
**LEON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
GROWTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL
MANAGEMENT**

Executive Summary

Transportation System Deficiencies:

Number of road segments operating below the minimum required Level of Service (LOS): 41

Mass Transit:

Number of Star Metro routes in Unincorporated Leon County: 1

Solid Waste:

Amount of Solid Waste reserved per capita in Leon County: 7.05 lbs.

LOS demand based on existing population: 100,250,345 lbs.

Amount of Solid Waste demand for vested and exempt development in Leon County: 357,180,447 lbs.

Amount of Current Demand based on Projects: 495,495,235 lbs.

Total Solid Waste Demand: 952,926,028 lbs.

Parks and Recreation:

Total designated park acreage in Leon County: 2,848 Acres

Currently available boat ramp capacity in Leon County: 3.07 Acres

Percentage of available boat ramp capacity remaining: 4.39%

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities:

Amount of dedicated bike lane miles in Unincorporated Leon County: 77.40 miles

Paved shoulder miles for bicycle use in Unincorporated Leon County (Bicycle- Pedestrian Master Plan Plan, 2004): 37.23 miles

Amount of sidewalk miles in Unincorporated Leon County (2008): 41.51 miles

Water and Sewer Facilities:

City of Tallahassee Utilities (Water) – 76,096 residential and commercial customers

City of Tallahassee Utilities (Sewer) – 64,212 residential and commercial customers

Talquin Electric (Water) – 9,150 parcels served (Source: Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Dept.)

Talquin Electric (Sewer) – 4,430 parcels served (Source: Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Dept.)

Septic Tanks (est from Florida Department of Health) – 38,000

ROADWAY FACILITIES

Level of Service Standards for Roadways

The adopted Level of Service (LOS) for individual roadways is a quantitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream. The adopted LOS of a roadway, at the time of Comprehensive Plan adoption, is dependent on the location and functional classification of that roadway. The maximum service flow for each roadway at its adopted LOS is dependent on the prevailing roadway and traffic conditions for each County roadway segment. Each type of roadway has unique characteristics that dictate maximum service flow at the adopted LOS. In addition to roadway conditions, traffic conditions such as vehicle types, lane distribution and directional distribution are influential factors in determining maximum service flow at the adopted LOS of a roadway. According to the Highway Capacity Manual (ed. 2000), the following Level of Service Standards are defined:

Level of Service A –The highest quality of traffic service, when motorists are able to travel at their desired speed.

Level of Service B –Similar to LOS A, although the presence of other vehicles becomes noticeable.

Level of Service C –The influence of increased traffic density becomes marked. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is affected by the presence of other vehicles.

Level of Service D –The traffic flow is unstable and the ability to maneuver is severely restricted due to traffic congestion. Travel speed is reduced by the increasing volume.

Level of Service E –The road is operating at or near the design capacity of the road. Disruptions in the traffic flow are not readily dissipated and regression to LOS F occurs frequently.

Level of Service F –The road is heavily congested with traffic demand exceeding the design capacity of the road.

The adoption of a maximum service volume is based on the lowest allowed level of service for the operation and maintenance of roadway facilities in a region.

Level of Service Designations for County Roadways

The Tallahassee/Leon County Comprehensive Plan (Transportation Element Policy 1.4.1) and Florida Statutes establish following peak hour minimum levels of service for Tallahassee and Leon County:

<u>Outside the Urban Service Area</u>	<u>Minimum Level of Service</u>
Interstate and Limited Access Parkways:	B
Principal Arterials:	C
Minor Arterials:	C
Major and Minor Collectors:	C
Local Streets	D

<u>Inside the Urban Service Area North of U. S. 90</u>	<u>Minimum Level of Service</u>
Interstate and Limited Access Parkways:	C
Principal Arterials:	
Except Capital Circle NW From I-10 to SR 20	D*
Capital Circle NW from I-10 to SR 20	E
Minor Arterials:	D/E**
Major and Minor Collectors:	D
Local Streets	D

* The minimum Level of Service for Monroe Street from Gaines Street to Tennessee Street shall be "E."

** For Minor Arterials, and Major and Minor Collectors located inside the Urban Services Area and south of U.S. 90, the minimum Level of Service shall be "D" for purposes of establishing priorities for programming transportation improvements, and "E" for meeting concurrency requirements, to support the Southern Strategy. The LOS for roads north of U.S. 90 shall be LOS D for both programming improvement and concurrency purposes.

Capacity Constrained Facilities

In response to the increasing number of facilities that are classified as overcapacity and the limited means to address these capacity constraints, the Tallahassee/Leon County Comprehensive Plan was amended to allow for some roadway segments classified as *Capacity Constrained* and eligible for a commensurate mitigation contribution to be utilized for concurrency approval for projects that significantly impact these segments. Capacity Constrained segments are segments with any of the following characteristics:

1. The improvement that would otherwise resolve the deficiency is not feasible due to environmental constraints, regulatory constraints or prohibitively costly right-of way demands, or;
2. The improvement that would otherwise resolve the deficiency is not desirable in that it is inconsistent with clearly defined community goals or long term plans, or;

3. The improvement that would otherwise resolve the deficiency is not desirable in that it clearly represents an economically inefficient measure that will address a public facility deficiency only on a temporary, limited basis.

In the Leon County Concurrency Management System, the following segments are identified as Capacity Constrained Segments and eligible for the commensurate mitigation strategy:

Table 1 Leon County Concurrency Management System Capacity Constrained Roadway Segments

Roadway Name	Segment	Constraint Characteristic
Meridian Road	Timberlane to Maclay	# 1 - Environmental
North Monroe	Sessions to Fred George	#2 - Community Goals
Old Bainbridge	Fred George to Capital Circle	# 1 - Environmental

Present Conditions

On the basis of the roadway and traffic criteria described above, and in accordance with the above-referenced standards for level of service (as of January 1, 2009), 184 segments had an adopted LOS C, 243 had an adopted LOS D, and 7 segments had an adopted LOS E. Of the 462 segments monitored in the Concurrency Management System, forty-one (41) are operating at or below the adopted LOS in either the peak or non-peak direction. Fourteen of the forty-one (41) segments are operating below the adopted LOS or overcapacity based on existing traffic flow, i.e., as determined by actual traffic counts. The remaining twenty-seven (27) segments are operating at or below the adopted LOS due to the reservation of capacity associated with new projects or projects that are vested/exempted from the Comprehensive Plan. Available capacity is defined as the capacity of a road segment taking into consideration the existing traffic counts, the vested trips assigned to the segment, and the approved projects that would be using the segment. Attachment #2 identifies the current condition of every road monitored in the Concurrency Management System.

The Significant Benefit MOA (Attachment # 6) seeks to achieve an economy of scale as project mitigation funds are expended on these most heavily traveled roadways. Roadways within the CMS and not a part of the Significant Benefits program will most likely obtain greater levels of congestion. Certain improvements for specific roadway demands will not occur due to the requirement that mitigation funds be expended only on those projects identified under the Significant Benefits MOA.

Two examples of roadway projects that would benefit were the MOA modified to provide greater flexibility in the use of mitigation funds are the Beech Ridge Trail improvement and the connection

between Kohl's and Publix in Bradfordville. Both projects were funded under the significant benefits provision of the Leon County Concurrency Management Policies and Procedures Manual, which is different than the MOA.

Leon County Growth and Environmental Management will work closely with its local and state counterparts to monitor and document system deficiencies and recommend possible responses.

SOLID WASTE

The Concurrency Management System requires Solid Waste monitoring pursuant to Policy 1.4.2 of the Solid Waste Sub-Element of the Utilities Element of the Tallahassee - Leon County Comprehensive Plan. The level of service for solid waste is measured in pounds per capita per day and increased annually at a rate of .10 pounds per capita per day every year until 1997. In 1997, the annual rate decreased to .05 pounds per capita per day. For the year 2008, the solid waste LOS measure was 7.05 pounds per capita per day.

With the development of the Gum Road Transfer Station, the Leon County Concurrency Management System no longer analyzes the remaining capacity in the Leon County Landfill for new developments approved in the County. Instead, the focus is on how much solid waste is expected to be produced for each new development and how much capacity remains at the facilities outside of the County's jurisdiction that are used for its solid waste. As of February 2009, the amount of solid waste generation demand for the most recent 12-month period was estimated to be 738,833,078 lbs., based upon the existing population of Tallahassee and Leon County, projects that have reserved solid waste in the City and County, and the residential developments approved by both jurisdictions (see Attachment #3). The County may wish to promote greater use of recycling to mitigate solid waste management impacts in the future. Some options to reduce demand for solid waste management capacity are: restricting the use of plastic shopping bags and styrofoam packaging and setting limits on the amount of building waste which can be disposed.

PARKS AND RECREATION

BOAT RAMPS

The County is responsible for the operation and maintenance of boat landings and water-related parks. The adopted level of service for boat ramps is 0.18 acres of boat ramps per 1,000 population. Like other public facilities, boat ramp capacity is reserved for the residential demands deriving from existing, vested/exempted projects, and new projects. Boat ramp capacity has been reserved for all County and City residential demands. At the time of the Concurrency Management Ordinance adoption, there were 70 acres of available boat ramp capacity. However, as of February 2009, the available capacity had been reduced to 3.07 acres, a reduction of 66.93 acres of boat ramp capacity (Attachment #4). The remaining capacity may not be adequate to maintain the adopted LOS in the coming years.

AREAWIDE and COUNTYWIDE PARKS

The City is responsible for monitoring the adopted levels of service for area wide and countywide parks, excluding boat ramps. Area wide parks are located within the City limits and the demand is based on the Urban Services Area population. As of January 2009, the total acreage for recreational facilities is 2,848 acres. Sufficient capacity exists to meet the demands of the population for the next five years and beyond. A list of recreational facilities maintained by the Leon County Division of Parks and Recreation Department is provided in Attachment #5. The list is dated February 2009 and indicates a total acreage for recreational facilities of 2,241.

STORMWATER

The County has adopted a performance-based level of service for stormwater, which is identified in Policy 1.5.2 of the Stormwater Management Sub-Element of the Utilities Element of the Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan. In order for new development to comply with the adopted minimum stormwater LOS, it must comply with the Environmental Management Act standards for water quality and rate control.

POTABLE WATER

In general, on-site wells furnish County residents outside the Urban Services Area with potable water. With the City/County Water and Sewer agreement, certain County residents located within the Urban Service Area (USA) and within a County-approved franchise area may, however, be required to connect to the City of Tallahassee or Talquin Electric Cooperative central potable water system.

Policy 1.2.2 of the Potable Water Sub-Element of the Utilities Element of the Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan states that the LOS Standard inside the USA is 160 gallons per capita per day. Policy 1.2.3 of the Potable Water Sub-Element of the Utilities Element of the Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan states that the LOS Standard outside the USA is 100 gallons per capita per day.

According to City of Tallahassee (COT) Utilities estimates, sufficient potable water exists for development for the foreseeable future. Currently, the COT Utilities Department serves approximately 76,100 customers with potable water service in the City and County.

Talquin Electric Cooperative has indicated that capacity for new development is contingent upon the proximity of the development to existing water service. If it is deemed that capacity does not exist, Talquin will work with the developer to ensure the availability of water service. The Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department estimated that 9,150 parcels are served by Talquin Electric for water service.

SANITARY SEWER

The majority of the population residing within unincorporated Leon County use on-site systems, i.e., septic tanks, and in a few minor exceptions, package treatment plants, as their method of sewage treatment in the unincorporated area outside the Urban Services Area. Septic tanks are permitted by the Leon County Public Health Unit of the Florida Department of Health pursuant to the Florida Administrative Code. On-site systems must also comply with the provisions of the Comprehensive Plan. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection permits package treatment plants. With the Water and Sewer Agreement, County residents located within certain portions of the USA may be required to use sanitary sewer, provided that service is available and adequate capacity available. Both the City of Tallahassee and Talquin Electric Cooperative provide sanitary sewer service to certain areas of the County established through County approval of franchise agreements.

According to COT Utilities estimates, sufficient sewer service exists for development for the foreseeable future. Currently, the COT Utilities Department serves 64,212 customers with sewer service in the City and County.

Talquin Electric Cooperative states that although some of the existing wastewater treatment facilities are reaching their design capacity, the current five (5) year improvement plan for these facilities will provide the necessary additional capacity to service existing and future development within its sewer franchise areas. The Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department estimated that 4,430 parcels are served by Talquin Electric for sewer service.

The most recent estimate of the number septic tanks in Leon County is 38,000 (Source: Florida Department of Health). An inventory of septic tanks should be completed by 2010 to meet the State's requirements for springs protection.

Package plants are regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). Staff is awaiting an estimate for the number of package plants in Leon County. There are eight (8) package treatment facilities in Leon County. They service approximately 820 residential customers, two (2) schools, and a community residential facility.

MASS TRANSIT

Mass transit service is presently provided only within limited areas of unincorporated Leon County. According to City estimates, the mass transit service meets the adopted LOS for mass transit. It is expected this standard will be maintained over the next five years. The Regional Mobility Plan, scheduled for completion in 2010, is expected to increase the LOS Standard for mass transit. Star Metro has been in consultation with Leon County regarding the provision of mass transit. In many cases, new development provides infrastructure for future transit.

Leon County is also being pro-active in designing development to accommodate transit through an incentive based approach. On January 29, 2008, the BCC adopted incentives that can be used to increase site and development plan application review thresholds, thereby lowering the review level, in exchange for a variety of different enhancements that increase the quality of development in Leon County. For non-residential development having greater than 100,000 square feet of office or commercial retail gross floor

area, provision of a transit stop increases the review threshold by 15%. For residential development having greater than 200 dwelling units and access to an arterial road, provision of a transit stop increases the review threshold by 10%. A transit stop includes surface area for bus access, a bus shelter, and pedestrian access to the stop.

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES

There has been an interest in assessing the level of the County’s bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of a multi-modal transportation system within the County. In August of 2004, the then Tallahassee-Leon County Metropolitan Planning Organization released its 2005-2025 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan for Leon County, detailing the current conditions of Leon County’s bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This document assesses the current conditions of Leon County’s sidewalk and bicycle path network, as well as sets a plan for implementation of future pedestrian and bicycle projects. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan uses corridor definitions to ascertain the needed degree of treatment desired for specific roadway design characteristics. The plan describes a range of corridor treatments for bicycle, pedestrian, and automobile movements. These movements are based on whether the needs are urban (20 mph, lane width of 10 ft, block length of 300 ft w/ traffic calming measures), suburban (35 mph, lane width of 11 ft, block length of 500 ft w/ streetscaping elements), or rural (50 mph, block length of 800 ft). A list of road segments is identified by the public for each corridor type from the Needs Plan of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which is used to develop a Cost Feasible Plan. This plan translates the corridor treatments into specific projects based on existing facilities, right-of-way constraints, and public input. Facilities considered are the addition of bicycle lanes, sidewalks, paved shoulders, medians, and off-road shared paths.

Bicycle and pedestrian LOS is based on the following variables: average effective width of the outside through lane, motorized vehicle volumes, motorized vehicle speeds, heavy vehicle (truck) volumes, and pavement condition. The main component of the adequacy of bicycle / pedestrian facilities is user perception of adequacy and safety. According to the FDOT Quality/Level of Service handbook, the range for LOS categories (scores) for Bicycle and Pedestrian uses are as follows:

Table 2 – 1
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN LEVEL OF SERVICE SCORES

Level of Service Score
A < 1.5
B > 1.5 and < 2.5
C > 2.5 and < 3.5
D > 3.5 and < 4.5
E > 4.5 and < 5.5
F > 5.5

Presently, all projects reviewed for concurrency are required to consider implementing the recommendations in the bicycle / pedestrian plan on a volunteer basis. These design requirements are anticipated by the implementation of a minimum LOS in the future for the BCC's consideration.

Several incentives for quality design make development more friendly to the bicyclist and pedestrian. The goal underlying these incentives is to allow people to live close to where they work, decreasing the use of the single occupant automobile and making walking and biking safer and more convenient. The table below shows the non-residential incentives that directly impact bicycle and pedestrian facilities:

Façade Length Incentive	All proposed building facades less than 60 feet in length. <i>Threshold increased by 25%</i>
Building Footprint Incentive	Building footprint no greater than 50,000 square feet of enclosed floor area. <i>Threshold increased by 10%</i>
Large Mixed-Use Development Incentive	Developments with access to an arterial road and having greater or equal than 100,000 square feet of office or commercial retail gross square footage floor area (also referred to as equivalent to 100% commercial base std.) and greater or equal to 100 dwelling units (equivalent to 100% of the residential base std.) or, any combination of these uses wherein the square feet of office or commercial floor space exceeds 20,000 and the number of residential units exceeds 25 and the cumulative total of the base standards exceeds 200%. <i>Threshold increased by 15%</i>
Window Glazing Incentive	Structures having ground floor window glazing along building frontages adjacent to streets or publicly-accessible parking areas greater or equal to 20% of façade area on the ground floor principal frontage and greater or equal to 15% of the area of each other applicable ground floor façade. <i>Threshold increased by 10%</i>
Reduced Parking Incentive	Developments where the number of spaces provided is less than or equal to 80% of the standard number of parking spaces set out in Schedule 6-2 of the Land Development Code. <i>Threshold increased by 15%</i>

SCHOOL CONCURRENCY

In 2005, State legislation mandated that the availability of public schools be a prerequisite for the approval of residential construction and directed a closer integration of planning for school capacity with comprehensive planning. As a foundation to these mandatory changes, the 2005 legislation required an updated interlocal agreement between the school board and affected local governments. In August 2006, the City of Tallahassee, Leon County, and the Leon County School Board adopted the Public School Concurrency and Facility Planning Interlocal Agreement as a required precursor to the mandatory Public School Facilities Element.

School concurrency became effective in Leon County on June 6, 2008, consistent with state law. The Leon County School Board (LCSB) reviews all residential projects for impacts to the school system. Leon County Growth and Environmental Management forwards a copy of all development applications to the LCSB. The LCSB reviews the applications, including school impact analysis forms, to determine whether mitigation is necessary. Applicants for projects requiring mitigation must enter into an agreement with the LCSB to provide the necessary facilities to meet school concurrency. Leon County will not approve a project if school concurrency has not been met.

As of February 2009, the LCSB has reviewed sixteen (16) school impact analysis forms for residential development within Leon County. None of these residential developments have been determined to require mitigation for school concurrency.

SUMMARY

Currently, the Concurrency Management System (CMS) classifies forty-one (41) road segments as operating at an overcapacity status due the existing traffic counts or the sum of the existing counts and committed demand exceeding the adopted capacity. These roadway segments handle the majority of the traffic in the region and are located in many of the areas exhibiting the strongest demand for development.

In response to increasing congestion on arterial roadways, Leon County entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the City of Tallahassee and the Florida Department of Transportation. The major benefit to the MOA is that it allows local government to funnel concurrency mitigation funds to a very limited number of critically-important designated roadway projects. This economy of scale will reduce delay of the construction of these previously identified projects. Unfortunately, the MOA has the side effect of reducing the amount of flexibility for local government to use mitigation funds for other important transportation improvements, which under certain circumstances, may be of equal or greater importance. It may be of value for the Board to direct staff to explore the development of objective criteria that can be used to impart greater flexibility in the process of expending mitigation funds.

The County Commission may wish to establish a proportionate share mitigation for boat ramps as there is only 3.07 acres of remaining capacity. Another alternative would be to program additional boat ramp facilities in future Capital Improvement Programs. Leon County is meeting the objectives of the comprehensive plan in regards to capacity for parks and recreational facilities.

According to officials from the Springhill Landfill in Jackson County, there is sufficient capacity in the landfill to service Leon County for forty-six (46) years. Local utility providers have also stated their ability to service the residents of Leon County for the foreseeable future.

The County Commission may wish to establish a LOS Standard for mass transit outside of the Urban Services Area (USA) upon the completion of the Regional Mobility Plan. Applications for large Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) are increasingly prompting discussions of the need for access to transit services. The provision of transit offers an additional opportunity to mitigate the congestion on the County's principal roadway corridors.