GOAL 11: PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Goal: To develop a timely, orderly and efficient arrangement of public facilities and services to serve as a framework for urban and rural development.

FINDINGS

1. The County’s currently adopted Plan for the Management of Solid Waste was prepared and adopted in 1973 by the County and was accepted by the State Department of Environmental Quality at that time. It must be realized at this time that many circumstances and applicable solid waste regulations have changed during the period since adoption of said Plan, and said Plan must, at this time, be considered only a “general” guideline to solid waste management in the County. In addition, said Plan was only directed to the disposal of wastes generated within the County and cannot be considered applicable to any regional or other facility plans.

2. The County has prepared and adopted a comprehensive plan for water and sewer facilities for Gilliam County under provisions of the Consolidated Farmers Home Administration Act of 1961 as amended.

3. The cities of Arlington and Condon provide community water and sewer service to residents of those cities. A domestic water system and a sanitary sewer system also are in place at the Condon Radar Base; however, secondary sewage treatment facilities are needed.

4. Waste Disposal Services of Oregon, Inc. dba Columbia Ridge Landfill & Recycle Center operates a large solid waste disposal facility in the County near Arlington. Operation of this facility has made it possible to close the landfills operated by the City of Condon and the City of Arlington. Such action has been advantageous to the County and the affected Cities as the costs and management requirements of solid waste disposal sites increase, particularly in relation to limited fiscal and personnel resources of the affected jurisdictions. In addition, construction of the subject facility has created approximately 150 full-time positions for employment, while other public facilities in the County and the affected Cities are capable of accommodating the direct and indirect employment created by this project.

5. Existing cemeteries are adequate in number and size to meet the long-term needs of the county.

6. There are no hospital facilities in the county, only medical clinics.

7. A site for the treatment and disposal of environmentally hazardous and similar types of toxic wastes is currently operating near Arlington and is shown on the Plan Map. Site monitoring and surveillance is performed on a regular basis by both the Department of Environmental Quality and the operator pursuant to license conditions. The facility was established prior to imposition of the current County Zoning designation in 1977 and
operated as a pre-existing non-conforming use until October 25, 2000. On this date, the County amended the zoning designation to authorize hazardous waste management facilities as permitted use in the zone, subject to certain pre-conditions designed to enable the County to address and mitigate impacts of the facility and any future modifications or changes of use. The County changed the zoning in recognition of the long existence of the facility, its likely continuation for the foreseeable future, and its importance to both the County and the region. In addition, the site monitoring and surveillance activities by DEQ, the court required buffer area, and adjacent EFU Zoning is considered adequate protection and safeguard for adjoining land uses. Relative thereto, there is no need identified for a special buffer area zoning around the subject facility. Further, the development of a PCB plant at the subject facility is not proposed, nor is such an issue in the immediate future.

8. The residents of the southern part of Gilliam County have formed a Rural Fire Protection District, which is headquartered at Condon. The residents of the northern part of Gilliam County have formed a Rural Fire Protection District, which is headquartered at Arlington. The east/west central section of Gilliam County in the vicinity of Rock Creek is not protected by a Rural Fire Protection District.

POLICIES:

In consideration of the above Findings, the Gilliam County Court adopts the following policies:

1. A significant feature of Gilliam County is that fact that about 70 percent of its population is located within the two principal cities and that the remaining 30 percent is widely dispersed over the 1,208 square miles of land area of which the county is comprised. Accordingly, it is the policy of Gilliam County to encourage the situation of public service facilities in relatively close proximity to the population concentrations and yet in a convenient location for the balance of the population that is widely scattered throughout the county.

2. Certain types of public services, such as schools, churches and similar meeting facilities, generally should be located within the incorporated cities where public sewer and water facilities are more easily provided. Other facilities, such as cemeteries and some types of utility installations, have no such locational requirements and can be situated satisfactorily in wholly rural areas, consistent with the EFU Zone.

3. There is no reason to be concerned that improvements in the school plants and in the community sewer and water systems made necessary by construction activities in the area might result in an over-improvement in terms of long-range needs. Alternatives to construction of additional permanent facilities should be fully investigated before effecting improvements of that nature.

4. Although the county government does not foresee the need for any additional schools, should such a need arise, it shall be the policy of Gilliam County to encourage their location
within an incorporated or adjacent Urban Growth Boundary, in order that proper sewer and water facilities can be provided.

5. Should medical treatment facilities, such as hospitals or emergency clinics or public assembly halls, be established in the county, they should be located within an incorporated city or adjacent Urban Growth Boundary (UGB).

6. The Gilliam County Solid Waste Management Plan, as amended, adopted by the Gilliam County Court on November 14, 1973 and the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan for Gilliam County, Oregon, adopted by the Gilliam County Court on July 15, 1970 are by this reference, incorporated into and adopted as part of this Comprehensive Plan. The County will continue to provide the leadership in the location and development of Solid Waste disposal sites as they are required by citizens of the county. Because of the extended period of time since the formulation and adoption of those Plans referenced hereinbefore and the many known changes in applicable standards and regulations governing such activities, it must be recognized and it shall be the policy of the County to consider such Plans as “general” guidelines.

7. The County’s Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan indicate that groundwater studies of the county have not been developed and that little is known about the pattern of groundwater occurrence in the county. The Plan Report also notes that the City of Condon is served by five shallow wells. Finally, the Plan Report observes that there is always the potential threat of contamination when shallow wells and septic tanks are located within the same vicinity. It therefore is the policy of Gilliam County to protect the Condon groundwater resource from contamination by imposing such restrictions upon uses in the vicinity of the well sites as seem necessary and prudent. These restrictions will be reviewed (and if appropriate, rescinded) either at such time that groundwater studies provide satisfactory evidence that such restrictions are unnecessary for the protection of public health and safety, or at such time as the City of Condon ceases to draw domestic water from these shallow wells. The State of Oregon Water Resources Department informs the County that much data on water resources in Gilliam County is being collected, inventoried and analyzed at this time as a part of the Columbia River Study. When this information is completed and supplied to Gilliam County, it will be considered for inclusion in this Plan during an annual update. In 1998/99, the County completed a Comprehensive Ground Water Study for the purpose of documenting the location and production of domestic, agricultural, and commercial water wells. This Study includes data compiled by the USGS, the NRCS, and State of Oregon Water Resources Department attempting to define the pattern, quality and approximate availability of groundwater. This Study will be used as a baseline for future groundwater evaluation.

8. The County fully realizes that these policies for future development of Gilliam County place a direct responsibility upon the Cities of the County to provide for the urban service needs of a significant portion of anticipated new growth. At the same time, the County understands that the Cities may not in fact be able to accommodate this growth without some addition to their current sewer and water plant capacities. It therefore is the policy of
the county government to assist the city governments in planning for such facilities as they may be required to provide a level of service commiserate with the basic objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. It is further recognized by the County that efficient provision of these municipal services may require adjustments and modifications of the County’s Comprehensive Plan. Such amendments shall be made through the Plan Amendment Process.

9. It is the judgment of the county government that existing cemetery facilities are adequate for the long-term needs of the county and no new cemeteries are contemplated on the Comprehensive Plan Map.

10. The County will support and assist efforts to secure adequate hospital or emergency clinic facilities to serve the needs of local residents.

11. The County will support and assist efforts to provide for Fire Protection Districts, which will protect the rural residents of Gilliam County.

12. The County will continue to provide the leadership in providing for proper solid and hazardous waste management and disposal in the County. Relative thereto, the County shall support and give due consideration to any and all alternatives for the disposal of solid and hazardous wastes within the County, which are found to have no significant adverse environmental impact and to be economically beneficial. Such considerations shall not be limited to only those proposals providing for the disposal of locally generated wastes alone, but shall also take into consideration regional and other area needs. In the case of any solid or hazardous waste disposal project, as necessary and appropriate, the County shall seek competent technical advice in the development and regulation of such facilities, and shall in any case, require the approval of the appropriate State and/or Federal agencies as a condition of County approval.