



LAKE COUNTY

FLORIDA

Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan

Lake County
Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan
Table of Contents

	<u>Page(s)</u>
Executive Summary and Introduction	4 - 5
Governing Body’s Commitment to Economic Development	5 - 6
Lake County Enterprise Zone Profile	6 - 11
Strategic Planning Process/Participation	11 - 12
Community Objectives and Goals for the Nominated Areas	12-15
Baseline Data and Benchmarks	15-16
Prospects for New Investment in the Enterprise Zone	16
Resources and Incentives Available within the Enterprise Zone	17-23
Conclusion	23
Exhibits:	
A. Legal Descriptions of the Enterprise Zone	24-26
B. Enterprise Zone Map	27
C. Lake County Economic Action Plan	28 - 34

Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan

Executive Summary and Introduction

Lake County was founded in July 1887 from parts of Orange and Sumter Counties and was named after its over 1,400 lakes. Tavares, located on Lake Dora, was selected as the County Seat through the efforts of Major St. Clair Abrams who founded the city. At this time, Lake County only had about 8,000 people.

The first paved roads were constructed in 1915, and most transportation around this time was by water on special hybrid steam and paddlewheel boats and rail. In 1922, the county built its well known Historic Courthouse for about \$250,000, paid for through bonds.

From its founding, Lake County was a bastion of agriculture and throughout the Civil and World Wars, Lake County supported the efforts through servicemen and as a supplier of food. Crops included not only citrus, but row crops, lumber and turpentine from its forests. Lake County is noted as having been the location of the first war bond sold in the nation. Many people do not know that Lake County was also the site of a Prisoner of War camp during the Second World War.

Freezes set back agriculture, especially the citrus industry in the mid-1890's, devastating farms. Many of these families replanted and prospered. In 1983 and 1985 the freezes returned and devastated farms again. A third freeze in 1989 struck when many of the farms were still struggling. The County lost 110,000 acres of orange groves, an astounding ninety percent of the total orange grove acreage. Many of the citrus farmers did not replant for fear of another freeze and explored other uses for their land such as ferns, silviculture and other crops.

Citrus growers realized that the ruined orange groves created an opportunity for residential and commercial development. Many grove owners soon became land dealers or sold their land to developers in order to survive.

Other industries, such as construction, became the major industries of Lake County as the economy moved from its agricultural roots. The 1990's and early 2000's saw incredible growth prior to the recession beginning in 2006. The once very rural county of 8,000 people has grown to almost 300,000 and includes 14 municipalities, each with its own distinct character.

Lake County's history is rich and diverse. It sparkles with its natural beauty and its diverse cultures. Colorful stories abound. Today, as in the past, Lake County is a wonderful place to live, work and play.

Currently, within the cities of Mascotte, Leesburg and Eustis, there are limited incentives available to promote each of the cities' economic development goals of business attraction, retention and expansion, small and minority business development and job creation. The need for incentives and effective tools to overcome the challenges and impediments to business development in the cities' older core areas led Representative Metz to request that Lake County receive legislative authorization to apply to the State for designation of an Enterprise Zone within eligible areas of the County. Legislative

authorization was granted and approved by the Governor on May 31, 2011.

Of particular interest to Lake County are the key areas where higher levels of poverty, unemployment, substandard housing, crime and other indicators of distress continue to exist. Based on the 2005 – 2009 American Community Survey Census data, it has been determined that the area represented in the Enterprise Zone map (**Exhibit “B”**) meets the criteria for designation as an Enterprise Zone. The area comprises all or portions of Census Tracts 302.01, 302.04, 305.01, 305.02, 312.01 and 312.02 and represents a total area of approximately 9.14 square miles. The average percentage of families with income below the poverty rate for the Enterprise Zone area is 32.9 percent compared with 7.2 percent Countywide. The average unemployment rate for the Enterprise Zone area is 9.7 percent compared with 7.7 percent Countywide. The Enterprise Zone, while representing approximately 3.4 percent of the County’s total population, is experiencing a disproportionate occurrence of poverty and dilapidated structures. Poverty, unemployment, crime, dilapidated and abandoned structures, and aging and deteriorated infrastructure are all impediments to both neighborhood and commercial revitalization.

The County strongly supports the community based revitalization goals developed by the CRAs, Habitat for Humanity, Brownfield reclamation and other programs for redevelopment. However, there are currently few incentives available to promote the critical economic development goals of business attraction, retention and expansion, small and minority business development and job creation.

The areas of the cities included in the proposed Enterprise Zone are ideal for residential rehabilitation and business location and expansion due to convenient access to rail, interstate highway and/or air transportation. However, aging infrastructure and deteriorated buildings present major obstacles to the revitalization of the core residential and commercial areas of the cities.

Lake County views the proposed Enterprise Zone designation as a way of overcoming the obstacles to economic revitalization associated with those areas where higher levels of poverty, unemployment, substandard housing, crime and other indicators of distress exist. As a result, the Board of County Commissioners approved Resolution 2011-157 on October 25, 2011, nominating areas in the cities of Eustis, Leesburg and Mascotte as the Lake County Enterprise Zone. On November 15, 2011, the Board of County Commissioners approved Ordinance #2011-58, creating the Lake County Enterprise Zone Development Agency, which has various responsibilities related to implementation of the Strategic Plan. The Lake County Enterprise Zone Development Agency shall consist of eleven (11) members, to be appointed by the Board of County Commissioners after approval of the nominated area as an Enterprise Zone.

Institutional representation on the Enterprise Zone Development Agency is required by state statute, including: the local chambers of commerce, local financial or insurance entities, businesses operating within the nominated area, residents residing within the nominated area, nonprofit community based organizations operating in the nominated area, the regional Workforce Board, local code enforcement agencies and a local law enforcement agency.

The Enterprise Zone Development Agency brings volunteer knowledge and interest in economic revitalization issues to the cities and to the County, and will assist with the ongoing implementation of

the Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan. If successfully designated as an Enterprise Zone, the additional State incentives coupled with existing private and public resources will encourage the necessary private investments in the Enterprise Zone to foster and promote productive business enterprises, jobs, economic opportunities and community redevelopment for the residents.

Governing Body’s Commitment to Economic Development

The Lake County Board of Commissioners realize that economic growth is the key to continued success for the County and, more importantly, to the citizens whom they serve. The Board continually strives to encourage and foster a pro-business attitude that permeates the County. It serves as an immense asset to companies currently located in the County and for those companies looking to start or expand their growth into Lake County.

The Lake County Office of Economic Development & Tourism provides assistance and manages services for both the businesses of Lake County and Lake County visitors.

The mission of Lake County Economic Development is to provide excellence in service as a liaison between companies and government with the goals of creating a business-friendly environment and quality jobs for the citizens of Lake County.

The following list of goals is from the Lake County Economic Action Plan. Lake County created an action plan for each goal listed below, and the entire Lake County Economic Action Plan is attached as **Exhibit “C”**.

GOALS

- A. Create a “business friendly” environment, simplify the governmental permitting process, and always be mindful of the impact of governmental regulation on the success of the private sector to retain and create jobs.
- B. Work directly with willing municipalities to assist with the implementation of each city’s economic initiatives, and promote cooperation and coordination between the cities and Lake County.
- C. Assure that we have an available and well-prepared workforce for existing, emerging and prospective businesses, and collaborate with Lake County educators to meet workforce needs and achieve educational excellence.
- D. Establish policies and programs that promote the retention, success, and expansion of existing businesses.
- E. Establish policies and programs to assist start-up and developing businesses, and encourage entrepreneurship.
- F. Attract and recruit new businesses to Lake County by targeting specific industries, drawing upon regional partnerships and using proven business models.

- G. Work directly with the business community, cities, and other stakeholders to promote eco-tourism, recreation, sports and tourism.
- H. Protect and improve our quality of life, and maintain the proper balance between job creation and the protection of our natural resources and unique “Lake County” character.
- I. Establish specific targets and track progress of our economic development efforts and programs, and maintain a sense of urgency as we seek to realize our economic goals.

A list of local resources is included in this Plan, on pages 17 through 19; a list of local and state incentives is included on pages 19 through 23 of this Plan.

Lake County Enterprise Zone Profile

In each of the poverty and distress indicator categories, the Enterprise Zone consistently exhibits a disproportionate share of negative characteristics from that of the respective city. The social-distress indicators, including poverty, unemployment, education and crime can be correlated to the ability of the residents to sustain the physical environment of the Enterprise Zone. Years of limited resources and opportunities for residents to expend on structural maintenance have led to the conditions of economic and physical distress in the neighborhood, exhibited in the number of vacant lots, substandard housing and vacant structures.

City of Eustis

The Lake County Enterprise Zone was selected in accordance with physical area and population criteria as set forth in Section 290.0055(4), Florida Statutes, and the pervasive poverty and general distress criteria of Section 290.0058, Florida Statutes. The legal description for Part 1 - City of Eustis is contained within **Exhibit “A1”**, attached hereto and incorporated herein.

Neighborhood Description

The Enterprise Zone area in the City of Eustis is located north and south of Orange Avenue (SR 44), the main east/west entry into the City. The portion of the Enterprise Zone located north of Orange Avenue is part of the City’s Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) and is the site of the historical African-American business district. Approximately 50% of the area has a land use designation permitting retail and professional office development. Over the last decade the area has deteriorated, lost most of its businesses and now faces drug related crime issues. The City CRA Master Plan for this area includes streetscape and an open market area on City-owned property designed to encourage new businesses and retail merchants and discourage the illegal activities now dominating the area.

The portion of the Enterprise Zone south of Orange Avenue includes retail/office land use designations along Orange Avenue, with the remainder of the Enterprise Zone designated for residential and institutional uses.

Demographic Conditions

City of Eustis and Enterprise Zone Area Statistics	City of Eustis	Census Tract 302.01 (Map ID 5)	Census Tract 302.04 (Map ID 6)	Total Enterprise Zone Area
Population	18,629	966	1,132	2,098
Households	7,191	328	492	820
Avg. household size	2.52	2.69	2.62	
Owner occupied units	5,140	143	360	503
Renter occupied units	2,051	185	133	318
Median income	\$39,300	\$23,332	\$51,229	\$37,280
Avg. percentage of families with income below poverty level	10%	39.0%	27.50%	33.25%
% households w/income < \$15,000		30.40%	8%	
Population 25+/no high-school diploma	17.2%	24.10%	11.0%	17.5%
Average unemployment rate	9.6%	10.8%	8.4%	

Source: U.S. 2000 Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-year estimate. Population by Block Group US Census and Poverty by Labor Market Statistics Center 2005-2009.

Summary Description of Poverty and General Distress

The population of the Eustis segment of the Enterprise Zone comprises approximately 11 percent of Eustis; however, the average poverty rate for households within the Enterprise Zone area is 33.25 percent compared with 10 percent Citywide.

The average percentage of adults in this area with less than a high school education is 24.10 percent and 11.0 percent and the average unemployment rates for the Enterprise Zone area is 10.8 percent and 8.4 percent.

The residents of the Enterprise Zone are in need of additional assistance to move their skills and education levels to match those of prospective employers interested in investing in the Enterprise Zone and its residents.

After this Plan is adopted, crime statistics for this section of the Enterprise Zone will be collected to determine if the area is experiencing a disproportionate occurrence of robbery and drug related crime. The Plan will be updated with this information.

City of Leesburg

The Lake County Enterprise Zone was selected in accordance with physical area and population criteria as set forth in Section 290.0055(4), Florida Statutes, and the pervasive poverty and general distress criteria of Section 290.0058, Florida Statutes. The legal description for Part 2 - City of Leesburg is contained within **Exhibit "A2"**, attached hereto and incorporated herein.

History

The City of Leesburg, Florida, located in Central Florida, is conveniently adjacent to U.S. Highway 441-27, Interstate 75, and the Florida Turnpike. The City was incorporated in 1875; Leesburg is the second largest City in Lake County. Leesburg is Lake County's oldest city and at one time was the County seat while a part of neighboring Sumter County. The city claimed 1857 as its birthday when Leesburg celebrated its centennial in 1957, recognizing the year that the city's namesake, Evander Lee, and his family came to the area.

Historically, (through the 1970s) Leesburg served as Lake County's leading demographic, financial and commercial/retail center. With the growth of the Orlando Metropolitan market starting in the late 70s, the demographic and development patterns of Leesburg began to spread throughout the southeastern and southwestern portions of Lake County. By the 1990s, development patterns demonstrated significant growth patterns throughout Lake County, the exception being the City of Leesburg. Target area neighborhoods like Carver Heights and Montclair Area, located in West Leesburg within the Enterprise Zone, saw industries move to the perimeter of the community during the 1960s to 1980s; concrete plants, asphalt plants, warehouses, distribution, fertilizer, boat and mobile home manufacturing all arrived. Thereafter, the City has been aggressively working with various programs to revitalize struggling neighborhoods in the Enterprise Zones, such as Carver Heights.

Leesburg has transitioned from its agricultural roots, which historically served the City well. Now most of the workforce is in the sector of real estate, retail, personal services and healthcare. Over the past decade, almost all new construction has been outside the city limits. Leesburg has designated half of the City as blighted communities in need of redevelopment. The neighborhoods of the City targeted by this Enterprise Zone are the most socioeconomically distressed areas in the City. For over a decade, this area has been the focus of infrequent revitalization efforts. The subject area is suffering from such problems as very high vacancies in the commercial, office and retail space and decreased property values. The community was once home to small businesses in distribution, manufacturing and office production. However, numerous restaurants have now closed due to declining sales. These vacant commercial centers through time become susceptible to criminal activity and increased blight within the targeted communities.

Executive Summary

The needs in the Enterprise Zone area can be described as short-term and long-term. The growth of family incomes have not kept pace with the increase in market rate housing cost, nor has it provided accessibility of working capital to start new businesses or help existing businesses. In the nominated Enterprise Zone area, it has become increasingly difficult to find affordable housing and high wage jobs. The declines in housing, retail development and jobs have had a major impact on the quality of life in the Carver Heights community.

Therefore, the short-term needs of the Enterprise Zone area is simple: provide quality and versatile affordable housing with creative designs and options, and incorporate commercial development to provide needed services to the community and allow for local ownership of businesses.

Throughout the Carver Heights community, which is in the Enterprise Zone, there are over 10 revitalization initiatives in place to address current conditions. It is estimated that at least twenty (20) brownfields parcels contained within the Enterprise Zone area have not been redeveloped due to the negative perceptions associated with possible contamination. As a result, restoration efforts within the proposed Enterprise Zone have not matched those of the surrounding areas.

The long-term goals are to focus on capital improvements within the Enterprise Zone such as drainage improvements, land restoration, road improvements and neighborhood beautification. The community has compiled a list of twenty brownfields sites within the Enterprise Zone and prioritized them to a selected eleven (11) top sites for positive redevelopment.

Leesburg Brownfields Sites within the Enterprise Zone	Brief Description	Vacant	Size/ Acreage
1.1903 Bradford Avenue	Above Ground Fuel Storage Tanks Site	No	.17 of an acre
2. 1901 Bradford Avenue	Parcel Adjacent to 1903 Bradford Site	Yes	.21 of an acre
3. 2023 Carver Drive	Old Chemtex Supply Facility Site	No	2.3 acres
4. 905 Stinson Street	Parcel located just north of Old Chemtex Supply Facility	Yes	2.9 acres
5. South Stinson Street	Vacant site, Northeast of Old Chemtex Facility on Carver Dr.	Yes	3 acres
6. 916 Stinson	Vacant Residential near Old Chemtex Supply Site		.29 of an acre
7. 2600 Industrial Street	Industrial/ Manufacturing Facility Site	No	1.38 acres
8.Carver Drive	Vacant Commercial Site	No	.42 of an acre

Leesburg Brownfields Sites within the Enterprise Zone	Brief Description	Vacant	Size/ Acreage
9. 2113 Griffin Rd.	Old Health Clinic	No	.95 of an acre
10. 2308 Mt. Clair Rd	Vacant Warehouse Site	No	9.16 acres
11. Carver Drive	Vacant Commercial Site East of Old Chem. Tech Site	Yes	.16 of an acre

Source: City of Leesburg

Demographic Conditions

City of Leesburg and Enterprise Zone Area Statistics	City of Leesburg	Enterprise Zone Area
Population	20,924	4,893
Avg. Households	8,980	3,030
Avg. Household size	2.33	2.50
Avg. percentage of families with income below poverty level	10%	30.55%
Population 25+ with no high-school diploma	18.1%	*
Average Unemployment Rate	7.5%	9.5%

Source: U.S. 2000 Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-year estimate. Population by Block Group/Block US Census and Labor Market Statistics Center 2005-2009.

* This information is unavailable at this time; the Plan will be updated when census block information from the 2010 census is available.

Summary Description of Poverty and General Distress

The population of this segment of the Enterprise Zone represents approximately 23 percent of the City of Leesburg; however, the average percentage of families with income below the poverty rate for the Enterprise Zone area is 30.55 percent compared with 10 percent Citywide.

Given the high unemployment rate within the Enterprise Zone (9.5 percent compared to 7.5% City-wide), the residents of the Enterprise Zone require additional assistance to update skills and education levels. This will encourage private investment in the Enterprise Zone by providing prospective employers with a properly trained and prepared local workforce.

After this Plan is adopted, crime statistics for this section of the Enterprise Zone will be collected to determine if the area is experiencing a disproportionate occurrence of robbery and drug related crime. The Plan will be updated with this information.

City of Mascotte

The Lake County Enterprise Zone was selected in accordance with the physical area and population criteria as set forth in Section 290.0055(4), Florida Statutes, and the pervasive poverty and general distress criteria of Section 290.0058, Florida Statutes. The legal description for Part 3 - City of Mascotte is contained with **Exhibit "A3"**, attached hereto and incorporated herein.

Demographic Conditions

City of Mascotte and Enterprise Area Zone Data	City of Mascotte	Enterprise Zone
Population	5,287	2,957
Average Households	1,642	1,200
Avg. Household size	3.22	2.81
Percentage of families with income below poverty level	13%	37.5%
Population 25+ with no high-school diploma	27.6%	*
Average Unemployment Rate	9.3%	10%

Source: U.S. 2000 Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey 5-year estimate and Labor Market Statistics Center 2005-2009.

* This information is unavailable at this time; the Plan will be updated when census block information from the 2010 census is available.

Summary Description of Poverty and General Distress

The Mascotte segment of the Enterprise Zone comprises the southern portion of the City of Mascotte and a portion of unincorporated Lake County. The proposed Enterprise Zone area constitutes approximately 55 percent of the population of the City of Mascotte. The average percentage of families with income below the poverty rate for the Enterprise Zone area is 37.5 percent compared with 13 percent Citywide. The unemployment rate for the Enterprise Zone area averages 10 percent, in comparison to 9.3% Citywide.

After this Plan is adopted, crime statistics for this section of the Enterprise Zone will be collected to determine if the area is experiencing a disproportionate occurrence of robbery and drug related crime. The Plan will be updated with this information.

Strategic Planning Process/Participation

In July 2011, the Lake County Economic Development Team held a meeting to discuss the nomination of an Enterprise Zone. The concept of an Enterprise Zone was first presented to the Board of

County Commissioners in August 2011, with representatives of the eligible cities in the audience. Staff showed the Board of County Commissioners the areas within the County and within the cities that were eligible to comprise an Enterprise Zone, based on the requirements contained within F.S. 290.0058. The three areas comprising the Lake County Enterprise Zone are located in Mascotte, Leesburg and Eustis, with some portions in the unincorporated area.

On October 11, 2011, Lake County representatives, Amye King, AICP, Director of Growth Management Department and the County Attorney's Office met with each of the cities to discuss goals and objectives to revitalize the eligible areas within the potential Enterprise Zone. Staff conducted brainstorming sessions, through phone conversations and email, with each of the cities to organize the group's thoughts and ideas on the revitalization of the nominated area. The City representatives are Ken Thomas, Director of the Economic Development Department, City of Leesburg, Dianne Kramer, Director of Development Services, City of Eustis, and Jim Gleason, City Manager, City of Mascotte.

These meetings led directly to the objectives and goals listed below:

Community Objectives and Goals for the Nominated Areas

1. Streamline the permitting and review process to ensure the projects are approved in a timely manner.

Strategy and Completion Date: Create an ombudsman process within six (6) months to help citizens through the permitting process and any other governmental regulatory issues.

Strategy and Completion Date: Immediately implement an expedited permit and review process for all projects within the Enterprise Zone areas.

Strategy and Completion Date: Within one year, create an online application and permitting process for commercial and industrial development projects.

2. Meet with existing businesses to determine their needs and take action to ensure their business will grow and remain. Provide businesses with available resources, incentives and tools so they have the capability to expand successfully.

Strategy and Completion Date: County and/or City Economic Development staff will meet with each existing business through one-on-one meetings or hold group meetings twice a year.

Strategy and Completion Date: Create a brochure explaining the incentives available and the advantages of being within the Enterprise Zone. The brochure will be completed and distributed to the businesses within six (6) months.

3. Update existing ordinances to encourage development of commercial and industrial businesses, including small businesses and home occupations.

Strategy and Completion Date: Rewrite Land Development Regulations or Code to ensure

they encourage development and redevelopment of the urban core and nominated area. All ordinances or Land Development Regulations will be updated and approved by the appropriate Boards within five (5) years.

4. Create a Countywide partnership to support economic development.

Strategy and Completion Date: Continue to meet with municipal leaders and citizens of Lake County to promote economic growth, as it is the key to continued success for the entire County. Promote and foster a pro-business attitude throughout the County; brainstorm and share information about resources and incentives to bring businesses to our area. This will be a continual process, with no completion date.

5. Aggressively pursue opportunities and build collaborative relations to strengthen the Enterprise Zone as a business center.

Strategy and Completion Date: Review the possibility of posting signs identifying the nominated area as an Enterprise Zone. If the signs are feasible, they will be completed and installed within one (1) year.

Strategy and Completion Date: Meet with real estate agents twice a year to inform them of the incentives for development within the Enterprise Zone and give them brochures to give clients.

6. Promote and increase awareness of local resources like Workforce Central Florida, Lake-Sumter Community College Business Resource Center, University of Central Florida Small Business Development Center, Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center and Florida High Tech Corridor Council.

Strategy and Completion Date: Create links on County and municipality websites to each resource, describing what each has to offer. Links will be completed within six (6) months.

Strategy and Completion Date: Create a brochure explaining the incentives available and the advantages of being within the Enterprise Zone. The brochure will be completed and distributed to the businesses within six (6) months.

Strategy and Completion Date: Hand out brochures at Development Review Services meetings with prospective new business owners; hand out brochures to all citizens who inquire about business development at the County and City offices. The brochure will be completed and available for distribution within six (6) months.

7. Actively recruit economic development of targeted industries in these areas.

Strategy and Completion Date: Obtain a commitment by leadership to a shared vision of success, which is vital to a strategic business recruitment program. Create a clear understanding of competitive strengths and weaknesses in the Enterprise Zone areas so that

the County and the cities can identify a list of desirable, targeted industries and businesses that would be a good match for the areas. Once there is a thorough understanding of the targeted industries, the County and the cities will begin recruitment of those industries and create a follow-up program to enable repeated contact with the targeted industries. This will be a continual process with no completion date.

8. Create stronger and more vibrant neighborhoods with quality, affordable housing.

Strategy and Completion Date: Continue to develop public/private partnerships, and encourage developers to take advantage of the lower cost of land, using SHIP funds as well as Enterprise Zone incentives. This will be a continual process with no completion date.

Strategy and Completion Date: Within two (2) years, organize neighborhood improvement committees such as Weed and Seed Steering Committee, comprised of stakeholders from each area.

Strategy and Completion Date: Work with Code Enforcement Divisions to condemn all abandoned and unsafe structures in the Enterprise Zone within the next 2 years.

Strategy and Completion Date: Work with local Law Enforcement offices to develop and strengthen relationships with property owners and stakeholders within the Enterprise Zones. This strategy will be a continual development.

9. Enhanced community aesthetics.

Strategy and Date: Within one year, organize a community meeting of residents and business owners to engage, educate and empower individuals to take greater responsibility for enhancing beautification, protecting the environment and eliminating litter and blight. Inform residents, through brochures and meetings, of the resources available, such as: Recycling Collection, Bulk Pickup Service, Electronic Recycling, Household Chemical Disposal and Mobile Disposal Units, and the Adopt-a-Roadway Program through Lake County and Adopt-a-Highway Program through the Florida Department of Transportation.

Measurable Goals

10. Reduce the unemployment rate.

Strategy: Increase the number of sustainable businesses within the Enterprise Zones and promote the resources in Lake County for educational and trade opportunities.

Benchmark: Reduce the unemployment rate within the Enterprise Zones by 15 percent over the next 10 years.

11. Increase educational attainment and job training.

Strategy: Inform the residents of the Enterprise Zones of the resources available to them, for example, Workforce Central Florida (WCF) offers training scholarships in the region's top 20 in-demand occupations through area schools to customers who meet specific eligibility requirements. WCF's financial aid packages are limited to specific schools with Certified Training Providers and programs for occupations that are in demand in Central Florida.

Benchmark: Increase the number of residents receiving job training or attaining a higher education by 15 percent over the next 10 years.

12. Increase sustainable businesses.

Strategy: Provide information on properties that are available for development and brochures explaining all incentives and advantages of developing or expanding businesses within the Enterprise Zones to the current business owners and targeted industries. Continually recruit targeted businesses and assist in longevity of all businesses.

Benchmark: Increase the number of expanded businesses or new businesses located within the Enterprise Zones by 15 percent over the next 10 years.

13. Reduce the poverty rate.

Strategy: Promote and encourage, through Enterprise Zone incentives, local businesses and businesses within the Enterprise Zone, and increase the number of residents receiving a high school education, technical school training and college degrees.

Benchmark: Reduce families living in poverty by 15 percent over the next 10 years.

14. Reduce the crime rate, increasing public safety.

Strategy: Work with local law enforcement and code enforcement divisions to eliminate, as much as possible, the conditions that inhibit public safety. Adopt a proactive approach to discourage illegal activity, and continue to promote better economic conditions in these areas in order to help reduce the crime rate.

Benchmark: Reduce the crime rate in these areas by 15 percent over the next 10 years.

Baseline Data and Benchmarks for Measurement of Goals

Eustis Enterprise Zone Area

Average Poverty Rate	33.25%
Average Medium Household Income	\$37,280
Average Unemployment Rate	9.5%
Current Commercial/Industrial Structures	17
Tax Base	\$1,015,341.58

Leesburg Enterprise Zone Area

Average Poverty Rate	30.55%
Average Medium Household Income	\$39,300
Average Unemployment Rate	9.5%
Current Commercial/Industrial Structures	205
Tax Base	\$2,838,871.05

Mascotte Enterprise Zone Area

Average Poverty Rate	37.5%
Average Medium Household Income	\$42,091
Average Unemployment Rate	10%
Current Commercial/Industrial Structures	34
Tax Base	\$1,305,827.08

Prospects for New Investment in the Enterprise Zone

The areas within the Enterprise Zone are poised for new investment. As documented, the available land, existing buildings and infrastructure exist to partner with state incentives. Several new initiatives that are starting in the area will further entice businesses to the area.

Commercial and Residential Infill: According to the recent property survey, there are approximately 1320 residentially zoned parcels and 154 industrially or commercially zoned parcels in the Enterprise Zone that are undeveloped. Residential infill programs are aggressively pursuing development of owner occupied infill housing in the Enterprise Zone area. In addition to these potential development sites, commercially zoned structures lie empty. With the incentives that are available, many of these can be returned to active, contributing uses.

Enterprise Zone Property Survey Table

Development Potential of the Lake County Enterprise Zone		
Zoning Category	Total Parcels	Unimproved Parcels
Industrial	135	35
Commercial/Business (including special districts)	275	119
Residential	3156	1320

Source: Lake County Property Appraiser

Resources and Incentives available within the Enterprise Zone

State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Affordable Housing Program

Lake County is the sponsor of the **State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Affordable Housing Program**, which is designed to assist lower income families in attaining and/or maintaining affordable homeownership through housing development, rehabilitation and direct assistance. The program provides down payments and closing cost assistance to low income first time home buyers. Consumer credit counseling education classes are also provided under this program. The maximum down payment assistance available to eligible participants varies according to the income level and maximum home purchase price that is preapproved through their lending institution. The State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) program also provides monies for rehabilitation assistance and emergency repair due to hurricane damage and provides development of affordable rental and homeowner housing. SHIP also assists with programs to acquire and use vacant or abandoned properties in designated redevelopment targeted areas, including the Enterprise Zone, as sites for the development of new affordable homes. SHIP assists families in acquiring housing in designated redevelopment urban infill areas with mortgage reduction, no interest and forgivable assistance loans.

All of the goals listed below are being achieved through current projects and efforts in Lake County:

- Rehabilitate owner-occupied housing for families residing within the County
- Provide housing counseling
- Expand current efforts to develop affordable housing for low and moderate-income families
- Expand Affordable Home Ownership Program
- Support neighborhood revitalization activities to include street, sidewalk and lighting improvements
- Support economic development or housing activities with supportive services for projects creating new jobs

Lake County Review Appropriate to Priority in Development (RAPID)

To encourage the location of target industry business, this program offers expedited plan review and inspections affecting construction of a facility in a time frame that meets the corporate goals/deadlines of the applicant's organization.

As proposed, qualified applicants will include target industries, businesses locating in the Christopher C. Ford Commerce Park, Brownfield sites, and businesses providing a number of jobs or positions with higher wages than the County average.

Lake County Business Assistance Program (BAP)

To encourage the location and/or expansion of targeted industry businesses, this program provides matching funds to new and expanding business to offset development costs (building permit fees, impact fees and/or infrastructure improvement costs).

As proposed, the applicant must share 50% of the costs, with the maximum grant amount limited to \$25,000, unless otherwise approved by the Lake County Board of County Commissioners. The business must create a minimum of five (5) new jobs that pay no less than 115% of the average annual wage for Lake County. The jobs must be retained a minimum of two (2) years.

Lake County High Value Job Creation Program (HVJCP)

To encourage the location target industry businesses that offer significant economic benefit and create high-value jobs, this program provides a cash award for the creation of jobs paying a minimum of 115% of the County's average annual wage (AAW).

As proposed, new businesses must create ten (10) jobs and existing businesses must create five (5) jobs. Per job bonuses will be as follows: \$2,000 (minimum of 115% of AAW), \$3,000 (minimum 150% of AAW), and \$4,000 (minimum 200% of AAW), and will be paid at the time the position is filled. The jobs must be retained a minimum of two (2) years.

Lake County Artist Relocation Program (ARP)

To encourage arts and culture in downtown art districts, this program provides matching funds to new or relocating art businesses to offset building improvement costs.

As proposed, the applicant must share 50% of the costs, with the maximum grant amount limited to \$2,500. The business must be located within a designated community redevelopment area within the County. In order to qualify, the artist must be the owner or occupant of a live/work structure and the artist must manufacture and sell art from that location. This award will be available to the first five (5) qualified applicants per year.

Lake County Business Association Sponsorship Program

To encourage business development programs offered by businesses or professional organizations in Lake County, this program offers assistance with event sponsorship. In addition, this program formalizes the sponsorship process while providing guidelines and an application procedure for those seeking awards.

As proposed, organizations planning events that will provide businesses and business owners with information and/or assistance may apply bi-annually. Awards are limited to a maximum of \$4,000 per event. Sponsorship funds must be used for expenses directly related to the business event, and Lake County must be a recognized sponsor (Lake County's logo must appear on all electronic and printed material marketing the event). Lake County must also be granted booth/table access for marketing of County programs (if desired).

Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center

The Florida Virtual Entrepreneur Center is a free web portal designed to connect entrepreneurs with business support organizations, programs and service providers who can support their new or growing business.

Florida High Tech Corridor Council

The Florida High Tech Corridor is a 23-county region comprised of the service areas of its three research universities, the University of Central Florida, University of South Florida and University of Florida. Situated in the middle of Florida, between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, the Corridor's counties are a diverse mix, ranging from the urban settings of Tampa and Orlando to the rural lifestyles of north and central Florida. The Corridor's counties offer an abundance of opportunities in the high tech arena, endless recreational activities and world-renowned educational institutions.

Chambers of Commerce

Local Chambers of Commerce include the City of Leesburg Chamber of Commerce, the South Lake Chamber of Commerce and the City of Eustis Chamber of Commerce.

Workforce Central Florida

Workforce Central Florida (WCF) is the region's workforce expert, an authority for workforce planning, programs, and the labor market. WCF connects employers to the largest pool of talent in the area and provides worker resources and training. WCF prepares Lake County residents for careers that meet local businesses' current and future demands.

Lake Sumter Community College Business Resources Center

This Center is a Web portal designed to provide access to local, regional, and national Web resources that Lake and Sumter County entrepreneurs will find useful in starting and growing their businesses.

Businesses can use their links to find websites that contain information, examples and services that will prove valuable to entrepreneurs in Lake and Sumter counties.

Businesses can find a listing of area professionals that can help them start or run a business. The Business Resources Center offers many services for Lake and Sumter County entrepreneurs.

University of Central Florida Small Business Development Center

Their mission is to provide high-quality management advice and comprehensive business training through the collaboration of higher education and economic development organizations, contributing to Central Florida's economic growth.

United States Federal Government & Lake County Sponsored Business Incentive Program Industrial Development Revenue Bonds (IDRB)

To encourage business expansion projects that are economically beneficial to the County, provide gainful employment, and protect the environment as well as promote the general welfare and public health of the State of Florida, this federal program offers bond financing up to 100% funding of qualified projects.

The IDRBs are beneficial as they are longer term and have lower interest rates than most commercial loans. The interest on the bonds has preferable income tax treatment by the IRS and those savings are passed along to the user. The debt is paid solely by the borrowing company.

Workforce Florida Sponsored Business Programs

Quick Response Training Program (QRT)

To encourage job retention and expansion, and to attract businesses creating high-quality jobs, this program provides grant funding for customized training for new or expanding businesses. This employer-driven training program is designed to assist new value-added businesses and to provide existing Florida businesses the necessary training for expansion.

Incumbent Worker Training Program (IWT)

To encourage training that will keep Florida's workforce competitive in a global economy and retention of existing businesses, this program provides training to currently employed workers. The program is available to all Florida businesses that have been in operation for at least one year prior to application and require skills upgrade training for existing employees.

State of Florida Sponsored Business Incentive Programs

Sales and Use Tax Exemptions (SUTE)

To encourage manufacturing facilities, these programs offer exemptions from the State's portion of sales tax on machinery and equipment purchased for manufacturing use, and on power consumption used in the manufacturing process.

Lake County Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program (QTI)

To encourage the creation of high-skilled jobs and growth of corporate headquarters and targeted industries, this program provides a tax refund of \$3,000 per qualified job created. An additional bonus of \$1,000 and \$2,000 respectively is paid for jobs paying 150% or 200% of the County's average annual wage.

Lake County Qualified Defense & Space Contractors Tax Refund Program (QDSC)

To encourage the preservation and growth of the high technology employment base by giving Florida defense, homeland security, and space business contractors a competitive edge in consolidating contracts or subcontracts, acquiring new contracts, or converting contracts to commercial production, this program offers tax refunds of \$3,000 per job created or retained. An additional bonus of \$1,000 and \$2,000 respectively is paid for jobs paying 150% or 200% of the County's average annual wage.

Economic Enhancement Area Program (EEAP) (Brownfield Development)

To encourage the redevelopment or reuse of properties with real or perceived contamination, this program offers \$2,500 job bonus tax refund for each new job created within the Economic Enhancement Area (EEAP), and the applicant is eligible for sales tax credit on building materials related to construction of a housing project or mixed-use project in the designated area. In addition, if a Brownfield Site Rehabilitation agreement is entered into with the Department of Environmental Protection, the applicant is eligible for a 50% voluntary cleanup tax credit and, if the project is redeveloped as affordable housing, an additional 25% voluntary cleanup tax credit and state loan guarantees.

Economic Development Transportation Fund (EDTF)

To encourage businesses to locate, remain or expand within the County, the "Road Fund" offers local government funding to alleviate transportation problems that adversely impact a specific company's location or expansion decision. The amount is based on number of jobs created or retained and transportation project costs, up to \$3 million.

City of Leesburg Incentive Programs

Ad Valorem Tax Abatement Program

The program provides industrial, manufacturing and distribution companies with up to a 10-year exemption from ad valorem taxes and tangible personal property taxes.

Capital Investment Tax Credit

This program provides annual corporate income tax credits to eligible high-impact sector businesses equal to 5 percent of the eligible capital costs of a new or expanding Florida facility.

CDBG Infrastructure Grants

The Florida Department of Community Affairs administers the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. The CDBG program currently provides \$12 million to provide infrastructure to new or expanding businesses.

Florida Energy Loan Program

The program provides low-interest loans to small businesses to purchase and install energy-efficient equipment or otherwise improve a facility's energy efficiency.

High Impact Business Performance Grant

This is an incentive used to attract and grow high-impact businesses in Florida. For example, a qualified high-impact business making a cumulative investment of \$100 million and creating 100 jobs may be eligible for a total grant award of \$1 million to \$2 million. A qualified company engaged in R&D that makes a cumulative investment of \$75 million and creates 75 new jobs may be eligible for a total grant award of \$2 million to \$3 million.

Impact Fee Deferral Program

This program allows businesses to defer the Lake County Transportation Impact Fee over a period of time. The number of jobs created, the wages paid and other program requirements determine the time period.

Impact Fee Financing Program

The program provides financing opportunities when the total of City impact fees reaches \$20,000. The fee may be financed over five years with the interest being set at the prime rate.

Job Growth Investment Trust Fund

Lake County established this fund to assist business expansion and relocation projects. Business can receive up to \$2,500 per job created, if they meet specific program requirements. All jobs created for which assistance is requested must earn at least the annual median wage, which is currently \$9.80 per hour. This program functions to promote high-paying jobs in targeted industries within Lake County.

Lake Technical Center Training Programs

The Lake County Public School Board, through the Lake Technical Center, offers training programs custom designed to meet a firm's specialized needs.

On-the-Job Training Program

Job Services of Florida will provide a reimbursement to businesses of up to 40% of wages paid to qualified employees when the company agrees to provide on-the-job training for eligible positions.

Qualified Defense Contractor Tax Refund Program

The refund provides up to \$5,000 per job created or saved in Florida through conversion of defense jobs to civilian production. Also qualifying are the acquisition of a new defense contract or the consolidation

of a defense contract that results in at least a 25 percent increase in Florida employment or a minimum of 80 jobs.

Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program

This program provides tax refunds to pre-approved applicants of up to \$5,000 per new job created.

Quick Response Training Program

Working with community colleges, vocational/technical centers, state universities and other institutions, the program provides start-up training tailored to a company's needs.

Sales Tax Exemption on Aircraft Parts, Repair and Maintenance

Creates a sales tax exemption for replacement engines, parts and equipment used in the repair and maintenance of eligible aircraft. Also provides a sales tax exemption for the sale or lease of qualified aircraft.

Sales Tax Exemption on Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment

This program allows for the purchase of certain manufacturing machinery and equipment to qualify for an exemption from paying the state sales/use tax.

Sales Tax Refund on Manufacturing or Research Equipment

This program transforms an existing sales tax refund program for silicon technology machinery into a direct and recurring exemption.

Small Business Technology Growth Fund

This fund creates a new program to provide financial assistance (loan guarantees, letters of credit) to Florida businesses with emerging technological potential and fewer than 100 employees.

First-Time Homebuyer Program

This is a program designed to assist low-moderate income families with home buying education, re-stabling credit, and down payment assistance and mortgage approvals.

"One Room to Go"

This is a partnership with local furniture retail companies that donate a room of furniture to a qualified buyer, one per quarter.

City of Eustis Business Incentive Programs

Brownfield/Superfund Redevelopment

The City of Eustis has a three year, \$400,000 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant and is actively pursuing assessment and redevelopment of identified properties. Several sites lie within the Eustis portion of the Enterprise Zone. The grant will fund Phase I and Phase II assessments.

Incentives

The City of Eustis provides vouchers to help fund the up-front cost of new construction. A new multi-family, mixed use, and/or non-residential development with a construction cost of at least \$250,000 is eligible for the following vouchers that can be used for impact fees, building permit, and other associated City fees:

- 4% of the construction cost, up to a maximum of \$60,000
- The area north of Orange Avenue is also in the CRA and is therefore eligible for an additional 2% of the construction cost. Vouchers in this area cannot exceed \$90,000, or the cost of the construction related fees if those fees are less than \$90,000.

Business Operation Incentives

The City of Eustis will waive the business tax receipt charges for businesses located within the Enterprise Zone.

State incentives available in enterprise zones in accordance with Statute 290.007.

The following incentives are provided by the state to encourage the revitalization of enterprise zones:

The enterprise zone jobs credit provided in s. 220.181.

The enterprise zone property tax credit provided in s. 220.182.

The community contribution tax credits provided in ss. 212.08, 220.183, and 624.5105.

The sales tax exemption for building materials used in the rehabilitation of real property in enterprise zones provided in s. 212.08(5)(g).

The sales tax exemption for business equipment used in an enterprise zone provided in s. 212.08(5)(h).

The sales tax exemption for electrical energy used in an enterprise zone provided in s. 212.08(15).

The enterprise zone jobs credit against the sales tax provided in s. 212.096.

Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, the Public Service Commission may allow public utilities and telecommunications companies to grant discounts of up to 50 percent on tariffed rates for services to small businesses located in an enterprise zone designated pursuant to s. 290.0065. Such discounts may be granted for a period not to exceed 5 years. For purposes of Section 290.007 of the Florida Statutes, the term “public utility” has the same meaning as in s. 366.02(1) and the term “telecommunications company” has the same meaning as in s. 364.02(13).

Conclusion

Our mission is to revitalize the Enterprise Zone area by creating an economic and social environment that will induce investment in productive business enterprises, increase jobs and economic opportunities for the residents and enhance the general appearance of the Enterprise Zone.

We will continuously check the progress and success of the Enterprise Zone Strategic Plan and provide input for strategy updates or revisions to the benchmarks that have been established. The benchmarks will be reported on annually and adjusted in future years based on actual results.

Exhibit "A1"

Enterprise Zone Legal Description - Eustis

Begin in Section 1, Township 19, Range 26 at the intersection of Bates Ave and Cardinal Drive, run south and west along Cardinal Drive to the intersection of McDonald Ave in Section 12, Township 19, Range 26, run west on McDonald Ave to the intersection of Glover Street, run south along Glover Street to the intersection of SR 44, run west along SR 44 to the intersection of Haselton Street, run south along Haselton Street to the intersection of Lakeview Ave, run west along Lakeview Ave to the intersection of the second Hillcrest Court in Section 14, Township 19, Range 26, follow Hillcrest Court north to the intersection of Lake Gracie Drive, run north and west along Lake Gracie Drive to the intersection of Key Avenue in Section 11, Township 19, Range 26, run west along Key Avenue to Mary Street, run north along Mary Street to the intersection of E. Hazzard Ave in Section 11, Township 19, Range 26, run east to the intersection of Prescott Street, run north along Prescott Street to the intersection of Bates Ave, run East along Bates Ave to the intersection of Cardinal Drive (POB), less all lakes and wetlands.

Exhibit "A2"

Enterprise Zone Legal Description – Leesburg

Begin at the northwest corner of Urick Street (1-5407) and CR 468 in Section 9, Township 19, Range 24, run east along Urick Street to Thomas Ave (1-5108), run Southerly along Thomas Ave to the intersection of Tally Road (1-5109) in Section 15, Township 19, Range 24, run east along Tally Road to Timber Road, run South along Timber Road to the intersection of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad in Section 22, Township 19, Range 24, run westerly along the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad to Thomas Avenue in Section 22, Township 19, Range 24, run south along Thomas Ave to SR 44, run west along SR 44 to CR 468 in Section 28, Township 19, Range 24, run north along CR 468 to POB, less all lakes and wetlands,

And

Begin at the intersection of Thomas Ave (1-5108) and West Main Street in section 27, Township 19, Range 24, run east along Main Street to US Highway 27, run south along US Highway 27 to the intersection of US Highway 27 and CR 25A in section 2, Township 20, Range 24, run northerly along the Abandoned Seaboard Coastline Railroad until it intersects with SR 44, run west along SR 44 until it intersects with Lone Oak Drive, run north along Lone Oak Drive to West Main Street, run West to POB, less all lakes and wetlands.

LESS and EXCEPT property within the municipal limits of the City of Fruitland Park as of October 13, 2011.

Exhibit "A3"

Enterprise Zone Legal Description – Mascotte

Begin at the intersection of SR 50 and Lee Road (2/3-1604) in Section 17, Township 22, Range 24, run easterly and southeasterly along SR 50 to the intersection of SR 50 and Main Avenue in Section 24, Township 22, Range 24, run southwesterly along Main Avenue to Anderson Road (2/3-1317) in Section 25, Township 22, Range 24, run west along Anderson Road to Empire Church Road (2/3-1213), run southerly and westerly along Empire Church Road to the intersection of Mascotte Empire Road (2/3-1310) in Section 34, Township 22, Range 24, run northerly along Mascotte Empire Road to Carter Jones Road (2/3-1309) Section 22, Township 22, Range 24, run westerly and southerly along Carter Jones Road to Bay Lake Road (2/3-0604) Section 21, Township 22, Range 24, run northeasterly along Bay Lake Road to Sloans Ridge Road (2/3-1503), run westerly and northerly along Sloans Ridge Road to the intersection of Lee Road, run northeasterly along Lee Road to POB, less all lakes and wetlands.

LESS and EXCEPT property within the municipal limits of the City of Groveland as of October 13, 2011.

Exhibit B

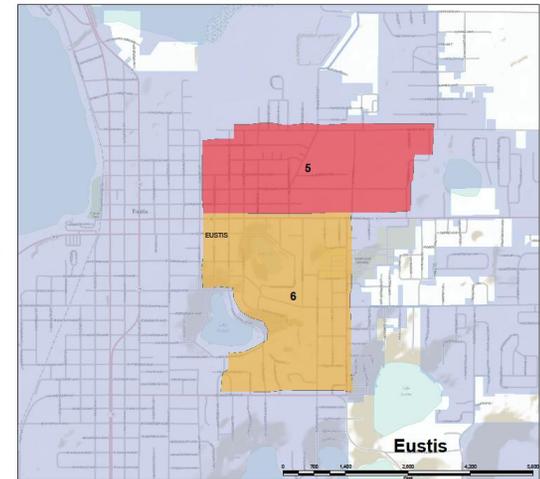
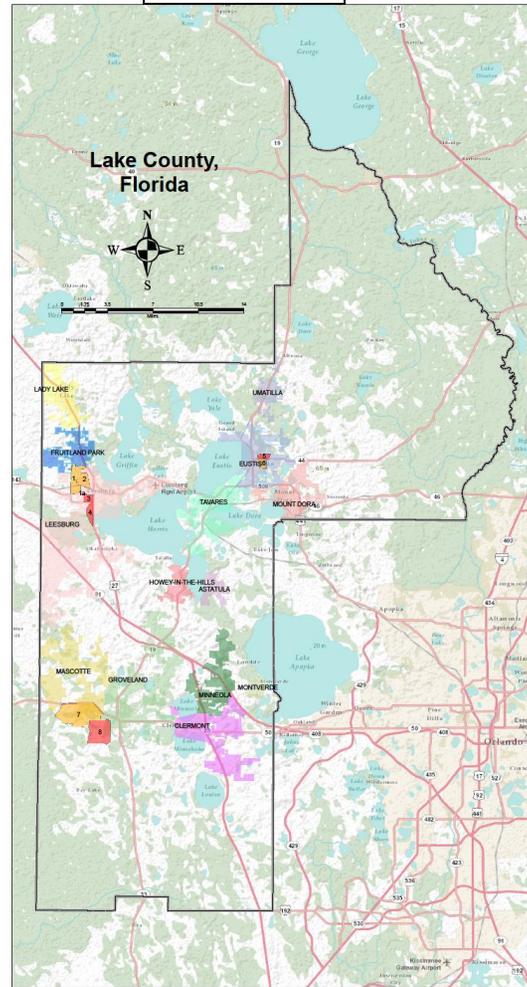
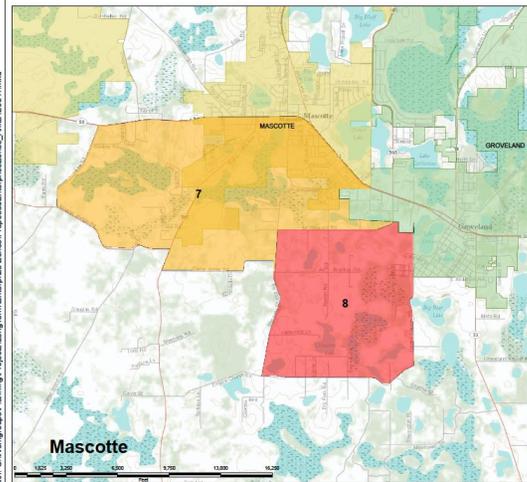
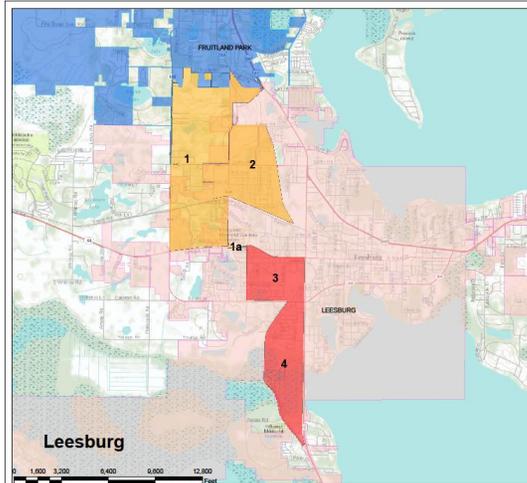


EXHIBIT "B" Enterprise Zone Candidates

Families Below Poverty

- 20.0% - 29.9%
- 30.0% +

MapID	Families Below Poverty	UnEmployment Rate	Square Miles *
1**	30.70%	0.13177441541	1.47
1a	0%	0.00000000000	0.00
2	31.30%	0.13177441541	0.77
3	27.50%	0.05869275233	0.40
4	32.70%	0.05869275233	0.36
5	39.00%	0.10761640456	0.34
6	27.50%	0.08399787347	0.40
7**	35.40%	0.0809461538	3.30
8**	39.60%	0.11925739459	2.10

*Portions of these census geographic block groups within the municipal limits of the City of Fruitland Park, and the City of Groveland as of October 13, 2011 have been excluded.

Total Square Miles: 9.14
* Square miles does not include Lakes or Wetlands

- Municipality**
- ASTATULA
 - CLERMONT
 - EUSTIS
 - FRUITLAND PARK
 - GROVELAND
 - HOWEY-IN-THE-HILLS
 - LADY LAKE
 - LEESBURG
 - MASCOTTE
 - MINNEOLA
 - MONTVERDE
 - MOUNT DORA
 - TAVARES
 - UMATILLA

Source: USCB American Community Survey 2005-2009 estimates - Table B17010, Poverty Status in the past 12 months of Families by Family Type, Table B23001, Sex by Age by Employment Status.

US Dept. of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service - Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater habitats of the United States, 2006.

US Geological Survey, US EPA, USDA Forest Service, et al - National Hydrography Dataset (NHD)

Basemap features supplied by: USGS, FAO, NPS, EPA, ESRI, DeLorme, TANA, other suppliers



Exhibit "C"

Lake County Economic Action Plan

VISION

A prosperous local economy supported by a wide range of career opportunities, a diversified tax base, and an exceptional quality of life.

MISSION

To aggressively retain, attract and grow jobs in Lake County, in partnership with others, while protecting and improving Lake County's quality of life and unique character.

GOALS

- A. Create a "business friendly" environment, simplify the governmental permitting process, and always be mindful of the impact of governmental regulation on the success of the private sector to retain and create jobs.
- B. Work directly with willing municipalities to assist with the implementation of each city's economic initiatives, and promote cooperation and coordination between the cities and Lake County.
- C. Assure that we have an available and well-prepared workforce for existing, emerging and prospective businesses, and collaborate with Lake County educators to meet workforce needs and achieve educational excellence.
- D. Establish policies and programs that promote the retention, success, and expansion of existing businesses.
- E. Establish policies and programs to assist start-up and developing businesses, and encourage entrepreneurship.
- F. Attract and recruit new businesses to Lake County by targeting specific industries, drawing upon regional partnerships and using proven business models.
- G. Work directly with the business community, cities, and other stakeholders to promote eco-tourism, recreation, sports and tourism.
- H. Protect and improve our quality of life, and maintain the proper balance between job creation and the protection of our natural resources and unique "Lake County" character.
- I. Establish specific targets and track progress of our economic development efforts and programs, and maintain a sense of urgency as we seek to realize our economic goals.

GOAL: Create a “business friendly” environment, simplify the governmental permitting process, and always be mindful of the impact of governmental regulation on the ability of the private sector to retain and create jobs.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Identify County policies, situations and regulations that adversely affect our economic vision and mission, and implement strategies to correct them (e.g. fees, conflicting regulations, duplicative regulations, lobbyist provisions that impede inquiries from new business prospects, etc.).
- b. Identify proven models for streamlining and simplifying the permitting process, and revise current process (e.g. online permitting).
- c. Establish a permitting “advocate” or “concierge” to “walk” business owners and prospects through the permitting process and coordinate with Cities and other reviewing agencies.
- d. Explore opportunities to create “regulatory” uniformity between Lake County and the cities, and aggressively work with willing cities to implement coordinated procedures.
- e. Aggressively pursue the settlement of all Comprehensive Plan challenges in order to achieve certainty and “closure.”
- f. Upon final adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, initiate a review of the Comprehensive Plan to identify policies or land use designations that impede job creation and positive economic activity and pursue solutions to rectify such provisions.
- g. Upon final adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, initiate an administrative correction process to address inconsistencies, scrivener’s errors, and new land use designations that impose greater restrictions on particular parcels than the prior land use designation for those parcels.
- h. Continually evaluate the development process for increased efficiencies, and immediately evaluate and respond to internal and external feedback in an effort to improve existing procedures.
- i. Reinforce a positive “customer service” attitude at all levels of County government through training and internal policies.

GOAL: Work directly with willing municipalities to assist with the implementation of each city’s economic initiatives, and promote cooperation and coordination between the cities and Lake County.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Utilize District Commissioners to reach out to elected officials in their Districts and “team” up with one or more elected officials from each City in order to become familiar with their economic vision and specific projects (e.g. infrastructure projects, targeted industries), and to identify opportunities to assist Cities with implementation of their economic initiatives.

- b. Utilize District Commissioners to reach out to elected officials in their Districts to discuss opportunities for improving or streamlining the development review process and request their support for monthly meetings between County and City planning and zoning directors to identify ways to align the development process across jurisdictional boundaries.
- c. Utilize ISBA, Joint Planning Agreements, Interlocal Agreements or less formal initiatives such as Joint Resolutions to assist Cities with implementation of their economic initiatives.
- d. Create an inventory map and matrix for each region of the County identifying improved and vacant parcels that are available for targeted industries which have specific needs regarding acreage, location and building specifications (e.g. light industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, high technology, agri-business), and provide maps and related information to cities to use as a planning and recruiting tool.
- e. Create a county-wide map showing existing and emerging industry clusters and provide to cities to use as a planning and recruiting tool.
- f. Share economic analysis, forecasts and similar technical information to the cities and promote cooperation and collaboration through regular communication (e.g. monthly meetings, emails, workshops).
- g. Establish a permitting “advocate” or “conciierge” to “walk” business owners and prospects through the permitting process and offer this service to the cities.

GOAL: Assure that we have an available and well-prepared workforce for existing, emerging and prospective businesses, and collaborate with Lake County educators to meet workforce needs and achieve educational excellence.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Meet with each education “partner” (e.g. School Board, LSCC, Lake Tech) or conduct an Education and Economic Summit with all partners to:
 - 1. Discuss our economic vision and mission;
 - 2. Share specific goals related to education and workforce needs;
 - 3. Review existing programs and explore possibility of expanding programs that have been well-received and adding new programs to address targeted industries;
 - 4. Discuss ways to showcase existing strengths and positive statistics;
 - 5. Identify new procedures to facilitate ongoing communication and collaboration; and
 - 6. Propose the adoption of a joint resolution emphasizing our desire to cooperate and work together on specific education and economic-related goals.

- b. Utilize economic development staff to identify existing and emerging workforce needs and to coordinate and communicate with education partners and the business community.
- c. Identify successful education and training models which address existing and emerging workforce needs, and share these opportunities with our education partners and facilitate implementation of such programs (e.g. High Tech Corridor teacher training and curriculum; mentoring and apprenticeships).

GOAL: Establish policies and programs that promote the retention, success, and expansion of existing businesses.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Create a mechanism for communicating with existing businesses, and collect pertinent data to provide to business owners and operators (e.g. tradeshow information, Technical Assistance programs, etc.).
- b. Conduct weekly “business” site visits (involve County Commissioners and County Manager as determined by staff).
- c. Evaluate successful models for Business Retention and Expansion Programs and consider implementation of new, revised or expanded programs (e.g. revolving loan fund for equipment purchases, building renovations or construction).
- d. Evaluate successful models for Technical Assistance Programs and consider implementation of new, revised or expanded programs, and offer services of Technical Assistance Programs to all Lake County businesses.
- e. Build relationships with the Chambers and other business-related organizations to assure communication and coordination, and to identify needs and opportunities for collaboration.
- f. Identify workforce needs of existing Lake County companies and collaborate with LSCC, Lake Tech, and Lake County School Board to develop programs to address existing and emerging workforce needs (e.g. specialized training, additional subjects, magnet schools).
- g. Explore ways to connect local students to existing Lake County companies through mentoring or apprenticeship programs.

GOAL: Establish policies and programs to assist start-up and developing businesses, and encourage entrepreneurship.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Evaluate successful models for Start-Up and Developing Business Programs and consider implementation of new, revised or expanded programs, including particularly the need for sub-regional programs and accessibility throughout Lake County (e.g. economic gardening, incubators, Entrepreneurship programs, etc.).

- b. Review scope and delivery of services provided by the LSCC Business Resource Center and collaborate on solutions to meet funding challenges and to address possible changes in the scope of services to meet specific needs of start-up and developing businesses.

GOAL: Attract and recruit new businesses to Lake County by targeting specific industries, drawing upon regional partnerships and using proven business models.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Expand list of targeted industries to include light industry and manufacturing, and include all industries targeted by metro-Orlando EDC.
- b. Improve utilization of the Metro-Orlando EDC as a national and international marketing tool, and attend target industry tradeshows to market opportunities in Lake County to national and international companies.
- c. Notify local companies of tradeshows that would be beneficial to their business.
- d. Work with the Metro-Orlando EDC to establish measurable targets and goals; assure regular communication with County Commissioners on pending prospects and marketing efforts.
- e. Work closely with our Cities on their economic initiatives and identify opportunities to connect our Cities to the Metro-Orlando EDC staff (e.g. assistance with RFPs, responding to prospects, technical support).
- f. Respond to RFI and RFP from Enterprise Florida for companies seeking to expand or relocate to Florida.
- g. Participate in regional planning and collaboration, and identify specific opportunities for sub-region planning (e.g. Sumter and Marion Counties; Seminole, Orange, and Osceola Counties and the City of Orlando) and emerging industry-clusters (e.g. existing Lake County business; private-sector Metro-Orlando EDC partners and investors).
- h. Encourage County Commissioners to take a direct role in the process of attracting and recruiting new businesses (e.g. meeting with prospects, traveling if necessary to meet prospective companies, attending trade-shows and economic workshops).
- i. Compile a list of ambassadors willing to assist when prospects visit Lake County (e.g. hotels, restaurants, transportation, tours, education and business leaders)
- j. Conduct periodic workshops for our residents, businesses and all partners as a mechanism to providing information on our progress and receiving feedback (e.g. “marketing” Lake County for economic prosperity must be a community-wide effort).
- k. Build relationships between economic development staff and our local real estate community by conducting regular meetings to exchange and update information so that we are able to connect prospects to available sites.

- I. Assure that our economic development website is dynamic and easy to use (e.g. information regarding incentives is easy to find, “available site” information is regularly updated and comprehensive).

GOAL: Work directly with the business community, cities, and other stakeholders to promote eco-tourism, recreation, sports and tourism.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Complete and implement a new TDC grant application process.
- b. Target new events that generate overnight purchases in Lake County.
- c. Support existing events that bring tourists to Lake County through marketing and financial support, and constantly look for new opportunities to bring tourists to Lake County (e.g. marketing, cooperation between private and public sector, cooperation between cities).
- d. Identify infrastructure needs, pursue funding and completion (e.g. trail systems, sporting venues).
- e. Consider conducting a “tourism” workshop and invite all partners to evaluate existing programs and facilities, and to explore opportunities for greater coordination, improved outreach, etc.
- f. Consider establishing a “Tourism” Business Retention and Expansion Program that specifically addresses the needs of existing tourism-related businesses.

GOAL: Protect and improve our quality of life, and maintain the proper balance between job creation and the protection of our natural resources and unique “Lake County” character.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Identify infrastructure needs that enhance our quality of life and evaluate their financial viability, including the ongoing costs of operation and maintenance (parks, recreation, trails, sidewalks, transportation, stormwater) and prioritize projects.
- b. Explore regulatory changes to encourage small, infill residential development (e.g. raise the threshold for de minimus concurrency impacts and provide waivers for infill development) that will enhance our downtown districts and urbanized areas.
- c. Adopt policies that encourage the redevelopment of existing buildings and sites (e.g. evaluate “change of use” provisions to determine whether present regulations deter use of existing sites and provide for waivers and incremental site upgrades).
- d. Evaluate current CRAs and their current funding allocations; consider using a “sunset provision” for CRA districts in order to protect our County-wide tax base; evaluate the potential for new CRAs as mechanism for facilitating redevelopment within Lake County.
- e. Support existing CRAs within Lake County and maximize their impact.

- f. Support programs and identify opportunities for improving the water quality of our lakes, rivers and waterways.

GOAL: Establish specific targets and track progress of our economic development efforts and programs, and maintain intensity level and sense of urgency regarding economic prosperity emphasizing the connection between government and the private sector.

ACTION PLAN:

- a. Staff should establish targets and present to the BCC for discussion.
- b. Staff should provide regular reports regarding economic activity, implementation of new programs, employment trends, new suggestions from businesses community, feedback, progress with cities, etc.
- c. Staff should provide updates on business visits and provide County Commissioners with the opportunity to participate in visits that are related to business retention and expansion.
- d. Staff should invite County Commissioners to meet with businesses prospects.
- e. Staff should provide regular updates on “simplifying” the permitting process and creating a business friendly environment, including time-frames for implementation and feedback from the public and the business community.