

CHAPTER 8 (9J-5.019)

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Section 8.01 Purpose: The purpose of this Chapter (element) is to establish the desired and projected transportation system within Niceville and to plan for future motorized and non-motorized traffic circulation systems. Future traffic circulation systems are supported by the goals, objectives and policies of this element and are depicted on the Traffic Circulation Maps (Figures 8-1 and 8-2) which are incorporated herein by reference.

Section 8.02 Data and Analysis: This Chapter (element) is based upon data and analysis requirements pursuant to Subsections 9J-5.005, F.A.C. and 9J-5.019, F.A.C. (reference Sections 5.03, 5.06 and 5.07 of this Ordinance and Chapter 5 of the Foundation Documents).

Section 8.03 Mass Transit, Aviation and Deep Water Ports: Not applicable. There is no mass transit system within the City of Niceville nor is one planned during the planning period. Similarly, there are no airports, rail lines or deep water ports located within the City.

Section 8.04 Goals, Objectives and Policies: The Goals, Objectives and Policies of this element are as follows:

Goal 8.A - Provide a safe, economical and efficient transportation system that maximizes the mobility of people and goods.

Objective 8.A.1 - Develop a Long Range Transportation Plan that identifies multi-modal and inter-modal transportation facilities that will function as an integrated system and address the mobility needs of the area.

Policy 8.A.1.1 - Continue to participate in the Ft. Walton Beach Urbanized Area MPO planning process in coordination with adjacent local governments and other public agencies and private organizations whose purpose is to implement the transportation, land use, parking and other provisions of the transportation element.

Policy 8.A.1.2 - Participate in the development of the Five Year Transit Development Plan especially in the establishment of numerical indicators against which the achievement of the mobility goals of the community can be measured, such as modal split, annual transit trips per capita, and automobile occupancy rates.

Objective 8.A.2 - Maintain level of service standards on regionally significant roadways consistent with the latest FDOT policy.

Policy 8.A.2.1 - The City hereby adopts level of service C as the minimum operating level of service

for local non-connector roads within the City unless otherwise specified by Policy 8.A.2.2. All locally maintained connector roads and all collector roads are hereby assigned LOS D for the planning period. Connector roads are defined as local roads connecting different land use areas (for example, residential with commercial).

Policy 8.A.2.2 - The following peak hour (100th highest hour) LOS standards for state roads within the City are hereby adopted:

SR 85 N from SR 20 to College Boulevard	- LOS C
SR 85 S from SR 85 N to Government Blvd. (John Sims Parkway)	- LOS F (maintain)
SR 85 from SR 397 to SR 190	- LOS D
SR 20 from the Rocky Bayou Bridge to SR 285	- LOS C
SR 20 from SR 285 to SR 85 N	- LOS C
SR 285 from SR 20 to College Boulevard	- LOS D
Palm Boulevard (local road) from Valparaiso Boulevard to College Boulevard	- LOS D

Where roadways are designated by the State Legislature on the Intrastate System, the City adopts a Level of Service “C”. The LOS standards are based upon the methodologies contained within the latest edition of the FDOT Level of Service Handbook.

The City of Niceville requested and FDOT has designated SR 85 S from SR 85 N to Government Boulevard as a backlogged facility. Backlogged Facilities are defined as “roads on the State Highway System operating at a level of service below the minimum level of service standards, not programmed for construction in the first three years of FDOT’s adopted work program or the five-year schedule of improvements contained in a local government’s capital improvements element, and not constrained.” (1998 FDOT LOS Handbook). Note: This LOS standard will be revised pursuant to a Plan amendment upon completion of improvements to the parkway and/or successfully re-routing of through traffic onto the College By-Pass. In addition, in accordance with the DOT designation, the City shall not issue any development permits which cumulatively would cause the roadway LOS to degrade by more than 10% of the 1988 FAADT.

Policy 8.A.2.3 - The City will include right-of-way protection provisions within the LDC (reference Policy 7.A.1.1).

Policy 8.A.2.4 - The City will continue to promote the establishment of six (6) lanes on John Sims Parkway (S.R. 20) through the City (reference Policies 8.A.4.2 and 8.A.4.3).

Policy 8.A.2.5 - The City shall continue its aggressive efforts to promote, support and encourage the construction of the proposed Niceville by-pass through its participation with the Fort Walton Beach MPO and interaction within the FDOT. Construction of the by-pass will relieve traffic congestion on John Sims Parkway (SR 20) through the City (also, see Policy 11.A.7.4).

Objective 8.A.3 - Coordinate the traffic circulation system with the future land uses shown on the Future Land Use Map Series (Figures 7-1 through 7-6) upon adoption of this Ordinance.

Policy 8.A.3.1 - The committee appointed pursuant to Policy 14.A.3.6 shall include within its annual review, an analysis of the traffic volumes and systems and system demands in order to further monitor and identify impacts of new growth on the transportation and traffic circulation system of the City. The committee shall include within its reports, produced pursuant to Section 14.06 of this Ordinance, its analysis of said impacts.

Objective 8.A.4 - Give the highest priority to transportation improvements that will relieve existing traffic congestion.

Policy 8.A.4.1 - Coordinate with the Ft. Walton Beach Urbanized Area MPO in the development of the Traffic Operations Project Priorities for the five-year Transportation Improvement Program.

Policy 8.A.4.2 - Prior to approving new road construction projects to add capacity the City shall investigate the feasibility of alternative improvements to the existing roadway system such as:

- a. Intersection improvements;
- b. Synchronization of traffic signals;
- c. Traffic calming measures;
- d. Installation of auxiliary lanes;
- e. Redesign or realignment of roadways; and
- f. Multi-modal systems

Objective 8.A.5 - Minimize accidents, including automobile/pedestrian/bicycle conflicts, by emphasizing safety features and by developing a multi-modal and intermodal transportation system.

Policy 8.A.5.1 - Direct through traffic onto principal arterials and away from local streets, and promote the use of traffic calming strategies to protect local streets from high traffic volumes and speeds.

Policy 8.A.5.2 - Facilitate the provision of a network for pedestrians and bicyclists that allows shortcuts and alternatives to traveling along high volume streets.

Objective 8.A.6 - Provide for adequate emergency evacuation by providing alternative evacuation routes and adequate highway capacity on evacuation routes, and by mitigation measures adopted in the Okaloosa County Hazard Mitigation Strategy.

Policy 8.A.6.1 - Coordinate with the Ft. Walton Beach Urbanized Area MPO, FDOT, and Okaloosa County in evaluating major evacuation routes and determining where deficiencies occur and where operational improvements can be made to maintain or reduce hurricane evacuation times.

Objective 8.A.7 - Support Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS) transportation facilities that provide connectivity to areas outside the urbanized area and serve important national and regional functions.

Policy 8.A.7.1 - Participate in implementation of Ft. Walton Beach Urbanized Area MPO Plan strategies to facilitate local traffic use of alternatives to the FIHS to protect its interregional and intrastate functions.

Objective 8.A.8 - Maintain and improve access to important regional facilities including airports, educational facilities, parks, historical and recreational areas and military installations.

Policy 8.A.8.1 - Coordinate roadway and transit service improvements with the Okaloosa County Airport Master Plan, the Fort Walton Beach MPO, and the FDOT 5-Year Transportation Plan, to ensure that future transportation access needs of the County's airport facilities are met.

Policy 8.A.8.2 - Promote the implementation of the Ft. Walton Beach Urbanized Area MPO 2020 Plan as it relates to roadway improvements improving access to major attractors in Niceville and Okaloosa County, including airports and other related public transportation facilities.

Policy 8.A.8.3 - Ensure that the Five Year Transit Development Plan includes strategies to address motorized and non-motorized access to all major attractors in Niceville and Okaloosa County, including intermodal terminals and access to aviation and rail facilities.

Goal 8.B - Provide an energy efficient transportation system.

Objective 8.B.1 - Reduce energy consumption by recommending transportation system improvements such as traffic calming measures that lessen the need for stop signs and traffic signals and result in less vehicle idling, a major contributor to air pollution and wasted fuel.

Policy 8.B.1.1 - Promote design of subdivision street systems that incorporates multiple interior connections and relatively direct routes between major transportation arteries.

Policy 8.B.1.2 - Promote the use of traffic calming measures that reduce the need for traffic signals.

Objective 8.B.2 - Reduce energy consumption by promoting actions to increase the occupancy of vehicles (e.g. ridesharing, mass transit, High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) lanes) or to reduce travel demand.

Policy 8.B.2.1 - Evaluate existing Park & Ride lot usage and review the recommendations in the WFRPC *West Florida Park & Ride Lot Planning Guide* in order to determine how to promote existing usage and where to establish new Park & Ride lots if analysis warrants the need for such facilities.

Policy 8.B.2.2 - Coordinate with the Ride Share Program of the WFRPC to develop and maintain car/vanpool programs that serve area employers, especially those that employ more than 50 employees.

Policy 8.B.2.3 - Coordinate with the Economic Development Council to support and promote commute trip reduction programs, telecommuting, electronic communications, variable work weeks and flextime.

Policy 8.B.2.4 - Participate in the development of the Ft. Walton Beach MPO Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Development Program especially in support of travel demand management strategies aimed at reducing the number and length of car trips and increasing the efficiency of the transportation system.

Objective 8.B.3 - Reduce energy consumption by promoting measures to facilitate pedestrian and bicycle facilities into the design of transportation projects.

Policy 8.B.3.1 - All new road construction projects within the City shall accommodate non-motorized transportation facilities. Such accommodation may include the installation of signage, striping of roadways, installation of sidewalks, widening of shoulders, installation of sidewalk ramps at intersections, and the like.

Objective 8.B.4 - Reduce energy consumption by promoting use of alternative fuels (e.g. compressed natural gas).

Policy 8.B.4.1 - Monitor the use of alternative fuels at other public agencies with large fleets of vehicles and coordinate with Okaloosa Coordinated Transportation, Inc., private sector industries and other public agencies to consider the use of low and zero-emission vehicles by large fleet operators.

Goal 8.C - Provide a transportation system in harmony with environmental, social, economic and aesthetic features of the area.

Objective 8.C.1 - Minimize adverse impacts on the environment, natural and scenic views, and existing developments by balancing the location, design, construction and operation of the transporta-

tion system with environmental and existing development features.

Policy 8.C.1.1 - Design and build transportation facilities to reflect the scale and character of the surrounding natural and developmental features using:

- a. Varying street widths and traffic calming measures to allow views of any scenic or historic resources;
- b. Appropriate paving materials, including intersection treatments;
- c. Appropriate styles of traffic control facilities; and
- d. Landscape materials that complement the character of the resources.

Policy 8.C.1.2 - The City shall continue its practice of providing or requiring the provision of non-motorized transportation systems to link residential areas with recreational and commercial areas in a safe manner through LDC regulations that require the construction of sidewalks, bike lanes, installation of signage, and striping of roadways so as to accommodate non-motorized transportation facilities.

Objective 8.C.2 - Encourage accessible public transportation for the transportation disadvantaged through coordination of local social service transportation.

Policy 8.C.2.1 - Continue to support the provision of transportation services to the transportation disadvantaged by the designated provider.

Policy 8.C.2.2 - Coordinate plans for transportation-disadvantaged services with the development of the Five Year Transit Development Plan as updates are completed.

Objective 8.C.3 - Enhance the urban area economic vitality by providing a transportation system that takes into consideration the needs of the business community and economic development strategies.

Policy 8.C.3.1 - All new developments, including but not limited to, planned unit developments, shopping centers, multi-family residential projects and other projects with internal circulation and parking needs shall be required to provide safe and convenient on-site traffic flow, non-motorized transportation facilities and sufficient vehicular parking to accommodate the needs of the development. Said provisions shall be delineated within the Land Development Code (reference Policy 7.A.1.1).

Objective 8.C.4 - Improve the environmental and aesthetic features of the existing transportation system by developing ISTEPA enhancement projects, including but not limited to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, scenic easements, landscaping, historic preservation, mitigation of water pollution due to highway runoff and control of outdoor advertising.

Policy 8.C.4.1 - Identify potential ISTEA enhancement projects and apply for the funds on an as needed basis.

Goal 8.D - Provide a transportation system that optimizes preservation and efficiency of existing transportation facilities.

Objective 8.D.1 - Minimize the need for construction of new highways through development and maintenance of a Congestion Management System and identification of strategies to reduce travel demand, encourage alternative modes of travel and implement traffic operations improvements.

Policy 8.D.1.1 - Participate in the development of the Five Year Transit Development Plan and the MPO 2020 plan as they address establishment of transportation demand management programs to modify peak hour travel demand and reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled per capita within the community and region.

Policy 8.D.1.2 - Participate in the development of the MPO 2020 plan as it addresses establishment of transportation system management strategies that are appropriate to improve system efficiency and enhance safety.

Policy 8.D.1.3 - Support and promote public awareness campaigns that focus attention on the societal and environmental impacts and costs of travel choices, and that make people aware of the range of travel choices available. Make information available at the Niceville Public Library on any commuter assistance programs, public transit, the co-coordinated transportation system program, and any bicycle/pedestrian programs endorsed by Niceville and Okaloosa County.

Objective 8.D.2 - Maintain and enhance the safety and efficiency of the arterial road system and minimize transportation conflicts associated with development by coordinating FDOT driveway permitting process, limiting development access to the transportation system and increasing interconnection between adjacent developments.

Policy 8.D.2.1 - The LDC shall limit new access points to arterial and collector roads by requiring minimum distances for separation of driveways and median cuts, consistent with FDOT and City access management policy.

Policy 8.D.2.2 - Any time a development project requires installation of access ways at distances closer together than the number of feet approved by FDOT for the roadway, a system of service roads will be required to be installed by developers for new development along arterial roads and designated limited access highways within the City, consistent with FDOT access management policy.

Policy 8.D.2.3 - Whenever possible require developments to provide direct vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent residential developments and/or service commercial or institutional land uses to reduce the need for additional access onto collector and arterial streets.

Policy 8.D.2.4 - The LDC shall contain regulations which provide for all future developments to pay all costs and construct all roads within the development to City standards so that the roads, upon construction, may be accepted into the City's road system (reference Objective 14.A.4).

Policy 8.D.2.5 - The City shall continue its practice of reconstructing or resurfacing local streets on an annual basis (reference Table 14-1).

Policy 8.D.2.6 - The City shall prioritize its maintenance and reconstruction activities pursuant to Policy 14.A.1.3 together with any cost/benefit analysis, traffic safety analysis and analysis of the physical conditions of the various roadways within the City. Said analyses may be performed by the City or others. If performed by others the manner and methods of analyses must be approved by the City.

Goal 8.E - Provide measures to relieve financial constraints on improvements to the transportation system.

Objective 8.E.1 - Obtain adequate funding for needed transportation improvements by encouraging greater state and federal participation and local adoption of measures to augment these revenue sources.

Policy 8.E.1.1 - Continue to levy a local option gas tax as a user fee and use the funding obtained to construct and maintain bridges and roads and associated transportation facilities.

Policy 8.E.1.2 - Assist in the updates of the Financial Resources Plan that identifies sources of funding that can reasonably be expected to be available to implement the Ft. Walton Beach Urbanized Area Transportation Study Cost Feasible Plan and recommends additional funding sources for other needed improvements.

Objective 8.E.2 - Equitably distribute transportation costs by requiring applicable development projects to construct appropriate transportation improvements on the public road system based on the proportional impacts of the development.

Policy 8.E.2.1 - The LDC shall require that development projects install applicable ingress/egress lanes and any traffic control measures deemed appropriate to ensure efficiency and safety of connections to the public roadway system commensurate with the project's impact.

Policy 8.E.2.2 - Encourage or require where appropriate new residential subdivisions, depending on their relation to congested or deficient arterial roadways, to design an internal public street system that will implement other goals, objectives and policies adopted in the transportation element to mitigate further congestion on the arterial roadway system.

Objective 8.E.3 - City shall provide for the protection of existing and future rights-of-way from encroachment by including regulations within the LDC (reference Policy 7.A.1.1) and implementing Policy 8.E.3.1. Minimize rights-of-way acquisition costs of planned transportation corridors by advanced purchase of right-of-way, required donation of rights-of-way and regulation requiring development setbacks from proposed rights-of-way.

Policy 8.E.3.1 - The City shall continue to enforce Ordinance 590 (the Zoning Ordinance, or any amendments or successor ordinances which may be adopted by the City) and include said Ordinance within the LDC (reference Policies 7.A.1.1, 7.A.1.2 and 7.A.7.2). Note: The Zoning Ordinance (or any amendments or successor ordinances which may be adopted by the City) provides adequate setbacks along all area roadways, including state highways, so that existing rights-of-way are protected from building encroachment.

Policy 8.E.3.2 - The LDC shall require rights-of-way standards and minimum building setbacks from proposed rights-of-way of roads requiring improvements and/or re-construction with additional lanes, consistent with the 2020 MPO Plan and City of Niceville CIE.

Goal 8.F - Provide a cooperative, continuing and comprehensive transportation process.

Objective 8.F.1 - Achieve a co-coordinated area transportation system through a local, regional, state and national decision-making partnership.

Policy 8.F.1.1 - Coordinate the City's transportation planning process with the plans and programs of the Fort Walton Beach MPO, the Florida DOT, and the West Florida Regional Planning Council Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

Policy 8.F.1.2 - The City will continue its active participation in and review of the Fort Walton Beach MPO plans and planning process to insure that MPO recommendations and activities are consistent with this Ordinance. The City's participation will include efforts to assure that needed projects within the City are included within the MPO and FDOT plans.

Policy 8.F.1.3 - The City will participate in, and review, the annual updates of the five (5) year construction plan (FDOT) to insure that activities of the City and the construction plan are consistent.

Policy 8.F.1.4 - Continue to fund the City's fair share of the annual operating cost of the Fort Walton Beach MPO and provide representatives to serve on the MPO and the various advisory committees created by the MPO.

Objective 8.F.2 - Ensure that the transportation system is supportive and compatible with growth management goals by coordinating the transportation plan with local, regional and state comprehensive plans.

Policy 8.F.2.1 - All land use decisions shall be consistent with the Future Land Use Maps and the Traffic Circulation Maps.

Policy 8.F.2.2 - The City Manager and the Public Works Director (or their designees) shall review all plans and proposals for development or redevelopment within the City by using the Future Land Use Maps and the Future Traffic Circulation Maps adopted herein. The review shall include a determination of consistency with the maps. Note: The review is not limited to the map series but must include the map series.

Objective 8.F.3 - Ensure the transportation system chosen as the optimum design is user acceptable by taking into consideration local desires and preferences.

Policy 8.F.3.1 - Continue to promote a high level of citizen participation in the transportation planning process through an active MPO Citizen's Advisory Committee and public meetings.