
ECONOMIC ELEMENT



Chapter XI

XI. Economic Element

GOAL 158: Lee County will achieve and maintain a diversified and stable economy by providing a positive business climate that assures maximum employment opportunities while maintaining a high quality of life. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

OBJECTIVE 158.1: Lee County will encourage the conservation and enhancement of those natural and cultural resources that represent the foundation of the county's existing retirement, recreation, and tourist oriented economy in order to place Lee County in a competitive position to enable the retention and expansion of these and other business opportunities. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.1: Lee County will encourage the development of diverse cultural facilities, through public, private, or public/private partnerships, that meet the needs of the residents and visitors of Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.2: Lee County will promote the opportunity for development and support of hospitals, nursing homes, and additional medical related facilities in order to promote a continuum of care to enhance the quality of life throughout the county. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.3: Lee County will cooperate with state entities and other social service providers to encourage the establishment of programs and facilities that assist the elderly population of Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.4: Lee County will work with the sheriff, fire districts, municipalities, and other appropriate entities to provide a strong public safety program capable of protecting the citizens of Lee County and their property. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.5: Lee County will maintain a publicly sponsored recycling program as well as "Keep Lee County Clean," "Adopt a Road," and "Adopt a Beach" programs to maintain a positive public image. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.6: Lee County will protect the environment that sustains the commercial fishing and tourist industries by opposing the leasing of off-shore tracts for the purpose of oil exploration and drilling. The county will oppose off-shore oil drilling in the region south of latitude 27 degrees north to the state waters north of the Florida Keys and west to longitude 86 degrees west. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.7: Lee County will encourage the preservation of sensitive natural resources, including beaches, wetlands, estuaries, clean air and water, historic resources, scenic vistas and other unique natural resources through public acquisition and/or regulatory protection. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.8: Lee County will ensure a continued commitment of a portion of the Tourist Development Tax to be used for beach and shore-related improvements such as restoration and erosion control, renourishment, future beach acquisition, fishing piers, and beach access points, beach parking facilities, and maintenance. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.9: Lee County, in response to current and projected needs of Lee County residents, will encourage a diverse mix of housing types, sizes, prices, and rents by maintaining mixed use land use categories in the Future Land Use Element. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.1.10: Evaluate the current land development regulatory and fiscal structure to identify and remove where appropriate the unwanted ~~impediments to ensuring development are fiscally~~ beneficial. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-16)

Deleted: impediments to ensuring development is

OBJECTIVE 158.2: Lee County will maintain and develop programs which are designed to expand and enhance the tourism industry. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.2.1: Lee County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council and other appropriate entities, will continue to support the area's domestic and international tourism development program to ensure continuation and expansion of the tourism industry. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.2.2: Lee County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council and other appropriate entities, will continue to lead the local tourism industry and work with the community to position Lee County as a friendly and hospitable visitor destination. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.2.3: Lee County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council and other appropriate entities, and in conjunction with the Port Authority, will work toward positioning Lee County as a major aviation international port of entry. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.2.4: Lee County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council and other appropriate entities, should continue the strong research efforts that accurately measure the economic impact of tourism and provide information for planning, marketing and management of tourism for both the private and public sectors.

POLICY 158.2.5: Lee County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council and other appropriate entities, will promote the development of ecotourism in Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.2.6: Lee County, in coordination with the Tourist Development Council and other appropriate entities, will promote the development of the sports market and sports facilities for future economic development. (Added by Ordinance No. 07-09)

OBJECTIVE 158.3: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will establish, continue and maintain programs which are designed to promote and encourage the recruitment of new industries that will facilitate and diversify Lee County's economic base. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.3.1: Lee County will, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, formulate an economic development plan to assist local organizations in fostering the expansion and diversification of Lee County's economic base, and will set forth the intent, funding, and the means available for its implementation. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.3.2: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will sustain a coordinated local, regional, national, and international marketing program that

will identify and attract industrial, commercial, and office space users. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.3.3: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will annually report on the progress of new company locations. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.3.4: Lee County will, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, develop a presentation packet to actively pursue and encourage businesses to relocate to Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.3.5: Lee County will ensure that adequate land is allocated in the comprehensive plan to meet future commercial, industrial, agricultural, residential, and recreational needs. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.3.6: Lee County will study economic incentives utilized by various Florida cities and counties that may also be utilized by Lee County to place the county in a competitive position to attract new businesses. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.3.7: Lee County will promote and coordinate the Lee County/Fort Myers Enterprise Zones. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, Relocated and Amended by Ordinance No. 07-09)

POLICY 158.3.8: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will encourage the expansion of international banking and finance to better accommodate the needs of international visitors to the area and that of local firms engaged in global markets. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, Relocated by Ordinance No.07-09)

POLICY 158.3.9: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will promote the Foreign Trade Zones in Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, Relocated and Amended by Ordinance No. 07-09)

POLICY 158.3.10: Lee County will, in coordination with local, state, and federal representatives, develop a strategy to increase foreign investment in Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, Relocated by Ordinance No. 07-09)

POLICY 158.3.11: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will continue programs which encourage and assist in the location of new companies that diversify the economy and create higher wage jobs. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, Amended and Relocated by Ordinance No. 07-09)

OBJECTIVE 158.4: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will maintain programs which are designed to encourage the retention and expansion of the county's existing economic base. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.4.1: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will continue programs which assist existing companies in expansion efforts and new companies that desire to relocate to the County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.4.2: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will annually report on the progress of existing industry expansions. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.4.3: Lee County will protect and promote its existing water port developments. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.4.4: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, will promote economic opportunity through the utilization of the Southwest Florida International Airport and strengthen the role of the airport in Lee County's economic development. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.4.5: Lee County will actively pursue state and federal funding for transportation improvements to the local, region, state, and national highway system in Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.4.6: All Lee County Departments and Divisions will communicate and coordinate with the Division of Economic Development (or its successor) to assure interdepartmental coordination of industry and business attraction, expansion and retention in Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.4.7: Lee County will encourage the retention of the agricultural and commercial fishing industries as described in Goals 8, 9, 121, 122, 128, and their associated objectives and policies of the Lee Plan. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.4.8: Lee County, in coordination with the Horizon Council and other appropriate entities, may establish an "Ambassador Team", consisting of volunteer representatives from such sources as government, banking/finance, utilities, marketing, chambers of commerce, education, and labor market sectors, in order to assist in the retention of targeted industries and businesses. The function of the team will be to increase communication between county and municipal governments, the Horizon Council, and the business community in Lee County.

POLICY 158.4.9: Lee County, in coordination with other appropriate entities, will work to establish and retain small businesses throughout Lee County. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.4.10: The Lee County Community Redevelopment Agency will continue local revitalization efforts in the county's redevelopment areas to leverage private reinvestment activities through public investment in community development and infrastructure improvements. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22) I am not sure if this still applies, since we no longer have this Agency or CRA's.

POLICY 158.4.11: Lee County will encourage agriculture industry programs to maintain or improve its economic viability, provide necessary support and promote Lee County produce. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

OBJECTIVE 158.5: Lee County will encourage the expansion and development of educational facilities that complement economic development and diversification. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.5.1: Lee County will continue to coordinate with and assist the Lee County School Board in the orderly and rational expansion of educational facilities that enhance economic growth and a desired quality of life. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.5.2: Lee County will promote the development of programs and facilities thru the Lee County School District, Edison State College, Florida Gulf Coast University, and any future

institutions of higher learning, including business and commerce, health services, technologies, and education careers. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

POLICY 158.5.3: Lee County will encourage the Lee County School District, Edison State College, Florida Gulf Coast University, and any future institutions of higher learning, to develop cooperative and integrated curriculums that enhance and increase the productivity of the local work force and attract industries and skilled workers. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22, 07-09)

OBJECTIVE 158.6: Lee County will maintain a system of development regulations that will promote the accomplishment of the goals, objectives, and policies of this element and will expedite the development review process for projects identified by the Economic Development Office as "economic projects". (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.6.1: Before adopting any new regulation which potentially imposes new costs to taxpayers and private business, Lee County first will generally assess the impact of that regulation upon the local economy and will adopt such regulations only in cases of compelling public need. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.6.2: Lee County will continue to utilize Lee County staff and private citizen committees to recommend revisions that will streamline development regulations. (Amended by Ordinance No. 00-22)

POLICY 158.6.3: Lee County will expedite the processing of rezoning and development permitting for projects identified by the Economic Development Office as "economic projects".

POLICY 158.6.4: Lee County will appoint a zoning and development permitting ombudsman within the Economic Development Office, who will have the authority to coordinate and facilitate the rezoning and development permitting processes for "economic projects" pursuant to Policy 158.6.3, so as to reduce requests for additional information, identify issue resolutions, and reduce the amount of time spent in rezoning and permitting for such projects.

GOAL 159 - GOAL 163: [RESERVED]