

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

GOAL: Establish and strategically promote public financial incentives to achieve an economically balanced community with a superior quality of life, employment opportunities for current and future residents and a diversified tax base.

Objective 1: The City of Cape Coral shall facilitate the collection, analysis and dissemination of relevant economic data and information in order to develop effective programs, projects, and activities to achieve its economic development goals.

Policy 1.1: The Economic and Business Development Office (EBDO) of the City of Cape Coral is designated as the City's clearing house for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of relevant economic data for developing and monitoring the progress of programs, projects, and activities related to economic development.

Policy 1.2: The EDBO shall facilitate the collection, analysis and policy initiatives related to economic development programs, projects, and activities to maximize job creation, retention and expansion of the tax base.

Policy 1.3:

The EDBO shall submit quarterly reports to the City Manager and City Council that addresses the status of the economic indicators of the city's economy, business and development activities and the impact of economic development programs, projects and activities generated from the objectives and policies of this plan. Said report may consist of:

- A review of the economic development & business activities underway and planned;
- Recommendations concerning infrastructure needs to support economic development efforts;
- Summary of business expansions and new business starts;
- Report of business expansion and attraction to the City through assistance and recruitment efforts;
- A report of educational training opportunities for businesses and employees;
- Performance Metrics;

Objective 2: The City shall plan, design, and implement programs, projects, and activities that support and assist in the expansion of existing businesses in the City of Cape Coral and that recruit new businesses. The Office of Economic Development is designated to carry out the following policies to achieve Objective 2.

Policy 2.1: The EDBO shall develop and implement a citywide developer and business recruitment/retention strategy to encourage existing business to invest in expansion and to attract new

businesses and promote new and expanded development of office, light industrial and mixed-use projects throughout the city.

Policy 2.2: Reserved.

Policy 2.3: The EDBO shall promote the use of public and private incentives to developers and businesses in order to diversify and expand the City's economic base resulting in the development of more office & light industrial uses.

Policy 2.4: The City of Cape Coral shall seek to attract and develop industries and businesses that do not negatively impact the City's natural environment and its resources.

Policy 2.5: The City of Cape Coral shall create financial incentives that target office & light industrial developments as well as mixed-use/clustered projects which reduce the need for vehicles.

Objective 3: The City shall designate the EDBO, in cooperation with the Department of Community Development, to define and map future land use areas for commercial, industrial and clustered mixed-use developments and to define optimal density for industrial and business development.

Policy 3.1: The City of Cape Coral shall create financial incentives that target office & light industrial developments as well as mixed-use/clustered projects which reduce the need for vehicles.

Policy 3.2:

The City of Cape Coral shall reserve properties to support the establishment of office & light industrial developments according to the following corridors and guidelines:

- **Pine Island Road Corridor from Burnt Store Road eastward to city limits.** All projects with frontage exceeding 170 feet shall be reserved for retail, office and warehouse/light industrial uses in order to maximize employment and revenue opportunities for the city. For those multi-family developments with a minimum of 30,000 square feet fronting the roadway (excluding public and outdoor storage as well as assisted living facilities), they will be permitted to be developed on these properties within 200 feet of Pine Island Road. Those uses excluded such as multi-family and assisted living facilities, they may be permitted in the rear of such properties but no closer than 250 feet from Pine Island Road.
- **Northeast 24th Avenue from Diplomat Parkway to Littleton Parkway.** Properties located on the east side of the roadway and abutting the existing Veterans Medical Clinic shall be reserved to support a mix of medical and professional office uses; warehouse and light industry and hotels, restaurants and retail uses as well as multi-family and assisted living facilities. Sites of 5 or more acres will prohibit the establishment of public and outdoor storage facilities.
- **Burnt Store Road Corridor from Embers Parkway northward to city limits.** Extending 400 foot east and west along the corridor, no public and/or outdoor storage or multi-family developments will be permitted. The intent is to promote development of office, light industrial/warehouse, commercial and retail establishments to maximize the attraction of business parks with a mix of employers.

- **Corbett Road from Diplomat Parkway northward to Littleton Parkway.** Reserve this corridor north of the Veterans Medical Clinic and U.S. Army Reserve to support retail, office and light industrial purposes.
- **Zemel East.** Reserve a minimum of 20% of the undeveloped land fronting Highway 41 to support a business park consisting of no less than 500,000 square feet of industrial and office buildings.
- In addition, the City of Cape Coral shall provide for the location of industrial and commercial development according to the following guidelines:
 - The Future Land Use Element’s Commercial Node Criteria;
 - Access to the transportation network, notably proximity to arterials and collectors;
 - Access to utilities;
 - Acceptable impacts on the environment and adjacent land uses;
 - A focus on scale and clustered development, such as research and technology parks, as valuable economic assets to the City and give such projects high priority;
 - Developments will also attract post-secondary education assets, including vocational schools, undergraduate colleges and universities and post-graduate education and research institutions.

Objective 4: The City shall review and, where possible, streamline land development regulations and permitting processes to shorten the review cycle time such that Cape Coral becomes measurably more efficient location for creating commercial development.

Policy 4.1: The City will evaluate and implement when applicable Fast Track review processes and objective standards for timely permit processing.

Policy 4.2: The City will evaluate and implement when applicable best practices in permitting review error reduction, process improvement and customer satisfaction.

Objective 5: Recognizing that workforce is a primary determinant for business growth and attraction, the City will establish programs that encourage development of a higher quality workforce, including retention of local students, and that provide housing opportunities that will be suitable for the city’s workforce.

Policy 5.1: The City will identify workforce education strategies that support Cape Coral businesses.

Policy 5.2: The City will evaluate and advocate for educational, vocational, and technical training opportunities to match needs of new and existing employers and employees.

Policy 5.3: The EBDO will meet periodically with representatives of educational institutions and workforce development organizations to discuss long-range planning for improving education and training opportunities for the benefit of Cape Coral businesses.

Policy 5.4: The EBDO will provide input for the design of programs to increase the availability of suitable housing that is priced appropriately for the city's workforce.

Policy 5.5: The EBDO will advocate creating programs that assist Cape Coral employers to assist their employees to afford housing.

Objective 6: Recognizing that Cape Coral is encumbered by having been pre-platted as largely a residential community, and that the City is not located along major transportation corridors, the City shall continue to coordinate with appropriate Federal, State and local agencies to increase the city's flexibility to implement land use changes for commercial development, and to increase the city's eligibility for transportation funding.

Policy 6.1: Cape Coral shall collaborate with other pre-platted communities in Florida to define changes in state legislation and policies that would enable these communities to more rapidly assemble land for commercial development.

Policy 6.2: The City shall continue to coordinate with FDOT and the Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization and other relevant government agencies to expand and enhance the overall transportation network in Cape Coral in order to provide improved access to commercial and industrial locations which includes providing increased access to both Pine Island Road and Burnt Store Road for medical and professional office and industrial developments.

Policy 6.3: The City shall foster land assembly efforts in targeted areas having fragmented land ownership patterns. Such land assembly efforts shall include, but not necessarily be limited to: assisting landowners in establishing real estate trusts; holding meetings or workshops concerning the benefits of a unified development plan.

Policy 6.4. Facilitate the redevelopment of retail shopping centers with large vacant and/or underutilized big box stores. Department stores and big box retailers no longer require 50,000 square feet or additional parking. Expanding zoning in these centers to support supply chain, office space, hotels, and multi-family development will be essential in order to strengthen and help make these centers viable once again.