

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 9, 2020**TO:** Taco Pope, AICP, County Manager
Michael Mullin, Esq., County Attorney**FROM:** Thad Crowe, AICP- PEO Director**SUBJECT:** PEO and Code Enforcement FY19-20 Accomplishments and Goals

Nassau County Planning and Economic Opportunity (PEO) Department continues to work diligently to address land use and development challenges and opportunities throughout the County. Responding to continued growth, 2019-2020 proved to be productive as the PEO staff achieved multiple goals, initiated new projects and continued providing outstanding planning services. The following outlines major projects, updates on-going initiatives, summarizes development activity, and recaps department and staff achievements.

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SELECTED PROJECTS OF INTEREST, STUDIES AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES

2020 Growth Trends Report

- Annual statistical update including existing and historical conditions in Nassau County and comparative trends in the region. Additionally, the report offers a status update to the twelve tools that were originally identified in the 2018 Growth Trends Report and updated in 2019. As initiatives are executed and new challenges arise, the toolbox will reconfigure and grow.

Administrative Complex Site Improvements

- PEO initiated recommendations to improve the function, aesthetics and code compliance of mechanical units at the rear of the Public Works Building. The recommendations are as follows.
 - Fence in the HVAC structures adjacent to the building in order to reduce noise and allow for utilization of an existing pavilion and table by county employees.
 - Install buffer plantings around the newly installed generator adjacent to the parking area and pond. PEO will generate a planting plan to allow for necessary access and maintenance which will buffer the large mechanical unit as required by LDC (sec 37.05 D (6)).

American Beach Planning Activities

- Starting in 2018, Nassau County PEO staff have been working with the American Beach community on possible long-term planning strategies, including exploration of a Community Redevelopment Area. Multiple community meetings were held in 2019 and 2020 with information captured at www.nassaucountyfl.com/americanbeach. Planning staff is also coordinating with Facilities to evaluate rehabilitation strategies for the County-owned Evans' Rendezvous building.
- *Passive Park at Evans Rendezvous*: this is a cooperative effort with residents of American Beach to create plans for a passive park on County-owned properties adjacent to the Evans Rendezvous structure. These plans will provide necessary information for potential implementation grant applications as well as guidelines for Nassau County-initiated plans.

Continuity of Operations Plan

- Updated plan for 2020 and began discussion with Engineering and Building departments regarding the need for coordination of efforts.

East Nassau Community Planning Area (ENCPA) Sector Plan

- Ongoing development and construction coordination with landowner Raydient and individual developers within the ENCPA central planning district (aka Wildlight). In addition to various commercial retail and service buildings, the Preliminary Development Plans (PDPs) for the Commerce Park and PDP#3 were reviewed.

Habitat Conservation Plan

- Began planning efforts on FFW program in conjunction with the City of Fernandina Beach. Habitat Conservation Plans are planning documents required for an application to the US Fish & Wildlife Service for Incidental Take Permits. Further action is awaiting the award of additional funds in January 2021.

Historic Resource Survey

- PEO received a grant award from the Florida Division of Historical Resources to complete the first comprehensive Countywide historic resource survey. The grant award was accepted by the Board of County Commissioners' in August 2019. Phase 1 of the project was completed and PEO applied for the same grant for Phase II.

Land Conservation Acquisition and Management Program (CLAM)

- PEO was tasked by the Board of County Commissioners' with exploring implementation of a Conservation Land Acquisition and Management program. In FY18-19, PEO staff formed a Technical Advisory Group, and coordinated and executed with the Trust for Public Land a financial feasibility analysis. In FY19-20, the North Florida Land Trust, in conjunction with the Planning Department completed the community, stakeholder and commissioner interviews, and produced a draft version of the Conservation Acquisition and Management Program. In the fall of 2020, the Program will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners' for approval. The Board of County Commissioners' has approved placing a referendum on the 2022 ballot regarding land conservation funding.

Mobility Planning

- The Mobility Plan addresses the changing transportation needs of County residents and businesses by identifying and coordinating future investments in transportation facilities. Over the past year and continuing into FY 20/21, criteria and performance measures will outline a standard that rank proposed mobility projects.
- Along with Engineering Services, developed the Transportation Impact Analysis Guide for all development and redevelopment in Nassau County, used by both departments for development review.
- Participated on the Steering Committee for the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization's (TPO's) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2045 update. The LRTP includes several Nassau County projects that align with the mobility plan projects. Also, participated on the Steering Committee for the TPO's Regional Greenways and Trails Master Plan to look at future trail connections throughout Nassau County.

Nassau Crossing Park

- A ground-breaking ceremony was held on September 27, 2019 for the 15-acre park adjacent to William Burgess Boulevard featuring 2.5 miles of multi-use trails, sports fields, play equipment and other neighborhood amenities.

Nassau County Parks and Recreation System Master Plan

- Engaged Barth and Associates Public Realm Planning, Design and Facilitation Consulting to produce an implementation plan for County parks based on projected growth and development patterns. This effort includes standards and methods for operations and maintenance. The Plan will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners' in November 2020.

PUD Annual Inspection Process

- Development of forms and processes for annual inspection of Planned Unit Developments and development agreements.

Timber to Tides SR200/A1A Corridor Design Plan

- The Corridor Design Plan is close to completion as staff is working closely with the GAI consultant team. The long-term design plan for the corridor will establish a unique community identity; enhance the public realm and streetscape; encourage recreation, bicycle and pedestrian activity;

promote compact mixed-use development pattern; and improve environmental quality and floodplain management.

Three Rivers DRI

- Ongoing development and construction coordination with the Three Rivers development team including monthly meetings with County Manager/County Attorney to monitor terms of the development agreement.

Vulnerability Assessment

- This project received funding from a Department of Environmental Protection grant. Phase One of the Vulnerability Assessment studied the areas east of I-95 on the mainland and west of I-95 south and west of A1A/SR 200/301 and was completed in Spring 2019. Phase two of the assessment for the remainder of the County, including Amelia Island, was completed in April 2020, and approved by the Board of County Commissioners' in June 2020. The Vulnerability Assessment reviews future exposure from flooding and storms to developed and undeveloped areas, examines financial exposure, and identifies risks to significant environmental and cultural resources. An application for additional grant funding has been requested in the DEP FY21-22 grant cycle to provide funding for an Adaptation Plan. An Adaptation Plan will help prioritize projects and areas within the county to help protect from flooding and Sea Level Rise and will inform long-range planning efforts currently underway.

William Burgess District

- The William Burgess District Overlay represents a shift in land-use and policy planning in Nassau County. The District includes the area south of SR 200, east of I-95, north of the Nassau River, and mostly west of US 17. The regulations governing development within the district are designed to create a community where people can live, work, play, and stay. In 2018-19, PEO Staff created a form-based code for the District as an overlay that was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners' as updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Development Code. The first large-scale amendment to transect districts, covering over 437 acres, was transmitted for review in March 2020 and is anticipated to be adopted in November 2020.

Westside Regional Park

- The Planning Department took part in the RFQ process and the project was awarded to POND Engineering.

POLICY UPDATES

Comprehensive Plan

- Adopted Water Supply Facilities Work Plan and associated text amendments to address requirements of Ch. 163, F.S. (CPA19-008).
- Transmitted updated Future Transportation Map Series and associated text amendments in September 2020, with anticipated adoption in November 2020 (CPA20-005).

Land Development Code (LDC)

- Updated the LDC sections regarding off-street parking, providing for shared parking agreements and reduced parking standards approvable by the Development Review committee to preserve canopy trees, increase open space, create drop-off zones for school or day care facilities or use Low Impact Development (LID) principles.
- Updated the LDC sections regarding landscaping and buffers between certain uses; adding screening and buffering standards for mechanical equipment; requiring landscape plans with site development plans; and adjusting requirements for fencing in uncomplimentary use buffers.
- Added additional permitted uses and adjusted setback standards in the Commercial Highway Tourist (CHT) zoning district.
- Added Cottage Food Production as a home occupation and manufacturing of prepared food products in a State-licensed commercial facility as conditional uses in the Open Rural (OR) zoning district.

- Added waterfront industrial uses as permitted uses in the Industrial Warehouse (IW) zoning district.
- Added definitions of “community residential home”, “functional family” and “single family detached dwelling” in conformance with state statutes and recommendations from EHAC.
- Continue to work on update to Development Review Procedures and consolidation of Subdivision Regulations and Roadway and Drainage Standards into the Land Development Code with anticipation of adoption by the end of 2020.

Other Ordinances

- Sea Turtle Lighting/Protection Ordinance – PEO staff has drafted an update to the County’s sea turtle lighting ordinance. It is currently being reviewed for acceptance.
- The final draft of the Tree Protection Ordinance section 37.02 will be reviewed by the Tree Working Group and will be ready for legal review and approval in late 2020 or early 2021.

BOARD/COMMITTEE/ORDINANCE FACILITATION AND ACTIVITIES

Planning and Zoning Board: STAFFING

- ***Meets the first and third Tuesdays of every month***
- 13 regular meetings
- Three rescheduled meetings
- Nine cancelled meetings due to either COVID19 or room conflict due to election
- ***Comprehensive Plan Amendments (CPA)***
 - Eight applications (Eight recommended for approval)
 - Six small-scale (<10 ac) FLUM amendments
 - Two (>10ac) FLUM amendments
 - Two text amendments (see above)
- ***Rezoning (R)***
 - Nine applications (Eight recommended for approval)
 - Seven conventional rezoning’s
 - One new PUD
 - One modification to existing PUD
- ***Final Development Plans for PUDs (FD)***
 - Nine applications (Nine recommended for approval)
- ***Waiver of Road Frontage (WRF)***
 - One application (One recommended for approval)
- ***Family Hardship Developments (FH)***
 - Three applications (approved)
- ***Lot Splits***
 - 73 Single Lot Split Applications
- ***Appeals (AP)***
 - Zero applications
- ***Minor Developments (MD)***
 - One application (none remaining)
- ***Land Development Code Amendments (LDC)***
 - Five ordinances recommended for approval (see above)

Code Enforcement Board: STAFFING

- Meets the second Tuesday of every month
- 12 Regular meetings
- Five meetings cancelled due to COVID19 or room conflict due to election
 - 22 cases reviewed
 - 932 complaints received
 - 2,972 inspections performed
 - 809 complaints resulted in code compliance

Conditional Use and Variance Board: STAFFING

- Meets the fourth Thursday of every month
- Six Regular Meetings
 - Processed 22 Conditional Use Applications
 - Processed Five Variance Applications (Two withdrawn)

Essential Housing Advisory Committee: STAFFING

- Meets the third Wednesday of every month
- 12 Regular Meetings
- Activities completed by the Essential Housing Advisory Committee in 2020 with staff assistance include:
 - Two presentations were given to the Committee on affordable housing around the region
 - A developer proposed The Preserve at Yulee, a multi-family affordable housing development off US-17. The Committee endorsed the project and recommended the density bonus to the Board of County Commissioners’.

Development Review Committee

- Meets every Tuesday
- 49 Development Review Committee Meetings
- 68 Pre-Application Conferences
- Reviewed:
 - 19 Preliminary Binding Site Plans
 - 38 Site Plans
 - 24 Preliminary Plats
- Approved:
 - Two Minor Developments
 - 28 Site Engineering Plans
 - 19 Preliminary Plats

Amelia Island Tree Ordinance Enforcement

- 14 Tree Protection Zone compliance site visits for permit approval
- Two Tree Protection Plan Revisions

National Flood Insurance Program - Community Rating System (NFIP-CRS) Participation

- 2020 Recertification of Nassau County as Community Rating System Class 8 to maintain 10% flood insurance savings for all residents who purchase flood insurance
- Update map of Repetitive Loss Areas in Nassau County from FEMA data for 2019
- The attendance and management of quarterly Program for Public Information committee meetings related to CRS Program was interrupted by Covid-19 protocol. This delay allowed time for preview of the PPI Plan by the CRS program to prepare the final draft for review and acceptance by the Board of County Commissioners’.
- Two (2) CRS Outreach events at Fernandina Beach Marketplace - Covid-19 restrictions interrupted attendance of four remaining Marketplace outreach events.
- Average three per month flood zone and CRS related phone or counter inquiries
- Prepare bi-monthly social media CRS/flood-related outreach postings
- Attendance at quarterly ‘Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) Working Group’ meeting

Grants

- Received Florida Department of Environmental Protection Resilience Planning Grant – Phase II Vulnerability Assessment. Plan completed in April 2020.
- Submitted Florida Division of Historical Resources Small Matching Grant – Countywide Historic Resource Survey Phase II.
- Awarded the National Park Service grant opportunities through NPS for Evans’ Rendezvous in American Beach for a Historical Structure Survey. RFQ for the project is planned to go out in early 2021.

OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Significant community outreach initiatives including community events, open house-style meetings, press releases, social media and roundtable events for Western Nassau Heritage Preservation, William Burgess District and American Beach. Public outreach events included (these numbers do not include number of meetings with additional interested parties such as property owners, nonprofits, state agencies, media, etc.):
 - Three community outreach meetings in American Beach.
 - Nine community outreach remote webinar/meetings for the Conservation Land Acquisition and Management Program.
 - Two community outreach meetings for the Conservation Land Acquisition and Management Program.
 - 11 community outreach remote webinar/meetings for the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.
- Issued multiple press releases related to planning initiatives, upcoming outreach events, awards, staff accomplishments
- Completed updates to and/or creation of multiple webpages related to PEO activity including:
 - Essential Housing
 - American Beach
 - Parks and Recreation System Master Plan
 - Timber to Tides Corridor Design Plan
 - Tree Protection
 - Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Committee
 - William Burgess Overlay
 - Conservation Planning
- Updated PEO application and forms where applicable to improve clarity.

PEO AND CODE ENFORCEMENT STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL ENGAGEMENT

PEO Staff

- Sun Ann Alleger
 - Maintained Certified Floodplain Manager certification
 - Attended Virtual Annual Florida Floodplain Managers Conference
 - Attended numerous virtual workshops and webinars regarding resiliency planning and the CRS Program.
 - Certified in IS-00230.d Fundamental of Emergency Management in April 2020
 - Certified in IS-00240.b Leadership and Influence in April 2020
 - Certified in IS-00317 Introduction to CERT in May 2020
 - Certified in IS-00019.20 FEMA EEO Supervisor Course 2020 in May 2020
- Naomi Braff
 - Renewed LEED Green Associate credential
 - Received an appreciation letter from a Nassau County resident
 - Added new responsibilities of researching & presenting Conditional Use Permit Applications to the Conditional Use and Variance Board
 - Attended six Florida Floodplain Managers Association virtual webinars
 - Attended Florida Main Street & Historic Preservation Virtual Conference
- Thad Crowe
 - Awarded annual recertification by American Institute of Certified Planners
 - Appointed as Secretary of the Regional Community Institute of Northeast Florida
 - Appointed as member of the Technical Coordinating Committee of the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization
 - Panelist on Jacksonville Business Journal panel discussion on Smart Cities
- Laurie Goltry
 - Received Notary Public designation in July 2020

- Abby Weiss
 - Served on Regional Boards for both Florida Planning and Zoning Association and Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association
 - Awarded annual recertification by American Institute of Certified Planners

Code Enforcement Staff

- Robert Bostick
 - Attended Sea Turtle Lighting Workshop in July 2020
- Mike Favors
 - Attended Sea Turtle Lighting Workshop in July 2020
- Jessica White
 - Attended Sea Turtle Lighting Workshop in July 2020
- Janet Wylie
 - Attended Sea Turtle Lighting Workshop in July 2020

Other Activities and Events Attended by PEO and Code Enforcement Staff

- Various Association Chapter Meetings – Florida Chapter of American Planning Association, Florida Planning and Zoning Association, North Florida Urban Land Institute, Women’s Transportation Symposium, Northeast Association of Code Enforcement, EOC required Emergency Management workshops/webinars for Nassau County response improvement offered by FEMA Emergency Management Institute (remote).
- All Code Enforcement staff are members of F.A.C.E. (Florida Association of Code Enforcement).
- All Code Enforcement staff are also members of N.E.A.C.E. (Northeast Association of Code Enforcement) and attend the bi-monthly training for Continuing Education credits.

Administrative: PEO

- Continued work on improving PEO Department processes, both internal and external, including file management systems and operational efficiencies. Continued work on PEO Department Standard Operating Procedures manual.
- Upgrade Senior Planner position to Principal Planner
- Update Planning Department Organizational Booklet
- Identify and explore feasibility of software deployment to improve internal PEO and Code Enforcement processes, ensuring coordination with related County departments
- Continue to streamline internal processes and organize office for improved efficiency and operations
- Staff transitions:
 - Thad Crowe, AICP, joined the department as Senior Planner (May 2020), was promoted to Interim Director (July 2020), and promoted to Planning Director (August 2020)
 - Andrew Prokopiak joined the department as Planner I (August 2020)
 - Valerie Feinberg, AICP, Interim Planning Director, left the department (July 2020)
 - Alyssa Neil, Planner I, left the department (July 2020)
 - Kailey Saver, Senior Planner, left the department (May 2020)
 - Adrienne Burke, AICP, Planning Director, left the department (February 2020)
 - Abby Weiss, AICP, promoted to Planner II/GIS Analyst (November 2019)

Administrative: Code Enforcement

- Code Enforcement staff continues to cross train, expanding the capabilities of each staff member.
- Completed software conversion to Munis
- Organized current and archived records in accordance with Florida Statutes 119 for prompt retrieval.
- Continued to work with banks and field service companies on foreclosures and lien searches. Maintain State mandatory and job required certification for Code Enforcement staff through

- education and training
- Continues to update Code Enforcement Policies & Procedure Manual
- Staff transitions:
 - Jessica White joined the department as Administrative Specialist II (November 2019)
 - Janet Wylie was promoted to Administrative Coordinator (May 2020)

Intergovernmental and Interdepartmental Coordination Activities

- School Board
 - PEO continues work on the School Board's Land and Growth Committee to identify future school sites, address transportation issues and address concurrency requirements.
- Health Department
 - Participate on Partnership for a Healthier Nassau to implement strategies resulting from Health Department's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process
- Economic Development Board
 - PEO Director and staff coordinate with the NCEDB as needed relative to potential economic development projects, and will be involved in any future economic development plan activities as directed by the BOCC and NCEDB
- Emergency Management
 - PEO participates on Local Mitigation Strategy Task Force and Advisory Committee
- Animal Services Department
 - Continuing coordination with Animal Services regarding animal sheltering and boarding facilities and compliance with the Land Development Code
- Building Department
 - 400 building permit applications analyzed and reviewed for compliance with site plan and LDC requirements
- North Florida Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
 - Continued coordination with TPO on county transportation planning
 - Current participation in the 14th St (Amelia Island) Bicycle-Pedestrian Safety Study, which kicked off in September 2020.
- Assist County Manager's office with organizational planning
- Continue to serve on the School Board Growth Committee
- Coordinate with City of Fernandina Beach on Joint Planning Activities as directed by Joint Boards; Habitat Conservation Plan, Safe Routes to School and Trail Planning, Roadways, Signage, Trees, etc.
- Participate in Partnership for a Healthier Nassau
- Continue coordination with Emergency Management Department

PROJECTS OF INTEREST, STUDIES AND PLANNING ACTIVITIES

- Continued Implementation of Developments
 - William Burgess District
 - Nassau Crossing
 - Nassau Station Phase 1
 - William Burgess Civic Center and River Village
 - Three Rivers
 - Wildlight Commerce Park
- Planning Projects
 - American Beach Planning Activities
 - Countywide Historic Resources Survey
 - Crawford Diamond Small Area Plan
 - Land Conservation Acquisition Planning
 - Mobility Plan
 - Parks and Recreation System Master Plan
 - PUD and Development Agreement Annual Monitoring and Reporting

- Timber to Tides (SR200/A1A) Corridor Design Plan
- Vulnerability Assessment
- Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Project Implementation

Community Outreach and Engagement

- American Beach Planning – neighborhood conservation district principles and zoning changes
- CRS and floodplain management
- Essential housing – focus incentives on Very Low and Low Income households (below 80% of County Median Income)
- Parks and Recreation System Master Plan
- Timber to Tides SR200/A1A Design Study
- Western Nassau Heritage Preservation Project
- William Burgess District Overlay

Policy

- Continue to update and refine the 2030 Comprehensive Plan to align with best practices and legislative policy, especially as it relates to long-range planning initiatives
- Continue to update the Land Development Code of Nassau County to be consistent with current best practices, especially:
 - Development Review Procedures
 - Consolidation of Subdivision Regulations and Roadway and Drainage Standards into the Land Development Code
 - Planned Development Standards

Print and Social Media

- Increase social media presence
- Continue to coordinate with the Public Information Officer to issue press releases
- Keep website current