

**COLLIER COUNTY  
GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT  
Wastewater Treatment Sub-Element**

Prepared by  
Collier County Planning and Zoning Department  
Comprehensive Planning Section

Prepared for  
COLLIER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
Adopted October, 1997

**AMENDMENTS TO COLLIER COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN  
PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT  
Wastewater Treatment Sub-Element**

<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>DATE AMENDED</u>	<u>ORDINANCE NO.</u>
	October 28, 1997	1997-58 **
(I)	October 22, 2002	2002-54
(II)	February 11, 2003	2003-07
(III)	June 19, 2002	2002-32 ***
(IV)	September 10, 2003	2003-44
(V)	June 7, 2005	2005-25
(VI)	January 25, 2007	2007-09 ****
(VII)	January 8, 2013	2013-05 *****

The parenthesized Roman numeral symbols enumerated above appear throughout this Sub-Element and provide informational citations to adopted documents recorded in the Official Records of Collier County, as required by Florida law. These symbols are for informational purposes only, meant to mark entries amended after the 1997 adoption of the full Sub-Element and typically found in the margins of this document, but are not themselves adopted.

\* Indicates adopted portions.

\*\* This is the EAR-based amendment (1996 EAR). Due to the magnitude of the changes – which included reformatting the entire Element, affecting every page of the Element – a Roman numeral is not assigned.

\*\*\* The above Ordinance No. 2002-32 was adopted on June 19, 2002. However, due to legal challenges, it did not become effective until the [then] Florida Department of Community Affairs issued its Final Order on July 22, 2003.

\*\*\*\* Based on 2004 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).

\*\*\*\*\* Based on 2011 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR).

(VI) **I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of the Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element is to provide for the health and safety of the residents of Collier County by ensuring adequate wastewater collection and treatment facilities that are cost-effective and environmentally sound. Such facilities may be provided through the Collier County Water-Sewer District, private utilities, other public utilities that operate within portions of the unincorporated County, or (in certain areas) private septic systems. In addition to collection and treatment of residential and commercial wastewater, the Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element also contains provisions regulating the reuse of treated effluent for irrigation purposes. Regardless of the service provider, or the manner in which service is provided to the customer, the provisions of the Sanitary Sewer Sub-Element shall be designed to ensure a safe, consistent and quality level of service for all customers.

(VII) **GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

(VII) **GOAL:**  
**TO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC BY ENSURING ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND, COST EFFECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTABLE WASTEWATER TREATMENT AND SANITARY SEWER FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

(I)(VI)(VII) **OBJECTIVE 1:**  
 Make certain that public sector sanitary sewer service utilities provide, repair and/or replace sanitary sewer collection, treatment and disposal facilities to correct existing deficiencies in their respective service areas, as may be required to meet or exceed the Level of Service Standards established in this Plan. In addition, public sector sanitary sewer service utilities will be expanded as necessary to provide for future growth.

(IV)(VI) **Policy 1.1:**  
 Continue the development of the Collier County Water-Sewer District consistent with the Capital Improvements element to provide for future growth.

(I)(III)(IV)(V)(VI)(VII) **Policy 1.2:**  
 Consistent with the growth policies of the Future Land Use Element of this Plan, provision of central sanitary sewer service by the County is limited to: the service areas shown in this Plan and depicted on the Collier County Sewer District Existing and Future Sewer Service Areas map (Figure WT-1); Sending Lands within the Rural Fringe Mixed Use District when Density Blending, as provided for in the Density Rating System of the Future Land Use Element, is utilized; and, to areas where the County has legal commitments to provide facilities and services as of the date of adoption of this Plan. Additionally, the County, at its discretion, may serve Towns, Villages, Hamlets, and Compact Rural Developments within the Rural Lands Stewardship Area Overlay (RLSA); presently, the County has no plans to serve any portion of the RLSA. This Overlay is depicted on the countywide Future Land Use Map and map series.

Within the RLSA: Hamlets and Compact Rural Developments one hundred (100) acres or less in size may be served by central sewer facilities; Towns, Villages and those Compact Rural Developments greater than one hundred (100) acres in size are required to be served by central sewer facilities; and, Compact Rural Developments that are one hundred (100) acres or less in size may be required to be served by central sewer facilities, depending upon the permitted uses within the Compact Rural Development. The private sector, Collier County, an independent wastewater authority, or some other non-County utility provider may provide these facilities.

For the purposes of this Policy and Policies 1.4, 5.1, and 5.3 of this Sub-Element, within the RLSA, the term “central sewer facilities” includes decentralized community treatment systems and innovative alternative wastewater treatment systems such as decentralized community treatment systems, provided that they meet criteria of Chapter 64E-6 F.A.C.

A decentralized community wastewater treatment system shall not exceed a design capacity of 10,000 gallons per day, shall provide an advanced secondary level of treatment, and shall be operated by a public or private entity with responsibility for operations and maintenance in accordance with Chapter 64E-6 F.A.C. System facilities located on individual lots or parcels

(VII) = Plan Amendment by Ordinance No. 2013-05 on January 8, 2013

shall have a utility easement to allow for access and maintenance of the system by the operating entity. The system shall be designed to meet the adopted level of service standards set forth in Policy 2.1 of this Sub-Element.

(IV)(VI) **Policy 1.3:**

The Collier County Water and Wastewater Authority (Authority), established by County Ordinance Number 96-6, regulates the operations of private sector wastewater treatment utilities that provide sanitary sewer services to portions of unincorporated Collier County. All such private sector sanitary sewer service providers are required to meet the County's adopted wastewater treatment Level of Service (LOS). All private sector sanitary sewer service providers shall file an annual statement with the Authority that provides current operating information including, but not limited to: a statement of current policies and service criteria, the LOS maintained by the service provider and whether such level of service meets the County's LOS Standard for wastewater treatment. The annual report shall also document any necessary or projected facility expansion and/or replacement projects that are required to correct observed deficiencies.

(III)(IV)(VI) **Policy 1.4:**

For any new structure in which plumbing fixtures are to be installed and which is proposed to be connected to a private sector sanitary sewer service utility, the developer is required to provide a letter of adequate capacity from that private utility to the Collier County Building Review and Permitting Department at the time of application for the first building permit, pursuant to Collier County Ordinance Number 80-112.

(I)(VI)(VII) **Policy 1.5:**

Collier County shall permit development of package sewage treatment plant systems in areas identified in Policy 1.2, on an interim basis until County service is available. The County shall allow individual septic systems within the County only when connection to an existing central system is not within 200 lineal feet of the closest property line. In portions of the County where septic systems are allowed, at such time as County service becomes available within 200 lineal feet of the property line, said septic systems will be required to connect to the appropriate centralized wastewater treatment system.

Within the Rural Lands Stewardship Overlay, consistent with Policy 1.2: septic systems are permitted within Hamlets; septic systems may or may not be permitted in Compact Rural Developments one hundred (100) acres or less in size depending upon the permitted uses in the Compact Rural Development; and, septic systems are not permitted in Towns, Villages, and those Compact Rural Developments greater than one hundred (100) acres in size. However, in Towns, Villages, and those Compact Rural Developments greater than one hundred (100) acres in size, septic systems are allowed to serve no more than 100 acres, on an interim basis only, until centralized wastewater treatment system service is available.

(VI) **Policy 1.6:**

The County shall give master planning and budgetary emphasis to regional sanitary sewer system projects, which will provide the means for phase out and connection of existing package sewage treatment plants and areas where septic tank use fails to meet the performance standards for such facilities in Chapter 64E-6, F.A.C.

(VII) = Plan Amendment by Ordinance No. 2013-05 on January 8, 2013

(IV)(VI)(VII)

**Policy 1.7:**

Where Community Development Districts, or similar special districts are established to provide a tool for developers to finance infrastructure or other purposes, wholly or partially within the Collier County Water-Sewer District, sewer service shall be connected to the regional system, and all facilities shall be conveyed, when acceptable, to the Collier County Water-Sewer District for operation and ownership in accordance with Collier County Ordinance Number 04-31, adopted May 11, 2004, and District construction and operating policies.

(VI)(VII)

**OBJECTIVE 2:**

Ensure wastewater treatment system capacity is available or will be available to serve development.

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**Policy 2.0.1:**

No development order shall be issued by Collier County without demonstration that wastewater treatment facility capacity that meets or exceeds the minimum Level of Service Standards established herein is available or will be available to serve the development under the guidelines established for concurrency in the Capital Improvement Element of this Plan.

(IV)(VI)(VII)

**Policy 2.1:**

The levels of service standards (LOSS) for Collier County wastewater treatment facilities appear in Policy 1.5; subsection “E” in the Capital Improvement Element.

[Note: The above Policy was revised as part of 2011 EAR-based amendments, removed from this “parent” Sub-Element of origin and relocated into the CIE. The parenthesized Roman numeral symbols remain at this location as historical reference, but may no longer apply to the entry as it now appears.]

**Policy 2.2:**

In order to ensure these LOS standards are maintained, methodologies for determining available capacity and demand shall incorporate appropriate peak demand coefficients for each facility and for the type of development proposed.

(VII)

**Policy 2.3:**

These LOS standards are the minimum criteria for replacement, expansion or increase in capacity of wastewater treatment facilities.

(VI)(VII)

**Policy 2.4:**

The Collier County Water-Sewer District shall review historical sanitary sewer demand records during Collier County Wastewater Master Plan updates and adjust the LOS standards, as referenced in Policy 2.1, if needed.

(VI)(VII)

**OBJECTIVE 3:**

Ensure utilization of environmentally sound and economically beneficial methods for disposal of treated sludge and septage.

- (VI)(VII) **Policy 3.1:**  
The County shall maintain sludge de-watering and stabilization facilities for use by County wastewater treatment operations to produce sludge de-watered and stabilized to a degree suitable for use as cover material for County landfills or to be used for any suitable manner that is permitted by law.
  
- (VII) **OBJECTIVE 4:**  
Promote the use of treated wastewater effluent for irrigation purposes in order to provide an environmentally sound disposal method and to conserve potable water and groundwater supplies by developing and implementing an integrated, comprehensive strategy for the following Policies:
  
- (VI) **Policy 4.1:**  
The County shall negotiate agreements with area golf courses to accept and use treated wastewater effluent for irrigation when and where such treated effluent is available from existing and future wastewater plants.
  
- (VI) **Policy 4.2:**  
The County shall continue to connect existing and future publicly owned lands suitable for irrigation with treated wastewater effluent, such as government building grounds, parks, and highway medians, when economically feasible.
  
- (VI) **Policy 4.3:**  
The County shall continue to connect existing and future privately owned lands suitable for irrigation with treated wastewater effluent, such as cemeteries, nurseries and commercial/industrial parks, when economically feasible.
  
- (VI) **Policy 4.4:**  
At such time as a source of treated effluent becomes available, the County shall permit the construction and connection of dual water systems (i.e., separate potable water and treated wastewater effluent networks) to the County's treated effluent irrigation system in new subdivisions, provided that said connection causes no adverse impact to the potable water system.
  
- (VI) **Policy 4.5:**  
Where Community Development Districts, or other similar special districts are established to provide a tool for developers to finance infrastructure or other purposes, wholly or partially within the Collier County Water-Sewer District, and where such districts make provisions for irrigation via dual systems utilizing effluent and/or other irrigation sources, said systems shall be connected to the regional system when available, and all internal irrigation systems shall remain in private ownership and be master metered by the County.
  
- (VI)(VII) **Policy 4.6:**  
The County will encourage Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ to reduce the generation of yard waste, reduce water consumption, and improve water quality. Section 373.185, F.S., defines Florida-Friendly Landscaping™ as using quality landscapes that conserve water, protect the environment, adapt to local conditions and tolerate drought.

(VII) = Plan Amendment by Ordinance No. 2013-05 on January 8, 2013

(IV)(VI)(VII)

**Policy 4. 7:**

The County shall seek to expand and prioritize the availability of irrigation water from supplemental sources, such as dual water systems within Community Development Districts, other special districts, and Planned Unit Developments, through connection of such sources to the County's reclaimed water system.

(VI)(VII) **OBJECTIVE 5:**

Discourage urban sprawl and the proliferation of private sector wastewater treatment utilities and sanitary sewer service suppliers in an effort to maximize the use of existing public facilities through the development order approval process by implementing the following policies.

(I)(II)(III)(IV)(V)(VI)(VII)

**Policy 5.1:**

The County shall discourage urban sprawl by permitting universal availability of central sanitary sewer systems only: in the Designated Urban Area, in the Designated Urban-Rural Fringe Transition Zone Overlay, in Receiving and certain Neutral Lands within the Rural Fringe Mixed Use District, and in the Rural Settlement District, all of which are depicted on the Future Land Use Map, and in Towns, Villages, Hamlets, and Compact Rural Developments within the Rural Lands Stewardship Area Overlay. These areas are further identified as: within the Collier County Sewer District Existing and Future Sewer Service Areas depicted on Figure WT-1 of this Sub-element, except the outlying urban areas of Immokalee, Copeland, Chokoloskee, Plantation Island, and Port of the Islands; within the Rural Lands Stewardship Area Overlay, as each Town, Village, Hamlet and Compact Rural Development is designated; or in Sending Lands within the Rural Fringe Mixed Use District when Density Blending, as provided for in the Density Rating System of the Future Land Use Element, is utilized; and, in areas where the County has legal commitments to provide facilities and service outside the Urban Area as of the date of adoption of this Plan.

(VI) **Policy 5.2:**

The County shall discourage urban sprawl and the proliferation of private sector and/or package sanitary sewer treatment systems through the development order approval process in order to ensure maximum utilization of existing and planned public facilities. No existing private sector or package treatment system will be permitted to add customers unless all Levels of Service Standards are met, and operations are in conformance with all FDEP permits.

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**Policy 5.3:**

As provided for in the Rural Lands Stewardship Area Overlay, and in Policy 1.2, central sewer facilities are permitted in Towns, Villages, Hamlets, and Compact Rural Developments. Though not anticipated, it is possible that central sanitary sewer collection lines may extend through lands not designated as a Town, Village, Hamlet or Compact Rural Development; no properties designated other than as a Town, Village, Hamlet or Compact Rural Development are permitted to connect to these collection lines. Under criteria, properties located outside of the existing sewer service area but within the future service area, as depicted on the Collier County Sewer District Existing and Future Sewer Service Areas map (Figure WT-1) of this Sub-Element, may be eligible for central sanitary sewer service from an existing public or private utility, subject to availability. Qualifying criteria shall be limited to the requirements and incentives established in

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the Future Land Use Element and Conservation and Coastal Management Element of this Plan to obtain preservation standards established for environmentally sensitive lands in the Sending Lands of the Rural Fringe Mixed Use District (RFMUD). Criteria for central sanitary sewer or wastewater treatment service eligibility may include, but are not limited to, plans for development which utilize creative planning techniques such as clustering, density blending, rural villages, and transfer of development rights (TDRs) from RFMUD Sending Lands. Criteria for eligibility may be amended and additional Sending and Receiving Lands may be designated in the future. Central Sanitary Sewer or wastewater treatment collection lines may extend through Sending Lands; however, no properties designated as Sending Lands may connect to the collection lines.