



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

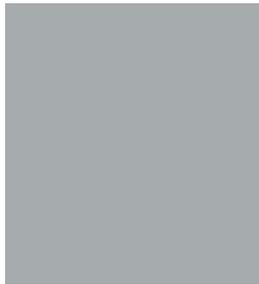
produced an award-winning interactive CD-ROM. More than 2,000 CDs per month are distributed to interested visitors and residents. In-house resources in the fields of design, advertisement, publications and media releases have been greatly expanded for a more cost-effective and personal approach to the 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.