

Okaloosa County's Annual Report



2019



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2019 Commission



Graham Fountain
District 1



Carolyn Ketchel
District 2



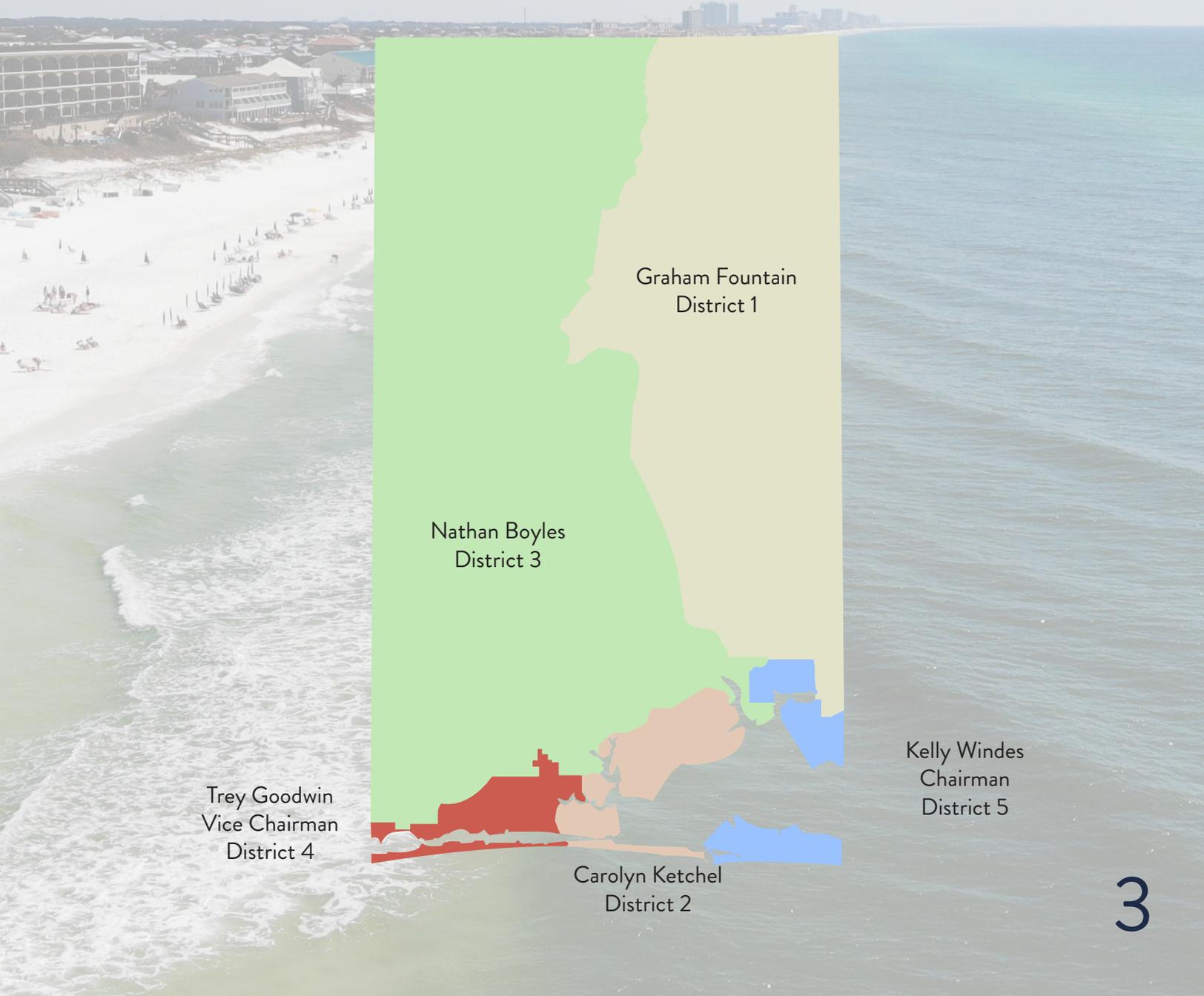
Nathan Boyles
District 3



Trey Goodwin
Vice Chairman
District 4



Kelly Windes
Chairman
District 5



Graham Fountain
District 1

Nathan Boyles
District 3

Trey Goodwin
Vice Chairman
District 4

Carolyn Ketchel
District 2

Kelly Windes
Chairman
District 5

Message from the Administrator



Growth continues to serve as our watchword in Okaloosa County. Our population continues to inch near 210,000 full-time residents – almost double the number of people who lived in the area about 40 years ago.

As more people flock to Florida in general; we, like many other Florida counties, continue to see some of America's best and brightest choose to live here. For that reason, we count ourselves blessed. More people have been able to work at high-paying jobs in our county, put their children through the best public schools in the state, and send them off to the best colleges and universities in the world.

Because of our many advantages and the hard work of County Employees, we are able to offer our citizens top-notch services at an affordable rate. Okaloosa County continues to have the one of the lowest tax burdens per capita while maintaining appropriate infrastructure, public safety and other benefits. In fact, Okaloosa

County is one of a small number of Florida counties to keep its millage rate below 4.0 mills.

The average homeowner pays about \$1,300 annually in property

John Hofstad started his tenure as a County Administrator in 2014 after a distinguished career in local government, which began more than 30 years ago at the city of Mary Esther, Florida. Mr. Hofstad manages the day-to-day operations of Okaloosa County with the help of deputy administrators Kay Godwin and Greg Kisela. Mr. Hofstad has lived in Okaloosa County for most of his life and holds an associates degree from Northwest Florida State College, a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from the University of West Florida and a Graduate Certificate in Florida City and County Management from the Askew School of Public Policy and Administration at Florida State University. Outside of his county duties, Mr. Hofstad serves the community through his efforts with the United Way of Okaloosa and Walton Counties, the All Sports Association, the Crestview Rotary Club, the Florida Association of City and County Managers as well as the International City/County Manager's Association.

taxes.

A look at a few accomplishments from Fiscal Year 2019

Fiscal Year 2019 saw the opening of the County Courthouse in the County Seat, Crestview. The \$22 Million project emphasized the commitment of the Board of County Commissioners to the further development of the rapidly growing city in general and the revitalization of the downtown area of the Hub City in particular. The courthouse boasts enhanced security features to protect judges, the public and inmates, a county commission chambers, the clerk's office and several other offices. About 1,000 people showed up on a blustery November day to celebrate the opening of the courthouse, which is now the centerpiece of a proud community.

Less than two weeks prior to the opening of the courthouse, Okaloosa County residents voted in favor of a local option half-cent sales tax. This user tax, a portion of which will be paid by tourists and those travelling through our area, will allow Okaloosa County to build a much needed bypass route around the City of Crestview. The Southwest Crestview Bypass will allow commuters to leave for work a little bit later, get home a little bit earlier and enhance quality of life in the northern portion of Okaloosa County by getting people out of their cars and back into their lives a little more efficiently. The



project's groundbreaking took place in September of 2019 and work is presently underway clearing right-of-way to make room for the expanded roadway. It is my hope this \$200 Million project, which received funding from the sales tax, Triumph Gulf Coast and FDOT, will pave its last mile of asphalt by 2024.

The Okaloosa County Airport continues to expand rapidly. Just five years ago, the airport had fewer than ten routes – now we have more than 30. The passenger numbers have spiked as well – more than 1.5 million passengers came through the terminal at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport in FY 2019. This rapid increase translates to growing pains and an upgrade in facilities is needed to match the growth. Our airports department has secured funding through the State and from a partner airline to build a new concourse and extra parking – for both cars and airplanes at the airport. We are excited to welcome new friends from further and further afield due to the success of Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport.

Speaking of visitors, we have had another record year for tourism in our area. Our Tourism Development Department continues to mold our marketing message to meet the opportunities available to us and the challenges more people in a limited amount of space bring. Thanks to a change at the State level, our tourism bed tax revenues can now be put to work to help us upgrade our infrastructure in the southern portion of the county to accommodate the population explosion which happens there from March to September and beyond every year. Additionally the Tourism Development Department is investing in alternative trip highlights for visitors, such as artificial

diving reefs, lionfish tournaments and ecological tourism in the northern reaches of Okaloosa County as a way to diversify our destination portfolio.

Finally, we are taking note of the threats to our county from the internet. Our Information Technology has rolled out a two-pronged approach to reduce our susceptibility to hackers, malware and other technical malfeasance other governments across the country have fallen victim to. IT has worked with every member of Okaloosa County staff to reduce our risk to phishing and other e-mail based scams, while also implementing soft and hardware based solutions for the same issues.

As Okaloosa County continues to grow, county employees stand ready to create the best environment possible for thriving business, thriving families and thriving communities.

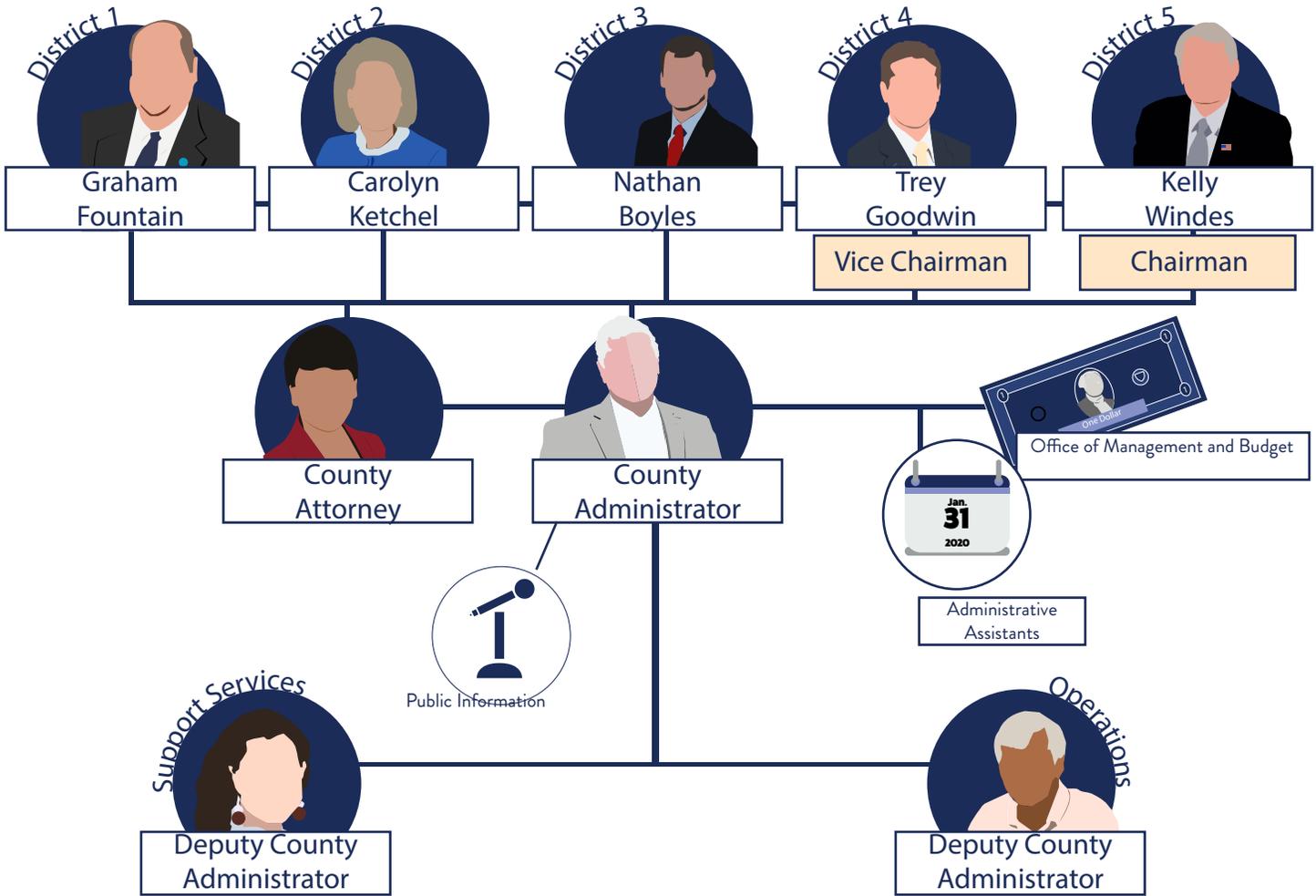
Thank you for taking interest in our slice of paradise.



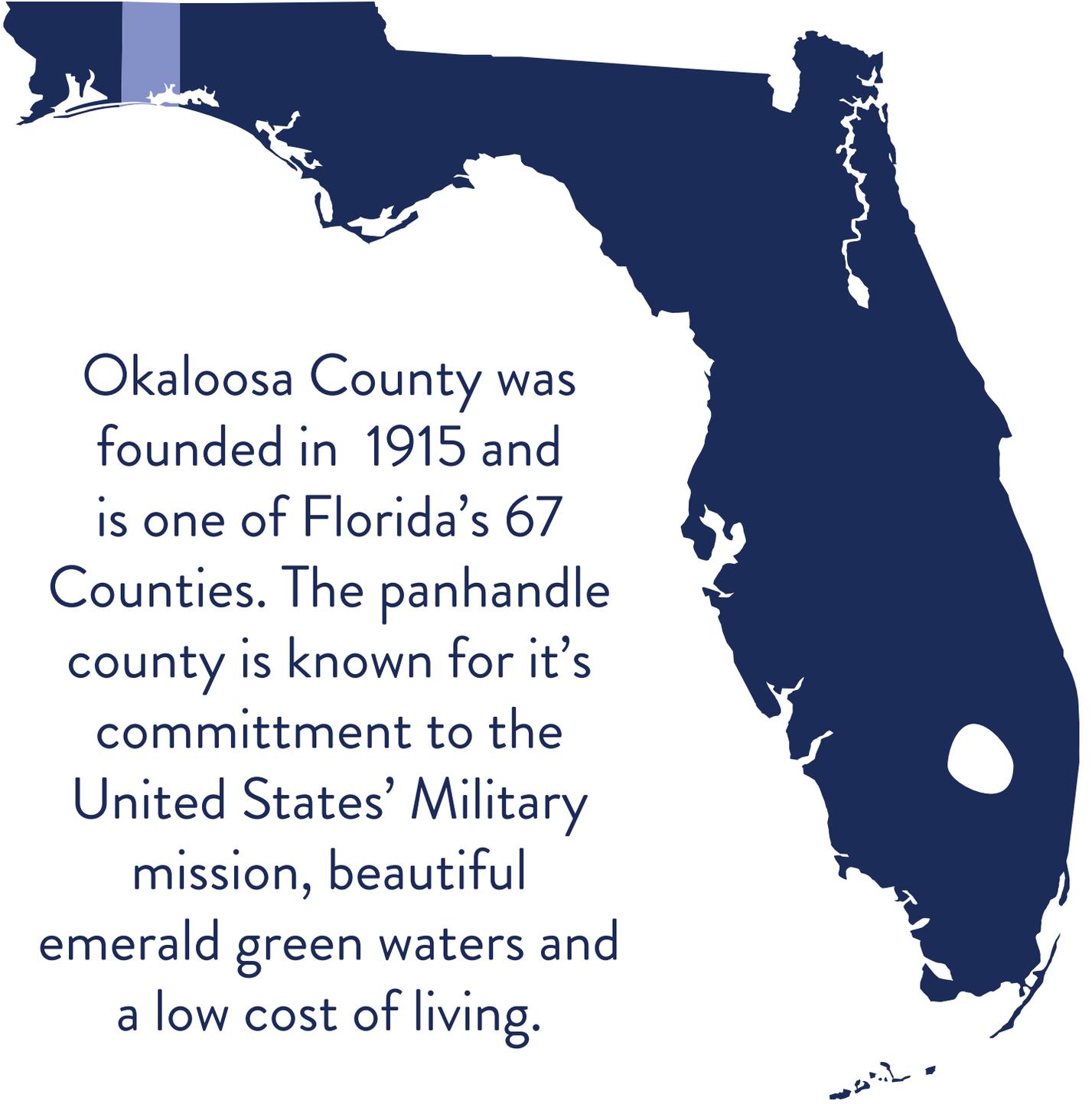
Above: County Administrator John Hofstad and Public Works Director Jason Autrey cut the ribbon at the Crestview Courthouse opening in November 2018.

John Hofstad
Okaloosa County Administrator

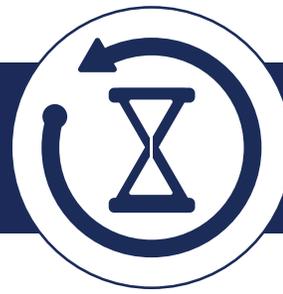
ORGANIZATION CHART



Okaloosa County was founded in 1915 and is one of Florida's 67 Counties. The panhandle county is known for its commitment to the United States' Military mission, beautiful emerald green waters and a low cost of living.



History



Since time immemorial, humans have lived along the coasts and in the pine forests of what is now Okaloosa County. Remnants of Native American Civilization, like the Fort Walton Beach Indian Temple Mound, dot the landscape and speak to the human heritage of the area which dates back before the end of the first millennia A.D.

The cities of Fort Walton Beach, Valparaiso and Niceville, then called Boggy Bayou, had little more than 100 residents combined during the 19th century. Most people lived to the north or near what is now the City of Destin. The city can trace its origins back to the arrival of Captain Leonard Destin, a New England Fisherman, who set up a permanent home in the area immediately before the Civil War. For many years, 'Destin' was a small fishing village on the coast. But as more and more people found out about the beautiful water, sand, scenery and fish, tourists began to flock to the area. Now, more than four million people from around the

country and the world come to visit the area every year.

It was a State Representative from Laurel Hill, William Mapoles, who succeeded in creating the new county. The Representative introduced a bill into the Florida House in 1915, which called for a referendum to carve away portions of Santa Rosa and Walton counties in order to merge them into a new county.



Above: State Representative William Mapoles with his family at their home in Laurel Hill.

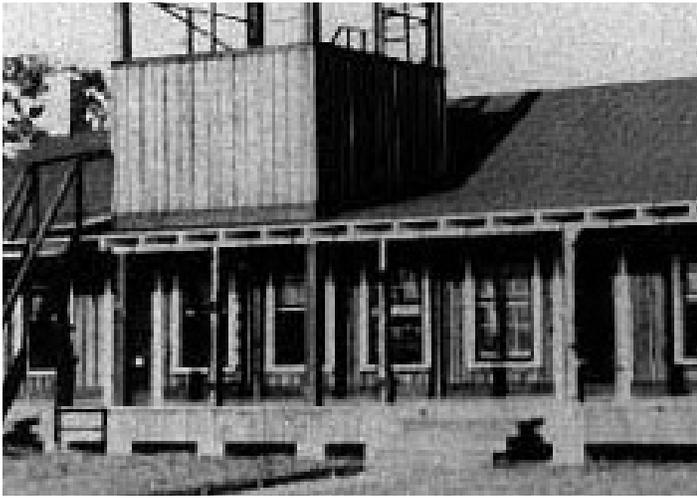
The voters approved the decision and Okaloosa County was created in September of that year. Mapoles named the new county "Okaloosa," after a steamboat he used to travel between the cities of Pensacola and Milton. The original inhabitants of the area, the Choctaw Indians, created the word - which translates to "black water."

A temporary county seat was created in Milligan. The county's residents, many of whom lived north of what is now the Eglin Reservation, decided the County's seat would be Crestview in a 1917 referendum.

At first, the newly-created county would rely heavily on the turpentine and fishing industries for sustenance,

Below: Another view of the Crestview Courthouse, which is displayed on the cover of this year's Annual Report





Above: An early photo of the Valparaiso Gunnery Range. Building and the land would eventually become Eglin Air Force Base.

Below: James Plew donated vast sums of his land to the United States Army in hopes of the government building up a large presence to stimulate the economy. It worked. Eglin Air Force Base is responsible for two of every three dollars earned in Okaloosa County.



but a visionary would forever change the way the county did business with the rest of the nation and the world.

Life had not changed too much in the twenty years which passed between the creation of the county and the beginning of troubling times once again in Europe. Across the Atlantic Ocean, German militarism

and expansionism began to rear its ugly head. Fascist dictators Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler had risen to power and began to arm their countries' once-shattered armies. In the East, Hideki Tojo and the military junta of the Imperial Japanese Army marched across China, killing millions of innocent civilians while keeping their eyes on the ultimate prize – oil reserves and rubber supplies to feed their ever-expanding empire.

In the United States, and in Okaloosa County, the Great Depression gripped the lives of ordinary people. It was during this time, a visionary landowner, James E. Plew saw an opportunity to lift the county out of the depression and prepare the country for its eventual entry into World War II. In addition to his business

interests, Plew loved airplanes and saw their intrinsic value for civilian and military uses. He contacted the U.S. Government with a proposition: he would donate about 1,500 acres of land for a bombing and gunnery range, knowing the rising tide which would come with the introduction of flyers to the local economy would lift all ships. Three years later, the range was named Eglin Field, after Lt. Col. Frederick Irving Eglin, an Army Aviator who died in a plane crash earlier that year near Maxwell Field, Alabama. Eglin had twenty years flying experience, during some of which he trained pilots in the First World War.

The base expanded after the end of the Second World War and now acts as a testing facility for many of the newest weapons in the Air Force's arsenal. The base is still the largest in the U.S. and compares in size to Rhode Island. It is also home to the Air Force Research Laboratory and the U.S. Army Special Forces 7th



Above: Lieutenant Colonel Frederick Irving Eglin, A New York City Native, was orphaned as a young boy. His incredible drive and athletic ability earned him a scholarship to Wabash College, where he played on the basketball, baseball and football teams. While in school, he joined the Indiana National Guard and was promoted to regimental sergeant major. He was selected for pilot training when the United States entered World War One. He commanded squadrons in both the United States and the Philippines

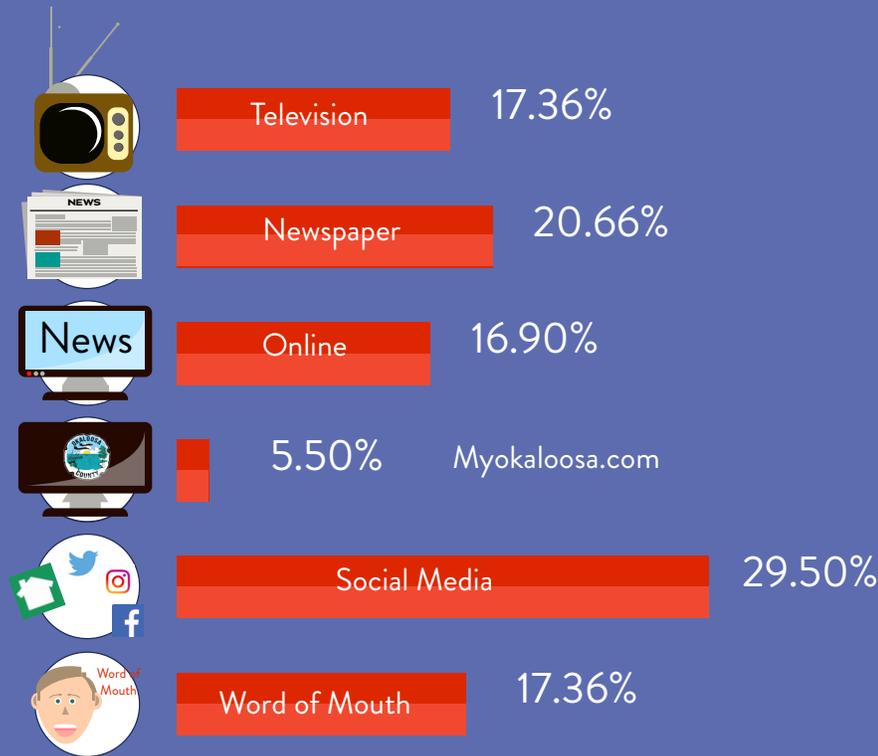
Group, which is responsible for the Latin American and Caribbean Field of Operations. James Plew's idea to bring the army into the county has paid dividends over and over for residents; 65% of the county's economic activity is generated from the military. •

Survey Responses



The second annual Okaloosa County Communications Survey was taken in May and June of 2019. 746 respondents were recruited to take the survey through social media, mailers and primitive advertising. Those responses yielded numerous insights into the opinions of residents, which the County PIO and other departments plan to use in order to become more effective and communicative in the future.

Types of Media People Use Daily to Learn About Okaloosa County



87.3%

of respondents with an opinion say Okaloosa County social media accounts are a good way to get more information about the County.

1 in 3 respondents is a Veteran, Active-Duty, in the Reserve, or in the Guard



Most Commonly Interacted-With Departments



Water and Sewer - 31.39%



Airports - 28.27%



Public Works - 24.95%

Human Statistics



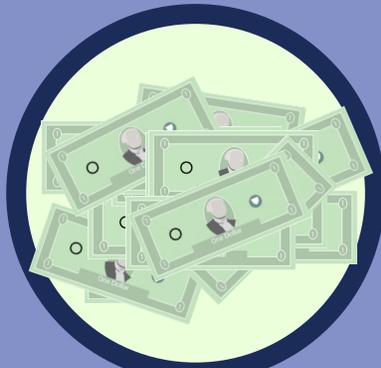
9,207 Active Duty Airmen, Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Coast Guardsmen call Okaloosa County home.



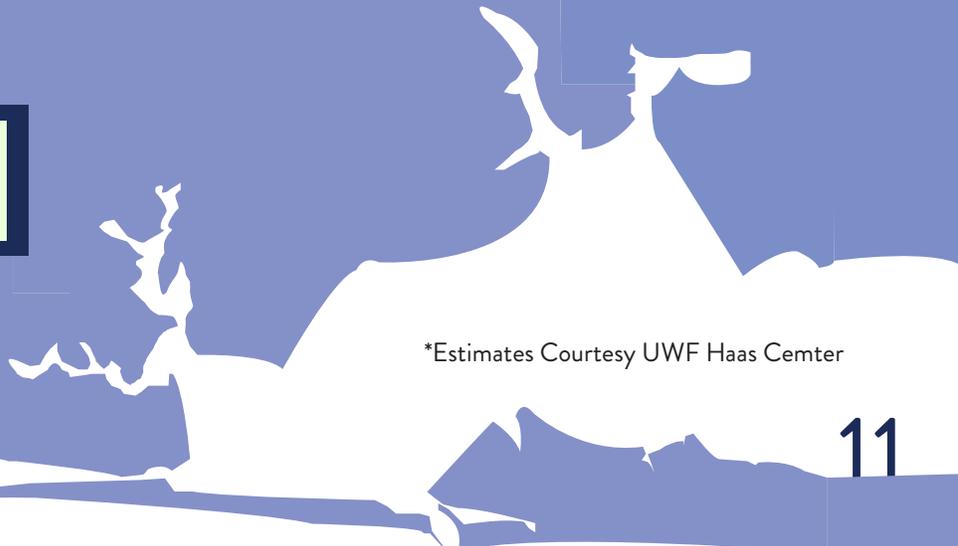
39.3% of Residents hold an Associate's Degree or Higher



33,552 Veterans live in Okaloosa County. Okaloosa County is one of the most Veteran-populated Counties in the Country



The Average Salary in Okaloosa County is \$47,349.



*Estimates Courtesy UWF Haas Center

Board of County Commissioners



The Board of County Commissioners is a five-member group of elected officials tasked with orchestrating administration and governance in Okaloosa County. During their four-year terms, members formulate policy which provides the direction the county administrator gives to staff. The Board's goal is to provide effective government while keeping the cost of that government as low as possible and to stimulate growth of businesses within the county.

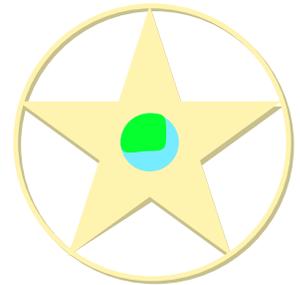
The County Commission meets twice monthly: the first Tuesday of the month, the group assembles in Crestview and on the third Tuesday, they meet in the commission chambers in Shalimar.

The Five Commissioners live in their geographic districts, but are elected at large and represent the entire county.

The Commissioners also bring unique experiences to the dais which rounds out the group. FY19's Chairman, Commissioner and businessman Kelly Windes captained a charter fishing boat after serving in the Navy. Commissioner and Vice Chairman Trey Goodwin is a practicing attorney in the Fort Walton

Below: Commissioner meet to discuss issues which face the County during one of their regular meetings.

Beach area. District 3 Commissioner Nathan Boyles is a lawyer and owns several businesses in Crestview. Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel worked for Catholic Charities of Northwest Florida and is a licensed counselor and social worker. Commissioner Graham Fountain has extensive law enforcement experience serving in the Sheriffs' Departments in Okaloosa and Walton Counties as well a stint as Law Enforcement Executive with the Florida State Department of Transportation. County Commissioners bear responsibility for approving the annual budget, choosing when and where to implement county ordinances and formulating policy.



Above: The County Commissioners provide oversight on the other elected officials, such as the sheriff's office and clerk of court, by approving their budgets every year.

As more and more people have moved into the Okaloosa County area, the Commissioners have accelerated their efforts to improve infrastructure in the county. They have leveraged every mechanism available, from general revenue to money given to the State of Florida to repay counties affected by the BP Oil Spill, to invest in County road infrastructure. Other goals for the five Commissioners include fortifying our Sheriff's office



with additional deputies, and bringing visitors to our emerald-green shores with Okaloosa County's rapidly expanding airport.

The Commissioners' main focus over the next several years will center on improving the capacity of local infrastructure. In 2019, The Board of County Commissioners were able to secure funding from several different governmental entities to fund the southwest Crestview bypass. The route will relieve traffic flowing into Crestview every day as commuters return home from jobs on Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field and tourism jobs in the southern portion of the County. The County estimates the project will be finished in 2024.



Above: Commissioners held two town halls in FY19; one in Baker and another in unincorporated Fort Walton Beach

Fiscal Year 2019 also saw the completion of the Crestview Courthouse, the installation of \$1.5 million in water and sewer infrastructure to improve the economic viability of the Shoal River Ranch Gigasite east of Crestview.

Below: BCC Executive Assistant Samantha Cutsinger was named the Guardian Ad Litem Community Partner of the Year for her work with the group.

The Board of County Commissioners receives its funding from the general revenue fund, which is paid for by property, sales and other taxes.



Chairman Kelly Windes
District 5
Destin, Bluewater Bay, Niceville



Vice Chairman Trey Goodwin
District 4
Fort Walton Beach, Mary Esther



Commissioner Nathan Boyles
District 3
Western Crestview, Niceville, Fort Walton Beach



Commissioner Carolyn Ketchel
District 2
Okaloosa Island, Fort Walton Beach, Shalimar, Cinco Bayou and Valparaiso



Commissioner Graham Fountain
District 1
Eastern Crestview, Laurel Hill



Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$779,232	\$759,013	-2.6%
Operating Expenses	\$81,150	\$64,045	-21.1%
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grand Total	\$860,382	\$823,058	-4.3%

OPERATION SANTA BOAT BRINGS GIFTS TO HURRICANE MICHAEL SURVIVORS

As Commissioner Kelly Windes watched Hurricane Michael rip through the coastline just sixty miles down the road from where he moors his charter boat – his first thought was for the safety and well-being of the people who had just suffered the landfall of the most powerful storm to ever hit the United States. His second thought was about kids like his grandchildren. “Their parents had just been put out of their jobs, they had just been put out of their homes,” he said. He knew what he had to do. He got in his trawler and made the overnight, 12-hour journey to Panama City Beach.

In his boat – food, water and other necessities for the people to survive in a new world without their homes and the comforts of everyday life in America. “I saw that the kids were in a bad way. I thought about how difficult it would be to live like that.” He spent the whole boat ride home thinking about what he could do for those children. When he got home, he spoke to his wife, Mary Anne, and they figured out how they could help.

“Christmas shopping season was right around the corner,” said Mrs. Windes, “and we knew we could be

their best hope to have a decent Christmas.” With that conversation, and another with Tourism Development Department Director Jennifer Adams, Operation Santa Boat was born. “We brought in the team from Boone-Oakley to help us reach out to the giving hearts of the Emerald Coast,” Adams said.



Citizens of the Gulf and Emerald Coast Enthusiasts from as far away as the Midwest helped the Chairman of the Commission round up thousands of presents for the children in Bay and Gulf Counties to deliver right before Christmas.

“It was a team effort for sure,” Commissioner Windes said, “I was just one part of it.”

Commissioner Windes made that 12-hour trip back to the areas affected by Hurricane Michael, hauling hope – just in time for Christmas. •

Right: Commissioner Windes uses heavy machinery to load donated toys onto his boat. The boat then made the 12-Hour journey to Port St. Joe and Panama City Beach.

Left: Public Works employees help the Commissioner batten down the Santa Boat Toys for children in Hurricane Michael-affected counties.



County Administrator's Office



The County Administrator's Office is the nucleus of the cell which makes up the county. The executive appointed official in the county government, the county administrator implements the policies of the Board. Creating a county government which is superior, efficient and cost-effective is the main goal of the department.



Above: County Administrator John Hofstad (Center), Deputy County Administrator Greg Kisela (Left) and Deputy County Administrator (Right)

In FY '19, the Okaloosa County Administrator's Office continued to progress the mission of the citizens of the County by updating the forward-looking strategic plan.

The beginning of the financial year saw the opening of the Crestview County Courthouse. The Courthouse, positioned prominently on the intersection of State Route 85 and US Highway 90, stands as a monument of the people of Okaloosa County, justice and the rule of law.

With the passage of the half-cent sales tax in November of 2018, the County Administrator's Office was also tasked with curating a list of infrastructure improvement projects. Included in the projects is the much-anticipated and much-needed southwest Crestview

Below: Currently, there is only one way through Crestview to I-10. the Southwest Bypass will relieve congestion through the center of the city, give travelers another way to get to I-10 and open up more real estate for local businesses.

bypass project. This bypass will reduce the high volume of traffic headed into the Crestview area from points south, including Eglin Air Force Base. Keeping with the County's commitment to the citizens to relieve traffic in the area, the County earned a \$64.1 award from the Triumph Gulf Coast Corporation. The award, which received its money from a settlement with BP after the 2008 Deepwater Horizon Spill, will fund about a third of the project's total cost.

Assisting the County Administrator in his duties are the Deputy County Administrators for Support Services and Operations. The Deputy Administrator for Support Services, Kay Godwin, provides oversight for the Growth Management, Human Resources, Agricultural Extension, Veteran Services, Risk Management, Information Technology, Court Services and Library Cooperative Offices. The Deputy Administrator for Operations, Greg Kisela, provides oversight for the





Water and Sewer, Public Works, Airports, Tourism Development and Public Safety Departments. The Office of Management and Budget reports directly to the County Administrator.

Above: A bird's-eye view of the Okaloosa County Administration Building. The building houses the Administrator's Office, the BCC offices, the Clerk of Courts, Tax Collector and Property Appraisers office, Information Technology, Growth Management, Veteran Services and the Supervisor of Elections office.

Other members of the County Administrator's Office include executive assistants who assist with development of the Board meeting agendas, and care for other business relating to the administration of the county. The County Administrator's Office receives its funding from the general revenue fund, which is paid for by property, sales and other taxes. •

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A BYPASS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

For decades traffic congestion on the only north-south artery in Okaloosa County has ground drivers to a halt as they head toward Crestview. But with the approval of more than two-thirds of voters and a grant from the Triumph Gulf Coast Fund, the Southwest Crestview will become a reality.

The bypass consists of an expanded State Route Four, with an interchange-overpass at Interstate Ten on the city's west side. On the north side of the interstate, the road will connect with Old Bethel Road. The Commission hopes to eventually expand the bypass into a full ring around the County Seat, similar to Interstate 285 in Atlanta.

The bypass will reduce traffic congestion flowing through the central district of Crestview. The new infrastructure will allow people to drive around the many stoplights inside the city for a quicker drive to the north or west. This will entice builders to develop land in the far northern portions of the county, as homebuyers who choose to live there will have a significantly reduced

Below: State Route Four will be expanded in order to relieve traffic on State Route 85. the expansion and interchange which will become the Southwest Bypass will raise quality of life in northern Okaloosa County

Above: a new overpass-interchange will be constructed to the east of the current overpass which connects south Crestview to Baker.

Below: The plans for the southwest bypass have been developed - Okaloosa County is ready to go!

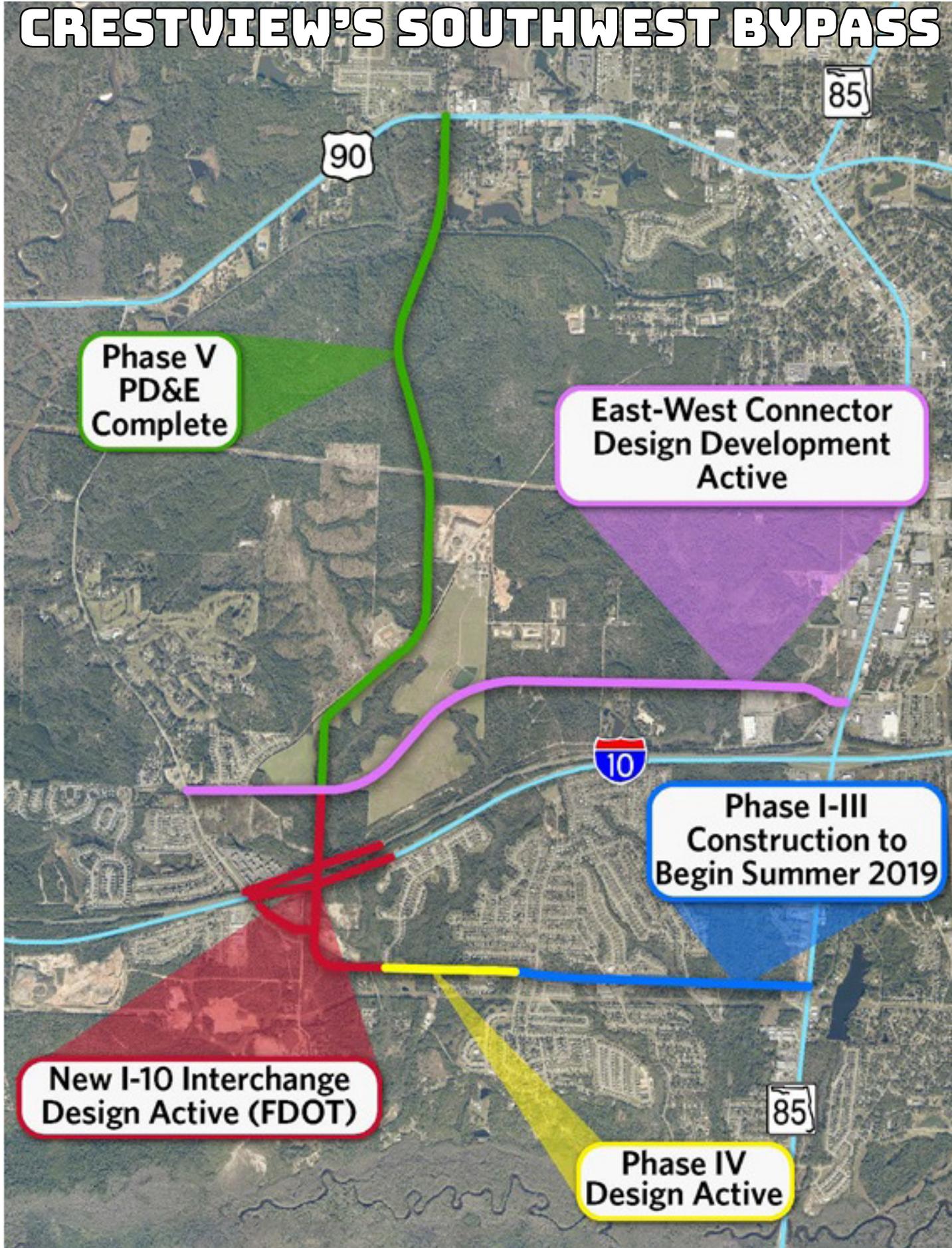
commute to Eglin Air Force Base and the beaches. The project will encourage the development of business along the corridor and mean another economic boom for the city of Crestview and other portions of the north county. New businesses will pop up along the route, along with new homes and other enterprises.

Finally, the burden of traffic on the vital military mission in Okaloosa County will be significantly reduced by an increase in capacity due to the expansion. "When a major earthquake struck Haiti in 2010, its people of Haiti were in desperate need of assistance," remembered Congressman Matt Gaetz when he advocated on behalf of the County's receipt of Triumph Gulf Coast Funds for the project, "Hurlburt and Eglin responded. Within 26 hours of the earthquake, airmen from Hurlburt field were on the ground in Haiti... It took our air commandos less than half an hour to render the Port-a-Prince Airport operational. That's less time than it takes to get from the Shoal River to Interstate 10 during drive time."

•



CRESTVIEW'S SOUTHWEST BYPASS



Public Information Office



Fiscal Year 2019 changed the way Okaloosa County reaches out to its citizens via the Public Information Office (PIO). Not only did the program office codify its policies, procedures and strategies in its Comprehensive Playbook, it far exceeded its previous ability to reach the citizens of Okaloosa County to let them know about the work being done on their behalf by the hardworking employees of the county.

Below: The logo of the Certified Public Communicator Program



The PIO made almost 1,400 posts on social media and recorded more than 900 stories in the traditional news media. Those efforts meant more than 28.77 million contacts with residents in our County, or 141 contacts with every citizen per year.

This media coverage exceeded \$180,000 in value per month. In

FY '17, the County managed an estimated \$75,000 per month.

The PIO produced a 55-page annual report, a 73-page Public Information Strategy, a Crisis Communication plan, a parks guide and six bi-monthly newsletters for employees and other projects which benefit the people, employees, executives and elected officials of Okaloosa County.

As part of the curriculum of the

Above: Okaloosa County's PIO serves as a megaphone for county messaging



Above: the Okaloosa County Hurricane Guide. The Guide is updated yearly.

Certified Public Communicator Program at Texas Christian University, the Public Information Officer created a strategic plan, referenced above, to set goals and action plan for Okaloosa County for the next five years.

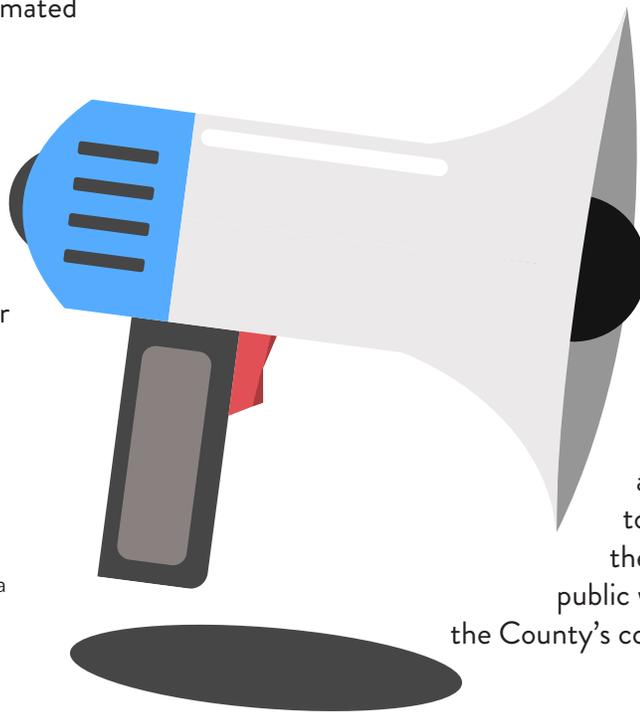
In FY '18, the PIO prepared a Hurricane Guide for the people of Okaloosa County. This guide told them how to prepare for and survive a Hurricane in Okaloosa County. This year, the PIO, in conjunction with Texas Christian University's Communication Department produced a Crisis Communications Plan



which will help the PIO clearly and efficiently communicate crisis information to the citizens of Okaloosa County as a part of the Emergency Management function of the Public Safety Department.

The PIO also distributed a survey to members of the public via social media, simple random mail survey and physical advertisement to get an understanding of the wants and needs of the

public when it comes to the County's communication. 746



surveys were filled out, more than the 464

returned the previous year. Several of the insights drawn from the survey are displayed on page 12.

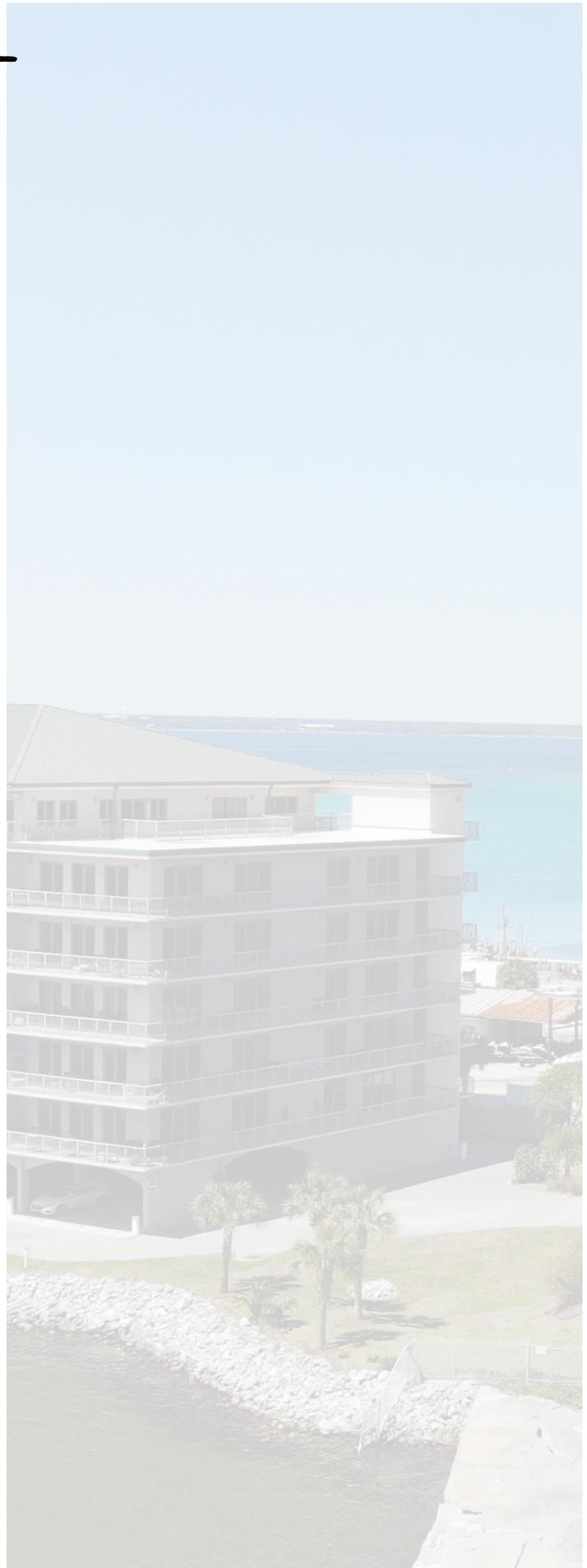


Above: The Small Unmanned Aerial System (sUAS), more commonly known as a drone, provides a whole new angle for Okaloosa County video productions which promote the hard work of county employees.

As the world of social media expands, the PIO has expanded with it. In Fiscal Year '19, the PIO opened LinkedIn, Instagram and Nextdoor accounts in order to send messages to the public and receive feedback on what the county is doing. Between the three accounts, the County reaches more than 250,000 people per month.

In addition to taking photos and videos on the ground, the Public Information Officer earned a pilot's license to fly small Unmanned Aerial Systems, more commonly known as drones. This ability has added a wealth of new content to more easily engage the average citizen and encourage them to engage with the county.

Finally, the PIO expanded through the use of unpaid summer volunteer interns. The interns, which served to bolster two-way communication through social media and improve the quality of posts and time on television through visual media allowed the PIO to expand its reach farther into the county. In addition each completed a long-term project, which benefited the overall mission of the County: be accessible, accountable, compassionate and transparent. •



Above: The PIO internship boasted two interns for the summer semester. The interns together put in more than 500 hours and completed over 300 tasks during their time at the county.

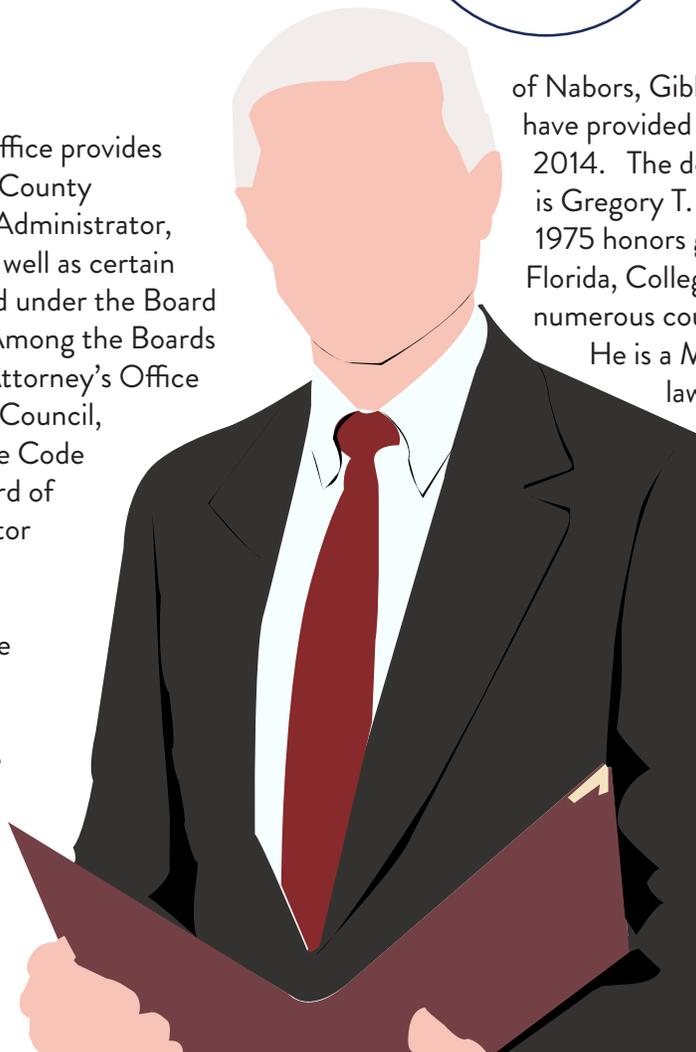
County Attorney's Office



The County Attorney's Office provides legal counsel to the Board of County Commissioners, the County Administrator, and County Departments, as well as certain boards and agencies organized under the Board of County Commissioners. Among the Boards represented by the County Attorney's Office are the Tourist Development Council, the Planning Commission, the Code Enforcement Board, the Board of Adjustment and the Contractor Licensing Board.

The County Attorney's Office oversees all aspects of the County's departments. Among those services are the drafting and reviewing of all contracts, leases and grants to be entered into by the County and the monitoring of the procurement process and legal oversight of all employment issues. The County Attorney's Office prepares all ordinances, resolutions, and proposed legislation for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners and is responsible for the institution and defense of all civil actions involving Okaloosa County the courtroom.

The services of the County Attorney's Office are provided by a contract with the law firm



of Nabors, Giblin and Nickerson, P.A. who have provided these services since April 2014. The designated County Attorney is Gregory T. Stewart. Mr. Stewart is a 1975 honors graduate of the University of Florida, College of Law and has represented numerous counties throughout the State.

He is a Martindale-Hubbell AV-rated lawyer and has been selected as one of "The Best Lawyers in America" in the field of Litigation - Municipal.

Lynn Hoshihara and Kerry Parsons serve as Deputy County Attorneys. Ms. Hoshihara is a cum laude graduate of Florida State University and a graduate of the Florida State University College of Law. Ms. Hoshihara served as Walton County Attorney from 2010 through 2012 and as Staff Attorney for Walton County from 2007 through 2010. Ms. Parsons is a 2008 cum laude graduate of Suffolk University with a bachelor's degree in Government and a 2011 graduate of Florida Coastal School of Law. Ms. Parsons served as Citrus County Attorney from 2013 through 2014 and as Citrus County Assistant County Attorney from 2011 through 2013.

The County Attorney is funded from the General Fund. •

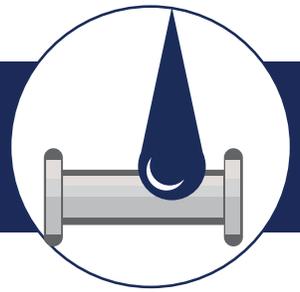
Above: The County Attorney's Office Represents the interests of the people of Okaloosa County, should a case go to court. The office is also responsible for drawing up ordinances which are in line with state and federal laws.

Below: Attorney Greg Stewart was one of the best lawyers in america - He was named a preeminent attorney by Martindale-Hubbell Lawyer Ratings.



AV PREEMINENT RATING
HIGHEST RATING AVAILABLE
PEER RANKED LEVEL OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

Water and Sewer



The Water and Sewer Department provides drinking water for the unincorporated areas of Okaloosa County and also provides wastewater services for these same customers. The eight divisions of the Water and Sewer Department work together to keep drinking water safe and the environment clean.

The department services more than 40,000 water service connections and 37,000 sewer service connections. These services are charged by the Water and Sewer I.T. Division's billing services each month. Despite the large number of customers, the department maintains a very high collection rate. Historically, less than one percent of annual revenue is written off as bad debt each year.

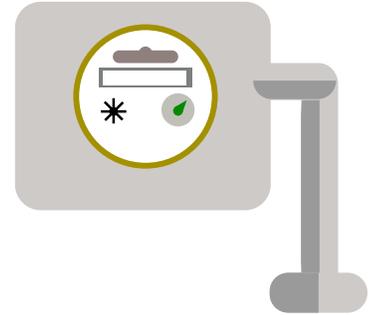
Administration

The Water and Sewer Administration is responsible for the accounting, billing, customer service, debt-collection, I.T., supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA), logistics, water meters, project and maintenance costing, contract grant administration, personnel/payroll functions, and budget administration.

Okaloosa County Water & Sewer is an Enterprise Fund Department. All Water and Sewer Department operations are funded by the revenue collected 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 & Sewer service area.

The Okaloosa County Water and Sewer Department Meter Team worked throughout the year to upgrade more than 20,000 water meters to ensure billing



Above: The Water Meter Team upgraded more than 20,000 water meters in FY19.

accuracy and convert to radio read technology. During 2020, the Meter Team is planning to finish this upgrade project throughout the entire customer base. Once completed staff will have the capability to detect leaks or abnormal consumption quickly, thanks to a continuously-reading meter.

Over this past year, Water & Sewer I.T. staff worked with a new vendor to launch a secure, user friendly, online services website. The new site's features allows customers to view, pay, track water use, and autopay bills.

In 2020, the Administration division plans to move forward with several new initiatives. The division intends to implement call recording software for customer service purposes. Members of the Water Meter Team are moving forward becoming licensed Water Distribution System Operators and certified backflow assembly testers. This effort should increase our level of service with

customers and builders. Department-wide, as many modern water/wastewater jobs require licensing and/or certification, many employees are moving forward with additional licenses and certifications, for reasons such as employee growth and development, professionalism, and improving levels of service and efficiency.

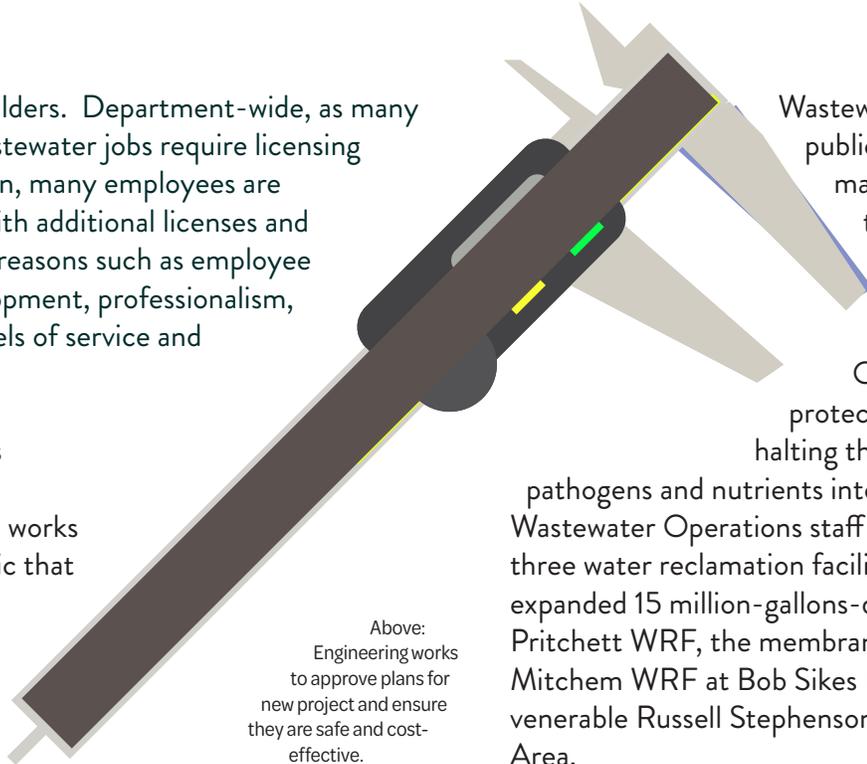
Water Operations

Water Operations works to assure the public that the Department's water supplies are safe and adequate for the water system's users.

The Water Operations division is responsible for the almost 500 miles of water distribution mains in Okaloosa County. In order to provide adequate pressure, flow, storage, and redundancy, the Water Operations division operates and maintains 21 public water supply wells, 3 ground storage tanks, 17 elevated tanks, and four booster pumps. The Department also maintains a backflow preventer inspection/compliance program, which ensures that cross connections (potential contamination) from individual customers do not affect the public water supply.

In FY19, the Water Operations division opened a much-needed second water supply line to Okaloosa Island. This supply postures Okaloosa Island for emergencies, like hurricanes. The transmission main, which was funded primarily by a state grant, is a directional bore under Santa Rosa Sound, near Brooks Bridge.

Water Reclamation Facilities and Lift Stations



Above: Engineering works to approve plans for new project and ensure they are safe and cost-effective.

Wastewater Operations protects public health by operating and maintaining public sewers throughout the County to treat 2.8 billion gallons of wastewater every year. The Wastewater Operations division also protects the environment by halting the introduction of harmful pathogens and nutrients into our environment.

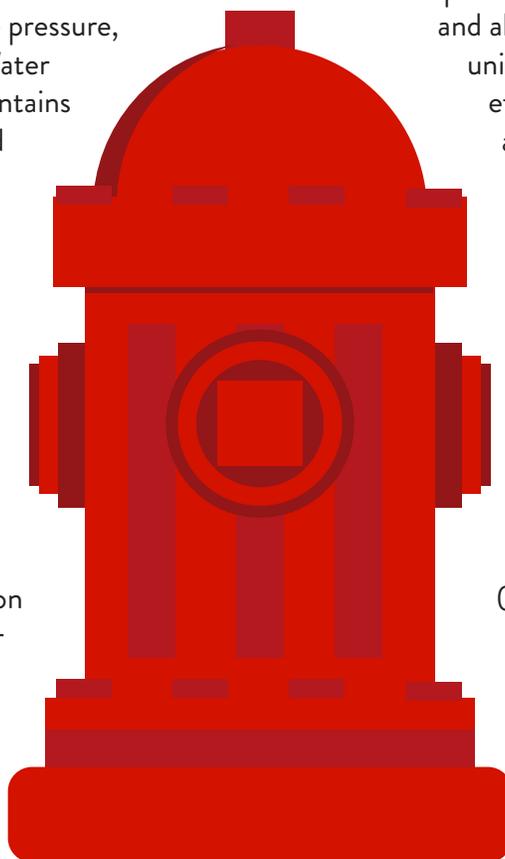
Wastewater Operations staff operates and maintains three water reclamation facilities (WRF), including the expanded 15 million-gallons-per-day (MGD) Arbennie Pritchett WRF, the membrane bioreactor Jerry D. Mitchem WRF at Bob Sikes Industrial Park, and the venerable Russell Stephenson WRF in the County West Area.

In Fiscal Year 2019, Okaloosa County Water and Sewer maintained 24/7 standby coverage on all program components, including 155 sewer pump stations and almost 500 miles of sewer mains. The unit also manages waste disposal via: 1) effluent to rapid infiltration basins and absorption beds, 2) reclaimed water to the City of Fort Walton Beach, and 3) biosolids used as fertilizer.

In 2020, Wastewater Operations will be beginning the design of a solids-handling expansion. This multi-year capacity expansion project is necessitated because of increased loading on the plant – the average flow coming to the plant, and primarily, from the septage/FOG (septage, oils, and grease) station.

Engineering

The Engineering Division oversees the design and acceptance of new infrastructure projects. For county capital improvement plan (CIP) projects, this division is responsible for survey work, design, permitting, inspection, and completion documentation. For land development projects,



Above: Utilities Operations Support maintains County Fire Hydrants.

this division is responsible for plan review, approval, inspection, and acceptance. The Engineering Division also offers assistance to the public and other County staff, in the form of GIS data, technical direction, and regulatory requirements.

Construction

Water and Sewer Construction installs new water and sewer infrastructure and replaces aging older infrastructure. They construct new water mains, sewer mains, and sewer pump stations across the county to upgrade and ensure service to the public.

This past year, the Construction Division completed the installation of the 7-mile East County Sewer Transmission Main. The project diverts Bluewater Bay Area wastewater from the Niceville-Valparaiso Regional Sewer Board’s plant and transmits it to the County’s Arbennie Pritchett WRF, resulting in a significant financial savings each year. This crew also completed about half of the construction on the Bradford/Lafitte Crescent Area Water System Improvements project, which will provide new, larger water mains to the area and increase the fire protection and system reliability. The remainder of the project is expected to be completed in 2020.

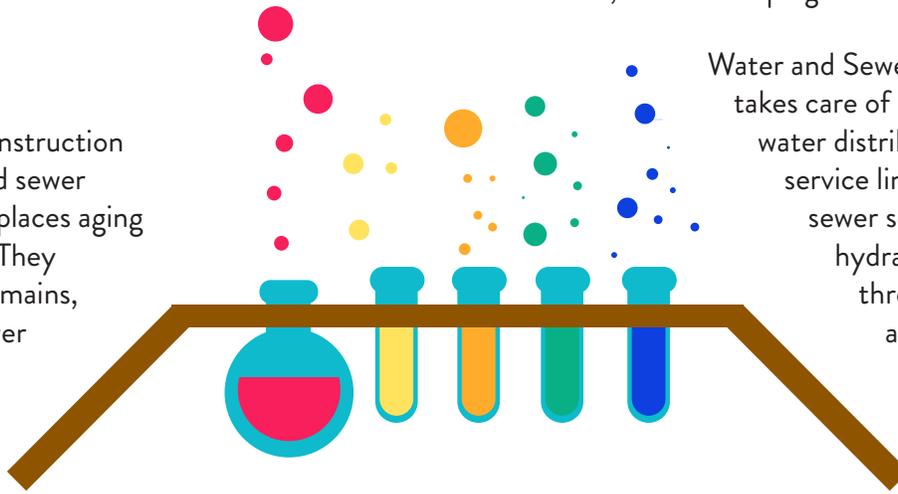
Water and Sewer has several major construction projects slated for 2020. The Water and Sewer department will relocate the water main along PJ Adams in preparation for the Southwest Crestview Bypass Project. The department will also complete the North Lakeshore Sewer project, which began in 2019 with grant funding. The project will convert approximately 20 coastal homes from septic tanks to public sewer and install critical backbone wastewater infrastructure.

Utilities Operations Support provides support services to the OCWS Construction Division and the buildings and facilities within the fund. Those services include carpentry, masonry, painting, maintenance, janitorial services, and landscaping.

Water and Sewer Maintenance takes care of Okaloosa County’s water distribution mains, water service lines, sewer mains, sewer service lines, fire hydrants, and manholes, all throughout the service area.

Okaloosa County Water and Sewer State Certified Laboratory constantly tests

water and wastewater samples to assure compliance with State and Federal Guidelines. The Lab takes samples from three wastewater treatment facilities, 24 monitoring wells, and many other points throughout the system in order to maintain the public’s confidence in the safety of their drinking water. Laboratory staff performed a total of over 4,000 wastewater sample tests, completed more than 4,000 additional tests for bacteriology and quality on County drinking water samples. The staff also provided all required reports to FDEP, EPA & NW Florida Water Management District, as well as numerous other tests on an as needed basis. •



Above: Okaloosa County’s State of the art testing facility ensures safety for the public.

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$8,812,093	\$9,434,680	7.1%
Operating Expenses	\$10,801,636	\$11,075,845	2.5%
Capital Outlay	\$24,910,294	\$7,295,100	-70.7%
Other Uses	\$31,451,638	\$46,148,326	46.7%
Grand Total	\$75,975,661	\$73,953,951	-2.7%

Risk Management



Risk Management's five-person staff works to avoid, minimize, or eliminate risks and protect the physical and financial assets of the Board of County Commissioners. Risk Management's primary focus is on conducting training sessions, new employee orientations, and other classes/programs to reduce the County's liability; administering the County's Self-Insurance Fund and employee benefits/wellness programs; ensuring the adequacy of the County's multiple insurance policies; conducting contract reviews, managing claims, and promoting occupational safety and health in County workplaces and processing public records requests.

This year was one of great change for both County employees and the Risk Management staff. Due to the surging cost of healthcare, the Board of County Commissioners introduced three healthcare options available to

employees for FY 2020. This

plans will provide employees with better options to meet their health care needs.

Risk Management hosted the annual Benefits Fairs to inform



Top: HR Employee Alicia Kuhn explains benefits and other important information to members of Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services at the Annual County Health Benefits Fair.

Above: A Public Works Employee browses the vendors tables at the Okaloosa County Health Benefits Fair.

Left: Risk Manager Edith Gibson joined Okaloosa County in Fiscal Year 2019.

County employees about their options, as well as the steps they can take to minimize future health risks. In addition, Risk Management implemented the Board of County Commissioners' Tobacco-Free Workplace Policy. The Board and Risk Management hope to reduce healthcare costs to employees and taxpayers by reducing risks associated with tobacco use.

In FY 2019, Risk Management saw a drop in the number of Workers' Compensation claims (65 cases were filed – 10 fewer than during FY 2018). Automobile claims also went down in FY 2019 (106 claims were filed, down from 122 claims during FY 2018). •



Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$1,923,694	\$2,177,562	13.2%
Operating Expenses	\$15,196,141	\$15,103,033	-0.6%
Capital Outlay	\$2,000	\$2,000	0%
Other Uses	\$1,260,653	\$1,765,457	40.0%
Grand Total	\$18,382,488	\$19,048,052	3.6%

Transit



Okaloosa County's Public Transit Department celebrated the completion of its first full year as a department in Fiscal Year 2019. The department works to serve the community by providing an affordable transportation alternative and a means by which disabled members of the community can access vital services throughout the county.

The department is required in accordance with section 427.011 of the Florida State Statutes and manages

more than \$5.2 Million in State and Federal Grants. These grants nearly eliminate the burden of the County's transit system on the local taxpayer, while still looking out for the most vulnerable populations under Okaloosa County's jurisdiction. The department is also funded by some ad valorem taxes, transit fare collections, contracted services and advertising revenue.



Above: Transit Manager Tyrone Parker Joined Okaloosa County in Fiscal Year 2019

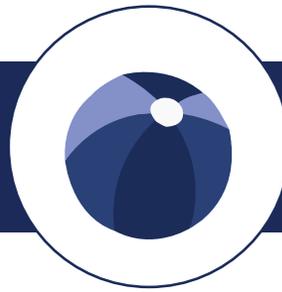
In Fiscal Year 2019, the Transit Department hired it's first-ever director, Mr. Tyrone Parker, who

is responsible for the oversight and management of the contracted service provider who hires drivers and operates the transit fleet. The Department also successfully switched contracted providers. MV Transit, a Dallas-based company now provides the services. MV is contracted for the next five years at a total cost of \$14.9 Million.

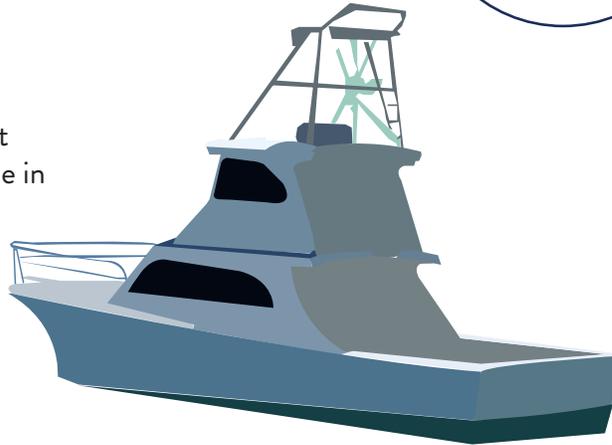
The Transit service provided a total of 216,000 Fixed Route and Paratransit rides and provided contract services to the Niceville Mullet Festival and the Destin Seafood Festival. These services raised a total of \$190,000 in fares from the travelling public. •

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$0	\$2,977	--
Operating Expenses	\$125,648	\$106,000	-15.6%
Capital Outlay	\$6,000	\$0	-100%
Grand Total	\$131,648	\$108,977	-17.2%

Tourism Development



The Tourist Development Department (TDD) is unique in many ways from the rest of the county government. It supports the second biggest industry in Okaloosa County, tourism, through promoting our area to domestic and international vacationers.



Above: Charter Boats fill the waters of the gulf - and the bellies of anglers with fresh fish

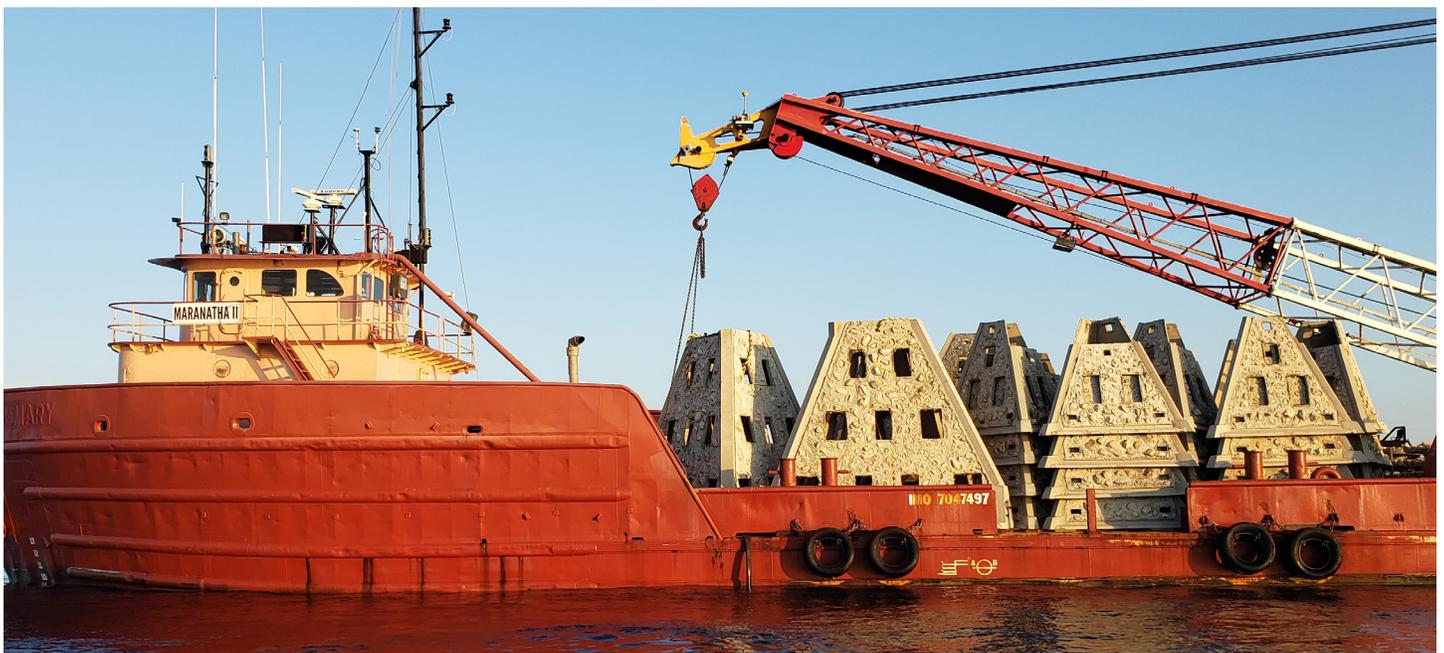
For many years, the TDD focused its resources solely toward attracting visitors to our beautiful beaches, fresh Gulf seafood and charter boat excursions. While still serving the primary mission of attracting vacationers to the Emerald Coast, the TDD has recently expanded its mission to provide marine law enforcement, public safety messaging regarding beach flags and rip currents, and capital infrastructure to increase tourist-related business activities. The department established a Beach Ambassador program to educate tourists and locals

about safe swimming and relieve lifeguards of those duties so they will be able to focus on their core tasks. The TDD is dedicated to proactively managing tourism within the destination. This includes nurturing and fostering the area's natural resources, and developing and implementing socially conscious initiatives that mindfully balance the quality of life for locals and vacationers

alike. To that end, the department is embarking on a Destination Development initiative to support the strategy of reaching new and emerging visitors by providing compelling experiences, quality infrastructure, and remarkable services. Locals are anticipated to directly benefit from this initiative, possibly through improved access to outdoor amenities or improved capital infrastructure.

Currently, roughly half of tourist development taxes are collected between June and August. Additionally, some estimate more than half of sales tax collected in

Below: A boat deploys artificial reefs as a part of Okaloosa County's program to increase fishing and diving tourism in the area.





the County during these months are contributed by tourists and visitors to our area. The goal of Destination Development is not to necessarily attract more visitors to Okaloosa County, but rather elevate the vacation experience to enable lodging, dining, and other tourism sectors to maximize revenues from new and emerging visitor segments during the non-peak Summer season to provide a more balanced local economy and quality of life year-round.

56 positions are budgeted for FY '20. Positions include welcome centers at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport and the Gulfview Hotel Center in Fort Walton Beach. Staffing resources also provide for in-house collection of tourist development taxes rather than remittance to the FL Department of Revenue.

Beaches and Parks

The Beaches and Parks division works with other departments in the County government to maintain, restore, and improve beaches and beach facilities and waterfront tourist parks in Okaloosa County. In addition, the program works to build a near-shore and off-shore artificial reef network to support the charter fishing industry

and induce eco-tourists to visit Destin and Okaloosa Island for their snorkeling and diving recreation.

This year, the Beaches and Parks Division secured three million dollars in federal funding for the Okaloosa County Coastal Storm Risk Management Study. This study will update the current edition on the specific risks hurricanes and tropical storms have on our area, which was published by the Army Corps of Engineers in 2011. Beaches and Parks also secured more than \$1.5 Million to dredge Destin’s East Pass. This pass is vital to Okaloosa County’s tourism economy. It allows the charter boat fleet, military craft and recreational

fishermen to enter and exit Destin and the



Above: The Mike Mitchell Beach Accessway was opened in FY19 as one of three new accesses on the island.

Choctawhatchee Bay quickly and easily. Should the East Pass close, boats would not be able to access safe harbor in Destin during storms

and the military missions relying on nautical transit would likely be reassigned to other bases – causing an economic disturbance for the citizens of Okaloosa

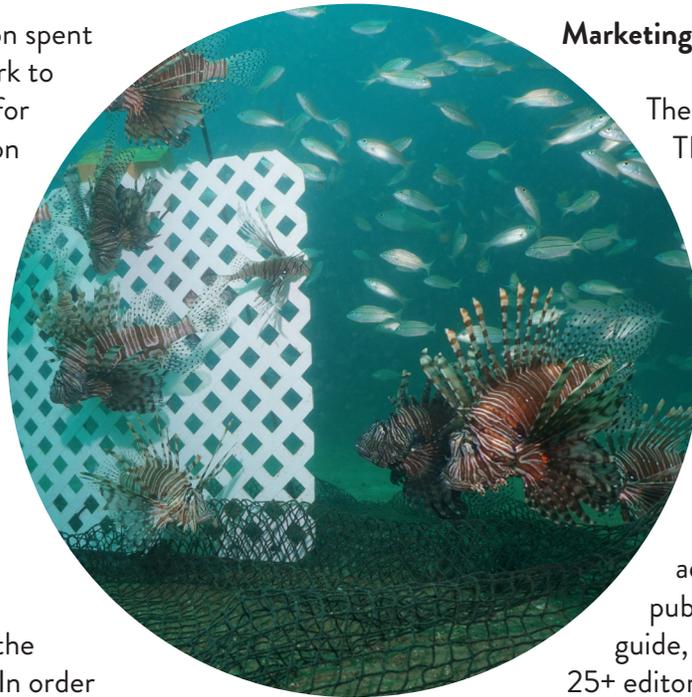
County.

on short term rentals.

The Beaches and Parks division spent the year laying the groundwork to diversify the tourism market for Okaloosa County. The Division secured \$60,000 to deploy artificial reefs in the Gulf of Mexico. These reefs will attract different species of fish which will in turn attract divers, boaters and fishermen to the area.

For the past decade, an invasive species, known as lionfish, have come to dominate the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, especially in the waters off Okaloosa County. In order to mitigate the destruction these fish cause to the native species in the ecosystem, the Beaches and Parks Division hosted the single largest lionfish tournament in history. Fishermen who participated in the tournament netted more than 20,000 of the fish and helped to reduce their impact on Okaloosa County.

Beaches and Parks maintenance and improvement is supported by the 1st cent of the tourism development tax



Above: Lionfish are a scourge of the gulf the Tourism Development Department has worked with state-wide partners to reduce in gulf waters

Below: The Emerald Coast Convention Center is used to bring large events to the Emerald Coast.

Marketing

The Marketing Division of the TDD generates a unified marketing strategy which benefits tourism industry partners, especially lodging partners, by building brand awareness of the Emerald Coast as a premiere family vacation destination.

In Fiscal Year 2019, the marketing team on-boarded advertising firm Boone-Oakley, published the inaugural in-market guide, hosted a media event for 25+ editors at Meredith Publications in NYC featuring 5 destination partners, launched redesigned leisure, convention center, and film commission websites, and opened a new Welcome Center in Downtown Fort Walton Beach. These efforts reaped more than \$20M in tourist development tax revenues for the fiscal year.

Emerald Coast Convention Center

The Convention Center sales team targets meeting planners whose events





align with the destination’s amenities and indoor/outdoor convention space. A new General Manager recently came on board who is making strides in operational efficiency and modernizing the venue. Food & beverage minimums and pricing packages have been implemented. Options for partnering with industry partners for event setup and food service functions are being explored.

In Fiscal Year 2019, the Emerald Coast Convention Center received a facelift. Upgrades included flooring, fire sprinkler systems, and AV improvements. FY20 scheduled improvements include: restroom renovations, landscaping (including signage), new linenless tables, china, glassware & flatware, AV/ equipment upgrades and HVAC upgrades. These upgrades will help the center attract weekday, out of area, group business.

Above: One of the most famous views in the Southeast

Below: Okaloosa County’s Tourism Development Tax netted more than \$20 million in FY19. This money will help the county improve roads, bring in more revenue and improve the overall infrastructure of Okaloosa County.

\$20M

The Convention Center remained busy, despite the ongoing upgrades and cancelled events in Oct & Nov due to Hurricane Michael: it had 212 event days and revenues are forecasted to finish \$157K over FY18. FY '20 promises to be even busier, as the Tourism Development Department expects revenues and event days to increase. This boost in revenue reflects positively on

accommodation occupancy and ancillary spending as well. The convention center is funded by the third and fourth cents of the tourist development tax on short term rentals, as well as by revenues generated by functions held at the convention center. •

Left: Beautiful sunrises are just one of the perks the TDD uses to convince vacationers to visit the Emerald Coast.

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$3,039,606	\$3,346,934	10.1%
Operating Expenses	\$14,473,758	\$16,264,053	12.4%
Capital Outlay	\$4,314,110	\$5,866,613	36%
Other Uses	\$51,963,234	\$51,715,051	-0.5%
Grand Total	\$73,790,708	\$77,192,651	4.6%



PROTECTING OUR NATURAL RESOURCES FROM INVASIVE SPECIES



Lionfish, a type of invasive species from the coast of India, have made Florida, specifically the panhandle's coast, their newest home. The fish eat other fish indiscriminately and could potentially destroy the charter boat industry; a major part of Okaloosa County's economy. For this very reason, Okaloosa County was thrilled to host this year's Emerald Coast Open, Lionfish hunters from across the United States and Caribbean descended on Okaloosa County, Florida in April for the Emerald Coast Open Lionfish Tournament hosted by Emerald Coast Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

By the end of the weekend, the Destin-based competition became the most successful lionfish removal event in history. A record shattering 14,119 of the invasive spiked species removed in a two-day period. Combined with the more than 5,000 lionfish removed

in the months leading up to the tournament weekend totaled of 19,167 lionfish removed from the Gulf.

189 individual hunters competed for over \$48,000 in cash prizes and \$15,000 in gear prizes.

The winning Team, Florida Man, on Destin based dive charter, Dreadknot brought in an astounding 2,241 in just 2 days.

The Largest Lionfish prize of \$5000 was awarded to team Killer Bees, who brought in a lionfish that was 440 mm, or 17.32 inches. The smallest lionfish, which also commanded a \$5,000 prize, was 75mm, or just under 3 inches caught by Team Diamond Divers.

By removing lionfish from the marine habitat off Okaloosa

County's shores, fishermen help to sustain the natural ecosystem visitors and locals alike love for its tasty, native, fish. •



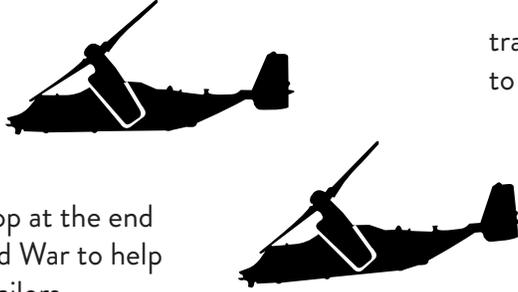
Above: County Marine Resource Alex Fogg displays a recently caught Lionfish during the tournament.
Below: Destin's Charter Fishing Fleet



Veteran Services



Veteran Services Offices around the State of Florida set up shop at the end of the Second World War to help returning soldiers, sailors and marines readjust to civilian life and receive their benefits for serving their country. Like many counties, Okaloosa County set up an office to help its own Veterans navigate through the VA benefit process.



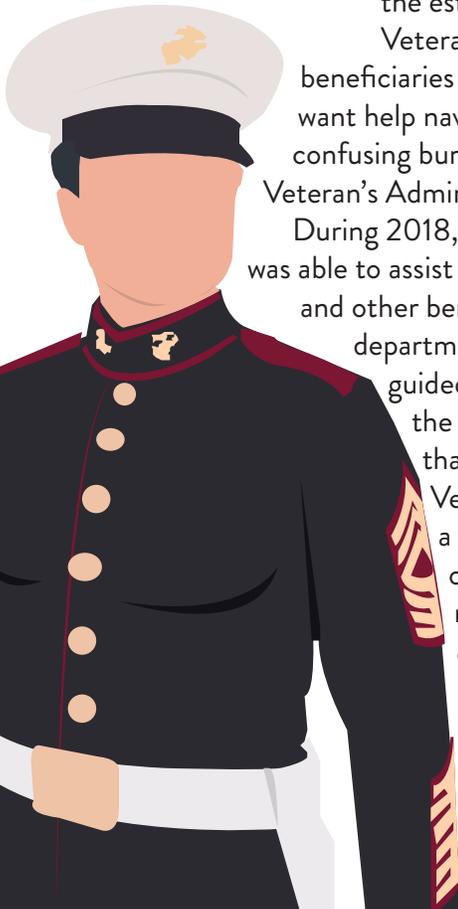
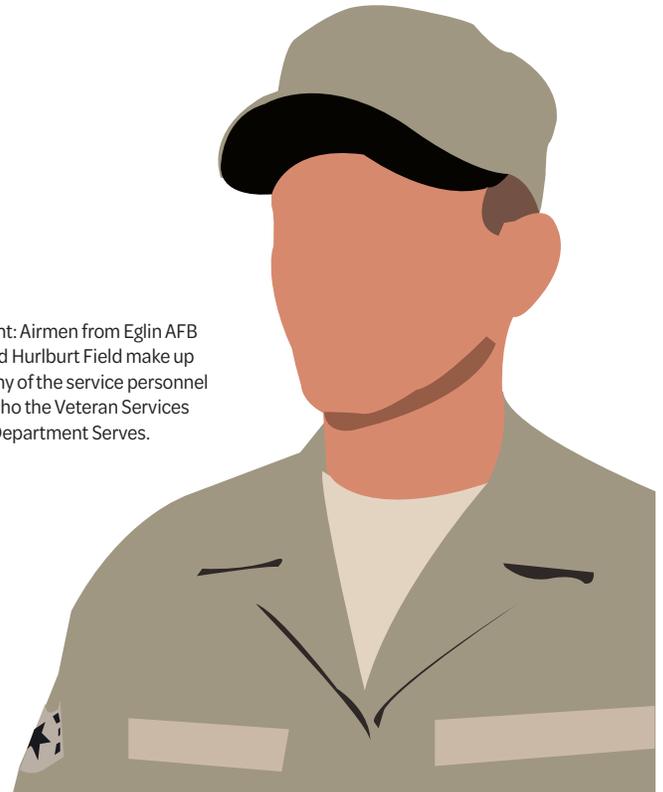
Above: CV-22s of the 8th Special Operations Squadron are deployed around the world to keep America Safe

transportation for 113 Veterans from Okaloosa County to the VA medical facility in Pensacola. The Veteran Services Department receives its funding from the general revenue fund, which is supported by property, sales and other taxes. •

Below: Veteran Services works to secure a bright future for members of all of the armed services.

Today, the Veteran Services Department receives over 9,000 calls for assistance from the estimated 35,500 Veterans and other VA beneficiaries in our area who want help navigating the often confusing bureaucracy of the Veteran's Administration. During 2018, the department was able to assist 9,876 Veterans and other beneficiaries. The department successfully guided Veterans through the appeals process that culminated in the Veterans receiving a collective amount of \$350,000 in retroactive benefits and an increase in their recurring monthly benefits. The department also scheduled and coordinated medical

Right: Airmen from Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field make up many of the service personnel who the Veteran Services Department Serves.



Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$189,444	\$222,450	17.4%
Operating Expenses	\$10,845	\$10,416	-4.0%
Grand Total	\$200,289	\$232,886	16.3%

Pre Trial



Pretrial Services provides Okaloosa County judges with critical and timely information to assist them in making informed decisions on bond at the defendant's first court appearance. By providing this information, Pretrial Services facilitates the release of low risk persons arrested, minimizes failures to appear in court as well as minimizes the potential danger to the community. Pretrial Services assists in managing the jail population by reducing unnecessary incarcerations and maximizing the rate of release.

100

Fund are ad valorem taxes, communications service tax, local business tax, permits and fees, state shared revenue, charges for services, judgments and fines, miscellaneous revenue and transfers from other funds and Pretrial Services electronic monitoring fees. •

To reduce potential dangers to residents of Okaloosa County, Pre-Trial supervises certain defendants and makes referrals to other court programs such as Drug Court, Veterans Court and Mental Health Court.

Above: not only was the failure to appear rate, which is the number of people who've absconded from the rule of law while out on bail divided by the total number of arrestees, below thier goal of 10% - Not one person failed to appear in court in Fiscal Year 2019.

In Fiscal Year 2019, Okaloosa County Pretrial Services assessed a total of 6,999 defendants prior to first appearance with 798 of those being placed under Pretrial Services Supervision pending the resolution of their cases. Pretrial Services also supervised a monthly average of 45 defendants under Mental Health Pretrial Services and a monthly average of 26 defendants in our electronic monitoring program.

The Pretrial Services Program is funded in the General Fund. Supporting revenue of the General

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$348,923	\$417,132	19.5%
Operating Expenses	\$75,507	\$79,031	4.7%
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$0	\$0
Grand Total	\$424,430	\$496,163	16.9%



The Okaloosa County Department of Public Safety is diligent in its efforts to provide the best possible service to our community, always echoing the department's mission to protect the health, safety, and welfare of our community with pride and professionalism.

Beach Safety

The goal of the Beach Safety program is to prevent death and injury as efficiently and effectively as possible through public education, the maintenance of high professional and technical standards, and the maintenance of a constant readiness year-round.

This program consists of one Beach Safety Division Chief, one Lifeguard Supervisor, three Senior Lifeguards, and 23 Seasonal Lifeguards. 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

154
MEDICAL CALLS
RESPONDED TO ON
THE BEACH

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, churches and community groups.

Posters, information cards, 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 flood waters resulting from severe weather events in



Above: Lifeguards protect the public beaches of Okaloosa County on Okaloosa Island

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.

Corrections

The Department of Corrections serves and protects the citizens of Okaloosa County by providing care, custody, and control of court remanded individuals. This is accomplished in accordance with applicable laws, statutes, and standards in a cost effective manner through an unwavering commitment to a safe, secure, and humane detention facility, and community programs which seek to improve quality of life inside the jail and post-release.

The Department ensures inmates are available for court and that sentencing requirements imposed by the Court are satisfied. Primary services include admission, classification, detention, transportation, and release of inmates, as well as retention and management of inmate records. All programs, privileges, and services, such as meals, clothing, recreation, visitation, access

Below: The Okaloosa County Jail provided more than 870,000 meals in FY19.

to religious services, library, and healthcare, are provided to the inmate population in accordance with the Florida Model Jail Standards, Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC), and National Commission on Correctional Healthcare Standards.



In 2019, the Okaloosa County Department of Corrections received its triennial FCAC on-site assessment. The three-member assessment team from various departments in the state reviewed 257 standards to determine our level of service, accountability, compliance, and overall performance as an agency. Despite persistent challenges of an aging facility and rising average daily population, the Department was reaccredited as an Excelsior Agency, which is the highest level afforded under the FCAC Accreditation process.





Above: A view from the sky of the Okaloosa County Emergency Operations Center. The building is located on the campus of Northwest Florida State College in Niceville.

Below: EMS Services were able to use grant money to purchase ballistic vests in order to keep employees safe in dangerous situations

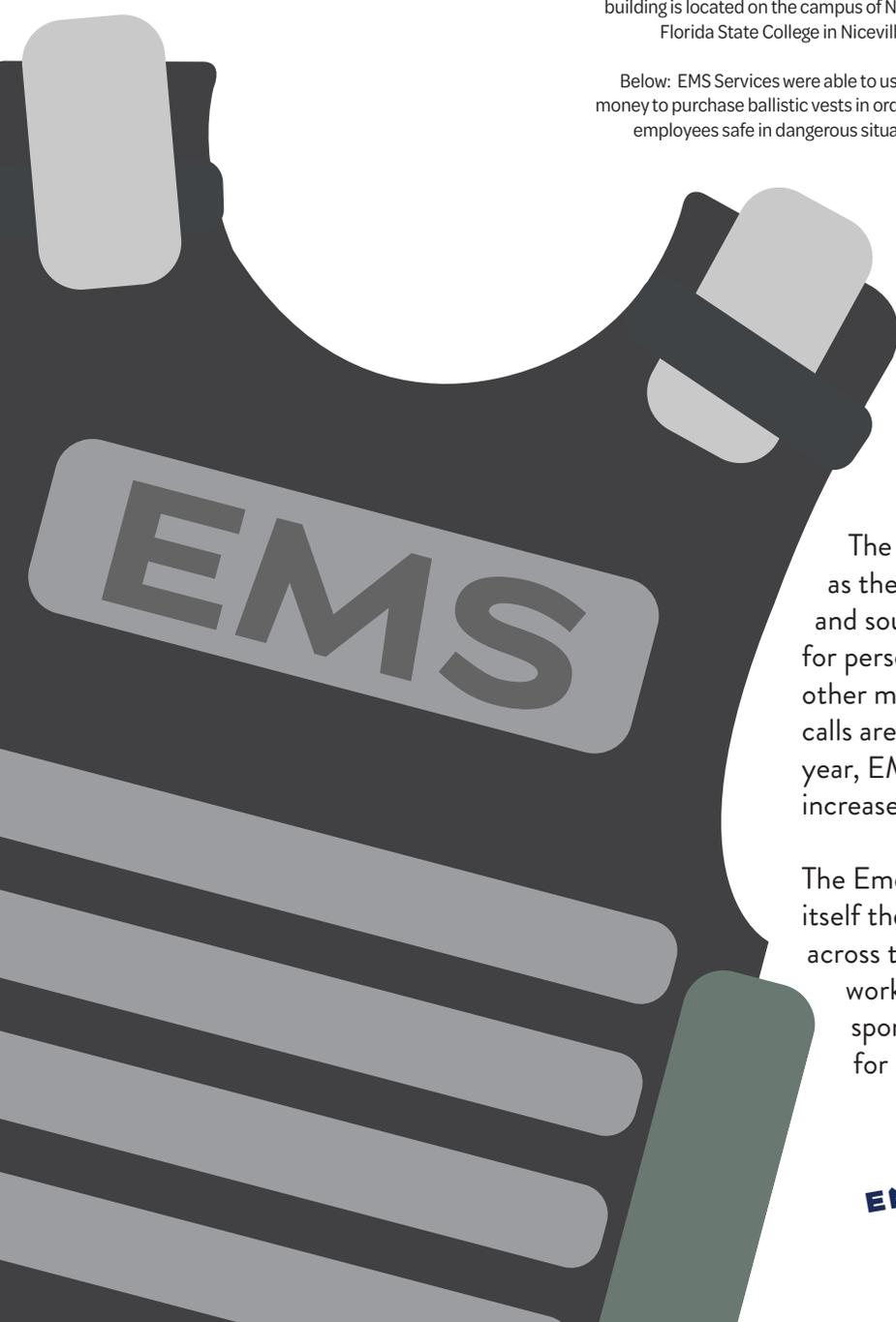
Emergency Medical Services

The Emergency Medical Services Division of the Public Safety Department works to provide professional and compassionate care to the citizens of and visitors to our area in their hour of greatest need. EMS has worked to maintain their response time, which exceeds the national standard. In addition, EMS has maintained a cost-effective fleet of 12 ambulances as well as maintain a list of accurate patient care reports in order to keep services revenue neutral for the County budget.

The 40 full time paramedics and 40 EMTs, as well as the 48 relief paramedics and EMTs are the heart and soul of EMS's operations. They provide critical care for persons experiencing wounds, cardiac arrests and other maladies which require emergency medicine. Their calls are becoming more and more frequent. In the last year, EMS was called out 31,349 times, a nine percent increase over the previous year.

The Emergency Medical Services division has made itself the gold standard for Emergency Medical Services across the country. The EMTs and Paramedics who work on the front line are able to return spontaneous circulation for

31,249
EMS CALLS FOR ASSISTANCE IN
2018



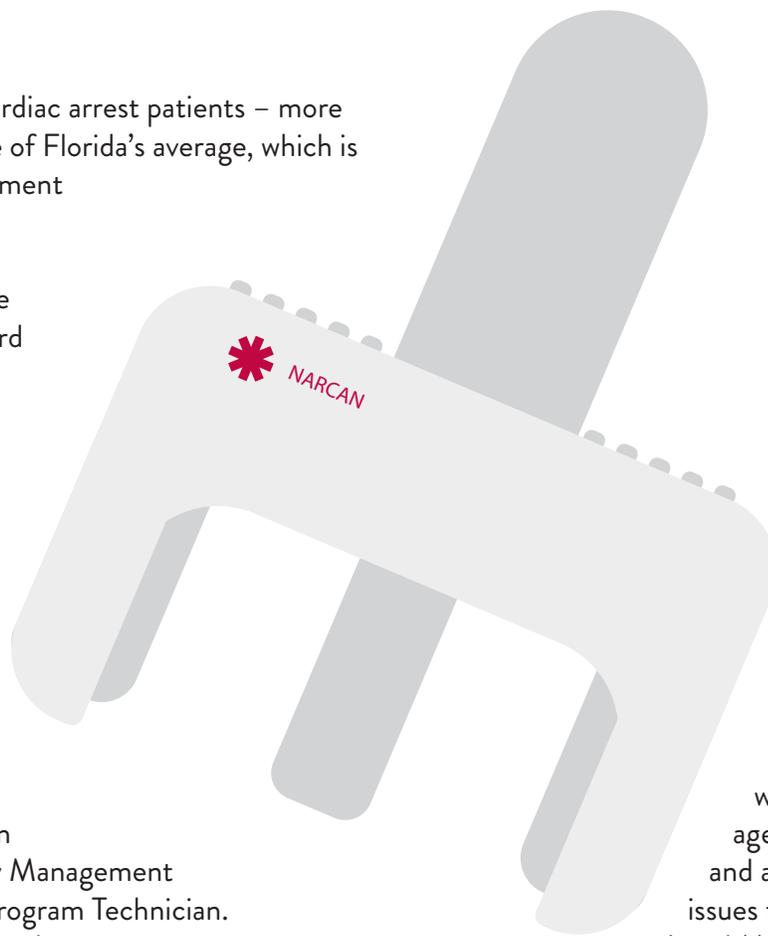
41% of prehospital cardiac arrest patients – more than double the state of Florida’s average, which is 18%. This accomplishment was recognized by the American Heart Association, who gave EMS their Gold Award for Excellence in Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Care.

Emergency Management

The Emergency Management program consists of an Emergency Management Division Chief, an Emergency Management Coordinator, and a Program Technician. The Division maintains the County Emergency Operations Center, which is a facility which 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 emergency support function/incident command system structure. 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 that comply with incident command system

Left: in Fiscal Year 2019, Okaloosa County Welcomed Emergency Management Chief Patrick Maddox to the team.



Above: EMS secured a grant to distribute NARCAN, an agent which counteracts the effects of heroin, to family members of addicts. this helps reduce the number of deaths from the drug.

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. The division 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. •

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$17,558,918	\$19,117,019	8.9%
Operating Expenses	\$7,806,434	\$8,179,175	4.8%
Capital Outlay	\$359,700	\$392,240	9.0%
Grand Total	\$25,725,052	\$27,688,434	7.6%

Information Technology



Whether it's determining if an address is in a hurricane evacuation zone, publishing a newsletter on the county website, ensuring critical communications are available, or providing cyber security to protect county systems and data: Okaloosa County's Information Technology Department plays a vital role in keeping people safe and informed about what is going on in the county.

The Department of Information Technology (IT) has an array of responsibilities within county government. Their 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 county relies on the IT department to be flexible, knowledgeable and creative in order to keep the backbone of the county, its fiber optic network, operating effectively while juggling a number of similarly important tasks.

Okaloosa County IT innovatively implements on-demand technology and data for critical government services to improve the quality of life for the citizens of Okaloosa County.

The department operates through four main divisions: Geographic Information Systems, Telecommunications, Systems and Networks, and Applications.

In Fiscal Year 2019, the department worked to improve connectivity and efficiency for all departments in the Okaloosa County Infrastructure.

The department worked to ensure the safety of the judges, elected officials, employees and citizens who use the Crestview Courthouse facility. The department supported the installation of VoIP, Alertus Beacons and network design (which covered HVAC, lighting, security and other technology needs.) The system also welcomes potential jurors by playing videos with information about the duties of serving on a jury.

In order to bring the county into compliance with the guidelines of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Okaloosa County Information Technology Department worked with county administrator's office and the county attorney to make the county's website and social media accessible to citizens with special needs.

Because of the IT Department, Okaloosa County is more prepared to deal with the threat of hurricanes

The screenshot shows the Okaloosa County website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, County Government, Departments, Services, Living, Visiting, and Contact Us. Below the menu is a large banner image of a wooden walkway through a field. To the right of the banner is a search bar and social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Below the banner is a section titled "Okaloosa County - Connecting Communities since 1915." followed by a paragraph of text. To the right of this text is a "Connect with Us" section with links for Breaking News, RESTORE Act, ADA Info, Okaloosa Today Show, Employee Recognition Programs, and Military Community Covenant. Below this is a row of seven service icons: Planning, Zoning & Building Permits; Airports; Tourism; GIS Maps; Calendar; Public Safety; and Water & Sewer. At the bottom, there are three columns: "Special Features" with a "Great American Defense Community" logo and a list of services; "Commissioners Corner" with links for Infrastructure Surtax Projects, Budget Information, County Commissioners, Public Notices, Public Record Request, and View Commission Meetings; and "Follow Us" with a Facebook post from the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners.

Above: The Okaloosa County IT Department works with almost every other department to maintain current information about County services on the myokaloosa.com domain. This service helps citizens find information they want and need in a short amount of time.

on the Emerald Coast. The department improved the tools available to the public through the “GIS Portal”: Now the public can access evacuation maps, the Okaloosa County Hurricane Guide, and other important applications and documents with a click of the mouse. The GIS division provided critical information concerning the county wide half-cent surtax on the county website, myokaloosa.com, in order to keep taxpayers up to date on the progress of various surtax-funded initiatives around the County.

IT extended the Okaloosa County Fiber Network to Okaloosa Lane in Crestview, several new water and sewer sites, the Okaloosa County School Board Building in Niceville and the Emergency Operations Center, as well as the new flightline fire station on Eglin AFB. These expansions help the IT Department as a whole reduce county-wide costs and increase safety, security and efficiency throughout the County’s departments and other fiber optic stakeholders.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

The GIS division captures, stores, analyzes, and displays geospatial data related to positions on the earth’s surface and relates that data to powerful information systems. Many decisions associated with our county are related to geography. Zoning, land use, storm water assets, parcel boundaries, city limits, county commissioner districts, storm surge zones, utility locations, aerial photography, and address locations, to name a few are managed by GIS. Therefore, the services such as data and tools that GIS provides are used by virtually everyone from the Property Appraiser, to determine property assessments, to the Water and Sewer Department, to locate and track underground pipes. They strive to make these services user friendly and available to the public.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications operates and maintains the county fiber optic telecommunication utility system and other related pieces of equipment to keep the system running. The fiber optic network is used by the Sheriff, Property Appraiser, Tax Collector, Clerk of Courts, Supervisor of Elections, Courts, State Attorney, Public Defender,

Guardian Ad Litem, Public Libraries, University of West Florida, numerous Okaloosa cities and other government related organizations, as well as all departments and agencies under the Board of County

Commissioners. Additionally, Eglin Air Force Base, Hurlburt Field, Duke Field, 7th Special Forces Group, Camp Rudder, and several reservation test sites utilize county fiber.

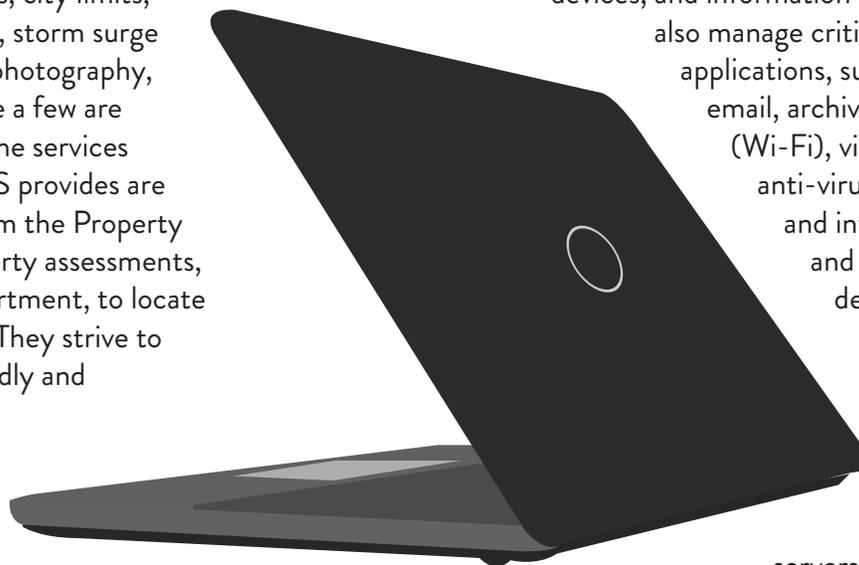
The fiber optic network provides superior service while reducing the burden on the local taxpayer.

Systems and Networks (SAN)

Systems and Networks manages the county’s networks, servers, data centers, computers, other connected devices, and information security. They also manage critical enterprise applications, such as county email, archiving, wireless (Wi-Fi), virtualization, anti-virus, anti-spam and internet presence, and virtually all department level applications including databases and file and application servers. SAN serves fellow employees, library staff,



Above: The County-Wide fiber network helps the County be as efficient as possible.



Above: The County Systems and Networks division maintains more than 1100 computers - an increase of about 200 from FY18.

and public access computers that total more than 1000 clients. They ensure core county technology is secure

and available to meet the needs of the employees and citizens alike.

Applications (APPS)

The Applications Division works to make sure mobile devices such as cell phones and tablets are effectively provisioned and used. They maintain the county website and several other important departmental applications for Human Resources, Risk, Purchasing and Public Works. APPS provides primary audio-visual support to the county and court administration, and leads the ADA website, document and closed captioning compliancy efforts. They also manage the county VoIP telephone communication system and related technologies, including over 1800 phones and other devices that run on the county fiber network. •



Above: The county issues cell phones to specific personnel in order to increase productivity.

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<i>Personnel</i>	\$17,558,918	\$19,117,019	8.9%
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Grand Total	\$25,725,052	\$27,688,434	7.6%

Library Cooperative



The Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative began 22 years ago to ensure that all Okaloosa citizens could freely access the educational opportunities provided through public libraries. Prior to the cooperative, a resident outside of city limits was not entitled to fee-free service at a city library. Today, the member cities of Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach, Mary Esther, Niceville, and Valparaiso open their libraries to all county residents at no charge.

While books continue to be the signature specialty of libraries, they have expanded widely into other physical and digital formats. From a collection of about 330,000 items, citizens can check out movies, music, audiobooks, magazines, games, and telescopes. They can download e-books, audiobooks and magazines from the comfort of their homes or traveling around the world. They can build academic and job skills with self-paced online courses.



Above: Libraries - lighting the way for the future - now in print and in digital format.

Media studios, virtual reality, computer labs, free wireless Internet and study spaces bring people together in an environment where they can expand their possibilities. From resume workshops to technology skills classes for mature adults, from children’s cooking classes to DIY arts and crafting, the cooperative offers over 2,000 enrichment events at no out-of-pocket cost to citizens.

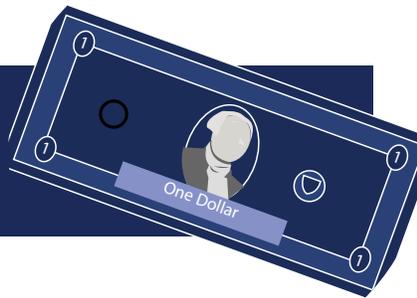
In Fiscal Year 2019, self-paced academic courses and online tutors provided for free at the member libraries in the county were used more than 5,000 times – a 25% bump from FY ’18.

High school matriculation for alternative students was another goal of the library this year: the cooperative partnered with the Florida Department of Education to provide a scholarship which enabled students to complete their high school diploma. As of the summer of 2019, four participants have received their diploma – and another 12 students are slated to earn theirs in the near future.

The cooperative also facilitated civic engagement in FY ’19. The cooperative partnered with city libraries to host forums for candidates and elected officials, government week activities, voter registrations and training for state public heritage monitors.

As society progresses and moves toward the internet for ease of access to information – the library cooperative is keeping pace. Slightly more than 670,000 visitors paid virtual calls on the library cooperative. The citizens who visited ‘borrowed’ materials at an increase of 44% year-over-year. •

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$94,561	\$99,295	5.0%
Operating Expenses	\$112,815	\$117,408	4.1%
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$8,000	100%
Other Uses	\$499,472	\$514,456	3.0%
Grand Total	\$706,848	\$739,159	4.6%



The Office of Management and Budget Department (OMB) is responsible for budget preparation and execution. In addition to developing and monitoring the County's annual budget, executing budget-related functions, and overseeing fiscal policy and financial planning activities. OMB also provides a centralized source for procurement and judiciously monitors grants that provide additional support for the efforts of the government to make the County a better place to live, work and visit.



Top: OMB Director Faye Douglas Joined the Okaloosa County Team in FY19

first round of the Gulf Consortium Pot 3 funding and several MYP applications to the US Treasury. The Grant Division has and will continue to assist all program managers and their staff with financial and programmatic compliance and is currently monitoring over 150 grants. In the upcoming year, we will sponsor contracted 2CFRPart 200 training. This training covers uniform administrative requirements, cost principles and audit requirements for federal government awards.

All activities performed within the department are done in accordance with established policies, procedures, contractual requirements and Florida Statutes. The department reports directly to the County Administrator and assists all departments in the implementation of the goals and priorities of the Board of County Commissioners. The department focuses on customer service, transparency, integrity, and proactivity. •



Purchasing Division

The Purchasing Division acquires goods and services for the County They processed a purchasing dollar volume of \$11.8 million and managed a purchasing card program that totaled \$4.8 million in the past year. The division also coordinates the annual inventory of fixed assets and assists all departments with contracts and leases. Over 5,200 fixed assets with a value of \$63 million were inventoried and the division manages 750 contracts and 195 leases. The Purchasing Division has and will continue to foster open competition and a fair and equitable solicitation process.

Grants Division

In the past year, specific activities of the Grants Division include the completion of the Hurricane Michael FEMA/FDEM and State Aid reimbursement process, conducting grants policy training for several departments, submitting two applications in the

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$892,207	\$1,050,033	17.7%
Operating Expenses	\$80,786	\$80,244	-0.7%
Capital Outlay	\$1,200	\$0	-100%
Grand Total	\$974,193	\$1,130,277	16.0%

Growth Management



The mission of the Growth Management Department is to ensure that growth and development in unincorporated Okaloosa County occur in the most orderly, cost-effective, and environmentally sensitive manner possible while recognizing constitutionally-protected property rights, providing for consumer protection, and accommodating the needs of individual citizens and communities.

The Department is organized into three Divisions - planning, building inspections, and code enforcement – each of which contributes to fulfillment of the department mission.

The Growth Management Department has two offices in Crestview. The planning office is located at 402 Brookmeade Dr and the building inspections office is located at 812 East James Lee Blvd. The south end office is a joint Planning/Code Enforcement/Inspections Office located at 1250 N. Eglin Parkway in Shalimar. The locations of the offices reflect the department's need to provide the full range of department services to two major population centers separated by the nation's largest military installation, Eglin Air Force Base.

Planning Division

The Planning Division is responsible for administration of the Comprehensive Plan and attendant Land Development Code; the National Flood Insurance Program including the Community Rating System

and Local Mitigation Strategy programs, affordable housing; the Eglin Installation Growth Management Plan; Eglin Joint Land Use Study/Small Area Study, and staff support for a number of boards and committees including but not limited to the Planning Commission, Transportation Planning Organization, Board of Adjustment, site plan review, the construction competency boards, Code Enforcement Board, and the

Okaloosa County Comprehensive Plan/Local Mitigation Strategy Committee.

The Growth Management Department oversees the implementation of the State Housing Initiatives Partnerships (SHIP) program and the Neighborhood Stabilization



Above: Along with the state government, the Growth Management Department works to stabilize economically challenged households by offering affordable housing

Program (NSP) through which economically challenged households are able to obtain affordable housing. SHIP is a state program funded by the State Legislature through the Sadowski

Act. As required by the Sadowski Act, the county has an 8 member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee which serves in an advisory role to the Board of County Commissioners on matters pertaining to the affordability of housing, and is also charged with review and approval of the County's Local Housing Assistance Plan which provides direction for the county's expenditure of SHIP funds.

The NSP is also a state-run program, though



FEMA

Building Inspections Division

The Building Inspections Division operates from full-service offices located in Fort Walton Beach and Crestview. It is headed by a Building Official, a position specifically recognized by the Florida Statutes as having unique responsibility and authority to interpret and administer the Florida Building Code. A Building Official must meet very exacting educational and experience requirements, and is regulated by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation. The construction inspectors and plans examiners who work under the Building Official are also subject to rigorous licensing and education requirements, and are also subject to oversight by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR).

The Building Inspections Division is primarily responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Florida Building Codes, including the permitting and inspection of all residential and non-residential structures constructed in the unincorporated area. The County has also entered into Interlocal Agreements whereby the division provides building permit services within the cities of Mary Esther and Shalimar, as well as the Town of Cinco Bayou. This division also enforces the life safety and fire codes in those parts of the county not covered by a municipal fire department or independent fire district with the requisite personnel. The Inspections Division is an enterprise fund and does not receive support from the general fund.

The inspections division was busy during the 2019 Fiscal Year: it issued more than 10,000 building permit applications within statutory timeframes and conducted more than 24,000 inspections. The division also worked with the planning division to establish standardized procedures for rehabilitation work of non-compliant properties under the county's purview.

it receives federal funds in a manner similar to community development block grants which are then allocated to communities throughout the state.

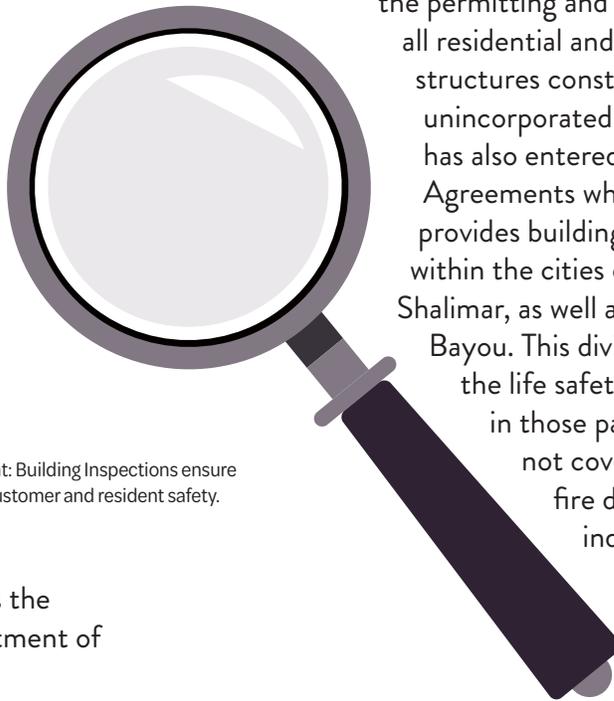
Above: The Growth Management Department works with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to prepare for storms by filing paper work for disaster and pre-disaster mitigation funds.

The Department's Grants and Housing Programs Coordinator Grants Specialist serves as manager of the County's contract with a private real-estate management company, Realty House, Okaloosa Community Development Corporation, a private, non-profit organization that provides maintenance, lease management, and other day-to-day operational aspects of the program. administers the SHIP and NSP programs on the county's behalf. The county currently has 75 affordable housing units managed by the OCC under the oversight of the Grants Specialist.

The Grants and Housing Programs Coordinator Grants Specialist also provides administrative support to other departments for Community Development Block Grants, and administers the county's Safe Haven Grant from the Department of Justice's Office of Violence against Women.

In fiscal year 2019, the planning division was able to successfully coordinate the flood plain management review and maintain flood plain rating of 5. This rating means a 25% reduction in flood insurance premiums for Okaloosa County citizens.

Planning division employees worked with their counterparts in municipalities across the county to ensure our collective participation in the federal disaster and pre-disaster mitigation funds.



Right: Building Inspections ensure customer and resident safety.

Code Enforcement Division

The Code Enforcement Division is responsible for enforcing the various rules and regulations of the County as set forth in the Land Development Code (LDC) as well as the Code of Ordinances (a much broader set of rules which go beyond the LDC's implementation of the Comprehensive Plan). These range from land development and zoning regulations to rules governing issues such as noise, junk, debris, and other similar nuisances. The Code Enforcement Division's goal is to bring violations into compliance, not punishment. Staff enjoys a high rate of success in resolving issues without having to take matters to a formal hearing. However, in instances when a violation cannot be corrected through voluntary compliance, the Code Enforcement Division can bring violators before the Code Enforcement Board which is comprised of volunteers representing various interests appointed by the Board of County Commissioners. The division can also choose to issue citations for violations which, if unresolved, are processed through the circuit court. The county has also amended the LDC to allow the recovery of enforcement costs (but not penalties) to be included on a subject property's taxes.

The Code Enforcement Division also assists the Building Inspections Division with the investigation of Building Code violations and complaints of unlicensed contracting. The Code Enforcement Division serves as the conduit to bring such violations before the Code Enforcement Board. The Code Enforcement Board is a quasi-judicial body whose members are appointed by



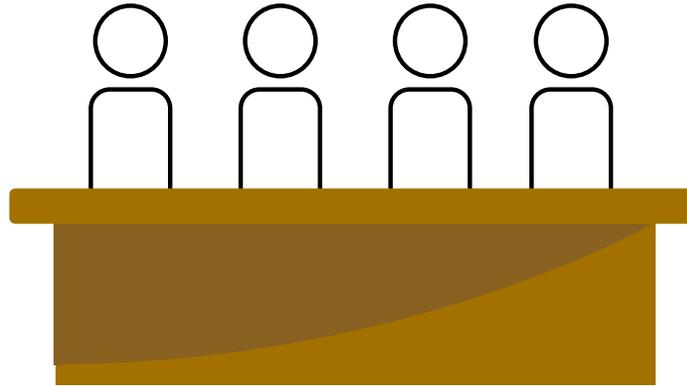
the Board of County Commissioners and who are, therefore, subject to the Sunshine and public records laws.

In Fiscal Year 2019, the Code Enforcement division successfully abated two derelict properties and placed liens on three properties. The division also coordinated with Waste

Management to expedite cleanup of 382 illegal or unauthorized dumping sites. •

Above: The Code Enforcement Division wishes to work to fix problems, not punish people out of code.

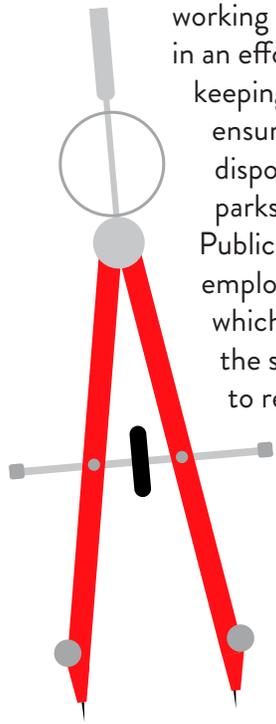
Below: Committees, made up of various residents of Okaloosa County, work together to suggest policy for the board to implement to make Okaloosa a better place to work and live.



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Personnel	\$892,207	\$1,050,033	17.7%
Operating Expenses	\$80,786	\$80,244	-0.7%
Capital Outlay	\$1,200	\$0	-100%
Grand Total	\$974,193	\$1,130,277	16.0%



Public Works is responsible for infrastructure that is a part of everyday life. Building and maintaining roads, constructing and repairing bridges, keeping the County's vehicle fleet in peak condition, working to control the mosquito population in an effort to minimize the spread of disease, keeping buildings clean and sanitary, ensuring trash is collected and properly disposed, and having clean beaches and parks are all tasks that fall within the Public Works Department. Nearly 250 employees across 13 divisions are the glue which holds the county together, provide the services to keep the county able to respond to emergencies, promote economic growth and improve quality of life for residents.



Engineering and Administration

The Engineering and Administration Division designs county roads, implements storm water management plans, surveys land, makes sure builders and landowners conform to code, inspect construction, and administers

Above: The engineering department plans for future public sector development of Okaloosa County.

construction contracts. Funded from the County Transportation Trust Fund that is made up of fuel taxes, local sales tax, charges for services, interest, other miscellaneous revenue, and transfers from other funds.

Projects being led by the Engineering Division include the widening of PJ Adams Parkway, Southwest Crestview Bypass and applications to multiple Federal grants highlight the work done in the past year. Support is provided by

the County Surveyor and survey staff. The division, under the direction of the County Engineer, serves as the primary source for technical expertise in county development projects.

Facilities Maintenance

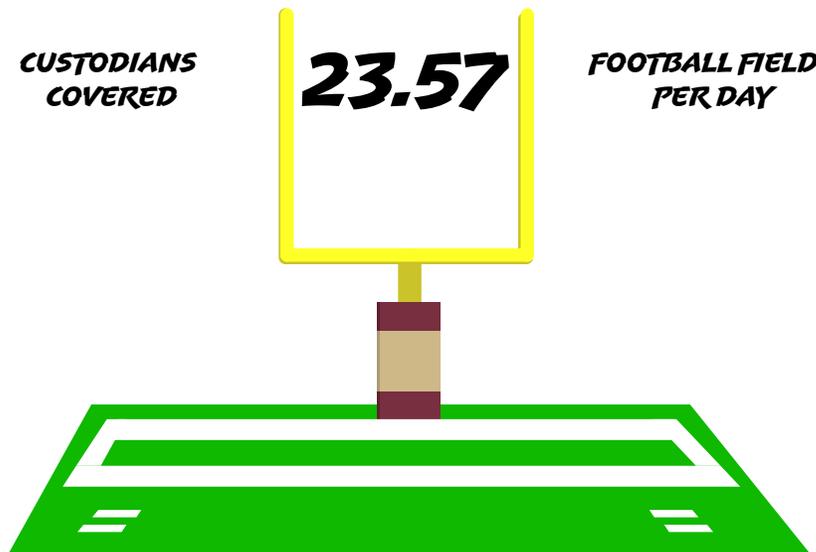
The Administrative Services of the Facilities Maintenance Department provides program budget planning and management, work order processing, department level accounting, contract management, payment processing for county facilities utility bills, construction project planning and accounting, purchase order processing, inventory management, a variety of customer service activities, and general support of the department's other functional units. The Custodial Services of the Facilities Maintenance Department provides daily janitorial services for county office space, common areas, and restrooms.

The Grounds Keeping Unit of the Facilities Maintenance Division provides programmed periodic lawn and landscape care, parking lot and sidewalk cleaning, carpet cleaning, and exterior pest control services for assigned facilities, and small equipment maintenance and repair services for all the functional units of the Facilities Maintenance Division. The core mission of the Building Maintenance Unit is to provide routine and Preventative

CUSTODIANS COVERED

23.57

FOOTBALL FIELDS PER DAY



Maintenance/HVAC/Electrical to county owned and operated buildings/ such as the County Jail and to certain leased offices, as proscribed by the terms of the lease, and to provide high-quality, professional, low-cost remodeling services to meet the needs of those who do business in county facilities.

Facilities Maintenance is funded within the general fund. Supporting revenue of the general fund are ad valorem taxes, communications-service tax, local business tax, permits and fees, state shared revenue, charges for services, judgments and fines, miscellaneous revenue and transfers from other funds.

Fleet

The Fleet Operations Division provides quality fleet management, fueling, repair, and maintenance services effectively and efficiently. The comprehensive fleet management program provides a “one stop shop” solution that responsibly meets the needs of county departments and designated local agencies.

This year, Fleet Operations provided maintenance and fuel services to more than 1100 county and other agency vehicles – a total of 1,156,000 gallons of gasoline. The large quantity of gasoline needed allowed for an economy of scale, which allowed Fleet Operations to save the taxpayer significantly over the fiscal year.

Fleet Operations professional staff and Automotive Service Excellence certified technicians are engaged and committed to ensure the elements of the Fleet Operations mission statement are achieved. The division’s main focus is to provide safe and reliable vehicles and equipment to customers at rates competitive with the open market. Fleet will work to open a new maintenance location at the Okaloosa County Transit Building in Fort Walton Beach. This

new location will help keep vehicles operational at a 95 percent rate or higher. The transit building maintenance location will use three employees, cover the county’s 55 transit vehicles with on-site maintenance and repair, increasing their readiness and reducing downtime for transit vehicles. This move will have the added benefit of increasing available work space in the fleet’s shops.

Land Development Review, Testing, & Inspection Section

Land Development Review, Testing, and Inspection staff focuses on ensuring improvements constructed throughout the county meet minimum standards. The section is subordinate to the Engineering division.

Quality assurance begins with the review of civil engineering documents that detail proposed paving, grading, and drainage improvements. Design plans are reviewed for conformance with the Land Development Code and consistency with best management practices for land development. Safe, quality infrastructure begins with proper plan development.

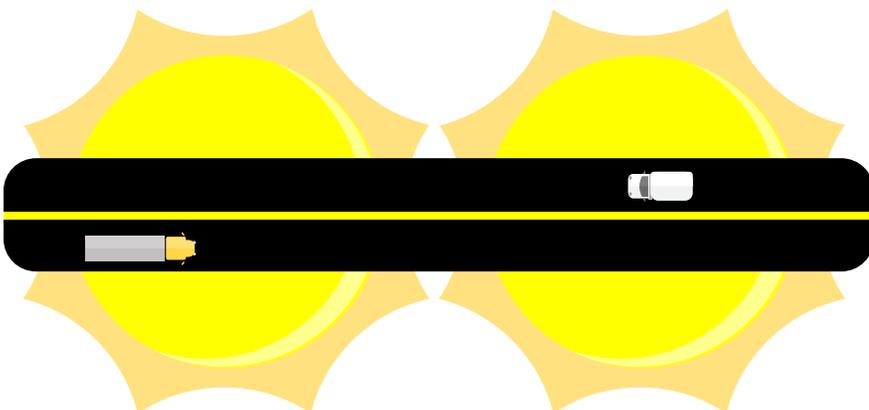
Once approved for construction inspectors within the section monitor work progress and review tests provided of work installed. Final inspections of infrastructure are coordinated with maintenance staff to ensure infrastructure that is to be dedicated to the county for maintenance meets all standards. Paramount to all reviews, tests, and inspections is having work performed that will protect the health, safety, and welfare of the general public.

In addition to inspecting work performed by private entities, commonly through development projects, this section assists with the construction of in-house capital projects. Inspectors are certified for testing the density of roadway in place materials and coordinate

lab tests of placed asphalt. Inspectors are trained in stormwater runoff control best management techniques so they can provide guidance through all capital projects.

The Land Development Review, Testing, and Inspection section is funded within the County

Left: County vehicles, drive more than four million miles a year - almost two trips around the sun.



Transportation Trust Fund that is made up of fuel taxes, local sales tax, charges for services, interest, other miscellaneous revenue, and transfers from other funds.

Mosquito Control

The Okaloosa County Public Works Department Mosquito Control (MC) Program provides the public with a safe and cost-effective program for the reduction of mosquito populations and habitat. The proposed FY20 Budget reflects the funding strategy to sustain the program model developed over the past decade. The jurisdiction of the MC Program includes all of Okaloosa County and excludes Federal and State Parks and Recreation Areas and Eglin Air Force Base property. Mosquito populations are controlled throughout the life cycle of the insect with larvacide control, mosquito fish stocks, breeding ground removal, and broadcast spraying.

In FY19, the Mosquito Control Program was awarded \$180,000 in grants from various agencies to help control the population of mosquitoes in the area. The program will use the money to invest in a georeferenced database system, laboratory equipment, chemical

Below: Okaloosa County Mosquito Trucks drove more than 11,000 miles on county roads to reduce the number of mosquitoes in the area.

pumps to reduce future capital requests and a climate control storage facility.

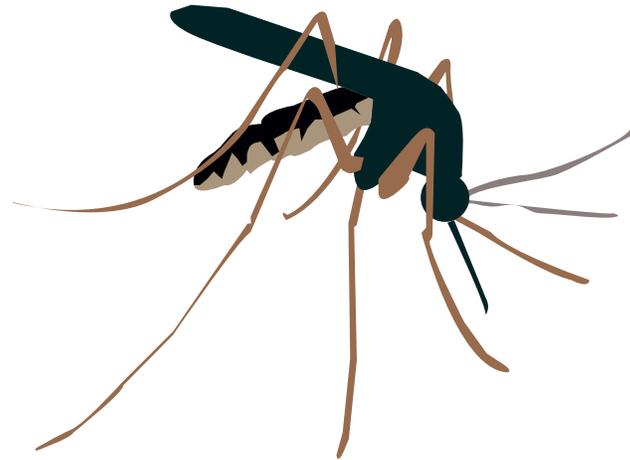
The Mosquito Control Program looks to expand their reach in the fight against mosquitoes in the coming fiscal year. The program hopes to treat 1,000 larvacide sites monthly – up from 900 in the previous year. The MC Program is funded through the General Fund. Supporting revenue of the General Fund are ad valorem taxes, state-shared revenue, licenses, permits, charges for services, interest, other miscellaneous revenue and transfers from other funds. Minimal Florida Department

of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) and erstwhile Florida Department of Health (FDOH) grants supplement the MC Program. The availability of FDACS grant funds are subject to annual review in the State Legislature and the availability of funds are historically consistent. Acceptance of the FDACS grant requires the MC Program Director to prepare monthly financial and chemical inventory

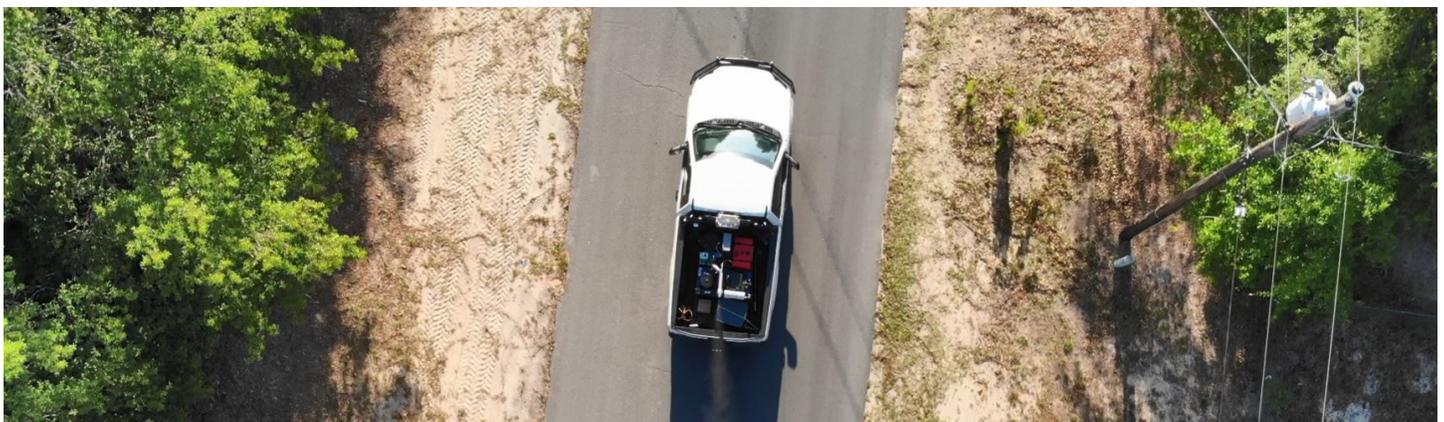
reporting and other State programmatic documentation. Projected FY20 State grant funds secured by the MC Program are projected to be \$33,403.12. FDOH grant funding is unpredictable, specifically targeted for activities associated with the Zika virus, and apportioned based on risk evaluation.

MSBU

Municipal Services Benefit Units (MSBU) are a special taxing district that allows residents to receive additional services in their neighborhood area. In



Above: Mosquito Control works to reduce the number of disease-carrying mosquitoes in Okaloosa County.



exchange for slightly higher property tax rates than the rest of the county, these areas receive additional services such as lighting, landscaping and roadway additions.

MSBU projects recently completed include annual landscape improvements in Bluewater Bay and the paving of dirt roads in the Pines and Triple Lakes subdivisions. Fees for an MSBU can also cover operational costs for street lighting or even specific channel dredging as in the case of the Lake Phippen subdivision. An MSBU can be created within an existing development through a petition process by the property owners or can be created by a single entity at the time of development. However formed, an MSBU is a specific way to fund an area-specific benefit.



Left: Sylvania Heights Park received a temporary facelift upon the signature of a short lease extension of the property the park sits on. The County is currently negotiating for a longer-term lease.

vacationers alike a place to play and enjoy themselves; whether they like bird watching at Veterans Park on Okaloosa Island, hiking and kayaking at Wilderness Landing on the Yellow River, or enjoying the beach along the Emerald Coast at James Lee Park in Destin. In addition to grounds and building maintenance of park facilities, major capital improvements completed this past year include upgrades to the Sylvania Heights and Holt Community Parks, upgrades and repairs to the seven beach

accessways on Okaloosa Island, general maintenance at all County Parks and the preparation of ball fields for sport seasons.

Parks and Boating

The Board of County Commissioners tasks the Parks Division with maintenance of the county's public parks and beaches. In total, the department maintains 467 acres of grass, 55 irrigation systems and cleans 21 restrooms. The Parks Division is funded through a combination of tourism-related taxes, general fund, and unincorporated county Municipal Service Taxing Unit funds.

Below: The Okaloosa Island Pier is one of many County-Owned recreational areas for residents and visitors to enjoy.

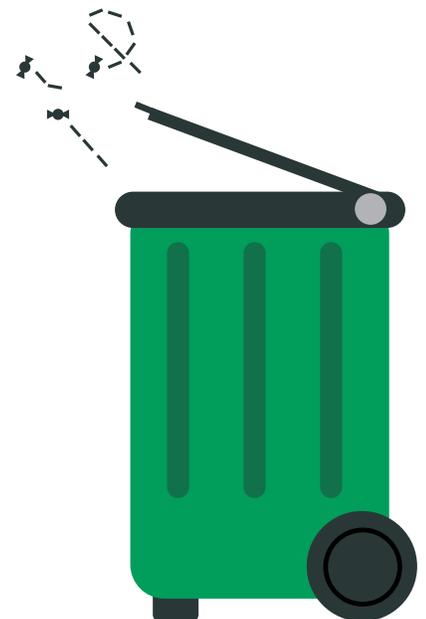
Okaloosa County parks offer citizens and

Activities and events, such as beach vendors and weddings, can be permitted through the Parks Division to ensure compliance with county ordinances.

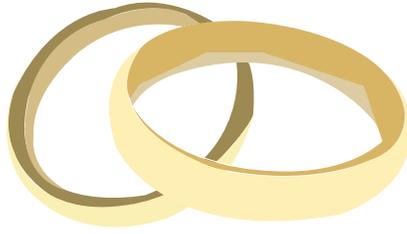
The Parks Division administers the Boating Improvement Program by installing and maintaining County boat ramps and boating related support facilities such as restrooms, parking areas, pavilions, and docks. This program provides removal of derelict vessels that have been identified and approved by the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



Right: The Parks Division removed more than 1.2 million pounds of trash from the beach last year.



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



to businesses, recreation, and each other. Road maintenance activities include routine mowing, repairs to potholes, and minor reconstruction efforts that are required through the normal wear-and-tear of vehicle traffic, resurfacing and lime-rock or asphalt millings, base stabilization, open graded hot mix road paving, bridge construction and other infrastructure maintenance and repair services.

Roads and Bridges Construction

Staff within the Road and Bridge Construction

Division execute large scale projects as part of the annual Capital Improvement Program. Annual maintenance work such as roadway overlays and bridge maintenance are a staple of the work performed by these crews, but major construction work is also performed.

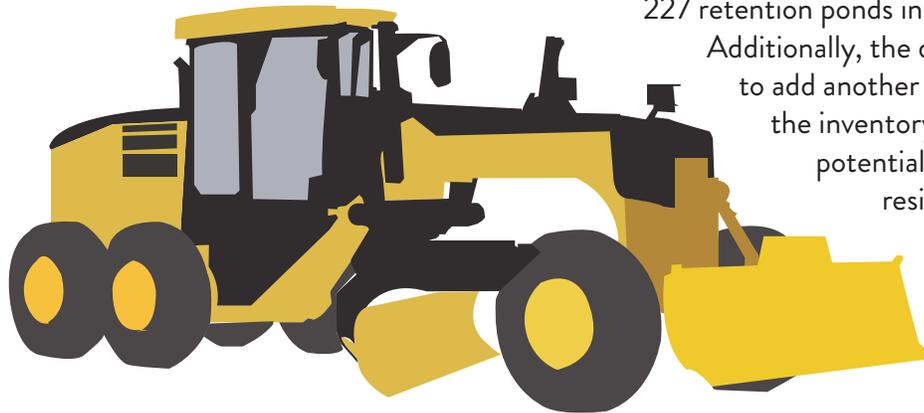
Road and Bridge Construction

crews are often also utilized in major stormwater construction projects. When an emergency pipe failure occurred along South Avenue, the Bridge crew was utilized to make immediate repairs. With the larger equipment and more skilled staff members, these two crews accomplish major projects at an efficient cost.

The Roads and Bridges Construction Division is funded by the County Transportation Trust Fund. That trust fund is made up of fuel taxes, a local government half cent sales tax, charges for services, interest, other miscellaneous revenue and transfers from other funds.

Above: The County provided almost 30 permits for beach wedding vendors.

Maintenance staff is split between the north and south end of the county, with about 2/3 of the staff stationed in the north end and 1/3 in the south. Activities exclusive to the north end of the county include road grading efforts; with nearly 200 miles of dirt roads under county maintenance there is a fleet of 8 graders charged with keeping these roads in the best condition possible.



Above: Road graders keep Okaloosa County's dirt roads passable.

The Road Maintenance Division maintained 227 retention ponds in the county.

Additionally, the division was able to add another retention pond to the inventory – reducing the potential for flooding for the residents of Okaloosa County.

The division responded to hundreds of citizens requests for maintenance –

including pavement repair, stabilization of roadway shoulders, installation of erosion control, removal of roadway debris, minor repair of roadway swales, minor repair of roadside ditches, installation of driveway culverts, tree and limb removal on county right-of-way, installation of check dams, repair to utility structures, cleaning of utility structures and basins, clipping shoulders and herbicide operations on county right-of-way.

Road Maintenance

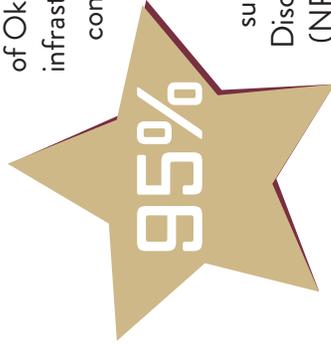
Many roads in the northern portion of Okaloosa County became more stable and usable by the traveling public, thanks to the hard work of the 57 full-time employees in the division. Clary Road, Annie Joe Road, A.L. Gillman, Griffith Cemetery, Ludlum Road, Thomas Road and the extension to Alpin Road all received upgrades to their

millings or lime rock.

The Roads Division is funded within the County Transportation Trust Fund. That trust fund is made up of fuel taxes, a local government half cent sales tax, charges for services, interest, other miscellaneous road maintenance.

Stormwater

The Stormwater Division of the Public Works department is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of Okaloosa County's stormwater infrastructure. In addition to field construction work, staff within the Stormwater Division makes sure the county is compliant with all federal regulations; such as the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) notice of intent.



Above: Okaloosa County road graders were able to grade roads 95% of the time in Fiscal Year 2019.

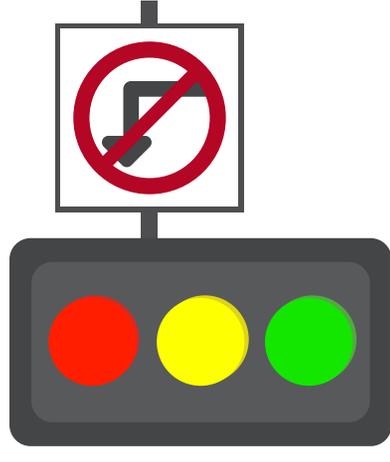
identified for upcoming capital improvement projects.

Traffic

The Traffic Division administers, maintains, and operates the Advanced Traffic Control Systems, which includes all traffic signals on county and state roads. Traffic Division staff regularly reviews signals throughout the system to determine if timing adjustments can be made to improve traffic flow. Signals in Okaloosa County can experience 50,000 trips per day, therefore, minor five second adjustments can have a tremendous impact.

Routine inspections of all signalized intersections include verification of signal function, crosswalk operations, and vehicle detection systems. Staff also maintains and programs school zone warning beacons based on requests from the Okaloosa County School Board.

In Fiscal Year 19, the Traffic Division adjusted the timing of the traffic signals along SR 20 in order to improve the flow of traffic along the busy commuter route in the Niceville area. This eased traffic during the evening and mid-morning commute periods considerably.



The Traffic Division also installed a signal at the corner of MLK and Comanche. This light was put up due to the efforts of the Public Works Department Team and the father of a man who was killed at the intersection while riding his motorcycle in 2017. A moving ceremony was hosted by Traffic, the Public Works Department, Commissioners Goodwin and Boyles and the father of the deceased motorcyclist.

Above: The traffic division operates all signals in Okaloosa County, regardless of location.

The division has also laid out the preliminary layout

“Signals in Okaloosa County can experience 50,000 trips per day, therefore, minor five second adjustments can have a tremendous impact.”

for the Traffic Management Center. The center will allow the Traffic Division to improve quality of life for Okaloosa County's commuters by centralizing the minds and information which can reduce commute times for thousands of drivers.

The Traffic Division is funded within the County Transportation Trust Fund. That trust fund is made up of fuel taxes, a local government half cent sales tax, charges for services, interest, other miscellaneous revenue and transfers from other funds. Additionally, FDOT assists with some of the



associated costs with this program through an annual infrastructure maintenance agreement.

Waste Resource Management Division

The Waste Resource Management Division (WRMD) of Public Works collects and disposes of all solid waste from citizens who live in the franchise area of unincorporated Okaloosa County via a contract with Waste Management. The WRMD also conducts oversight of the county's recycling and household hazardous waste programs for Okaloosa, Santa Rosa and Walton Counties – about 500,000 residents.

Yard debris delivered to either the Wright or Baker landfills is mulched by staff and utilized as ground cover at any of the three closed landfills that are monitored by FDEP. Additionally, the county also administers a special waste (which includes tires and appliances) and Small Quantity Generator program.

Below: The County was able to recycle 16,000 used tires in FY19.

In FY '19, the Waste Resource Management Division provided for the collection, disposal, remediation and long-term care activities with reductions in staff and revenues despite additional regulatory scrutiny.

Above: Public Works Director Jason Autrey Speaks to the family of Jeff Shaffer and Commissioners at the ceremony to activate the MLK/Comanche Traffic Light in June of 2019.

The Waste Resource Management Division is an enterprise fund that operates exclusively on fees associated with the program. This includes charges for services (refuse and recycling), tipping fees, franchise fees, and landfill operation charges.

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$12,724,726	\$13,640,743	7.2%
Operating Expenses	\$16,607,892	\$17,526,868	5.5%
Capital Outlay	\$20,611,516	\$26,811,063	30.1%
Other Uses	\$15,309,126	\$15,942,485	4.1%
Grand Total	\$65,253,260	\$73,921,159	13.3%

THOSE PENNIES ADD UP!

The November midterms brought good news to Okaloosa County Residents. Voters approved a half-cent sales tax measure, to improve infrastructure, storm water management and public safety in Okaloosa County.

Immediately, county staff and elected officials went to work to use the money to secure supplemental funding for the Southwest Crestview Bypass, so fewer traffic jams and shorter commutes to and from work for north county residents could become a reality. Since the election, Okaloosa County has received word from the Florida Department of Transportation and the Triumph Gulf Coast Corporation they would provide the additional requisite funding to make the roadway a reality. But many other projects, which will also benefit county residents are scheduled. Money for public safety improvements, like a much-needed upgrade for the Sheriff Office's antiquated radios, storm water and drainage improvements in low-lying areas, especially around the greater Fort Walton Beach area and roadway improvements are scheduled. Many of the projects are underway.

In order to encourage a transparent process; the commission appointed a surtax advisory committee. The advisory committee pre-approves or rejects items on

the project list. The surtax advisory committee looks at the project options which could be funded by the surtax and determines which ones it believes are the most important to perform. Once the committee has voted to approve a project, it goes in front of the Board of County Commissioners for a final approval vote. Once the board has approved it, the project is placed in the projects underway tab on the county website, along with information pertinent to the project, such as allocation and estimated time of completion.

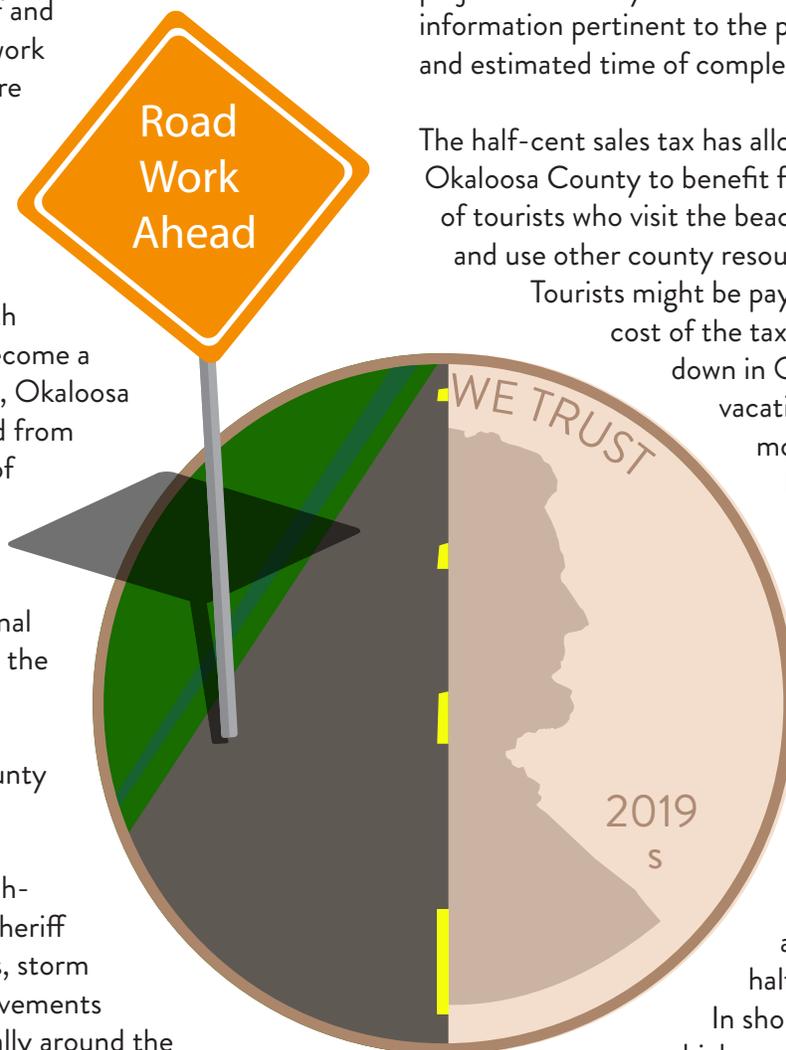
The half-cent sales tax has allowed the people of Okaloosa County to benefit from the large numbers of tourists who visit the beaches, drive on the roads and use other county resources during their stay.

Tourists might be paying up to 55% of the total

cost of the tax increase while they are down in Okaloosa County on their vacations. This arrangement

more equitably splits the burden of providing county services to the public than an ad valorem tax increase would have, as residents and property owners would be the only people to pay those costs. Indeed, the county commission would have had to raise property taxes 20% to match the amount of revenue the half-cent sales tax brings in.

In short, the small tax increase, which works out to an average of less than \$10 per person per month is equitable, a light burden and a huge return on investment for the people of Okaloosa County. •



Agricultural Extension



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 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.

In Calendar Year 2018, Extension Agents published 98 newspaper articles and 104 radio programs, which reached almost 300,000 people each week with unbiased and research-based information. Extension agents and volunteers taught almost 10,000 people

in demonstrations, workshops and seminars. Agents also answered about 33,500 phone calls and had 1,667 field and office consultations. Master Gardener volunteers, coordinated by the County Extension Office, provided \$140,000 in community service in 2018. In addition, 4-H reached more than 2,500 youths through clubs, camps, day camps, school enrichment and after school programs. •



Above: For every dollar the county spends on the Agricultural Extension, \$3 is brought in by grants or other methods to help the citizens of Okaloosa County.

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$293,599	\$331,578	12.9%
Operating Expenses	\$49,142	\$52,768	7.4%
Capital Outlay	\$34,029	\$0	-100%
Grand Total	\$376,770	\$384,346	2.0%

Human Resources



The Okaloosa County Human Resources Department works to support other County departments by providing technical and consultation services. These services include legal and regulatory compliance, policy development, recruitment and selection of new employees, orientation, separation, employee relations, handling of discipline and grievances, employee award recognition, performance management, job classification, compensation, employee communications, training and development, attendance and leave management, HR information systems and records.

The Human Resources Department expects to provide these services to more than 850 employees over the next fiscal year.

In fiscal year 2019, the Human Resources Department worked to process almost 6900 applications from individuals wanting to work for Okaloosa County, an increase of almost 1300 applications. In FY '20, they expect to process more than 7000.

In Fiscal Year 2019, HR accomplished several objectives which made the county a better place to work. The department conducted a prohibited harassment refresher training course for more than 200 employees. The department also helped to hire and conduct orientation for 202 employees, or two out of every nine employees currently working at

Above: OCHR provided eight employees a chance to further hone their skills and provide added value to the public by granting tuition assistance.

the county. Additionally, the department began a collaboration with the Public Information Office to use social media to recruit prospective employees.

The members of the HR Department developed the Lead Training Program. This program helps employees in management positions learn to lead effectively within the scope of their duties. This essential training helps cultivate the county's future leaders, supervisors and managers.

2019 also meant a change for the Human Resources Department. HR welcomed a new director – Edward Sission. Sission came to the county in August of 2019. Sission comes to Okaloosa County with a wealth of Human Resources experience. Previous employers include the Cities of Pensacola and Jacksonville as well as Hillsborough County.



Above: New HR Director Edward Sission

Human Resources is funded within the general fund. Supporting revenue of the general fund are property taxes, communications service tax, local business tax, permits and fees, state shared revenue, charges for services, judgments and fines, miscellaneous revenue and transfers from other funds. •

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$604,656	\$644,569	6.6%
Operating Expenses	\$63,968	\$58,141	-9.1%
Capital Outlay	\$0	\$2,500	100%
Grand Total	\$668,624	\$705,210	5.5%



Above: A conceptual design of the terminal expansion at Destin-Fort Walton Beach

50-thousand gallon expansion to the airport’s fuel farm, a third lane to the security checkpoint which serves as a TSA PreV lane to increase passenger throughput, a terminal wide HVAC retrofit, exterior security bollards and access control features and a rehabilitation of Taxiways D1 and D2.

A recently completed airport layout plan has mapped over \$75M in improvements to meet growing demands and daily challenges. the layout plan calls for expansions to the baggage handling system, west aircraft parking apron, existing terminal building to accommodate ticketing and circulation, parking lot additions, and construction of a new Concourse-C building. The new concourse building will feature its own security checkpoint, hold rooms, concessions, and up to five aircraft parking positions.



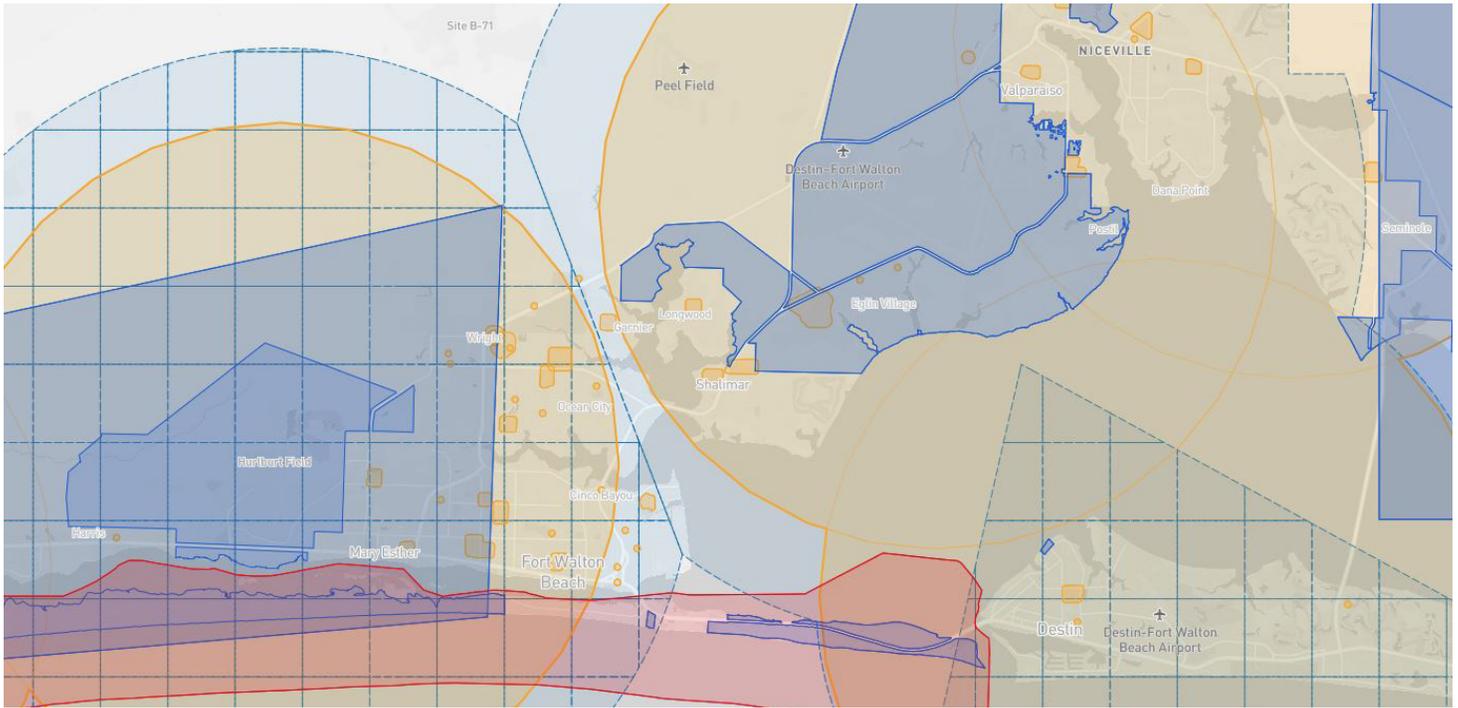
Above: VPS Welcomed Silver Airways to the tarmac in FY19

VPS and Eglin AFB share common goals with respect to the safety and security of the terminal and airfield facilities, resulting in a close partnership and seamless collaboration.

The airport’s sound financial management practices earned an S&P Rating increase to A-. In order to accomplish this feat, the airport’s executive staff worked to have unrestricted cash and investment

balances providing 750 days cash on hand, based on 2018 operating expenses.

As a nod to the beneficial partnership with Eglin AFB and pride in the local military mission, passengers are welcomed by a fully landscaped park featuring memorials with an Air Force F-15, an Army Huey UH-1 Dustoff and the ship’s bell from the WWII-decorated USS Okaloosa.



Destin Executive Airport

Destin Executive Airport (DTS), also known as Coleman Kelly Field, is a general aviation, public use airport located on the south end of Okaloosa County. The first landing at the airport occurred October 13, 1961. Lucius Burch of Memphis, Tenn., and two passengers came for a weekend of fishing at the “World’s Luckiest Fishing Village.” DTS has an area of 395 acres and one runway designated as 14/32 with a length of 5,001 feet. Lynx FBO Network, rated as a top-10 FBO in the country, provides for comfortable first class facilities and services for travelers and pilots alike.

In 2017, the airport began operating its own Air Traffic Control Tower, named after retired Air Force Lt. General and World War II pilot Leroy Manor. The \$5 million tower means increased safety for private, commercial and military pilots and passengers along the Emerald Coast, which is among the busiest and most complex airspace

Above: the airspace above southern Okaloosa County is incredibly complex. It requires the best of the best to make sure the airspace stays safe.

in the United States. The tower monitors and directs air traffic for the airport from 6AM to 10PM, seven days a week.

The airport boasted more than 65,000 flight operations in FY '19.

The airport also completed several upgrades in FY '19 – including the design rehabilitation of Taxiway Alpha, an update to the airfield driving course, changes to security procedures to keep the public safe and the completion of the airport master plan.

Below: Airports Department Employee Pat Powell receives an award from the 823 Red Horse Squadron at Hurlbert Field for his customer service efforts.

The Destin Airport generates revenue from landing fees, hangar leases and fixed-base operators.



Bob Sikes Airport

Bob Sikes Airport (CEW), named for U.S. Congressman Robert L. F. Sikes, is a public-use general aviation airport and is a haven for defense and industrial aerospace development as well as modification and conversion companies due to its 8,000 foot runway



Above: A satellite view of the Bob Sikes Airport in Crestview. The Airport was named after a former member of the United States House of Representatives for the northwest Florida area.

with an instrument landing system (ILS) and available acreage on and off airport for lease.

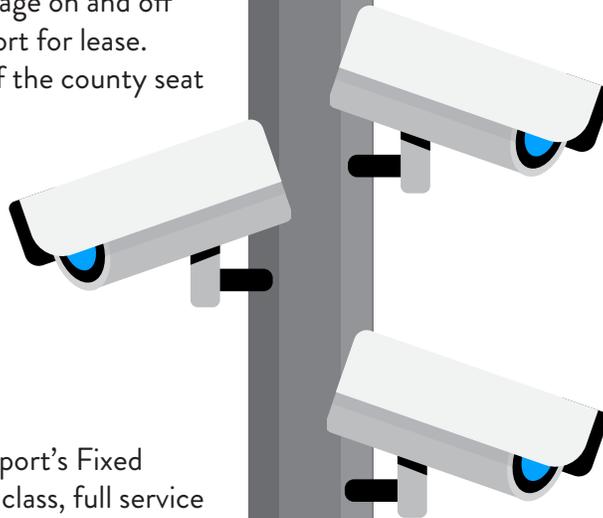
Tucked in the northeast corner of the county seat of Crestview, CEW sits on 1,080 acres adjacent to the 360-acre Okaloosa-Crestview Industrial Airpark and serves the public as a regional logistics base for several aerospace manufacturing and modification companies.

Emerald Coast Aviation is the airport's Fixed Base Operator and provides first class, full service amenities for all customers. CEW makes for an ideal base of operation for many such companies and also serves several non-aviation centered companies through its designation as an enterprise zone for future development opportunities.

Fiscal Year 2019 saw Bob Sikes Airport gain grant funding to commence design on major rehabilitation of the south airplane apron to serve the general aviation community.

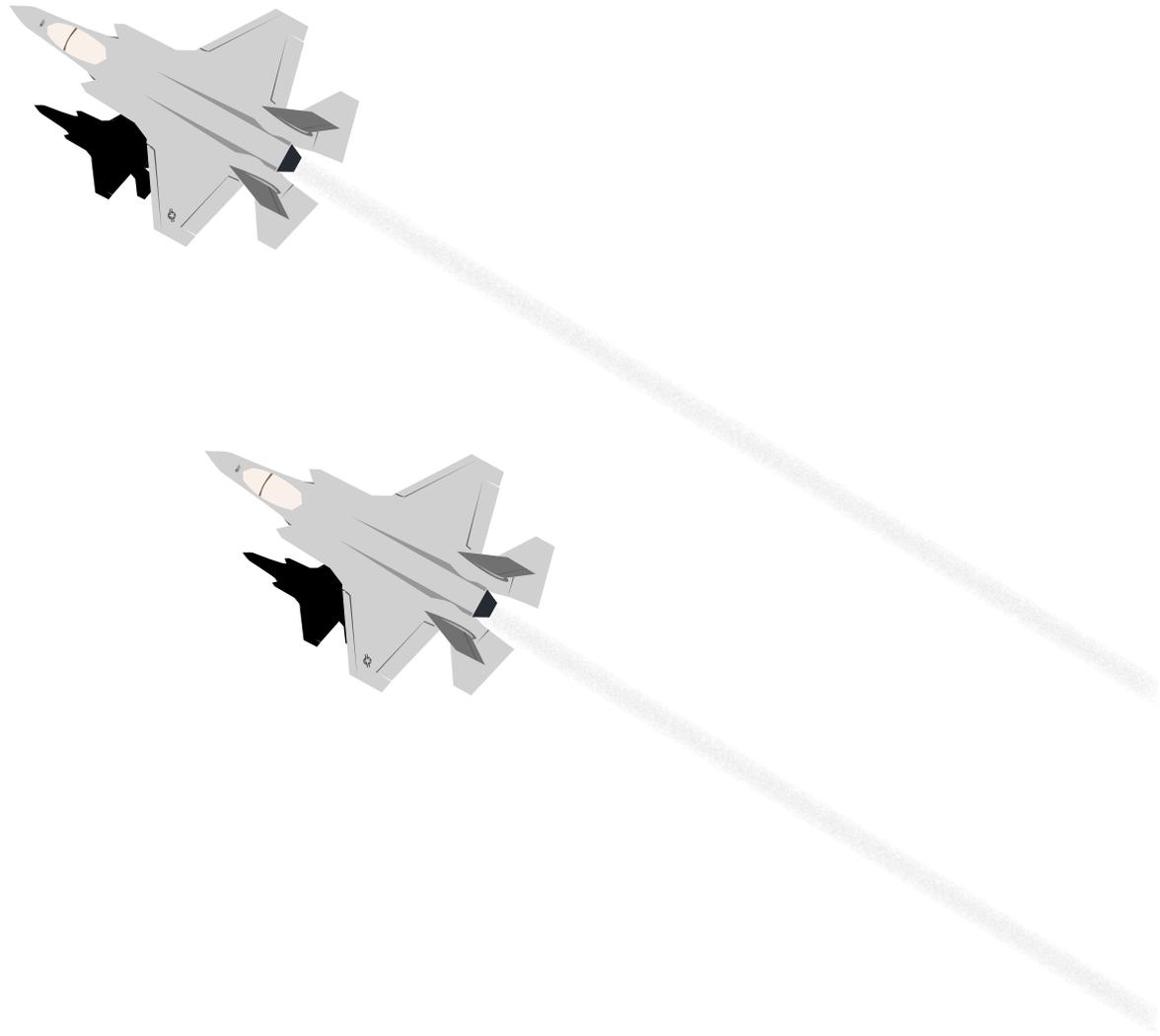
The airport also completed its 5-year master plan.

The Bob Sikes Airport generates its revenue through fuel flowage fees, land and building leases and percentage fees of gross sales from the fixed base operator, as well and other land and hangar lease fees.



Left: Security Cameras were added at the Crestview Airport. These cameras are monitored remotely and represent a cost-savings for the department.

Category	FY19 Budget	FY20 Budget	% Inc/Dec
Personnel	\$2,352,267	\$2,569,681	9.2%
Operating Expenses	\$6,736,617	\$7,347,249	9.1%
Capital Outlay	\$622,084	\$11,460,207	1742.2%
Other Uses	\$39,845,037	\$28,469,202	-28.6%
Grand Total	\$49,556,005	\$49,846,339	0.6%



A creation of the Okaloosa County Office of Public Information