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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Element of the 1998 City of Zephyrhills Comprehensive Plan is not required by Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, and, therefore, is an optional element. Although, an optional element, it is nonetheless an integral part of Zephyrhills Comprehensive Plan and is not an isolated set of policies. This element and the other elements of the plan form a system of development management which includes the plan, the development regulations, and concurrency management.

PURPOSE

Most actions taken by City government have some economic Impact; therefore, the City felt it was important to understand the local economy and to consider the economic impact of Growth Management decisions. The City is interested in an economic development plan that will provide assistance in continuing to obtain industry that is diverse and consistent with goals established in this element.

SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC ISSUES

Preface

The preparation of an Economic Element is premised on the fact that it is good public policy to be involved in economic development. Traditionally, government does not undertake economic development; however, the actions they take, or fail to take, influence the process of economic development within their jurisdictions. There are several reasons why local communities, such as the City of Zephyrhills, actively participate in economic development. The first, and perhaps one of the strongest reasons, is the need to increase and diversify the tax base. Second, commercial and industrial properties pay more in taxes and consume less in services while conversely residential properties traditionally consume more in services than what they pay in taxes. Third, government has always had a de facto role in economic development through rules, regulations, policies, and the provision of infrastructure and services. Fourth, since the decline in the Federal government's economic participation in the early 1980's, communities throughout the United States have taken a pro-active role in economic development as a mechanism to enhance revenues. To date, there are over 10,000 active economic development organizations within the United States all competing for a share in job creation. As stated by the International City Management Association in its 1991 Local Economic Development Strategies for a Changing Economy: "Local governments that do not or cannot compete will be outpaced by those who can". Lastly, in communities such as the City of Zephyrhills that do not have traditional economic leadership and funding provided by regional headquarters companies (banks, insurance, utility, manufacturing or development), public sector participation and provision of the leadership and funding are necessary.

Increase and Diversify the Tax Base

Florida's Growth Management Legislation, coupled with limited Federal and State revenue sharing, has placed increased pressures on local governments to fund needed infrastructure (roads, schools, water/sewer, etc.) and services (fire, police, human services, etc.). The major sources of funding in the City of Zephyrhills for capital improvements are user fees, impact and connection fees, while services are funded through property taxes (ad valorem and intangible) and sales taxes. The City's current tax base is less diversified and thus restricted in its ability to fully support funding for capital improvements. While larger communities have been active in economic development for years, the current requirements of Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, (especially in public-private partnership) is to link these dimensions in such a way that the participants contribute to the benefit of the broader community, while promoting their own individual or organizational interest (Lyons and Hamlin, 1991). Communities today are in competition with each other to not only attract new industry, but also to keep those they have.

The City of Zephyrhills economic base is comprised of primarily three types of industry consisting of seasonal tourism, large industry, and recreational opportunities. First, Zephyrhills is a very seasonal community comprised of temporary residents that come to reside in Zephyrhills during months of October through April. The economic viability of the City is greatly enhanced during these months. Therefore, efforts need to be made to continue the provision and enhancement of a diversified economic base to meet the needs of the permanent and seasonal residents. The City is also represented by large scale industry with Great Springs of America bottled water plant, Zephyr Egg, and East Pasco Medical Center. These three large industries provide a diversified economic base and numerous employment opportunities for the community. East Pasco has also resulted in many other medical related offices to locate in the north end of town. The City is interested in continuing its' efforts to attract additional medical related and clean light industrial types of business.

The Zephyrhills Municipal Airport is also beginning to generate more activity and in 1998 completed the construction of infrastructure for an 80 acre industrial park. The industrial park is conveniently located with access to the County By-Pass, US 301, and Interstate 75. The City recently began development of a Business Development Plan for the airport and the industrial park with the assistance of Florida Power, Florida Enterprise and Tampa Bay Partnership Committee of 100. Goals, objectives and policies have been developed and are included in this element. The mission statement is as follows:

Promote the quality and successful development of the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park to be self-sufficient, generate revenue, diversity the economic base, foster good will, and enhance the quality of life for the region.

The following three goals were developed for the business plan:

- (1) Implement a plan that will guide the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park to become self-sufficient by the year 2008.
- (2) Develop and implement a marketing plan to promote the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park starting in fiscal year 1998.
- (3) Provide the necessary infrastructure/environment at the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park for industrial, aviation, and recreational purposes.

A Resolution was passed by the City in 1997 to provide economic incentives to prospective businesses to locate at the Airport Industrial Park. The resolution allows building permit fees to be waived for businesses that locate at the Industrial Park. Finally, Zephyrhills is known around the world for skydiving recreational opportunities that are available at Skydive City. This is a year round activity that attracts tourists from all over which provides a marketing opportunity for the City of Zephyrhills.

In June 1997, the City Council of the City of Zephyrhills agreed to waive all building permit fees for businesses and industry locating at the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport or at the city's industrial park.

This measure was passed as an incentive to help lure business and industry to Zephyrhills and in recognition of the special conditions existing at the city-owned property which required prospective businesses to lease land their businesses would be situated upon. The City also has established longer-term limits for leases – in some cases up to 50 years – to make the leases and financing of building and site preparation affordable.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Introduction

Pursuant to Sections 163.3177(7)(j), F.S., the following represents the Economic Development Goals, Objectives and Policies of the City of Zephyrhills. In addition to statutory requirements, the following Goals, Objectives and Policies were developed in keeping with the character, conditions, both environmental and social, and desires of the community. These Goals, objectives and Policies are intended to address the establishment of the long-term end towards which the economic development programs and activities are ultimately directed.

Implementation

Unless otherwise stated, the implementation of objectives and associated policies contained in this Section shall be through the development, adoption, and application of regulations set forth in the City Code of Ordinances and Land Development Code.

The following policies are intended to establish a basis for assuring the availability of public facilities and infrastructure in a timely manner to support rational growth consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

GOAL To provide a diverse economic base which affords the City of Zephyrhills and its residents a maximum amount of economic opportunity.

OBJECTIVE The City shall develop and maintain programs designed to expand and enhance the City's economic base.

POLICY Develop and maintain programs which assist existing companies in expansion efforts in order to create annually, a number of jobs, when combined with jobs in new industries, that exceeds the average annual growth in employment over the past five years.

POLICY Cooperate with organizations representing the following industries: commercial; agricultural; manufacturing; wholesale and retail trade; service; and finance, insurance, and real estate to determine the future economic and land use needs of those industries on an annual basis.

OBJECTIVE The City shall establish and maintain programs designed to promote the attraction of industries facilitate the diversification of the City's economic base.

POLICY It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to utilize the Marketing Plan to attract suitable new industries which will provide quality job opportunities for residents, increase the per capita income, and reduce the unemployment rate.

POLICY It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to identify and attract industries which have acceptable impact on the City's environment and its natural resources.

POLICY
ECO-I-2-3: It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to develop and maintain programs which assist suitable new companies in expansion and relocation efforts in order to create annually, a number of jobs, when combined with jobs in new industries, that exceeds the average annual growth in employment over the past five years.

OBJECTIVE
ECO-1-3: The City shall develop and maintain an equitable public-private partnership that provides a sufficient and stable base for business, governmental, and financial support for the City's economic development efforts.

POLICY
ECO-1-3-1: It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to establish a sufficient level of funding for economic development that supports the implementation of this Element.

OBJECTIVE
ECO-1-4: The City shall ensure that land is allocated for future commercial, industrial and conservation/open space land uses to allow for a viable economy.

POLICY
ECO-1-4-1: It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to provide for the location and clustering of major commercial and industrial activities according to the following guidelines:

- a. In close proximity to principal arterials.
- b. With access to appropriate utilities (water, sewer, electricity, gas, telephone) or to allow for provision of these utilities.
- c. With access to mass transit routes where feasible.
- d. With on-site rail facilities and airport access, if appropriate, and available.
- e. So as to have acceptable impacts to the natural environment and adjacent land uses.

POLICY
ECO-1-4-2: Develop a parcel level Geographic Information System which can be used to analyze land for its potential to accommodate future industrial and commercial uses by 2000.

OBJECTIVE
ECO-1-5: The City, in coordination with Pasco County shall protect the integrity of existing infrastructure and promote the development of appropriate new infrastructure within designated growth areas to facilitate economic development.

POLICY
ECO-1-5-1: Coordinate through its designated agencies or representatives with the Florida Department of Transportation and Pasco County to expand and enhance the overall transportation network in order to provide reasonable access to agricultural, commercial, industrial, and office locations throughout the City and County.

OBJECTIVE The City shall implement the objectives and policies of this Economic Element through development and maintenance of a Business Plan which includes careful evaluation of proposed City actions for conformance with the Policies of this Element. All objectives and policies within the Comprehensive Plan shall be considered when making Growth Management decisions.

POLICY It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to continue support for the Main Street Zephyrhills, Inc.

POLICY It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to continue support for the Zephyrhills Industrial Air Park.

POLICY It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to implement the programs and plans as specified in this Element within the established time frames.

POLICY It shall be the policy of the City of Zephyrhills to require an Annual Report be submitted to the City Council, written by the Director of Development, who will coordinate reporting with other agencies involved (directly or indirectly) in economic development in the City. The report will monitor the effect of implementation of these Policies on economic growth and levels of employment; this report shall make recommendations with regard to eliminating, strengthening, and/or enhancing economic development policies.

GOAL Implement a Business Development Plan that will guide the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park to become self-sufficient by the year 2008.

OBJECTIVE Confirm baseline for self sufficiency through 2008.

ECO-2-1:

POLICY Review existing expense/revenue streams information by category (aviation, industry, recreation).

POLICY Establish current baseline.

ECO-2-1-2:

POLICY Project baseline through 2008.

ECO-2-1-3:

OBJECTIVE Establish revenue targets.

ECO-2-2:

POLICY Identify revenue opportunities by category and location consistent with Airport Layout Plan.

POLICY Create and adopt standards for development.

POLICY Review pricing options and reprice as necessary.

POLICY Set revenue targets

GOAL Develop and implement as part of the Business Development Plan a Marketing Strategy to promote the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park starting in fiscal year 1998.

OBJECTIVE Analyze opportunities and identify targets.

POLICY Obtain Enterprise Florida Study and Tampa Bay Partnership targets.

POLICY Survey existing tenant base and area business.

POLICY Analyze information and identify external/internal markets/targets.

OBJECTIVE Identify and develop messages to convey.

POLICY Review strengths identified in planning session.

POLICY Review additional strengths (i.e. survey, Tampa Bay Partnership, etc.)

POLICY Establish core messages.

OBJECTIVE Produce and implement the marketing elements.

POLICY Identify potential agencies.
ECO-3-3-1:

POLICY Develop / issue RFP
ECO-3-3-2:

POLICY Recommend and select agency.
ECO-3-3-3:

POLICY Develop or enhance collateral materials (i.e. brochures, fact sheets, direct mail, Web, etc.)
ECO-3-3-4:

POLICY Select / place advertising.
ECO-3-3-5:

POLICY Initiate direct mail effort based on targets and timely press releases.
ECO-3-3-6:

OBJECTIVE Through implementation of marketing strategy, achieve revenue goal.
ECO-3-4:

POLICY Respond to prospect/inquiries within 5 working days and follow-up as appropriate and convert 30% of all prospects/inquiries into projects.
ECO-3-4-1:

POLICY Increase projects over 1997 baseline by 100%.
ECO-3-4-2:

GOAL Provide the necessary infrastructure/environment at the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport and Industrial Park for industrial, aviation, and recreational purposes.

OBJECTIVE Identify future infrastructure / improvements necessary.

ECO-4-1:

POLICY Develop and obtain approval of Airport Layout Plan.

ECO-4-1-1:

POLICY Research potential funding sources for future projects and determine estimated costs. Review and prioritize future projects.

OBJECTIVE Review proposed development on abutting airport properties to ensure aviation compatibility.

ECO-4-2:

POLICY Develop strategies to ensure protection of airport from encroachment of non-compatible land uses.

ECO-4-2-1:

POLICY Protect all existing and projected airspace surfaces and runway protection zones around airport to ensure safe operations.

ECO-4-2-2: