

# INTRODUCTION

## Economic Development Element

Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes (F.S.) provides the statutory authority for local governments to establish an optional Economic Development Element. The Economic Development Element of the County will guide policy to attract economic prosperity, build a strong business environment, achieve long-term structural change and communicate the Clay County opportunity to targeted businesses and basic industries to support a viable local economy.

The Economic Development Element relates to the ability of Clay County to attract and retain basic industries which create higher-wage jobs. Basic industries are defined as the businesses that sell their goods or services outside the geographic boundaries of the local economy. Basic industries, as a result of their out-of-county earnings, create new incomes and additional spending power in the County's economy by importing new financial capital. Furthermore, certain basic industry sectors are prioritized or targeted for economic development business recruitment and retention activities because of their value or contributory nature to the local economy in creating higher skilled, higher wage jobs. Current examples of target/key industries include manufacturing facilities; professional, scientific and technical services such as healthcare and life sciences, finance and insurance services, logistics and distribution, information technology, aviation and defense; and, administrative and business support services as well as corporate headquarters. The list of statewide target industries is maintained by Enterprise Florida, Inc. The list of local/regional target industries is maintained by the Clay County Economic Development Corporation; subsequently, the target/key industries listed are periodically updated and are subject to change.

The County has the responsibility to support and accommodate projected economic development activities while serving the public interest. The County has a key role in guiding land use and infrastructure which supports economic development including transportation, water and sewer, energy resources (i.e., electric and gas); telecommunications, environmental conservation, education, investment incentives, and coordination of economic development efforts.

The Clay County Economic Development Corporation (Clay EDC) performs economic development activities, and has a Contract for Services with the Clay County Board of County Commissioners. The purpose of implementing an economic

development program is the creation of quality jobs through the development of a favorable business climate with the overall goal to diversify the economy within Clay County. The Clay EDC has an agreement with the Clay County Board of Commissioners to fund participation in JAX USA, the Regional Economic Development Partnership, which markets Northeast Florida nationally and internationally to new business opportunities.

The Clay County Development Authority (the “Authority”) was created by a special act of the state legislature in 1957 to perform economic development activities. The Authority supports economic development through its ability to issue Industrial Revenue Bonds to assist in the expansion of industrial facilities to support production capacity that promotes quality job growth.

The Clay EDC oversees the completion of studies which contain assessments of the County’s strengths, opportunities, and shortcomings, and also include detailed information on harnessing those strengths and opportunities to support the County’s strategies for economic development activities.

This Element is intended to serve as a broad decision-making guide to direct the physical planning, programming, infrastructure and financial resources to support countywide economic development efforts. The Goal, Objectives and Policies established within this Element reflect the County’s concerns regarding Economic Development, including: the continued diversification of the economy; the offering of County-based incentives as part of a strategy to attract and retain basic industries to the area; that land should be allocated for economic growth; and, that appropriate infrastructure should be available for economic growth.

This Element has been designed to meet the requirements of the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act and the expectations of the citizens and officials of Clay County.

The Economic Development Element contains two (2) Goals and eight (8) Objective Areas. The Objective Areas are:

1. Coordinated Economic Development Strategy
2. Allocation of Land Uses supporting Employment Generation
3. New and Existing Businesses and Industries
4. Infrastructure
5. Budgetary Resources and Incentives
6. Development Regulations
7. Workforce Development
8. Attracting Entrepreneurs and Millennials

**EDE GOAL 1** Clay County will achieve and maintain a diversified and growing economy by providing a positive business climate that assures maximum employment opportunities while maintaining the quality of life and quality of the environment.

**EDE OBJ 1.1** Clay County shall create a local economic development environment through a coordinated strategy that is conducive to the creation and growth of new businesses and the expansion of existing businesses.

**EDE POLICY 1.1.1**

Clay County shall partner with private sector agencies in conducting a coordinated economic development program.

**EDE POLICY 1.1.2**

Clay County shall maintain public-private partnerships through its continued support of the Clay County Economic Development Corporation in an effort to provide a sufficient and stable base for business, governmental, and financial support for the County's economic development efforts.

**EDE POLICY 1.1.3**

Clay County shall work with the Clay County Economic Development Corporation and encourage active development and implementation of programs that promote a diversified economy for Clay County through the following: attraction and retention of targeted/key businesses and basic industries, creation of public private partnerships, and the education of the community on the value of economic development.

**EDE POLICY 1.1.4**

Clay County shall pursue an integrated approach to economic development that includes tourism, arts and cultural resources, natural resources, education, business, industry and government.

**EDE OBJ 1.2** Clay County shall ensure an adequate supply of land uses that support a viable economy and allow for employment generation such as office and industrial uses on the *Future Land Use Map* (FLUM).

**EDE POLICY 1.2.1**

Clay County shall prioritize the land use planning of sites meeting the locational requirements of identified targeted/key industries and basic industries uses in appropriate and compatible locations and recognize this

priority during the review of plan amendments, rezoning requests, site plan approvals and permitting processes.

**EDE POLICY 1.2.2**

Clay County shall support employment generating land uses in order to maintain a diverse and fiscally sustainable property tax base.

**EDE POLICY 1.2.3**

Clay County shall support and encourage planned mixed or multi-use employment centers that may include a functional mix of residential, commercial, office and industrial land uses. The combination of residential and commercial shall be less than 30 percent of the entire floor areas within the designated land uses for employment generation.

**EDE POLICY 1.2.4**

The County shall encourage office and/or industrial infill and redevelopment activities by establishing strategies, such as mixed-use and increased intensities, as well as support for brownfields redevelopment.

**EDE POLICY 1.2.5**

Clay County shall work with its partners to ensure the First Coast Expressway is strategically incorporated into the County's Future Land Use planning framework to ensure the infrastructure investment is maximized to support long-term transportation and economic development efforts.

**EDE OBJ 1.3** **Clay County shall promote and encourage the recruitment of new industry as well as the expansion and retention of existing industries that engage in basic and/or target/key industry activities which export their goods or services outside the geographic boundaries of the local economy and help to diversify the County's economic base.**

**EDE POLICY 1.3.1**

Clay County shall support efforts to formulate an economic development plan to assist in the attraction and location of targeted/key businesses and basic industries to facilitate the diversification of the County's economic base.

**EDE POLICY 1.3.2**

Clay County shall evaluate and propose or revise as necessary, Comprehensive Plan policies to create land use for the location of targeted/key businesses and basic industries to expand the economic capacity of the County.

**EDE POLICY 1.3.3**

Clay County shall promote economic diversity and growth by creating an environment which encourages entrepreneurs to engage in basic business and target/key industry activities.

**EDE POLICY 1.3.4**

Clay County shall provide the opportunity for expansion of existing business and industry and the location of new business and industry by taking action to improve public service, coordination, and regulatory components that increase the County's competitive position in the marketplace.

**EDE POLICY 1.3.5**

Clay County shall collaborate with the appropriate public and private organizations to implement programs and maintain an environment conducive to business recruitment and retention including business development incentives, transportation resources, utilities such as the extension of sewer and water facilities, labor supply, workforce training, available land and buildings, business support services, local government cooperation and the quantity and quality of educational, recreational and community services.

**EDE OBJ 1.4** Clay County shall enhance business development opportunities by ensuring that Clay County develops and maintains a comprehensive, long-range infrastructure program as a key critical component of sustaining current economic growth as well as attracting future economic growth.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.1**

Clay County shall support and encourage the expansion and development of public services and infrastructure, such as transportation, utilities, and stormwater facilities that complement economic development and business diversification.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.2**

Clay County shall endeavor to accommodate an appropriate balance of infrastructure investment that supports new and existing office and industrial land uses within the Capital Improvement Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.3**

Clay County shall coordinate future growth areas with the Clay County Utility Authority and/or municipal government expansion areas to encourage the expansion of existing and/or development of new businesses and industries.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.4**

Clay County shall encourage the location of businesses and industries in areas with adequate infrastructure; in areas scheduled for future infrastructure improvements to expand existing capacity as identified in the Capital Improvement Element; or in areas to be provided with the required infrastructure as identified in binding development agreements.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.5**

Clay County shall coordinate and align the County's Capital Improvements Program and the adopted five-year schedule within the Capital Improvements Element with other infrastructure providers to ensure that infrastructure (such as transportation, sewer and water facilities) is available at the time new economic development opportunities present themselves.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.6**

Clay County shall support programs designed to ensure the availability of infrastructure needed for advanced telecommunications and high technology targeted business opportunities.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.7**

Clay County shall encourage utility providers to expand and extend public water and sewer facilities in a timely manner to support county wide economic development objectives and to facilitate the expedient processing of requests for service in projected growth areas.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.8**

The County shall encourage the expansion of access to broadband internet technology to attract new people and businesses, but also inspire innovation from existing residents and businesses which ultimately creates high quality jobs, supports telecommuting and economic development opportunities.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.9**

The County shall support efforts to maintain, expand and upgrade the community's information technology infrastructure throughout the planning horizon.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.10**

The County shall seek assistance from Federal or State programs that are designed to address the digital divide and that increases access to information technology, especially within minority, low income, disabled, rural, and aging communities by supporting new internet infrastructure.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.11**

The County shall require new residential developments to provide access to high speed internet.

**EDE POLICY 1.4.12**

Priority for County economic development incentives shall be given to any private sector initiative for construction of internet infrastructure that improves the reliability and/or speed of existing internet service.

**EDE OBJ 1.5    The County shall support availability and access of public and private financial resources to maintain a sustainable source of support for economic development activities.**

**EDE POLICY 1.5.1**

Clay County shall maintain dedicated funding for countywide economic development programs which utilize a range of public revenues, grants and private sector contributions.

**EDE POLICY 1.5.2**

Clay County shall support incentive programs that will invest in retaining and creating high wage job opportunities and value-added businesses.

**EDE POLICY 1.5.3**

Clay County shall encourage and support local revitalization efforts to leverage private investment activities through public investment in community development and infrastructure improvements.

**EDE POLICY 1.5.4**

Clay County shall support the use of development agreements as a mechanism to fund infrastructure and improvements and expansion of existing facilities.

**EDE POLICY 1.5.5**

Clay County shall pursue grants and other programs available to expand infrastructure for economic development.

**EDE POLICY 1.5.6**

Clay County shall encourage the use of innovative methods of financing for infrastructure and services, leveraging resources wherever possible, in order to minimize increases in the current and future tax burden.

**EDE POLICY 1.5.7**

Clay County shall investigate ways to implement a strategy to provide financial or other incentives to assist in the expansion of business and industry, which may include the mitigation and/or delay of impact fees or similar development costs for qualifying targeted/key businesses and basic industries.

**EDE OBJ 1.6** **Clay County shall ensure County policies and regulations are consistent with and promote economic development objectives, develop public understanding and support for the economy and its connection to a sustained quality of life, and align community development issues with economic efforts.**

**EDE POLICY 1.6.1**

Clay County shall endeavor to streamline the review and permitting process for targeted/key businesses and basic industries and develop clearly defined development guidelines that will promote the accomplishment of the goal, objectives and policies of this Element.

**EDE POLICY 1.6.2**

Clay County shall employ the use of priority review and permitting procedures, identify a liaison to assist or other internal processes that may be necessary to expedite site review, permitting, concurrency, and inspection of targeted/key businesses and basic industries and the expansion/relocation of existing industries.

**EDE POLICY 1.6.3**

Clay County shall use pre-application conferences and preparation and distribution of guides, handouts, and other information on regulatory and permitting procedures affecting economic development to streamline and expedite the application review and permitting process.

**EDE POLICY 1.6.4**

Clay County shall evaluate and incorporate Land Development Regulations that support the objectives of this Element.

**EDE POLICY 1.6.5**

Clay County shall avoid duplicating permits, inspections, or functions that overlap state and/or federal permits, inspections or functions. This policy shall not preclude the adoption of County regulations more stringent than state or federal regulations.

**EDE GOAL 2**

**Partner in a community-wide effort focused on attracting, developing and retaining 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce to support targeted/key industries and entrepreneurship.**

**EDE OBJ 2.1**

**Support efforts to develop a highly skilled and globally-competitive workforce to meet the needs of employers in Clay County.**

**EDE POLICY 2.1.1**

Champion the development of education curricula, training facilities and programs that increase appropriately credentialed employees.

**EDE POLICY 2.1.2**

Encourage the clustering or co-locating of high schools, vocational schools and colleges or universities near employment centers to better connect students with potential employment opportunities.

**EDE OBJ 2.2**

**Support practices that encourage the attraction and development of a workforce that is younger, entrepreneurial and diverse.**

**EDE POLICY 2.2.1**

Support the implementation of regulations that focus on the development of diverse housing options, multi-modal transportation, employment centers with enhanced social amenities that support placemaking in the County.

**EDE POLICY 2.2.2**

Expand housing options that support the local workforce by planning new urban residential development near employment centers.

**EDE POLICY 2.2.3**

Focus on competing for millennials by supporting urban and neighborhood infill development and redevelopment including the adaptive reuse of buildings.

**EDE POLICY 2.2.4**

Encourage co-work spaces and incubator accelerators to attract business start-ups and entrepreneurs to Clay County.

## Definitions

*Millennials* - a person who was born in the 1980s or 1990s.