



Economic Potential Evaluation of the Future of Hillsborough County Comprehensive Plan

Market Sensitivity/Flexibility Policy Strategy
Recommendations

FINAL
9/7/2011



Market Sensitivity/Flexibility Policy Strategy Recommendations

The following is part of a larger effort on behalf of the Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission to evaluate the economic potential of Hillsborough County and its cities' Comprehensive Plans. The current County Comprehensive Plan does not directly address economic development (vis-à-vis the promotion of economic prosperity). The orientation of the Plan is growth management which may be perceived as a drawback from a traditional economic development perspective. Therefore, the following takes a somewhat different approach to the subject matter and addresses a more proactive approach as to how the comprehensive plan can become a tool for economic development. In order to reframe this perspective of growth management to one promoting economic prosperity, a summary overview of economic development and its process is provided.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

According to the Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC)¹, economic development is:

“The process of improving the economic health of a city, region or the state by bringing together its assets, resources and political action into a strategy to bring wealth and prosperity to that area.”

Economic development is fundamentally about enhancing the factors of productive capacity – land, labor, capital, and technology – of a national, state, or local economy. By using its resources and powers to reduce the risks and costs which could prohibit investment, the public sector often has been responsible for setting the stage for employment-generating investment by the private sector.

The public sector generally seeks to increase incomes, the number of jobs, and the productivity of resources in counties, cities, and neighborhoods. To support economic development and growth, its tools and strategies have often been effective in enhancing a community's:

- labor force (workforce preparation, accessibility, cost);
- infrastructure (accessibility, capacity, and service of basic utilities, as well as transportation and telecommunications);
- business and community facilities (access, capacity, and service to business incubators, industrial/technology/science parks);
- schools/community colleges/universities, sports/tourist facilities;
- environment (physical, psychological, cultural, and entrepreneurial);
- economic structure (composition); and
- institutional capacity (leadership, knowledge, skills).

However, there can be trade-offs between economic development's goals of job creation and wealth generation. Increasing productivity, for instance, may eliminate some types of jobs in the short-run. Examples include:

¹ The Florida Economic Development Council is a private organization whose members are leading public and private sector economic development professionals.

- UPS added computerized labels on packages to better organize truck loading based on delivery sequence and to employ fewer loaders.
- Pharmaceutical giant GlaxoSmithKline combined staff for information technology, finance and other support functions that used to be replicated in each business unit.
- Physicians now enter orders for medicines or X-rays on computers instead of handing them off to data-entry clerks, leading to fewer errors and jobs.

WHY PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT?

Again, according to the FEDC, the public sector is involved in economic development in order to:

- increase wealth and prosperity for the state, communities, and citizens;
- ensure job opportunities for all of its citizens;
- expand the tax base for local government to better serve the citizens;
- improve the quality of life of its citizens by increasing the standard of living; and
- ensure a bright economic future for the area.

As noted by the FEDC, wealth generation occurs when products and services are exported outside of jurisdictional boundaries and money is imported in return (this is referred to as basic industries). When companies have wages above the local or state average, the standard of living is raised. Local retail and service jobs, although needed, circulate money within the community but do not create wealth for the immediate area unless serving visitors to the community (these are referred to as non-basic industries).

Without an economic development program, the community would grow but not always in the way desired. Without a proactive approach to economic development, growth may result in the County and its cities having lower waged, service-oriented jobs and a lower standard of living. By targeting and attracting firms that produce high-wage, high-value jobs, which other communities compete for, prosperity is increased and the standard of living is raised.

By encouraging high levels of capital investment along with high-wage jobs, the tax base is expanded, thereby providing more dollars for local and state governments to provide high-quality services. This new tax base will continue to provide a strong return, especially at the local level, for many decades.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PUBLIC SECTOR POLICY

Economic development, throughout the United States and definitely now in Florida, has become a major public policy issue. At the state or national level economic development is necessary for sustaining competitiveness and raising overall productivity and incomes. At the local level, additional development can help maintain a high level of employment and job quality for all citizens. Lastly, and increasingly important due to Florida Growth Management Legislation, economic development can provide the earnings needed to make further investments in education, government services, amenities, infrastructure, and quality of life.

Economic development activities and outcomes are shaped by public policies. Funding for infrastructure, tax and regulatory policies, new workforce training grants, and countless other examples influence the environment for investment and commerce. Called "business climate," the term refers to the extent to

which the political and policy environments of a particular locality, compared with other jurisdictions, are seen to be supportive or burdensome to businesses.

The business climate is affected by both major cost factors (e.g., land, labor, taxes, regulations) and non-cost factors (e.g. quality of life, attitudes toward business). Government has a big impact on business climate (and hence, economic development practice), for it is that combination of services provided by the public sector, such as education, infrastructure, taxation, and regulation, which creates the context within which companies operate. Moreover, government delivers other direct programs to companies in the form of grants, low interest loans, debt insurance mechanisms, and business advisory services.

COMPETITIVENESS

Competitiveness involves the advantages of an area, that are inherent (labor force, natural resources, geographical location) and those that are created (tax structures, worker training efforts, capital access funds, and infrastructure). Most of what goes into a business location decision are economic and cost factors that are beyond the reach of public policy. Understanding and addressing business perceptions and real concerns, however, may affect marginal decisions. These decisions may be particularly important in the case of rapidly expanding businesses, and thus are relevant to comprehensive planning for economic development in terms of facilitating permit-ready, marketable sites.

Site Selection Process

The process of locating a site for a new company or expansion is a complex process. Because the process usually involves research regarding hundreds of possible sites, the initial phases of the site search is inherently negative; e.g. there are usually hundreds of areas that could potentially accommodate the needs of a relocating or expanding company. Therefore, one of the first steps is to review the specific corporate needs and site selection factors unique to the company's requirements and discard as many sites as possible in order to narrow the process to 3 to 5 prospective areas (cities/regions) that have the highest rankings.

Site Selection Factors

Area Development is an economic development oriented magazine that annually surveys corporate real estate/facility managers and private site selectors as to the major factors being considered in selecting new sites. Corporate real estate managers tend to be most involved in smaller site selections and as well as manufacturing while site selectors are more involved in headquarter and technology oriented projects. The analysis of these factors can assist planners in understanding the needs of industry and can be helpful in developing comprehensive plans and land development regulations.

As shown below, there are some differences in the ranking of factors between the two groups but consistency when viewed in terms of major site factors. Based on the 2010 survey corporate real estate managers felt that highway accessibility was the single highest factor while site selectors had labor costs and incentives as the highest ranking site location factor. Corporate tax rate and shipping costs were deemed very important by corporate real estate manager, but not site locators; while energy availability and proximity to major markets were highly ranked by site selectors but not corporate real estate managers.

There have been some subtle changes by industry since the 2005 survey. Corporate real estate weights tax exemptions and occupancy/construction costs higher today than in 2005; while site selectors did not rank energy availability or occupancy costs as very important in 2005.

While quality of life factors are usually only important in the final stages of site selection, it is interesting to note the importance of crime by both corporate real estate managers and site selectors as is the importance of health care, housing costs and availability, and the ratings of public schools. Corporate real estate managers rank healthcare facilities high while site selectors rank colleges in the area as high.

Figure 1: Areawide Site Selection Factors, 2010-2005



Area Development 2010 vs. 2005 Site Selector Factors/Rankings

Corporate Survey	2010	2005	Site Selector Survey	2010	2005
1. Highway Accessibility	97.3	91.4	1. Labor Costs	96.8	93.8
2. Labor Costs	91.0	87.9	1. State and Local Incentives	96.8	95.9
3. Tax Exemptions	90.9	83.6	3. Highway Accessibility	95.8	94.0
4. Occupancy/Construction costs	89.8	83.7	4. Availability of Skilled Labor	92.6	89.6
5. State and Local Incentives	89.3	86.0	5. Energy Availability/Costs	91.5	NA
6. Corporate Tax Rate	86.3	85.0	6. Proximity to Major Markets	90.5	93.8
7. Availability of Skilled Labor	85.9	85.7	7. Tax Exemptions	88.4	86.0
8. Shipping Costs	84.0	NA	8. Occupancy/Construction costs	88.3	NA
25.Railroad Service	36.0	28.9	25.Rail Service	46.8	26.0
Quality of Life Factors			Quality of Life Factors		
1. Low Crime Rate	84.6	67.8	1. Low Crime Rate	75.0	70.8
2. Healthcare Facilities	72.2	62.1	2. Colleges in Area	66.3	60.4
3. Housing Costs	68.4	60.0	3. Housing Costs	65.6	65.9
4. Housing Availability	66.4	49.3	4. Ratings of Public Schools	65.2	73.0
5. Ratings of Public Schools	61.2	56.8	5. Healthcare Facilities	63.5	67.3
6. Climate	56.3	46.5	6. Housing Availability	60.6	68.1

Source: www.areadevelopment.com

Site Specific Site Selection Parameters

Once the highest ranking areas have been identified then a specific site due diligence is performed to determine the best sites within these high ranking areas. This complex evaluation entails detailed analysis of the unique site and corporate parameters/factors being analyzed. Again, knowledge of these site attributes can assist planners to better plan for economic growth by understanding the needs of industry. Short lists of the types of site attributes that are analyzed include:

Typical Checklist of Site Attributes

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality • Endangered Species • Groundwater • Hazardous Materials • Wetlands <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Transportation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air • Rail • Roads • Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Utilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electricity • Gas • Other Fuels • Water/Sewer <input type="checkbox"/> Applicable Codes/Permits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal • State • Local <input type="checkbox"/> Site Slope/Topography <input type="checkbox"/> Soil Conditions/Water Table |
|--|--|

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

At the beginning stages for site selection, business climate and regionalization are very important. As shown in the three case studies of Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Austin, Texas; and Jacksonville, Florida; successful economic development starts with two important features. First, there is a shared commitment to economic development and second, the approach is regional. Most successful areas realize that just to get into the game requires a regional pooling of assets and second in this highly competitive marketplace there needs to be a clear pro-business public sector approach to development.

Costs have always been a critical issue in choosing a facility location. While costs have always been an overriding factor, it is critical to know that they are usually factor in later in the site selection process. Comparison with existing costs or a projected budget determines whether a new location search should take place or whether relocation of an existing facility can be justified. Once a search for candidate locations begins, however, it is important to insure that all project criteria are satisfied before a total cost comparison is undertaken. Relative costs for individual key elements can, of course, be included among the factors used to screen for and select candidates. For example, salary indexes or comparative power rates or freight cost differentials might be important in choosing potentially acceptable locations for specific projects. Finally, after a "short list" is developed (up to five locations/economic development organizations as indicated by 92 percent of the survey respondents), the low-cost place should emerge as the best alternative, since presumably all finalist candidate locations can meet operating objectives and satisfy location criteria.

WHERE DOES COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FIT IT?

A key component of the struggle for prosperity in American metropolitan areas is development patterns, which define everything from density to the socioeconomic make up of residents.

Development patterns are partly a consequence of decisions by local governments—often with very little coordination, oversight, or even guidance from state or regional entities—about the physical character of new growth. Among the most important of these decisions is how to regulate land; a prerogative that local governments guard jealously.²

As mentioned, economic development is an increasingly national, competitive process. Because of Florida's rapid growth, since the 1960s up until the most recent recession, the State initiated strong growth management legislation tailored to manage growth's impacts on the State and local governments. Since the recession, Florida has modified its overall approach to growth management in an effort to be more effective in creating jobs in the State. As shown below, the Brookings Institute reviewed 50 MSAs and characterized the types land use regulations used into four (4) major groupings:

Traditional. *“Traditional” is defined as “laws that govern land use planning have not been revised significantly since the promulgation of the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act and the Standard City Planning Enabling Act of the 1920s. Planning and zoning remains mostly voluntary, few local governments engage in innovative land-use regulation, and state review of local plans is mostly absent”.*

Wild, Wild Texas. *Brookings Institute felt the Texas metropolitan areas form a regulatory order all their own. They have in common an unparalleled openness to growth and development. It all starts with zoning. Texas counties are not allowed to adopt zoning, nor can they adopt binding comprehensive plans. Cities are authorized to zone unincorporated land within specified distances of their city limits (up to five miles for the largest cities), but any land outside that extraterritorial jurisdiction is regulated only by minimal subdivision regulation.*

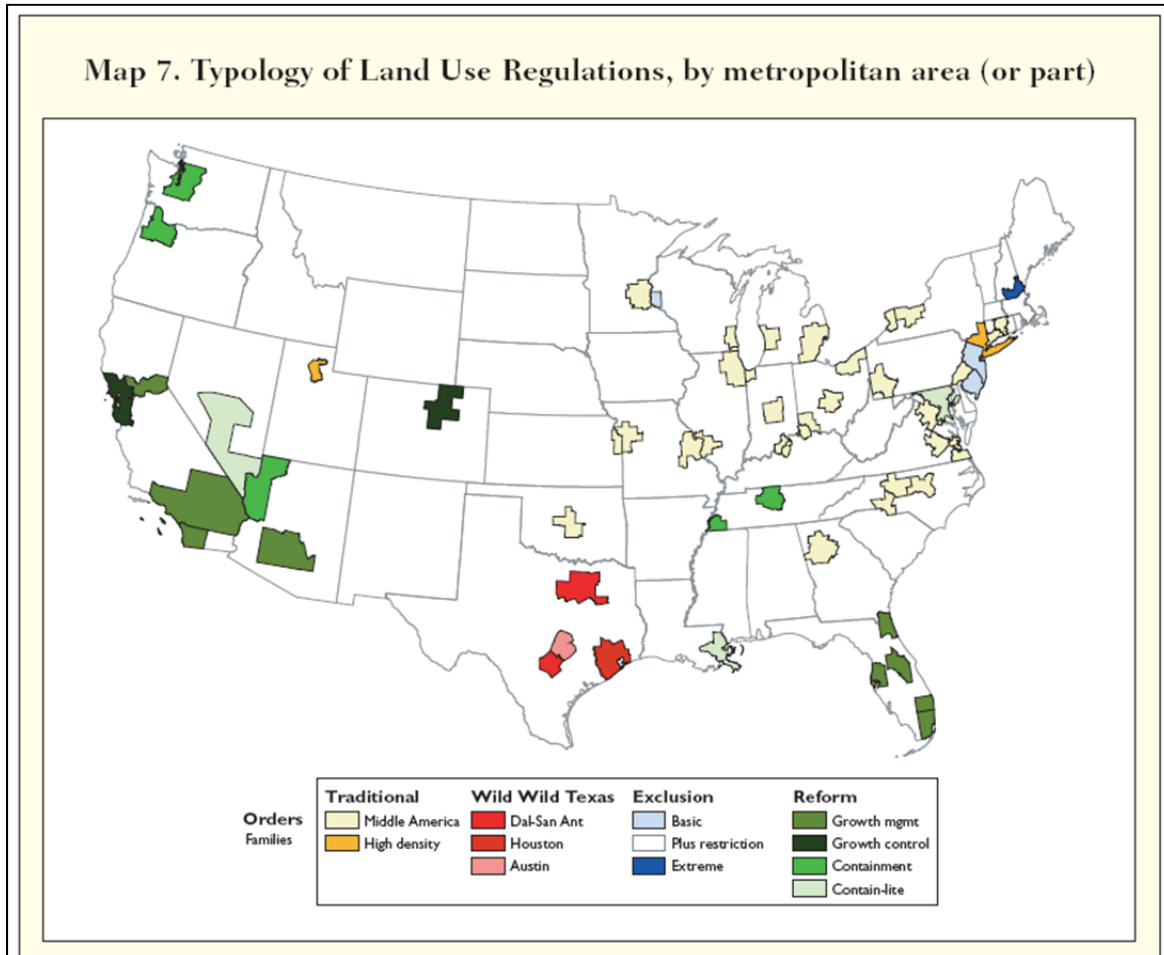
Exclusion. *Exclusion MSAs are noted for their extensive use of measures that restrict construction usually multi-family housing. They also share a comparatively low use of tools to require that development “pay its own way.”*

Reform. *Reformed areas use tools beyond comprehensive plans, zoning, and subdivision regulation to manage and control land use. Growth Management designation indicates areas that have high use of containment policies and infrastructure management.*

Hillsborough County is defined as a “Reform” County.

² Rolf Pendall, Robert Puentes, and Jonathan Martin, *From Traditional to Reformed: A Review of the Land Use Regulations in the Nation's 50 largest Metropolitan Areas*, Brookings Institute, August 2006.

Figure 2: Typology of Land Use Regulations



Source: Brookings Institute, Traditional to Reformed: a Review of the land use regulations in the largest 50 MSAs, August 2006

Comprehensive Planning

The comprehensive plan sets forth the community’s vision of the future and as such is one of the key elements in defining the community’s business climate. It is now common for comprehensive plans to include an economic development element; especially if there is not a clear and unified vision for the need for economic development. By its inclusion, there is implied a coordination between the goals, objectives and policies of the economic development element with the other elements; most notably, future land use, infrastructure, transportation, capital improvement elements and in the case of Florida, intergovernmental coordination elements. As noted by San Diego’s Comprehensive Plan

“Companies increasingly look beyond their walls for resources and relationships to help them compete. Companies require access to highly skilled people and international markets, advanced telecommunication capacity, information networks, and competitively priced and reliable resources like energy and water, to be successful. This “regional infrastructure” must be quality-oriented in terms of customer satisfaction, cycle-time reduction, and as flexible as

the companies it supports. Flexible, supportive public policies and world class – human and physical – infrastructure provided in a timely fashion will provide local companies with the opportunity to compete effectively in the national and global market-place”.³

RECOMMENDED POLICY STRATEGIES

Tampa and its MSA have long been acknowledged as a growth center. In 1982, John Naisbitt wrote the bestselling book “Megatrends” wherein he picked Tampa as one of a selective few Southern ‘Mega Cities. Because of the City’s and Florida’s strong growth rate over 1970-2000 decades, the existing County comprehensive plan was written as a “managed growth” document and is not oriented toward economic development. While specific objectives and policies could be rewritten to more favorability emphasize economic development, it nonetheless would still not be an economic development driven document. The City of Tampa’s Comprehensive Plan has an economic element (Chapter 8), and while Plant City does not have an economic element, economic development themes run throughout its Plan.

It is recommended that select elements of the County’s comprehensive plan be amended with greater focus on overall economic prosperity. This can be partly accomplished by creating an economic development element and linking all elements including intergovernmental coordination; as economic development is regional in nature.⁴ While having a strong marketing partner in the Tampa Bay Partnership,⁵ the Tampa Bay area has not demonstrated a strong working relationship between local governments and economic development organizations (EDOs) within the Tampa Bay Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) which comprises Hillsborough, Pinellas, Polk and Hernando counties, unlike those found in communities with successful economic development efforts. It is recommended that a more MSA driven EDO be formed to implement policies at the ground level. This needs to be considered in the rewrite of the **Intergovernmental Coordination Element**.

Another specific issue, from an economic development perspective, is the need for regulatory measures to be flexible and permits obtainable in a reasonable timeframe. Expedited permitting is an economic development tool used by communities throughout the country as a means to providing more certainty in obtaining permits in a timely fashion. A recent article suggests that businesses are working on a compressed timeframe, wanting to be up and running in as little as six-months.⁶

In reviewing the existing Comprehensive Plan only a few of the elements have direct impact on economic development: Future Land Use and to a lesser degree; Transportation, Infrastructure, Capital Improvement, Housing and Broadband/Electricity (which are not standalone elements).

Future Land Use Element

One of the prime economic development parameters is the “availability” of land and/or facilities of sufficient size and “affordability” at the right location. The following is a review of various planning tools that being used to increase flexibility to development process. Their applicability is oriented to the

³ San Diego, REPS, Volume 1, page 31

⁴ San Diego’s 2008 Comprehensive Plan is a good example.

⁵ The Tampa Bay Partnership represents an artificial eight county region (Sarasota, Manatee, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Polk, Pasco, Hernando and Citrus counties) that comprise three separate MSAs. A MSA is considered an individual economic and demographic region.

⁶ Stephanie Porter-Nichols, *New role of consultants changes economic development*, July 15, 2011

Future Land Use Element' but have secondary linkages to transportation, infrastructure, livable communities and housing.

Types of Flexible Regulations Used in Planning/LDRs

*Observe always that everything is the result of change, and get used to thinking that there is nothing Nature loves so well as to change existing forms and make new ones of them. **Marcus Aurelius**, emperor of Rome (121-180 AD)*

Job creation like all other things is subject to constant change: technology, site requirements, costs, etc. Jobs and their respective companies have different characteristics requiring different building types, land requirements, etc., There is no "one size fits all" planning parameter that addresses comprehensive planning, or land development regulations. Change is constant; therefore in long ranging planning, the need for flexibility is critical. The following land use tools are recommended for policy consideration:

Overlay Zones⁷

An overlay district is created by identifying a development area and adopting new provisions that apply in that area in addition to the provisions of the zoning ordinance; for example, a development area overlay district along a transportation corridor which provides for greater and more cost-effective development patterns. The provision of an overlay district can be more expansive than those contained in the zoning district.

The purpose is to realize development objectives without unduly disturbing the expectations created by the existing zoning ordinance. The existing zoning provisions may properly regulate the relevant district, in general, but more specific and targeted provisions may be needed to accomplish pressing land use objectives such as job creation.

Floating Zones⁸

Floating Zoning is a zoning tool which involves the creation of zoning districts that define a use, such as an office, research laboratory, reuse of a vacant shopping center, a business park or employment generator in general. The floating zone is a district which does not have any specific geographic relationship at the time of adoption and can only be used in conjunction with a Master Plan. The floating zone can be affixed to a qualifying parcel of land, either upon the application of the parcel's owner or upon the initiative of the local legislative body. Upon approval, the parcel is rezoned to reflect the new use and becomes a small zoning district; its development is governed by the use, dimensional and other provisions of the floating zone ordinance.

The purpose of adding one or more floating zones to a community's zoning ordinance is to add flexibility to that ordinance, enabling it to accommodate new land uses. As a community's needs change, uses that are not readily accommodated by the adopted zoning ordinance may be desired by local leaders. These uses may be unique and have a relatively significant, but manageable impact on their surroundings. Local officials may be unclear as to where such uses should best be accommodated and where developers would prefer to locate them to insure that they are successful economically. Examples include communities that may want to create an office park but not want to limit the location of such a

⁷ Overlay Zoning, Matt Bavoso and Timothy Jones, Land Use Law Center, 1996

⁸ Floating Zones, Michael Murphy and Joseph Stinson, Land Use Law Center, 1996

facility to give developers ample opportunity to find a site that is most suited to current market needs. Since office parks can be buffered, serviced and designed to fit into a variety of contexts, the municipality may be comfortable with the floating zone mechanism to enhance the community's chances of attracting private capital for such developments, without unduly impacting adjacent properties.

Performance Zoning⁹

"Performance zoning" is an alternative to traditional land use zoning. Whereas traditional land use zoning specifies what uses can be applied to land within specified districts, performance zoning specifies the intensity of land use that is acceptable. The advantages to the performance zoning approach is that it usually requires less administrative involvement, since variances, appeals and re-zonings are not necessary. It also gives more flexibility both to the municipality and to the developer, allowing more of a range of land uses, as long as their impact is not negative. This allows for more innovation and the incorporation of new technologies that may not be accommodated in more traditional zoning ordinances. That said performance zoning has its own challenges. In traditional ordinances, land uses are listed as absolutes--either allowed or not allowed. Under performance zoning uses are determined through sometimes confusing calculations of a variety of factors. This requires local zoning administrators to be more adept at making appropriate and fair determinations based on sometimes subjective criteria, and can lead to more legal challenges.

Flexible Zoning

Flexible zoning allows for flexible development that makes sense to developers but also protects residents nearby." The underlying zoning beneath the overlays would remain and developers could still build according to those zoning regulations by right. Some literature classifies overlay and floating overlays as types of flexible zoning. However, for this study we are referring to flexible or flex zoning for industrial use. Flex zoning would not restrict industrial uses are to only industrial zones, but rather would stipulate that some of these uses could locate in other zoning districts, provided certain thresholds related to externalities such as noise, odor, and waste generation are met. The flexibility would allow lighter industries such as biotechnology, distribution, and assembly operations to locate in commercial areas while preserving industrially zoned land solely for those production activities with more noxious externalities.¹⁰

Form Based Zoning

Form Based Zoning is a method of land use regulation characterized by 1) emphasis on form regulations (building size, location, appearance) and 2) prescriptive rules (what a community does want to see built) while still providing flexibility. Form based zoning focuses on established bulk regulations (rather than use) to solve the Euclidian "problem" of use separation. Form codes are designed to provide more flexibility than conventional codes to promote development in largely built out communities. These codes work well in established communities because they effectively define and codify a neighborhood's existing characteristics or they can implement new building types when a radical change is desired.

⁹ "Performance-Based Zoning Model." <http://www.steppingstones.ca/library/pbzone.htm>, 29 Sept. 1998.

¹⁰ For more information see Palm Beach County Light Industrial Land Use White Paper, 2008

Changing Industrial Designation

Lastly, the County and its municipalities may wish re-consider the term “industrial” and “manufacturing”. Both terms, as they are perceived in Florida, tend to evoke a strong negative connotation of “dirty smoke stack” types of business; which is not the case of today’s industry. We recommend that only one industrial district (land use and LDR) be used and only for “real smoke stack industries” if they in fact exist in the region. Industrial or Manufacturing districts using the term “light” might be called commercial, business park, job creating, etc. as manufacturing and industrial today resemble office or business parks and use flex space.

Transportation Element

Accessibility to major highways has always been a major transportation parameter. Access to Tampa’s airports, seaport and rail, are also critical to those business types that use those types of transportation modes. From a planning perspective these transportation modes are critical yet funding for them needs to take into account the impact of impact and/or mobility fees can have on the affordability of land compared to prices in surrounding and/or competitive sites. Transportation capital improvements involve significant cost and improvements may increase land costs. Using incentives to reduce costs, including reducing mobility fees, should be considered in locations where economic development is desired and most suited. Recent changes to Florida’s transportation concurrency requirements can increase Hillsborough’s ability to design strategies to provide affordable transportation facilities. Based on other successful cities of similar size the continued effort to achieve Countywide, if not MSA wide rapid transit should be a top priority especially with the prospect of significant increases in gasoline prices.

Electricity and Broadband (Not Standalone Element)

The availability and affordability of energy is becoming increasingly important in location studies. Perhaps even more important is the availability of high speed broadband with redundancies. This is particularly important as one moves away from the urban areas of the County. Significant and redundant broadband and large electrical capacity at affordable rates should be considered as potential policies.

Utilities (Potable Water/Sanitary Sewer Element)

For the Tampa Bay area the competitive pricing of utilities rather than availability will be a future issue. For those businesses that have a high demand for these services, pricing will be an important issue.

Capital Improvement (Potable Water, Sanitary Sewer, Solid Waste and Storm Water Elements)

With the State of Florida backing off some of the concurrency requirements, it is important to find creative strategies to fund the necessary capital improvement requirements yet remain having competitive priced land and facilities. For example, while rapid transit incurs significant costs, the development of TOD couple with location efficient mortgages now being promoted by EPA/HUD could lower future mixed use rents and/or prices.

Policies should be developed to assure that needed capital improvements are available to selected job creating land uses.

Housing Element

Affordable housing is important to economic development. The existing element needs to be amended to reflect the changes that have occurred to the County's housing stock since the "Real Estate Bust". The element is based on 2000 Census data. The housing market is now heavily impacted by foreclosures, the impact that foreclosures have on household, and its impact on future home ownership versus rentals.

Livable Communities Element

The Livable Communities Element lists 21 community plans most of which do not reference economic development as a goal and those that do provide few details or strategies to achieve economic prosperity. Most of the visions are based on maintaining lower densities and rural character and encourage job creating uses to future mixed use developments and town centers. It would appear that most of the visions were developed pre "recession" and demonstrate that plans, especially regarding land use, be flexible. Community plans are typically revised every 10 years and the HCCPC is developing a guide for developing future community plans which will have a greater focus on the vision and strategies of each community. It is likely, too, that economic development will play an enhanced role in future community plans.

Intergovernmental Coordination Element

Intergovernmental co-operation and coordination is critical in economic development as economic development is regional in nature and the overall market does not recognize jurisdictional boundaries. Goals and policies across jurisdictional boundaries should clearly address the regional nature and shared vision for economic prosperity.

Economic Prosperity Element (Recommended)¹¹

It is recommended that the County develop an economic development element for a host of reasons. First, the Comprehensive Plan was largely written pre "Recession" and may not reflect its impact on the growth and economic structure of the County. Second, an Economic Prosperity Element could be the catalyst for the other elements e.g. the elements would support the goals and policies of the Economic Prosperity; thereby increasing the implementation of its policies and strategies. Third, it sends a clear message that Hillsborough County is a pro-business community. Fourth, it allows other non-comprehensive element parameters to be addressed; the most significant of which is workforce training and incentives, and fifth, it would allow for development of more tailored tools/incentives to be created rather than relying on Statewide programs.

INCENTIVES

"There are few things that local governments can do to influence the demand side of the equation (e.g. marketing of regional products, buying locally, assisting local producers in finding

¹¹ Especially given that the Comprehensive Plan has an Economically Disadvantaged Element

local suppliers (import substitution), but the majority and most significant ways that the public sector can influence business profitability are on the supply (cost) side of the equation.”¹²

In addition to policy strategies to be included as part of a community’s Comprehensive Plan, incentives are now a major site selection factor especially as a means to lessen relocation costs. Incentives are often not related to policies, but instead are associated with the regulatory side, such as zoning and development review processes. The number one reason for relocation is labor; number two is cost. Upfront costs associated with relocation can be staggering. In order to be competitive in economic development, local communities can draw upon a host of public sector incentives:

Table 1: Public Sector Economic Development Incentives/Tools

• Zoning and permit assistance	• One stop permitting
• Infrastructure improvements	• Land or building acquisition
• Cash grants	• Site preparation
• Subsidized land or buildings	• Relocation assistance
• Subsidized worker training	• Employee screening
• Tax increment financing	• Regulatory flexibility
• Low interest loans	• Private utility rate reduction

The State of Florida has a number of incentives/tools to promote economic development. These Statewide incentives are primarily offered through Department of Economic Opportunity and Enterprise Florida a public private partnership and include:¹³

Target Industries Incentives

- Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund (QTI)
- Qualified Defense and Space Contractor Tax Refund (QDSC)
- Capital Investment Tax Credit (CITC)
- High Impact Performance Incentives Grant (HIPI)

Workforce Training Incentives

- Quick Response Training Program (QRT)
- Incumbent Worker Training Programs (TWT)
- Employ Florida Banner Centers

Infrastructure Incentives

- Economic Development Transportation Fund

Special Opportunity Incentives

- Urban Job Creation Incentives
- Enterprise Zone Incentives
- Brownfield Incentives
- Jobs for the Unemployed Tax Credit Program (JUTC)
- Local Government Distressed Area Matching Grant Program (LDMG)
- Manufacturing and Spaceport Investment Incentive Program (MSII)

¹² APA Planning and Economic Development Toolkit, www.planning.org/./index.htm

¹³ For details please check www.eflorida.com/ContentSubpage.aspx?id=472

Other State Programs

- Florida First Business Bond Pool
- High Impact Performance Grants

Moreover;

Hillsborough County has two economic development Incentives (in addition to those of the State):

- Ad Valorem Tax Exemption
- Small Business Job Creation Program

The City of Tampa has several economic development Incentives (in addition to those of the State):

- Brownfield Assessment Grant Program
- Business Façade Improvements
- Channel District Neighborhood Amenity Incentive Program
- Downtown CRA Preservation Trust Fund Loan Program
- Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption Program
- Transportation Impact Fee Exemption/Reduction
- Tampa Foreign Trade Center

CONCLUSIONS

Tampa/Hillsborough County has a positive global image. Starting with the selection of a National Football League (NFL) expansion team (i.e., Tampa Bay Buccaneers) and its national television/newspaper exposure in 1970, coupled with John Naisbitt's best seller "Megatrends", Tampa Bay received global attention that few other cities have been able to solidify. While the region experienced significant growth, fueled by residential growth; that growth was largely founded of the construction and related industries came to an end with the "Great Recession" for which it has still not recovered. The recessionary impacts to the State and Tampa Bay region have caused State and local governments to reassess the way they have conducted and planned for growth. Today, unlike the past, the desire for economic prosperity is the number one goal of most communities.

In the review of the three communities as case studies (i.e., Charlotte-Mecklenburg County, North Carolina; Austin, Texas; and Jacksonville, Florida) as well as reviews of economic development strategies throughout the country, certain relevant facts become apparent. First, economic development is a regional process and requires close coordination with all stakeholders throughout the vertical structure of government and the horizontal structure of EDOs and related organizations. Positive business climate is the common theme of successful communities.

As a result of this strong vision of economic growth, the planning functions of government in those areas are attuned to the needs of business. They employ an economic element that coordinates with the other elements to present a strong business image or they utilize a strong Strategic Economic Development Program through the regional EDO that serves as the catalyst to the Comprehensive Plan. Planning is flexible and permitting time expedited not only for targeted industries for also for locally expanding companies. Government action is viewed as a means of keeping the area cost competitive.

While recommendations by element have been provided, there are "overarching" themes that could be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan, e.g.:

- Shared “Regional” approach to economic growth and prosperity
- Common Vision embraced by the County and its cities
- Promote “Quality of Life’
- Simplify/streamline the land development approval process
- Expand and diversify the labor force through training
- Incentivize the expansion of “existing industries” within the County
- Capture greater share of the international market.

Today, the Tampa Bay region is changing and is challenged. Pinellas County, which was, to many people a competitor, is now built out. There is a perception that a significant part of economic development oriented sites within the desirable portions of Hillsborough County, including Tampa, Plant City and Temple Terrace are approaching build-out. One of the major themes of the planning process needs to be to determine policies and strategies to assemble “larger” vacant properties or underutilized parcels that are competitively priced, located in areas that business want to locate, with all supporting infrastructure. The USA Capacity study addresses this issue in greater detail.

Downtown Tampa and Ybor City are well positioned for the new innovative/creative class of millennials that desire the 24/7 lifestyle. It’s the remaining types of employment including those that employ the “middle skilled” that require competitively located and priced land/facilities which appear to be currently limited or “shovel ready”.