

**CONSERVATION ELEMENT**

**GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**GOAL E – THE CITY OF FORT WALTON BEACH WILL PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND ENHANCE THE CITY’S NATURAL RESOURCES, ENCOURAGING THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND BEST LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

**OBJECTIVE E.1 - THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO PROTECT, CONSERVE AND ENHANCE WILDLIFE HABITATS**

**Policy E.1.1**

The City will continue to provide standards necessary to protect any identified areas which are habitats for species, both flora and fauna, classified as endangered, threatened or a species of special concern, by the Department of the Interior, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Policy E.1.2**

The City will continue to require the preparation and implementation of a habitat management plan as a prerequisite to the approval of any development proposed on a site containing areas designated as Conservation on the Future Land Use Map Series or on land designated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) as habitat for threatened or endangered species.

**Policy E.1.3**

The City will continue to require that any lands included as part of a proposed development site which are to be preserved for use as habitat for flora and fauna classified as endangered, threatened or a species of special concern by the Department of the Interior, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be located adjacent to existing viable habitat, a significant wetland system, floodplain or a wildlife corridor.

**OBJECTIVE E.2 – THE CITY WILL PROTECT AND, WHERE POSSIBLE, PROVIDE FOR RESTORATION OF JURISDICTIONAL WETLANDS**

**Policy E.2.1**

The City will protect and conserve the natural functions of wetlands and water bodies. In furtherance of this policy, wetlands in the City of Fort Walton Beach will not be removed, altered, or destroyed, except as permitted, mitigated, or provided a *de minimus* exemption by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Northwest Florida Water Management District, and US Army Corps of Engineers. The definition and delineation methodology for wetlands will be that established pursuant to § 373.019(25) and § 373.421, F.S. Map 1-6 depicts wetland data obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (2010), identifying potential jurisdictional wetlands; however, data is not field verified and final wetland delineation must be determined by an independent survey agreed to by the City.

**Policy E.2.2**

The City will continue to prohibit developments from channeling stormwater runoff directly into designated wetlands and water bodies.

**Policy E.2.3**

The City will require a setback of at least ten (10) feet for principal buildings and development adjacent to protected wetlands and water bodies. Within the setback area water dependent and water related uses, such as marinas, boardwalks, or docks, may be allowed.

**OBJECTIVE E.3 – THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO MAINTAIN AIR QUALITY WITHIN ITS JURISDICTION IN CONFORMANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL AIR QUALITY REGULATIONS**

**Policy E.3.1**

The City will continue to protect and enhance the air quality of the City by requiring that all sources of air pollution comply with rules promulgated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), whichever is the most restrictive.

**Policy E.3.2**

The City will continue to require that any source of air pollution emissions be tested by the Florida DEP at the expense of the person responsible for the source of pollution.

**OBJECTIVE E.4 – THE CITY WILL CONSERVE, APPROPRIATELY USE, AND PROTECT THE QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF GROUND AND SURFACE WATERS.**

**Policy E.4.1**

The City will participate and coordinate with the development and implementation of the Choctawhatchee River and Bay System Surface Water Improvement (SWIM) Plan.

**Policy E.4.2**

The City will protect the quantity and quality of groundwater and surface water through prohibiting activities that pollute the waters, such as discharge of fertilizers, pesticides, or other chemicals.

**Policy E.4.3**

The City will implement standards to ensure adequate recharge into groundwaters.

**Policy E.4.4**

The City will continue to implement standards to eliminate or reduce the sedimentation of surface water bodies.

**Policy E.4.5**

The City will continue to implement recommendations of the City of Fort Walton Beach Regional Water Supply Plan which includes the projected needs through 2030.

**Policy E.4.6**

In cooperation with the Northwest Florida Water Management District, the City will implement any emergency water conservation plans necessary to protect water sources during periods of insufficient supply.

**Policy E.4.7**

The City will demonstrate full consideration of the most current NFWMD Regional Water Supply Plan when proposing and/or amending the City's Water Supply Plan.

**Policy E.4.8**

The City will continue to expand and encourage the use of reclaimed water in the City in order to discourage the use of potable water for irrigation purposes and other non-potable needs, thus reducing the dependence on the Floridan aquifer.

**Policy E.4.9**

The City will continue to enforce wellhead protection standards, adopted in the Land Development Code.

**OBJECTIVE E.5 – THE CITY WILL CONSERVE, APPROPRIATELY USE AND PROTECT THE MINERALS, SOILS AND NATIVE VEGETATIVE COMMUNITIES LOCATED WITHIN THE CITY**

**Policy E.5.1**

The City will require preservation of native vegetative species on land proposed for development or redevelopment to the extent possible.

**Policy E.5.2**

The City will continue to maintain its designation as a Tree City USA community.

**Policy E.5.3**

The City will require the use of drought-tolerant landscaping materials to the greatest extent possible.

**Policy E.5.4**

The City will continue to require a soil analysis for development subject to requirements to provide a landscape plan or a stormwater management plan.

**Policy E.5.5**

The City will continue to implement an environmental education program in order to promote natural resource conservation.

**OBJECTIVE E.6 – THE CITY WILL CONTINUE TO TAKE ACTIONS TO ELIMINATE THE IMPROPER HANDLING AND DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS WASTES**

**Policy E.6.1**

The City will continue to require the periodic, environmentally safe, disposal of household and commercial hazardous wastes. Such disposal may include, but is not limited to, participation in Okaloosa County's

Amnesty Days, and promoting public awareness to educate citizens regarding hazardous wastes, the environment, and proper disposal methods.

**Policy E.6.2**

The City will continue to participate in programs that emphasize education, monitoring inspections, and proper disposal of small quantities of hazardous wastes.

**OBJECTIVE E.7 – THE CITY WILL PROMOTE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SUSTAINABILITY BEST PRACTICES**

**Policy E.7.1**

The City will continue to manage and explore expansion of a Brownfields Redevelopment Program to provide economic assistance and incentives to public and private property owners and businesses to facilitate environmental cleanup and the reuse of designated property.

**Policy E.7.2**

The City will increase services to green builders by having a certified “green inspector”, who can evaluate commercial and residential projects to determine whether they qualify for various “green” standards, tax credits, and awards.

**Policy E.7.3**

The City will develop procedures for evaluation of development applications for compliance with various “green building” certification programs.

**Policy E.7.4**

The City will implement standards for low impact development.