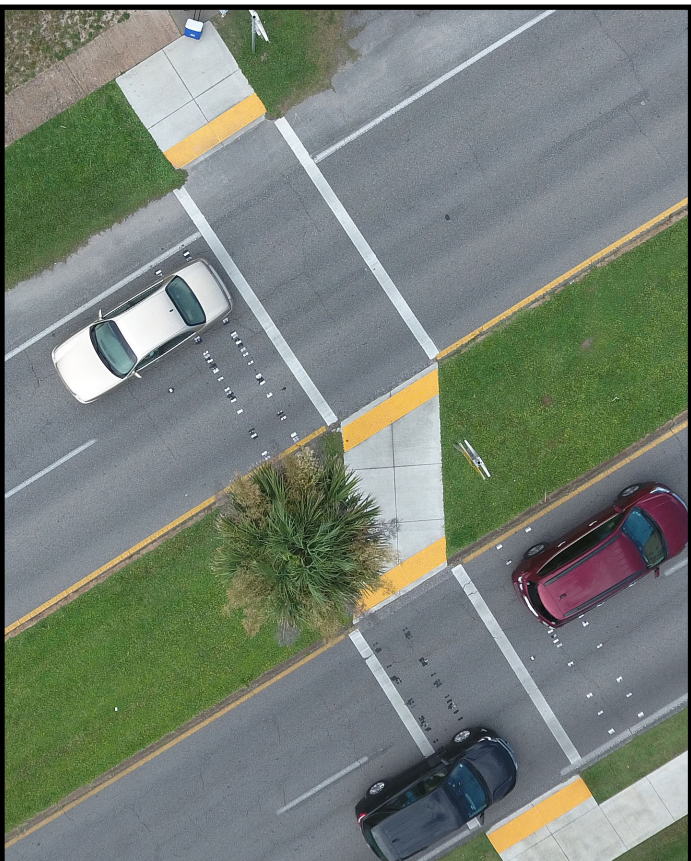




ANNUAL REPORT



2021



Annual Report 2021

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A message from the County Administrator



Emerging from a difficult year for the world, our nation and Okaloosa County, our employees have served our community, in 2021, with dedication and determination throughout this pandemic. From our Emergency Medical Service staff who have been at the forefront of our response, to Growth Management who helped steer vulnerable residents towards assistance, to our grants and financial staff who managed millions in stimulus funds – our employees have risen to the occasion.

We have built upon the successful application of federal stimulus funds the County received over the past year, specifically \$36.8 million received through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and \$889,775 from the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) that provided 125 households with rental assistance and home repairs. These funds have been used to support public health programs, assist small businesses, and help those most impacted by the pandemic and those who are most vulnerable in our community.

The Half-cent Sales Tax Fund is estimated at \$41,903,711 which represents an increase of \$20,999,571 or 100% in FY22. Sales Tax revenue is estimated at \$19,378,400 in the coming year and we will also carry forward \$35 million of unused funds. Revenue in this fund has exceeded expectations and we will

be bringing more projects to the Infrastructure Surtax Board for review and approval earlier than anticipated.

We have 23 infrastructure surtax projects in the planning phases, including the Northwestern Crestview bypass. As planning for the Women Veteran Monuments commenced FY 21, the installation and grand opening would come to fruition at Veterans Park on Veteran's Day 2021. Among other projects, we will begin construction of a brand-new South Okaloosa County Agriculture Extension Facility.

Okaloosa County was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic but saw a rebound, breaking records in revenue and occupancy in 2021. After much collaboration with 9 municipalities regarding a proposed countywide tourism development district expansion referendum, an interlocal agreement was approved. Eligible voters were presented with the opportunity to vote on the countywide expansion of the tourism development district and on October 5, 2021, we found that each of the eligible precincts across the county had approved the expansion.

Okaloosa County's three airports have another significant impact on the local economy. Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport

(VPS) is a joint-use facility established on Eglin Air Force Base in 1957. This valuable relationship with Eglin assists our military with convenient, affordable air travel, thereby benefitting residents as well. With the recent addition of Southwest Airlines, the airport flies direct to more than 50 cities. The Bob Sikes Airport in Crestview and the Destin Executive Airport are equally diverse, with Crestview rising as a hub of industry, accommodating aerospace industrial applications from across the globe. Bob Sikes Airport recently welcomed the Hsu Foundation's Aviation Center for Excellence supporting the next generation of STEM education innovators. Looking forward, we welcome Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport (VPS) expansions to include concourse projects, baggage claims and lobby expansions which will positively impact the ease of access and further stimulate economic growth. The innovative design, future growth enhancements and overall technology of these facilities and projects are setting a new standard for economic excellence.

The five elected Okaloosa County Commissioners are dedicated to connecting our communities and providing essential services, public safety, and quality of life for the county's 211,668 citizens and future generations.

- John Hofstad

COUNTY LEADERSHIP



Paul Mixon
District 1



Carolyn Ketchel (Chairman)
District 2



Nathan Boyles
District 3



Trey Goodwin
District 4



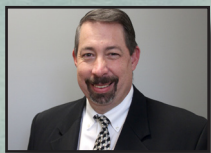
Mel Ponder (Vice Chairman)
District 5



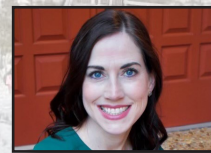
Administrator
John Hofstad



County Attorney
Lynn Hoshihara



Deputy
Craig Coffey



Deputy
Sheila Fitzgerald



Airports



Water & Sewer



Management and Budget



Human Resources



Information Technology



Corrections



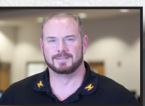
Tourism Development



Growth Management



Court Services



Public Safety



Public Works



Public Information



Executive Assistant



Library Cooperative



Facility Parks Maintenance

ABOUT OKALOOSA

POPULATION: 211,668

AREA (Square Miles): 1,082

ESTABLISHED: 1915

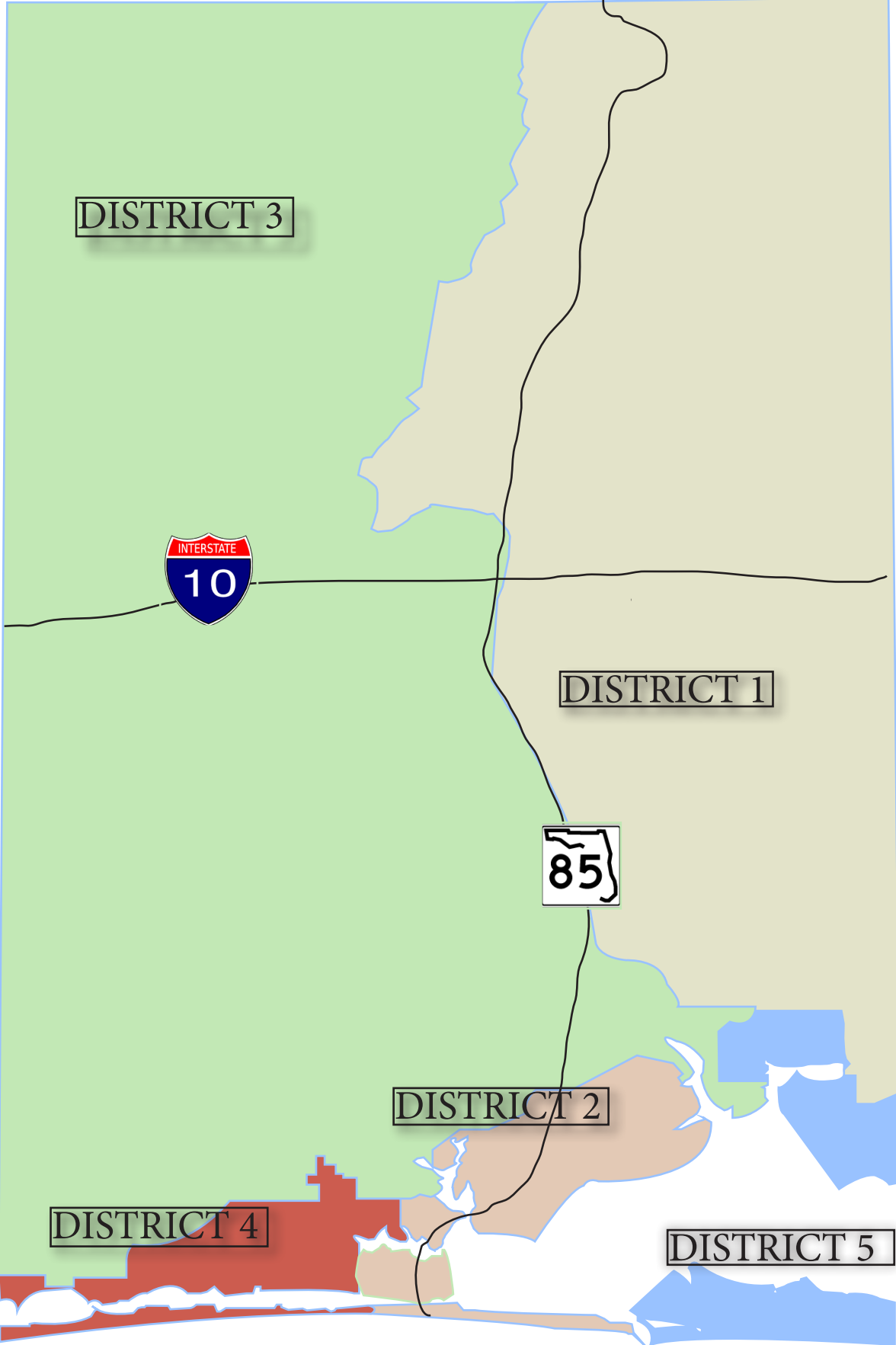
COUNTY SEAT: Crestview

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME: \$67,586

DISTRICTING: 5 Single Districts

MEDIAN AGE: 36

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and One Okaloosa Economic Development Council



**SURVEY
RESULTS**

2021 Communications Survey & Results

times will support horrible Destin includes crowded money congestion
 County Commissioners development downtown county police
Traffic congestion schools **local** Also **beaches** community
needs many people **tourists** north end **growth** roadways
lack Covid **infrastructure** homeless **Traffic** curre

Some other survey items worth noting:

Top 3 departments people interact with the most:
 -Beach Safety
 -Public Information
 -Parks and Facility Maintenance

Do you approve of the job Okaloosa County government is doing?

67%
approve

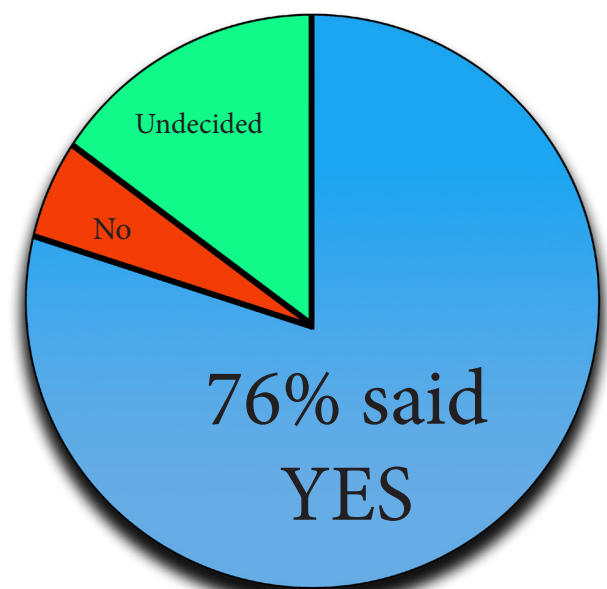
We asked a random sampling of 670 citizens of Okaloosa County to give us their input on the performance of the County.

The survey included 20 questions on topics including: if they knew who their Commissioner is, the greatest problems facing the County, how the County communicates with the public and if they liked living and working here. Residents were also asked to give additional comments at the end of the survey. The survey was advertised on our website myokaloosa.com and our social media accounts Twitter, Facebook and Nextdoor. We are highlighting some of the common responses and data in this section to give you an idea of what is on the minds of Okaloosa County residents.

What is the biggest challenge for Okaloosa County?

- Residents who responded to the survey commonly brought up the subjects of growth management, to include tourists and housing prices.
- Also at the top of the list was how the County can deal with the high volume of traffic and infrastructure.
- Other challenges people noted were drugs, crime and keeping beaches clean of trash.

IS OKALOOSA COUNTY A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE?



Half Cent Sales Tax Fund

The Half Cent Sales Tax Fund is estimated at \$41,903,711 which represents an increase of \$20,999,571 or 100% in FY22.

Sales Tax revenue is estimated at \$19,378,400 in the coming year.

There are 23 infrastructure surtax projects in the planning phases, including the Northwestern Crestview bypass.

Revenue in this fund has exceeded expectations and we will be bringing more projects to the Infrastructure Surtax Board for review and approval earlier than anticipated.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

The Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners continues working to ensure our county recovers from COVID-19. The vaccine rolled out and grants for businesses, nonprofits and housing were funded.

As our community recovers, the Board of County Commissioners created value for citizens by supporting services such as recycling, environmental services, water & sewer, traffic and public transportation. Because of their leadership, departments including Public Safety, Corrections, Public Works, Airports and Tourist Development saw innovations.

Additionally, projects supporting infrastructure, libraries, extension services and park expansions saw progress.

As the health threat of the previous year's pandemic began to decline, commissioners reengaged with in-person events and gatherings including a big announcement, followed by the inaugural flight of Southwest Airlines at VPS, workshops for Santa Rosa Boulevard improvements, town halls for FDOT studies in Baker and new construction in Sylvania Heights, a groundbreaking ceremony for the Crystal Beach Expansion and for the start of the Crestview SW bypass.



Carolyn Ketchel (Chairman)
District 2

Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel is Commissioner for District Two, which includes Shalimar, Okaloosa Island and parts of unincorporated Fort Walton Beach.

She has been a resident of Okaloosa County for over 30 years, and brings a comprehensive background in Federal, State and local experience, with an emphasis on social services policy and administration which spans decades. She was named the Social Worker of the Year for the State of Florida in 2015 by the National Association of Social Workers.

Most recently she was awarded the 2020 Presidential Advocacy Award by the Florida Association of Counties. This award recognized her tireless work advocating for the citizens of Okaloosa county and her work alongside then Rep. Mel Ponder, and in unison with community leaders, to create the Mental Health Diversion Program.

While in Washington, she served on the White House Conference on Families under President Carter, and the Commission to Reform Social Security under President Reagan. She was recognized for her work on Social Security by President Reagan. Carolyn worked in the United States Congress as a Subcommittee Director for the powerful Ways and Means Committee.

Carolyn holds a Master's Degree in Social Work in Administration, Social Policy and Clinical Counseling, and has a license in Clinical Social Work. During her years as a social worker, she has worked on the macro-level, assisting to pass legislation on Social Security, child welfare and foster care. Her public service in Florida includes serving on Congressman Jeff Miller's district staff and serving as Senator Don Gaetz's legislative director.

Carolyn has been married for 38 years to Circuit Judge Terry Ketchel. They have two sons, a daughter-in-law and two granddaughters. As a devoted wife and mother, Carolyn was extremely active in various school and youth activities with her sons. She served in numerous leadership functions in Boy Scouting, where both her sons achieved the rank of Eagle Scout.



Mel Ponder (Vice Chairman)
District 5

Commissioner Mel Ponder is a leader committed to conservative values who was born in Ocala, Florida. The Commissioner won the election in the November 3rd, 2020 general election and will serve a term from 2020-2024.

He is a family man, man of faith, a small business owner, Mayor of Destin from 2014 to 2016, and a member of the Florida House of Representatives from 2016 to 2020. Commissioner Ponder graduated from Florida State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Finance. He has been married to his wife Mona for 29 years and has 3 children.

During his tenure in the State House of Representatives, Commissioner Ponder served as the Chair of the Children, Families and Seniors Subcommittee, Vice-Chair of the Higher Education Appropriations Subcommittee, and as a Deputy Majority House Whip. He was instrumental in the passage of laws concerning military education and licensure, veterans alternative treatment options, veterans treatment court, VisitFlorida/tourism, child welfare, mental healthcare, and religious freedom.

Commissioner Ponder is committed to leading the County with sound decision-making and fiscal responsibility. He is looking forward to working hard for the people and efforts under which he ran – Family, Faith, Freedom, & Forward! Commissioner Ponder is the owner of Business Empowered, a workplace ministry and is Government Affairs Director with the Emerald Coast Association of Realtors.

In addition to his political and business work – he is heavily involved in non-profits and outreach to the community. He helped institute the Destin Week of Blessings which is an annual event that unites pastors and churches in the Destin area.



Paul Mixon
District 1

Commissioner Paul Mixon is the County Commissioner for District 1 – which covers the northeastern quadrant of Okaloosa County. Commissioner Mixon was elected to the office after winning the Republican primary on August 18th, 2020.

Commissioner Mixon took his seat on the commission on November 17th, 2020 for a four-year term. Outside of his duties as a commissioner, Commissioner Mixon is a Pastor at Central Baptist Church in Crestview.

He believes that Okaloosa County deserves a government that is responsive, ethical, and committed to protecting quality of life. Commissioner Mixon grew up in Shalimar and is a longtime resident of Okaloosa County. He is a graduate of Choctawhatchee High School. In addition to his years at Choctaw, Mixon furthered his education by completing an Associate of Applied Science in Criminal Justice from Northwest Florida State College and a Bachelor's Degree in Christian Ministry from the Leavell College of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Mixon has served in sworn Law Enforcement in Okaloosa County in various roles with the Sheriff's Office and the Crestview Police Department from 2004 to 2020. During his time at the Sheriff's Office, he was awarded the life-saving medal by the Sheriff and graduated from Homeland Security Training Center.

His top priorities include supporting and nurturing an economic recovery from the pandemic, providing effective law enforcement and public safety, seeking funding for crucial highway projects, and ensuring transparency and ethical standards in County government.

COMMISSIONERS CONT.



Nathan Boyles
District 3

Commissioner Nathan Boyles grew up in North Okaloosa County. He received a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering with an emphasis in environmental engineering from Florida State University. After his graduation, he earned his Law Degree from FSU College of Law.

Nathan and his wife Crystal have two children: seven-year-old son Beau and two-year-old daughter Quinn. They call Holt, in the center of District Three, home. Nathan and Crystal believe small business is the backbone of our economy and it helps to form the foundation of our community. They proudly own and operate several local businesses which support local jobs and empower the local community.

First elected in 2012, Nathan previously served as Chair and Vice-Chair of the County Commission and has served or does serve on a number of boards for governmental, business and civic organizations. These organizations include the Okaloosa Library Cooperative, Northwest Florida Regional Planning Council, Crestview Rotary Club, Crestview Area Chamber of Commerce, Main Street Crestview Association, Crestview Historical Preservation Board, Northwest Florida Regional Transportation Organization, CCB Community Bank Florida Advisory Board and Crestview Community Redevelopment Agency Board.

Nathan currently chairs the Okaloosa Walton Transportation Planning Organization which is responsible for long-range transportation planning in Okaloosa and Walton Counties. In this role he continues to work to prioritize funding for critical transportation infrastructure projects for Okaloosa County, including expanding Highway 85 to six lanes, constructing the Crestview by-pass, creating an additional Interstate interchange on I-10, and implementing the "around the mound" solution in downtown Fort Walton Beach and the Destin cross-town connector.



Trey Goodwin
District 4

Robert A. "Trey" Goodwin III is an Okaloosa native who attended local schools and graduated from Choctawhatchee High School.

He earned his bachelor's degree in Building Construction from the University of Florida in 2001, and his Juris Doctor degree from the Florida State University School of Law in 2005.

Trey founded the law firm of Robert A. Goodwin III, P.A., and represents clients in the areas of real estate, construction, estate planning, and probate law. Trey also gained significant experience in public service leadership as a member of the Fort Walton Beach City Council (2011 – 2014), and as County Commissioner for District 4 since November 2014.

Trey lives in Fort Walton Beach with his wife, Krystle and their children, daughter Alexia and son Robert. Trey and his family worship at Wright Baptist Church.

Commissioner Goodwin is the liaison officer for the following departments and community organizations: Okaloosa County Tax Collector, Water and Sewer, Supervisor of Elections, Walton/Okaloosa/Santa Rosa Regional Utility Authority, Value Adjustment Board, First Judicial Circuit, Board of Trustees for the Law Library, Defense Support Initiatives, Economic Development Council and Military Relations (Hurlburt Field).

Additionally, Commissioner Goodwin is a personal watercraft safety advocate starting conversations with the community and seeking solutions for the safety of our waterways.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION

OKALOOSA COUNTY IN RECOVERY FROM COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In October 2020, Okaloosa County offered \$5.6 million in CARES Act Grants for Small Businesses, Non-profits and individuals with medical expenses, County Administration lead educational opportunities in partnership with Integrity Group and local chambers of commerce via in-person and zoom workshops.

As Vaccines were introduced for healthcare workers, at-risk individuals and the general population, County Administration supported public health community partners and Okaloosa County public safety by organizing the vaccine distribution protocol and working with the Okaloosa County Public Information, to distribute accurate and timely information.

The U.S. Treasury awarded Okaloosa County \$6.36 million in emergency rental and utility assistance for low-income households experiencing COVID19 financial hardships. Beginning April 6, 2021, to ensure a successful economic recovery in our area, County leadership offered grant assistance for rent, rent arrears, late fees, utilities and utility arrears.

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT EXPANSION

June 15, 2021 – The Board of County Commissioners approved a special election for the consideration of a countywide expansion of the Tourism Development Taxing District.

County leadership was tasked with educating stakeholders and working with the Public Information Officer on educating the public on what tourism development tax is and why the referendum is being considered. Through multiple workshops, an interlocal agreement was approved by municipalities and an ordinance supported



Craig Coffey | Deputy County Administrator

by the TDC and approved by the Board. On October 5, eligible voters approved the referendum expanding tourism countywide.

Additionally, in favor of more accessible data, capabilities were reevaluated and the Board approved in-house collection of tourism tax dollars, offloading the responsibility from Florida Department of Revenue and placing the responsibility in the hands of the Okaloosa County Clerk's office.

LEADERSHIP ADDITION

On September 21, 2021 the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners approved the recommendation to hire Sheila Fitzgerald as Deputy County Administrator of Support Services.

Fitzgerald has officially joined the team and reported for duty on October 4. She brings seventeen years of experience in the areas of budget management, grant administration and project management. She earned a Master of Science Administration, Public Administration from the University of West Florida in May 2008. Deputy County Administrator Sheila Fitzgerald shared,

“It is a very exciting time to join the Okaloosa County team. I look forward to contributing to the success of the initiatives and projects that improve the quality of life for county residents.”

Fitzgerald's recent work history includes a stint as Grants and Special Programs Director with Santa Rosa County Board of County Commissioners and Assistant City Manager at the City of Gulf Breeze.

“We're pleased to have Ms. Fitzgerald join the leadership team at Okaloosa County,” said Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners Chairman Carolyn Ketchel.

“We warmly welcome her collaborative leadership style and experience in public administration.” Fitzgerald's duties coincide with fellow Deputy Craig Coffey who joined Okaloosa County in 2020.

Deputy County Administrator of Operations, Craig Coffee will split oversight of County departments with Ms. Fitzgerald. His responsibilities include Okaloosa County's Airports, Tourism, Public Safety, Public Works, Facilities and Parks Maintenance.

Sheila will oversee Growth Management, Agricultural Extension, Human Resources, Information Technology and Library Cooperative.



Sheila Fitzgerald | Deputy County Administrator of Support Services



Major Accomplishments

Administrators updated the County Strategic Plan and reorganized the County's overall organizational structure, establishing an Office of Management & Budget and a Deputy County Administrator for Operations.

They also facilitated the development of a community-wide list of immediate and future infrastructure project needs and boosted social media presence and public awareness through the aggressive efforts of the County's Public Information Office.

The Department continued close coordination with the Economic Development Council in an on-going effort to attract new industry and manufacturing business interests in Okaloosa County and strengthened the County's interaction and engagement with area chambers of commerce, the military, business partners, and city leaders.

Additionally, staff presented and engaged with County departments and the Board on Legislative Priorities resulting in approval of the Board's top priority projects.

COUNTY ATTORNEY



Lynn Hoshihara | County Attorney

The mission of the County Attorney's Office is to provide quality legal services to the Board of County Commissioners, County Administration, County departments, and various advisory boards and committees in a timely and efficient manner.

County Attorney Lynn Hoshihara began representing Okaloosa County on various matters when she joined the law firm Neighbors, Giblin & Nickerson in 2012. She served as Deputy County Attorney

from 2014 – 2019 and has served as the primary County attorney for two years with the firm. Hoshihara and her team work within the law on the subjects of contracts, employment, litigation, finance, land use, utilities as well as other matters facing the County.

Deputy County Attorney since 2015, Kerry Parsons represents the Tourist Development Council, Planning Commission, Board of Adjustment, Code Enforcement Board and the Competency Boards.

We congratulated Parsons this year, as she was promoted to a to a partner at the firm Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson.

“She has worked tirelessly and this promotion is very well deserved. Both Okaloosa and NGN are lucky to have her,” said Hoshihara.

Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson is a full-service law firm that concentrates its practice on representation of local governments on a statewide basis. NGN has been providing legal services to Okaloosa County for over 30 years.



Kerry Parsons | Deputy County Attorney



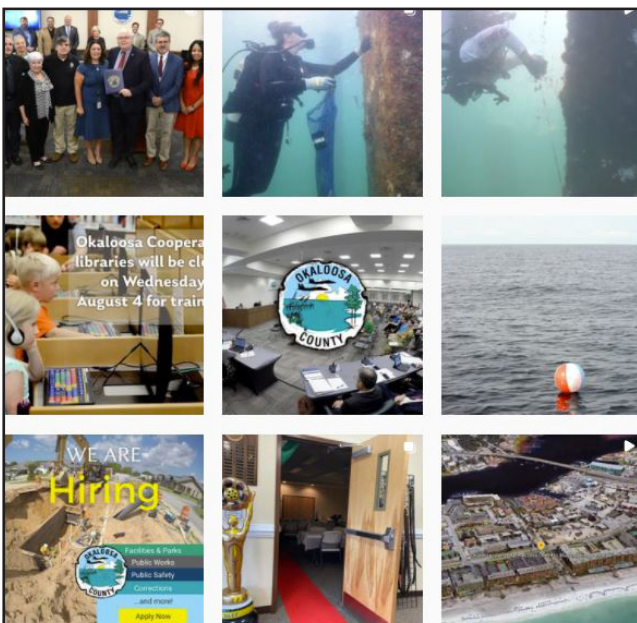
PUBLIC INFORMATION



April Sarver
Public Information Officer

Under the direction of the County Administrator, the purpose of Okaloosa County Public Information is to unify the messaging to citizens from County government, operational departments, County services and to engage in thoughtful two-way conversations, ultimately earning public trust by providing a reliable source of information in day-to-day activities and in crisis situations.

Our Mission is to inform the public across multimedia platforms, in the most relevant platform per message and per audience. We reinforce positive community relations through maintaining media relationships, maximizing networking opportunities, strategizing with community partners and optimizing digital platforms online via the County website and on social media platforms.



Top 2021 Public Information Initiatives

ENHANCED MEDIA / COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Authored and distributed 27 press releases compared to 6 from 2020. Created new as well as maintained existing relationships with the media through timely and professional interactions on a day-to-day basis resulting in 141 stories compared to 78 in 2020 with more than 60 million views.

Pitched stories and arranged media interviews with elected officials and county leadership. Worked with the City of Destin to scale Leave No Trace Initiatives county-wide and to break ground on Crystal Beach expansion. Collaborated with environmental community on community cleanup awareness.

Worked with municipalities and chambers countywide for consistent hurricane season

messaging and countywide bed tax expansion messaging. Worked closely with Florida DOH for Covid-19 updates and posted the final of 500 covid-19 data updates on May 23, 2021. Continued working with DOH on Vaccine resources.

DROVE SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

34,800 Followers on Facebook (up 8,857 from previous year). Facebook reach in 2021 was 1.7 million (up 21.6% from previous year) 43.3k engaged with our video content (up 43% from previous year) 985.3k viewed for more than 3 seconds (up 15.2% from previous year)

Our audience across all social media platforms includes 92,500 people, up 10,700 from previous year. Platforms include

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube and Nextdoor. YouTube and Nextdoor.

IMPROVE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE AND CONTENT AT MYOKALOOSA.COM

Created websites with innovative / more user-friendly designs and simple “click to expand” content buttons and organizers. Authored more than 20 new MyOkaloosa landing pages including Leave no Trace, Women Veterans Monuments, Covid-19 vaccine resources and COVID-19 relief grant pages while improving the overall design of the myokaloosa.com home page.

Additionally, onboarded 13 indoor digital messaging monitors across the county with content fed by various departments and COVID-19 resources.

CREATED MOMENTS FOR LEADERSHIP INCLUDING COMMISSIONERS TO ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY

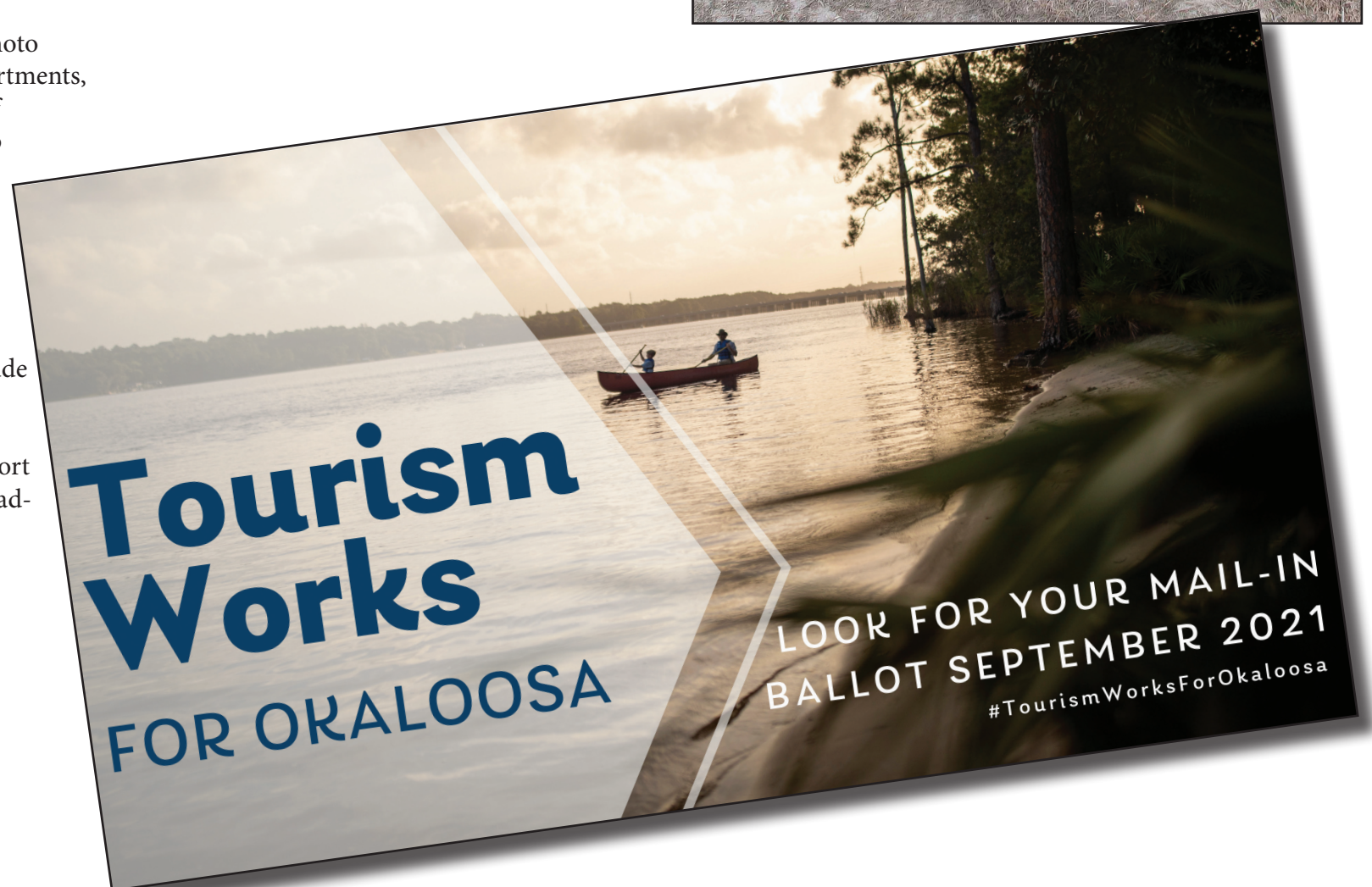
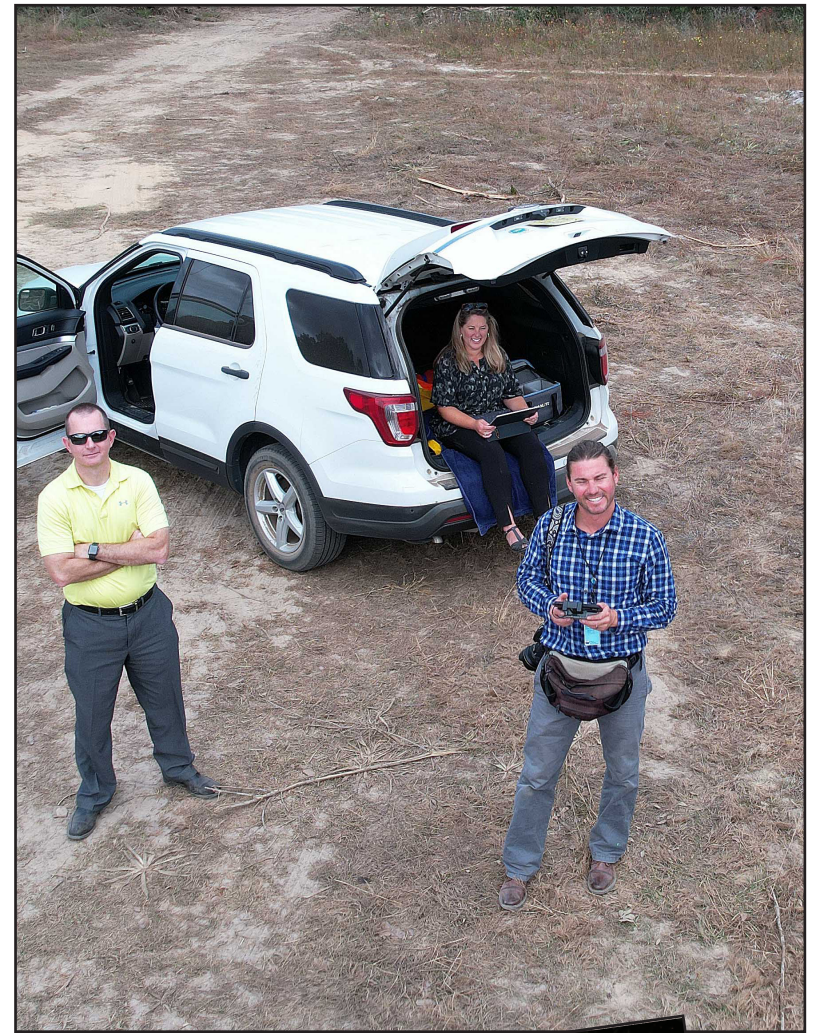
Created informative video and photo packages promoting county departments, leadership moments and status of projects including deep dives into department responsibilities, accomplishments, public safety awareness, employee spotlights, project status updates, recruiting and special events.

Some events we activated and/or covered and special projects include Ask a Lawyer Program, Artificial Reefs, Coffee with Carolyn, Live BCC wrap-ups, Town Halls, Airport Announcements, Community Leadership Events and Workshops.

Proprietary mediums include County social media, bright signs and outdoor signage.

SCALE AND ENHANCE PIO OFFICE PUBLICATIONS

Crafted and Lead a multimedia public education messaging campaign which lead to the approval of countywide bed tax. Assets included scripts for radio broadcast, creative and copywriting for mailer, social media assets, creative for digital signage and the website TourismWorksForOkaloosa.com. Additional annual publications include the annual report and hurricane guide.



**COUNTY
DEPARTMENTS/DIVISIONS**



AIRPORTS



Tracy Stage
Airports Director

Okaloosa County's Airports; Destin - Fort Walton Beach Airport, Destin Executive Airport, Bob Sikes Airport provide over a \$2B annual economic impact to the region.

DESTIN - FORT WALTON BEACH AIRPORT (VPS)

VPS is the preferred aviation gateway to Northwest Florida. Revenues are derived from operating agreements, leases and fees charged through business operations based at the airport. The award-winning airport terminal accommodates passengers from around the nation with 60 non-stop flights daily to large hub cities across the U.S. with American Airlines, Allegiant Air, Delta, Southwest and United, making domestic and international connections easy. Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport operates on and maintains a 130-acre leasehold with a 149,000 square foot, recently expanded terminal building and numerous support facilities to provide scheduled airline service to over 1,800,000 passengers annually.

DESTIN EXECUTIVE AIRPORT (DTS)

DTS serves to provide a general aviation airport environment that is beneficial, distinctive, and conducive for private and business aircraft operations. DTS provides excellent accessibility to coastal communities and resorts in a safe and secure operating environment that is an exceptional value for customers, while minimizing noise impact and improving compatibility with surrounding residential areas. The approximately 395 acre facility



serves a variety of travelers, private and corporate aircraft, with over 80,000 annual flight operations and two fixed base operators.

BOB SIKES AIRPORT (CEW)

CEW serves as the region's logistical base providing a home to several aerospace manufacturing and modification companies, some of which are the county's top employers. With over 1,080 acres and an ILS equipped 8,000-foot runway, the facility accommodates over 45,000 aircraft operations annually. A designated Enterprise Zone protects the airport with a surrounding five-mile buffer to prevent non-compatible development to protect aeronautical activities and promote further development and future opportunities.



Major Accomplishments

VPS

VPS Achieved Global Biorisk Advisory Council Star Accreditation, developed and implemented an Infectious Disease and Pandemic Plan, VPS Recovery Plan, and Air Service Recovery Plan.

Received awards totaling over \$24M in recovery relief funding through the FAA, due to strong financial position.

Gained service with Southwest Airlines in May 2021, the nation's largest domestic carrier.

Decreased the remaining system debt and escrowed funds for full redemption of bonds in October 2023, resulting in a debt-free three-airport system.

Baggage Handling and Terminal Expansion Project, approximately \$18M, will be complete in late 2021.

New Concourse C project funded by Allegiant Air will be completed in April of 2022.

CEW

Completed construction on Foy Shaw Industrial Parkway, a decade long vision to provide direct connectivity between U.S. Highway 90 and the airport.

In partnership with FDOT, constructed parking lot on airport property, adjacent to the new Hsu Education Foundation, home to the Northwest Florida State College's new A&P School .

Entered into agreement amendment with the Fixed Base Operator to allow for construction of new FBO office facilities and five new hangar builds within the next three years.

DTS

Rehabilitated the main parallel and connector taxiways.

Negotiated new leases with tenants in Blocks 10 & 11 to bring those hangars under County ownership ahead of original term expiration.

Completed roof repair on County-owned Block 8 hangars.

Integrated new security, access control procedures and tenant drivers training.



CORRECTIONS



C. Eric Esmond
Chief Correctional Officer

The Okaloosa County Department of Corrections is committed to public safety and the continued success of our law enforcement, correctional, judicial, and community partners through excellence, integrity, and innovation. In 2021, Corrections cared for a total of 7,836 inmates, jailed for an individual average of 13.5 days, and supervised the release of 7,805 inmates. While the jail is built for approximately 600, the correctional officers and support staff managed an average daily population of 718 inmates.

INSPECTION STATS:

- Population on date of inspection: 761
- Date of last inspection: 03/13/2020
- Average daily population for the preceding 12-month period: 718
- Maximum rated capacity: 594

Housing:

- Number of beds: 649
 - Single occupancy cells: 7
 - Multiple occupancy cells: 587
 - Number of dormitories: 7
- Inspection date: 10/12/2021



Major Accomplishments

The Okaloosa County Department of Corrections exceeded requirements to meet two separate on-site Florida Model Jail Standards Inspections (Medical & Operations), and it was found to be well maintained and operated in full compliance. Common areas and inmate areas were found to be very clean and orderly. The inspector noted the jail has a solid plan in place to address inmates who present with medical and mental health challenges.

In an effort to assist the County in mitigating the impact of COVID-19, the Okaloosa County Department of

Corrections provided cost-free testing to 146 Medical staff, 504 Corrections/County Staff, and 1,534 inmates.

The jail offered (and continues to offer) voluntary COVID-19 immunizations to the inmate population and all personnel.

Staff leadership also brought awareness to Correctional officers with the Food Truck Frenzy event, which also provided an opportunity for local businesses to expand their footprint.



HUMAN RESOURCES



Edward Sisson
Director of Human Resources

In support of County departments, the Human Resources Department provides technical and consultation services in the areas of: regulatory compliance; policy development, revision, and enforcement; recruitment; separations; employee relations; employee recognition; performance management; job classification; compensation; employee communications; training and development; payroll and leave management; Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS); public records requests; and employee records.

KEY OBJECTIVES INCLUDE

1. Recommend staffing strategies and initiatives that align with organizational objectives to include efforts for attracting and retaining a well-qualified, high-performing, and diverse workforce.
2. Provide technical and advisory assistance to managers within the organization regarding staffing and employee relations issues.
3. Maintain organizational compliance with employment laws and county policies.
4. Provide quality administration of Human Resource functions.

The mission of the Human Resources Department is to provide outstanding customer service to citizens and employees of Okaloosa County while developing programs, policies and procedures that enhance organizational effectiveness, ensure quality recruitment, retention, training and development of employees, and, provide practical, effective solutions to workplace challenges.



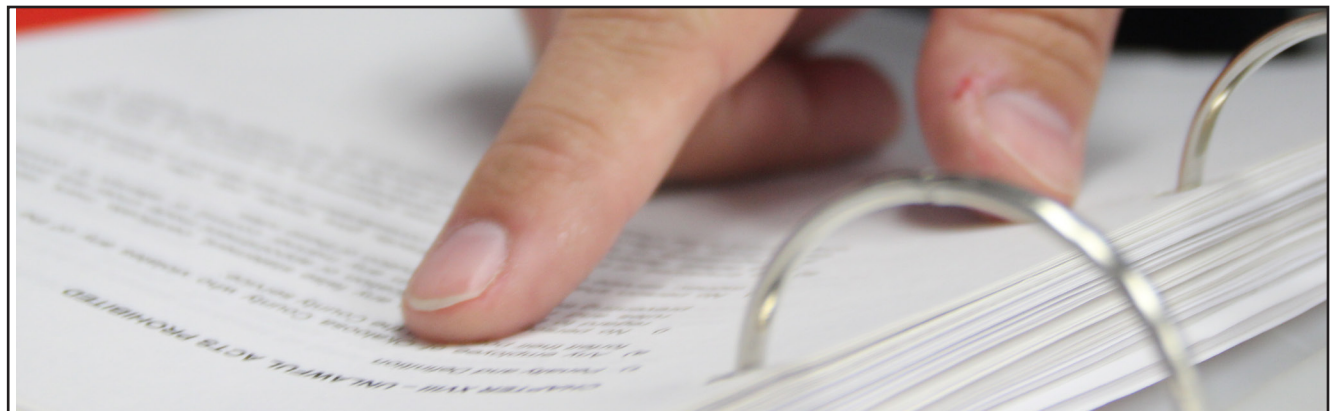
Major Accomplishments

Human Resources was able to coordinate and implement compensation strategies in an effort to reduce turnover as well as aide in the recruitment of several critical classifications and/or functional areas throughout the County.

They successfully prevailed in efforts of collective bargaining agents to represent multiple classes of employees employed by the County and also successfully negotiated a collective bargaining agreement with the IAEP.

HR also coordinated with the IT Department to provide kiosks in the HR lobby to add electronic capability to the public and for staff without access to a computer on the job.

The department initiated the hiring process for more than 520 new hires, additionally received and reviewed 6254+ applications for 303+ different job requisitions.



PUBLIC WORKS



Jason Autrey
Director of Public Works

The Mission of the Public Works Department is to provide infrastructure and quality of life related services to residents and visitors of Okaloosa County. The Public Works Department accomplishes this mission through its four divisions: Engineering, Roads, Fleet, and Administrative Services. Subsidiary sections that provide support are Traffic Operations, Environmental Services, Surveying, and Supply.

The Public Works Department operates with efficiency in mind; honing in on projects with the greatest impact while maintaining fiscal responsibility. Challenges presented to the department are met with a commitment to excellence and professionalism. Opportunities for success come with the implementation of innovative, yet sound, solutions and a statement of pride in the quality of our work.



Major Accomplishments

Public Works acquired all land and permits required for construction of the SW Crestview Bypass and East-West Connector – includes widening of PJ Adams Parkway and the construction of both Phase V and the East-West Connector. In total, construction contracts totaling over \$65 million were awarded for the overall SW Crestview Bypass Project.

The County celebrated the groundbreaking for the Phase V & East-West Connector sections of the project.

The Department also completed five surtax projects and continues the execution of 21 active projects.

LAND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW AND PERMITTING

The Land Development Review and Permitting section of Engineering received and reviewed 158 plans for land development projects and reviewed/inspected 401 driveway permit applications.

Performed 135 periodic inspections for

developments. The division performed 60 bridge inspections/report filings.

They conducted 25 roadway material density tests needed for roadway and stormwater construction projects as well as 16 traffic counts.

TRAFFIC

The Traffic Operations Section completed the JPA providing additional fiber communications for segments on western portion of US 98 to include Cody Ave, Florosa School and Parrish Blvd. traffic signals and assisted FDOT's inspection teams performing construction and engineering on major road projects.

Began development of the Traffic Operations Center design documents.

STORMWATER

The Stormwater section identified 112 outfalls that flow into receiving waters and 397



Total Outfalls currently GIS Arc mapped.

Staff performed 110 Dry Weather Inspections, 30 Park Stormwater Structure Inspections, 91 Lake Doctor Inspections and 334 retention pond inspections.

458 out of 458 complaints were investigated.

ROAD/BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION

Road Construction crews repaired extensive damage to the jail parking lot following Hurricane Sally.

Resurfaced approximately 13.5 miles of roads using in-house staff.

Converted almost 13 miles of dirt road to a lime-rock stabilized base ready for future chip-seal improvements.

MOSQUITO CONTROL

Mosquito Control section integrated a new data system software and hardware system for tracking call in and spray locations.

Staff responded to over 340 customer inquiries (work orders), provided inspection and larvicide application at over 1,900 sites per month as well as adulticide application over 651,850 acres; 1,800-person hours; traveling over 19,000 miles.

FLEET OPERATIONS

Fleet Operations staff members completed 6210 shop work orders. Of these work orders 1,185 were Preventive Maintenance.

They also Established electronic billing and implemented a vehicle “loaner” program for our customers with vehicles down for extended repairs.

WASTE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Waste Resource Management section was able to dispose of municipal solid waste and provide recycling collection for approximately 34,000 homes.

Collected and disposed approximately 160,000 tons of garbage, collected and processed approximately 7,000 tons of recyclables through residential service and approximately another 42,375 tons through private/municipal recycling efforts (includes over 14,000 tons of yard waste).

Disposed of 10,000 waste tires and collected and processed over a million pounds of Household Hazardous Waste.



EXTENSION SERVICES



Ronnie Cowan
Director of Extension Services

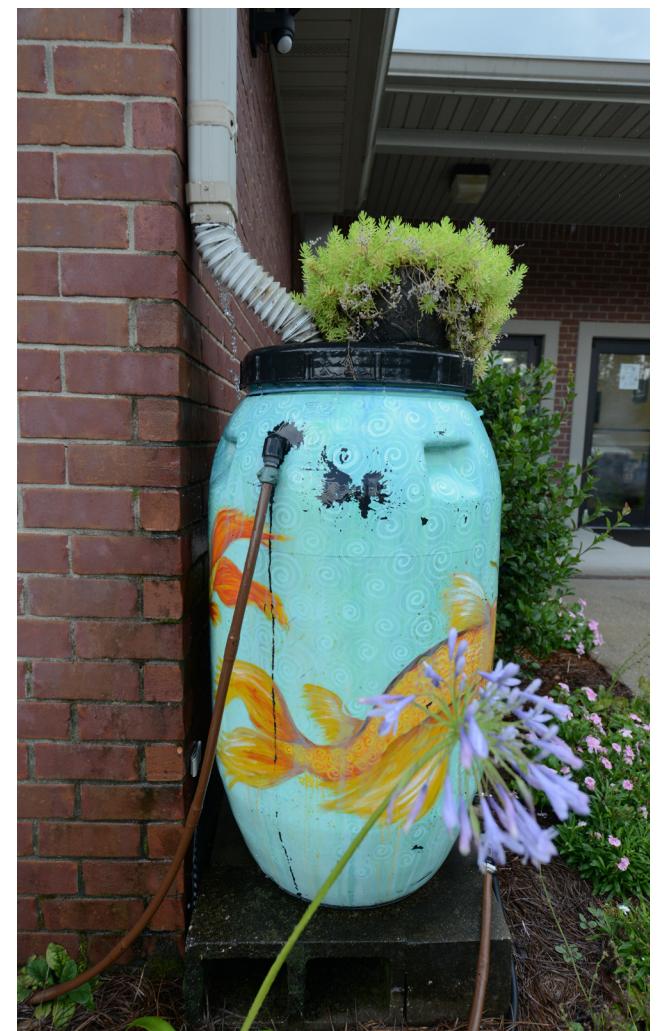
Okaloosa County UF/IFAS Extension Service develops and delivers research-based educational programs, workshops, newsletters and publications in the areas of agriculture/small farms, family and consumer sciences, horticulture, natural resources, marine science, and 4-H youth development. The nationwide informal educational network links experts and resources at federal, state and local levels. Local citizen advisory committees provide guidance and recommendations for programming based on local community needs.

Programs in Agriculture/Small Farms/Natural Resources focus on agriculture profitability and the sustainable use of environmental resources for the larger commercial operations as well as those smaller farms with more limited available resources.

Family and Consumer Sciences programming involves food, nutrition, health, food safety, family finance, community prosperity, and housing. Homeowner and Commercial Horticulture programs include training of volunteer Master Gardeners and development of Best Management Practices. With increased urbanization and growth come increased pressures on our coastal ecosystems. Balancing population needs while



conserving our natural resources is one of the major goals of Okaloosa County's Sea Grant and Natural Resources Extension program. 4-H Youth Development programs develop youth leadership, character, and good citizenship. Projects and programs focus on a wide array of youth interests.



Major Accomplishments

UF IFAS Okaloosa County Extension staff supervised, managed, and conducted two points of distribution sites to assist victims of Hurricane Sally. The office was also fully functional in reaching our clientele during these efforts.

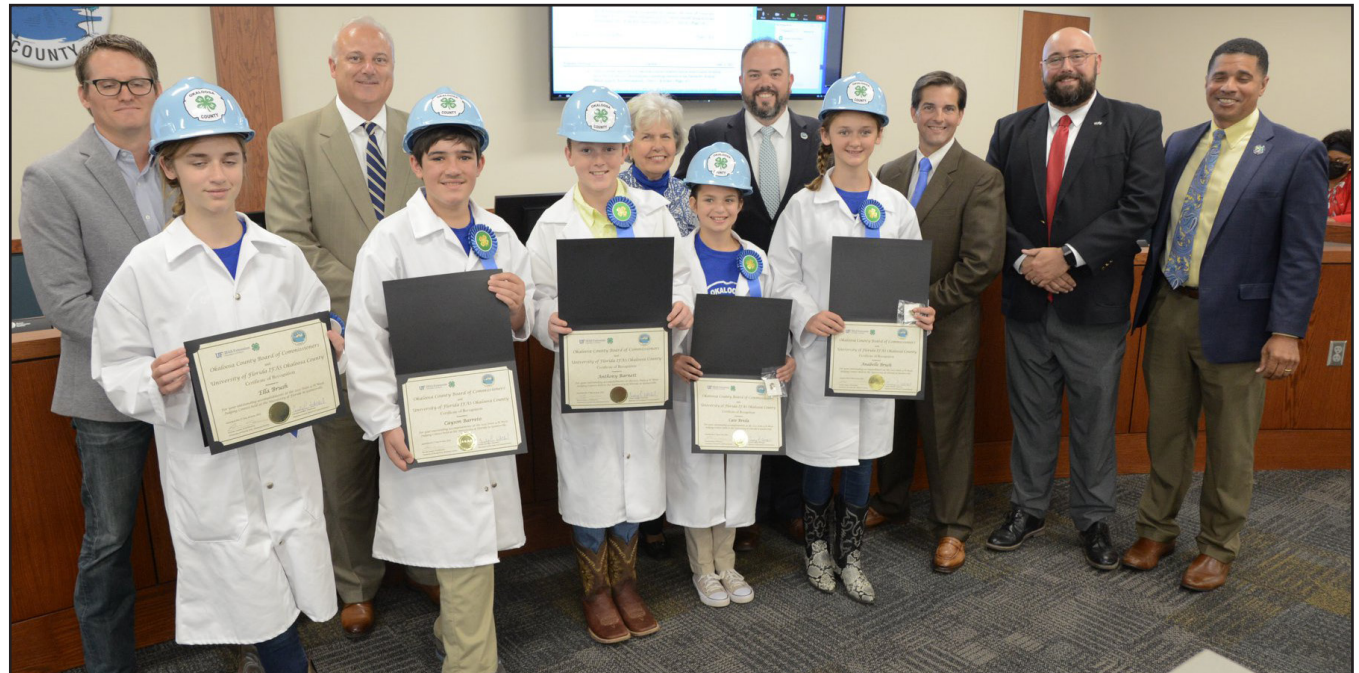
Twenty licensed county employees from 7 different departments earned 111 required hours of professional development at 1/4th the cost of online or industry-provided training. Eight county employees completed 27 hours of training and earned new pesticide applicator certification.

The Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) agent aided limited-resource families and individuals with financial education through the VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) tax preparation program. The agent assisted 81 families or individuals prepare and file their 2020 taxes; during this program, each receives a minimum of 1 hour of one-on-one financial coaching.

The Agriculture Extension Program reached 2,539 clients through on-farm consultations, phone calls, group meetings, emails and office visits this past year. Forty-one farmers saved \$12,554 through on-site farm visits and drone diagnostic flights. The agent provided an economic benefit to pesticide applicators in the amount of \$168,542 for initial training and \$76,976 for recertification CEUs.

Continuing its reach on the water, the Extension office facilitated 79 charter captains to obtain Florida Friendly Fishing Guide certification including several who operate out of Destin, FL, recognizing fishing guides who are committed to preserving the future of Florida's fisheries.

Additionally, the Marine Science Extension Program solicited \$25,000 in additional grant funding, including \$5,000 to support



the NAGISA program at Niceville High School, and \$3,291 in-kind contributions from 9 volunteers.

The Residential Horticulture Agent published 61 newspaper articles and aired 53 radio programs reaching local residents to more correctly manage their lawns, landscapes and gardens.

The Master Gardener Program and its 66 volunteers provided 3,075 hours of volunteer service. Using the 2020 accepted \$27.20 value for volunteer time, Okaloosa County Master Gardener Volunteers contributed a net in-kind donation of \$83,640 to Okaloosa County.

The 4-H program also saw a robust year. Okaloosa County 4-H reached over 100 youth through day camps, 31 participants enrolled in the 3-day camp. Over 80% of participants reported a knowledge increase in concepts and identification of flora and fauna.

Furthermore, 100% indicated that they would consider their impact on wildlife

habitat. Additionally, Okaloosa 4-H Meat Judging Team won the 2021 Meat Retail Identification State Championship.



FACILITY AND PARKS MAINTENANCE



Butch Hendrick
Director of Facility and Parks Maintenance

The Facilities and Parks Maintenance Department serves the citizens of Okaloosa County by constructing, expanding, remodeling, repairing, and maintaining the various county-owned and leased facilities, and by providing custodial and grounds keeping services as directed by the Board of County Commissioners and the County Administrator.

The Facility and Parks Maintenance Department provides services to:

- The Board of County Commissioners
- All County Departments under the BCC including
- All County Airports
- All County Parks
- All County Constitutional Officers

PARKS DIVISION

The Parks Division provides Construction Technicians and Groundskeepers for services at 61 developed/undeveloped parks throughout Okaloosa County.

These include beach parks, baseball/athletic fields, neighborhood parks, and assigned non-park areas such as Highway 98 and Santa Rosa Boulevard medians on Okaloosa Island.

Groundskeepers provide services to the public by maintaining approximately 477



acres of grass, installing and maintaining landscaping including 51 irrigation systems, cleaning 21 restrooms and providing trash pickup/removal and beach cleaning services for Destin and Okaloosa Island.

PARK/BOATING IMPROVEMENT

The Parks Division administers the Boating Improvement Program by installing and maintaining County boat ramps and boating-related support facilities such as restrooms, parking areas, pavilions, and docks. This program provides removal of derelict vessels that have been identified and approved by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

The Coastal Resource staff provides oversight of installation and replacement of boating restriction area signs and pilings such as “No Wake and Minimum Wake Zone”. The program also provides grants and aids to municipalities, upon request, for improvements to their boating facilities.



Major Accomplishments

The department routinely services parks and boat ramps to ensure they are modern, safe and clean for the public. This past year the parks division was able to create a new park, Abram's Park and renovate existing parks with new roofing, and conduct routine cleaning and landscaping of sports complexes.

A major part of the department's work during the summer months this year was trash collection on the beach. Staff cleaned over 10 miles of beach areas on Okaloosa Island and Destin resulting in 1,113,880 lbs. of trash from gulf-front beaches.

The department also made improvements to County buildings. They were able to improve security on the third floor of the Bracken Building as well as make safety improvements to both courthouses.

Boating improvements were also made this year. They ordered 21 replacement buoys for reinstallation in the No Vessel Zone near Crab Island and removed 9 derelict vessels from various waterways in Okaloosa County.



GROWTH MANAGEMENT



Elliot Kampert
Director of Growth Management

The Department of Growth Management provides a broad range of development and regulatory services to both the citizens and the development community. With offices in Ft. Walton Beach and Crestview, Growth Management provides services in five primary areas of responsibility mandated by federal, state and local codes and ordinances.

These are: the implementation of the adopted Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code and the National Flood Insurance Program, the plan review, permitting and inspection of construction activities in the unincorporated county and the municipalities of Cinco Bayou, Shalimar, and Mary Esther.

Additionally, we provide for the enforcement of local codes and ordinances relating to growth and land use development, as well as the administration of the Neighborhood Stabilization and State Housing Initiative Partnership affordable housing programs.

The Department of Growth Management supports the County Administrator and Board of County Commissioners and several citizen and technical advisory boards, namely; the Planning Commission, the Board of Adjustment, the Code Enforcement Board, the County Contractor Licensing Boards (Construction, Electrical,



Mechanical, Plumbing, Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals) and the Fire Code Advisory Board.

The Department of Growth Management is organized into three Divisions: Planning, Building Inspections, and Code Enforcement. Additionally, an Administrative Staff oversees required daily administrative duties.

The Administrative Section consists of the Growth Management Department Director, Elliot Kampert, the Planning Manager, Randy Woodruff, and the Chief Building Official Purl Adams, with support staff located in both the north and south offices.

The Planning Division has the lead responsibility for the implementation of the County's Comprehensive Plan, the Land Development Code, the National Flood Insurance Program, the flood insurance Community Rating System, and the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

The Building Division is made up of three sections: Permitting and Licensing,

Construction Plans Review, and Inspections. The staff of the Building Inspection Division provides direct staff support to the Code Enforcement Board, the Fire Code Advisory Board, and the County Contractor Licensing Boards (Construction, Electrical, Mechanical, Plumbing, Construction Board of Adjustments and Appeals).

The Inspection Section also provides permitting and inspection services to the municipalities of Mary Esther, Cinco Bayou, and Shalimar.

The Code Enforcement Division operates from offices in both Fort Walton Beach and Crestview, and enforces not only the regulatory aspects of the County's Land Development Code, but also serves as the regulatory arm of the County's contractor licensing program as well as junk, nuisance vehicle, noise and other complaints.

Major Accomplishments

Growth Management successfully coordinated CRS/Floodplain management review retaining the County's CRS rating of 5, continuing the 25% reduction of flood insurance premiums and updated joint City/County Local Mitigation Strategy ensuring continued ability to participate in Federal disaster and pre-disaster mitigation funds.

The department also administered 12 new, owner-occupied SHIP rehabilitation projects and successfully placed code liens on nine properties and partnered with Waste Management to expedite clean-up of 643 illegal/unauthorized dumping and tagged curb-side bulk pick-up issues.

Additionally, the staff maintained the Insurance Services Office Building Code for commercial buildings effectiveness rating of 3, maintained the Insurance Services Office Building Code for residential structures effectiveness rating of 4 and finished re-payment of General Fund cost allocation waivers.

In the previous year, Growth Management processed more than 12,000 building permit applications and conducted over 28,000 inspections while implementing an email permit application system and virtual inspection protocol.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Dan Sambenedetto
Director of Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) Department operates through four main divisions: Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Systems and Networks (SAN), Applications and Administration (APP) and Telecommunications (Telecom).

The Department's mission is to provide continually improving technology and data in a secure, reliable, integrated, cost-effective, and efficient way to enhance the effectiveness of county government.

The goal of IT is to innovatively implement on-demand technology and data for critical government services to improve the quality of life for the citizens of our county.

The management of technology and data in a coherent, organized County-wide effort is necessary to ensure limited money, resources, and time are wisely allocated and efficiently utilized to provide effective, efficient government in Okaloosa County.

Additionally, the Information Technology Department provides a reliable and cost-effective telecommunications infrastructure and manages the County's fiber-optic/telecommunications network as a mission-critical utility.



Major Accomplishments

The Information Technology Department was able to take great strides in improving GIS mapping to better inform the public about storm-related items like evacuation zones, critical facilities, flood zones and road and bridge closures, storm damage.

Lessons learned from Hurricane Sally, precipitated GIS to revamp the EOC Road Closure board. The information is now automatically passed to GIS, which provides the information on the main county web page and a Road and Bridge Closure App.

The Commissioners District map was submitted in an ESRI publication contest. The map was selected and published in their ESRI Map Book 36th edition.

They set up two Department of Health call centers and made sure staff was able to work remotely during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, IT also set up temperature checking devices, set up the County to operate using Zoom meetings and expanded Wi-Fi in County buildings.

IT also researched, coordinated and enrolled the County into scheduled Cybersecurity penetration and vulnerability testing, federally funded and provided by CISA (Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency), resulting in weekly reports provided to us highlighting identified vulnerabilities to our network and systems.

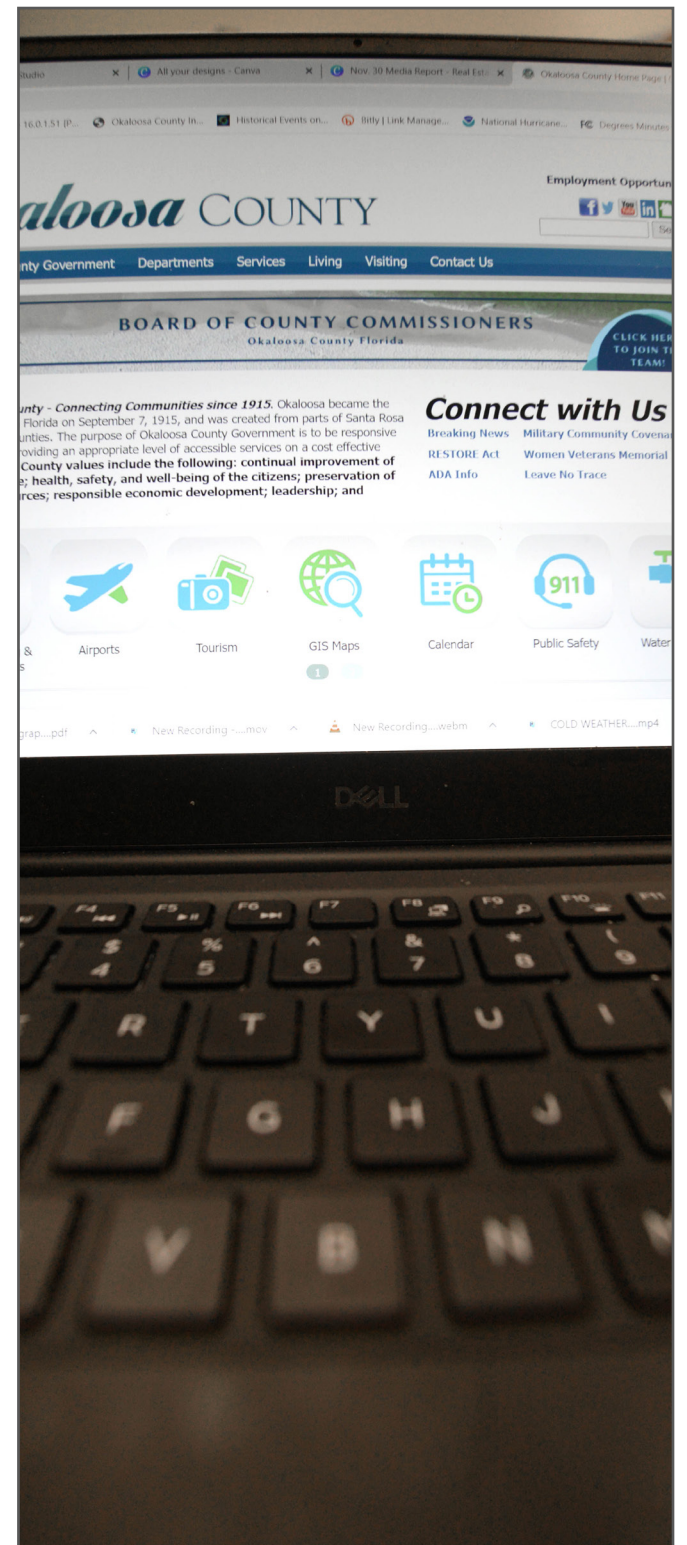
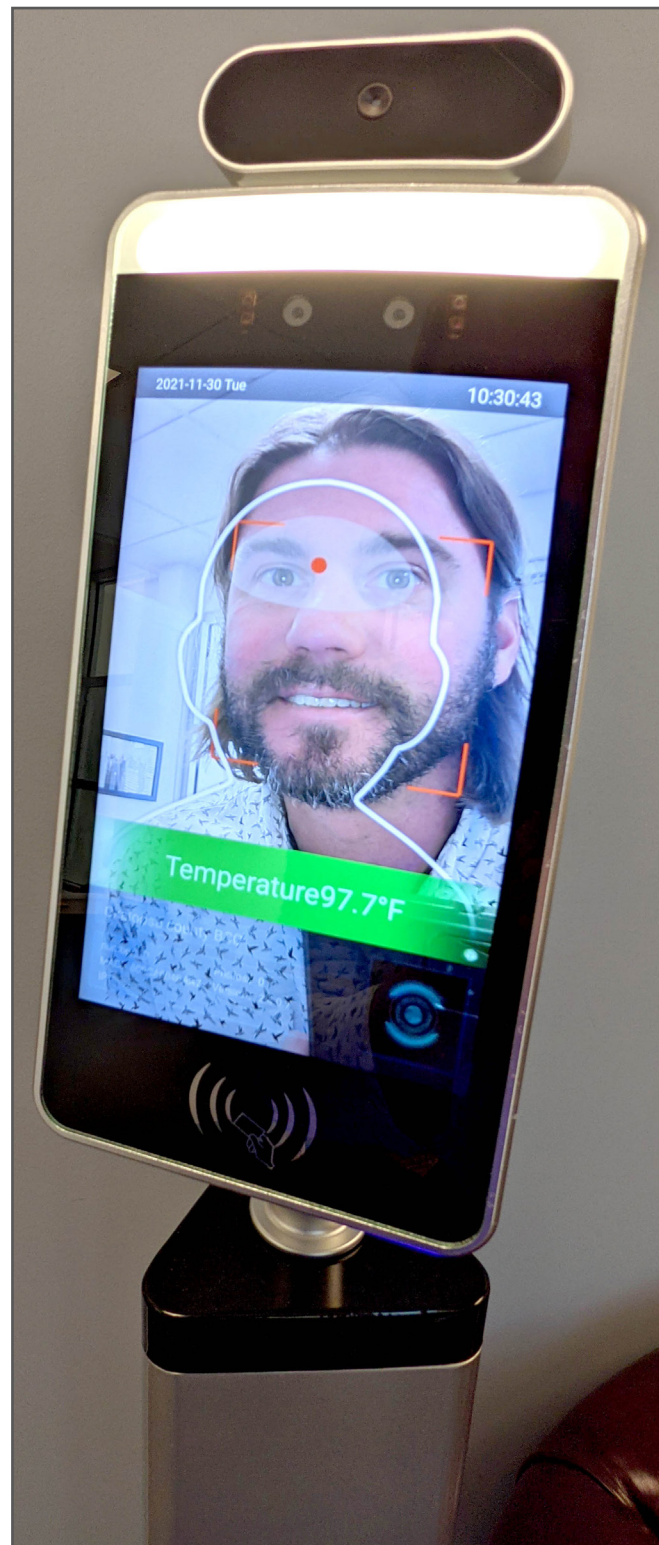
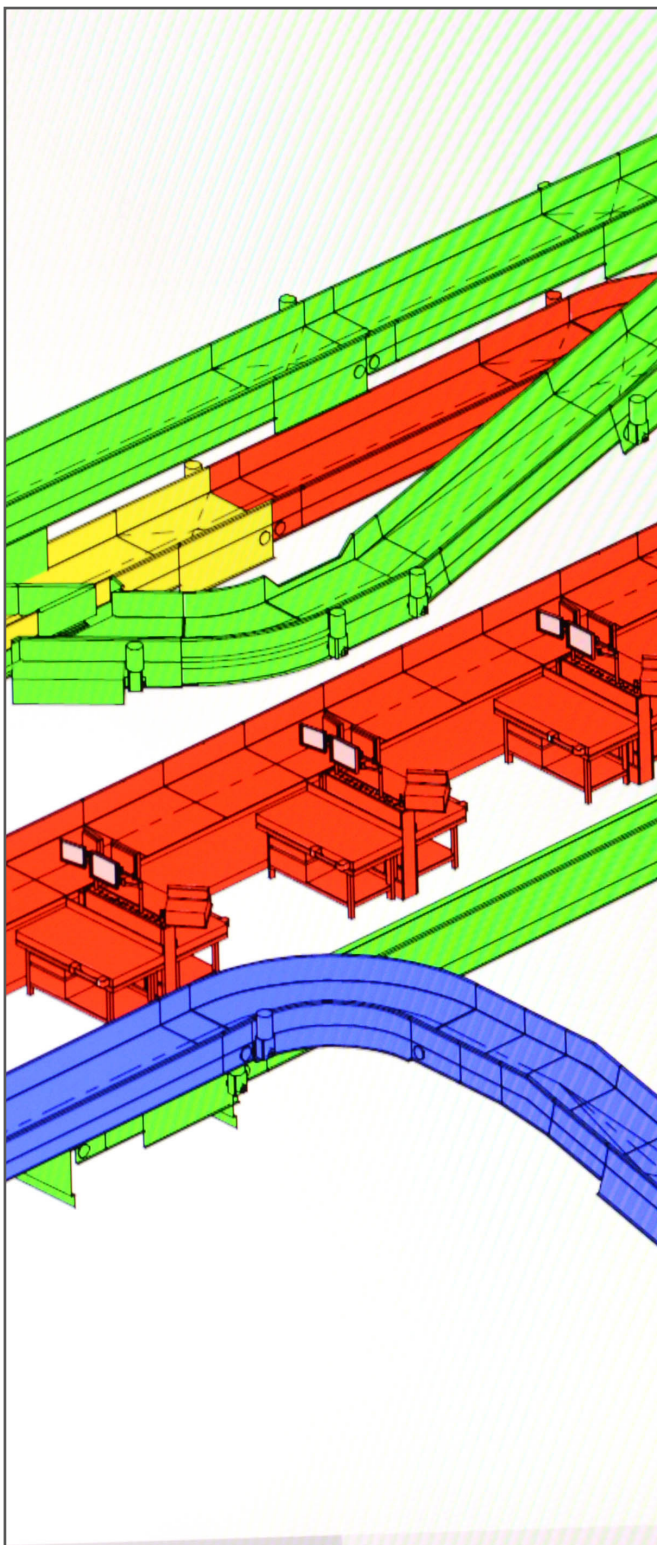
IT expanded BCC Wi-Fi to cover conference rooms throughout the county that allowed users to connect their laptops in multiple buildings. They also implemented dual authentication for connections, requiring both

device and user credentials to be checked and added patron Wi-Fi to the Property Appraiser's Shalimar location.

The Department replaced outdated servers and upgraded operating system for county Internet and Intranet servers. This included security enhancements, adding HTTPS, theme changes, link updates, and restructuring file stores.

Staff researched IT solutions for Airport needs on multiple projects including Baggage Handling System, Concourse C Construction, ConRac Remodel, Baggage Claim Expansion, and Inspection Station.

Among other accomplishments in the County's Fiber Optic Telecommunication Utility System, the Information Technology Department extended County fiber to the Sheriff Training Center, ½ Okaloosa Lane ring out, Shoal River Landing L.S. SCADA, Okaloosa Lane Well SCADA, PJ Adams conduit relocate and fiber install to Wildhorse and CWP reconnect and Raintree Well SCADA in Bluewater Bay.



LIBRARY COOPERATIVE



Vicky Stever

Director of the Public Library Cooperative

The Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative is a partnership between the cities of Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Niceville, Mary Esther, Valparaiso, and Okaloosa County to provide no-fee library services for all county residents. OCPLC is an independent, inter-governmental agency governed by a board of seven appointed members.

The Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative (OCPLC) empowers the community through education, creation and exploration.

Essential Community Services

Mobile career center, job fairs, career counseling, income tax preparation, voter and social services registration, Career Online High School, homework assistance and tutoring.

Collaborative Spaces

Meeting rooms, study spaces, classes and cultural events for all ages, community conversations.

Access to Technology and Research

Computers, free wireless access, digital media creation labs, technology instruction, research assistance, group classes, STEM exploration activities, online courses, downloadable eBooks and eAudiobooks.



Major Accomplishments

The Public Library Cooperative was able to secure federal grant dollars to address the education gap in the community through the Career Online High School.

Additionally, they were able to acquire CARES Act funding for loaner laptops for the students.

This year the libraries were able to safely shift back to in-person library services and special events such as cooking demonstrations and live animal shows while practicing responsible health protocols.

OCPLC implemented a major software migration to enhance the customer experience while reducing licensing fees as well as refreshing the functions and look of the website.

Additionally, OCPLC joined a regional consortium to share library lending of digital titles.

The move from a standalone license saves thousands of dollars per year and increases the percentage of expenditure applied to content rather than hosting fees. Customers benefit from collections shared by participating libraries throughout the Panhandle.

PUBLIC SAFETY



Patrick Maddox
Director of Public Safety

The Okaloosa County Department of Public Safety consists of Emergency Management, Beach Safety and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Divisions. The Department remains focused around the clock to keep our community of residents and visitors protected from hazards and harm from the South Okaloosa County beaches to the tree lines, waterfront parks and roadways of Central and North Okaloosa. The department protects the health, safety and welfare of our community with pride and professionalism.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION

The Division maintains the County Emergency Operations Center, which is a unique facility that provides a central command location for County emergency response and recovery efforts before, during, and after emergencies and disasters. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) operates under the National Incident Management System/Incident Command System/Emergency Support Function.

There are 21 individual Emergency Support Functions; each function oversees a critical service the county must continue to provide to its citizens, visitors, and businesses. The Emergency Support Functions are arranged into sections, which comply with National Incident Management System/ Incident Command System requirements. The Division assists with the logistics of disaster response and recovery operations with all



branches of government to ensure missions and resources are managed efficiently. Emergency Management identifies potential threats and designs a long-term plan to prevent damages to individuals and property. Mitigation activities include public outreach through the Alert Okaloosa warning system; shelter retrofits as funding becomes available, increasing shelter space available by working with other governmental agencies through new construction, and actively addressing mitigation issues through the Okaloosa County Local Mitigation Strategy Committee and identifying mitigation projects and funding opportunities to the committee.

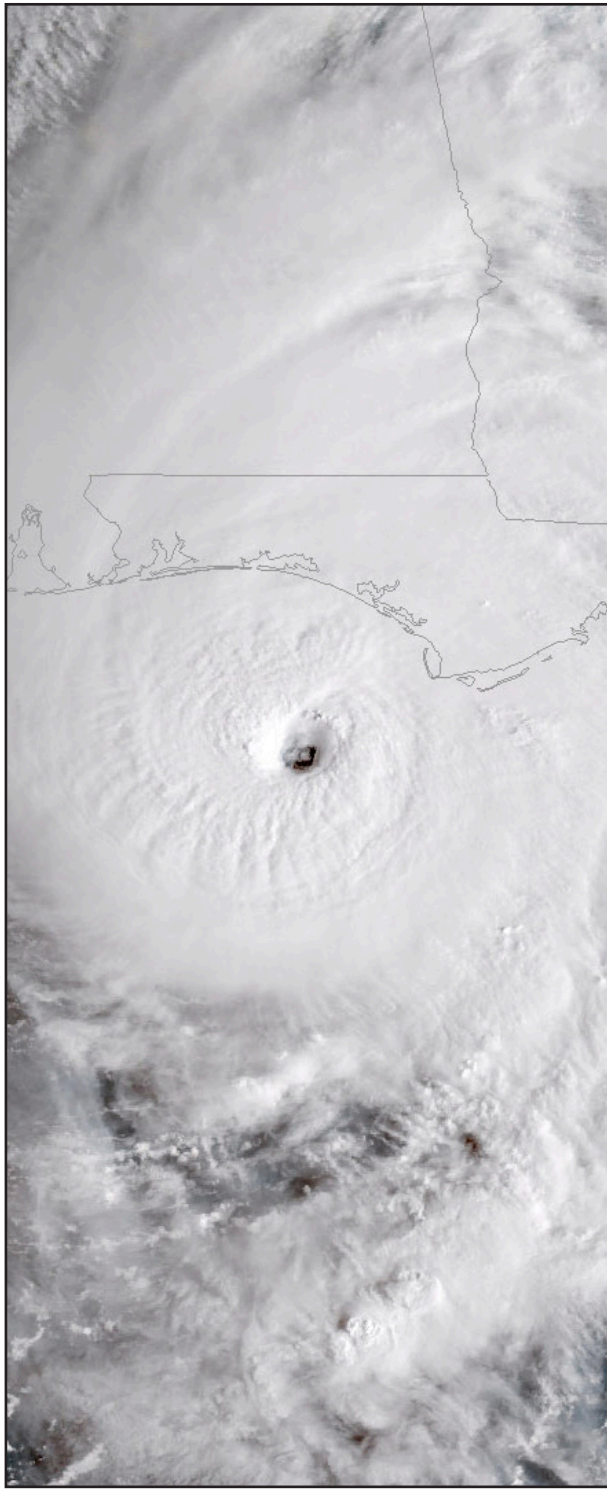
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Mitigation Strategy Committee and identifying mitigation projects and funding opportunities to the committee.

BEACH SAFETY

The Beach Lifeguard Program provides year-round lifeguard protection, preventative oversight, and heavy surf and rip current rescue services on the beaches and waterways of Okaloosa County, in accordance with Okaloosa County Parks and Recreation Ordinance No. 08-06. Division personnel raise and maintain the universal flag warning and signage system on Okaloosa County Beaches in coordination with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Beach Flag





Warning Program, as set forth in Section 380.276 F.S.S.

Beach Safety provides public education information to the citizens and visitors of Okaloosa County on the hazards that exist in the aquatic and marine environment. Lifeguards make presentations and provide safety briefings to civic organizations, military organizations, church groups, and others. Posters, information cards and pamphlets, and videos are printed and distributed to local schools and universities during safety presentations conducted by senior lifeguard staff members.

The Swift Water and Flood Rescue program focuses on early warning, evacuation, and rescue of victims and potential victims of rising floodwaters resulting from severe weather events in Okaloosa County. Team members provide technical rescue services in shore-based, boat-based, and in-water situations, as well as special situations around dams, vehicles, and high-angle areas. The team is also deployable on a regional scale and can be mobilized to respond to disasters in surrounding counties on short notice.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DIVISION

The EMS Division operates 12 Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support ambulances stationed throughout Okaloosa County that respond to emergency calls and transport patients to appropriate medical facilities.



Major Accomplishments

The County's plan for how we deal with pandemics, specifically influenza and COVID-19 was updated during the height of the pandemic.

Public Safety was instrumental to the citizens of Okaloosa County during Hurricane Sally and subsequent storms that included acquiring assistance from FDEM and FEMA and coordinating Response and Recovery while limiting costs to the County.

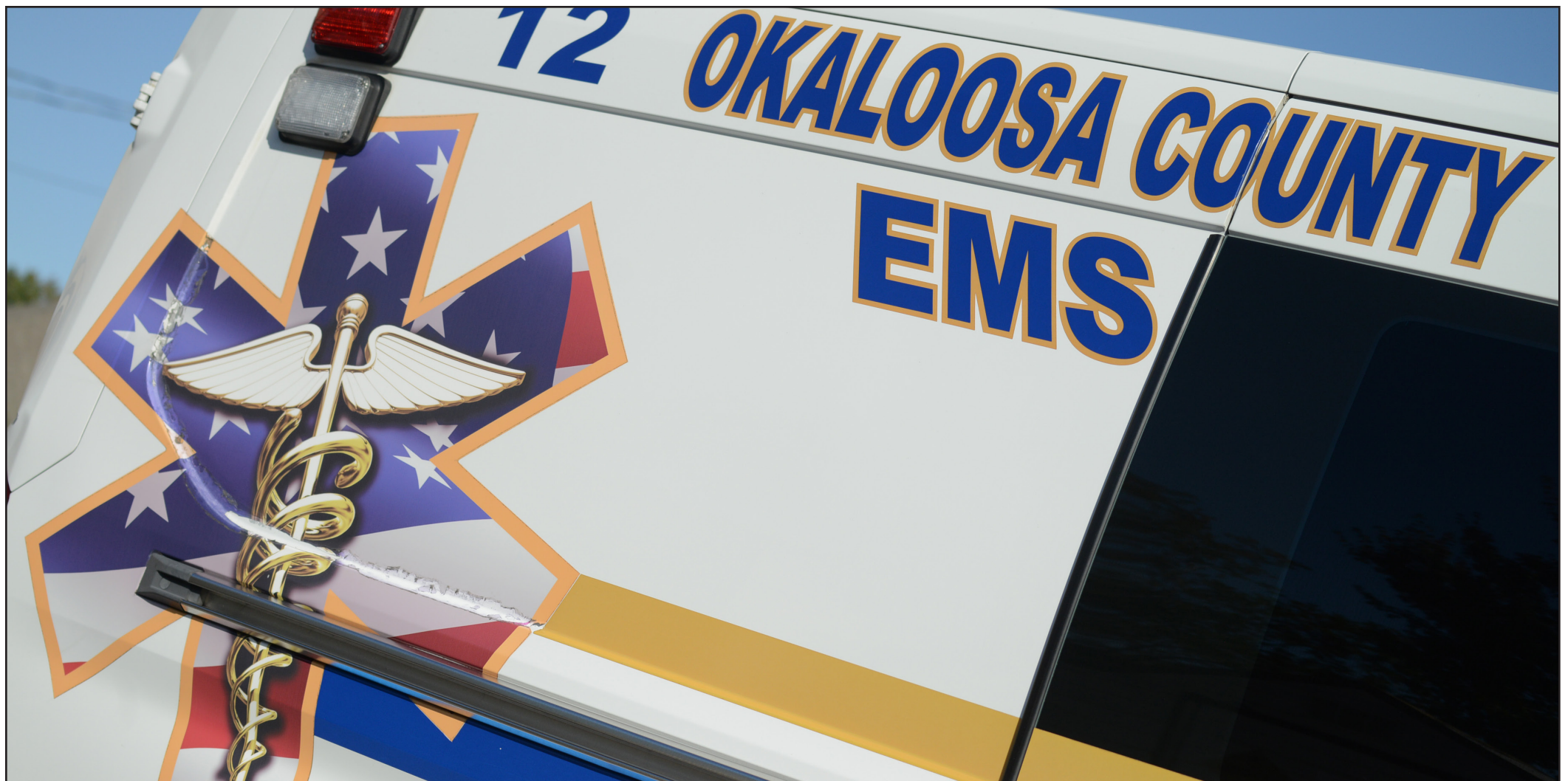
Beach Safety lifeguards conducted over 780,000 documented preventative actions and performed 31 rip current and heavy surf rescues. Additionally, they responded to 56 reports of lost children and 121 medical calls as they continued to increase efficiency and effectiveness of lifeguard operations through the use of the Main Lifeguard Tower on the Okaloosa Pier. Beach Safety reached over 5,000 seasonal visiting youth with the preventative care program, "Buddy on the Beach".

Public Safety coordinated with FEMA, the CDC, HHS and FDEM to secure medical supplies and PPE items during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, coordinated vaccine distribution planning with the State, County and DOH personnel to ensure the widest opportunity for residents to be vaccinated.

EMS specifically, partnered with Florida Department of Health Okaloosa for COVID-19 response, administered vaccinations to eligible recipients as well as at-risk populations through home-bound outreach, a type of community paramedicine.

EMS responded to 30,555 requests for ambulance transport. They were also awarded the American Heart Association's Mission Lifeline: Gold Plus Award for Excellence in out-of-hospital cardiac care, having an in-field Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) rates of 26.8% for cardiac arrest patients.

Further, Okaloosa County EMS renewed their international accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS), receiving a flawless review and obtaining a special commendation for excellence.



RISK MANAGEMENT

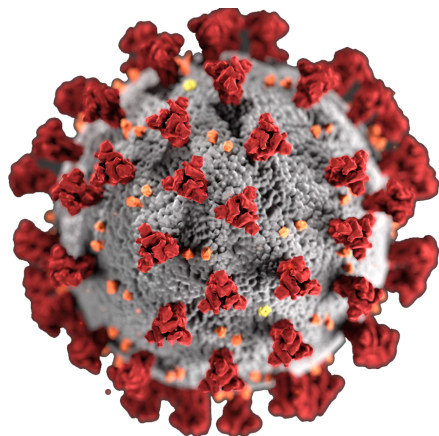


Kelly Bird
Director of Risk Management

The Risk Management Department is responsible for the safety of employees, the conservation of physical and financial assets of the Board of County Commissioners, Clerk of Court, the Tax Collector, the Property Appraiser, and the Supervisor of Elections.

Major activities include administration of the self-insurance fund; including general liability, workers compensation, auto and property insurance, the employee benefits program, contract review, public record request, safety program, and claims management. In addition, the department serves as the coordinator of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for the County.

The goal is to provide professional support in areas of employee health, wellness and safety while protecting County assets through aggressive workers compensation, property, auto, and general liability claims management.



Major Accomplishments

Risk Management was primarily responsible for COVID-19 tracing of County Employees and reporting to the Department of Health.

Staff created a process for tracking and reporting Administrative COVID-related leave for both payroll and reimbursement purposes.

With IT assistance, a secure portal for employees to submit benefits documents was created. A virtual Benefits Fairground with educational benefit resources was created so that employees could safely access during the Covid Pandemic.

County employees were successfully enrolled for benefits using zoom and one-on-one meetings in the absence of the traditional Benefit Fairs.

A Safety Training program was initiated for County Departments with kiosk computers being set up in field offices.

Additional training for County employees on Workers Compensation, Public Records and Certificates of Insurance was provided.

TRANSIT



Tyrone Parker
Director of Transit

The Transit Division, operating under Coordinated Transportation, serves as the Community Transportation Coordinator as required by Section 427.011 of the Florida Statutes and manages more than \$8.7 Million in State and Federal Grants Funds through which both paratransit and fixed-route services are provided.

The Division is funded with General Funds with salary supported by State and Federal grants. Revenue for transit operations is obtained through fare collections, contracted services, and transit advertising. Funding for transit operations is subsidized by the Federal Transit Administration, Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Commission for the Transportation Trust Fund, Medicaid, and matching local dollars.



The goal of the Transit and Grants Section is to maximize the procurement and use of state, federal and other grants in order to:

1. Provide the most affordable public transportation to citizens of Okaloosa County through the most economical offering fixed route and paratransit services.
2. Transition eligible paratransit users from demand response service to fixed-route service and operation.
3. Reduce General Fund contribution allocated to public transportation.
4. Supplement County funds used for infrastructure.
5. Provide grant administration assistance to other County Departments and Agencies.



Major Accomplishments

Okaloosa County BCC adopted (PTASP) Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for its public transit provider EC RIDER, as required by (FTA) Federal Transit Administration and (FDOT) Florida Department of Transportation.

Okaloosa County Transit - EC RIDER and its Transportation Management Contractor (MV Transportation) implemented safety protocols and procedures, along with revisions to requirements for Bus Operators, Passengers, and Customers for Transit Operations, as it relates to fixed route and paratransit services during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

They also replaced and procured new



electronic farebox and data system for its Fixed Route Service and Operations.

The Transit Division acquired (3) three Fixed Route Vehicle under a FFY2020 FDOT 5339 Rural NOGA Capital Award and applied for eligible grant funding under the ARP and CRSSA allocation through (FDOT) Florida Department of Transportation, for continued transit-related expenditures in combating COVID-19 and the Delta Variant, Operations, and Capital Projects.

Additionally, they provided over 53,000 fixed route passenger trips and over 40,800 in paratransit/door-to-door passenger trips, while operating under 50% loading capacity during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Okaloosa County Transit Fleet Maintenance retrofits existing fixed-route and paratransit vehicle fleet to include the installation of driver safety barriers and sanitizing units, to assist with the enforcement of safety measures and protocols relating to COVID-19.



TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



Jennifer Adams
Director of Tourism Development

Okaloosa County was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 but saw a rebound, breaking records in revenue and occupancy in 2021. After much collaboration with 9 municipalities regarding a proposed countywide tourism development district expansion referendum, an interlocal agreement was approved.

Eligible voters were presented with the opportunity to vote on the countywide expansion of the tourism development district; and on October 5, 2021, past election data indicated that each of the eligible precincts across the county had approved the expansion.

Tourism Development Taxes are also known as 'Bed Taxes' and are funded solely by visitors staying in overnight lodging accommodations.

Unlike a sales tax, which is levied on a variety of goods and services, the tourist development 5% tax is collected from the visitor by short-term rental providers only such as hoteliers, vacation rental management companies, campgrounds, even self-managed properties listed through online booking agents such as Vrbo and Airbnb. Overnight guests remit their tourism tax, in addition to sales tax on their accommodations.



Beaches and parks maintenance and improvements are funded by the 1st cent of the Tourist Development Tax on short-term rentals. Projects include maintenance, restoration, and improvements of beaches and beach facilities; maintenance and improvements of waterfront parks within the taxing district; and support for an artificial reef program and ecotourism opportunities.

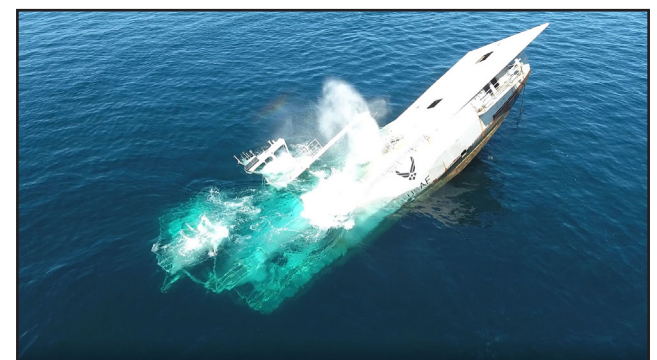
Lifeguard, public safety, and public facilities capital improvement are funded by the 2nd cent of the Tourist Development Tax on short-term rentals.

The Convention Center is funded by the 3rd cent of the Tourist Development Tax on short-term rentals, as well as by revenues generated by functions held at the convention center. The Destin-Fort Walton Beach Convention Center (DFWBCC) provides professional services, unique food and beverage, and a safe, clean and well-maintained facility for meetings, conventions, trade shows, public entertainment and special event activities.

Marketing is funded by the 4th and 5th cents of the Tourist Development Tax on short-term rentals.

Goals include:

- 1) Reintroduce Destin-Fort Walton Beach as the place that gets kids outside on the water to give their adventurous side room to grow and change perception with branding and promotion.
- 2) Create a more personal, connected experience for families in Destin-Fort Walton Beach through destination stewardship initiatives.
- 3) Be a shared community asset for both the tourism industry and residents of Destin-Fort Walton Beach, Florida.



Major Accomplishments

The TDD conducted post-Hurricane Sally Beach surveys on Okaloosa Island and Destin beaches and provided environmental monitoring throughout the year including sea turtle surveys and red tide monitoring.

They also deployed eight Fish Aggregating Devices Buoys 60-80 miles offshore in addition to 62 artificial reefs, for two patch reef complexes. In addition, the TDD was able to deploy a 93-foot vessel BID DAWG, donated to the County by the U.S. Air Force as well as another donated vessel the BRANNON.

The TDD also deployed 325 piling-mounted artificial reefs to create four snorkel reefs. Two on Okaloosa Island and two in Destin. The project was 100% funded by RESTORE.

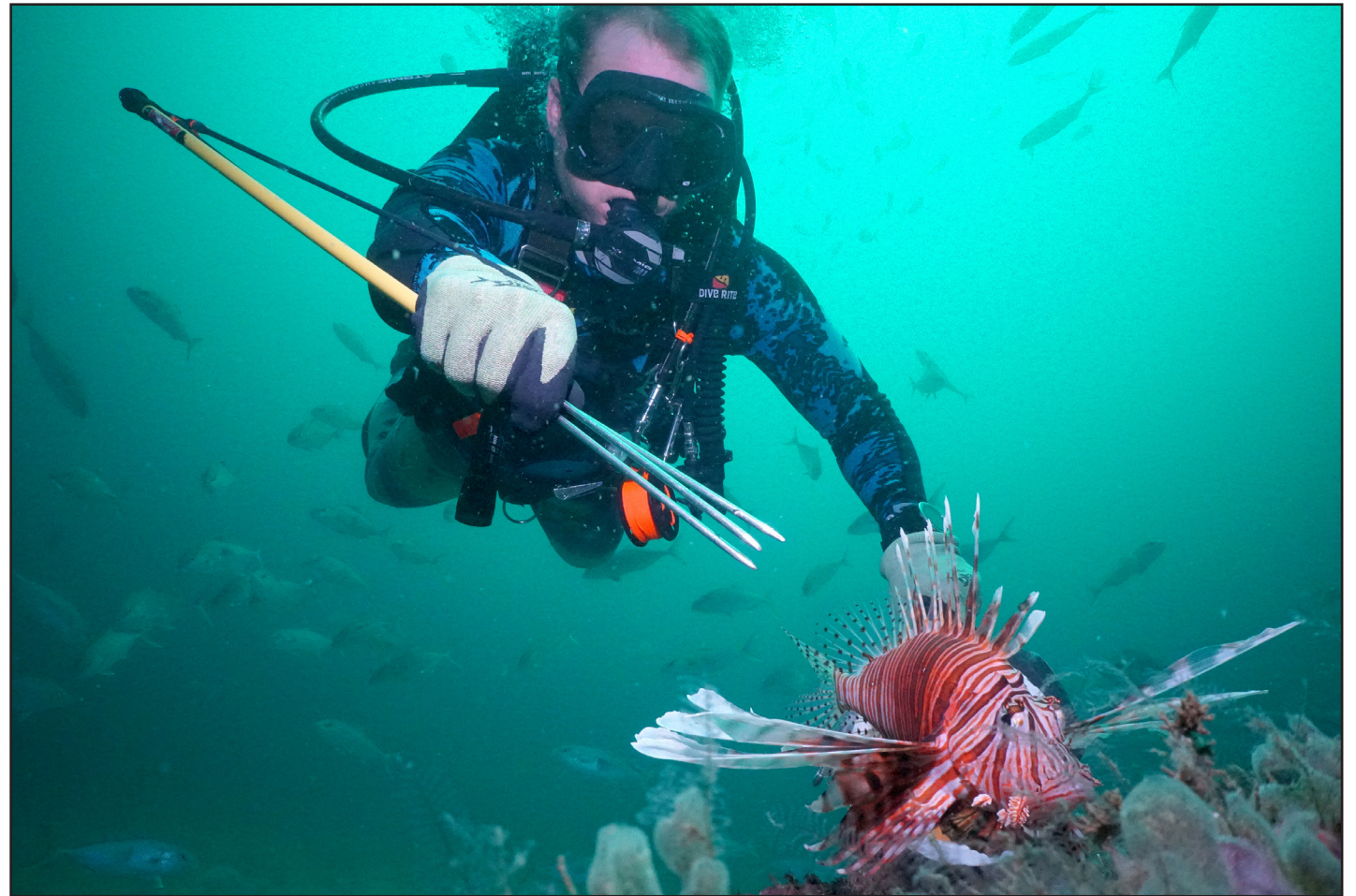
The Department contributed to numerous documentaries and shows lead by CNN, Discovery Channel, National Geographic, and Outdoor Channel.

The Convention Center Exterior Accessibility project is 80% complete and Restroom/HVAC plans are completed and awarded. The anticipated start date is December 2021.

Participated in annual destination marketing conferences to create awareness of Northwest Florida for attracting group business and assess the prospect of hosting new business, including CMCA, a conference which DFWBCC will host in 2022. The Convention Center successfully hosted many large-scale events under Covid-19 protocols and won new business while most similar venues were unable to open.

Tourist Development Marketing completed stage 2 pilot of Adventure Pack program under Destination Stewardship, increasing pack offerings from four adventures packs in stage 1 to 11 in stage 2.

Introduced online chat on destinfb.com,



operated by local moms, resulting in nearly 3,500 chats. Additionally, the department implemented a standalone Wayfinder Outpost at Shores of Crystal Beach access. Includes the contract hiring of seven Wayfinder Scouts, as well as the launch of three pop-up lessons resulting in 25 classes and 121 kids introduced to water adventures including fishing, paddle boarding and snorkeling.

The TDD successfully completed first full paid media campaign under new Destin-Fort Walton Beach brand and saw a 113% growth in engagement, a 96% increase in video views, and a 5% growth in impressions across all platforms. Ultimately, visitation from Key Markets increased by 30% over 2019.

The department fostered national, regional, and local media initiatives through active and reactive pitching and secured

coverage in notable publications such as The Wall Street Journal, Travel + Leisure, MSN, Yahoo, TripSavvy. Additionally, the TDD Developed and launched their first paid influencer campaign and hosted 9 influencers from a 150+ mile radius and regional key markets with partner participation and contracted coverage.



VETERAN SERVICES



Beatrice Love-Moore
Director of Veteran Services

The Department of Veteran Services was created by the Board of County Commissioners to assist Okaloosa County Veterans, their dependents and survivors in accessing and obtaining federal, state, local benefits with professional and courteous service which will improve their quality of life.

Veteran citizens and their survivors require a high level of individual hands-on care by the County Veteran Service Officers and Veterans' Counselors who act as an advocate in order to locate and access federal resources that are based on complex and ever-changing policies and procedures.

The primary focus of the Division of Veterans Affairs is to ensure the needs of our community Veterans and their survivors are addressed and they are honored for their service to our country. Key objectives include:

1. To effectively and efficiently respond to all client requests
2. Serve all veterans/dependents including shut-ins, assisted care facilities, incarcerated & homeless veterans
3. To maintain an acceptable dollar return to the County from claims submitted for Federal and State benefits
4. Maintain client support and ensure critical needs are met



Major Accomplishments

The department responded to and assisted a total of 7,085 Veterans and/or their dependents seeking various VA benefits as well as verified information and/or documentation to the Property Appraisals Office for 175 Veterans and/or their beneficiaries in obtaining appropriate Property Tax Exemptions.

Various VA informational briefings throughout the County & military installations were conducted to include quarterly VA Women Briefings and a Q&A VA Podcast phone interview with our local EOD Warrior Foundation Representatives.

Veteran Services also interviewed 63 Veterans at the Annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down, 5 received follow-up assistance. The department also assisted a large number of surviving spouses and other beneficiaries with DoD and OPM Federal benefits.



WATER & SEWER



Jeff Litrell
Director of Water & Sewer

Okaloosa County's Water and Sewer Department is a professional, community organization providing the customers of Okaloosa County an ample and affordable supply of clean, safe drinking water, with a commitment to collecting and disposing of domestic waste in a manner that protects the environmental future of our county. The department services tens of thousands of residents, most living south of Eglin Air Force Base.

This department is an enterprise fund and receives revenue through monthly customer billings, capacity expansion charges and related ancillary charges for use of both the Water and Sewer systems within the Okaloosa County Water and Sewer service area. The fund's customer base is currently in excess of 40,500 water service and 37,200 sewer service connections including both residential and commercial.

Maintaining 24/7 standby coverage, the department is responsible for protecting public health through the provision of sanitary sewers for wastewater collection (lift stations), treatment plants, and effluent disposal. Additionally, it is responsible for protecting the environment by preventing the introduction of pathogens and excess nutrients into the ground and surface waters.



STATS

Water and Sewer repairs, maintains and monitors:

- 21 wells
- 17 elevated tanks
- 3 ground storage tanks
- 4 booster stations
- 518 miles of water distribution mains,
- 42 miles of water service lines
- 2,463 fire hydrants
- 155 lift stations
- 21 potable water wells
- 20 tanks
- 512 miles of water distribution mains
- 63 miles of water service lines
- 445 miles of sewer mains
- 114 miles of sewer service lines
- 5,516 manholes



Major Accomplishments

The Water and Sewer Department was able to rehabilitate gravity sewers made of clay by using cured-in place-piping that reduces infiltration, exfiltration and root intrusion; thus, lessening the risk of blockages, backups, and sanitary sewer overflows.

Additionally, they were able to improve, rehabilitate or create lift stations and water mains at various locations around the County.

Construction began on the Okaloosa County/Niceville/Eglin AFB reclaimed water project with a total cost of \$11 million for 11 miles of pipeline. Money was also awarded in the amount of \$2.5 million from the Florida Water Management District for the project.

With many lessons learned from Hurricane Sally, the department began moving forward with numerous resiliency initiatives. In addition to gravity sewer rehab and redundant alarm systems being added, generators and by-pass pumps were purchased (and more are in the planning stage) and the Clifford Street Lift Station – the largest and most vulnerable in the Fort Walton Beach area – underwent numerous upgrades.

In the Crestview area, with Triumph Gulf Coast funding, in-house staff completed the installation of water and sewer mains along Highway 90 East to Jericho Road. This project expands water and sewer availability to a portion of the County being primed for industrial and residential development. A new master lift station was also constructed within the new Shoal River Landing subdivision; it will take all existing wastewater south of Hwy 90, plus new development of 1000+ homes, just north and south of Interstate 10.

Okaloosa County Water and Sewer's customer service continued to provide multiple options for payment of utility bills; including free online and phone payments while maintaining a low level of bad debt write-offs.

Numerous infrastructure and staffing challenges occurred throughout the year such as water main breaks, and communication outages due to unique circumstances.

The department performed more than 4,000 wastewater sample tests, tested in excess of 456 water samples from monitoring wells and more than 2,000 tests in both bacteriological and quality on County drinking water samples.



OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET



Faye Douglas

Director of Office of Management and Budget

The office of Management and Budget (OMB) is a department which reviews all financial matters managed by the County.

The department is split into three divisions:

- The Office of Management and Budget
- The Grants Division
- The Purchasing Department

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

The Office of Management and Budget is the function of the County government that enables all departments to function. It helps departments compile their annual budget for review and approval by the County administrator.

GRANTS

The Grants Division allows taxpayers to pay less in local taxes by winning awards for needed County projects. The division's team members work with precision and in an exacting manner to ensure every grant is accurate. They assist in writing grants specific to each department in coordination with department heads.

PURCHASING

The Purchasing Division ensures that Okaloosa County employees are equipped with items necessary for them to complete their job in an efficient manner. The division handles all requisitions, contracts and bidding solicitations.

Category	FY 2021	FY 2022	CHANGE
Personnel	\$797,712	\$883,822	\$86,110
Operating Expenses	\$69,456	\$69,984	\$462
Capital Outlay	0	0	0
TOTAL	\$867,168	\$952,786	\$85,618

Major Accomplishments

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) was able to manage grant awards in the amount of \$215 million, an increase of \$7 million from the prior year.

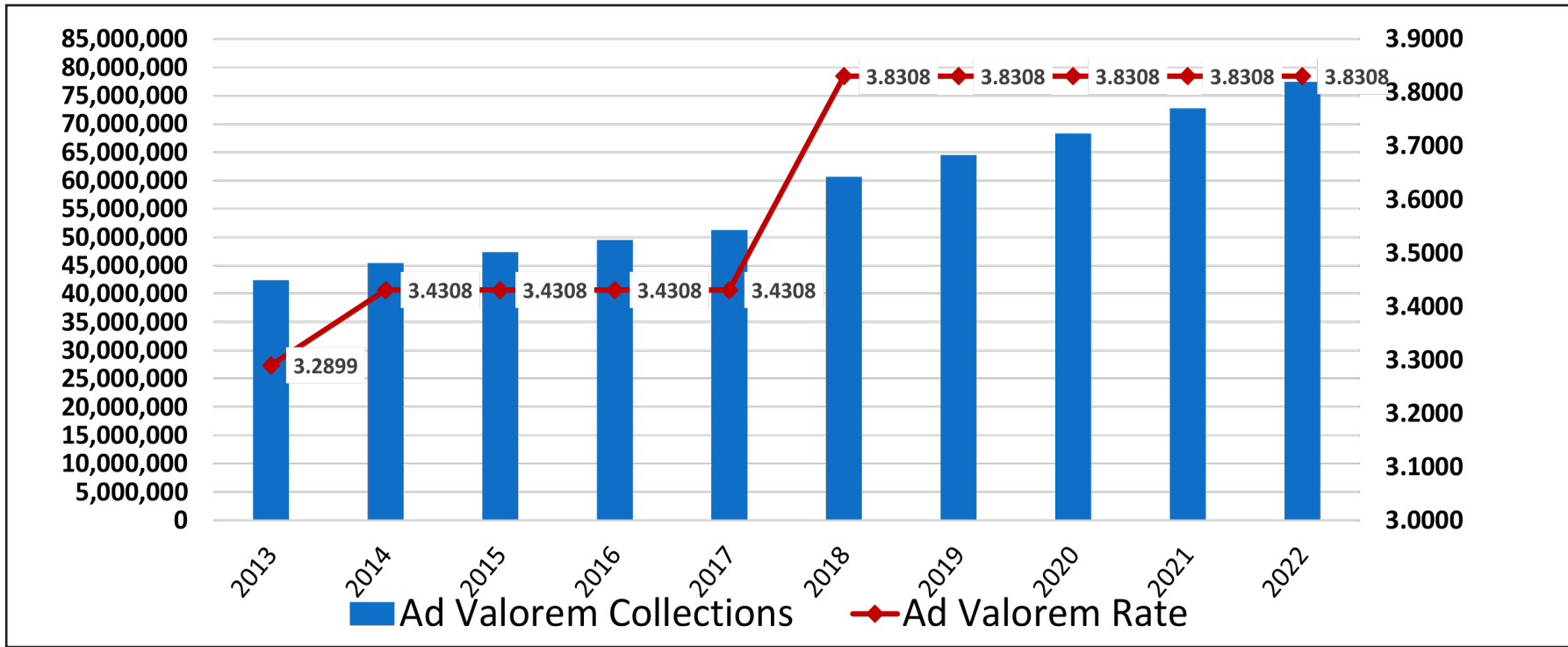
OMB also managed County's COVID grant in the amount of \$36.7 million as well as managing the County's Non-Profit Grant program that provides funding to eligible non-profit programs. In FY 2021, ten agency requests were approved for a total of \$242,125.

The department submitted the first reimbursement report to Triumph Gulf Coast for the Southwest Crestview Bypass project, a grant totaling \$64.1 million.

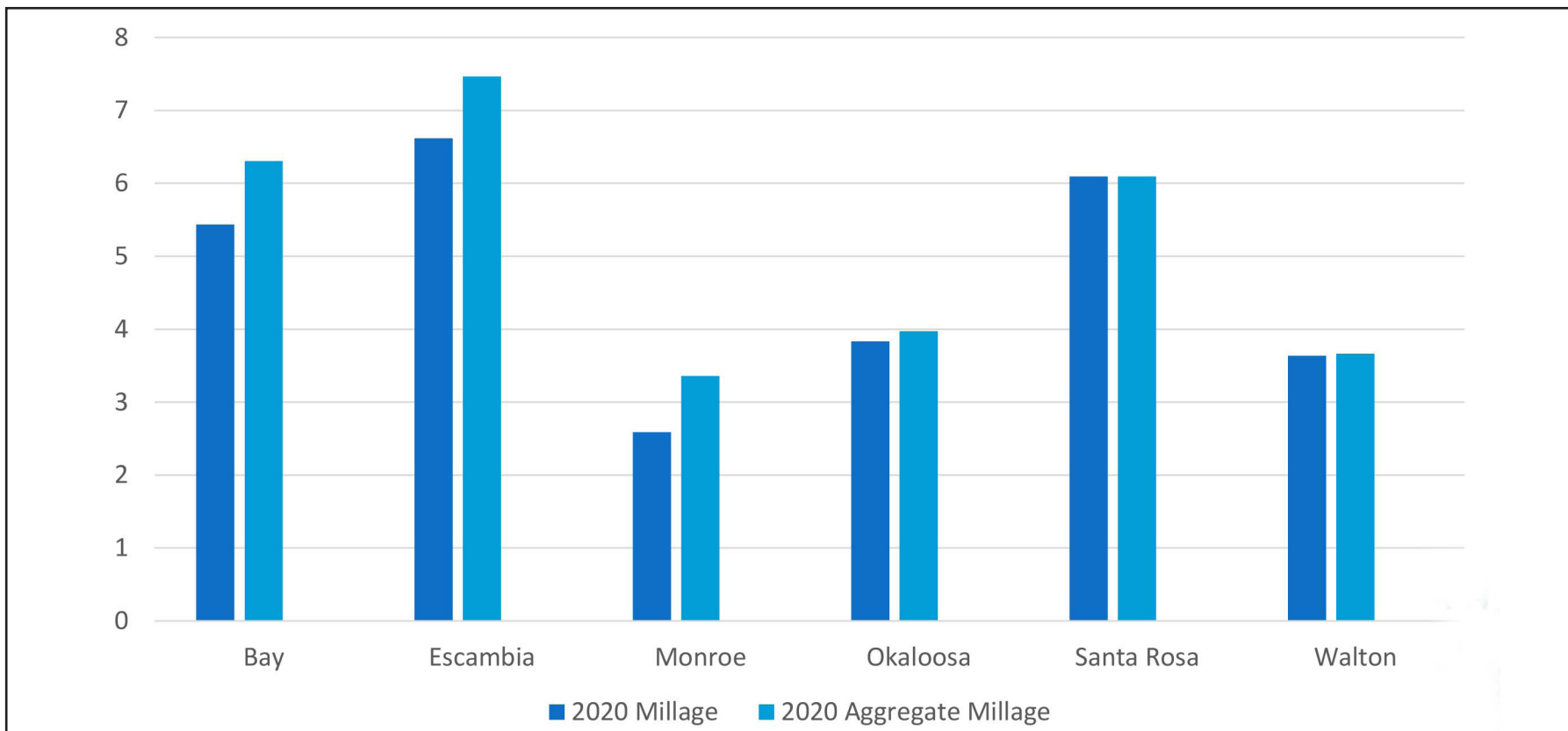
OMB Completed closeout of design award for the Jerry D Mitchem Water Reclamation Facility effluent disposal expansion, applied to the RESTORE Council for construction and submitted the RESTORE application for Veteran's Park Living Shoreline with co-funding by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Tourist Development Department.

Other notable accomplishments include managing the reimbursement process for Hurricane Sally, processed purchasing dollar volume of \$12,721,864 and managing the Purchasing Card Program along with the continued utilization of "e-payables." Total card purchase dollar amount of \$5,885,571, an increase of 8% over the prior year. This has again resulted in the largest rebate check to date, \$84,645.

Ad Valorem Collections and Rate History



Countywide Aggregate Millage Comparison

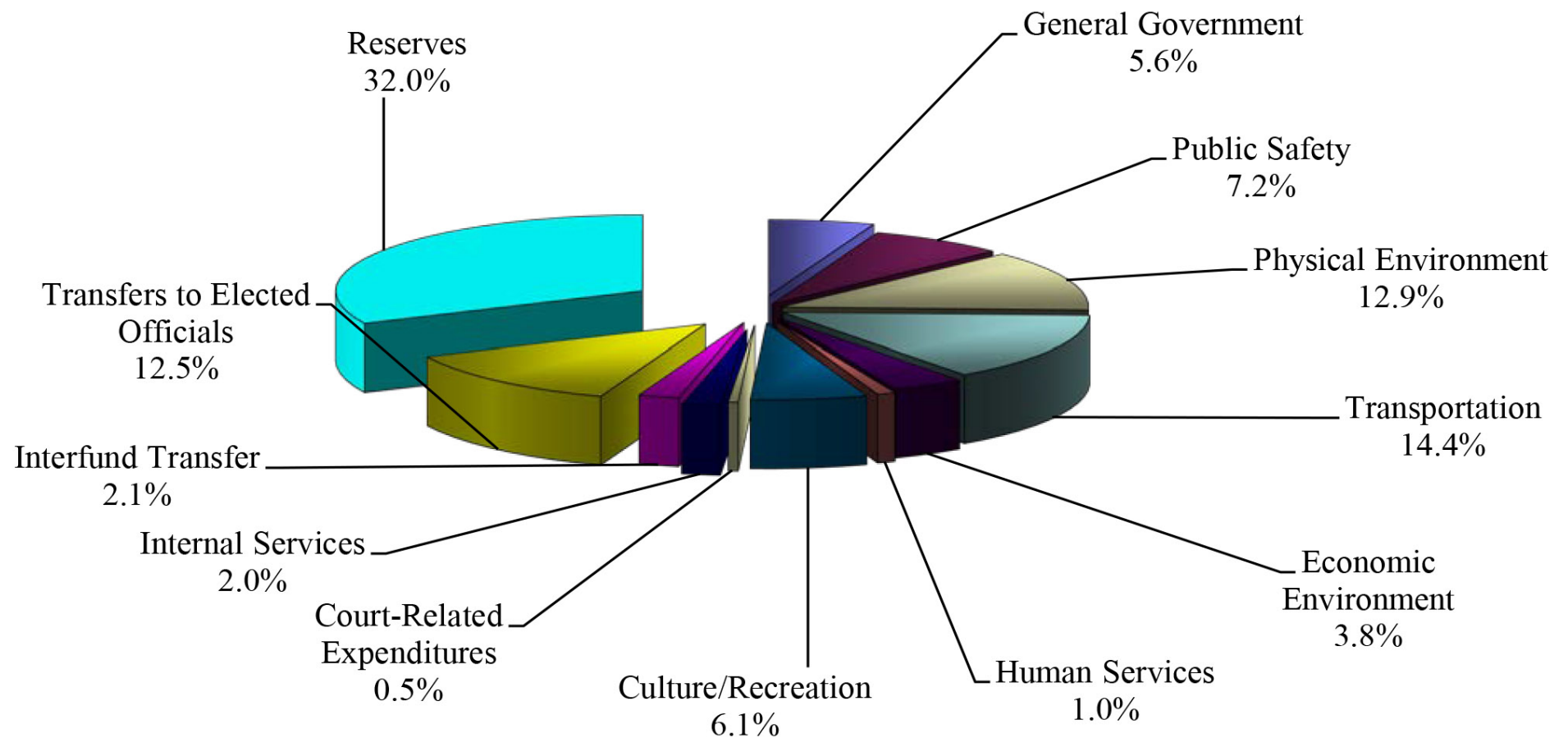


General Fund Cost Drivers

**TOTAL NUMBER OF
EMPLOYEES:
960 (+25 over FY 2021)**

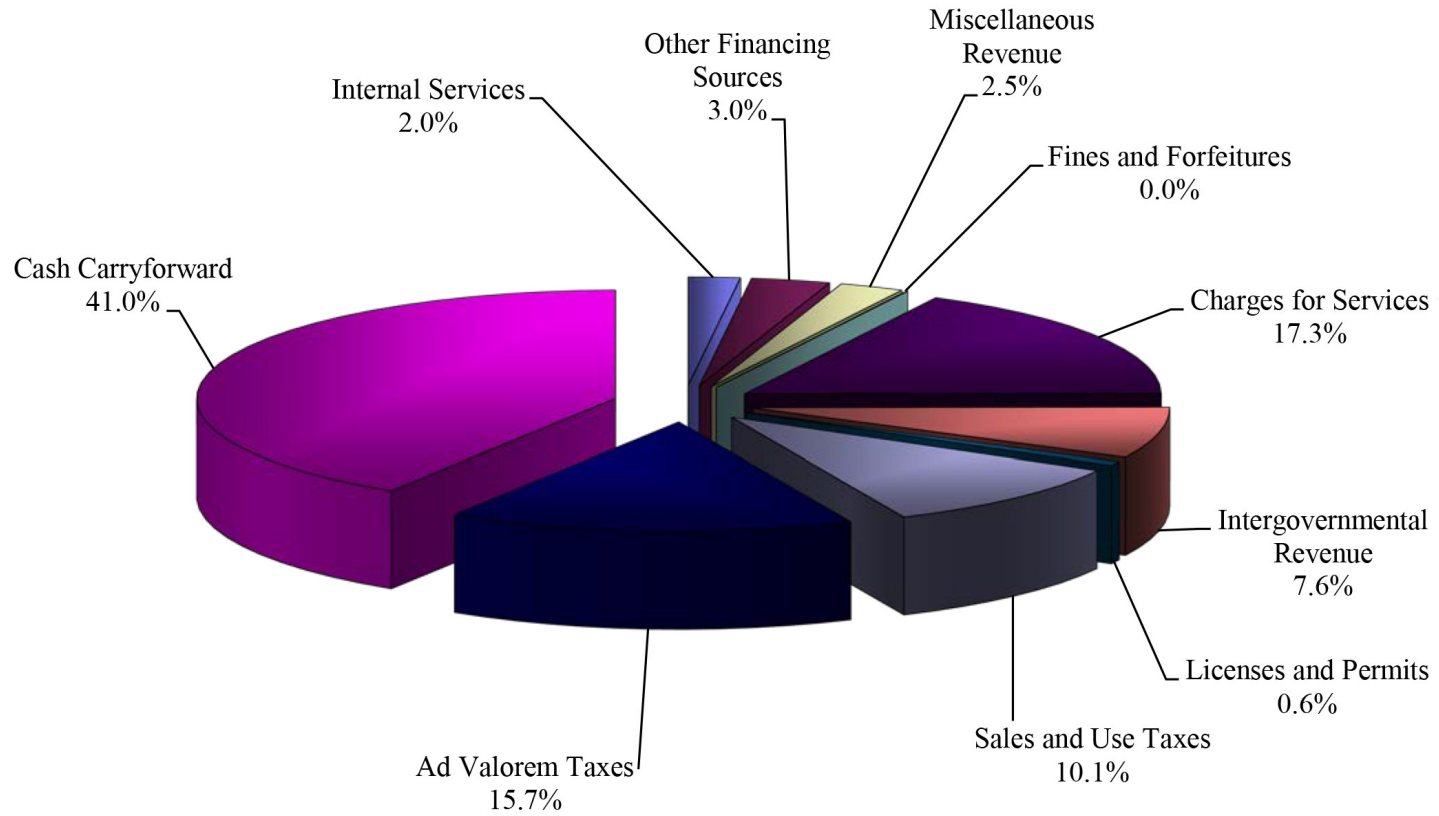
Category	2021 Budget	2022 Budget	Difference
Personnel Costs	\$22,127,890	\$26,134,333	\$4,006,443
Operating Costs	\$20,391,340	\$22,707,754	\$2,316,414
Capital Costs	\$1,129,213	\$1,249,866	\$120,653
General Services - CRA's	\$3,003,096	\$3,239,082	\$235,986
Library Cooperative Payments	\$514,456	\$540,179	\$25,723
Aid to Others	\$247,500	\$247,500	\$0
Constitutionals	\$57,229,901	\$63,189,486	\$5,959,585

FISCAL YEAR 2021-22 EXPENDITURES BY FUNCTION TOTAL: \$511,420,706



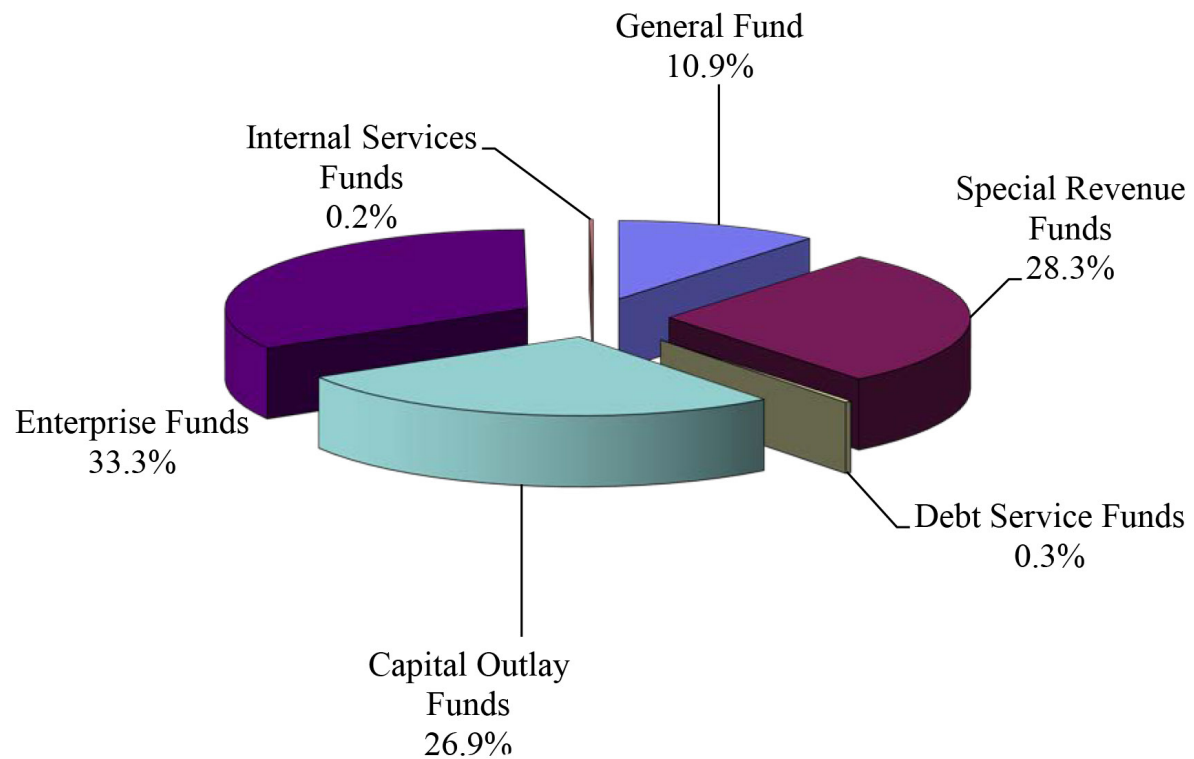
REVENUE OVERVIEW BY FUND (FY 2021-22)

Total by source: \$511,420,706











CASH CARRYFORWARD BY FUND TYPE






TOTAL: \$209,794,453












BUDGET COMPARISION - FISCAL YEARS 2021 AND 2022






Board of County Commissioners	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$797,712	\$883,822	\$86,110
 Operating Expenses	\$69,456	\$68,964	-\$492
 Capital Outlay	0	0	0
 TOTAL	\$867,168	\$952,786	\$85,618
EMPLOYEES: 8			






County Administrator	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$680,775	\$948,051	\$267,276
 Operating Expenses	\$66,878	\$82,788	\$15,910
 Capital Outlay	0	0	0
 TOTAL	\$747,653	\$1,030,839	\$283,186
EMPLOYEES: 7			





Water and Sewer	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$9,902,643	\$10,981,872	\$1,079,229
 Operating Expenses	\$11,269,60	\$11,644,407	\$374,797
 Capital Outlay	\$12,456,400	\$21,424,700	\$8,968,300
 Other Uses	\$41,296,628	\$36,024,956	-\$5,271,672
 TOTAL	\$74,925,281	\$80,075,935	\$5,150,654
EMPLOYEES: 140			






Agriculture Extension	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$344,499	\$401,854	\$57,355
 Operating Expenses	\$54,867	\$58,408	\$3,541
 Capital Outlay	0	\$8,000	\$8,000
 TOTAL	\$399,366	\$468,262	\$68,896
EMPLOYEES: 10			






Corrections	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$10,210,974	\$11,697,595	\$1,486,621
 Operating Expenses	\$6,336,675	\$6,540,393	\$203,718
 Capital Outlay	\$252,900	\$136,700	-\$116,200
 Other Uses	\$398,500	\$1,043,487	\$644,987
 TOTAL	\$17,199,049	\$19,418,175	\$2,219,126
EMPLOYEES: 142			





Airport	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$2,612,223	\$3,049,527	\$437,304
 Operating Expenses	\$7,508,266	\$9,573,940	\$2,065,674
 Capital Outlay	\$10,240,407	\$4,647,218	-\$5,593,189
 Other Uses	\$21,659,839	\$31,961,337	\$10,301,498
 TOTAL	\$42,020,735	\$49,232,022	\$7,211,287
EMPLOYEES: 40			





Facility Maintenance & Parks	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$4,405,731	\$5,079,033	\$673,302
 Operating Expenses	\$3,097,313	\$3,069,346	-\$27,967
 Capital Outlay	\$1,966,510	\$2,469,920	\$503,410
 Other Uses	\$2,146,960	\$1,478,266	-\$668,694
 TOTAL	\$11,616,514	\$12,096,565	\$480,051
EMPLOYEES: 82			






Human Resources	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$686,966	\$812,396	\$125,430
 Operating Expenses	\$77,986	\$75,535	-\$2,451
 Capital Outlay	0	0	0
 TOTAL	\$764,952	\$887,931	\$122,979
EMPLOYEES: 10			






Growth Management	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$2,547,107	\$3,091,925	\$544,818
 Operating Expenses	\$1,186,384	\$914,765	-\$271,619
 Capital Outlay	\$40,700	\$105,000	\$64,300
 Other Uses	\$1,391,987	\$1,753,200	\$361,213
 TOTAL	\$5,166,178	\$5,864,890	\$698,712
EMPLOYEES: 39			






Library Cooperative	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$101,468	\$108,926	\$7,458
 Operating Expenses	\$118,406	\$208,328	\$89,922
 Capital Outlay	0	0	0
 Other Uses	\$514,456	\$540,179	\$25,723
 TOTAL	\$734,330	\$857,433	\$123,103
EMPLOYEES: 1			






Information Technology	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$2,107,788	\$2,437,335	\$329,547
 Operating Expenses	\$729,664	\$1,039,977	\$310,313
 Capital Outlay	\$589,098	\$378,400	-\$210,698
 TOTAL	\$3,426,550	\$3,855,712	\$429,162
EMPLOYEES: 29			





Office of Management & Budget	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$1,038,269	\$1,123,207	\$84,938
 Operating Expenses	\$111,129	\$121,503	\$10,374
 Capital Outlay	0	0	0
 TOTAL	\$1,149,398	\$1,244,710	\$95,312
EMPLOYEES: 14			





Public Safety	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$8,647,599	\$9,313,245	\$665,646
 Operating Expenses	\$2,481,217	\$2,641,477	\$160,260
 Capital Outlay	\$321,000	\$345,680	\$24,680
 Other Uses	\$2,307,000	\$2,913,239	\$606,239
 TOTAL	\$13,756,816	\$15,213,641	\$1,456,825
EMPLOYEES: 179			

Public Works	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	10,964,655	\$11,865,574	\$900,919
 Operating Expenses	\$19,992,460	\$19,731,663	-\$260,797
 Capital Outlay	\$43,869,780	\$46,961,110	\$3,091,330
 Other Uses	\$19,014,597	\$46,237,232	\$27,222,635
 TOTAL	\$93,841,492	\$124,795,579	\$30,954,087
EMPLOYEES: 172			

Risk Management	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$2,095,752	\$2,520,726	\$424,974
 Operating Expenses	\$2,633,164	\$2,775,048	\$141,884
 Capital Outlay	\$1,000	0	-\$1,000
 Other Uses	\$639,731	\$423,301	-\$216,430
 TOTAL	\$5,369,647	\$5,719,075	\$349,428
EMPLOYEES: 5			

Tourist Development	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$3,174,500	\$3,241,910	\$67,410
 Operating Expenses	\$15,711,548	\$14,874,956	-\$836,592
 Capital Outlay	\$7,878,410	\$9,015,797	\$1,137,387
 Other Uses	\$45,644,243	\$44,591,937	-\$1,052,306
 TOTAL	\$72,408,701	\$71,724,600	-\$684,101
EMPLOYEES: 50			

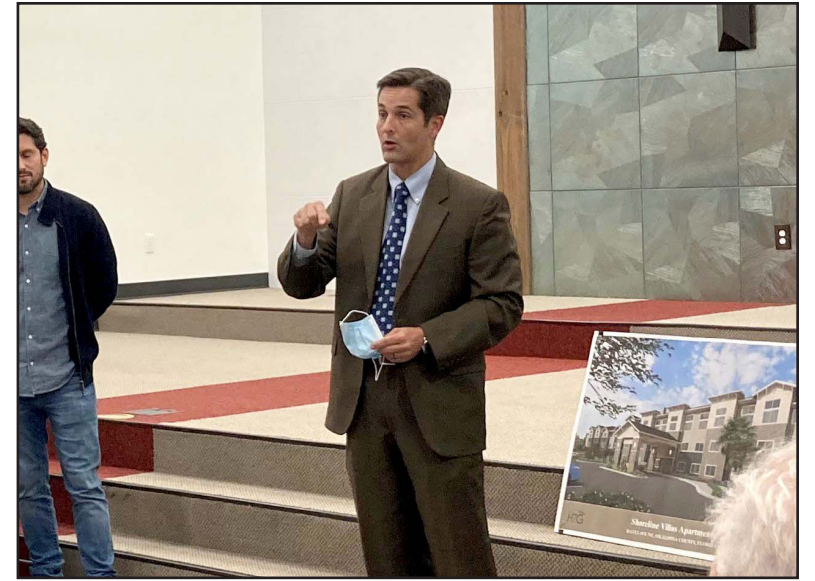
Transit	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$13,989	\$16,923	\$2,934
 Operating Expenses	\$99,527	\$74,612	-\$24,915
 Capital Outlay	0	\$29,327	\$29,327
 TOTAL	\$85,538	\$87,016	\$1,478
EMPLOYEES: 9			

Veteran Services	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Personnel	\$184,182	\$258,147	\$73,965
 Operating Expenses	\$11,837	\$12,826	\$989
 Capital Outlay	0	0	0
 TOTAL	\$196,019	\$270,973	\$74,954
EMPLOYEES: 4			

County Attorney	FY 2021	FY2022	CHANGE
 Operating Expenses	\$530,500	\$620,500	\$90,000



Chairman Carolyn Ketchel speaks during a ceremony at Coast Guard Station Destin.



Commissioner Trey Goodwin speaks to community members from Northgate and Sylvania Heights.



Commissioner Nathan Boyles speaks at the Phase V Bypass groundbreaking ceremony.



Commissioner Paul Mixon poses at the Library Co-op's Career Online High School graduation.



Commissioner Mel Ponder poses with members of the Student Leadership Council.



PRODUCED BY

OKALOOSA COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION

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