



**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
of THE MARY ESTHER LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY
June 2, 2025 - 5:30 PM**

195 Christobal Road – North, Mary Esther, FL 32569

LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY PRESENT

Chris Stein, Chairman
Bernie Oder, Board Member
Susan Coxwell, Board Member

April Sutton, Board Member
Larry Carter, Board Member
Richard Lawson, Board Member

CITY STAFF PRESENT

Jared Cobb, City Manager
Hayward Dykes, City Attorney
Dillon Morris, City Clerk

Tyler Reed, Community Development Director

1. INVOCATION

No invocation was given.

2. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Stein at 5:30 p.m.

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Stein led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. ROLL CALL

The City Clerk called the roll as reflected above. Chairman Stein asked for a motion for Board Member Carter to participate virtually. The motion was initiated by Board Member Sutton, seconded by Board Member Cowell. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (4-0)
MOVER:	Board Member April Sutton
SECOND:	Board Member Susan Coxwell
AYES:	Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

5. ADMINISTRATION OF OATH TO THOSE PERSONS TESTIFYING

City Clerk Morris administered the oath to those persons testifying.

6. ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1. Consideration of transmittal of the City of Mary Esther Comprehensive Plan update for State Coordinated Review and first reading of Ordinance 2025-04

Tyler Reed, Community Development Director, provided the background of the Mary Esther Comprehensive Plan Update. Eric Christanson, Emerald Coast Regional Council, discussed the update to the City's comprehensive plan, including what a comprehensive plan is, comprehensive plan versus zoning, required updates, the timeline, comprehensive plan changes generally, future land use elements, transportation elements, housing elements, infrastructure elements, coastal management and conservation elements, recreation and open space elements, intergovernmental coordination elements, capital improvement elements, public schools facility elements, property rights elements, and the next steps of formal adoption. Board Member Oder asked if there were any issues with submitting later, with Eric Christanson stating that the only penalty would be that the city could not submit any future land use map changes, but that this is a typical occurrence. Community Development Director Reed also stated they reached out to the state to inform them that the submission would be late. Chairman Stein asked if the LPA had

any additional comments. Hearing none, Chairman Stein opened the floor to public comments. Hearing none, Chairman Stein asked for a motion to approve the transmittal of the City of Mary Esther Comprehensive Plan update for state-coordinated review and to recommend a first reading of Ordinance 2025-04 to the City Council. Board Member Lawson initiated the motion, seconded by Board Member Sutton. The motion passed unanimously.

RESULT:	PASSED (5-0)
MOVER:	Councilmember Richard Lawson
SECOND:	Mayor Pro Tem April Sutton
AYES:	Larry Carter, Bernie Oder, April Sutton, Richard Lawson, Susan Coxwell
NAYS:	None

7. **ADJOURN**

The council meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Minutes approved at the 7/7/2025 meeting.

Dillon Morris
Dillon Morris, City Clerk





Mary Esther Comp Plan Update

Eric Christianson, Planner

Agenda

- Comprehensive Planning Overview
- Policy Changes
- Plan Implementation
- Adoption



CITY OF MARY ESTHER

Comprehensive Plan: 2020

*Ordinance No. 99-02
(As Amended)*

March 9, 2010

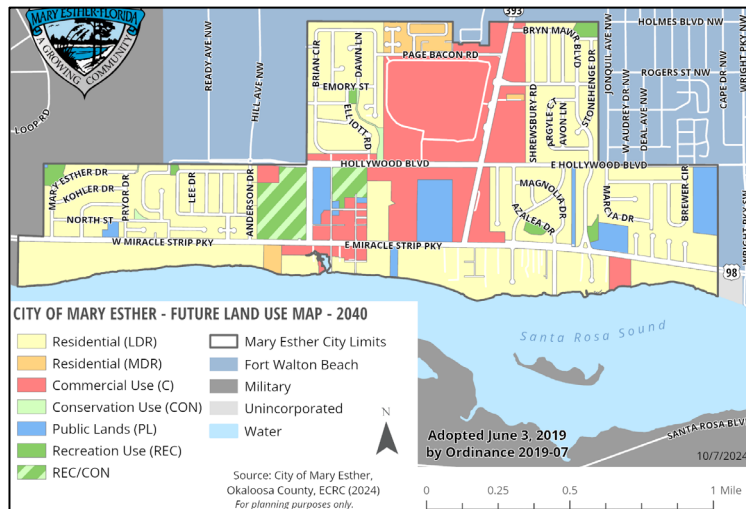
What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Your Comprehensive Plan serves as a long-term blueprint for guiding growth and development. It ensures that land use, housing, transportation, and public facilities are planned in a way that meets current needs while accommodating future changes.

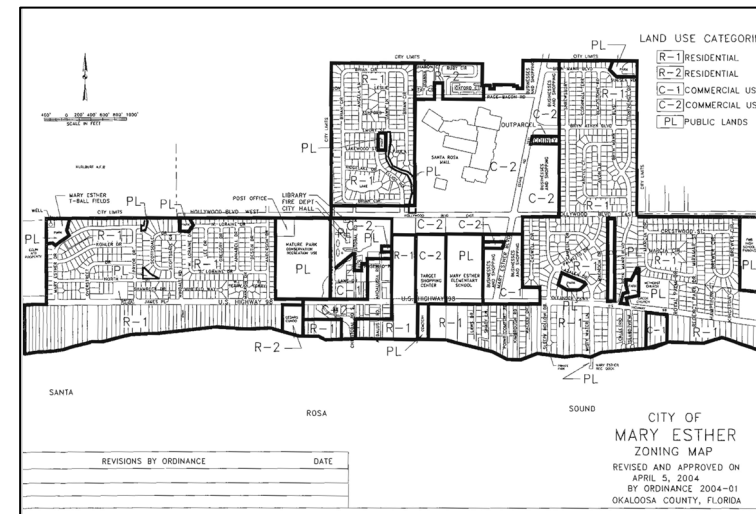
A well written plan simplifies the task of approving individual development requests and ordinance changes.



Comp Plan v. Zoning



- Regulates Future Land Uses
- High level vision



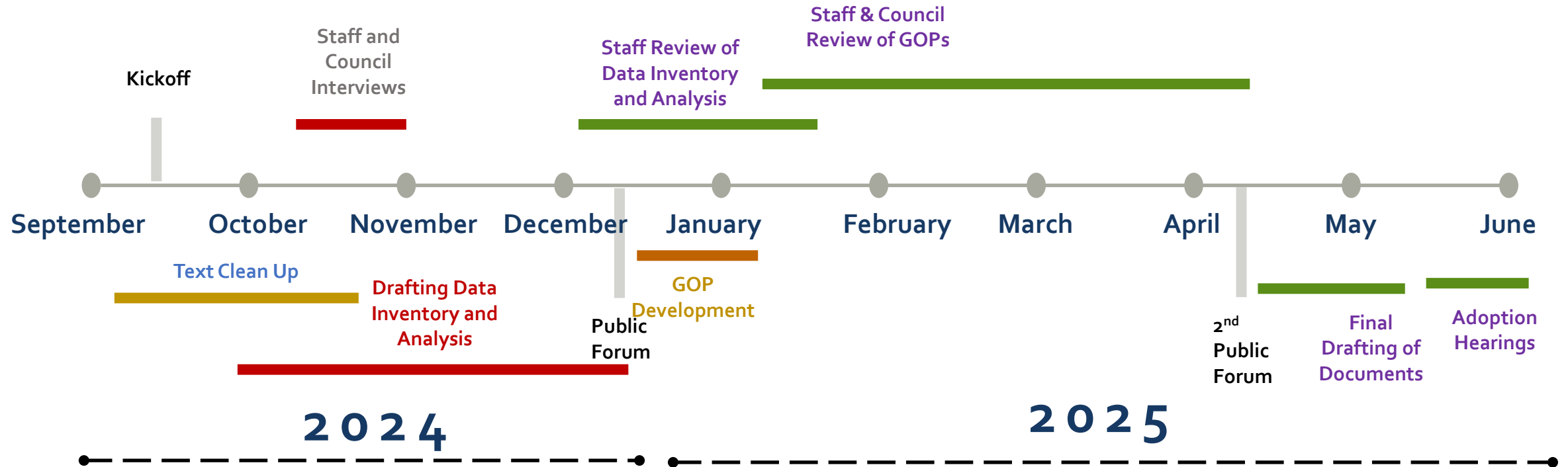
- Regulates the way land is used today
- Specific Application

1. Update Planning Horizon
At least 10-year and 20-year planning horizons
2. Add in the required 2021 Property Rights Element
3. Overall updates to reflect changes in the City since last major update in 2010
4. State Deadline of February 28





Timeline (Updated)



- Grammar and clarity changes
- Restructured and simplified document
- Removed references to outdated City Land Development Code and Florida Statutes
- Updated best practices where appropriate
- Creates new Annual Comprehensive Plan Review and Goal Setting Session

Introduction

Definitions

A – Future Land Use Element

B – Transportation Element

C – Housing Element

D – Infrastructure Element

E – Coastal Management and Conservation Element

F – Recreation and Open Space Element

G – Intergovernmental Coordination Element

H – Capital Improvements Element

I – Public School Facilities Element

J – Property Right Element (new)

Major Updates:

- Clarified descriptions and creation of new Future Land Use Categories
- Creation of **Town Center** and **Soundside Overlay**
- Inclusion of Concurrency Management (previously a separate section)
- Updated Future Land Use Map

FUTURE LAND USE

ELEMENT A - FUTURE LAND USE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

Pursuant to Section 163.3177(6)(a), F.S., the following represents the Future Land Use Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the City of Mary Esther. In addition to statutory requirements, the Goals, Objectives, and Policies were developed in keeping with the character, conditions, both environmental and social, and desires of the community. Goals, Objectives, and Policies are intended to address the establishment of a long-term end towards which the land use programs and activities of the community are ultimately directed.

The included Future Land Use Map Series is, by reference, made a part of this Ordinance including all future amendments, revisions, and updates. The Future Land Use Map Series may be amended by following the requirements in Florida Statutes Section 163.3184.



GOAL A1

Manage and regulate land uses, locations, and densities to ensure the promotion, protection, and improvement of public, health safety, and welfare of the residents of the City of Mary Esther.

Objective A1-1 - Coordinate future land growth and development with the appropriate topography, soil conditions, and availability of facilities and services to protect the public health, safety, and welfare through the adoption, implementation, and enforcement of land development regulations.

Policy A1-1a - The City's Land Development Regulations shall be maintained in the City's adopted Land Development Code (LDC).

Policy A1-1b - The LDC shall contain specific and detailed provisions to implement this Ordinance including, as a minimum, the following:

- a. Regulation of the subdivision of land (reference Article 2, Section 13 - Land Development Code);
- b. Regulation of the use of land by zoning districts which implement the land use categories shown on the Future Land Use Map (reference Chapter 21 - City Code);
- c. Ensure compatibility of adjacent land uses (reference Chapter 21 - City Code);
- d. Provide for open space (reference **Element F** of this Ordinance);
- e. Protect potable water wellfields and sources (reference **Policy E2-2a**);

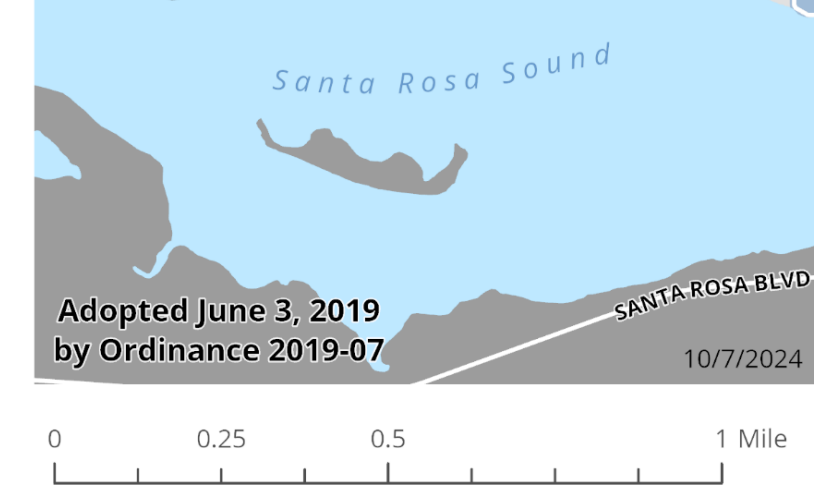
Future Land Use Map (Current)



CITY OF MARY ESTHER - FUTURE LAND USE MAP - 2040

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Residential (LDR) | Mary Esther City Limits |
| Residential (MDR) | Fort Walton Beach |
| Commercial Use (C) | Military |
| Conservation Use (CON) | Unincorporated |
| Public Lands (PL) | Water |
| Recreation Use (REC) | |
| REC/CON | |

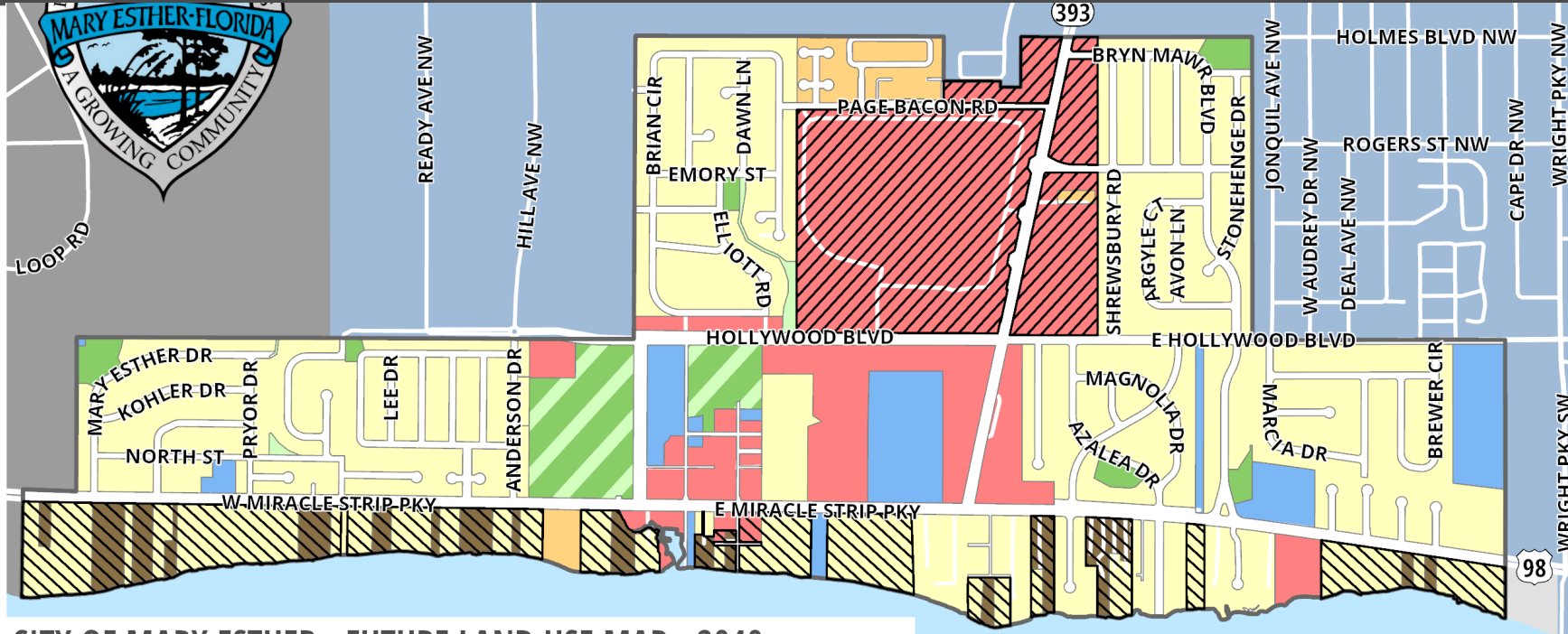
Source: City of Mary Esther, Okaloosa County, ECRC (2024)
For planning purposes only.



Adopted June 3, 2019
by Ordinance 2019-07

10/7/2024

Future Land Use Map (Proposed)



CITY OF MARY ESTHER - FUTURE LAND USE MAP - 2040

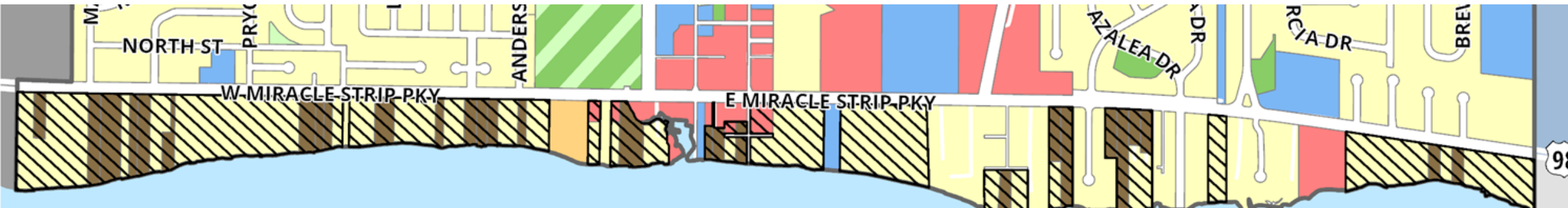
- | | |
|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Residential (LDR) | Town Center District |
| Residential (MDR) | Soundside Overlay District |
| Commercial Use (C) | Mary Esther City Limits |
| Conservation Use (CON) | Fort Walton Beach |
| Public Lands (PL) | Military |
| Recreation Use (REC) | Unincorporated |
| REC/CON | |
| Historic Duplex Cottage District (HDCD) | |



Source: City of Mary Esther, Okaloosa County, ECRC (2025)
For planning purposes only.



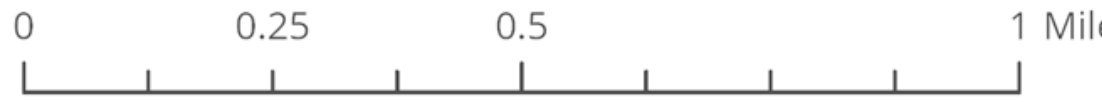
Future Land Use Map (Current)



CITY OF MARY ESTHER - FUTURE LAND USE MAP - 2040

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Okaloosa County, ECRC (2024)
For planning purposes only.



Updated through
Ord. 2024-05

4/4/2025

Major Updates:

- Clarified and strengthened references to nonmotorized transportation.
- New Policy on working with FDOT and the OCSD to alleviate queuing on US 98.
- Inclusion of new transportation technologies
- References to an encouragement of bike and pedestrian infrastructure in the new Town Center overlay.



Major Updates:

- Promotion of a wide variety of housing types including “missing middle” housing, mixed-use development, and adaptive reuse.
- Dedication to reviewing and improving the city’s regulatory and permitting program.



Major Updates:

- Updated goals surrounding wastewater disposal to allow for flexibility in exploring future solutions.
- Clarified current solid waste management practices.
- Removed specific recycling goals.
- Removed water saving device ordinance reference previously required by state statute.





Major Updates:

- Updated goals to reflect the statewide Resilient Florida standards.
- Updated references to the County's Local Mitigation Strategy and regional Hurricane Evacuation Study.
- Added Florida Friendly Landscaping as a potential alternative to current xeriscape requirements



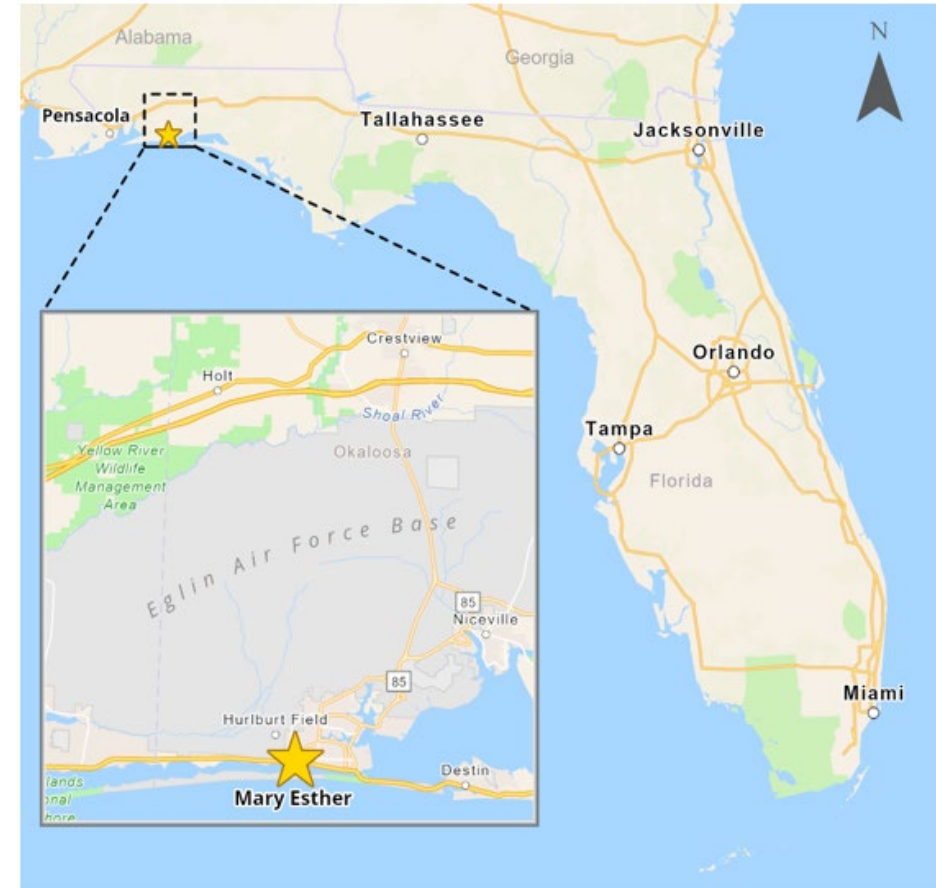
Major Updates:

- Creates new category of Park 'Town Center Park'
- Updated references to upcoming Bike, Ped, Trail Plan for Okaloosa-Walton TPO.
- Added references to community gardens and the farmer's market.
- Modified references to tourism development organizations.



Major Updates:

- Clarified importance of intergovernmental coordination and updated references to recent coordination efforts.
- Eliminated or modified references to defunct organizations, plans and agreements.



CITY OF MARY ESTHER - LOCATION MAP

Source: FDEP, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, SafeGraph, FAO, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS, FDEP, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA

Major Updates:

- Added in updated inventory of capital improvements
- Included Level of Service standards for Roadways, Sewer, Solid Waste, Drainage, Potable Water, Recreation and Open Space, and Public School Facilities
- Establishes new Annual Goal Setting Process



Major Updates:

- Added a direct reference to support the development of a new primary access drive for Mary Esther Elementary School.
- Clarified support for Safe Routes to School
- Removed references to outdated schools plans and maps



Major Updates:

- Added in state recommended language to protect property owner's rights.
- Clarified current notice and hearing procedures.





Formal Adoption

- LPA Public Hearing and Recommendation
- Council Transmittal Hearing (First Reading)
- Transmittal to State and Agency Review (expedited review)
- Adoption Hearing (Second Reading)
- Final Submittal and Appeal Window

Thank You

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Eric Christianson, Planner
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