



LAKE

Mapping Our Future

State of the County Annual Report 2004



a prominent future and a different choice

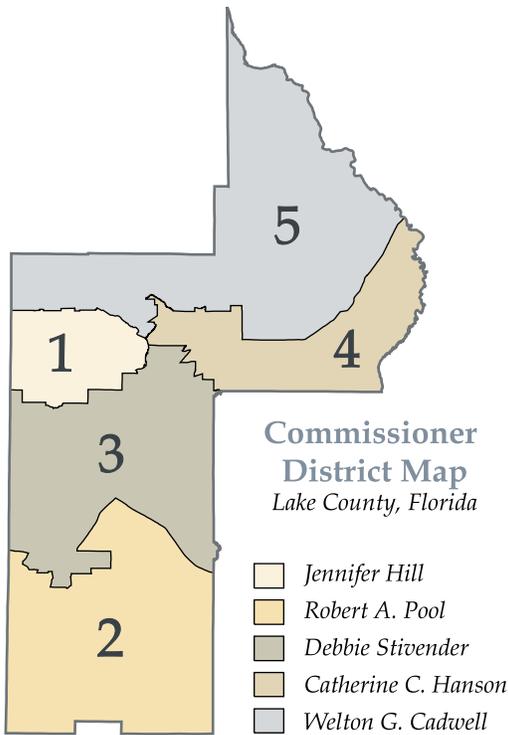
Mapping

From the time the first settlers journeyed to Lake County in the early 1800s, the striking physical beauty of the area has captured the hearts and imagination of many. With an array of dynamic features that includes more than 500 lakes and rivers, Lake County will continue to attract visitors for years to come.

The road map to success for Lake County is simple: provide and create opportunities to address public needs. By building a sustainable environment, developing a diverse economic base to allow citizens the ability to enjoy a quality standard of living, nourishing communities and increasing confidence in government, Lake County is positioning itself as a viable destination in the Central Florida scene.

Not only does Lake County offer the serenity of a quiet atmosphere, but it also lies within close proximity to both Florida coasts and a number of tourist attractions that often characterize Central Florida. What Lake County offers that others cannot is its hometown feel of charming downtowns and endless acres of nature preserves.





The Lake County Board of County Commissioners is comprised of (left to right) commissioners Robert A. Pool, Catherine C. Hanson, Debbie Stivender, Jennifer Hill and Welton G. Cadwell.



from the Chairman of the Board

A Letter

To My Fellow Citizens:

With spirit, cooperation and dedication, Lake County continues its path of excellence by proactively "Mapping our Future." The theme of the Lake County 2003-2004 fiscal year annual report captures and defines the vision of the Board of County Commissioners.

From focusing on customer service, to standing tall in the face of peril, Lake County has taken the positive approach of being available and ready when we are needed most. A host of initiatives introduced this past fiscal year are making us stronger as we build a more cohesive community with common goals.

The Board of County Commissioners is striving to enhance the quality of life in Lake County. We are attracting higher-wage jobs, improving the road system daily and providing invaluable community services. The Board is developing stronger relationships with local municipalities, neighboring counties and our citizens.

We will continue to face the challenges that lie ahead with determination and resolve. As we confront new tests, Lake County looks forward to collaborating with our citizens to develop workable solutions.

On behalf of the Board, I hope you enjoy this annual report and share our pride in this year's success stories detailed in the following pages. I am honored to be a part of the Board that shares a commitment to the community and toward actively "Mapping our Future."

Respectfully,

Debbie Stivender
District 3, Chairman



Bill Neron, County Manager

A Message

from the County Manager

Dear Citizens:

The Lake County administrative team is continually striving to build pathways for future generations.

This year has been filled with productive change geared toward customer service. Our list of customers is long and distinguished: citizens, tourists, the business community, neighboring counties and local municipalities. Equally important are our internal departments and the manner in which we complement each other.

In our dynamic community, expectations are rising. In response, we changed our department structure this year to enhance both internal and external communication and to prioritize effective service.

A focus on technology was essential to open the County to citizen and interagency dialogue. Our Building Division, Public Safety and Economic Development and Tourism departments especially have reached out to citizens through interactive Web sites, multimedia communication

and artistic display. We are particularly proud of our recent efforts to keep our citizens apprised of hurricane developments through our Web site, Citizens Information Line, television briefings and numerous media releases.

Lake County is evolving into one of the most vibrant counties in the State of Florida. By "Mapping our Future," we are effectively identifying challenges and opportunities. I continue to pledge my strongest support and unwavering enthusiasm to the Board, the citizens and the employees of Lake County government.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill Neron".

Bill Neron
County Manager



Gregg Welstead, Deputy County Manager



Cindy Hall, Assistant County Manager



Sandy Minkoff, County Attorney

Assistant County Attorneys



Melanie Marsh



Leigh Tucker

Directors of County Offices and Departments



C. Steven Earls
Office of Information Technology



Regina M. Frazier
Office of Budget



Blanche Hardy
Department of Environmental Services



Kenneth Hayslette
Office of Procurement Services



Gary E. Kaiser
Department of Public Safety



Sarah R. LaMarche
Office of Program Analysis & Contract Mgt.



Greg Mihalic
Department of Economic Development & Tourism



Fletcher D. Smith
Department of Community Services



Jim Stivender, Jr.
Department of Public Works



Sharon L. Wall
Office of Employee Services



a path for preserving nature, enjoying culture

Sketching

From managing water resources to teaching literacy, Lake County boasts a wide variety of services that are working toward protecting, bettering and promoting the many natural and leisure resources. Nature and leisure activities in Lake County are not only plentiful but are recognized across the state.

One of the biggest draws to Lake County is its natural beauty. Programs such as The Blue Ways Trail community development project promote the abundance of natural resources available to citizens and tourists. The Blue Ways Trail project is a series of recreational waterway trails scenically located along the lakes, rivers and canals of Lake County for canoeists, kayakers and recreational boaters. Maps and trail markers are provided to help paddlers and boaters guide their way through the water trails. The maps include launch areas, waterside restaurants, shops, camps and available hotels for travelers. The program enhances recreational and educational opportunities for both local residents and visitors, and it promotes economic development.

Pristine Protection

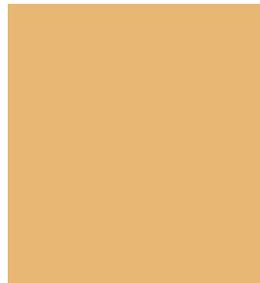
The Department of Environmental Services oversees care of Lake County's natural resources by proper management, testing and inspecting of water and refuse and ensuring compliance with all federal, state and local environmental regulations.

As part of the Department reorganization in 2004, an Administration Division was created to consolidate and streamline administrative functions. This new Division addresses all personnel, safety, regulatory and customer service issues, leaving operations staff to focus on technical needs.

Tackling Illiteracy

The Library Services Division hosted the First Annual Festival of Reading in April 2004, a celebration of National Library Week and an opportunity to showcase libraries in Lake County. The libraries and staff coordinated 27 events, which included authors, performers, speakers and workshops. Each member and

In 2003, more than 1.3 million items were circulated in the Lake County Library System – enough for each Lake County resident to have checked out five books.



branch library scheduled events that educated, entertained and promoted library services within the community.

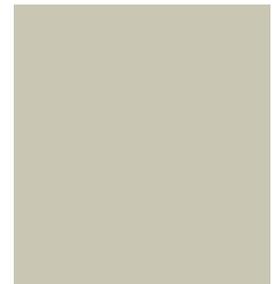
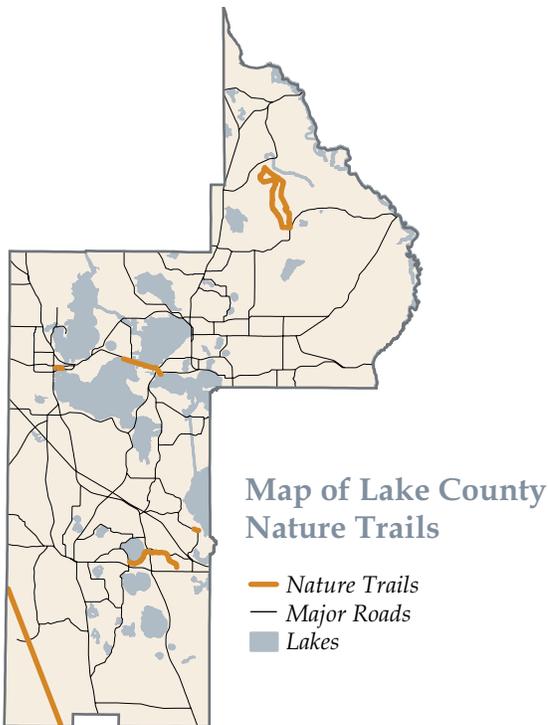
The Division received a \$68,000 Library Services and Technology Act Grant in 2004 to fund the third year of the Born to Read Family Literacy project. This program focuses on breaking the intergenerational cycle of illiteracy by providing programs to parents with small children and families, and tutoring services to adults in need. Since its inception in 2001, the program has registered more than 2,600 residents as

participants. The countywide Adult Literacy Program provides training in basic literacy and English for speakers of other languages. This year, the first edition of the “Literacy Family Lighthouse,” the monthly newsletter for the Library Literacy Program, was published.

Recreation Renaissance

Parks & Recreation handles maintenance and improvements at 35 County parks. This year, the parks department completed development of Pine Forest and Twin Lakes parks. These projects took four months to complete and

On average, each household in Lake County throws away more than 2,500 pounds of trash a year. Environmental Services programs, by reducing, reusing and recycling that waste, actually dispose of less than 500 pounds per household.



feature basketball courts, youth playgrounds, picnic areas, nature trails and parking lots. Twin Lakes Park was completed in cooperation with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection through a \$100,000 matching grant with the County.

Parks & Recreation developed the first dog park in Lake County and a hiking trail at Palatka Environmental and Agricultural Reserve (PEAR) Park in cooperation with volunteers from the PEAR Association. A Florida Department of Community Affairs grant for \$3.1 million is enabling the County to purchase 50 additional acres of parkland at the PEAR Gateway. The parks department also maintains hiking and nature trails through scrub jay conservation

areas at Palatka River and Pine Forest parks. In addition, a two-mile extension of the Clermont/Minneola Bike Trail along Old Highway 50 and Hancock Road was completed this year.

Attraction Favorites

The Lake County Historical Museum preserves Lake County history for all residents and visitors. With more than 30 new exhibits in 2004 and many special events, there is always something new to see and do at the Museum. In addition to Lake County residents, the Museum has had visitors from all 50 states and more than 35 different countries and hosted more than 50,000 visitors last year. The Museum was also named one of the top 100 museums in the state by "Florida Monthly" magazine.



The agricultural flavor of the Lake County community is evident throughout County-maintained facilities and programs. The Expo Center/Fairgrounds hosts various functions, including a weekly Farmers' Market and a variety of family-oriented events. Lake County 4-H offers many diverse program opportunities to young people between the ages of 5 and 18. Life skills are taught through different project areas such as animal science, horticulture and environmental education.

Agriculture Center staff organized the Lake County Beef Cattle Field Day at Kuharske Farms, which was attended by more than 60 farmers, ranchers, teachers and students. The

program was co-sponsored by the Lake County Cattlemen's Association and the Lake County Extension Service. Program topics included basic genetics and heifer development.

The Lake County Master Gardener and the Lake County Residential Horticulture programs received several awards this year. The children's garden program received an award at the State Master Gardener Conference. The Mobile Plant Clinic offers important educational materials to citizens about horticultural and other services provided by Lake County departments. This innovative approach by the program earned distinctive awards from the University of Florida and National Association of Counties.

The Citizens' Commission for Children received recognition from Gov. Jeb Bush and Lt. Gov. Toni Jennings for its involvement in raising funds for a playground that is accessible to children of all abilities.



the needs of the community by reaching out to citizens

Addressing



Lake County offers services to meet the needs of every citizen, from young to old. Volunteers dedicate thousands of hours to better the community. Through County efforts, a safer environment is provided for children, and the men and women who served in America's military receive well-earned assistance in working with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. With care and determined work, Lake County is a healthier, happier place to live.

Serving Needs

The Department of Community Services links citizens to the numerous cultural, educational, social, safety and human services provided by County government. Housing programs, "books-by-mail," agricultural services, and horticultural learning programs are designed to enhancing the quality of life of each resident.

An active volunteer program assisted the County by expanding services to the community. This year, about 700 volunteer assignments contributed more than 18,000 work hours. Volunteers accomplished many tasks and services that benefit residents such as database enhancements, event planning, participation in park programs, court mediation services,

and manning the Citizens Information Line during the recent hurricane disasters.

The recently formed Elder Affairs Coordinating Council has been busy in their advocacy role for the growing senior population in the County. This year, the Council hosted the County's first senior symposium featuring numerous experts on aging issues. Recognizing the impact of an increasing number of senior residents, the Council is focused on working collaboratively with city and County leaders to encourage improved coordination of community planning and services that are crucial to seniors as well as all other residents.

Youthful Objective

Meeting children's needs is a priority for County leaders. Their voices are heard and their needs are raised through the Citizens' Commission for Children (CCC). The CCC is a 15-member advisory board appointed by the Board of County Commissioners to advance children's issues in Lake County. The CCC assists with strategic planning for children and family services and provides a forum to exchange ideas and promote partnerships.



A number of positive results in 2004 for the CCC culminated after months of diligent planning. The Commission established the non-profit Children's Foundation of Lake County to generate and manage financial resources that address the needs of children and families. In collaboration with the Parks and Recreation Division, the CCC is working to build a "boundless playground" that guarantees children of all abilities are able to play in a safe area which meets their special needs. Through the County, a state grant, the Children's Foundation, and in-kind services from local businesses, more than \$400,000 is committed to the project.

The Rimes Pre-K Center will offer an on-site health clinic, parenting center, counseling services, adult education center, and community outreach activities. The CCC collaborated with the Lake County School Board, the School Readiness Coalition, and Lake-Sumter Community College to establish this "one-stop" center concept.

Reaching Destinations

The Lake County Board of County Commissioners, in conjunction with a host of partners, offers a series of transportation services for

the transportation-disadvantaged population of Lake County.

The goal of the Transportation Disadvantaged Division is to accommodate the maximum number of riders by enhancing public transportation services and developing innovative means to meet their needs. In the past year, the Division provided nearly 235,000 trips to the transportation-disadvantaged population of the County.

Brave Assistance

The Veterans Services Division enjoyed a banner year in 2004 with more than 5,000 new veterans choosing Lake County as their home. Nearly 40,000 veterans currently live here, and this trend seems likely to continue. This past year, Veterans Services staff helped local veterans claim benefits of \$1.3 million from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

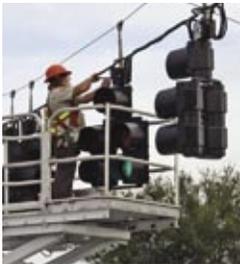
In February, the area U.S. Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic relocated to larger quarters in downtown Leesburg. Service offices are in Tavares and Clermont, providing geographically convenient access points for local retired military men and women.



The County maintains 137 facilities and 1.5 million total square feet of floor space.

Keying

on areas of improvement in Lake County



The Department of Public Works oversees the construction and maintenance of all County-owned facilities and roads in Lake County as it continually strives to meet the needs of each resident.

The four divisions of the Department — Engineering, Special Services, Construction Projects and Road Operations — handle numerous duties, including managing architectural design services for various County projects. From implementing a quality control review program of all architectural design projects, to protecting the many lakes of the County from polluted storm runoff, the Department is positively serving citizens every day.

Better Building

The Construction Projects Division assesses the needs and cost for County buildings, renovation of existing facilities and leasing space. Improvements included reconfiguring the third floor of the Judicial Center and negotiating leases in Mount Dora, Eustis and Leesburg for Lake County Health Department clinics. Projects underway for the Division are the

renovations of the Judicial Center and of the Agricultural Center.

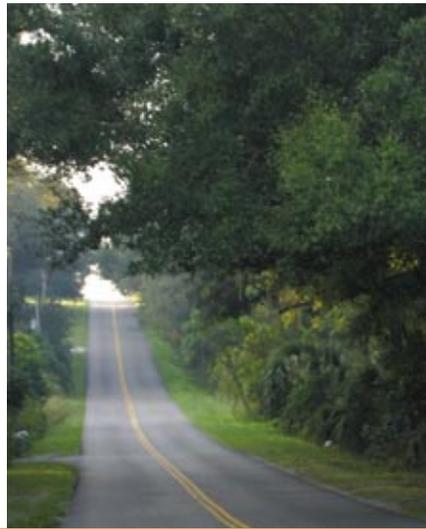
Future Designing

Completing design on the second phase of Hooks Street and Citrus Tower Boulevard, an important connector in South Lake County, was a significant accomplishment for the Engineering Design Section in 2004. In the next fiscal year, it will complete design on the second phase of a 4-mile trail connecting Minneola to the Orange County line and a 2.2-mile, four-lane divided highway that is a key connector from Lakeshore Drive to U.S. Highway 27.

Handling property acquisition for new roadway, sidewalk, drainage and road maintenance projects is the responsibility of the Right-of-Way Section. Staff is working toward converting the existing right-of-way information into an electronic format for easier and more accurate retrieval. The goal is to make all right-of-way information available on the Internet.

Maintaining Excellence

The maintenance of all 137 County-owned and leased facilities is a full-time effort that is



*The County maintains 23,683
road signs and 206 traffic signals.*

spearheaded by the Facilities Maintenance Section. Project highlights for the Section this past year include improving the power distribution systems at the Lake County Fairgrounds to correct unsafe conditions and retrofitting light fixtures in the Judicial Center, reducing energy consumption by \$67,000 per year.

The Road Operations Division provides a safe environment for drivers by maintaining and enhancing the quality of County roads. Staff made improvements to several roads in 2004, including treatments to clay roads of Colony Barn, Ranch, Will Murphy and Mill Creek. Before the surface treatments, heavy traffic was causing increased maintenance costs due to surface rutting and washing.

The Fleet Maintenance Section of the Special Services Division took over maintenance of the Transportation Disadvantaged bus fleet and brought the maintenance and documentation for the bus fleet up to State standards. This resulted in the State releasing the funding for new replacement buses that had been withheld.

Directing Flow

From managing traffic to addressing stormwater runoff, the Department of Public Works made significant improvements in 2004. The Traffic Operations Section is completing an asset management database program for road signs. The effort will feature an inventory of global positioning system locations for every road sign in Lake County. A program of changing the incandescent traffic signal bulbs to LED lights was completed this year, reducing the electric consumption by two-thirds.

The Stormwater Section completed four stormwater retrofit projects in the Lake Griffin basin. The projects took six months to complete and are expected to remove about 100 pounds of phosphorus from the stormwater inflow to Lake Griffin each year. Phosphorus removal is a key component in the effort to improve water quality in lakes. Stormwater inventories and evaluations continue in the Lake Eustis and Silver Lake, and Lake Harris and Little Lake Harris basins. Completion of these projects is scheduled for 2005.



the level of citizen protection

Elevating

The Department of Public Safety serves a vital role to the community, providing and coordinating lifesaving services. These include response to fires and hazardous materials incidents, special operations, emergency management and E 9-1-1 communications, disaster response and animal services. The Department's purpose, training and orientation are all focused on providing these essential services to the public around the clock.

Positively Ready

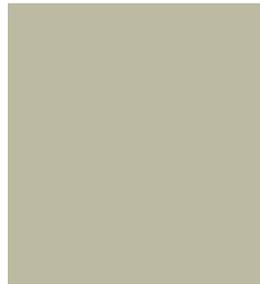
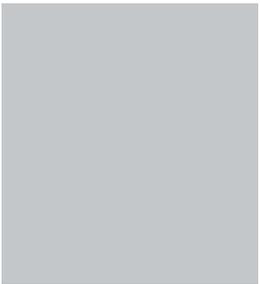
The Fire Rescue Division operates 14 staffed stations and seven volunteer stations to provide emergency response to medical calls, vehicle accidents, fires, hazardous materials and special operation rescues. During the past year, the Division experienced a 10 percent increase in call load equaling 14,371 incidents.

To provide greater accountability and faster command action, the Fire Rescue Division implemented a realignment of the management organizational structure without increasing staff in the spring of 2004. Vacancies in both field and staff positions were filled, and in the coming year additional training will increase the number of stations providing advanced life-support services.

Fire Rescue has adopted a "level of service standard" that provides an average five-minute urban response and an average 10-minute rural response, as well as a minimum staffing level of two firefighters per engine-company and three firefighters per ladder-company. In response to community needs, Station 52 on Highway 44 in Grand Island was re-opened as a staffed station in February 2004. The opening of this station has dramatically improved response times to the Grand Island and Lake Yale areas. Station 52 now houses a new 3,000-gallon water tanker, a fire engine, a brush truck and a Fire Rescue officer who supervises the surrounding area.

Property Protectors

The Code Enforcement Division has had a very active year responding to more than 2,800 individual complaints—300 of which were specifically related to protection of the environment. The Division actively resolves a multitude of issues ranging from unpermitted tree removal and storm water violations to construction in wetlands. This level of activity means that each officer received an average of 35 new cases each month which totaled more than 7,300 site visits last year.



The Animal Services Division handled 10,445 animals, helped citizens adopt or reclaim 1,633 animals and responded to 9,377 service requests last year.

A fundamental change to the enforcement process was made this year by replacing the Code Enforcement Board with the Special Master process. This change will ensure a factual, rule-based enforcement process.

Serving Needs

Since 2002, the Probation Division has continued its partnership with the Lake County Sheriff's Office in enhancing offender supervision and accountability. Probation officers supervise probationers at a satellite location in the Sheriff's Office, as well as the Clermont substation and the Tavares office. In September, the probation staff expanded its police-probation partnership by supervising probationers at a second satellite location at the Lady Lake Police Department.

The Animal Services Division provides for public safety and animal welfare, enforces Florida statutes and local ordinances, provides professional services to the public and promotes responsible livestock ownership. Two additional officers, a dispatcher position, and two shelter technician positions have been added to the staff, enabling shelter visitation hours to be extended to

6 p.m. Monday through Friday and until 4 p.m. on Saturday.

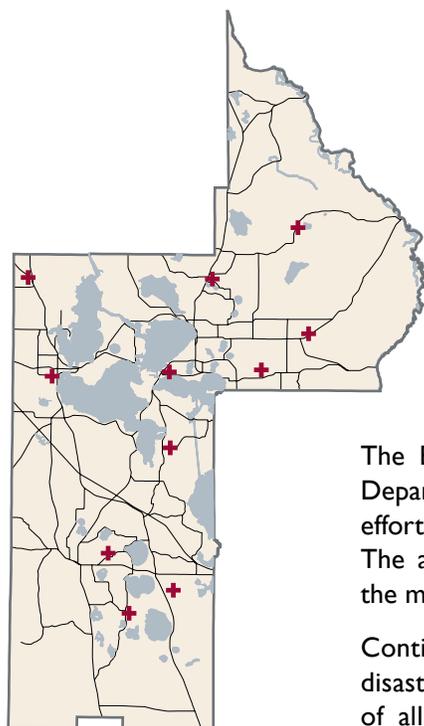
The Communications Systems Division completed an upgrade of the E 9-1-1 system in April 2004 to identify wireless call locations. The upgrade aids in the location of wireless phone callers during emergencies as it provides a call back number as well as a latitude and longitude of the wireless phone call.

Fighting Invaders

Changing environmental conditions over the past four years has stimulated hydrilla growth in Lake County water bodies. The Aquatic Plant Management Section has responded by increasing management efforts to suppress current growth and prevent further infestations. The Mosquito Management Section has recently augmented the mosquito larviciding program by incorporating the use of an all-terrain vehicle. Mosquito management personnel now have accessibility to those areas that may provide a suitable habitat for production of disease-carrying mosquitoes.

During Hurricane Frances in September 2004, 4,500 people, including 500 special-needs residents and 300 pets were sheltered in the 11 Lake County risk shelters.

Planning and preparing for emergencies



Map of Lake County Shelter Locations

- ✚ Shelter Locations
- Major Roads
- Lakes

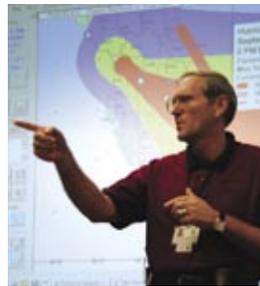
The Emergency Management Division of the Department of Public Safety leads the County effort in disaster preparedness and response. The active hurricane season in 2004 brought the mission of the Division to the forefront.

Continuity of government during and after a disaster is essential to the safety and well being of all citizens. The Division coordinates the effort to ensure that essential services are available to the citizens of Lake County following a disaster. The Lake County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) became fully activated for several weeks as dozens of trained



officials from the Division, County departments and other agencies prepared for the worst hurricane season in recent history.

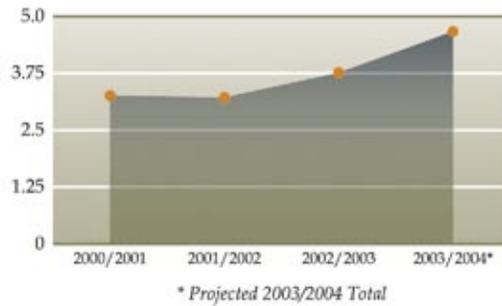
Hurricane Charley spared much of Lake County, although less than a month later, Frances and Jeanne came barreling into Central Florida. The hurricane and tropical storm-force winds uprooted hundreds of trees and more than 90,000 households lost power. The Division was up to the task coordinating relief efforts for citizens as the EOC and the Citizens Information Line remained operational 24 hours a day.



The Emergency Management Division is leading the effort to identify projects throughout the County that, if corrected now, would lessen the future impact of disasters on the community. This effort involves a countywide partnership that includes each of the municipalities, the County, the Sheriff's Office, the Health Department and several other public and private organizations. Once completed, the Local Mitigation Strategy will serve as a guide for directing resources to best serve citizens prior to, during, and after a disaster.

In addition to preparing for natural disasters, Emergency Management, working with these same agencies, has developed a terrorism response plan for the County. Interagency coordination training activities that ready the County to respond to a terrorist event include regional exercises with neighboring counties, training in response to the use of weapons of mass destruction and participation in the creation of regional response teams. Providing for the health, welfare and safety of citizens and visitors of Lake County is the number one priority.

Residential Permits Issued
(in thousands)



In the past year, building inspectors performed more than 111,000 construction inspections and issued more than 16,000 construction permits.

Coordinating

for the future of Lake County



Population increases of more than 5.5 percent annually have brought a wave of new development. Lake County focuses on customer service and has increased development services to meet community needs.

Lake County staff in conjunction with appointed citizens participating in the Local Planning Agency began the process this year of updating the 1991 Comprehensive Plan. Data collection for analysis has begun and a recently completed inventory of existing land use is being field-verified for accuracy. Current and projected population estimates are being confirmed with the State. Once complete, the Comprehensive Plan will contain policies to enhance or improve the quality of life in Lake County through 2025. The estimated timeframe for project completion is early 2006.

From building inspections to long-range planning, the Department has demonstrated its commitment to continually elevate customer service. The Lake County Building Division's South Annex moved to the new Clermont City

Hall this year to better serve area residents. The office operates as both the County and the City of Clermont Building Department. The collocation of the County/City building functions with the City zoning services, environmental health and the Property Appraiser provide for a one-stop center in the new City Hall for Clermont customers.

Safety First

The Building Division is charged with ensuring that structures built meet all applicable state building codes. The Division currently provides permitting via the Internet for permits that do not require a plan review and/or zoning clearances and is currently working on expanding the list of permit types. Specifics about building permits can be examined on the Lake County Web site (www.lakegovernment.com). Applicants or contractors are able to request inspections, view inspection results, check the status of plan reviews, view and print reports and obtain a copy of the Certificate of Completion. Electronic plan review is also being activated in





an effort to provide the ability to send plans through the Web for review.

Bettering Service

Duties of the Planning and Development Services Division include review and preparation of Board actions related to specific proposals for development such as commercial site plans and subdivisions, and individual applications for zoning changes.

The Division has recently implemented the use of a “project manager” format for staff assignments. This new process allows an applicant for a land rezoning with the intent to develop, to have the same staff contact throughout the rezoning and development review process. The process gives the applicant one point of contact and provides the reviewing staff member with extensive knowledge of the project.

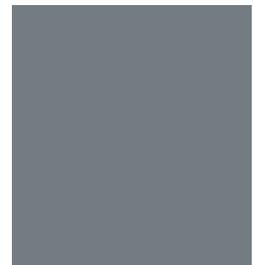
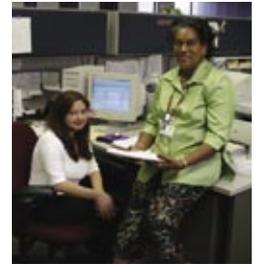
In response to the need to coordinate data, the Department of Growth Management implemented a new tracking and permitting software

package. It will integrate data and information used by the building department for zoning and building permits, Code Enforcement for tracking complaints and violations and Planning and Development for development review. The use of this advanced technology will provide all relevant information to one reviewer in a central location.

Surveying Requests

The Zoning and Customer Services Division assists citizens with development plans to meet the requirements of the Lake County Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan.

In 2004, customer service representatives and associate planners answered an average of 1,800 zoning calls each month. The majority of the customer service calls inquired as to the status of permits and inspections. Associate planners respond to more than 900 personal inquiries every month. Questions typically relate to zoning designations on property in order to determine setback requirements and permitted uses of the property.





a route to successful community development

Drawing

Sound initiatives nurture communities and citizens of Lake County every day. Examples such as assisting residents with affording their own homes and attracting high-paying jobs to the area provide the investment for a strong and lasting future.

Developing Demand

Supporting and sustaining the flourishing economy of Lake County is an important task. The Department of Economic Development and Tourism serves visitors and residents daily by publishing valuable information about the County. The Department promotes economic development opportunities and partners with the community to sponsor and publicize events. Through an interactive Web site and increasing use of print and electronic media, the Department has created a public awareness of County amenities, attractions and interests.

As a tool to promote the numerous events taking place in the County, the Department

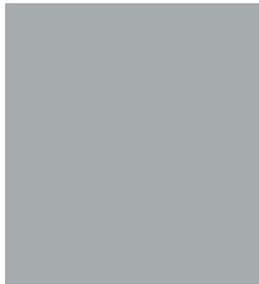
produced an award-winning interactive CD-ROM. More than 2,000 CDs per month are distributed to interested visitors and residents. In-house resources in the fields of design, advertisement, publications and media releases have been greatly expanded for a more cost-effective and personal approach to the business of attracting tourists. A 23.4 percent increase in the revenue received from the tourist tax demonstrates the County's success.

Community Collaborating

All Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) activities in Lake County are accomplished through strong partnerships. This federal grant program, coordinated through County efforts, provides financial support to many infrastructure and public service improvements.

Recent CDBG projects include road paving in the Paisley area of Lake Kathryn, construction of sidewalks north of Main Street in the City of Tavares, construction of accessible facilities for

To date, 1,575 Lake County families have received home-purchase loans totaling \$10 million through housing programs in the County. Repair loans totaling \$4.4 million assisted 311 families.



the Montverde Town Hall, provision of medical prescriptions to 396 low-income residents, transport for seniors to congregate meal sites four days per week and delivery of weekend meals to homebound seniors.

Accuracy Counts

The focus of the Geographic Information Services (GIS) Division is to provide the citizens of Lake County with the most current and accurate data that represents the County's geography. In addition to serving the citizenry, the Division supplies data to every County department and Constitutional Office.

GIS is making a difference in Lake County. For example, the Supervisor of Elections uses geographic information to identify potential new precincts, and the Sheriff's Office applies addressing data to locate incidents. During the past year, key projects included creating an existing land use layer for the update of the

County Comprehensive Plan, address matching for locating all students in Lake County Schools, and analysis and mapping for the School Siting Committee.

Welcome Home

"Home, sweet home" never rang more true for hundreds of local families that were able to purchase homes thanks to government down-payment assistance. The Housing and Community Development Division provides loans for home purchase and home repair, as well as rental assistance to citizens of Lake County. The Division served more than 650 families in 2004.

To better assist residents in need, a core focus of the Division this past year was enhancing customer service. Staff received program-specific training to reinforce and improve expertise in the application of Federal and State housing assistance requirements and guidelines.

The Office of Information Technology maintains more than 625 computers, 25 file servers, 24 telephone systems and 1,900 telephones.



sound direction for fiscally-responsible leadership

Charting



The five offices of Lake County Government — Budget, Information Technology, Employee Services, Procurement Services and Program Analysis and Contract Management — provide integral support to each County operating department. Assistance with computers, recruitment of quality employees, effective procurement practices and assurance that monetary resources are in place are imperative functions for County departments to achieve their mission of delivering quality services.

Accurate Balance

The primary goal of the Office of Budget is to establish sound fiscal management practices and to ensure accountability to the taxpayers of Lake County. The Office prepares a two-year budget, which promotes longer-term planning and reduces the amount of preparation time required by operating departments during the second year of the budget cycle.

The County, working with the Clerk of Courts and the Sheriff's Office, has begun the process of selecting a new financial system. An updated system will integrate numerous functions such as accounting, budgeting, purchasing and

human resources, eliminating time now dedicated to duplicate data entry as well as reducing the possibility of human error. Automation has also streamlined the process to deliver the assessment data to the Tax Collector's Office. Both the Fire Rescue and Solid Waste assessments have been added to the Property Appraiser's tax notice eliminating the need to mail separate notifications.

Promoting Efficiency

The Office of Employee Services recruited 148 new employees during the fiscal year and received, logged and screened at least 7,500 applications and resumes.

The process of recruitment was streamlined this year by implementing an online application system. Applicants are now able to view job openings and submit applications over the Web, which are immediately available for review by the hiring department. This shortened the recruitment process from 75 to 35 days. The online application process has decreased the need for hardcopy applications, printouts and duplicates. Transmitting and communicating via e-mail, and posting open positions and documents



on the Internet are saving staff time, advertising costs and postage.

Revolutionizing Change

Technology is revolutionizing the business process by improving information availability, eliminating delays and reducing the cost of maintaining records. The rollout of a county-wide document management system allows for electronic storage and retrieval of documents, pictures, audio-visual clips and e-mail.

The Office of Information Technology installed free wireless Internet networks (Wi-Fi) this year at the Lake County Welcome Center and Lake County Administration Building. The Wi-Fi networks provide Internet access to motorists stopping by the Welcome Center and to citizens who conduct business at the Administration Building. All that is needed to surf the Web or check e-mail is a laptop computer or personal digital assistant device with Wi-Fi capability.

Recycling Saves

The Office of Procurement Services focuses on the efficient use of taxpayer dollars. One of the highest users of paper products, the Office

stressed the importance of reducing packaging, reusing components and recycling paper. A new document-imaging program will reduce the costs of storing and printing the two million documents generated by Procurement Services per year. Always on the lookout for a good deal, the Office purchased several used capital items at the heavy equipment auction in February 2004, saving an estimated \$52,000.

Oversight Key

The Office of Program Analysis and Contract Management was created this fiscal year to provide third party internal reviews of operating departments to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of operations. The Office also oversees two vital contracts for the County: transportation services provided to the transportation-disadvantaged population and waste disposal in the incinerator operated by Covanta Lake. Both contracts underwent changes this year. Vehicle maintenance for the County bus fleet was brought in-house to provide closer oversight of repair schedules, and a new agreement with Covanta will result in a significant reduction in the price of tipping fees at the County Landfill.

Lake County

facts and figures

Quick Facts

Founded	1887
Land Area (square miles)	1,163
Number of Lakes	520
Registered Voters	139,291

Demographics 2004

Population*	251,037
Total Housing Starts	5,033
Single-Family	4,515
Multi-Family	124
Mobile Homes	394
Median Age	46.5
Rank in State	10
Median Household Income	\$ 37,354
Rank in State	25

*Source: Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Florida

Property Value

Value of Real Property (2003)	\$ 9,311,363,465
Residential	78.4%
Commercial	13.0%

Tourism

Camping Sites	2,850
Hotel Rooms	2,400
Revenue from Tourism	
Development Tax (in millions)	\$ 1.8
Visitors to the Lake County	
Welcome Center (per year)	30,000

Labor

Employment	92,376
Lake County Unemployment Rate	4.3%
Florida Unemployment Rate	4.7%
National Unemployment Rate	5.7%

Source: Department of Labor Statistics — July 2004

County Budget 2003-2004

Countywide Millage Rate	5.917
Ambulance Millage Rate	.5289
Stormwater Millage Rate	.500
Total Budget (in millions)	\$ 286.7
Approved County Positions	1,576

Education

	Elementary	Junior/Middle	High School	Tech Center	Comm. College
Number of Schools	21	9	7	1	1
Number of Students	16,323	8,025	9,631	3,856	3,500

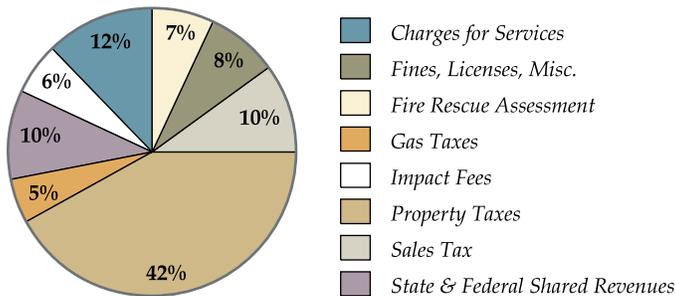
Source: Florida Agency for Workforce Innovation, Labor Market Statistics — 2004

The Office of Budget provides oversight for a \$286.7 million County budget that includes 48 funds, 18 departments, 60 divisions, 212 cost centers and about 4,800 budgeted line items.

Fiscal Year 2004

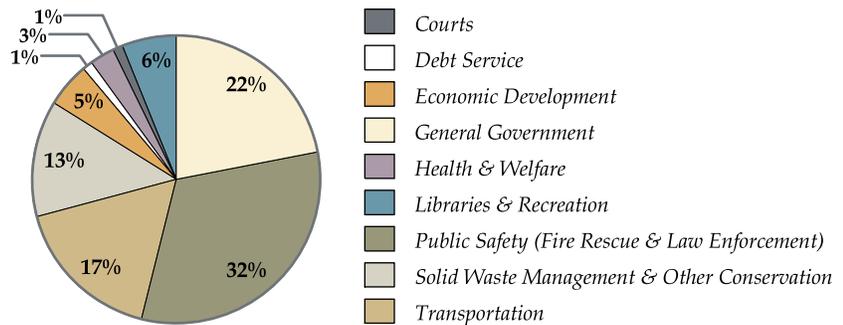
Where the Money Comes From

Current Operating Revenues



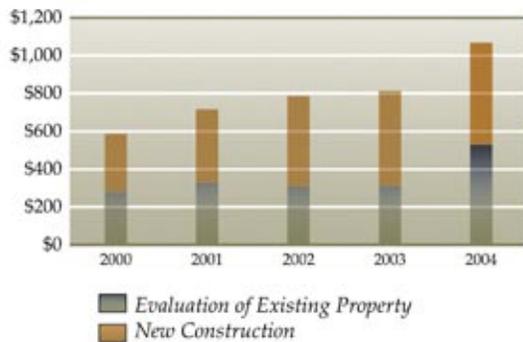
Where the Money Goes

Current Operating Expenses



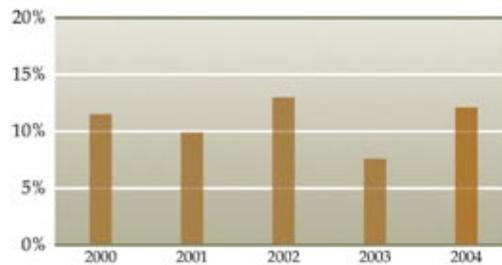
Increase in Gross Taxable Value Over Prior Year

Fiscal Years 2000-2004 (in millions)



Unrestricted Reserves as a Percentage of Expenditures

Fiscal Years 2000-2004



Note: Budget Recommended Practices indicate that the unrestricted reserve should be two months of expenditures (10%-17%). Board Policy LCC-51 recommends at least 10% in the Economic Stabilization Reserve.

Lake County

Phone Directory

Department	Phone Number
Agricultural Extension Services	(352) 343-4101
Animal Services	(352) 343-9688
Board of County Commissioners	(352) 343-9850
Budget	(352) 343-9452
Building Services	(352) 343-9653
Citizens' Commission for Children	(352) 343-9416
Clerk of Courts	(352) 742-4100
Code Enforcement	(352) 343-9639
Community Development Block Grant	(352) 343-1864
Community Services	(352) 343-9630
County Attorney	(352) 343-9787
County Manager	(352) 343-9888
Economic Development & Tourism	(352) 429-3673
Emergency Management	(352) 343-9420
Employee Services	(352) 343-9694
Environmental Services	(352) 343-3776
Finance	(352) 343-9808
General Information	(352) 343-9800
Geographic Information Systems	(352) 343-9775
Growth Management	(352) 343-9643

Department	Phone Number
Health Department	(352) 589-6424
Housing Services	(352) 343-1780
Information Technology	(352) 343-9633
Library Services	(352) 253-6180
Mosquito Control	(352) 343-9682
Parks & Recreation	(352) 343-6625
Planning & Development	(352) 343-9739
Probation & Court Services	(352) 343-2525
Procurement Services	(352) 343-9839
Property Appraiser	(352) 343-9748
Public Safety	(352) 343-9458
Public Works	(352) 253-4900
Sheriff's Office	(352) 343-9524
Solid Waste Mgmt. Customer Service	(352) 343-6163
Supervisor of Elections	(352) 343-9734
Tax Collector	(352) 343-9602
Transportation Disadvantaged	(352) 253-6115
Veterans Services	(352) 343-9753
Volunteer Services	(352) 343-9771
Zoning/Customer Service	(352) 343-9641

LAKE



Lake County Board of County Commissioners

315 West Main Street, Tavares, Florida 32778

www.lakegovernment.com