

Economic Element

GOAL ONE: TO FACILITATE A STRONG AND ROBUST LOCAL ECONOMY THAT PROVIDES GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXISTING BUSINESSES, ATTRACTS NEW HIGH-WAGE PRIMARY EMPLOYERS AND PROMOTES A DIVERSE RANGE OF INDUSTRIES THROUGH INNOVATIVE, SUSTAINABLE METHODS THAT, IN A RESPONSIBLE MANNER, ENHANCE THE COUNTY'S VITALITY AND THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

1.1. Objective: To strengthen the local economy by attracting 50,000 new high-wage primary jobs to Pinellas County by 2030.

1.1.1. Policy: Pinellas County will continue to actively recruit identified Targeted Industry businesses.

1.1.2. Policy: Particular emphasis will be placed on attracting and retaining businesses that specialize in innovation, research and development, as such organizations often serve as catalysts for creating new high-wage spin-off companies, and attracting complementary industries.

1.1.3. Policy: Pinellas County will continue to utilize, and seek to enhance, its business incentives program.

1.1.4. Policy: Pinellas County will continue, and expand upon as necessary and appropriate, its mentoring programs for targeted industries and existing businesses.

1.2. Objective: To provide quality siting opportunities for primary employers by maintaining and enhancing industrial lands within Pinellas County.

1.2.1. Policy: The following criteria guide the location of industrial uses, as applicable, and will be used to evaluate conversion of industrially-designated lands to other uses:

- Site Characteristics: the size, configuration and physical characteristics of the site, including potential for expansion or consolidation with adjoining properties, in relationship to its potential utility to support employment opportunities.
- Locational Characteristics: the location of the property in relationship to adjoining similarly-classified property, its compatibility with adjoining and nearby uses and plan classifications that would be similar to or serve the site, and any adjoining residential or incompatible use or plan category.

- **Transportation and Infrastructure Features:** the location of the property in relationship to arterial and major highway, public transit, airport and rail access as well as other infrastructure and service facilities, including water, sewer, stormwater and parking and their respective capacities.
- **Unique Features:** whether the property is now, or is proposed to be, used for unique and high-priority functions such as water-dependent, working waterfront, and transit-oriented uses.
- **Contribution to the Economy:** the number and type of jobs, and corresponding wage scale(s), to be provided within the proposed plan designations as compared to those now provided, or potentially available, within the existing plan category.
- **Redevelopment Plans:** whether the property is included as part of a special area plan that has evaluated and addressed the effect on the number and type of jobs and wage scale of persons to be employed in the redevelopment area proposed to be reclassified;
- **Related Comprehensive Plan Policies:** whether the amendment furthers key policies of the comprehensive planning process, consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan, in order to enhance the manufacturing, high-tech and targeted industry employment base.

- 1.2.2. Policy: Pinellas County will examine the feasibility and appropriateness of allowing certain Industrial Limited uses in Commercial General and Residential-Office-Retail designated lands, and will amend the Comprehensive Plan as necessary to support the results of this examination.
- 1.2.3. Policy: Pinellas County will, as appropriate, ensure that adequate public infrastructure is in place to serve identified targeted industry employer locations, and consider how best to provide infrastructure improvements in locations where planned development/redevelopment (e.g. an activity center) is desired.
- 1.2.4. Policy: Pinellas County will examine the feasibility of implementing regional stormwater systems as a means to facilitate redevelopment activity.
- 1.2.5. Policy: Pinellas County will identify and consider adopting development standards that facilitate rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing structures as potential alternatives to replacement or new development.

- 1.2.6. Policy: Pinellas County will develop appropriate strategies and criteria for implementing a new targeted industries land use category.
- 1.3. Objective: To maintain an Industrial Development Authority as a primary mechanism to support objectives for job creation, attraction and retention, and siting opportunities.
- 1.3.1. Policy: Pinellas County will identify locations where land assembly would enable infill and/or redevelopment, and provide public assistance, as appropriate and allowed for by law, with the process and cost of land assembly to support targeted industries and accomplish redevelopment objectives.
- 1.3.2. Policy: Pinellas County will identify surplus and non-environmentally sensitive public lands, such as the Airco Golf Course and the Toytown historic landfill, for redevelopment.
- 1.3.3. Policy: Pinellas County will continue to maintain the Young-Rainey STAR Center and/or seek similar opportunities that foster economic development.
- 1.3.4. Policy: Pinellas County will provide for the financing of projects through its Industrial Revenue Bond program for the public purposes described in Chapter 159, Florida Statutes.
- 1.4. Objective: To achieve a business climate that promotes and supports local business retention, expansion and diversity.
- 1.4.1. Policy: Through its Economic Development Department, Pinellas County will continue programs that facilitate the retention and expansion of existing local businesses, particularly primary employers and locally headquartered companies.
- 1.4.2. Policy: Pinellas County will support and encourage a diversified local economy that is less susceptible to economic downturns and the fluctuations of a particular industry.
- 1.4.3. Policy: Pinellas County will encourage exports to outside of Pinellas County and internationally.
- 1.4.4. Policy: Pinellas County will support and encourage businesses and industries that are uniquely situated to benefit from the County's coastal location, such as marinas, the marine industry and other water dependent businesses.
- 1.4.5. Policy: Pinellas County will support and assist businesses in obtaining workforce training grants, and support local and regional job readiness initiatives, such as Centers of Excellence, Pinellas Technical Education

Centers (PTEC), and federal Job Corps, to ensure a qualified workforce exists to meet the needs of employers.

- 1.5. Objective: To support and promote a healthy environment for small businesses in Pinellas County through ongoing programs and assistance.
- 1.5.1. Policy: Pinellas County will continue training programs, education and classes for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- 1.5.2. Policy: Pinellas County will continue its Small Business Enterprise program that strengthens small business connections with County government.
- 1.5.3. Policy: Pinellas County will identify and evaluate other potential methods to assist small businesses, start-ups and entrepreneurs.
- 1.6. Objective: To provide a system of land development regulations that facilitate design flexibility, demonstrate a commitment to environmental improvement, and ensure provisions for quality redevelopment.
- 1.6.1. Policy: Pinellas County will research potential changes to land development regulations in an effort to enhance design flexibility in a way that promotes the local economy and targeted industries in particular.
- 1.6.2. Policy: Pinellas County will establish regulations that coordinate environmental enhancements with rebuilding and redevelopment efforts as opportunities arise.
- 1.6.3. Policy: Pinellas County will encourage the preservation, rehabilitation and re-use of structures with historic and/or architectural value.
- 1.6.4. Policy: Redevelopment and urban infill projects should be compatible with established neighborhoods and community character.
- 1.6.5. Policy: Pinellas County will, in an effort to achieve improved development plans, streetscapes and livability consistent with provisions in the Future Land Use and Quality Communities Element, promote development patterns that are compact, of mixed use, pedestrian-friendly, and provide options for housing in close proximity to employment centers to ease traffic congestion and reduce worker commutes.
- 1.6.6. Policy: Pinellas County will evaluate potential changes to land development regulations that streamline the development review process and create more of a redevelopment-oriented code that increases the viability of redevelopment opportunities and ensures that the County remains competitive with surrounding areas that have considerably more developable greenfield acreage.

- 1.7. Objective: To continue Pinellas County's strong history of tourism and recognition as one of Florida's prime tourist destinations.
- 1.7.1. Policy: Pinellas County will continue to promote and support tourism and tourist-related businesses, as tourism is one of the County's largest economic industries.
- 1.7.2. Policy: Pinellas County will continue to coordinate with and support the St. Petersburg-Clearwater Convention and Visitors Bureau in its mission to promote and market Pinellas County tourism.
- 1.7.3. Policy: Pinellas County will examine the feasibility of financial and regulatory incentives to offset the high cost of creating new tourist accommodations, and will encourage the renovation of the existing stock of units, particularly for properties with historic and/or unique architectural value.
- 1.7.4. Policy: Pinellas County will continue to implement the Gulf Boulevard Improvement Project, and seek additional opportunities and area enhancements to increase the attractiveness of the County.
- 1.7.5. Policy: Pinellas County will promote and support local parks, recreation and cultural amenities, environmental lands, entertainment establishments, and retail goods and service providers as important quality of life components and workforce and business attractors.
- 1.7.6. Policy: Pinellas County will seek to attract new high quality transient lodging development.
- 1.8. Objective: To promote a strong regional economy enhanced by cooperation and mutual support, as Pinellas County is not an isolated entity, but an integral component of the greater Tampa Bay region.
- 1.8.1. Policy: Pinellas County will foster and actively participate in intergovernmental coordination strategies and efforts toward regional economic growth.
- 1.8.2. Policy: As many Pinellas County citizens rely on jobs based in other area counties, and vice versa, the growth and retention of businesses on a regional level shall remain a top priority.
- 1.8.3. Policy: Pinellas County will continue coordination efforts with local municipalities and government agencies in regards to economic development strategies.
- 1.8.4. Policy: Pinellas County will continue coordination efforts with State and Federal programs, local school boards, colleges and universities in regards to worker training and ongoing education opportunities.

- 1.8.5. Policy: Pinellas County will actively engage the private sector regarding beneficial public/private partnerships related to economic development.
- 1.8.6. Policy: Pinellas County will continue its public education and marketing efforts regarding the benefits of quality redevelopment and growing its industrial base, and will continue to encourage citizen and business participation and involvement in the economic (re)development process.
- 1.8.7. Policy: As a basis for adjusting strategies and future decision-making, Pinellas County will continue to collect data and remain apprised of demographic, economic and business trends affecting the local and regional economies.
- 1.8.8. Policy: Pinellas County will remain committed to the economic viability of its unincorporated areas, and will develop specific strategies for each of these areas based on collected data, citizen input and community need.