

VII. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

GOAL #22 - Promote and maintain orderly and diversified economic growth, increased employment, and investment opportunities, while protecting the environment and current quality of life.

Infrastructure

Objective 22.1 The private sector has identified the lack of infrastructure as an impediment to opportunities for business creation and expansion. The analysis indicates that a limited amount of industrial and commercial acreage is serviced by central water and wastewater facilities. The County shall pursue the expansion of infrastructure to encourage business development.

Policy 22.1.1 The County will support the use of development agreements as a mechanism to fund infrastructure improvements and expansion.

Policy 22.1.2 The County will pursue reducing the cost of water and sewer utility hookups.

Policy 22.1.3 The County will utilize Municipal Services Taxing Units and Municipal Services Bond Units, deferred payments, and other innovative financing methods to fund infrastructure improvements.

Policy 22.1.4 The County will pursue grants and other programs available as a member of an Economic Development District to expand infrastructure for economic growth.

Permitting

Objective 22.2 An important factor in the success of economic development activities is the provision of County services, of which, permitting is a major component. The development and review process will be reviewed to eliminate unnecessary impediments to economic development.

Policy 22.2.1 The County will continue the use of preapplication conferences and preparation and distribution of guides, handouts, and other information on regulatory and permitting procedures affecting economic development to streamline and expedite the application review and permitting process.

Policy 22.2.2 The County will eliminate permits, inspections, or functions that duplicate or overlap state and/or federal permits, inspections or functions. This policy shall not preclude the adoption of County

regulations more stringent than state or federal regulations, if so desired, by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC).

- Policy 22.2.3 The County will coordinate with representatives of the Economic Development Council (EDC) to disseminate information on existing and pending local legislation affecting economic development activities.
- Policy 22.2.4 The County will assist the EDC in providing information to County firms that seek to expand, as well as businesses that wish to relocate to the County.
- Policy 22.2.5 The County will review its existing regulations and rectify or eliminate conflicts that may exist to improve service and expedite permit processing.
- Policy 22.2.6 The County will continue to provide improved and necessary services, and retain a position to facilitate business development.
- Policy 22.2.7 The County will streamline the review and permit process to encourage the promotion of economic growth.

Tourism

- Objective 22.3 The utilization of natural resources is an integral component of the local economy. The ecology of Citrus County's natural areas can support these activities if conducted in an environmentally responsible manner. Citrus County shall direct its tourism and promotional efforts to emphasize the County's multitude of natural resources.
- Policy 22.3.1 The County will support and encourage the utilization of its natural resources in an environmentally responsible manner to promote economic development activity.
- Policy 22.3.2 The County will consider tourism related partnerships with the managing agencies of public lands and the private sector, and encourage the establishment of tourism related infrastructure within public lands.
- Policy 22.3.3 The County will explore the availability of grants or matching fund programs for the promotion, creation, enhancement, or expansion of tourism related activities.
- Policy 22.3.4 The County will support and encourage the adequate funding for ecologically sound management of public lands.

- Policy 22.3.5 The County will coordinate with the appropriate local, state, and federal agencies for the use of public lands in promoting all tourism, including ecotourism activities in the County.
- Policy 22.3.6 The County shall support the development and maintenance of the Great Florida Birding Trail and shall target specific marketing efforts to the birding community worldwide.
- Objective 22.4 The County shall improve access to fresh and saltwater beaches and shorelines for all residents and tourists.
- Policy 22.4.1 In coordination with Objective 4.6, the County shall maintain and improve public access to fresh and saltwater beaches and shores.
- Policy 22.4.2 The County shall establish a boat ramp and waterfront facilities improvement plan which shall take inventory of all existing facilities, determine future needs, and provide adequate funding for acquisition, construction, and maintenance.
- Policy 22.4.3 The County shall develop procedures to facilitate the acquisitions of properties which contain special features and/or shoreline and water-use access, and establish criteria for selection and funding.
- Policy 22.4.4 The public access study shall analyze and include provisions for providing and maintaining adequate public access sites; shall be consistent with the public access requirements of the 1985 Coastal Zone Protection Act, and shall include an analysis and requirements for adequate parking, vehicular access, public restrooms, and handicapped access.

Education and Training

- Objective 22.4 The availability of a skilled labor pool is an important factor in industry attraction and expansion. Job placement is an important goal of educational facilities. The County, through its partnership with the EDC, shall assume the role of liaison between private industry and educational facilities to develop educational programs that fulfill private industry's work force needs.
- Policy 22.4.1 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will coordinate with educational institutions including, but not limited to, Citrus County School District, Central Florida Community College, and Withlacoochee Technical Institute, and the business community to encourage the development of educational programs, which provide students with skills matching the needs of local employers.

- Policy 22.4.2 The County will utilize the County's various departments for internship opportunities, school visits, and presentations to educate students on the role of government in the local economy.
- Policy 22.4.3 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage partnerships between existing and potential businesses and educational institutions to develop educational programs that will utilize new and existing technologies as they become available and widely utilized in the marketplace.
- Policy 22.4.4 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage business and trade associations to develop apprenticeship programs with existing and potential businesses.
- Policy 22.4.5 Reserved

Job Creation

- Objective 22.5 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage job creation, diversified economic growth, and increased employment.
- Policy 22.5.1 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage diversification and expansion of the tax base.
- Policy 22.5.2 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage business attraction and expansion.
- Policy 22.5.3 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage advertising, promotional activities, and other sales and marketing techniques to attract new businesses.
- Policy 22.5.4 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage diversified economic growth.
- Policy 22.5.5 The County, through its partnership with the EDC, will encourage job creation.
- Policy 22.5.6 The County will use excess revenue from occupational license fees to oversee and implement this Element, including:
- Providing matching funds to the EDC in accordance with the Agreement between the EDC and the County and/or
 - Other projects and programs approved by the BCC pursuant to the implementation of this Element

Senior Services

- Objective 22.6 The County will ensure its senior citizens a high quality of life through its various policies and programs, through incentives to provide assisted and semi-assisted housing for the elderly, and through encouragement of the private sector to provide a broader range of services geared to the specific needs of the elderly and the frail elderly.
- Policy 22.6.1 The County shall encourage state and local nursing programs to provide training in geriatric care and shall encourage the State University System and local and regional hospitals to establish a geriatric research facility in the County.
- Policy 22.6.2 The County shall encourage multifamily housing and mixed use development where housing, shopping, recreation, medical, and other services and facilities are in close proximity, allowing senior citizens to perform needed and desired daily activities without the need to own an automobile or to drive to a destination.