

### **1.5.C.1: Brief Assessment of Successes & Shortcomings – Public Facilities Element – Sanitary Sewer Subelement**

#### **A. Introduction & Background:**

The purpose of the Sanitary Sewer Subelement is defined within its single Goal (Goal 1), which reads as follows:

“TO PROTECT THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE PUBLIC BY ENSURING ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND, COST EFFECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTABLE SANITARY SEWER FACILITIES AND SERVICES.”

As currently formatted, this Subelement consists entirely of a Goal (Goal 1), Objectives and Policies. As part of the EAR-based amendments, Comprehensive Planning staff is recommending formatting changes consisting of the addition of a brief introductory statement for the Subelement and removal of the “1” from the Goal, so that it is simply the Goal of the Subelement. Similarly, the Objective and Policy numbering format should be simplified. Also, the Subelement contains a number of references to the County’s Water & Sewer District. The District’s official name is the “Collier County Water-Sewer District, and the Subelement text needs to reflect this.

#### **B. Objectives Analysis:**

##### **OBJECTIVE 1.1:**

The County will implement the following policies to make certain that public and private 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.

##### Objective Achievement Analysis:

This Objective concerns both private and public utilities. Collier County’s private water and wastewater utilities are regulated through the Utility/Franchise Regulation Section of the Community Development & Environmental Services (CDES) Operations Department. This agency serves as staff for the Collier County Water and Wastewater Authority. The Utility/Franchise Regulation Section is the County entity responsible for monitoring compliance with County regulations by private utilities. In addition to managing the operations of the Department and Section, the CDES Operations Director is also the Executive Director for the Water and Wastewater Authority.

In regulating the operations of the County's private utilities the Authority, which is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners, exercises considerable power. They may set rates, adjust franchise boundaries, set quality of service standards and intervene in disputes between utilities and customers.

The publicly owned (as opposed to privately-owned) wastewater collection system is operated by Collier County through the Collier County Water-Sewer District. The District is responsible for developing, operating and maintaining the County's public facilities related to wastewater treatment and collection.

The Collier County Board of County Commissioners has adopted the 2002 Wastewater Master Plan Update, Final Update (Master Plan) for the Collier County Government Public Utilities Engineering Department. This Master Plan updates provides for an integrated approach for meeting the needs of the citizens of Collier County wastewater and reclaimed water facilities up to the year 2020. A further update to the Master Plan will be completed during 2004.

The Master Plan is considerably more detailed than the Subelement regarding this objective. It contains separate criteria for wastewater treatment, wastewater collection and transmission, biosolids, and reclaimed water. Furthermore, with regard to the County Utility System, the County has implemented this Objective through: the adoption of Level of Service (LOS) Standards; the implementation of a concurrency management database and certificate of service tracking system; allowing private utility service only in areas where the County's wastewater management system does not operate; completion of the South County Regional Water Reclamation Facility; completion of the collection system for the East Naples and South Naples areas; ongoing expansion of the North County Regional Water Reclamation Facility; and establishing Community Development Districts, as per the criteria contained in Section 190, Florida Statutes.

Based on the above, this Objective should be retained as written.

#### Policy Relevance:

There are seven (7) policies within this Objective. Policy 1.1.1 requires the continued development of the Collier County Regional Sanitary Sewer System consistent with the criteria contained in the Capital Improvements element. The EAR-based amendments should include revision to the CIE table for sanitary sewer capital projects because the currently cite out-of-date treatment plant expansions.

Policy 1.1.2 places limits upon the establishment of central sanitary sewer service by allowing such service only in specific areas. Staff has identified a grammatical error in this Policy as it is currently written, and recommends correcting the error as part of the EAR-based amendments.

Policy 1.1.3 requires private sector sanitary sewer service utilities to file an annual statement of their policy and service criteria, including level of service provided, with the

Collier County Utilities Division, for the expansion and/or replacement of their facilities to correct existing deficiencies and provide for future growth within their respective service areas. Staff recommends that the EAR-based amendments include revisions to this Policy for purposes of clarity.

Policy 1.1.4 allows the use of package treatment plants or septic systems in areas of the County where centralized sewer service is not available. This Policy also contains criteria for the use of various wastewater treatment systems within the RLSA. Staff recommends that this policy be retained.

Policy 1.1.5 requires connection of all properties to a centralized sanitary sewer system when such becomes available. The language used in the text of the Policy is convoluted, and staff recommends simplifying this statement.

Policy 1.1.6 gives priority to connecting package treatment plants and septic systems to centralized sanitary sewer systems. The Policy contains criteria referring to private systems that have the potential to create adverse environmental or public health impacts. Staff recommends that criteria regarding bacteriological and effluent quality be added to this policy for the purpose of providing specific guidelines as to when interconnection should occur.

Policy 1.1.7 requires Community Development Districts, or other special infrastructure districts, to connect to the County Utility System when they are located within the Collier County Water-Sewer District Service Area.

## **OBJECTIVE 1.2:**

By the time mandated for the adoption of land development regulations pursuant to Chapter 163.3202,, F.S., including any amendments thereto, implement procedures to ensure that at the time a development order is issued, sanitary sewer 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.

### Objective Achievement Analysis:

This Objective is the County's concurrency provision for wastewater treatment capacity. The Collier County Water-Sewer District annually meets or exceeds its stated LOS standard. The disclosure of this achievement is reported within the periodic updates of the County's Wastewater Master Plan. The Collier County Development Review Process requires a determination that there is, or will be, adequate wastewater treatment capacity to serve the buildout of a proposed development. Furthermore, the County does not permit the establishment of large-scale residential or commercial developments without either the ability to treat the project's wastewater through an existing central utility or the establishment of an onsite wastewater treatment system. Therefore, this Objective has and is being met, and should be retained as written.

Policy Relevance:

There are four (4) policies within this Objective. Policy 1.2.1 establishes Level of Service (LOS) standards for various treatment facilities and for various types of land use. However, the policy should be revised to indicate the LOS standard for Orangetree Utilities, the Immokalee Water and Sewer District and the Florida Governmental Utility Authority, all of which are in Collier County.

Policy 1.2.2 requires that public and private utility methodologies for determining available capacity and demand must incorporate appropriate peak demand coefficients for each facility and for the type of development proposed. This Policy should be retained as written.

Policy 1.2.3 declares that the LOS Standards from Policy 1.2.1 are the minimum criteria upon which to base replacements, expansions or capacity increases. . This Policy should be retained as written.

Policy 1.2.4 requires an annual review of wastewater treatment demand records, with adjustment of the LOS Standards, as necessary, based upon the findings of the annual review. This Policy should be retained as written.

**OBJECTIVE 1.3:**

The County will continue to ensure utilization of environmentally sound and economically beneficial methods for disposal of treated sludge and septage.

Objective Achievement Analysis:

A review of the single policy within this Objective indicates that it is concerned with the safe and economic disposal of sewage sludge from County facilities. The Objective should be expanded to cover private sludge and septage disposal practices within Collier County.

Policy Relevance:

Policy 1.3.1 requires sludge de-watering and stabilization facilities to be included in all County wastewater treatment plants. The facilities are required to produce sludge de-watered and stabilized to a degree suitable to enable its use as cover material for County landfills or to be used for any suitable manner that is permitted by law. The stabilization facilities at the North County Water Reclamation Facility were abandoned in 1999 due to odor concerns. The County currently hauls biosolids to a sanitary landfill on an interim basis until biosolid stabilization facilities can be obtained to meet FAC Chapter 62-640 and USEPA 40 CFR Part 503. This policy should be retained.

As part of the EAR-based amendments, the County proposes a new policy requiring private sludge and septage to be treated to a degree equivalent to that employed at the County facilities, prior to its disposal.

## **OBJECTIVE 1.4:**

The County will continue to promote the use of reclaimed water 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.

### Objective Achievement Analysis:

This Objective commits the County to promoting the use of reclaimed water as an irrigation source for suitable properties. This language is similar to language contained in Objective 1.4 of the Potable Water Subelement (see Section 1.5.C.2 of this report). The County has an active reclaimed water irrigation program. Therefore staff recommends retention of this Objective as currently written.

### Policy Relevance:

There are six (6) policies within this Objective. Policy 1.4.1 requires the County to negotiate with area golf courses toward having these land uses accept reclaimed water as an irrigation source. A similar policy also occurs in the Potable Water Subelement (see Section 1.5.C.2 of this report). This policy should be retained as written.

Policy 1.4.2 calls for publicly owned lands to be connected to reclaimed water irrigation systems when economically feasible. This policy should be retained as written.

Policy 1.4.3 calls for suitable private lands to be connected to reclaimed water irrigation systems when economically feasible. This policy should be retained as written.

Policy 1.4.4 permits the construction and connection (to the County system) of dual water systems for new subdivisions, to the extent that this may be done without adverse impacts to the potable water system. Staff notes that similar Potable Water Subelement Policy 1.4.6 is written differently. Both policies should be retained but they should be made consistent with each other.

Policy 1.4.5 requires that dual water systems within Community Development Districts, other special districts, and Planned Unit Developments be connected to the Regional (County) system, at such time as the system is available for such connection. This policy should be retained as written.

Policy 1.4.6 requires the County to expand the use of “supplemental water systems.” However, it also references the reclaimed water system. This policy was achieved with the completion of the Immokalee Road (aka, Mule Pen Quarry) supplemental water wells. These wells were completed in 2002. This policy should be maintained and other resources of supplemental water should be pursued through the Golden Gate Canal.

## **OBJECTIVE 1.5:**

The County will discourage urban sprawl and the proliferation of private sector 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.

### Objective Achievement Analysis:

This Objective seeks to discourage urban sprawl through maximization of existing public wastewater treatment utilities. Further, the Objective states that this action will be achieved through the local development review process. The Public Utilities Engineering Department coordinates with the Zoning & Land Development Review Department in the review of development order applications to ensure that the requirements of this Objective are met. Therefore, this Objective should be retained as written.

### Policy Relevance:

There are three (3) policies within this Objective. The Objective and policies are similar to Objective 1.5 and its policies within the Potable Water Subelement (see Section 1.5.C.2 of this report). Policy 1.5.1 states “universal availability of “central sanitary sewer systems” will only be permitted in certain specific areas of the County. This policy is a restatement of Policy 1.1.2, but with an emphasis on limiting urban sprawl. The policy was amended during 2003. Therefore, these policies should be retained.

Policy 1.5.2 seeks to limit the ability of private sector and/or package sanitary treatment systems to be established, expand or add customers. “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 DER permits.” The policy was amended during 2003. The County recommends retention of this Policy with the correction of “DER” to “FDEP.”

Policy 1.5.3 contains the conditions for connection of development within the RLSA and the Rural Fringe to a central sanitary sewer system. Specifically, the policy states that “no properties designated other than as a Town, Village, Hamlet or Compact Rural Development” (within the RLSA) are permitted to connect to a central sanitary sewer system. The policy also states conditions for connections within the Rural Transition Water & Sewer District (i.e., the County’s Rural Fringe Mixed Use District). The policy was created during 2003. Therefore, this policy should be revised to incorporate the revised District boundaries, and to incorporate a reference to a 400-foot corridor of specifically designated roadways.