future needs/demands, and how local citizens and leaders believed Baker County would grow versus their ideals of how they wanted to see Baker County develop.

These visioning exercises were augmented and updated in 2008-2009 during the Reality Check and First Coast Reality Check regional visioning exercises facilitated by the Northeast Florida Regional Planning Council that effectively convinced Baker County leaders and citizens to raise sites and goals to a regional level rather than only county-wide.

III. Population

Baker County is comprised of 585 square miles and has a population of approximately 24,000 people in 2004 (in July 2009: 26,336), which equates to an approximate density of 38 – 40 (45 in 2009) persons per square mile (note: the State of Florida averages 296 persons per square mile). The number of persons per household was slightly higher in Baker County (2.86) versus in the state (2.46) in 2000. (Florida County Rankings 2004/2009).

The Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) projects the population in 2030 to be approximately 32,000 people (see: Figure 1, Population Projections). This population projection is inconsistent with the growth that the County expects. To date growth has been limited by not only low market demand, but by the availability of county-wide public services. Baker County is just now being approached by large development in the form of Developments of Regional Impact.

FIGURE 1: Population Projections
APPENDIX I  ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Baker County as compared with Florida’s population / land area is illustrated below:

Table 1: Baker County as compared with Florida: 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Density Rank in Percentage of State</th>
<th>Density Rank in State</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>17,071,508</td>
<td>(X) 100.00</td>
<td>316 (X)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>23,383</td>
<td>52 0.14</td>
<td>40 52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Source: 2004 Florida Statistical Abstract)

Baker County’s population is distributed as follows:

Table 2: Population: County / Municipality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Municipality</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>22,259</td>
<td>23,383</td>
<td>5.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen St. Mary</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>4.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macclenny</td>
<td>4,459</td>
<td>4,855</td>
<td>8.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unincorporated</td>
<td>17,327</td>
<td>18,035</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2003, there were 15 births per 1,000 persons. The birth rate differed by race: 15.5 for whites and 12.5 non-white. This birth rate led to a total of 353 births in 2003, of which 6 were of children of Hispanic origin.

In 2003, the birth rate for every 1,000 teenage girls ages 15-19 is 70.1, which means that 7% of teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are became mothers in Baker County in 2003. Of this group, 73.8% are unwed mothers and 26.2% have had previous births. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

Two-hundred and seventy four couples married in Baker County in 2003, and 135 couples got a divorce. Between 2002 and 2003, this represents a 12.3% increase in the marriage rate and a decrease of 6.9% in the number of divorces. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

Children
Of the 2002 divorcing couples, 75 had children, meaning that the minimum number of children affected by the divorces were 118. Between 2002 and 2003, out of the 6,217
children in Baker County, there were 318 reported cases of child abuse, making the abuse rate 6% for the year. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

**Elderly**

In 2002-03, 397 cases of elderly abuse were reported. This is a rate of 17.5 cases per 1,000 citizens aged 65 and over. (Florida County Rankings 2004).

**Social Service Characteristics**

In the 2002-03 fiscal year, 143 families received Aid to Families with Dependent Children.

**IV. Housing Characteristics**

Traditionally, the rate of homeownership is higher in Baker County (81.2%) than in Florida (70.1%). Also, homes are generally less expensive in Baker County than the Florida average: the Baker County median value of the owner-occupied housing units was $80,900 in 2000, whereas it was $105,500 in the State of Florida. In 2002 and 2003, 492 mobile home tags and 403 mobile park tags were sold (Florida County Rankings 2004). It is important to realize that more than 50% of the local housing stock is mobile homes rather than traditionally built homes and that there are less than 100 multi-family units available in the county.

**Residential Development**

Cedar Creek and Navona Creek were large DRIs proposed to be developed with residential and commercial in several phases. These projects were lost in the financial down-turn of 2008-2010. The Cedar Creek property has been split between two owners. With the County, these owners are moving toward abandonment of the DRI and possible new residential land use projects at a much more conservative level or large lot division to offer the property to smaller developers. The current owner of the previously named “Navona Creek” property has proposed several ten (10) acre subdivisions along paved county roads, again to a much more conservative scale than the DRI level of development previously planned.

In 2010, there were no large scale plan amendments and only four small scale plan amendments submitted. Three of these are to change zoning to industrial, commercial, and one to institutional. The Trustees of Internal Improvement Trust Fund (TIITF—DOC), Department of Corrections rezoned a 20 acre parcel for a 480 bed, re-entry processing facility slated for development in the next five years. Residential growth is at a stand-still for the moment except for ongoing projects.

Residential developments that were previously approved or are pending in Baker County from 2005 until 2009 are listed below in Table 3A.
Table 3A: Developments – 2005 - 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Number of Dwellings per current or previous land use / zoning district</th>
<th>Number of dwellings per proposed land use / zoning district</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blair Nursery</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanderson Farms</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen St. Mary Nursery</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern States Nurseries</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glen Plantation</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Glen Estates</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creekside Oaks</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greystone</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timber Lane</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Ridge</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper Creek III</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypress Pointe</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandes Pointe</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Oaks</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaning Oaks</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolling Meadows</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creekside Town Houses</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cypress Pointe Town</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>Houses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf Course</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhoden</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Florida Heritage</td>
<td>Pending</td>
<td>10.75</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
V. Economic Characteristics
The median household income in 2005 was $51,400.00. In 2004, Baker County had a 92.51 FCRPI (Florida County Retail Price Index): goods and services in Baker County cost 7.5% less than the state average. The Florida County Wage Index (FCWI) measures the relative wages paid to a worker performing an identical job. Baker County had a FCWI of 97.18 in 2004, meaning that Baker County residents earn 2.8% less than the state average for an identical job.

BEBR 2004 Retail Price and Wage Indices
The Florida County Retail Price Index (FCRPI) is a measure of the relative income required to purchase the same bundle of goods throughout the state. In 2004, Baker County had a 92.51 FCRPI, which means that goods and services in Baker County cost 7.5% less in Baker County than the state average. With this FCRPI, Baker County ranks 40th out of the 67 Florida Counties in terms of the costs associated with goods and services.

The Florida County Wage Index (FCWI) measures the relative wages paid to a worker performing an identical job. Baker County had a FCWI of 97.18 in 2004, meaning that Baker County residents earn 2.8% less than the state average for an identical job. This puts Baker County 25th highest paid out of Florida’s 67 counties. When the FCRPI and FCWI are combined, deductions can be made about the quality of life in Baker County. Overall, Baker County residents are paid nearly as much as the state average (only 2.8% less), but goods cost considerably less than the state average (7.5% less). This combination makes Baker County a desirable place to live.
BEBR 2002 Long-Term Economic Forecast

In its *Long-Term Economic Forecast 2002, Volume 2- State & Counties,*** the Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) at the University of Florida ranks Baker County as one of the ten Florida counties with the largest shares of state government earnings. According to BEBR, these counties are expected to experience employment growth through 2015 of 26%, but are not anticipated to match the statewide average job growth (30%). While Non-Agricultural Wage and Salary Jobs are forecasted to increase by 26%, personal income is expected to go up 151%. Additionally, taxable sales are forecasted to double (104% increase). (**This report has been discontinued.2010**)

Table 4: BEBR Long-Term Economic Forecast for Baker County, 2002.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1998</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-Ag &amp; Salary Jobs</td>
<td>5,300</td>
<td>6,400</td>
<td>6,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Income (in millions)</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>957</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taxable Sales (in millions)</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Projected unemployment rate for 2010 at 4.1% - actual is approximately 9.1%.*

Employment Trends

In 2005 the total employment in Baker County was expected to steadily rise through 2049. The projection trends for Private Non-Farm Employment followed the total employment projection trends by slowly increasing during this planning period. Public Administration Employment was and still is projected to slightly taper off from 2045 to 2049. Farm Employment is expected to continue to slowly decline throughout the planning period.
The problem with BEBR forecasts is that they depend only on historical data and do not/cannot take into account events such as the hard economic downturn of the last few years or the pending positive variables such as the expansion of the Jacksonville port or the development of nature-based tourism within the expanding County park system. This type of economic development has no history in Baker County and therefore is difficult to quantify or project into the future.

**Personal Income & Taxable Sales**

Personal income is projected to steadily increase through 2015 from $552 million in 2005 to $717 million in 2010 to $957 million in 2015. This represents an increase of 73% between 2005 and 2015. Accordingly, taxable sales are also projected to steadily rise 48% between 2005 and 2015 to $186 million in 2015. However, the projected increase in taxable sales (+48%) does not keep pace with the expected rise in personal income (+78%).

The above figures illustrate that the average wage earner in Baker County has been paid slightly less than a similar employee in his/her field when compared with Florida as an aggregate. However, that same Baker County wage earner is paying less for goods and services and less for housing than his/her peers outside of the county. However, in 2002, the per capita income, on average, for a citizen of Florida was $29,758.00, but only $20,618.00 for the average Baker County resident (source: 2004 Florida Statistical Abstract). Baker County also has, on average, more persons per household than the average for Florida as a whole.
VI. Infrastructure

Centralized Water and Sanitary Sewer

At this time, the lack of a county-wide centralized public water and sanitary sewer facility is prohibiting the County from developing with more urban-like growth and creating a challenge for industrial growth. The City of Macclenny has a publicly owned municipal water and sewer facility that provides water and sewer for the City of Macclenny, the town of Glen St. Mary, and several limited properties in unincorporated Baker County. However, with the development pressures mounting in both the cities and the County, Macclenny’s consumptive use permit will not be able to handle the future growth without expansion.

In the meantime, in order for developments to be served by water and sewer that are not located within the municipal limits of Macclenny, the following applies:

S. 21-32 Water and sewer services outside the city limits

(a) The applicant requesting such services is economically able to have such services provided by the city, and is not an economic burden to the city.
(b) If such applicant is contiguous with the city that the applicant must first apply for voluntary annexation before the services will be furnished.
(c) If the applicant is not contiguous with the city they must in writing agree that when the applicant's property becomes contiguous with the City of Macclenny, the applicant will forthwith apply for voluntary annexation.
(d) If the applicant is not contiguous with the city, the city must apply a surcharge of additional fifty (50) per cent as allowed by Florida Statutes for such water and sewer services.

Essentially, the above requirements simultaneously promote the geographic and population expansion of Macclenny, but also limit the ability of Baker County to develop logistics and transportation based industry. The result is that the urban services boundary must, at this time, evolve from the geographic service boundaries of Macclenny.

Attachment ‘B’ to this summary illustrates the old (2005) proposed urban service boundaries. A submitted application for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) contiguous to Glen St. Mary was proposed to utilize surplus sewer capacity for 150 single-family units, although the total PUD build out is proposed at 250 units. The balance of the units, or 100 homes, would be placed on individual septic systems. Should the County determine that it is in the public’s health, safety and welfare to mandate phasing of the proposed developments to coincide with the capacity for centralized public sewer, a substantial portion of the proposed development would be deferred until more capacity is made available.

Developing a sustainable community implies that future developments will maintain the Levels of Service identified in the Capital Improvement Element (CIE) of the
APPENDIX I  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Comprehensive Plan. Baker County has current Level of Service (LOS) standards identified both in the Comprehensive Plan (CIE) as well as in the Land Development Regulations (Article V). As county-wide water and sewer services are not offered at this time, levels of service are maintained through individual well and septic systems.

Consequently, development is constrained and Baker County is either restricted to large-lot developments, which is indicative of the historic development pattern of unincorporated Baker County: Baker County has a density of 40 persons per square mile (see: 2004 Florida Statistical Abstract), which is far less than the state average for density per square mile and/or wait until the City of Macclenny’s public utilities system can serve the project.

The alternatives are to seek federal and/or state assistance and work for private-public partnerships to bring central or regional water/sewer service forward more quickly to meet the required time line for the needs of third party logistics companies that will be part of the port expansion.

Public Schools

Concerned about the impacts on the public school system, Baker County includes the School Board in the review of all proposed developments. As a result of the partnership, the School Board has determined that the schools are near operational capacity. Therefore, in conjunction with State law and the need to more accurately measure the LOS for the schools, the School Board contracted with a consultant to develop a public school facilities concurrency program, which has been adopted and is in effect.

VII. Public Input

For the initial visioning process, there were three public meetings: June 8, 2005, June 20, 2005, and April 24, 2006. In addition to the public meetings, the NEFRC garnered input from the community in the form of stakeholder interviews. The following questions contained in the stakeholder interview survey are relevant to the Urban Services Boundary and vision plan for Baker County:

- As Baker County develops, which of the following are the most important issues facing local governments, and why?
- Which of the following government services do you have concerns about, and why?

The two top issues facing local governments identified in the stakeholder interviews are land use and transportation. Economic Development and Environment were third and fourth respectively. The two government services identified as being most critical were roads and sheriff’s department. Fire service, public utilities, emergency services and parks/recreation were also identified.

Sixty-three percent of those interviewed stated that their preference for continued development in Baker County should be “self-sustaining.” Twenty-five percent stated
that Baker County should remain a rural community. The idea of a self-sustaining community reaches beyond the scope of an urban services boundary, although it is a fundamental aspect of planning for future growth. The question that needs to be addressed is how does an urban services boundary relate to creating a sustainable community?

As a part of the community survey, participants were asked three open-ended questions that were intended to allow a wider range of responses. While there was some variety in responses, there were common responses that could be grouped.

The most common responses to the question, “Are there qualities / attributes that are important to you that you would like to see maintained into the future?” centered on the rural / country / small town atmosphere, with twenty-seven related responses. The natural environment (8 responses), the quality of Baker County schools (7 responses) and the sense of community that Baker County residents enjoy (13 responses) were also popular answers. These responses indicate that Baker County residents enjoy their community, natural environment and way of life, and want to see that maintained into the future.

When asked, “What kind of services would you like to see more of in the County?,” there were a wider variety of answers. The most common answers given were related to public utilities/ water & sewer service (9 responses), recreational opportunities (9 responses), restaurant or dining experiences (8 responses), and more training / education (8 responses). However, participants also said they would like to see more cultural, police / fire, medical, entertainment, road, employment, and senior citizen services.

Participants were asked, “What kind of services would you like to see more of in the County?” in order to gauge what services respondents feel are lacking in Baker County.

Vision
Several county-wide development scenarios were presented to the public on the June 20, 2005, public presentation of the Baker County Alternative Futures Study. Each scenario represented a particular development pattern: rural, bedroom community, full service community, or hybrid of all three, which would include provisions for new urbanism. It was the community’s vision to promote the later of the scenarios, whereby Baker County would be a mixture of rural, bedroom and full service development.
Several density scenarios were presented, and are illustrated herein:
The above development pattern is promoted by remaining large lot land use and zoning in place and by leaving public service capital unfunded. While large lot development is appropriate and a fundamental aspect of Baker County, this type of development does not promote clustering and limits the ability of the county to grow. It also limits the ability for non-residential development because commercial development tends to follow population.

**Photograph 2: Density 8 units / acre**
Generally, seven to eight units per acre is considered to be low density; although, in unincorporated Baker County this is considered a relatively higher density pattern. Density is contingent upon the availability of public services.

**Photograph 3: Density 21 units / acre**

As illustrated in Photograph 3, higher densities (i.e., +20 units per acre), result in either the development of row houses, town houses, or apartments / condominiums. The higher density development introduces the ability to promote neo-traditional neighborhoods or new urbanism land development patterns that promote mixed use. However, it is not in keeping with the local vision of a rural county.

**Photograph 4: Mixed-use development**
As illustrated in Photograph 4, in mixed use communities, buildings can contain a mix of uses with residential typically occupying the top floors and office/retail at ground level. This type of development is ultimately contingent upon the availability of full urban services. However, land use and zoning are also essential in promoting this type of development.

Lacking county-wide public water and sewer availability, the opportunity for mixed-use development is greatly diminished. And clustering and mixed-use developments must be confined to Macclenny and Glen St. Mary, assuming the availability of capacity. As previously mentioned, pursuant to S. 21-32 Water and sewer services outside the city limits for the City of Macclenny, contiguous properties to the municipal boundaries that seek water and sewer must voluntarily seek annexation into the city. Essentially, the current situation in the County is such that future development will be dictated by either the municipal regulations of Macclenny and Glen St. Mary, or on an individual project basis through development agreements.

In order to promote logistics and transportation related industry, the county must aggressively create a business environment that supports private-public partnerships to develop water/sewer facilities to serve industrial/commercial ventures in the I-10, national southern freight corridor.

VIII. Alternative Futures:
In the original 2005-2006 study, four conceptual Baker County futures were presented to project participants for future Baker County growth to gauge how participants prefer to see Baker County develop. The alternative community development styles presented were: rural community, bedroom community, full-service community, and a hybrid mix of two or more of these development styles.

A. Rural Community
Generally, residents of rural communities in Northeast Florida have homes that are situated on large lots that are five acres or more per dwelling unit. This is the historical development of Baker County, with lot sizes usually ranging from one to twenty acres per one dwelling unit in the unincorporated area of the county with water well and septic tanks.

While a portion of residents may prefer this development style, because it does not promote much of a tax base, it is difficult for the governments of rural communities to fund essential public services. There is a greater cost per resident for road development and maintenance, developing central sewer, and water infrastructure, and providing school services. Because residents are dispersed, providing health, education, cultural, and senior services within a reasonable distance to rural residents is nearly impossible for local government.
Currently and historically Baker County faces these challenges, as evidenced by over 400 miles of unpaved roads and the lack of central water and sewer because there is an insufficient tax base in the community to fund these services in unincorporated Baker County. To preserve the rural character of the County, which a large number of residents would like to see, the County could allow large lot land use and zoning classifications or conservation designations on the Baker Future Land Use Map and the Baker County Zoning Map. Within these conservation designations, the County has the option to create scenic corridors / greenways and trails that will benefit of Baker County residents and begin to attract nature-based tourists – a growing segment of tourism in Florida.

If the County leaves the road, water, and sewer infrastructure un-funded; there are greater constraints on development because of the lot size requirements for a permit for a private well and septic tank. However, local residents are not discouraged by the lack of paved roads even though dirt roads are a hazard for fire and emergency services providers.

Innovative planning techniques are being researched to preserve Baker County’s rural nature such as, conservation easements and the Florida Rural Stewardship Program. And new Goals, Objectives, and Policies in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan amendments support architectural controls and aesthetic guidelines, to be implemented through the County’s land development regulations to preserve the look of a rural community while improving the quality of life, health, and safety of the community.

**Long-Term Results of Rural Community Development**

If homes continue to be developed on one to ten acre lots in unincorporated Baker County, installation of central water/sewer, and paved roads by the County will not be feasible.

While each homeowner will have a substantial amount of land for themselves, most working residents will continue to have to commute a substantial distance to their place of employment if they do not work in agriculture, at their home, or at the jobs that are currently in existence in Baker County, unless the County can attract new industries to the area.

Additionally, essential public services (police, emergency services, fire, schools) and other public services (libraries, cultural services, senior services) will be either limited or located far away from rural residents until there is more local acceptance of greater residential density. This is an important issue when residents need assistance in an emergency from the police, EMS, or firefighters.
B. Bedroom Community

Northeast Florida has many bedroom communities, which result from the suburban, conventional style of development. In this development style, land uses are strictly separated so that housing is not in near proximity to commercial and other uses. This development style necessitates automobile or bus transit for every day employment, shopping, and leisure activities. Conventional subdivision design has been the status quo for housing development since World War II. Baker County permits this type of development to occur on one to five acre parcels resulting in Baker County exacerbating urban sprawl by being a large-lot bedroom community to the Jacksonville urban core. In 2010, approximately 51% of Baker County workers commute to the City of Jacksonville, for work; approximately thirty-eight minutes to the heart of Jacksonville, according to MapQuest (www.mapquest.com).
Like most development styles, there are both advantages and disadvantages to Baker County as a bedroom community. Families typically may approve of this development style for several reasons: it results in each home having an individual yard, the single-family home may be more affordable since it is a well-established housing product, there is more of a sense of privacy and independence, and since developers and regulators are acclimated to this development style, it is usually the ‘easier’ development type to propagate. However, beyond a lack of character and focal points, this development style does not preserve natural resources, it increases traffic congestion, and increases the cost for public infrastructure which eventually raises the cost of living or decreases the quality of life.

Long-Term Results of Bedroom Community Development
If the status quo, conventional subdivision development design is perpetuated in Baker County, it will significantly affect how residents live. Each family will have a yard, and experience the privacy associated with conventional subdivisions. From their homes, residents will almost always need to get into their cars to take their children to school, to go to work, and to take care of daily needs. Biking and walking cannot be used for transport, except by fortunate school children that are within biking distance of their school, and instead will only be used for recreation and exercise.

Employment will be located outside of Baker County for a majority of residents; so, over half can expect a commute of approximately 40 minutes to and from work. Many working parents will be geographically separated from their children as they leave their children in Baker County and go outside of the County for work.

C. Full Service Community
Full service communities offer the opportunity for residents to live, work, and play in one community due to both the diversity of land uses and their proximity to one another. Full service communities reduce traffic congestion because residents make fewer automobile trips, and the automobile trips made are for shorter distances. Recognizing that all full-service communities do not look the same, the density at which a community is developed determines how the community functions. Baker County has a large quantity of vacant, developable land in comparison with other Florida counties, which gives the community leeway in deciding how communities should be formed, and makes this point is particularly relevant.

To illustrate, consider two Northeast Florida examples: the City of St. Augustine (St. Johns County) and Fleming Island Plantation (Clay County).
The City of St. Augustine was founded in 1565, which makes it the oldest enduring settlement in America. The plan for the town is created to Governor Gonzalo Mendez de Canzo, who formulated the layout in the late sixteenth century. (City of St. Augustine). Visitors to St. Augustine notice the narrow streets, closeness of shops and restaurants, ease of walking and biking, and difficulty of automobile use. The City of St. Augustine is an example of a dense full-service community that was necessitated by the lack of technology available to settlers in the late sixteenth century.

Near Green Cove Springs, Fleming Island Plantation is a newly built full-service planned community that is much less dense and less architecturally diverse than the City of St. Augustine. Residents may have to drive a short distance to reach school, employment centers, or community facilities, but community facilities are available within the Fleming Island Plantation subdivision.

Full-service communities offer more employment, entertainment, and transportation options to residents than bedroom communities. The higher density and intensity of a full-service community encourages pedestrians, cyclist, and transit use. In full-service communities, it becomes more difficult to use automobiles due to the more dense and intense nature of the developed streets.

IX. Recommendations

A. Centralized Water and Sewer

King Engineering has developed the “Baker County – Water, Wastewater and Reclaimed Water Master Plan” for Baker County. The Master Plan addresses service area, flow projections, proposed water system, proposed wastewater system, proposed reclaimed water system, institutional considerations, and implementation program.

Proposed in the document is a regional system concept in which Baker County will be divided into two sub-regional service areas consisting of a westerly and an easterly service area. Although Baker County has financial constraints that inhibit a County-initiated system; a private-public partnership could be negotiated for future acquisition of the systems by the County. At the initial stages of development, and until such time as they are acquired by the County, the County shall maintain a “technical and managerial” role.
B. Land Use

Much of the land in unincorporated Baker County is classified as agriculture. The State of Florida is concerned about the loss of farm lands that could be used for food production to urbanized use. In Baker County, although there is a bulk of land designated as some type of “agricultural” land use, most of it is either state or federal managed forest or private silviculture – planted pine for many generations. Although it looks green on an aerial photograph, it is mostly pine trees, not old-growth forests, not natural Florida hammocks, and not food or cattle producing farmland. In fact, there is only one dairy farm in the county and that farm can no longer be run profitably due to regulations regarding pollution and the small amount of productive truck farmland is slowly moving to organic production.

In a survey of land use changes in Baker County for the ten year period between 2001 and 2010, the number of acres that changed from Agricultural (Ag A or B) to Residential was 2,160.81 acres. The number of acres with land use change from Agricultural to Commercial or Industrial was 2,036.13 acres. However, the number of Agricultural acres that changed to Conservation or Recreation was 2,049.10 acres! A total of 6,146.04 acres left the agricultural designation, with 4,196.94 going to non-open space designations and 2,049.10 to open space designations. This survey demonstrates a rather slow and balanced change of land that from predominantly silviculture (not prime agricultural) to residential, commercial, industrial, and conservation/recreation in a 2:1 ratio. If the numbers were averaged over the ten year period, the annual number of acres changing from agricultural to other land use is approximately 625 acres annually, but 205 of those acres are going to recreation and conservation – open space uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ag to Res</th>
<th>Ag to Ind/Comm/Inst’l</th>
<th>Ag to Rec/Cons (Open Space)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>72.05</td>
<td>44.06</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>9.60</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>116.6</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>594.82</td>
<td>23.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>75.19</td>
<td>33.64</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>100.17</td>
<td>.13</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>24.79</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6.73</td>
<td>1,850.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>39.38</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annual TOTALS</td>
<td>2,160.81</td>
<td>2,036.13</td>
<td>2,049.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next map depicts the conservation efforts in Baker County and illustrates clearly that the County has only limited lands available for development concentrated along the transportation corridor.
Further analysis will show that even within the proposed new **2010 urban growth boundary**, wetlands and conservation limit the number of acres available for
development such that increased density of commercial/industrial development will be necessary.

1. The “Future Urban Development Expansion Overlay” contained in the Comprehensive Plan was eliminated and the 2006 Baker County Alternative Futures Study yielded an **Urban Growth Boundary**. This boundary is being revised to an **Urban Growth Area** that promotes job development in the transportation and logistics industries along the I-10 National Freight Corridor as depicted here.

![2010 – Urban Growth Boundary Master Plan](image)
C. Economic Development

The 2000 Census found that 51.7% of Baker County workers age 16 and over commute outside the County. The mean travel time for these workers was 32.7 minutes in 2000. Of those, 16.3% carpool, and only 0.2% of this population use public transportation. In 2005-2006, sixty-three percent of the citizens interviewed stated that their preference for continued development in Baker County should be “self-sustaining.”

In the regional visioning project of 2008-2009, “Reality Check” Baker County participants continued to hold this preference, but also agreed with regional leaders that logistics and transportation industries will become regional economic drivers as the Port of Jacksonville expands to a deepwater port with post-Panamax ships in this eastern seaboard port of call.

Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) designation from the State of Florida.

Baker County is within one of the designated Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) as designated by Florida’s Governor. RACECs are regions comprised of rural communities adversely affected by severe or chronic economic distress, extraordinary economic events, or natural disasters. The RACEC designation entitles these regions to assistance for economic development initiatives.

RACECs as defined by Florida Statute 288.0656: ‘Rural area of critical economic concern’ means a rural community, or a region composed of rural communities, designated by the Governor, that has been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster or that presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.” This economic distress is determined through factors including low per-capita income, low per capita taxable values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly earned wages as compared to the state average, high percentages of the population receiving public assistance, high poverty levels as compared to the state average, and a lack of year-round stable employment opportunities.

From a statutory perspective, the general effects of being within a RACEC are (1) increased grant amounts, waiver of match, priority for grants; and (2) comprehensive plan flexibility. Being designated a RACEC also affects the school district.

Statistical Analysis: This data compares Baker County to the state of Florida as a whole.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baker County</th>
<th>Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per-Capita Income:</strong></td>
<td>$ 26,173</td>
<td>$39,064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unemployment:</strong></td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly Earned Wages:</strong></td>
<td>$ 570.25</td>
<td>$822.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population Receiving Public Assistance:</strong></td>
<td>0.94%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Population Below the Poverty Line:</strong></td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sources: 2008 Census Estimates, LAUS, Workforce Indicators).
C. Inventory natural resources and plan for preservation.

Baker County is home to the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge and the Osceola National Forest, but land for additional parks is being identified. Baker County has significant waterway resources: the St. Mary’s River and Ocean Pond. These two water bodies were the most common answers provided to the survey question, “What area(s) of the County would you like to see preserved as conservation lands?” However, more than two-thirds of land in Baker County is government-owned and controlled conservation forest, undevelopable and that doesn’t include the wetlands.

D. Transportation

Working with FDOT for a variance of the Level of Service (LOS) on I-10, the County recently developed a Concurrency Management System as part of its preparation to attract logistics and transportation industries to the county. The County also has a Proportionate Fair-Share Ordinance incorporated into the Land Development Regulations to assist with the funding of much needed infrastructure.

Recommendations

1. The County should partner with private developers, other municipalities, and government agencies to fund improvements to the transportation corridor for the movement of people and freight.

2. The County should consider including mandates for interconnectivity between developments and joint-share mandates for off-street parking facilities and shared drive-ways.

3. The County should adopt typical street sections into the Land Development Regulations to define roads to be styled as rural and roads to function as connectors for high load trucks for the interstate movement of freight.

4. The County should consider adopting an alternative transportation network (trails, bikeways, sidewalks, and greenways) to encourage local multimodal projects and energy conservation.

E. Rural Character Sustainability

Baker County has retained a rural feel and character Many current residents want development to respect their choice of lifestyle. Accordingly, rural land use patterns should: (1) promote traditional rural lifestyles; (2) maintain traditional rural landscapes; (3) discourage sprawl; and (4) protect surface water flows and groundwater recharge areas.

Rural areas are characterized by low density residential dwellings, farms, forests, mining areas, outdoor recreation and other open space activities. Commercial uses are small in scale in urbanized areas. Industrial uses are related to and dependent on either natural resources (nature-based tourism) or within the urban development boundary and along the transportation corridor.
Recommendations

1. The County should maintain natural vegetative buffers along collector and arterial roadways.

2. The County should adopt aesthetic design guidelines to define and maintain the County’s rural character.

3. The County should limit curb-cuts along US 90.

4. The County should explore the development of local natural resources for a tourism income stream based in the natural Baker County areas.

5. The County should utilize the Water, Waste Water and Reclaimed Water Master Plan to ensure sufficient public utilities to support development at higher densities.

REFERENCES


