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LEVY COUNTY
Development Services Division

Presented by: Laura Jones, JBPro, Senior Planner
Date: January 27, 2026
Petition: CPA-WFWP
Applicant: Levy County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)



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Table of Contents

Request Summary.....	3
Background.....	3
Staff Analysis.....	4
Recommendations.....	7



Request Summary

This is a staff-initiated request to amend the Levy County 2045 Comprehensive Plan to adopt, by reference, the Levy County Water Supply Facilities Work Plan (WSFWP) and to update related provisions of the *Infrastructure*, *Conservation*, and *Intergovernmental Coordination Elements*. This amendment is required by Section 163.3177(6)(c)4, Florida Statutes, which mandates adoption of a local WSFWP within 18 months after the applicable Water Management District adopts a Regional Water Supply Plan. The Suwannee River Water Management District adopted the *Western Water Supply Plan* in March 2024, requiring Levy County to adopt its WSFWP by September 2025.

Background

The WSFWP ensures that local comprehensive plans are coordinated with regional water supply planning and state law, while addressing the potable water needs of County-owned utility systems. Levy County owns and operates two potable water systems: the University Oaks Mobile Home Park (MHP) system and the Manatee Utilities system. Among the County's systems, only the University Oaks MHP has been recommended for improvements in the Western Water Supply Plan. Accordingly, the WSFWP focuses exclusively on the University Oaks MHP system.

To implement the WSFWP and maintain internal consistency, the following elements of the Comprehensive Plan have been amended:

- The *Infrastructure Element* has been amended to incorporate the Water Supply Facilities Work Plan by reference and to establish procedures for future updates to ensure continued consistency with state and regional planning requirements.
- The *Intergovernmental Coordination Element* has been amended to strengthen provisions for collaboration with the Suwannee River and Southwest Florida Water Management Districts, as well as with municipalities within Levy County, to support coordinated water supply planning.
- The *Conservation Element* has been amended to introduce a new policy outlining water conservation strategies the County may consider for its potable water systems, reinforcing broader goals of resource efficiency and long-term sustainability.



Staff Analysis

Staff has reviewed the proposed amendments for consistency with the Levy County 2045 Comprehensive Plan. The following section identifies the Goals, Objectives, and Policies most pertinent to regional and local water supply planning, with each followed by a **bolded** determination indicating how the amendments support or align with the Comprehensive Plan.

Infrastructure Element – Potable Water Quantity and Quality Sub-Element Goal. Protect, maintain, and conserve the source, quality and supply of potable water to serve existing and future development and population needs.

The proposed amendments support this goal by incorporating the WSFWP into the Comprehensive Plan, which identifies projected demand, planned improvements, and strategies to ensure long-term potable water availability.

Infrastructure Element – Potable Water Quantity and Quality Sub-Element, Objective 1 – Water Source Protection. Coordinate with the Water Management Districts to develop water supply and quality protection standards, monitoring systems, and other measures to enhance the quality and supply of potable water.

The amendments reinforce this Objective by establishing formal coordination with the Suwannee River and Southwest Florida Water Management Districts through updated policies to the Comprehensive Plan that require continued alignment with regional water supply plans.

Infrastructure Element – Potable Water Quantity and Quality Sub-Element, Policy 1.1. The County will coordinate with the Water Management Districts to develop water plan policies to ensure that the projected increase of water use and drainage for agricultural, residential, and commercial uses are met and to address potential demands for water transfers to other counties.

The WSFWP and companion amendments demonstrate coordination with the Suwannee River Water Management District by relying on data, projections, and identified improvements consistent with the Western Water Supply Plan, which addresses long-term potable water needs within the County's service area.

Infrastructure Element – Potable Water Quantity and Quality Sub-Element, Policy 1.6. Within 18 months of the adoption of a regional water supply plan which includes Levy County by either the Suwannee River Water Management District or the Southwest Florida Water Management District (whichever is later), the County shall amend its Comprehensive Plan to (Subsection 163.3177(6)(c), Florida Statutes):



- a. identify alternative and traditional water supply projects and conservation measures necessary to meet the water needs identified in the regional water supply plans; and

The WSFWP confirms that, within the County-owned potable water service areas, no traditional or alternative water supply projects are required to meet projected demand during the 10-year planning period. The WSFWP applies exclusively to the University Oaks MHP system—the only County-owned system identified in the Western Water Supply Plan recommended for improvements. For this system, the WSFWP identifies University Oaks Phase 4 as a conservation-based infrastructure project intended to reduce water loss through line replacements and meter upgrades.

- b. incorporate a work plan for at least a 10-year planning period for the development of water supply projects that will meet the water needs identified in the regional water supply plans to serve existing and new development.

The WSFWP provides a 10-year planning framework for the University Oaks MHP system, including projected demand based on population growth scenarios, system capacity analysis, and identification of capital improvements. The Plan demonstrates that future needs can be met within existing capacity, with University Oaks Phase 4 identified as the only project recommended to maintain system performance and reduce losses over the planning horizon.

[Note: The provisions of Policy 1.6 have been incorporated into proposed Policy 6.3 under Objective 6 of the Infrastructure Element's Potable Water Quantity and Quality Sub-Element.]

Conservation Element – Goal. Protect, conserve, enhance, or appropriately use the County's natural resources in a manner which maximizes their long term viability and economic, recreational, and natural value.

The proposed amendments are consistent with this goal by adopting the WSFWP through the Infrastructure Element and adding a new Conservation Element policy on water conservation strategies. Collectively, these amendments promote the efficient use of potable water resources, reduce unnecessary water loss, and ensure that the County's groundwater resources continue to support long-term environmental and community needs.

Conservation Element – Objective 6 - Protect the Quality and Quantity of Current and Projected Water Sources. Protect, appropriately use and conserve the quality and quantity of current and projected water sources within the County including surface water, springs, groundwater and waters that flow into the Gulf of Mexico.



Recommendations

The proposed amendments advance this Objective by adopting the WSFWP into the Infrastructure Element, which establishes a 10-year framework for sustainable potable water supply planning for County-owned systems. The new Conservation Element policy supports this objective further by identifying conservation practices the County may pursue, including outreach, and operational improvements, to protect both the quality and quantity of the County's potable water resources.

The WSFWP also recommends additional conservation strategies, such as demand-based rate structures and public outreach, to further support responsible water use within the service area. These conservation strategies were reinforced through a new policy in the Conservation Element, which outlines a range of measures the County may explore to reduce water waste and promote long-term efficiency.

Florida Commerce indicated that the inclusion of a tiered rate schedule could be considered more burdensome or restrictive under Section 28 of Chapter 2025-190, Laws of Florida; therefore, the tiered rate schedule has been removed prior to the adoption hearing.

The above suggestions have been incorporated into the latest draft.



Recommendations

On September 22, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the petition to the Levy County BOCC with the following modifications:

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION ELEMENT

Water Supply Planning Coordination

Policy 5.4 The County shall coordinate with the Suwannee River and Southwest Florida Water Management Districts, and any applicable regional water supply authority, to ensure the County gives due consideration to each District's Regional Water Supply Plan and other regional initiatives through the exchange of information, participation in plan updates, and consideration of regional strategies in local decision-making.

INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENT

Water Supply Protection

Policy 5.4 The County will cooperate with the Water Management Districts in instituting water conservation measures to address drought conditions giving due consideration to the regional water supply plans of the Suwannee River and Southwest Florida Water Management Districts and in accordance with Florida Statutes.

The WSFWP recommended the additional conservation strategy of demand-based rate structures and public outreach, to further support responsible water use within the service area. These conservation strategies are reinforced through a new policy in the Conservation Element, which outlines a range of measures the County may explore to reduce water waste and promote long-term efficiency.

On November 24, 2025 FloridaCommerce commented that the demand-based rate structures included in proposed policy 6.18 is potentially in contradiction to Section 28 Chapter 2025-190, Laws of Florida. As it is not a major component of the plan, the recommendation was removed.

The above suggestions have been incorporated into the final draft.