



LAKE COUNTY
FLORIDA

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

Data, Inventory & Analysis

2030 Planning Horizon

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In February 2008, the Lake County Board of County Commissioners adopted the economic strategic plan entitled, "Building Bridges for Development in Lake County", and its vision for Lake County, "Lake County will strengthen its position as a business center for Central Florida by aggressively pursuing opportunities and building collaborative relations with regional allies."

The purpose of this economic development plan is to provide a realistic vision for Lake County to diversify its economy and tax base.

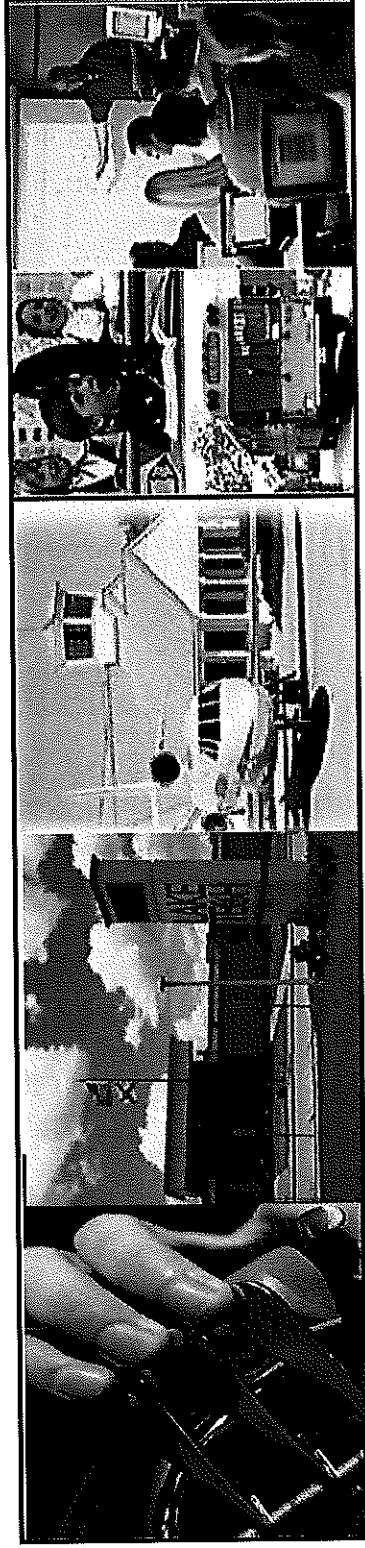
This plan is comprised of a comprehensive set of strategies and encourages organization and collaboration. The economic plan, "Building Bridges for Development in Lake County" is attached and will be used as the Data, Inventory, and Analysis for the Economic Development Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

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Building Bridges for Economic Development in LAKE COUNTY, FLORIDA



Prepared for:

Lake County Economic Growth and Redevelopment

Prepared by:



T · I · P S T R A T E G I E S

February 2008

acknowledgements

TIP Strategies, Inc. (TIP) would like to thank the economic development steering committee, whose time and guidance for this economic development strategic plan were invaluable. We would also like to thank the business and community leaders, who greatly contributed to our understanding of Lake County, its challenges and opportunities.

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introduction

Once known primarily for its orange groves, Lake County has emerged as Greater Orlando's new suburban frontier. Today, Lake County accounts for nearly a quarter of the metro area's population growth. New residents have been attracted to its subdivisions, access to Orlando, rolling landscape, multiple lakes, and plentiful outdoor recreational opportunities. The population in Lake County nearly doubled from 1980 to 2000 (210,508 persons) and is projected by the state demographer to again double over the next 25 years and reach a population of 500,000 persons by 2030.

This growth, however, comes with challenges. The population boom has been concentrated primarily in and around Clermont, as well as other communities in close proximity to Orlando. This has resulted in the development of a distinct economic divide between the northern and southern halves of Lake County. In addition, this growth has brought with it greater demand for public investments in infrastructure to support new housing and higher traffic volumes. At the same time, the county has yet to successfully position itself as a major employment center within the wider region. In effect, Lake County lacks the commercial tax base necessary to fund needed improvements.

Recognizing these challenges, Lake County hired TIP Strategies, an economic development consulting firm based in Austin, Texas, to assist in crafting an appropriate response. **The purpose of this economic development plan is to provide a realistic vision and roadmap for Lake County to diversify its economy and tax base.** This plan is a comprehensive set of strategies and an implementation plan to guide future economic development efforts in Lake County.

Lake County has more economic development opportunities and strengths than it does weaknesses. Its challenges are not unlike most suburban areas. The loss of the orange groves forced many of the orange growers out of economic necessity to sell their land for development or develop it themselves. The development pattern seen in Lake County since the 1980's has largely been single-family subdivisions. Oddly though, the retail and other commercial development has not occurred as rapidly as one would expect in a county the size of Lake County. The good news is that Lake County has a large commuter workforce (some estimates suggest nearly 40 percent of Lake County's workforce commutes outside of the county for work). The bad news however, is that the commercial tax base to support the services that all of the residents demand is barely enough so many capital improvements (e.g. roads, parks) are not sufficiently developed.

Commercial developers and businesses want to come to Lake County but there are no assurances of what policy makers will think of their projects, and that is a major economic development concern. Predictability in the development process is arguably more important than higher impact fees. Carrying costs on a small to large development can be devastating if the development review process is not predictable. The County's future land use plan needs to be completed and commercial development needs to be encouraged—mostly within city limits, but also in unincorporated areas in south Lake County that are close to Orlando.

While Lake County has enjoyed recent jobs gains, the area has yet to see significant growth in business sectors that provide higher wage jobs. One factor in the county's difficulty in attracting such employers could be related to the county's relatively low educational attainment levels. TIP conducted a data comparison of Lake County with several other suburban counties in Sun Belt locations and found that only one benchmark county in Mississippi recorded a smaller percentage of its over-25 workforce with a college degree. According to this analysis, the share of adults in Lake County with a Bachelor's degree or higher was 17 percent. Typically, information technology firms place cities and counties with 30 percent or more high on their site selection lists. As a result, education is an area that should continue to be a focal point for additional improvements. Fortunately, Lake County can call on LSCC, UCF, and an improving public education system to help raise the educational standards.

Specific industries need to be targeted for business growth in Lake County. TIP recommends Lake County focus its economic development and education efforts on the following industries:

- Health and Wellness
- Agritech
- Arts, Recreation, and Leisure
- Business Services
- Clean Tech

For more information regarding these targets, including industry trends, site requirements, selection rationale, and specific recommendations, see the Target Sectors section of this plan.

This Strategic Plan is based on an economic development model which focuses on three key areas: Quality of Place, Talent, and Industry/Innovation. Four goals followed by strategies and actions will lead to improvements in these three key areas, and ultimately lead to a more diversified and balanced economy:

- **GOAL ONE: COORDINATE EFFORTS WITH ALLIES AND LEADERS**
- **GOAL TWO: DIVERSIFY THE TAX BASE THROUGH INNOVATION, INDUSTRY ATTRACTION, AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
- **GOAL THREE: ENHANCE AND PROMOTE QUALITY OF PLACE**
- **GOAL FOUR: DEVELOP, RETAIN, AND ATTRACT TALENT**

TIP recommends that policy leaders first read the Economic and Demographic Assessment found in the Appendix. This section provides a backdrop of information and analysis to the goals and strategies in this plan. A great number of individuals have contributed their time and insight into the development of this plan. Much of their input is aggregated in this Assessment section.

This economic development plan is a guiding document for policy leaders, and public and private stakeholders throughout Lake County and the Metro Orlando region. This plan provides a focus for Lake County's economic development efforts. Heretofore this focus was absent, but not surprising given that the County's economic development department is less than two years old. Economic development efforts and policy decisions were

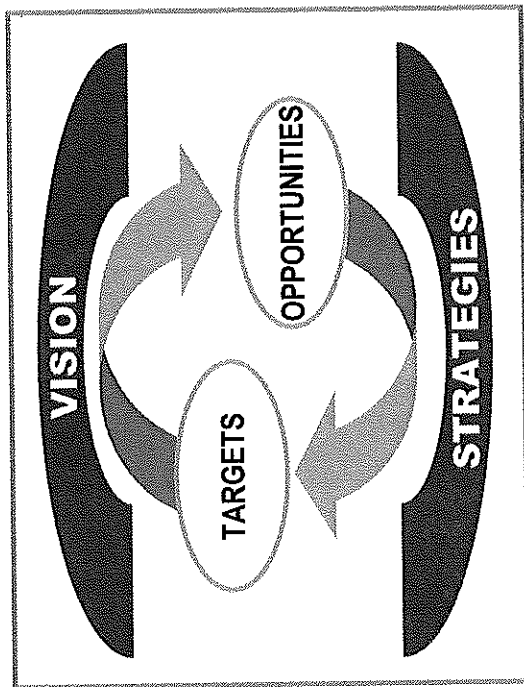
reactionary, but the hope is that with this economic development plan, county economic development efforts and policy decisions related to economic development will be proactive and consistent.

strategic plan

VISION

Economic development strategies must be driven by a clear vision. While conceptually this makes sense, the more practical value of a vision is in directing community resources. As a result, successful vision statements are bold but provide a clear direction and can be supported by goals and strategies.

This vision statement presents a clear focus for Lake County's economic development efforts with aggressive, yet attainable, goals. Lake County will strengthen its position as a contributor to the region's economic growth. This process will be driven by the creation of new office space to allow for expanded opportunities in business and professional services and will provide the catalyst for mixed-use retail, housing, dining, and entertainment developments. Simultaneously, Lake County will work with allies to ensure the county effectively leverages its economic opportunities by meeting its challenges. The county's array of assets and allies will solidify Lake County's status as an emerging business center for Central Florida.



The following statement establishes a bold—yet attainable—vision for Lake County's economic development efforts:

<< CENTRAL FLORIDA'S EMERGING BUSINESS CENTER – Lake County will strengthen its position as a business center for Central Florida by aggressively pursuing opportunities and building collaborative relations with regional allies. >>

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Guiding principles establish the framework within which a city or county will pursue its vision. They also encompass values that represent the area and its plan for economic development. The principles listed below should act to guide the activities that Lake County Economic Growth and Redevelopment Department will undertake in fulfilling its mission as the lead economic development organization for Lake County.

The Lake County Economic Growth and Redevelopment Department will:

- 1) Aggressively promote economic vitality and tax base diversification.
- 2) Promote environmentally sound, quality, economic development.
- 3) Promote site and building locations near and within incorporated communities primarily and promote site and building locations outside their service areas secondarily.
- 4) Promote economic development that supports Lake County's high quality of life and sense of place.
- 5) Promote the construction and maintenance of adequate infrastructure.
- 6) Partner with other local organizations and regional partners.
- 7) Remain committed to developing and maintaining talent by advocating and promoting excellence in education.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Economic development is undergoing major structural changes, ranging from site requirements to talent to livability to regional planning. Working within the vacuum of traditional economic development is becoming increasingly untenable, as the benefits of primary industries, of retail growth and of professional services have shifted, requiring new analytical approaches.

Economic development planning has failed to keep pace with global economic changes. If we were to diagram the old economic planning models, one might envision a triangle (Figure 1.) representing the following goals: Industry, Sites, and Jobs. This model assumes that the recruitment of new businesses could be best accomplished by providing sites in industrial parks, which in turn would result in the creation of new jobs. For many regions, this remains the default economic development strategy. Unfortunately, this approach depends heavily on tax abatements and the availability of fully serviced land. As a result, the benefits of attracting new industry and “creating new jobs” is often compromised by a lack of services, reduced land for housing and open space, and increasingly compromised economic vitality.

Economic development planning that is responsive to new opportunities—an approach championed by TIP—sees the same “triangle” (Figure 2.) with different goals: Innovation and Capital, Quality of Place, and Talent.

Rather than relying on incentives and cheap land to recruit industry, this approach recognizes the increasing importance of quality of place in the attraction and retention of business. This approach keeps quality of place on equal footing with innovation and capital. It recognizes that community development initiatives may generate as significant a return as industrial parks (which are often disconnected from the community and which require huge public investment). We also see “jobs” as something more than just a reduction of unemployment—looking instead at the duration of those jobs, the wages they pay and their impact on the community. This broader perspective is what we describe as “talent.” It holds the view that retaining and attracting younger workers is not synonymous with job training or with current workforce programs.

TIP defines economic development as the application of public resources to stimulate private investment. This definition recognizes that decisions on everything from telecommunications to workforce development must be informed by the response they will receive from the private sector. Since private investment is increasingly linked to technology and knowledge workers, it is only sensible for public entities to respond in kind. This approach frequently requires infrastructure investment, making it congruent with the site selection and expansion goals of private companies.

Our team’s experience in cities, counties, regions, and states underscores the benefits of a more holistic approach. There are, regrettably, too many examples in which a project is evaluated only on a fiscal basis, only to leave residents of the community dissatisfied and neighborhoods more fragmented and less economically viable than before the project was undertaken. As a result, an economic development methodology based on **TALENT, INNOVATION,** and **PLACE** helps redefine the types of business as well as the types of public resources under consideration, and provides for the basis of a more realistic evaluation of options to stimulate private investment.

Figure 1:

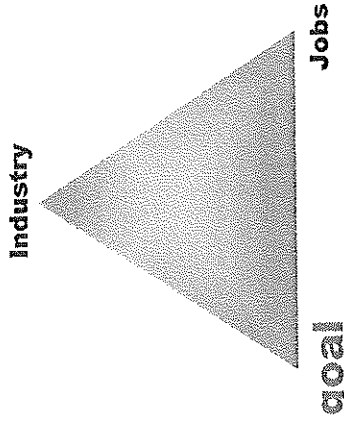
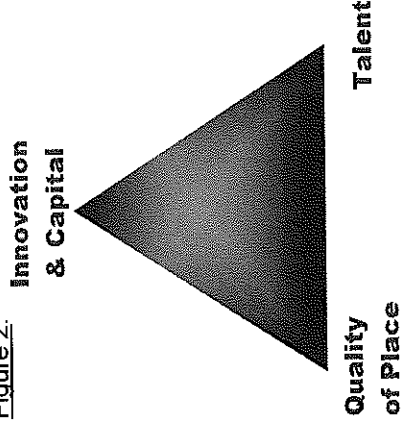


Figure 2:



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Lake County's vision as an emerging business center for Central Florida is based on the recognition that the county has the potential to develop into a major destination point within the wider metropolitan region. For this to occur, however, Lake County can no longer remain a "bedroom community." Diversifying the county's tax base should continue to be a principle goal for long-term economic sustainability. Achieving this goal will require efforts that help shift the burden of property taxes from the homeowner to one that is balanced and includes contributions from business and corporate enterprises. We believe that the following four goals will support the proposed vision and provide a strong framework for strategies and actions:

- **GOAL ONE: COORDINATE EFFORTS WITH ALLIES AND LEADERS**
- **GOAL TWO: DIVERSIFY THE TAX BASE THROUGH INNOVATION, INDUSTRY ATTRACTION, AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**
- **GOAL THREE: ENHANCE AND PROMOTE QUALITY OF PLACE**
- **GOAL FOUR: DEVELOP, RETAIN, AND ATTRACT TALENT**

While each of these goals was chosen for its ability to leverage distinct opportunities in Lake County, they were also intentionally chosen for their ability to support one another. As a result, some strategies and actions that are placed under one goal could just as easily have been put under another due to their inherent overlap. *Lake County and its partners should, therefore, remain mindful that a lack of support for one of these goals may hinder progress in another.* Recognition should also be given to the fact that policies supporting a strong business climate for economic development cannot be improved within a vacuum. As a result, they should be considered within the overall context of a wide variety of factors that will influence the long-term economic vitality and sustainability of Lake County.

The purpose of this plan is to provide the Lake County Economic Growth and Redevelopment Department with specific guidance regarding the commitment of countywide and regional resources for enhancing the economic vitality and tax base within Lake County. Some issues that have an economic impact on Lake County—but are not within the purview of its economic development department—are raised within this plan. These concerns should be carefully distinguished from the department's specific economic development mission. They are raised, because failure to address these concerns will decrease its ability to effectively perform its economic development mission.

POTENTIAL PARTNER LISTS & ABBREVIATIONS	
<u>CHAMBERS</u>	Lake County chambers of commerce
<u>CITIES</u>	Lake County cities
<u>COUNTY</u>	Lake County
<u>EDC</u>	Metro Orlando Economic Development Corporation
<u>LCS</u>	Lake County Schools
<u>LSOC</u>	Lake-Sumter Community College
<u>LSMPO</u>	Lake-Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization
<u>UCF</u>	University of Central Florida
<u>WCFE</u>	Workforce Central Florida

GOAL ONE: COORDINATE EFFORTS WITH ALLIES AND LEADERS

Organization & Collaboration ➤ This economic development strategic plan offers a host of strategies and actions to stimulate private investment activity in Lake County. Several recommendations in the plan reach beyond the traditional realm of economic development and will require support of partners from both the public and private sectors to ensure its overall success. It is, therefore, of critical importance for Lake County to develop partnerships in joint ventures and supporting target sectors.

From an organizational standpoint, Lake County's primary economic development challenge is the number of cities, chambers, advisory boards, and other parties who can exert either direct or indirect influence over business investment decisions in the county. As should be expected, these multiple entities serve varied, and often competing, constituencies. This has resulted in the county having acquired a negative reputation and image within Central Florida's business community.

The initial step in the implementation of this plan is for Lake County to enlist the support from a broad-based coalition of partners, including the county's various cities and their economic development departments, chambers serving Lake County, Lake-Sumter Community College, Lake County Schools, and key individuals who can influence the plan's implementation. In its presentation to these and other potential partners, Lake County must communicate an understanding of macroeconomic and demographic trends and how they affect the ability of Lake County employers in remaining prosperous and competitive. In addition, Lake County should be prepared to convey the importance of built-in strategic linkages among the various goals and strategies in this plan and how they can influence investment among target sectors. Moreover, Lake County, its constituent communities, and the area's various interest groups must forge a common vision and approach to influencing real estate development in such a way as to maximize its economic and fiscal impact.

Residents and active economic development participants should understand that this plan is only a beginning for Lake County. The issues that the county faces today did not form overnight. In some cases, they have been building for decades and are the results (either intended or unintended) of past decisions. Adding to this context should be the understanding that the Lake County Economic Growth and Redevelopment Department remains in its infancy. As such, Lake County and its allies should focus on managing expectations for timely success. While immediate action can be taken on many of its recommendations, the overall success of the plan hinges on sustained efforts leading to long-term opportunities that will diversify Lake County's tax base and encourage high-wage employment opportunities in the local area.

PRIORITY PROJECTS:

- Establish a countywide economic development partnership.
- Develop an incentive policy that is clear, focused, and consistent.
- Expand the county's financial and staffing resources for economic development.
- Co-locate entrepreneurial programming and one-stop economic development services in partnership with LSCC.

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

goal 1:

Goal One Summary of Recommendations and Work Plan

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD ORGANIZATION	TIMELINE >>				
		ONGOING	0-6 mos.	6-12 ms.	1-2 yrs.	3-5 yrs.
STRATEGY ONE > CREATE A COUNTY-WIDE PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.						
Action A >> Identify areas of collaboration.	COUNTY		X			
Action B >> Formulate a clear mission and structure for the partnership.	COUNTY			X		
Action C >> Establish clear "wins" or attainable projects for short term success.	COUNTY			X		
STRATEGY TWO > DEVELOP AND EXPAND INTERNAL RESOURCES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Action A >> Expand Lake County's economic development budget.	COUNTY			X		
Action B >> Develop local resources to support economic development in Lake County.	COUNTY			X		
Action C >> Evaluate options for maximizing Lake County's relationship with Metro Orlando EDC.	COUNTY			X		
STRATEGY THREE > STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP BASE AND EXPAND INVOLVEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.						
Action A >> Raise awareness of economic development issues and raise support among Lake County's leadership and citizenry.	COUNTY		X	X	X	X
Action B >> Enhance and expand leadership training programs and networking opportunities.	CHAMBERS			X	X	X

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

goal 1:

> **STRATEGY ONE > CREATE A COUNTYWIDE PARTNERSHIP TO SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

Due to Lake County's size and diversity of various interest groups, it makes sense that a formal countywide partnership be created to deliver a clear vision and common voice for economic development. To be truly effective, it is absolutely essential that the county's constituent communities play an active role in its formation and policy implementation. This is due to the fact that Lake County does not provide utilities to unincorporated areas. The county must, therefore, seek a collaborative relationship with the cities with a view towards the development of key parcels that might lie in the cities' various service delivery areas.

Several other organizations in the county may play a role in providing economic development services, including the various chamber organizations, redevelopment organizations, and educational institutions. Certainly, the private sector can also play a role in promoting the county's economic development efforts. Collaboration among these entities should be improved as a means for streamlining services, focusing economic development programs, and developing a consistent message to the business and real estate development communities.

The formation of such a partnership would assist in developing a collaborative approach and ultimately result in increased business development and investment throughout the county. The functional purposes for the organization should be to: 1) support the target sectors (see the *Target Sectors* section of this plan for additional information), and 2) develop a coordinated and collaborative approach to policies and programs (e.g., infrastructure development, land ordinances, training, etc.) for supporting economic development in the county.

▪ **Action A >> Identify areas of collaboration.**

Lead: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Using the roll-out of this plan as a springboard, commence discussions with countywide leadership to build support for the establishment of a new economic development organization for Lake County.
- Develop a benchmark list of other economic development partnerships in Florida and the Southeast to determine their effectiveness. One potential benchmark would be the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, Florida. For more information see: www.florida-edc.org
- Provide presentations on countywide plans to chambers, leadership organizations, and educational entities throughout the county. Present the benchmark information at these presentations.
- Follow up these presentations by inviting key stakeholders from the various entities to discuss the concept of establishing a countywide economic development partnership.

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

Goal 1

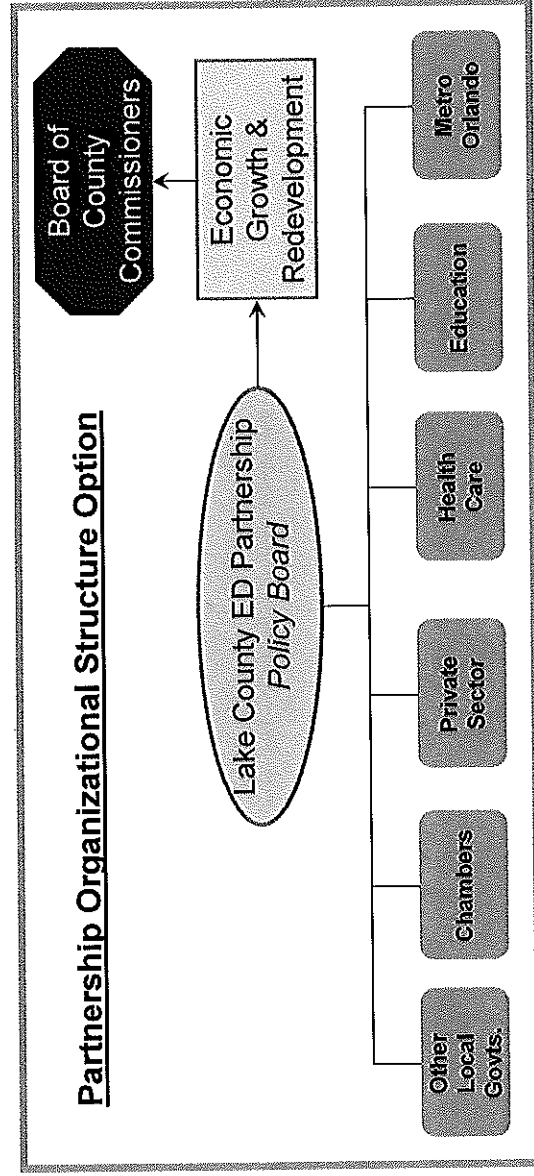


▪ **Action B >> Formulate a clear mission and structure for the partnership.**

Lead: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Establish a Lake County Economic Development Partnership policy board. Careful consideration should be given to the composition of the policy board. TIP recommends it be comprised of City representatives, chamber representatives, higher education representatives, one Metro Orlando Economic Development Council representative, and representatives from each of the target industry sectors identified in this plan. This organization should replace the current Industrial Development Authority and should act as an advisory council for the Board of County Commissioners to support the implementation of this plan.
- Over the long-term, consideration should be given to broadening participation within the policy board to include wider public and private sector support from within the county. The evolution of the board should lead to the eventual establishment of a formal countywide economic development partnership. Lake County is strongly advised to establish an organization similar to the structure of the Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County, Florida.
- Once a formal partnership has been established, commence a capital fundraising and/or membership campaign to carry forward recommendations in this plan.



goal 1: ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

- Action C >> Establish clear “wins” or attainable projects for short term success.

Lead: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Identify short and long terms goals and projects that the partnership and its allies can implement.
- Use the annual *Economic Development Summit* as a means for celebrating the partnership’s wins and gain local and regional attention.

➤ STRATEGY TWO > DEVELOP AND EXPAND INTERNAL RESOURCES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

The Lake County Economic Growth and Redevelopment department has a full-time staff of two. The County should be commended for its recent decision to add an additional full-time equivalent (FTE) to the department’s staff who is expected to come on board in the next few months, focusing mostly on redevelopment. Prior to this, the department was inadequately staffed with too few resources for an organization whose mission is to promote and support economic development in a county of 300,000 persons.

- Action A >> Expand Lake County’s economic development budget.

Lead: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Increase staffing, by adding an additional FTE in addition to what is already budgeted for FY 2008. This staff person should have experience in establishing and enhancing partnership relationships, and marketing and recruitment with Lake County’s target sectors.
- Increase “deal closing” funds in the county’s economic development marketing budget.

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

goal 1:

- **Action B >> Develop local resources to support economic development in Lake County.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partners: CITIES, LCS, LSCC

Specific Tasks:

- Modify the **Jobs Growth Investment Trust Fund** policy. This policy provides incentives based on average hourly wages levels for two separate employer categories (Manufacturing and Service/Distribution), offering different policies for each. The Service/Distribution category should offer incrementally higher incentives for higher paying jobs, similar to the Manufacturing category.

- Consideration should also be given to developing incentives based on:

- Capital investment (assist in diversifying and expanding Lake County's tax base),
- Number of new jobs (wages must meet a minimum threshold),
- Location (desirable development areas as evidenced by existing and planned infrastructure, as well as comprehensive land use map), and/or
- Targeted business sectors.

- Encourage countywide taxing entities to establish similar formal incentives guidelines.

- Work with countywide partners to strengthen collaboration and coordination of economic development activities (e.g., incentives package development and application assistance, transportation/mobility development projects, etc.).

Formal incentives policies should be carefully crafted in a transparent manner to ensure that they yield a net benefit to area taxpayers. The following principals should be considered when establishing a policy: 1) the targeted investment would not occur without the incentive and 2) the investment should generate new economic activity in the area instead of displacing existing businesses.

When creating an incentives deal for a particular prospect, the following are recommended: 1) a statement demonstrating how the proposed incentive relates to the broader economic development strategies, 2) a formal cost/benefit estimate weighing the estimated direct/indirect benefits (e.g., tax base enhancement, increase in retail sales, increase in wage rates, etc.) to the incentive costs (e.g., tax abatements, training subsidies, infrastructure improvements, etc.) associated with a particular deal, and 3) a "clawback" agreement that guarantees the recovery of incentives funds if the firm makes fewer hires or investment expenditures than promised.

All incentives should be made available to new and existing businesses alike.

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

goal 1:



- **Action C >> Evaluate options for maximizing Lake County's relationship with Metro Orlando EDC.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partner: EDC

Specific Tasks:

- Commence a dialogue with Metro Orlando EDC regarding its activities on behalf of Lake County. The purpose of these conversations should be to arrive at a clearly defined role for the EDC and how it can contribute to the implementation of the county's economic development efforts. In addition, careful consideration should be given to the strengths of each partner (e.g., Metro Orlando EDC's experience in national and international marketing).
- Develop a list of clearly defined and realistic "deliverables" that Metro Orlando will provide for Lake County.
 - Consideration should be given to including these within a performance-based contract.
 - Consideration should also be given to making Lake County's contribution more in line with the amounts provided by other regional partner counties.
- Provide Lake County Board of Commissioners with recommended modifications of Lake County's annual contribution to the EDC.

goal 1: ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

➤ **STRATEGY THREE > STRENGTHEN LEADERSHIP BASE AND EXPAND INVOLVEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

Changing the perception that local leaders and residents have regarding the potential for new business development in Lake County will be critical to the success of this economic development plan. Local public and private sector leaders have the greatest impact on how Lake County is viewed from both the inside and outside. For example, executives, managers, and others from local firms often travel to meetings with professionals from outside the region. In essence, these individuals can serve as Lake County's best, or worst, marketing channel. In addition, without committed leadership, economic development professionals often find themselves lacking in the support to undertake necessary initiatives.

- **Action A >> Raise awareness of economic development issues and raise support among Lake County's leadership and citizenry.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partners: CHAMBERS; EDC

Specific Tasks:

- Leverage existing leadership programs to serve as a vehicle for communicating economic development goals and understanding the needs of various groups in Lake County. The primary purposes of this task should be to 1) build an awareness of the county's strengths among business and community leaders, and 2) provide information to spread a more positive image of the county in their relationships throughout the Central Florida region and beyond.
- Create a brief profile promoting Lake County's positive aspects to be used by community and business leaders.
- Establish an annual countywide *Economic Development Summit* to keep the county's leadership and citizens updated on opportunities and challenges in Lake County, including local, regional, and national economic trends and other business climate issues (i.e. local taxation, planning initiatives, business announcements etc.).
 - As part of the annual summit event, include recognition of individuals, businesses, and/or organizations that have had the most significant impact on Lake County over the previous year.
 - Invite regional brokers, retailers, and developers to this forum.
- Meet quarterly with key business leaders, local media, and decision makers to provide opportunities for in-depth, one-on-one discussions to solicit input on Lake County's business climate issues.
- Develop a countywide newsletter, including an e-newsletter, to disseminate information to the wider public regarding economic development activities.

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

goal 1:

- Establish a long-term economic development planning process for updating progress on specific goals and strategies outlined in this plan. This process should be coordinated with the annual economic development event.

▪ **Action B >> Enhance and expand leadership training programs and networking opportunities.**

Lead: CHAMBERS; Partners: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Enhance and expand existing programs that help identify and prepare area residents for future positions of leadership in Lake County.
- The County should offer assistance to the various chambers and other organizations in developing ideas for additional target networking opportunities for professionals living and working in Lake County, including evening and weekend functions. Other support might include offering meeting space and/or marketing the events.
- Assist in the identification of current and future leaders within the Lake County, including representatives of various groups (e.g., professional, youth, minority, etc.).
- Establish a Young Professionals Organization (YPO) group to serve as a source for identifying potential emerging community and business leaders (See www.yppcommons.org for more information).

ORGANIZATION & COLLABORATION

goal 1:

GOAL TWO: DIVERSIFY THE TAX BASE THROUGH INNOVATION, INDUSTRY ATTRACTION, AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Industry & Innovation > The U.S. manufacturing industry continues a transformation that has profound effects on the practice of economic development. It is forcing us to rethink what we mean by a primary job, how we measure economic impact, and how we design incentives. This is due, in large part, because manufacturing employment continues to decline. It is no overstatement to say that you cannot build an economic strategy solely around manufacturing jobs.

For this reason, our assessment of industry considers the full complement of economic activities—ranging from traditional industrial employers to advanced research to entrepreneurship—as well as the physical infrastructure (industrial parks, sites, transportation etc.) and business climate to support those activities. Understanding the role of innovation, the opportunities for expansion of existing companies, and the best targets for recruitment, are important building blocks of an economic development plan.

Area leaders should be continually reminded that “economic development is a marathon, not a sprint.” As such, sustained economic development efforts will be required. One of the most critical efforts will be continuing to ensure that adequate sites for business and industrial development are available in the face of explosive residential growth. For better or worse, Lake County is squarely in the crosshairs of Central Florida’s residential development community. While the entire region is currently being affected by the housing slump, the region’s continued employment growth virtually ensures the building of development pressures in Lake County. One resulting challenge for the county’s economic development is influencing land use decisions in such a way that key parcels are reserved with the goal of developing a diversified employment and tax base. To compound this problem, residents are naturally and justifiably concerned with protecting their quality of life and Lake County’s natural resources/greenspace. As a result, promoting industrial or other business uses in a way that is compatible to existing developments or the desires of residents can be a complicated exercise—not unlike walking a tightrope.

Retaining and promoting sites is only one part of the solution, however. Another opportunity is unleashing the latent entrepreneurial spirit of Central Florida’s citizens. Fortunately, demographics work strongly in Lake County’s favor as it enjoys access to Orlando’s motivated business class and regional higher education institutions. Of course, the needs of existing employers must not be overlooked either. A final component in achieving economic diversification is the implementation of a target sector marketing campaign closely coordinated with Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission (EDC).

PRIORITY PROJECTS:

- > Develop a GIS system to support economic development.
- > Initiate an entrepreneurship program.
- > Conduct a target industry marketing campaign.

INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

goal 2:

Goal Two Summary of Recommendations and Work Plan

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD ORGANIZATION	TIMELINE >>				
		ONGOING	0-6 mos.	6-12 ms.	1-2 yrs.	3-5 yrs.
STRATEGY ONE > PLAN FOR ADEQUATE SITES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LAKE COUNTY.						
Action A >> Support the development of office and tech/flex space to promote Lake County as a regionally competitive location.	COUNTY			X	X	X
Action B >> Develop a sophisticated internet-based mapping and site inventory system that displays available sites throughout the county and cities.	COUNTY			X		
Action C >> Develop a land use and utility plan to leverage development potential in southern Lake County.	COUNTY				X	
STRATEGY TWO > CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE RETENTION AND EXPANSION OF BUSINESSES IN LAKE COUNTY.						
Action A >> Continue to support the retention and expansion of existing businesses.	COUNTY	X				
Action B >> Encourage public sector entities to adopt policies and programs geared towards stimulating specific industry sectors in Lake County.	COUNTY				X	
STRATEGY THREE > DEVELOP AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM FOR LAKE COUNTY.						
Action A >> Establish an entrepreneurship program to facilitate startup activity in Lake County.	LSCC				X	
Action B >> Facilitate financing for local entrepreneurs.					X	
Action C >> Foster a countywide climate that embraces and celebrates entrepreneurship.					X	X
STRATEGY FOUR > INITIATE AN EXTERNAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR LAKE COUNTY AND ITS TARGET INDUSTRIES.						
Action A >> Build awareness throughout the Metro	COUNTY		X	X	X	X

goal 2:
INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

Orlando region and Central Florida.									
Action B >> Build awareness among decision-makers in target industries.	EDC				X		X	X	X
Action C >> Build awareness among site selectors.	EDC						X	X	X



➤ **STRATEGY ONE > PLAN FOR ADEQUATE SITES AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN LAKE COUNTY.**

Lake County finds itself in the position of being “in the path of growth” of Orlando. This situation should be carefully monitored and managed—to the extent possible—as rapid growth may lead to a future shortage of good business sites, strains on infrastructure, and the loss of green spaces/natural resources. As a result, Lake County must work carefully with its constituent communities to identify key sites and/or intersections along existing and planned transportation routes (within or beyond their jurisdictions), promote a vision for their future development, and update land use planning decisions.

Land and location are the best assets Lake County has for economic development, yet strategic commercial sites are being planned and developed as residential sites. Several key sites offering proximity to Orlando and major transportation nodes are still present within the county and would be ideal for promoting target industry sectors. These sites must, therefore, be secured for commercial purposes.

One sign of a sophisticated economic development program is the availability of internal resources and tools that can be leveraged to ease desirable business location decisions. Included among these are database and other software packages that allow an economic development department to act as an information and site location clearinghouse for new and expanding businesses. This role is especially important in such a rapidly developing suburban county as Lake due to the threat of 1) undesirable developments on sites that are incompatible with surrounding uses or 2) developments with low economic and fiscal impacts on strategic sites.

- **Action A >> Support the development of office and tech/flex space to promote Lake County as a regionally competitive location.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partners: EDC, CITIES, Private sector developers and property owners

Specific Tasks:

- Identify 100- to 150-acre tracts that are suitable for the major office, corporate campus, research park, and tech/flex space developers and users. Incorporate and highlight sites in all marketing materials.
- Strengthen relationships with area brokers, property owners, and developers to communicate the vision for Lake County and offer assistance in recruiting users of office and tech/flex space.
- Pay particular attention to those who might influence development along the Florida Turnpike, east and south of Clermont, as well as locations to the east of Mount Dora.
- Continue to maintain and build relationships with these developers and land owners, offering assistance to aggressively market their properties and buildings to future tenants.
- Investigate developing a “streamlined permitting process” for desirable developments, including targeted sectors.

- Develop a baseline comparison of Lake County's development review and permitting process with neighboring counties. If no such baseline comparison already exists, then the county should begin tracking the review time for different categories of permitting (i.e., residential/commercial and infill/greenfield development). At the same time, the county should gather information from these benchmarks and begin comparing this data with Lake County's.
- Encourage constituent communities to develop streamlined permitting process for desirable projects, including targeted industries, as well. The degree of success that Lake County enjoys is dependent on the functionality of the cities' permitting processes. For this reason, it is important for Lake County to act as a liaison between prospects and the cities and to support the cities whenever possible.
- Hold monthly or quarterly meetings with the development community to review the benchmark data to obtain developer feedback. This qualitative information can often be more valuable than the comparative data in improving the development review and permitting process.

- **Action B >> Develop a sophisticated internet-based mapping and site inventory system that displays available sites throughout the county and cities.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partners: EDC

Specific Tasks:

- Meet with Metro Orlando EDC staff to review their existing internet-based programs. Review the CoStar program that may be the least expensive way for Lake County to update internet-based data on sites.
- Meet and review internet-based options with other area partners and choose a program that all county partner organizations can use to keep an updated internet presence.
- Act as an information clearinghouse for companies seeking to expand or relocate to Lake County, especially for proposal development. The county should pay particular attention to developing tools that are web-enabled since much of the site location process occurs through internet research. The county and its constituent communities should collaboratively:
- Develop and maintain a database of available properties in Lake County.
- Develop or purchase a geographic information system (GIS) to allow for the display of multiple layers of information (e.g. infrastructure availability, etc.) on properties and assist in researching and identifying infrastructure and land use allowances on specific sites. Consideration should also be given to working with any existing internal GIS resources.
 - Provide printable maps that highlight major developments by type in the county.

goal 2: INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

- Provide site location and site analysis to businesses seeking to locate or expand in the county.

- **Action C >> Develop a land use and utility plan to leverage development potential in southern Lake County.** *Two general areas should be considered as prime commercial development sites: 1) to the west of Horizon West and 2) east of Clermont near Florida's Turnpike.*

Lead: COUNTY; Partners: Property owners, EDC

Specific Tasks:

- Meet with property owners, developers, Orange County, and utility providers in southern Lake County to understand how sites might be leveraged for commercial development opportunities in the unincorporated areas to the west of Horizon West.
- Once a short-list of suitable sites has been created, encourage property owners to create conceptual site plans that focused commercial development in a concentrated location without requiring more than 50 to 100 acres. The focus should be on creating sufficient densities within these sites to meet developer/landowner return-on-investment needs while at the same time preserving open space.
- Consideration should also be given to assisting in marketing sites that meet the county's desirable development goals to the regional development community.

goal 2: INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

➤ **STRATEGY TWO > CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE RETENTION AND EXPANSION OF BUSINESSES IN LAKE COUNTY.**

Many judge industrial recruitment as the most important aspect of economic development. However, additional opportunities for cultivating economic development and vitality often lie closer to home. “Economic gardening” is the most overlooked—but often most important—economic development activity. In other words, ensuring the continued prosperity and survival of local employers is crucial to sustaining a healthy economy.

Simultaneously, an awareness of existing local business’s needs for remaining competitive in their respective industries is also a must. In other words, Lake County and the area’s leadership should remain vigilant and responsive to the various issues that affect the profitability and competitiveness of existing employers.

- **Action A >> Continue to support the retention and expansion of existing businesses.**

Lead: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Place periodic calls with existing businesses in Lake County to not only achieve a better understanding of their challenges, but also to potentially uncover opportunities for local expansions and to assist in raising awareness of available technical and financial assistance programs.
- Develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory of existing businesses to have a clear understanding of the types of businesses already in Lake County and to keep tabs on new locations and expansions.
- Act as a liaison between area workforce development providers and existing businesses in Lake County to ensure local employers are aware of all available training resources. Additionally, Lake County should communicate local business needs to workforce development and training providers.
- Ensure that local businesses are aware of incentives opportunities.
- Consider hiring additional staff to manage the county’s business retention and expansion efforts (if needed).

- **Action B >> Encourage public sector entities to adopt policies and programs geared towards stimulating specific industry sectors in Lake County.**

Lead: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Develop and propose green building standards for all new or renovated public buildings in Lake County, including cities, LCS, and LSCC facilities as a means for stimulating local demand to create a market for green building goods and services.

INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

Goal 2:

- Develop and propose clean vehicle programs for public sector fleet vehicles that run on ethanol or biofuel to stimulate this sector in Lake County.

➤ **STRATEGY THREE > DEVELOP AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAM FOR LAKE COUNTY.**

Across the nation, economic developers have embraced entrepreneur development as a means of promoting economic diversification and stimulating economic growth. The reason for this interest in entrepreneurs is twofold: 1) an economic transition in the U.S. that has created more market opportunities for entrepreneurs and 2) the recognition that entrepreneurs can be more deeply rooted in their communities, which increases both their economic and social impacts.

Leveraging existing resources among Lake County's business community—including innovation, knowledge, research, finances, and business and social networks—and matching those resources with opportunities should form part of the county's overall economic development efforts. Lake County's location in close proximity to Orlando, as well as the presence of higher education and research institutions in the Central Florida region, should be treated as unique assets for fostering and enhancing a culture of entrepreneurship.

- **Action A >> Establish an entrepreneurship program to facilitate startup activity in Lake County.**

Lead: LSCC (BRC); Partners: CHAMBERS; LSCC, UCF, COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- The BRC should establish an *Entrepreneurs Forum* where individuals can network and discuss key issues relevant to their efforts.
- Meet semi-annually with current and potential entrepreneurs in Lake County to better understand issues affecting their business decisions and provide networking opportunities for area professionals and emerging entrepreneurs.
 - Include all area taxing entities and potential partners, such as LSCC, UCF, UF, and USF.

en-tre-pre-neur

(ɔ̃n'trɛ-prɛ-nũr', -nɔ̃ɔr') n.

A person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture.

French, from *entreprendre*, to undertake.

SOURCE: American Heritage Dictionary.

goal 2: INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

- Encourage LSCC and UCF to determine the feasibility of establishing a “brick and mortar” entrepreneurial center in Lake County.
 - Consideration should be given to locating the center a proposed new LSCC campus in northeastern Lake County, which could also serve as a one-stop shop for entrepreneurial programming and economic development services (See Goal 4, Strategy 1, Action A on page 38).
- Focus entrepreneurship and business investment programs on target industry sectors.
- Advocate for entrepreneurs by facilitating local government assistance and help address issues and challenges.
- Consider sponsoring an annual awards program for area entrepreneurs to provide an enticing incentive/award for the most innovative concept.
- Offer entrepreneurship training courses such as FastTrac or NxLevel that provide intensive training for potential entrepreneurs. Certify BRC staff in these training courses.
- Support the creation of a youth entrepreneurship education program in the public schools.
- Develop a mentor network to match “green” entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs.
- Establish an information clearinghouse to aid entrepreneurs in gaining competitive information, market research, and assistance

TRAINING CURRICULA

One popular entrepreneurial training program is FastTrac. Founded by the Kauffman Foundation of Kansas City, Missouri, FastTrac is a boot camp for entrepreneurs. According to the foundation’s materials, 70 percent of companies that go through the program succeed beyond three years – the oft-touted threshold by which the majority of small businesses fail. The program can be brought to any town provided there is an organization willing to become certified to teach the program. <http://www.fasttrac.org/>

Another popular program is NxLevel, a curriculum developed by the University of Colorado at Denver. NxLevel includes 7 different curriculum tailored for different types of entrepreneurs. Since 1996, over 80,000 students have participated in NxLevel trainings. A third-party evaluation of the program shows that over 90 percent of business start-ups that participated in the program were still in business after 3 years. The program is taught by certified trainers in over 600 communities in 48 states. <http://www.nxlevel.org/>

▪ **Action B >> Facilitate financing for local entrepreneurs.**

Lead: LSCC (BRC); Partners: CHAMBERS; LSCC; UCF, COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Support the formation of a formal angel investor network to aid entrepreneurs in raising seed capital by providing opportunities for entrepreneurs to present business plans and financing needs to an audience of local investors.
- Investigate the feasibility of creating a community-based revolving loan fund. A revolving loan fund, in which local financial institutions participate, would provide support for higher risk loans (start-ups & small) while spreading risk for the lenders.
- Sponsor financial literacy courses to educate entrepreneurs and business owners on the various types of financing mechanism, the pros and cons of each, and best practices for using them.
- Encourage local lenders to offer small business financing to assist startups and strengthen their Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) ratings.
- Leverage existing state and federal program that offer business startup assistance (e.g., SBDC, etc.)

▪ **Action C >> Foster a countywide climate that embraces and celebrates entrepreneurship.**

Lead: LSCC (BRC); Partners: CHAMBERS; LSCC; UCF, COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Support the creation of an entrepreneurial program at UCF—potentially in collaboration with LSCC—to teach key entrepreneurial skills in a case-based program.
- Consider developing and/or sponsoring workshops for would-be entrepreneurs. Topic may include developing business plans, raising capital, and managing growth. These may coincide with the *Entrepreneurs Forum*.
- Encourage entrepreneurship programs in LCS secondary campuses (e.g., Junior Achievement programs) which might be facilitated by local entrepreneurs and mentors.
- Develop a regional media campaign celebrating local entrepreneurial success stories.

➤ **STRATEGY FOUR > INITIATE AN EXTERNAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN FOR LAKE COUNTY AND ITS TARGET INDUSTRIES.**

While strategies devoted to entrepreneurship as well as the retention and expansion of existing businesses should remain at the forefront of any economic development program, Lake County should also develop an aggressive business attraction strategy with a view toward diversifying the tax base and easing the property tax burden on countywide homeowners. Any target sector marketing efforts, however, should be closely coordinated with constituent communities and the Metro Orlando EDC.

This plan identifies the following target sectors for Lake County: **HEALTH & WELLNESS, CLEAN TECH, AGRITECH, BUSINESS SERVICES, and ARTS, RECREATION, & LEISURE** (*For more information regarding industry trends and specific recommendations, see the Target Sectors section of this plan.*) To be successful the county and its economic development partners should implement a target marketing campaign with quality materials customized to the needs of these targets.

- **Action A >> Build awareness throughout the Metro Orlando region and Central Florida.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partner: EDC

Specific Tasks:

- Develop a marketing theme that links Lake County's target sectors with its assets and the image the county is trying to promote. Consideration should be given to developing a theme around the notion of sustainability in environment and lifestyle [e.g., health and wellness; clean tech (green building and clean energy); portions of agritech; and recreation and leisure].
- Implement a public relations campaign targeted at regional publications. TIP recommends identifying key regional publications and sending press releases about recent business successes. The initial press release should be to promote the success of the economic development plan and explain how local leadership worked together to determine the best opportunities for Lake County.
- Participate in joint marketing activities with Metro Orlando EDC, statewide economic development agencies, and area utilities.
- Identify other parties that could refer leads to Lake County and set up a visitation schedule with a focus on the Central Florida region, such as local and regional construction firms, real estate brokers, banks, service firms (legal and accounting), regional industry associations, and area universities (e.g., UCF, University of Florida, University of South Florida, etc.).
- Hold at least two brokers events per year to communicate opportunities for investment in Lake County.

INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

goal 2:

▪ **Action B >> Build awareness among decision-makers in target industries.**

Lead: EDC; Partner: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Identify key industry associations for each target.
- Create and maintain a database of regional and national companies for each target.
- Develop local intelligence and expertise for each targeted.
- Design marketing material and initial direct mail programs for each target.
- Participate in industry trade events.

▪ **Action C >> Build awareness among site selectors.**

Lead: EDC; Partner: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Maintain a database of site consultants.
- Maintain and update site consultant information request database. The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) has prepared a comprehensive set of data standards for communities to use when presenting themselves to site selectors or prospective businesses. The data standards matrix is available at www.iedc.org/Data_Standards.xls. Additional guidelines for using the matrix are available at www.developmentalliance.com/pdf/whitepaper_0206.pdf. Also, *Expansion Management* offers the “short list” database.
- Initiate a monthly site consultant letter campaign, highlighting a different opportunity in Lake County each month.
- Hold a “developer’s day” or “familiarization (fam) tour” events in Lake County for site consultants and regional industrial and commercial brokers. *(This is an ambitious undertaking and should be delayed until land use and site issues are resolved in Lake County.)*

INDUSTRY & INNOVATION

goal 2:

GOAL THREE: ENHANCE AND PROMOTE QUALITY OF PLACE

Place > Much has been written about the importance of quality of life to the site selection process. Communities throughout the nation have positioned themselves by touting their advantages in this regard—good schools, safe streets, pleasant weather. We agree these factors are important. We take issue only with the narrowness of the focus. Quality of life assumes that everyone thrives in the same environment and is attracted to the same amenities. It assumes that current residents' view of what makes a community would be shared by all.

By contrast, quality of place considers what is attractive to a range of residents, both old and new. The idea of quality of place accommodates growth and recognizes the benefits of change. It recognizes that one person's "good place to raise a family" might translate into another's "there's nothing to do in this town." Quality of place is about providing options, not just for current residents, but for those who will be residents in the future.

Increasingly, companies rely on the skills and talent of their workforce to retain or gain a competitive advantage. Only recently have employers discovered that one way to tap into talented workers is by locating operations in communities with a strong sense of place. This is because communities offering a multitude of amenities are the ones attracting many of today's skilled and talented workers.

Lake County enjoys a number of "quality of place" assets, including abundant outdoor recreation opportunities. It is also strongly positioned for leveraging its historic downtowns. It is evident that significant sums of private investment dollars have been invested in the downtown area. The opportunity for leveraging these investments should not be squandered and should be considered one of the county's leading assets, especially for marketing purposes. The county's revitalized downtowns already hosts a number of dining, boutique shopping, and other options that presents Lake County with a unique opportunity to differentiate itself from its regional competition. Lake County's strong collection of assets ranging from outdoor recreation to fine arts, placed together, can position the county as a premier destination for talent in Central Florida— especially Baby Boomers and young professionals (i.e., Echo Boomers; Generations X & Y).

At the same time, the county's development patterns have placed many of the area's natural resources at risk. The rapid suburbanization of Lake County has been the result of Orlando's westward sprawl into the county. This has resulted in the loss of untold acres of green space and has stressed the county's natural resources. As a result, it is critical that area leader reach a consensus on development patterns that embrace the environment but also allow for the diversification of the county's tax base.

PRIORITY PROJECTS:

- > Protect natural resources and green space.
- > Support mixed-use anchor destinations in the downtowns.
- > Establish an entertainment district.

Goal 3:
PLACE

Goal Three Summary of Recommendations and Work Plan

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD ORGANIZATION	TIMELINE >>			
		ONGOING	0-6 mos.	6-12 ms.	1-2 yrs. 3-5 yrs.
STRATEGY ONE > PROTECT AND PROMOTE LAKE COUNTY'S GREEN SPACES AND NATURAL RESOURCES.					
Action A >> Support the expansion of outdoor recreational options in Lake County.	COUNTY		X	X	X
Action B >> Promote Lake County's natural resources and recreational amenities.	COUNTY		X	X	X
Action C >> Encourage development patterns that follow the MyRegion.org vision for growth.	COUNTY		X	X	X
STRATEGY TWO > SUPPORT REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION ACTIVITIES IN AREA DOWNTOWNS.					
Action A >> Support public and private investment opportunities in downtown areas to create mixed-use anchor destinations and improved public places.	CITIES		X	X	X
Action B >> Support strategic redevelopment along major transportation corridors and at important intersections within Lake County's cities.	CITIES		X	X	X
Action C >> Promote transportation mobility options linking the areas urbanized areas and downtown destinations.	LSMPO			X	X
STRATEGY THREE > PROMOTE THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT.					
Action A >> Support the establishment of an entertainment district in one of Lake County's downtown areas.	CITIES			X	X
Action B >> Support local artists through publicly and privately sponsored events and other programs.	CITIES			X	X

goal 3:
PLACE

> **STRATEGY ONE > PROTECT AND PROMOTE LAKE COUNTY'S GREEN SPACES AND NATURAL RESOURCES.**

Lake County residents have repeatedly stated their interest in preserving green space and protection of the area's natural resources. Not only is this a strong value held within the county, it also makes economic development sense. Communities across the country clearly recognize the importance of recreational, parks, and preserved natural resources in their ability to make themselves more attractive to talented workers of all ages.

- **Action A >> Support the expansion of outdoor recreational options in Lake County.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partner(s): CITIES

Specific Tasks:

- Conduct a survey of existing residents to identify desired outdoor recreation opportunities that may not already be available in Lake County.
- Survey communities in the surrounding area to understand the competitive environment for meeting regional recreation demands.
- Explore funding options with assistance from area taxing entities, state and federal agencies, and area non-profits.
- Support the expansion of the existing parks systems throughout the county and its constituent cities, including hike and bike paths to create greenbelts connecting different parts of the county.

- **Action B >> Promote Lake County's natural resources and recreational amenities.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partner(s): CITIES

Specific Tasks:

- Raise regional awareness of outdoor recreation amenities throughout the region by including Lake County's lakes, green spaces, and recreational amenities in all marketing materials for the county and its local allies.

goal 3:
PLACE



- **Action C >> Encourage development patterns that follow the MyRegion.org vision for growth.**

Lead: COUNTY; Partner(s): CITIES

Specific Tasks:

- Encourage constituent communities to adopt standards that promote increased density within their city limits.
- Work with constituent communities in developing targeted incentives programs for the cities and Lake County to stimulate commercial growth inside city limits.

goal 3:
PLACE

STRATEGY TWO > SUPPORT REDEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION ACTIVITIES IN AREA DOWNTOWNS.

Lake County's downtowns present it with a strong opportunity to distinguish Lake County from the competition. Its downtown offers a number of unique retail boutiques, a sophisticated lodging, a number of fine dining experiences, and a burgeoning arts scene, all within historic and authentic settings. Lake County's downtowns have clearly benefited from significant private investments, not only making them economically viable areas but also as economically vital parts of the larger county.

anchor (n)
1. a reliable or principal support
2. a large business (as a department store) that attracts customers and other businesses to a shopping center or mall

The downtowns are unique *quality of place* assets that—if fully leveraged—can enhance Lake County's overall image within Central Florida. While this may appear to be an intangible benefit, an enhanced image can be translated into direct economic benefit for the county. The continued revitalization and redevelopment of the downtowns would serve several functions: 1) attracting baby boomer retirees, 2) retaining and attracting young talent, 3) capture increased tourism spending, 4) protect the significant private and public investments that have already occurred downtown, and 5) focus development away from the county's green spaces.

- **Action A >> Support public and private investment opportunities in downtown areas to create mixed-use anchor destinations and improved public places.**

Lead: CITIES; Partner: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Spread the anchors across the core of downtowns such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic must pass other tenants when traveling between anchors. This location strategy will provide heightened visibility for other tenants located in the core.
- If new public facilities, such as the development of the county complex in Tavares, are planned in other cities, encourage them to be within or adjacent to a downtown core to serve as a primary employment anchor.
- Encourage the development of a flagship mixed-use projects that will include entertainment options, fine dining, and residential units. These projects should be designed with the goal of promoting Lake County's downtowns as after-hours destinations. However, careful attention should be paid to attract tenants that complement, rather than compete with, existing downtown businesses.

- **Action B >> Support strategic redevelopment along major transportation corridors and at important intersections within Lake County's cities.**

Lead: CITIES; Partner: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Work with both public and private property owners and the cities to identify, inventory, and prioritize sites at highly visible or strategic locations suitable for redevelopment.

goal 3:
PLACE

- Create an information packet, including an inventory of priority sites, to provide to commercial brokers, retail site consultants, and franchises seeking locations in Lake County.
- Include redevelopment opportunity sites in marketing materials for Lake County.

- **Action C >> Promote transportation mobility options linking the areas urbanized areas and downtown destinations.**

Lead: LSMPO; Partner: CITIES, COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Support the development of a light rail or commuter rail line linking communities such as Tavares in Lake County to Orlando.
- Continue to support the development of a countywide bus system

goal 3:
PLACE



STRATEGY THREE > PROMOTE THE ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT.

For a county its size, Lake offers relatively few cultural and entertainment amenities. This situation is the norm in rapidly growing suburban areas due to their location in close proximity to a major city—where such amenities are typically abundant—and the fact that support institutions have not yet had time to fully evolve. This should not, however, minimize the importance of promoting the development amenities in Lake County. These assets not only serve the direct need for leisure activities of local residents, but they can also provide opportunities for increasing interest from out-of-county visitors including tourists visiting Orlando, as well as day-trippers from throughout the region. In essence, such arts and entertainment often act as destinations or catalysts that prompt interest and can increase local retail spending.

The development of arts and entertainment in Lake County can also serve a more strategic purpose: talent attraction. The interests of younger, educated talent (e.g., Echo Boomers, Generations X & Y) are hardly distinguishable from those of Baby Boomers. The enhancement of cultural, entertainment, and recreational activities in Lake County could serve to attract the interests of professionals of all ages. The expansion of live music, the arts, and other entertainment options in Lake County could help position it in retaining area students. If these students view the community in a more favorable light, then they would certainly be more willing to consider Lake County as a viable opportunity over the long-term.

- **Action A >> Support the establishment of an entertainment district in one of Lake County's downtown areas.**

Lead: CITIES; **Partner:** COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Meet with property owners and area residents to gauge support for the establishment of an entertainment district in one of Lake County's downtowns. If the proposal receives a positive community reaction, the following tasks should be considered.
- Identify the boundaries of the entertainment district.
- Designate the entertainment district with special zoning status (if necessary).
- Develop a conceptual site plan for the entertainment district as a means for promoting the idea to potential developers—both regional and national.
- Include conceptual site plan in marketing materials for Lake County.
- Identify an appropriate organizational structure and funding

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District:

TIFs are tools that use future gains in taxes to finance the public improvements in targeted zones. When the public improvement is completed, there is an assumed increase in the value of surrounding real estate, and often new investment (new or rehabilitated buildings, for example). This increased site value and investment creates more taxable property, which increases tax revenues, which are the "tax increment". TIFs dedicate that increased revenue to finance debt issued to pay for the project. TIF are generally designed to channel funding toward improvements in distressed or underdeveloped areas where development would not otherwise occur.

options for the entertainment district. Consideration should be given to the formation of a tax increment financing (TIF) district to support its establishment.

- **Action B >> Support local artists through publicly and privately sponsored events and other programs.**

Lead: CITIES; Partner: COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Encourage the use of art in public places focused on downtown areas. Consideration should also be given to sponsoring public art at transit stops throughout the county.
- Establish new special events and support existing ones to bring cultural and arts activities in the downtown areas (e.g. outdoor festivals, live music, outdoor movies, art shows, crafts fairs etc.).
- Promote the provision of a market space in one of Lake County's downtowns to promote local startup retailers, locally made arts and crafts, and/or locally grown agricultural products (e.g. monthly farmers market/arts and crafts fair).
- Support the efforts to develop a performing arts center at the Lake-Sumter Community College (LSCC) Leesburg Campus, where existing infrastructure and capacity are in place.
- Perform an analysis of the county's fairground facilities to determine the best long-term use of the site.

goal 3:
PLACE



GOAL FOUR: DEVELOP, RETAIN, AND ATTRACT TALENT

Talent > The concept of talent means more than a skilled workforce. It means recruiting talented people as well as cultivating the talent pool represented by groups as diverse as students, retirees, and entrepreneurs. It also means ensuring that the employees and companies that have been responsible for a community's growth continue to see a reason to remain in the area.

National demographic trends, most notably the aging of the baby boomers, suggest that demand for workers may soon outstrip supply. As a result, competition for labor is expected to increase among companies as well as communities. Focusing on the development, attraction, and retention of talent should, therefore, be an important part of any economic development strategy.

Economic development planning has traditionally focused solely on the recruitment of new businesses. Unfortunately, this approach depends heavily on tax abatements and the provision of sites with infrastructure services. While offering these and other incentives is certainly an important part of the overall economic development process, many economic developers stop at this point and do not recognize that they are only the most basic tools in the kit. Nurturing and attracting talent is perhaps the *most* fundamental issue for creating long-term, sustainable economic vitality. But this "talent" goal implies more than the typical workforce development and training issue.

Some of Lake County's talent-related challenges are common among growing suburbs: accommodating growth while retaining high standards and integrating new residents. What makes Lake County unique is the magnitude of growth and the diversity of its constituents and communities. These challenges call for an appropriate response—creating opportunities from obstacles.

The greatest talent-related opportunity for Lake County is the expansion of higher educational opportunities in the area. We believe this would provide tangible local benefits while also promoting an image of Lake County as a community that promotes and supports excellence in education. Realizing this goal would achieve several objectives: 1) retaining a higher percentage of home-grown talent, 2) enhancing the area's workforce needs through continuing education, 3) creating partnership opportunities for research between higher education and Central Florida's business community, and 4) enhancing Lake County's quality of place.

PRIORITY PROJECTS:

- > Support a new LSCC campus.
- > Support the development of a full service UCF regional campus in Lake County.
- > Support new target-related secondary academies.

goal 4:
TALENT

Goal Four Summary of Recommendations and Work Plan

STRATEGIES & ACTIONS	LEAD ORGANIZATION	TIMELINE >>			
		ONGOING	0-6 mos.	6-12 ms.	1-2 yrs. 3-5 yrs.
STRATEGY ONE > CONTINUE TO EXPAND AND PROMOTE HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSETS.					
Action A >> Support the development of a new LSCC campus in northeastern Lake County.	LSCC				X
Action B >> Establish a four-year university campus within Lake County.	UCF				X
STRATEGY TWO > PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.					
Action A >> Enhance and expand existing partnerships between LCS and area higher education assets.	LCS			X	X
Action B >> Link LCS secondary school programs with local economic development opportunities.	LCS				X
STRATEGY THREE > ENHANCE LINKAGES BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.					
Action A >> Link workforce development with target sectors and existing business needs.	WCF				X

goal 4:
TALENT



➤ **STRATEGY ONE > CONTINUE TO EXPAND AND PROMOTE HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND ASSETS.**

The importance of higher education and workforce training in economic development cannot be overstated. Employers must be assured of access to skilled workers, and talent is drawn to locations that offer educational opportunities. Higher education institutions also often play a crucial role in enhancing the image of a community both externally and internally. In addition, specific programs at a four-year school can also offer great potential for technology-transfer, private-public partnerships, and entrepreneurship in the surrounding area. As a result, we recommend that Lake County and its economic development partners remain supportive of existing higher education assets (e.g., LSCC and UCF) and remain mindful of opportunities for expanding their presence.

- **Action A >> Support the development of a new LSCC campus in northeastern Lake County.**

Lead: LSCC; Partners: COUNTY, CITIES, CHAMBERS, EDC

Specific Tasks:

- Communicate the importance of increasing LSCC's presence in Lake County to the area's residents and business and political leadership.
- Assist in the establishment of new programs to support specific target sectors, especially clean tech and agritech.
- Evaluate the option of locating entrepreneurial programming and one-stop economic development services at the campus, similar to Seminole Community College's Center for Economic Development (For more information, see: www.scc-fl.edu/heathrow).
- Encourage the use of green building standards in the planning and construction of the new campus.

- **Action B >> Establish a four-year university campus within Lake County.**

Lead: UCF; Partners: COUNTY, LSCC

Specific Tasks:

- Establish a *Higher Education Task Force* to support the expansion of UCF in Lake County.
- Meet with Lake County's legislative delegation to communicate the goal of achieving the expansion of higher education assets locally and to obtain guidance and feedback.
- Meet with the UCF to better understand its requirements for expanding its presence in the area.
- Consider offering assistance in identifying or acquiring suitable sites for a four-year campus if it cannot be achieved at the current location.

goal 4:
TALENT

- Visit other Florida communities to better understand how they were successful in establishing a local four-year college campus.
- Explore the potential for gaining support—financial or otherwise—from major corporate employers in the region for the development of a public/private institutional partnership.

➤ **STRATEGY TWO > PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE EXCELLENCE IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS.**

Public schools are crucial to local economic development. Employers need to be assured of access to trainable workers. At the same time, corporate executives—along with rank-and-file workers—all insist on an excellent education for their children. Not only that, but homebuyers, as well as the development community, recognize that their investments are strongly affected by the quality of a school district. It is, therefore, imperative that Lake County and its citizens remains supportive of Lake County Schools and continue to leverage this resource as a means for providing a positive image of the county and helping support Lake County's economic development efforts.

- **Action A >> Enhance and expand existing partnerships between LCS and area higher education assets.**

Lead: LCS; Partners: LSCC, UCF, COUNTY

Specific Tasks:

- Assist in the development of case studies of business/education collaborations in Florida and the U.S. and review these with local partners to determine the viability of various approaches in Lake County.
- Encourage LCS to establish "meet the principal" days for local businesses to develop a first-hand impression of the progress being made in the schools, including their physical plants.
- Explore the potential for creating scholarships—with support from both the public and private sectors—to local students who choose to pursue higher education at institutions serving Lake County.
- Consider the establishment of a program to assist local high school graduates gaining automatic admittance into regional higher educational institutions as a means for retaining local talent in the region (e.g., LSCC and UCF).
- Explore opportunities for expanding existing college coursework credit programs in area high schools.

goal 4:
TALENT



▪ **Action B >> Link LCS secondary school programs with local economic development opportunities.**

Lead: LCS; Partners: LSCC, COUNTY, CHAMBERS

Specific Tasks:

- Consider the establishment of a formal internship/apprenticeship program to aid in the transfer of vocational students to entry-level positions among existing local employers and/or targeted sectors.
- Encourage and support the development of additional secondary schools with curricula geared towards targeted sectors, such as LCS's current efforts in establishing a healthcare related high school.
- Work with LCS and LSCC in the establishment of "career days" for area employers and entrepreneurs to discuss employment and educational opportunities in Lake County, especially as they relate to target sectors.

➤ **STRATEGY THREE > ENHANCE LINKAGES BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS.**

As labor markets continue to tighten, the availability of skilled workers has become a significant factor in the successful development of industry clusters. Aligning workforce resources in support of the region's industry clusters will help to enhance Lake County's competitive position, as well as maximize available resources. This approach encompasses a range of issues including matching skills training with the needs of current and future employers, creating channels for gathering business intelligence, and identifying high-demand occupations for targeting.

▪ **Action A >> Link workforce development with target sectors and existing business needs.**

Lead: WCF; Partners: LSCC, LCS, COUNTY, LTI

Specific Tasks:

- Assist in the facilitation of an annual *Lake County Workforce Development Summit* to:

- Better understand the county's labor force availability, talent assets, and training capabilities available for potential employers relocating to the county.
- Maintain and solidify existing cooperative relationships between Workforce Central Florida, LSCC, LCS, Lake County, and the business community.
- Ensure that area businesses are made aware of any workforce development incentives (e.g., customized training incentives, tuition reimburse tax credits, etc.) that are available to businesses and that area training programs continue to match business needs in Lake County.

goal 4
Talent

- Support new and expand existing internship/apprenticeship programs (if demonstrated need is determined through the workforce development summit) that aid in the placement of vocational/technology students with area employers and targeted sectors to support their needs for talent.
- Continue to support workforce development and training activities at Lake Technical Institute and encourage the development of programs linked to the county's target sectors.

goal 4: TALENT



appendix

This appendix includes an economic and demographic assessment and entrepreneurial assessment for Lake County. Profiles detailing Lake County's recommended target sectors are also included within this section of the plan.

ECONOMIC & DEMOGRAPHIC ASSESSMENT

Methodology > The primary goal of the following assessment is to arrive at a common understanding of Lake County's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats from an economic development perspective. This analysis is expressed in the context of both regional and national economic trends to ascertain Lake County's relative position within this framework and to highlight the county's competitive advantages and disadvantages.

To conduct this analysis, TIP has drawn upon its experience and overall understanding of both economic development, as well as global and national economic and demographic trends affecting its practice. One such trend, which will have tremendous effects on economic development, is the pending retirement of the Baby Boom generation. This demographic cohort represents approximately 80 million Americans, many of whom are the most experienced and productive workers in the nation's labor force. Their exodus from the workplace will not only affect companies across the county but also the communities that host them. Communities and regions that understand the implications of this demographic shift and develop strategies for ensuring that the pipeline of talent remains filled will be at a strong competitive advantage for attracting new private sector investment.

Background > TIP reviewed a number of studies, plans, and other material that impact economic development planning and activities in Lake County. With assistance from the client, TIP solicited materials from various sources, such as the Lake County, area communities within the county, and other organizations.

Input > For any plan to be effective, it must respond to the needs of those who will be affected by the plan (residents and businesses) and to the community leaders charged with its implementation. Throughout the *Discovery* phase of this planning process, we capitalized on opportunities presented by interviews and site visits to solicit input from key stakeholders, including:

- Agri Starts III, Inc.
- City of Clermont
- City of Leesburg
- City of Mount Dora
- City of Tavares
- Lake County Industrial Development Authority
- Lake-Sumter Community College
- Lake County Schools
- Lake County Land Planning Authority
- Metro Orlando EDC

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- Florida Food Products Inc.
- Lake County Board of Commissioners
- National Training Center
- South Lake Chamber of Commerce

Assessment > After having reviewed past plans and studies and meeting with local partners and interested parties, TIP completed a targeted analysis of demographic and economic factors that are of greatest concern to national business leaders, site selectors, and other economic decision makers. This assessment included the analysis of trends pertaining to Lake County's:

- Population
- Age
- Educational attainment
- Occupations
- Commuting
- Income
- Housing
- Employment
- Local taxes

Major Findings > The following strengths and challenges (as well as "SWOT" table on page 34) are meant to provide a brief "snapshot" of findings. The following assessment does not include each data point that will be included in the final assessment, but only those issues that appear to currently have the greatest impact on economic development activities in Lake County. As we proceed into the Opportunities phase, we expect to continue to gather more information about the area's strengths and challenges, especially as they relate to specific opportunities.

Strengths:

- **REGIONAL ECONOMY** > The Greater Orlando region has one of the most dynamic metropolitan economy's in the nation. Between 2000 and 2005, the Orlando-Kissimmee Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) experienced a net increase of 118,000 wage and salary jobs, placing the MSA in sixth place nationally for total job growth, according to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis. Moreover, the metro area had the 25th largest concentration of wage and salary jobs in 2005. According to a recent study by the Brookings Institute, the Orlando metro area also enjoyed the 29th largest gross domestic product among all the nation's metropolitan areas. Lake County's location within this growing metropolitan area places it at a distinct advantage for increasing local employment opportunities for its residents.
- **LOCATION & INFRASTRUCTURE** > The county offers a strong central geographic location within Florida and is served by the Florida Turnpike. This interstate-grade tollway provides good access from the county to



markets in the Miami area, northwest Florida, and much of the Southeast U.S. In addition, the county's close proximity and direct connections to Interstate 4, as well as the Orlando Beltway, provide access to destinations in both northeast and southwest Florida. As a result, Lake County is home to a number of major distribution facilities located in the Christopher C. Ford Commerce Park.

- **WORKFORCE** > According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lake County's civilian labor force has doubled in the last fifteen years, reaching over 123,000 in 2006 (annual estimate). The metropolitan region's labor force totals over a million workers. As a result, local and regional employers enjoy access to a large and growing labor force to accommodate and sustain employment growth. A significant number of local workers, however, must commute outside Lake County to pursue employment opportunities. In 2000, approximately one-third of the county's employed residents worked outside the county according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Since then the county's population and workforce have grown substantially. One local stakeholder estimated that roughly half of the county's labor force commutes outside the county now.
- **HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE TRAINING** > Lake-Sumter Community College (LSCC) and its strong alliance with the University of Central Florida (UCF) create a strength for developing local workforce skills and fostering the necessary talent that make local employers competitive. LSCC offers an impressive array of educational programs at its two existing campuses. In addition, UCF's South Lake campus, a joint-use facility developed in partnership with LCSS, provides opportunities for local students to obtain a four-year degree. UCF's Sports and Fitness program, for example, is offered only at the South Lake campus.
- **HEALTHCARE** > Lake County enjoys a significant and growing healthcare economy, anchored by Leesburg Regional Medical Center, South Lake Hospital, as well as a number of assisted living, nursing care, and other rehabilitative facilities.
- **RECREATION** > Lake County enjoys an abundance of recreation-related assets, a key contributor in creating a strong quality of life and sense of place for its residents. This should be an important consideration for economic development in the way that these assets are strong influencers on the location decisions of upper income and more highly educated residents. The ability to attract talented workers to Lake County will have a direct impact on its ability to recruit higher wage businesses. Additionally, recreation assets can also strongly shape overall perceptions of the county as a whole which can also affect business location decisions. Finally, these recreational options provide the county with assets for attracting additional tourism-related and retiree spending.
- **HISTORIC DOWNTOWNS** > Scattered across Lake County are a number of finely preserved and revitalized downtowns, including Mt. Dora, Eustis, and Leesburg. The redevelopment of these downtowns appears to have strongly influenced the emergence of a local arts and culture community. Much like recreational assets, downtowns, arts, and culture provide the county with the ability to positively influence perceptions regarding Lake County. This, in turn, can also positively influence visitor spending as well as talent and business recruitment.

- **SITES** > In spite of its explosive population growth, Lake County still retains an abundance of sites to accommodate business relocations to the area. Beyond, the Ford Commerce Park, few of these sites are however fully developed business sites. While the availability of raw land is undoubtedly a traditional economic development strength, considerations regarding the development of this land is also a challenge. For example, many of the “best” sites are located beyond the city limits of Lake County’s various municipalities. As a result, site development decision making in the county is complicated by the competing interests of multiple stakeholders in Lake County.

Challenges:

- **UNDER-DEVELOPED ECONOMY** > An assessment of employment data reveals that Lake County’s economy is largely under-developed. In other words, most local employers and economic activity is largely driven by a single factor: population growth. As a result, job growth in the county has been largely concentrated in activities that serve a locally growing population, including construction, retail, healthcare, and education. Very few local businesses act as primary employers, meaning the export of goods and services outside the county. Export industries are a key consideration in economic development due to their ability to expand the economy by bringing in dollars from outside the area.
- **UNCOORDINATED PLANNING & LACK OF CONSENSUS** > From an economic development perspective, Lake County has good problems. The county is part of a large, prospering metropolitan area with an increasingly bright economic future. To date, however, the county has not yet fully benefited from this location. Instead, much of the county’s growth has been tied solely to an increase in its residential population. This is a recognized suburban growth trend. Typically, suburban areas first see the decline of their agriculture base as the perceived value of the land transfers to residential development. The next stage in this trend is the arrival of retail to serve a growing population along with a few employers taking advantage of a larger labor force. The final stage is the eventual development of a more balanced and self-sustaining economy. This last development phase, however, is no guarantee. The collective decisions that are made in managing growth through land use and economic development activities strongly influence the ability of an area to reach its full potential by maximizing its advantages and opportunities. Currently, there appears to be no wide consensus within Lake County regarding its future. Complicating this is the geographic size of the county with multiple municipalities divided up between the northern and southern parts of the county. In addition, the county is served by several economic development-related entities, including the Lake County Department of Economic Growth and Redevelopment, Lake County Industrial Development Authority, multiple chambers, and the regional Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission. Without a strong vision for Lake County, these organizations among others have failed to reach a consensus for common economic development goals resulting in inter-agency turf battles. This sends a mixed message not only to current residents but also to the business community at large.
- **GROWTH MANAGEMENT** > Ensuring high quality development in Lake County should be a top priority. The image of Lake County and its communities is inextricably linked with its major transportation corridors. These are the primary visual medium of the area to the vast majority of residents throughout the region. Beyond the visual image of Lake County, growth management issues also concern the quality of place as land use

decision can affect both traffic congestion and environmental issues. These decisions have obviously been a major struggle in Lake County. We believe that the key for economic development is the pursuit of opportunities that enhance the image of the area, contribute to the county's quality of place, and have a high impact on its long-term economic vitality and tax base.

- **IMAGE & PERCEPTION** > Throughout our interview process with local and regional stakeholders, the TIP team heard several mentions regarding the image of Lake County. We were told that, regionally, the county is perceived as being out-of-the-way, poor, less educated, not business friendly, etc. Without conducting a scientific survey, it is difficult to validate these image perceptions. Given the frequency with which these comments were heard, it is difficult to discount them however. In addition, the team was also told that perceptions regarding the school district were historically not positive, but recent improvements in both academic performance and facilities are beginning to mitigate these perceptions.

SWOT TABLE > TIP conducted an economic development SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) for Lake County. This assessment was based on a review of economic and demographic characteristics, input from regional economic development experts, interviews with local business and community leaders, and our experience working with suburban areas across the country. The following table captures the major findings from this analysis:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
■ Regional Economy ■ Location and Infrastructure ■ Regional Workforce ■ Higher Education and Workforce Training Assets ■ Healthcare ■ Outdoor Recreational Assets ■ Historic Downtowns ■ Sites	■ Housing Slump ■ Underdeveloped local economy ■ School district perceptions ■ Lack of countywide consensus ■ Uncoordinated planning
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
■ Health and wellness cluster development ■ Multimodal transportation ■ Business and professional services ■ Higher education expansions ■ Image and marketing	■ Growth management ■ Loss of sites

Demographic Overview

- A snapshot overview of the various demographic indicators reveals that Lake County is expected add approximately 67,000 new residents by 2012, current trends continue.
- During the next five years, Lake County's population is expected to expand at a 4.2 percent compounded annual growth rate (CAGR).
- The percent of adults (25+ years of age) that hold a Bachelor's Degree or higher is significantly lower than the state as a whole.
- The distribution of occupations for employed local residents is similar to the state as a whole. Although a slightly higher share of local residents are employed in Blue Collar occupations (26%) than the state (22%).
- The local homeownership rate (73%) is significantly higher than the statewide rate (63%).

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T.I.P. STRATEGIES

Lake County Demographic Overview

	Lake County	State of Florida
Population		
2007	292,691	18,893,813
2012	359,915	21,311,920
5-Year Net Chg, 2007-12	+67,224	+2,418,107
CAGR*, 2007-12	4.2%	2.4%
Households		
2007	122,780	7,510,601
2012	151,295	8,501,036
5-Year Net Chg, 2007-12	+28,515	+990,435
CAGR*, 2007-12	4.3%	2.5%
Educational Attainment (% of Population Age 25 or Older)**		
No High School Diploma or GED	20.2%	20.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16.6%	22.4%
Household Employment by Occupation (% of Population Age 16 or Older, 2007)		
White Collar	54.2%	59.6%
Services	20.0%	18.6%
Blue Collar	25.8%	21.8%
Other 2007 Indicators		
Homeownership Rate	72.6%	63.1%
Avg Household Size	2.35	2.46
Median Household Income	\$45,699	\$48,591
Median Home Value	\$204,660	\$231,576
Median Age	46.0	41.0

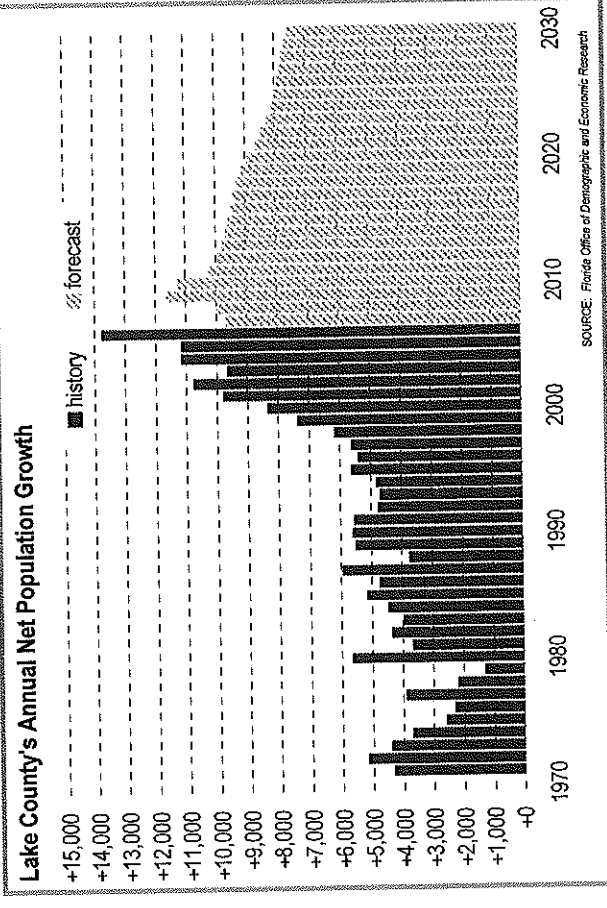
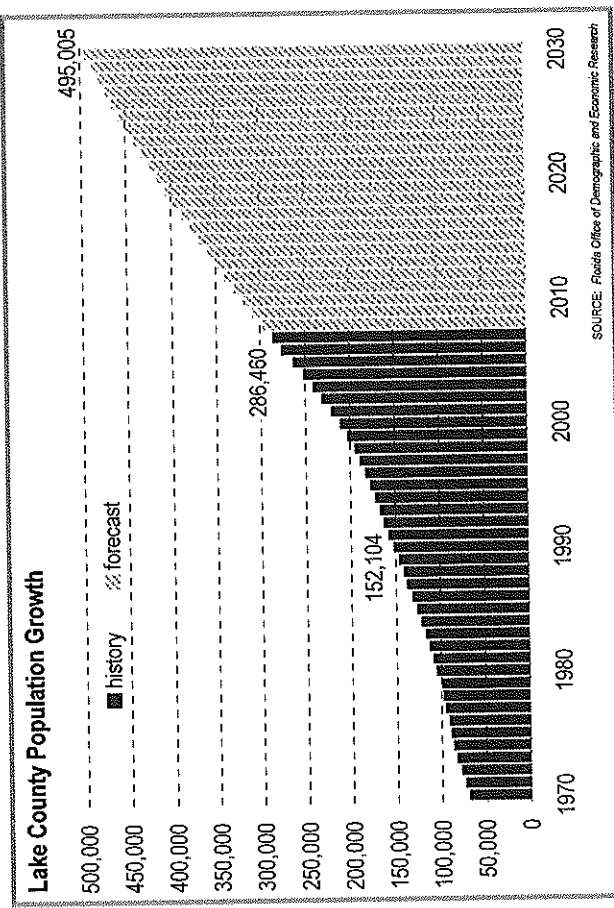
SOURCE: ESRI

*compound annual growth rate

** as of 2000 Census since 2007 estimates were not available from ESRI at this level of geographic detail

Population Growth

- Since 1970, Lake County's population has tripled.
- Since 2000, the annual addition of new residents has accelerated. Prior to 2000, the county never added more than 6,000 new residents in a year. In 2006, that level peaked at nearly 14,000, according to the Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research.
- Though Lake County's net population growth in future years is expected to be less than the unusually robust 2006 level, annual gains are still expected to exceed the average levels of the 1990s by a wide margin.

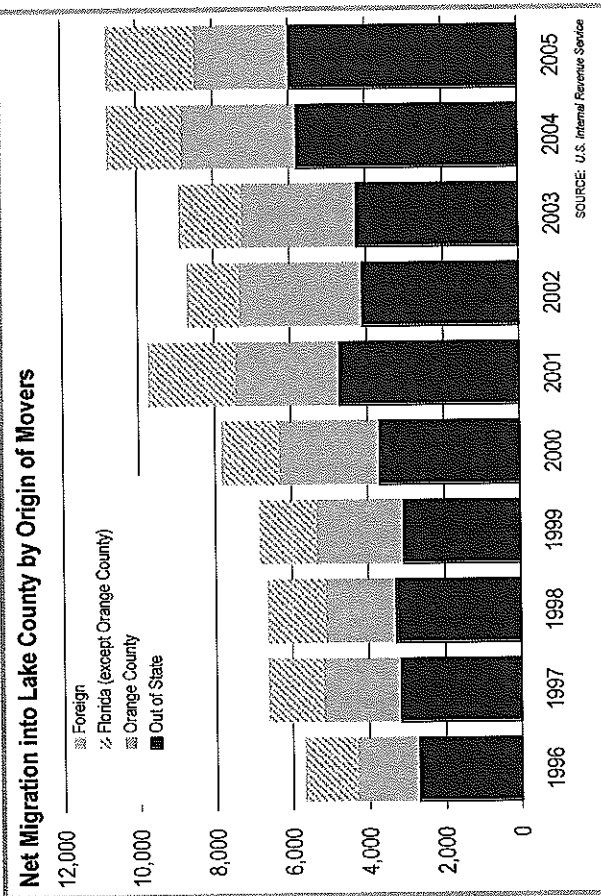


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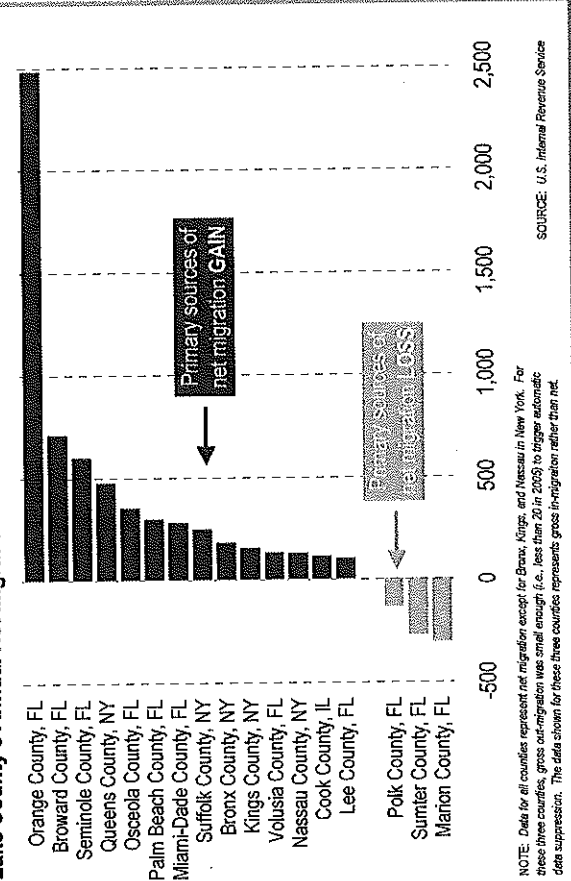


Migration Patterns

- Net migration into Lake County has nearly doubled over the past decade, rising from 5,700 in 1996 to 10,800 in 2005.
- The out-of-state portion of this total did, in fact, double from 2,700 net in-migrants in 1996 to nearly 6,000 in 2005.
- Despite recent changes in sources of migration, Orange County remains by far the leading source of in-migration into Lake County. Among out-of-state sources, New York City (Queens, Kings, and Bronx Counties) and Long Island (Suffolk and Nassau Counties) are major sources of in-migration.
- On a net basis, Lake County loses residents to Polk, Sumter, and Marion Counties in Florida.



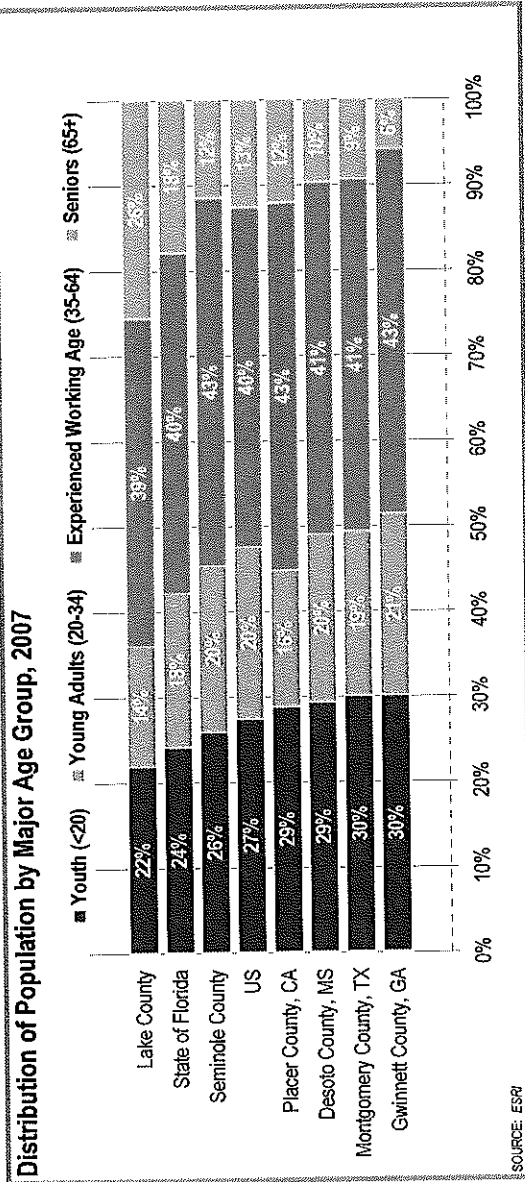
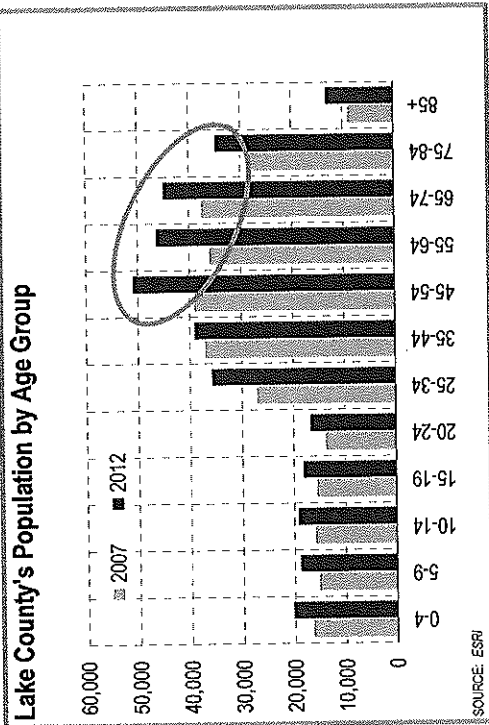
Lake County's Annual Net Migration Flows of 100 or More



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Age Groups & Distribution

- In the next five years, the number of persons aged 45-84 years living in Lake County is expected to increase by approximately 36,000 persons. This would represent over 50 percent of the county's expected growth during the same period.
- Already, Lake County has a much higher share of older persons than other suburban counties around the country. For example, over a quarter of current residents are of retirement age, compared with only 12 percent in nearby Seminole County.

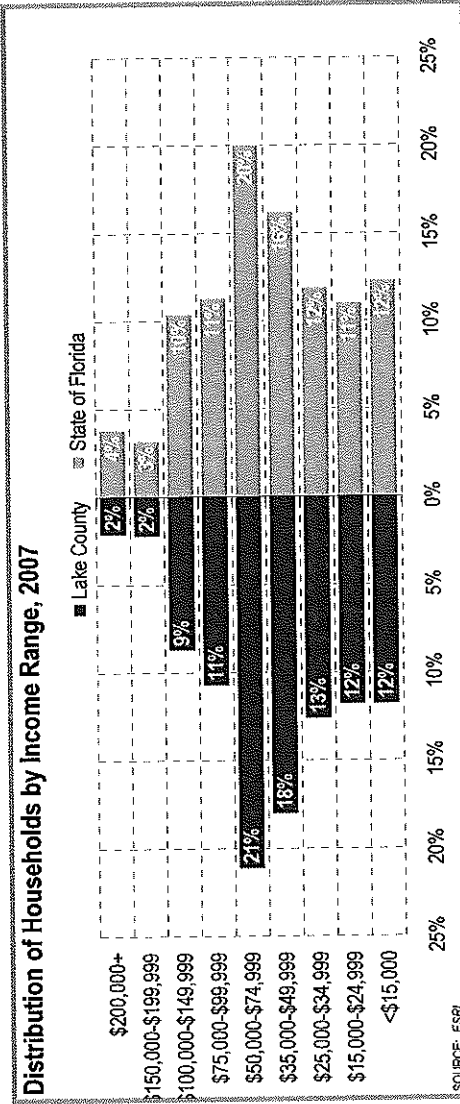
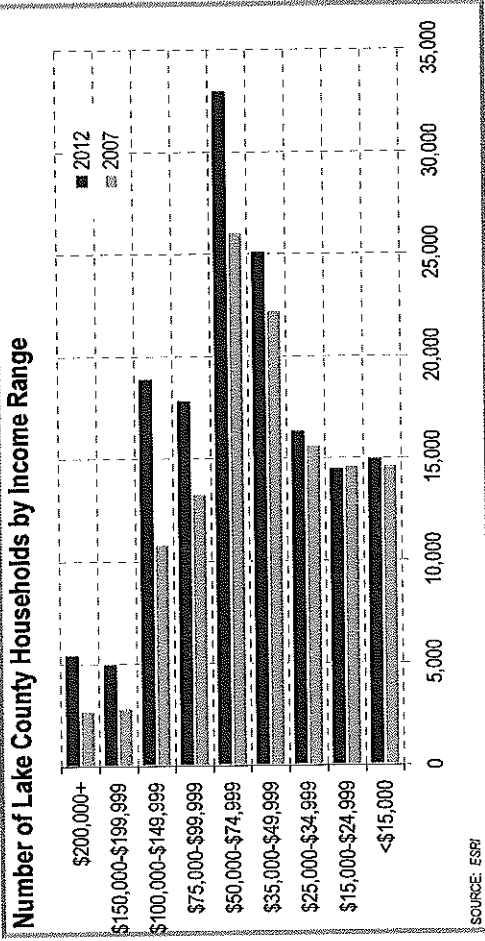


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Household Income

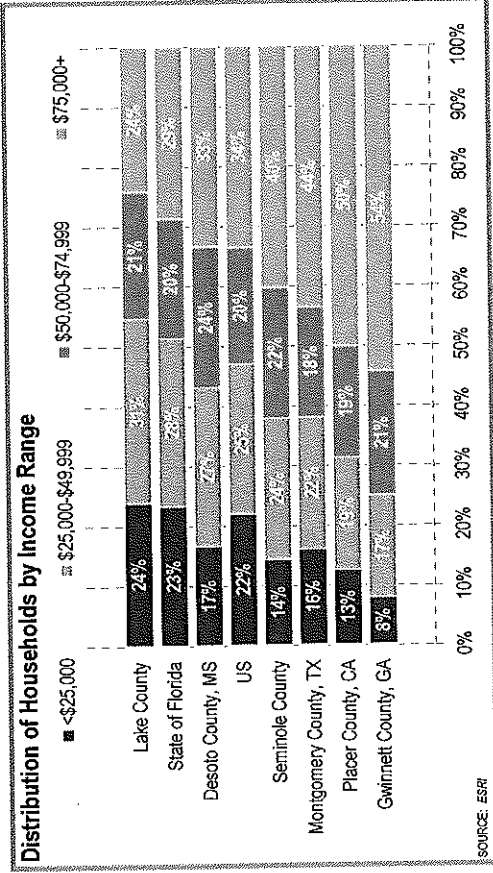
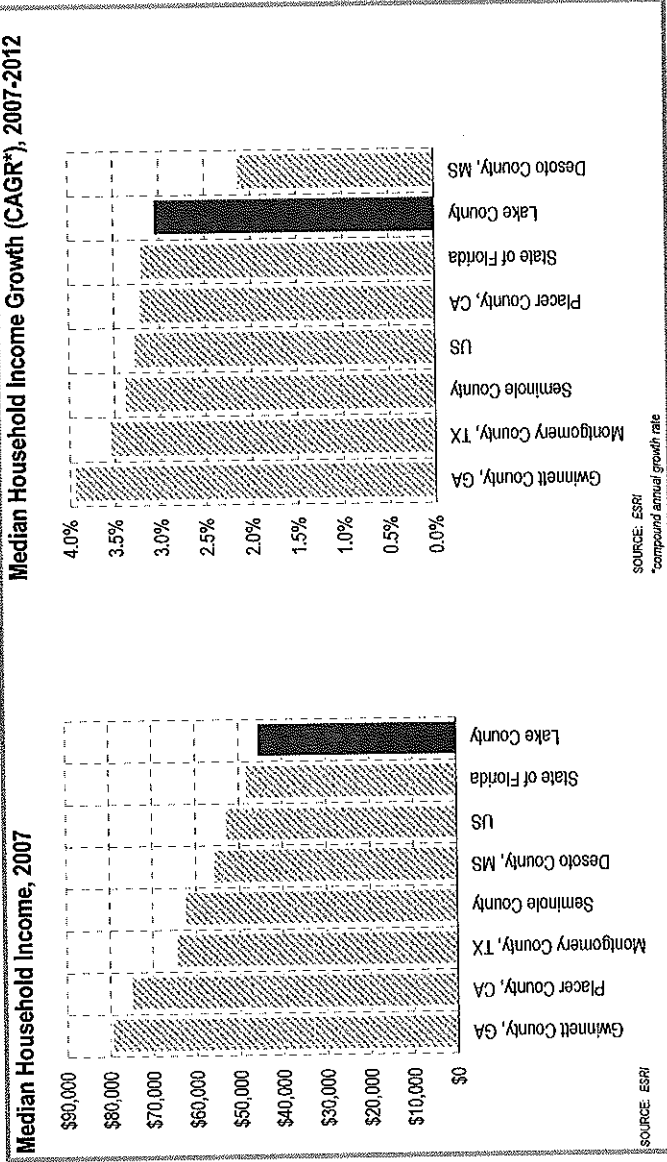
- During the next five years, the number of upper and middle income households in Lake County is expected to increase rapidly. By comparison, lower income household growth is anticipated to be negligible.
- Lake County's distribution of household by income is very similar to the state as a whole.



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Household Income (cont'd)

- The current median household income in Lake County is estimated to be approximately \$45,700. This figure is only slightly lower than the state of Florida but substantially lower than incomes in other suburban Sunbelt counties.
- Median household income is expected to increase at an annual clip of about three percent. This rate compares favorably to national peers.
- In 2007, 55 percent of local households had an income that was less than \$50,000, and only a quarter of households had an income greater than \$75,000.

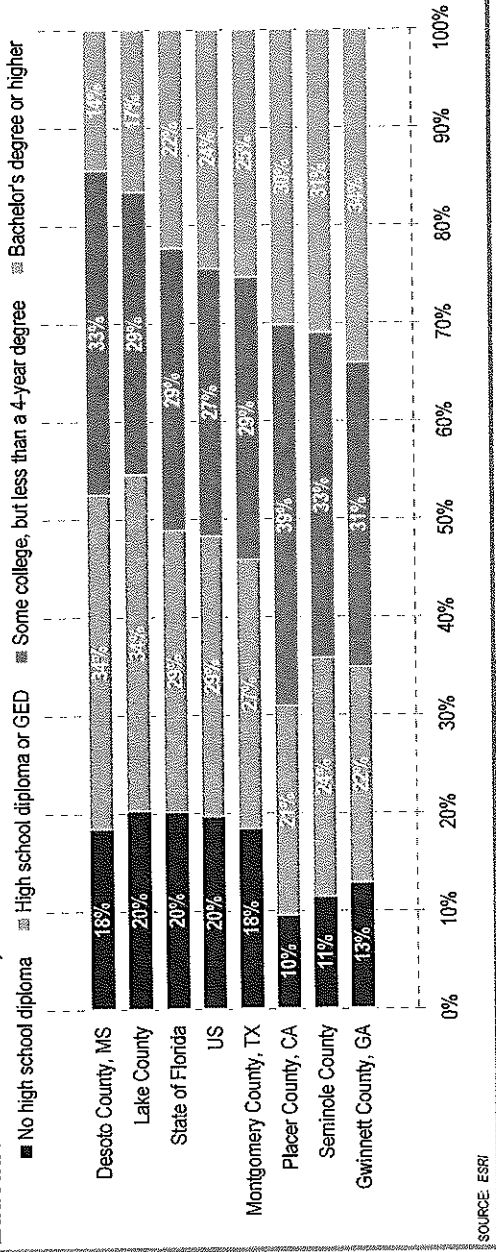


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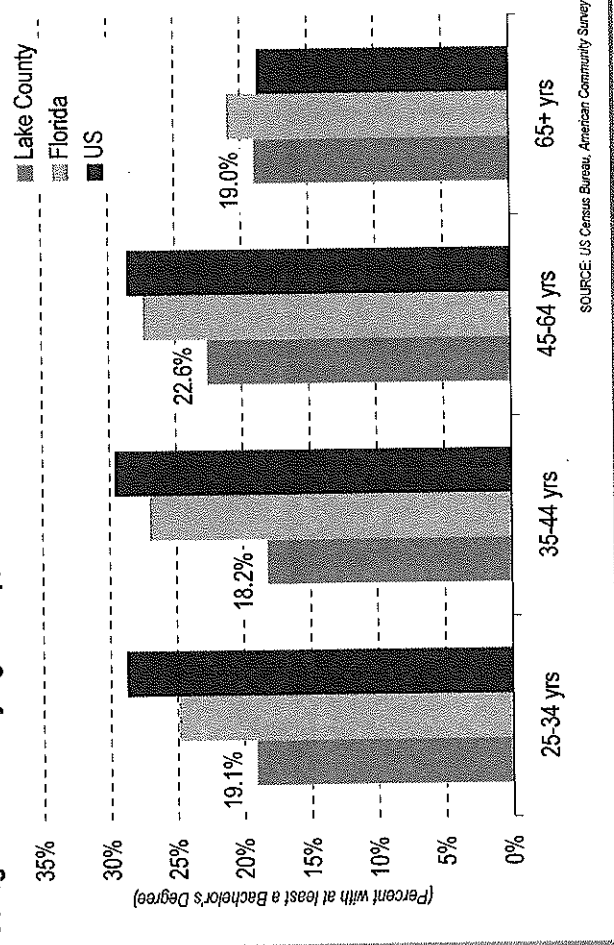
Educational Attainment

- In 2000, only 17 percent of adults living in Lake County had earned a Bachelor's Degree.
- Among its national peers, only Desoto County, Mississippi, had a smaller share of college graduates.
- At the same time, the county was tied with the state and nation in having the highest share of adults who had not graduated from high school.
- Recent estimate from an experimental program at the Census Bureau indicate that discrepancies in the percent of college graduates between Lake County and the state and nation are occurring among younger workers.

Educational Attainment, 2000



College Graduates by Age Group, 2006

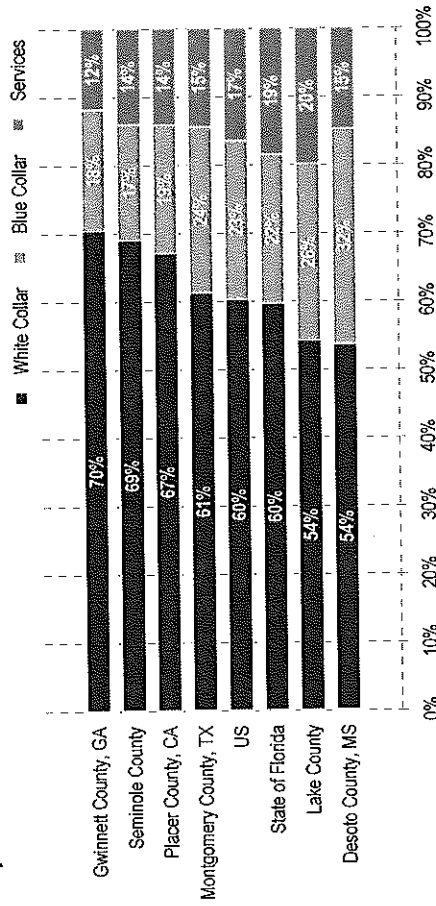


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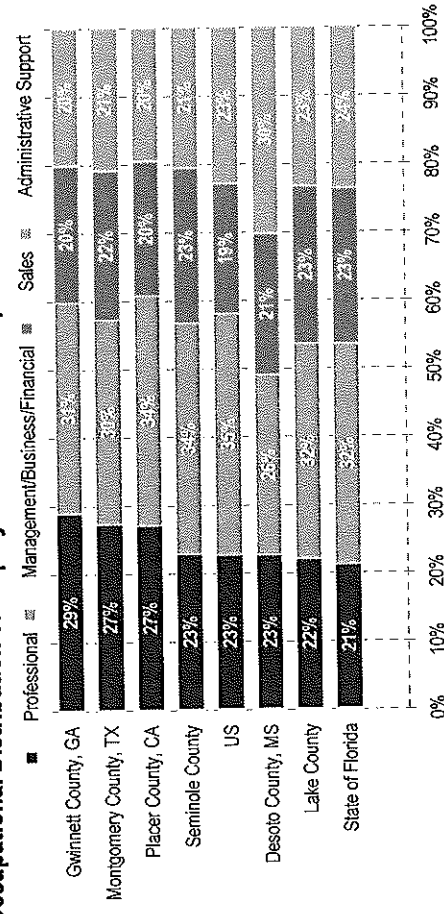
Distribution of Occupations

- In comparison with other suburban counties, Lake County was tied with Desoto County, Mississippi, in having the smallest share of White Collar workers. In addition, Lake County had the highest percentage of employed residents working in Services occupations (which are typically lower paying).
- Among White Collar occupational segments, Lake County had a similar share of residents employed in management, business, or financial jobs as its national peers.
- Notably, Lake County lagged only slightly behind nearby Seminole County in its share of professionally employed residents.

Occupational Distribution of Total Employed Population, 2007



Occupational Distribution of Employed White Collar Population, 2007



SOURCE: ESRI

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Orlando MSA — Occupations

Occupational group	Number of Jobs	LQ (US=1.00)
Office & administrative	191,350	1.08
Sales	132,160	1.22
Food preparation & serving	110,350	1.30
Transportation & material-moving	65,420	0.88
Construction & extraction	64,580	1.26
Education & training	52,160	0.83
Business & financial	47,300	1.06
Cleaning & property maintenance	46,510	1.38
Healthcare - technical	42,520	0.82
Installation, maintenance, & repair	41,170	1.00
Production	37,010	0.47
Personal care & services	36,590	1.46
Management	29,750	0.66
Computer & mathematical	22,510	0.95
Protective services	22,270	0.96
Healthcare - support	20,280	0.76
Architecture & engineering	19,040	1.02
Design, entertainment, & media	14,480	1.09
Community & social services	7,110	0.53
Legal	7,070	0.94
Life, physical, & social sciences	6,710	0.71
Ag & forestry	2,930	0.85

Median Salaries

Occupational group	Local Median Salary	% of U.S. Median
Management	\$81,460	101%
Legal	\$61,050	90%
Computer & mathematical	\$58,170	88%
Architecture & engineering	\$54,730	88%
Healthcare - technical	\$48,330	93%
Business & financial	\$47,950	89%
Life, physical, & social sciences	\$44,840	85%
Design, entertainment, & media	\$37,220	97%
Education & training	\$37,100	90%
Community & social services	\$33,930	95%
Installation, maintenance, & repair	\$33,530	91%
Construction & extraction	\$30,330	86%
Protective services	\$28,920	90%
Office & administrative	\$25,860	92%
Production	\$24,030	88%
Sales	\$23,370	101%
Transportation & material-moving	\$23,210	92%
Healthcare - support	\$22,530	99%
Cleaning & property maintenance	\$18,850	93%
Ag & forestry	\$17,790	99%
Personal care & services	\$17,420	91%
Food preparation & serving	\$16,720	102%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2006 data released May 17, 2007

Regional Salaries by Occupation

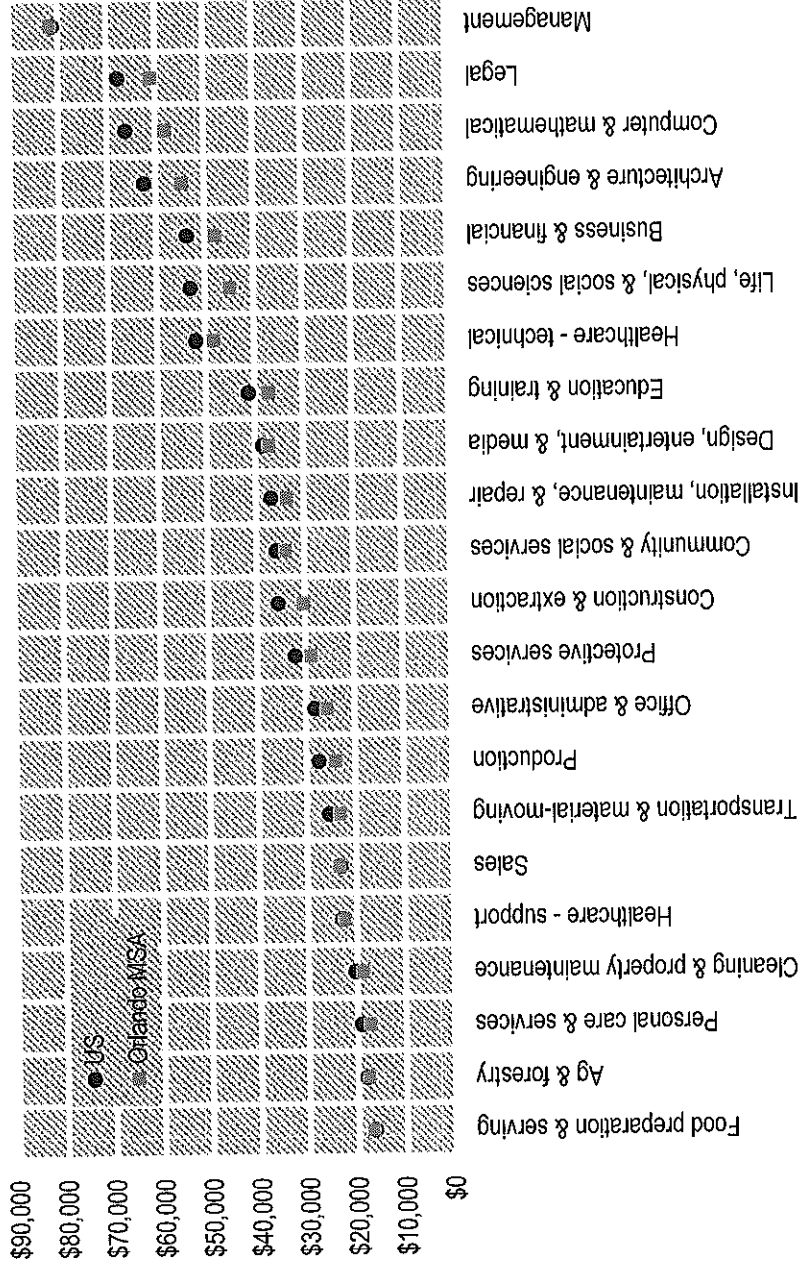
- The median salary for regional workers was significantly lower than for their national counterparts in nearly all occupational categories even among the Orlando region's highest paying job categories (with the exception of management positions).
- The region's highest occupational LQs tend to be in positions that are related to Orlando's tourism economy, e.g., food preparation and serving, cleaning, and personal care services.
- The region's lowest occupational LQ is in production occupations, which tend to be in manufacturing industries.

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Occupational Salary Variations

- The Orlando area lags the national median salary across most occupations, but the gap is most obvious among higher-paid, higher-skilled occupational groups.

Occupational Salary Variations Between the Orlando Region and the National Median

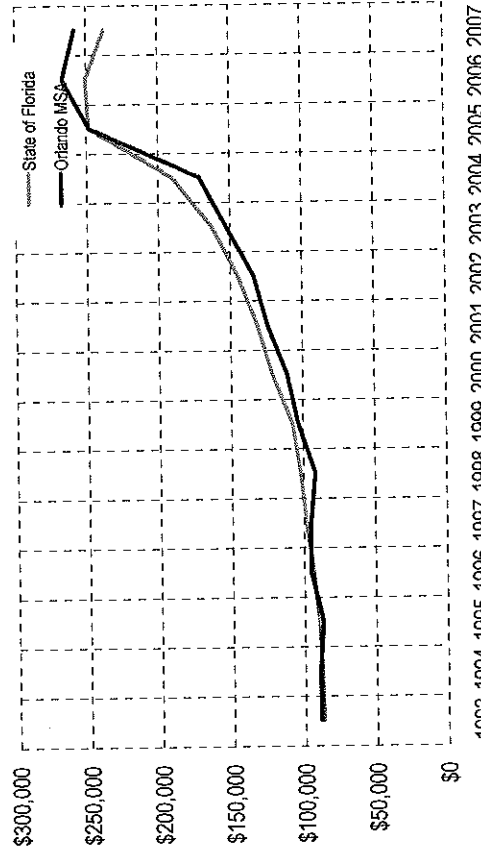


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Home Sales Prices

- Median home prices in the Orlando metropolitan area have historically been near or slightly below the statewide average. However, the recent run-up in prices peaked statewide before peaking in Orlando. The result is that Orlando's prices – though falling – are still ahead of the statewide average, at least for now.
- In the late 1990s, the development cost associated with a single family home in Lake County was relatively close to median sale price for an existing single family home in the Orlando MSA. In the last five years, however, regional prices shot well above actual development costs, leaving an unsustainable gap that the market has not yet fully corrected.

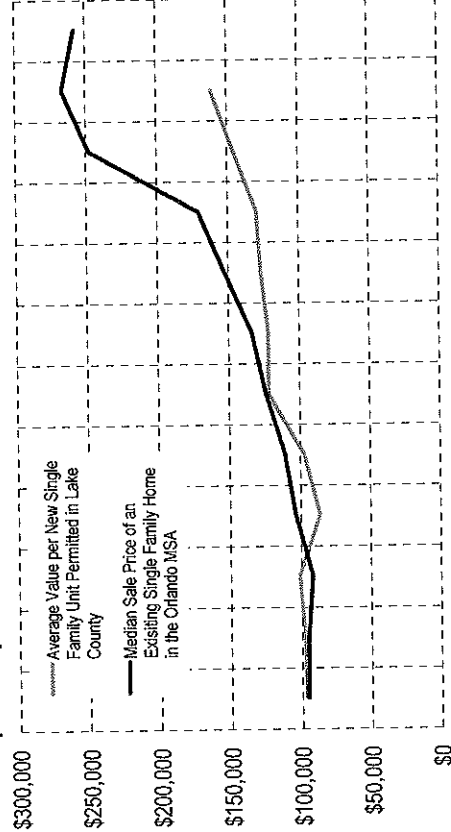
Mid-Year Median Sale Price for Existing Single Family Homes



SOURCE: Florida Association of Realtors; University of Florida Real Estate Research Center

What Goes Up...

A Wide Gap Developed Between SF Home Development Costs & Sale Prices



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Florida Association of Realtors; University of Florida Real Estate Research Center; TLP Strategies

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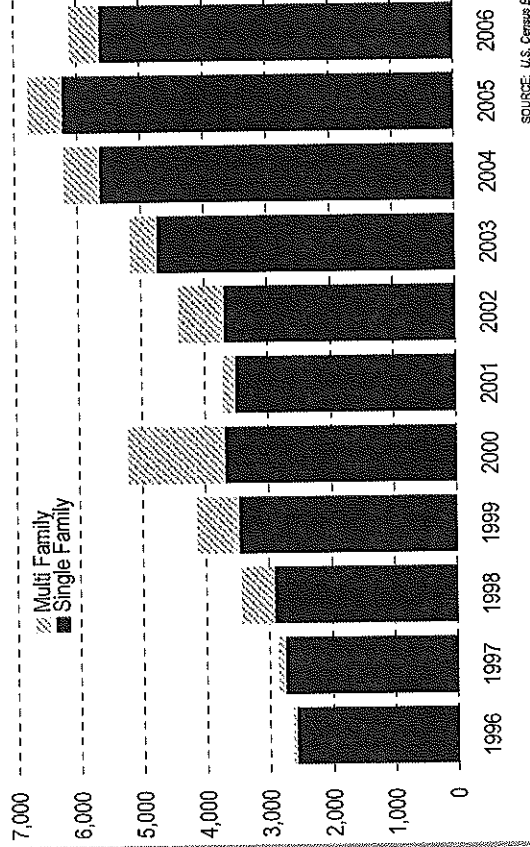


T.I.P. STRATEGIES

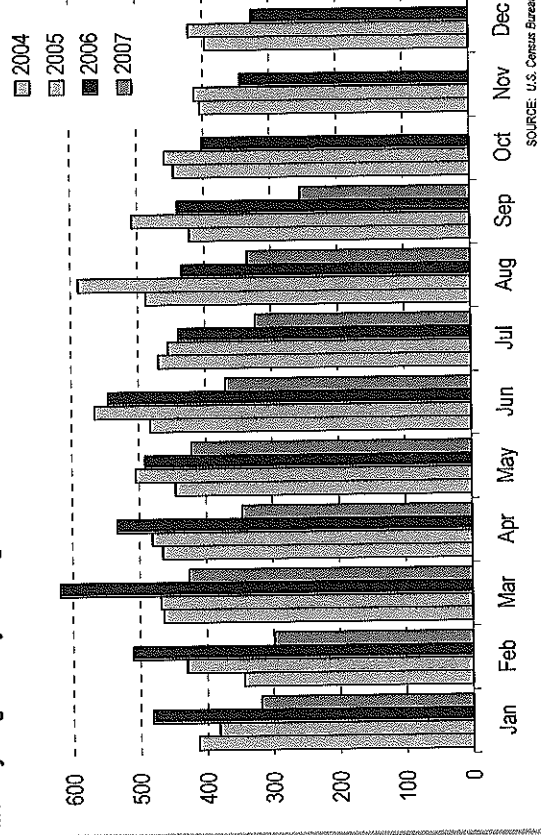
Residential Building Permits

- Lake County's housing permits peaked in 2005.
- Single family construction accounts for the vast majority of residential growth.
- Even as housing prices re-adjust, Lake County's fast population growth means that single-family construction is likely to remain strong by historical standards.

Annual Housing Permits Issued in Lake County



Monthly Single Family Building Permits, 2004 thru Present



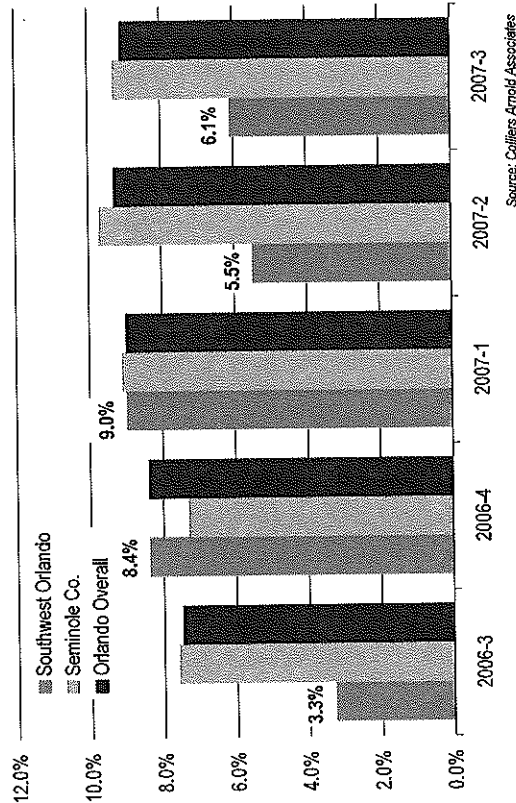
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Office Market

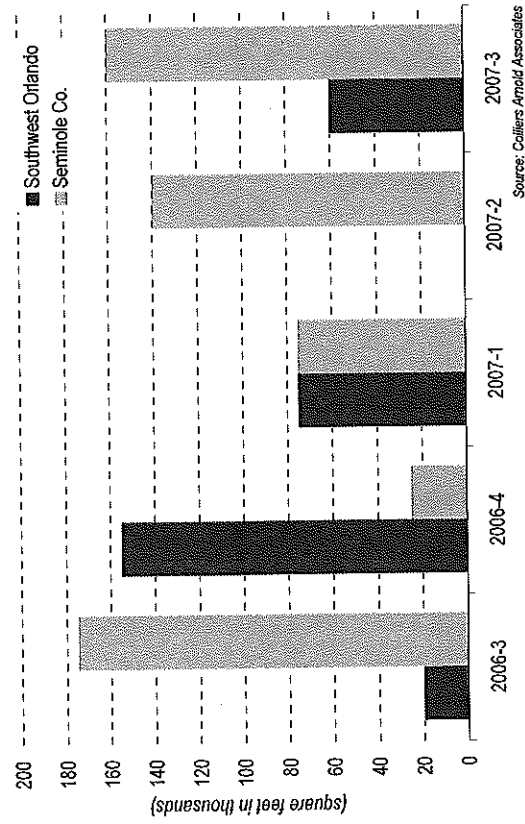
Note: While the *Colliers Arnold Market Report* does not include Lake County within its data compilations, these figures can still provide an understanding of the county's *potential* position within the overall market.

- The Southwest Orlando office submarket—which includes southwestern Orange County and the I-4 corridor in Osceola County—had the lowest vacancy rate among all submarkets in the Orlando region in the third quarter of 2007 (the latest for which data were available).
- This rate is three percentage points lower than six months prior due to the rapid absorption of new inventory that had been introduced in the fourth quarter of 2006.
- During the last 12 months, nearly 300,000 square feet of office space was completed in the Southwest Orlando submarket, compared to approximately 400,000 square feet in Seminole County.

Class A Vacancy Rates - Last 5 Quarters



Office Space Completions - Submarket Comparison

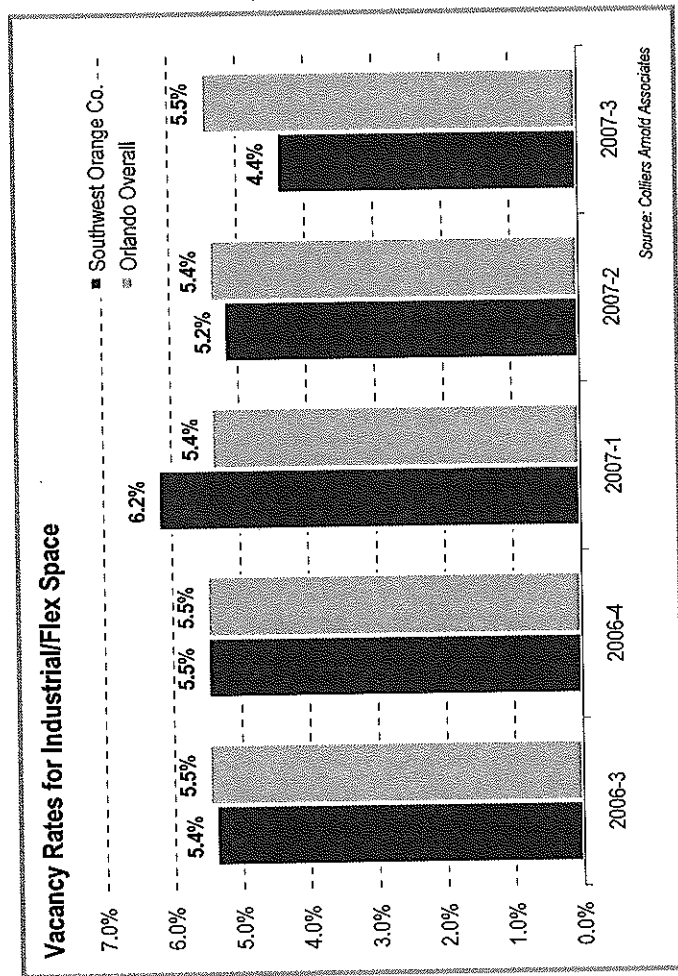


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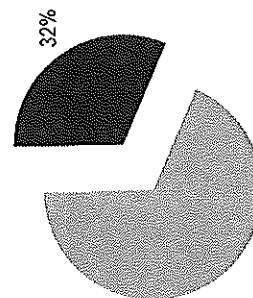
Industrial/Flex Market

Note: The Colliers Arnold Market Report does not include Lake County within its data compilations.

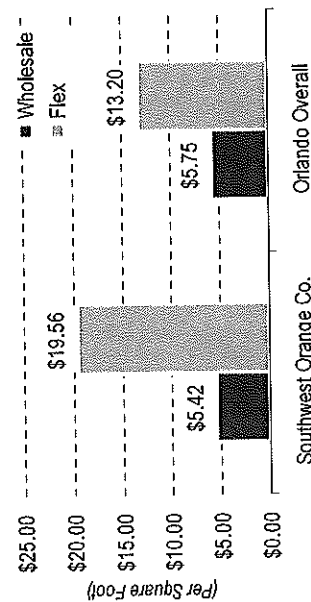
- Vacancy rates for industrial and flex space in the Southwest Orange County submarket fell sharply in 2007, compared to a steadier rate throughout the Orlando region.
- Southwestern Orange County is the largest submarket in the region, accounting for nearly a third of all space.
- A comparison of asking rates by space type reveals that flex space is much more expensive in the southwestern submarket than the region overall. At the same time, wholesale space prices were comparable in both the submarket and the regional market.



Share of Total Industrial/Flex Market



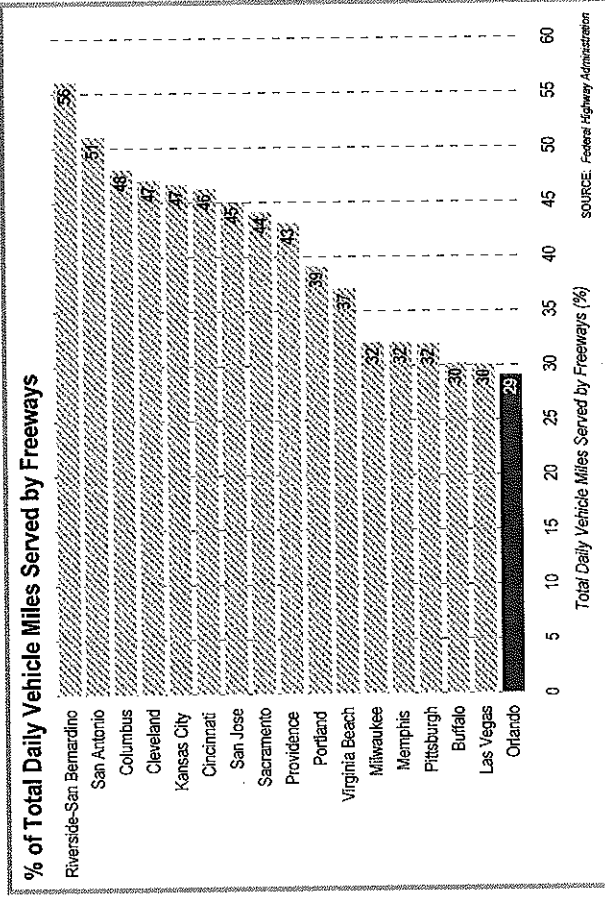
Average Direct Asking Rate NNN



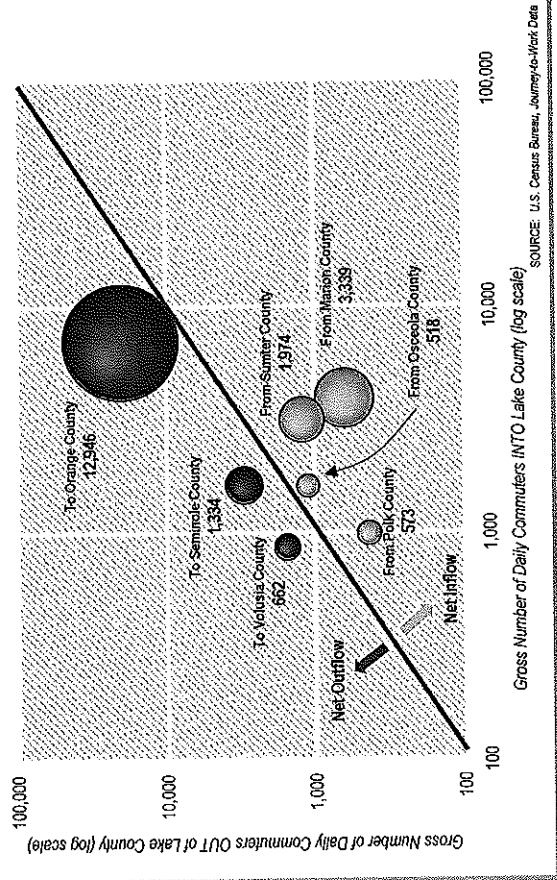
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Commuting Patterns

- Compared to metropolitan areas of similar size, the average number of miles driven per person each day on Orlando's roadways is relatively high.
- Data from the 2000 Census show that 20,000 Lake County residents travel to work each day in Orange County while just 7,000 Orange County residents travel in the opposite direction to jobs in Lake County. The difference is a daily net outflow from Lake County of nearly 13,000 commuters.
- But the net flow is not outward for all counties. In fact, Marion County produces the largest daily net inflow of commuters into Lake County. Nearly 4,000 Marion County residents travel into Lake County to work each day while only about 600 Lake County residents work in Marion.



The Largest Average Daily Commuter Patterns for Lake County



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Net Annual Job Change for Lake County & Neighbors

	Lake County	Orange County	Polk County	Seminole County
1990	+71	+18,134	-941	+6,323
1991	+390	-2,373	-2,746	-651
1992	+840	+11,545	-3,735	+4,177
1993	+2,752	+21,873	+4,270	+5,025
1994	+2,759	+14,970	+7,193	+7,016
1995	+3,767	+15,415	+5,582	+5,308
1996	+4,643	+30,221	+5,491	+8,671
1997	+4,263	+30,979	+3,922	+12,103
1998	+4,410	+38,943	+8,891	+5,834
1999	+1,954	+35,665	+4,638	+8,790
2000	+2,166	+23,734	+6,714	+8,130
2001	+3,637	-8,226	-472	+6,519
2002	+3,465	-7,967	+2,379	+1,421
2003	+5,391	+26,037	+4,955	+6,306
2004	+7,807	+31,594	+11,560	+9,191
2005	+4,276	+36,331	+14,459	+16,792

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

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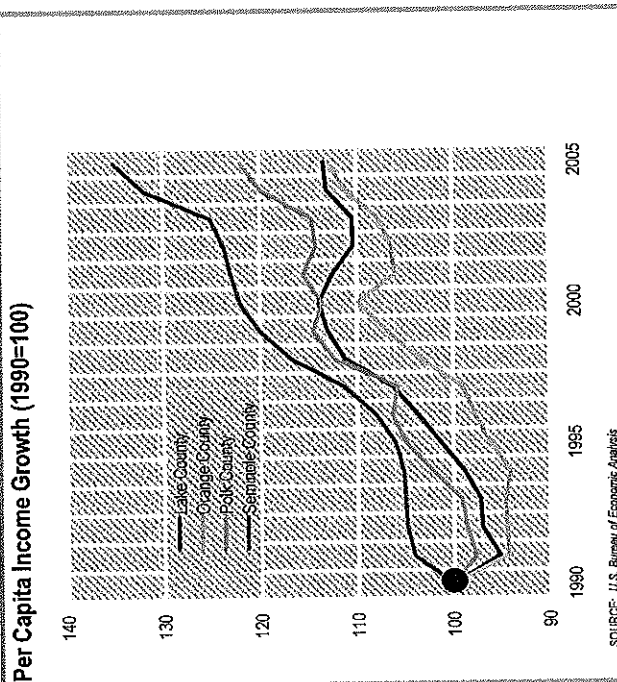
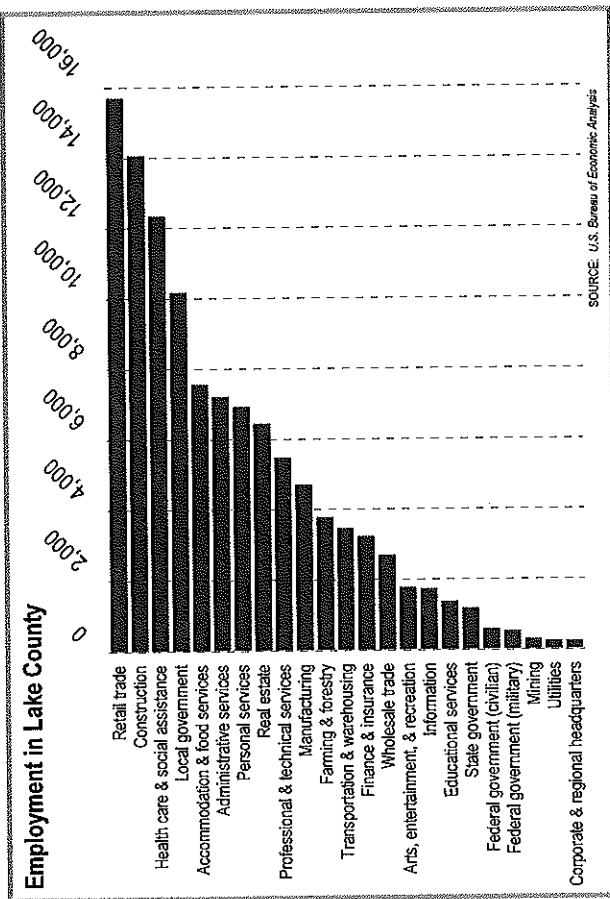
Job Growth Comparison

- Employment growth in Lake County has been modest compared to neighboring counties. However, the county's job base has also been less affected by cyclical downturns. During the 2001-2002 recession, for example, Lake and Seminole Counties together added as many jobs as Orange County lost. During the 1991 recession, Lake County gained jobs while Orange, Polk, and Seminole Counties experienced losses.

Employment by Sector

- Retail trade, construction, health care, and local government are the sectors with the highest employment levels in Lake County. Each of these four sectors employs at least 10,000 workers.

- Since 1990, Lake County's per-capita income growth has exceeded Orange County even as it fell well behind Seminole County's growth rate. Since 2000, however, Lake County's per-capita income growth has stalled while per-capita income growth in neighboring counties has accelerated.



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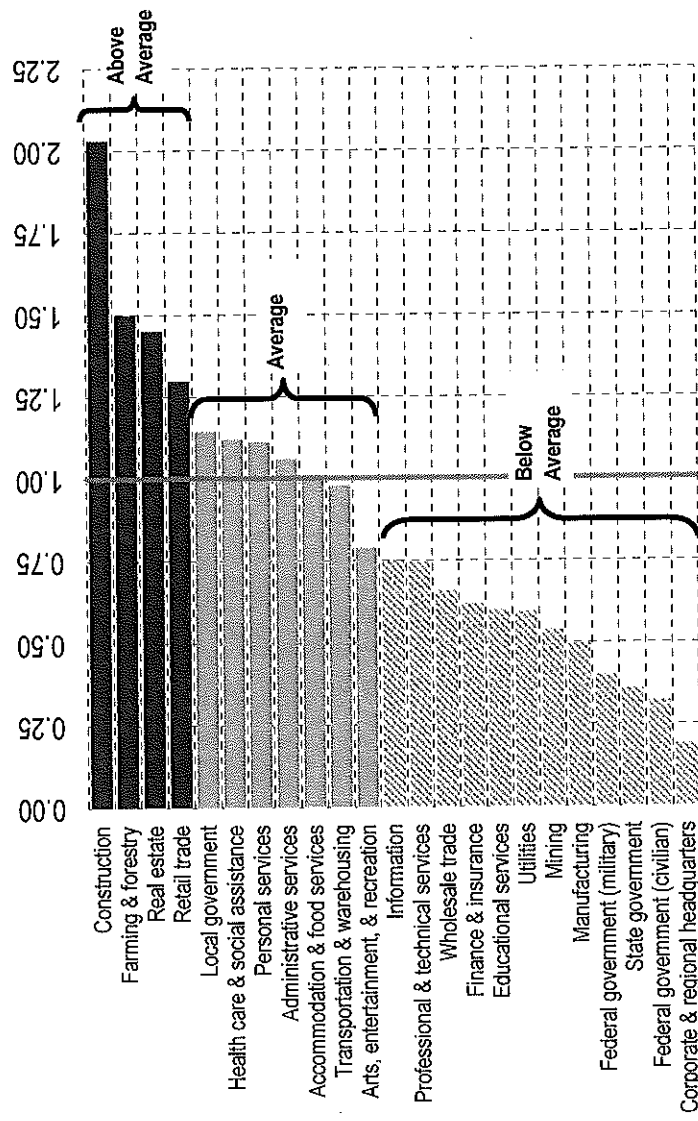


T.I.P. STRATEGIES

Economic Specialization

- Location quotients (LQs) in Lake County are above average in sectors that reflect very fast exurban growth patterns (construction and real estate) and also reflect the existing rural employment base (agriculture).
- Sectors with lagging LQs are often those with relatively high pay levels that attract skilled workers (information, professional services, wholesale trade, finance, and manufacturing).

Location Quotients for Lake County Employment Sectors



SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

UNDERSTANDING LQs

A location quotient (LQ) is calculated as a local industry's share of total local employment divided by the same industry's share of employment at the national level:

$$LQ = \frac{\text{Local jobs in industry} / \text{Total local jobs}}{\text{U.S. jobs in industry} / \text{Total U.S. jobs}}$$

If the local industry and national industry are perfectly proportional, the LQ will be 1.00. If an industry is heavily concentrated at the local level (e.g., automotive industry in Detroit, technology in Silicon Valley, gambling in Las Vegas), then the location quotient will be higher than 1.00. Conversely, if the industry is sparsely concentrated at the local level (e.g., farming in New York City, convention tourism in North Dakota), the LQ will be lower than 1.00.

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Local Taxes

- Lake County's millage rate was comparable to its neighbors in 2006 with the exception of Sumter County, which enjoyed a significantly lower property tax.
- Twenty-three percent of Orange County's taxable values were in improved commercial properties. By comparison, less than 9 percent of Lake County's values were in this category.
- A high percentage (13.5%) of Lake County's taxable values was in vacant residential land, compared to only three percent in Orange County and seven percent statewide.

2006 Property Tax Statistics & Rankings for Lake County & Its Neighbors

County	2006 Total Taxable Value			2006 Tax Levies			2006 Avg. County Millage			2006 Construction (% of Total Tax Base)		
	Rank*	Value (billions)	Rank*	Value (millions)	Rank*	Rate	Rank*	Rate	Rank*	Rank*	%	%
Orange	4	\$91.8	5	\$1,668.7	30	18.18	26	3.9%	26	3.9%		
Polk	14	\$30.2	13	\$583.8	16	19.3	15	4.9%	15	4.9%		
Seminole	15	\$29.7	16	\$516.5	37	17.38	32	3.4%	32	3.4%		
Lake	23	\$18.9	21	\$344.8	29	18.21	6	6.7%	6	6.7%		
Marion	27	\$17.5	23	\$301.7	38	17.2	20	4.2%	20	4.2%		
Sumter	39	\$4.6	40	\$70.8	56	15.27	1	14.3%	1	14.3%		

SOURCE: Florida Department of Revenue, 2006 Florida Property Valuations and Tax Data Book

*Rank out of 67 Florida counties, highest = 1, lowest = 67

Distribution of Taxable Parcels, 2006

	Lake County	Orange County	Florida Statewide
Single Family Residential	58.1%	66.0%	50.7%
Vacant Residential	20.5%	10.4%	19.7%
Mobile Homes	14.5%	1.2%	5.2%
Improved Commercial	2.3%	2.4%	2.3%
Condominiums	2.0%	16.0%	18.7%
Vacant Commercial	1.5%	0.7%	1.0%
Multi Family <10 units	0.9%	2.7%	1.8%
Vacant Industrial	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Multi Family =>10 units	0.1%	0.2%	0.2%
Other Residential	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Cooperatives	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%

SOURCE: Florida Department of Revenue, 2006 Florida Property Valuations and Tax Data Book

Distribution of Taxable Value of Real Property, 2006

	Lake County	Orange County	Florida Statewide
Single Family Residential	58.7%	47.6%	45.7%
Vacant Residential	13.5%	3.1%	7.0%
Improved Commercial	8.8%	22.7%	13.1%
Mobile Homes	6.1%	0.3%	1.3%
Vacant Commercial	2.9%	1.9%	1.6%
Condominiums	2.3%	11.5%	19.1%
Improved Industrial	2.0%	3.8%	3.3%
Agricultural	1.7%	0.5%	0.9%
Multi Family => 10	1.2%	5.0%	2.9%
Multi Family < 10	1.0%	1.5%	2.2%
Institutional	0.8%	0.3%	0.6%
Non - Ag	0.6%	1.0%	0.9%
Vacant Industrial	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
Miscellaneous	0.2%	0.1%	0.3%
Government	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Other	0.0%	0.4%	0.7%

SOURCE: Florida Department of Revenue, 2006 Florida Property Valuations and Tax Data Book

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ASSESSMENT



ENTREPRENEURIAL ASSESSMENT

The challenge for Lake County is not a function of starting companies but of retaining them. This has everything to do with proximity to Orlando and available regional resources. As a consequence, a successful entrepreneurship program must look beyond identifying and supporting start-up companies. What value would there be for Lake County if, after substantial investment in programs, buildings, and networks, entrepreneurs left the area as soon as their businesses became profitable. The more effective approach for Lake County's entrepreneurial initiatives would seek—from the outset—to link start-ups with specific business opportunities within the county.

TECHNOLOGY ASSETS >

- Business-class broadband is available in more developed parts of the county but should be improved throughout the area.
- Access to a research base is available as shown by the Florida High Tech Corridor Council as Lake County is physically located between UCF, USF, and UF. UF research activities appear to have a strong focus on agriculture.
- Small, emergent industry clusters exist in agritech, related to the county's agricultural history, and healthcare and wellness, related in part to the National Training Center.

BUSINESS ASSETS >

- Large pool of talented and motivated people is available in Lake County.
- Access to risk tolerant capital is available through Orlando based angel investor networks and Florida based venture capital funds.
- Banks tend to be more traditional and relationship based. They prefer more asset based companies with higher collateral.
- Available management talent is available due to Florida and Lake County's status as a retirement destination that includes former executives who are often underutilized.
- Regional professional service providers (intellectual property lawyers and accountants) are available. However, there appears to be dearth of such professional service providers in Lake County proper. The Florida High Tech Council could connect Lake County entrepreneurs to Orlando based professional service providers.
- Workforce training facilities are available through LSCC and its relationship with UCF extension classes.
- Continuing education options for an MBA are available in regional universities such as UCF.

entrepreneurial ASSESSMENT

SOFT ASSETS >

- Authentic quality of place was seen as an asset by the interviewees. People liked the combination of slower pace, fresh water recreation, and the abundance of greenspace.
- K-12 education was seen as a concern by some employers.
- A formal mentorship program did not seem to be in place, but this could be solved if younger professionals were invited to participate in the local power breakfast meetings.
- Wireless access appears to be available in most downtowns for quick business over coffee meetings.
- Good healthcare facilities seem to be in place with South Lake Hospital, including innovative programs such as the National Training Center.
- Affordable housing is a positive asset. While Lake County may seem expensive to the native citizens, housing is less expensive there than in the other counties surrounding Orlando.

Lake County Entrepreneurship Gap Analysis

END STATE	CURRENT STATE	GAPS/ACTIONS
Fill the existing incubator with small startup companies.	The Leesburg incubator has been open since Spring but has no occupants.	- The incubator should host business related educational events to serve as a marketing opportunity to show off the facilities. - Leesburg incubator may need to become specialized such as a minority business center or food production. - Promote the incubator to young professional groups or networking organizations. - The incubator needs a full time focused director - Incubator director needs to promote Internet access speeds that come with office lease.
Lake County entrepreneurs have more access to the resources available in the area such as the Florida High Tech Corridor and the National Entrepreneur Center. Results shown in number and amount of grants received and capital raised.	The Florida High Tech Corridor has never funded a private or public sector project in Lake County in the ten years of the organization.	- Introduce the Agritech companies or the INX company to HTC. - Create a program to partner with the National Training Center. - Start an entrepreneur education program such as FasTrac to filter the best entrepreneurs and plans - The HTC and NEC can introduce the entrepreneurs to the appropriate lawyers and accountants.
Lake County entrepreneurs have more access to angel and venture capital to grow companies and pay higher wages.	While there is wealth in Lake County, there is no organized capital structure if an entrepreneur was qualified for investment and would have to look elsewhere. The banks in the Lake County area are relationship based and tough on startups.	- Find a focal point or a person to connect entrepreneur resources. - Put on events to educate entrepreneurs about better business plans and investor presentation skills. - Partner with the Winter Park Angels to create a Lake County Branch and hold Power of Angel Investing event.
A supportive infrastructure where entrepreneurs are highlighted as the future employers for the future of Lake County.	There is a bit of confusion about the true definition and different needs of entrepreneurs versus small business owners	- Find an entrepreneur who is from Lake County but is a success story somewhere else who can say "I did it so can you" to an audience of current leaders. - Improve the relations with the business editors of local publications.

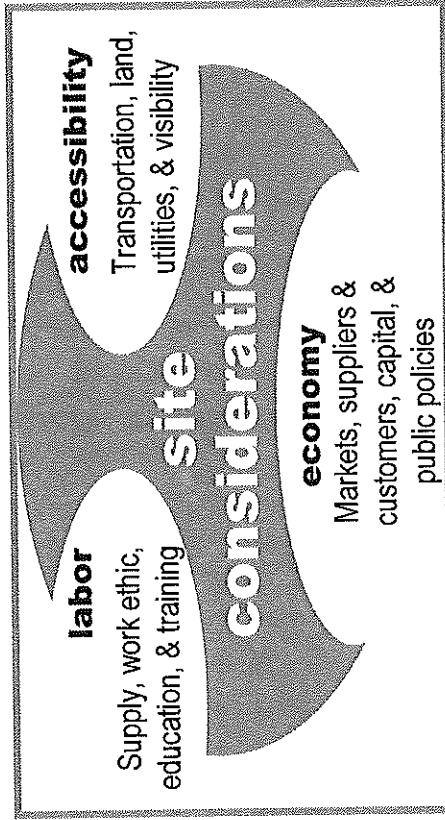
entrepreneurial
ASSESSMENT

Lake County Entrepreneurship Gap Analysis (cont'd)

END STATE	CURRENT STATE	GAPS/ACTIONS
A critical mass of niche agricultural based product companies that can charge a premium to support higher wages for skilled and unskilled labor.	A declining amount of available agricultural land that is the heart and pride of Lake County.	- Partner the ideas of the founders Florida Foods Company with the Agritech experts of the HTC to extract new product ideas into new companies. A form of private sector tech transfer. - Potentially transform the Leesburg incubator into a specialty incubator with a commercial kitchen for organic food products. Organic foods can charge a premium. - Help with introduction of Lake County Food Entrepreneurs to specialty and large chain grocery stores such as Florida based Publix or Winn Dixie.
A well funded NTC which has become a magnet for talented healthcare professionals including more orthopedic surgeons and high end nutrition experts.	The National Training Center has a long list of ideas and ambitions but limited funding sources beyond the hospital and membership fees.	- The development of a medical device and / or athletic training device incubator or accelerator to take new ideas from doctors, athletes and members. - Partner with the HTC and NEC to extract these ideas and make sure the people with the ideas benefit from the outcome. - Potentially hold a seminar on the creation of healthcare and athletic products. - Attend the golf equipment conference coming to Orlando in the winter.
The beginning of a potential life sciences cluster to support the new wet lab and training space at Lake Sumter Community College.	The wet lab is under construction.	- Partner with the company in Jacksonville Florida who is bringing 30-40 biotech startups from Israel. - Partner with HTC to find the appropriate legal firms to protect the intellectual capital.
Become a home for UCF incubator graduates as office space costs in the Orlando region continue to rise.	A lack of Class A Office Space if there was an increase in demand from a better business climate.	Improve the reputation of Lake County with commercial real estate developers.

TARGET SECTORS

The selection of target sectors is traditionally bound to an assessment of only a few determinant factors, such as access to an available workforce, industrial sites, and incentives. Our target industry recommendations are not based solely on these factors, but also on conversations with business leaders to better understand potential opportunities and challenges that might not be identified from secondary data sources alone. TIP also brings to bear its understanding and appreciation of broader socioeconomic trends such as consumption patterns/consumer spending, emerging markets/international trade, and demographic shifts/aging workforce to better understand long-term recruitment and development prospects within emerging economic sectors. Finally, TIP also strongly took into consideration how the following targets fit within the overall framework of the strategic framework plan and how they will affect Lake County's ability to attract talent to the area.



In sum, TIP identified target industries for Lake County using a three-pronged approach: *quantitative*, *qualitative*, and *strategic*.

Methodology > TIP examined both traditional and non-traditional targets for Lake County. Traditional targets represent the types of industries that have historically been marketed to by economic development organizations. These typically include traditional manufacturing industries and related industrial and/or transportation activities. Traditional targets often represent the first tier of economic opportunity. This is due to the fact that an area already has in place many of the necessary components (e.g. economic base, workforce, infrastructure, etc.) to begin effective targeting and marketing efforts. This is not to say, however, that Lake County already has all the pieces in place for each traditional industry. In some cases, longer, more sustained efforts may also be required to successfully attract investment.

Non-traditional targets include economic sectors and other development opportunities that are well-suited to Lake County but are not typically targeted by local economic development organizations. While these sectors pose unique challenges for traditional economic development marketing efforts, we feel they should not be ignored. Due to larger trends (i.e., demographic shifts, technology, and globalization), TIP believes that economic development can no longer simply be a competition for the recruitment of industrial employers. Instead, the future of Lake County also lies

TARGETS



in its ability to identify emerging opportunities in emerging sectors, which tend to be strongly tied to innovation and the retention and attraction of talented professionals.

TIP determined that the following targets represent the best (both long- and short-term) opportunities for the Lake County's economic development efforts. We believe these represent the best opportunities for business startup, retention, expansion, and attraction activities. These sectors are selected for their ability to serve a dual purpose: 1) to bolster and diversify Lake County's economy over the short-term by taking advantage of existing assets and 2) to provide a pathway to sustained economic vitality over the long-term.

Selection Rationale > The Orlando region is expected to continue to enjoy employment gains across all employment sectors in the foreseeable future. Lake County, which offers new employers available greenfield sites with access to a quickly growing regional labor pool, can also expect to benefit from the area's strong economy. The challenge for Lake County's leadership, however, will be to position the community in such a way that leverages its strengths and maximizes its strategic and competitive position within the region.

While an implicit goal of economic development is to increase local employment, Lake County's leaders should also strongly consider other factors in the determination of target sectors and specific employers, including: increasing the local tax base (sales and property); protecting and enhancing the county's quality of place; promoting a positive image of the county; and increasing the average wages in Lake County.

Determining which sectors to promote in Lake County will be the key to the county's long-term economic sustainability and overall vitality. As a result, leaders and residents may be tempted to not place a strong focus on local economic development. After all, Lake County is in the path of growth, and the location of new employers in the community is inevitable. We believe, however, a more aggressive role in economic development is essential for Lake County. If it were to play an aggressive and proactive role in managing the types of development that will occur, the county's economic success would yield short-term and long-term gains. In other words, the greatest economic threat that Lake County faces is the loss of its most strategically important sites to developments that produce few quality jobs and tax revenue.

The selection of target industries should be considered as much art as science. Our selection process includes the analysis of multiple factors, such as local, regional, and global industry trends; potential for industrial linkages; regional labor availability and skill sets; existing assets (e.g., industrial parks, available buildings, infrastructure); proximity to markets; and business climate (e.g., tax rates, permitting). In determining suitable targets for Lake County, land use and the region's development patterns should be taken heavily into account.

The following list of target industries represents what we believe are some of the best opportunities for business retention, expansion, and attraction activities in Lake County. We believe these sectors serve a dual purpose: 1) bolstering and diversifying the county's economy by taking advantage of existing assets and 2) providing a pathway for sustained economic growth over the long-term.

TARGETS



- HEALTH & WELLNESS CLUSTER, including healthcare, recreation, sports training, physical rehabilitation, and related business activities (e.g., life sciences, research and development, etc.)
- CLEAN TECH, including green building and clean energy
- AGRITECH, including research and development
- BUSINESS SERVICES, including corporate HQs, back office operations, and IT enterprises
- ARTS, RECREATION, & LEISURE

Additional Considerations > The selection and targeting of specific target industries and economic sectors cannot occur within a vacuum. To achieve success, Lake County and its regional partners should focus efforts on enhancing conditions within its overall business climate as a means of both supporting these targets as well as providing a catalytic stimulus for initiating public and private sector investment. Throughout this phase, we will give additional consideration to the following issues:

- Enhancing partnerships
- Employment centers
- Private and university research
- Enhanced Higher Education Presence
- Office Development
- Destination Retail
- Multi-modal transportation
- Marketing

TARGETS

HEALTH & WELLNESS >

INDUSTRY TRENDS

Access to healthcare, both primary care and emergency care, is viewed as a quality of life issue for residents and an economic issue for communities. The presence of healthcare facilities is also seen as key in location decisions for most industries. While access to healthcare is an important factor in corporate location decisions (67.2 percent of respondents in Area Development's annual corporate survey rated health facilities as "important" or "very important" in 2002—up from 65.3 percent in 2001), it is less critical than other business-related factors, such as availability of skilled labor (90.9 percent) and highway accessibility (86.6 percent).

With the continued loss of manufacturing jobs, once the most critical driver in local economic development, communities are becoming more reliant on the healthcare industry as a source of employment and tax revenue. Growth in the U.S. healthcare sector is largely driven by two major factors: population growth and an aging population. As the Baby Boom generation approaches retirement age, a larger share of all consumer spending in the nation is being spent on healthcare related expenses. This increase is related to rising healthcare costs, which in turn, is partially related to the high number of insured persons in the nation (approximately 45 million).

According to Frost & Sullivan, the U.S. market for medical equipment exceeds \$55 billion and is expected to grow. Demographic shifts and technological advances are driving this growth. With the aging of the baby boomers, the demographics are favorable for longer term growth in the medical equipment industry. Analysts of this industry anticipate new product announcements in 2008 and 2009 that may propel further growth in the industry. In orthopedics in particular, knee-joint-replacement and spinal repair are expected to be prime growth areas.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Access to primary healthcare facilities
- Proximity to population growth centers and retiree destinations
- Availability of trained or trainable healthcare workforce (i.e., semi-skilled healthcare aides, registered nurses, healthcare technicians, highly trained doctors)
- Proximity to institutions of higher learning and medical schools (research and development and healthcare training facilities)
- Proximity to outdoor recreational opportunities
- Availability of medical and professional office space
- Quality of place

DEFINITION:

This sector includes establishments providing health care for individuals, including ambulatory health care services and hospitals. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals. All industries in the sector share this commonality of process, namely, labor inputs of health practitioners with requisite expertise.

Wellness refers to the healthy condition a person obtains through reaching a balance in lifestyle, whether through fitness, diet, emotional, social and/or spiritual pursuits.

TARGETS

NICHE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Allied health (general medicine, healthcare support)
- Medical & diagnostic labs
- Outpatient care centers
- Specialty clinics (i.e. wellness centers, sports medicine, vocational & rehabilitation, geriatrics)
- Medical and orthopedic equipment & supplies

HEALTH & WELLNESS (cont'd) >

RATIONALE

- Emergence of Central Florida as a major center for healthcare research (e.g., recent announcement of location of the Burnham Institute for Medical Research).
- Leverage ongoing and planned expansions occurring at countywide hospitals
- Location of the National Training Center in South Lake, as well as related UCF programs (e.g., Sports and Fitness and Nursing), to support wellness activities.
- Continued growth in healthcare is expected for the foreseeable future due to national and regional demographic trends, combined with increasing interest in spiritual and Eastern medicines.
- Produce job opportunities in high wages in employment sector.
- Potential for stimulating related manufacturing (e.g., equipment and supplies) and research.
- Linkages with the promotion of recreational activities, the local environment, and the sustainable ideals pursued through green building and clean energy.
- Over the long-term, promoting investment in health and wellness might result in the successful recruitment of medical and orthopedic device manufacturers.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assist in the development of business plans for physicians and wellness experts as part of entrepreneurship as well as business, expansion, and retention programs.
- Stimulate the creation of medical office space in Lake County to assist in attracting small healthcare service providers and private-practice physicians.
- Continue to support the expansion of healthcare-related programs at Lake-Sumter Community College, Lake County Schools, to supply labor for the healthcare services sector.
- Continue to support the Metro Orlando EDC's efforts in promoting the region to life science and biotechnology companies.
- Actively engage UCF and LSCC to increase the presence of healthcare related research and educational programs in the county.

TARGETS

DEFINITION:

Agriotechnology is a segment of biotechnology that focuses on genetic engineering, cloning and high tech horticulture and agriculture.

–Source: Metro Orlando EDC

AGRITECH >

INDUSTRY TRENDS

Agriotechnology, as a distinct industry, remains in its infancy. As such, the sector has no official NAICS code through which employment can be measured. According to the Metro Orlando EDC, Florida's \$35 billion agriculture and natural resources sectors are led by activity in the Central Florida area. Statewide, these sectors employ more than 330,000 Floridians and nearly 44,000 commercial farmers. Their high productivity is based on the use of some of the latest technologies which helps deliver a safe and dependable food supply. Nationally, Florida ranks among the top ten states in the value of farm production and is second in the production of fresh vegetables.

Lake County's long agricultural history has allowed local value-added manufacturers to slowly evolve into agriculturally 'high tech' companies. The nationally recognized Institute of Food and Agricultural Science at the University of Florida was a force in making agritech a target sector for the Metro Orlando EDC and the Florida High Tech Corridor Council.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Favorable climate conditions and available agricultural land
- Proximity to institutions of higher learning and research and development
- Access to educated workforce
- Availability of Class A office space, tech/flex space, and research and technology parks
- Access to capital networks to provide financing for startups
- Light industrial, distribution space; general purpose manufacturing for production and general purpose flex space for research and development

TARGETS

AGRITECH (cont'd) >

RATIONALE

- Leverage Lake County's historic strength in agriculture for increased value-added activities.
- Build upon emerging regional agritech cluster. Local businesses include Agri Starts III and Florida Food Products.
- Research-intensive industry that requires high skills sets and, therefore, pays higher wages.
- Leverage existing support of Metro Orlando EDC in promoting this sector for Lake County.
- Potential to strengthen linkages between agritech and wellness sectors (e.g., nutraceuticals).
- Strengthens image of Lake County as a place that is supportive of sustainability in environment and lifestyles.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to pursue options for higher education research in agritech.
- Promote the establishment of new LSCC programs devoted toward supporting agritech. Consideration should be given to hosting these programs at a new campus in the northeastern portion of the county.
- Linkage entrepreneurial development strategies with agritech.
- Include sector within economic development marketing materials. Consider developing a theme of sustainability to link agritech, clean tech (green building and clean energy) with local outdoor recreational assets and the county's natural resources.

NICHE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Nutraceuticals
- Other extractions for medicinal purposes
- Genetic cloning
- Agritechnology research and development
- Specialty foods

TARGETS

RETAIL, ARTS, RECREATION, & LEISURE >

INDUSTRY TRENDS

The retail trade and leisure sectors have been among the leading national job creators during the last several years, driven by increased consumer spending and population growth, especially in locations with natural and/or man-made amenities. While these industries are not known for offering high wage jobs, they remain important to local government for their contributions to sales.

In addition, retail and leisure are increasingly being viewed as amenities that a community can not do without. When searching for a new home, potential residents (both singles and families) strongly take the available shopping in an area into consideration. As a result, employers—who are interested in retaining and recruiting workers—have come to realize the importance of retail and leisure amenities.

Retail and leisure amenities also strongly influence the attraction of visitors and, eventually, retirees. Increasingly, communities are coming to realize the potential for linking these two groups. Over time, a tourist who frequently visits a place begins to adopt a notion of brand loyalty for that community or destination which can, in turn, strongly influence retirement location decisions. Today's retirees are much more affluent than past generations and are more likely to increase consumer spending in the area, especially increasing demand for the region's health care economy. The leading edge of baby-boomers is set to retire in the coming years, but analysts expect the nature of their retirement to be distinctly advantageous as they are anticipated to be more active community participants and more likely to start up new business enterprises.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Access to population/consumers
- Quality of regional transportation network, especially interstate and airport
- Retail sites with high visibility
- Diversity of retail base
- Access to natural (e.g., lakes, national parks etc.), cultural amenities (e.g., fine arts, performing arts, historical attractions), and other tourism destinations
- Concentration of hotels and restaurants
- External image of the region

DEFINITION:

The retail trade sector comprises establishments engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. Destination retail refers to those stores that attract customers regardless of the location, as opposed to a business that relies on convenience of location for its customers. In other words, these retailers do not solely rely on a local market but have the ability to bring in customers from a larger retail area and can, therefore, serve to bring in outside dollars to a community.

The leisure trade sector includes a wide range of establishments that operate facilities or provide services to meet varied cultural, entertainment, and recreational interests of their patrons. This sector comprises 1) establishments that are involved in producing, promoting, or participating in live performances, events, or exhibits intended for public viewing; 2) establishments that preserve and exhibit objects and sites of historical, cultural, or educational interest; and 3) establishments that operate facilities or provide services that enable patrons to participate in recreational activities or pursue amusement, hobby, and leisure-time interests.

NICHE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Baby boomer retirees/Zoomers
- Specialty retail boutiques in downtowns
- Cultural, recreational, and entertainment promotions
- Outdoor recreation, including: ecotourism, boating, golfing, biking, and jogging, etc.

RETAIL, ARTS, RECREATION, & LEISURE (cont'd) >

RATIONALE

- Increase Lake County's attractiveness and visibility to tourists already visiting Central Florida.
- Increase visitor spending and sales taxes in Lake County.
- Strengthen the status of the county's downtowns as destinations for entertainment, culture, boutique shopping, and fine dining.
- Strengthen ability to draw talent to support target industries (especially Healthcare Services and Business & Professional Services).
- Assist in altering negative images (both external and internal) of Lake County.
- Linkages with health and wellness cluster development, especially in regards to outdoor recreation and healthy lifestyles

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continue to support redevelopment and revitalization activities in downtowns, including the establishment of an entertainment district.
- Continue to support the Arts.
- Consider conducting a retail leakage study to determine niches for targeting.
- Target potential tourists visiting Central Florida and Orlando regional day-trippers.
- Market Lake County's outdoor recreational assets, the National Training Center, and other fitness and wellness amenities.

TARGETS



BUSINESS SERVICES >

INDUSTRY TRENDS

Professional and business services, as an industry, has been one of the primary generators of employment growth and economic vitality for the last 20 years in America and is expected to remain a critical driver for the foreseeable future. While overall manufacturing employment in the U.S. has remained stagnant since the early 1970s, services employment has tripled. In other words, America has transitioned from an economy based on producing goods to one that provides services. In fact, business and professional services has emerged as the backbone of the modern American economy. This very broad sector includes a great number of activities, such as advertising and marketing, consulting, management services, technical and scientific research and design, and financial, insurance, and real estate services. One reason that business and professional services has emerged as such a powerful creator of new jobs is the increasing role of entrepreneurship.

With the exception of technical services, which typically follow a specific, specialized customer base, business and professional services is broadly driven largely by three primary factors: proximity to customers, access to an educated workforce, and quality of life considerations. By and large, these assets are found in abundance primarily in larger metropolitan regions.

In addition, the presence of a well-developed business and data services sector is critical to the growth in software and other information technology enterprises. The presence of a strong local software and IT sector has become critical as their use comprises an increasing share of the value of all products and services. This trend will likely only be compounded in the future as technological advances continue to revolutionize both “high tech” and traditional industries alike.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Availability of Class A office space
- High visibility or “prestige” development sites
- Access to deep pool of highly educated talent
- Access to hub airport or one with quick and frequent connections to a major hub
- Broadband internet connectivity
- Quality of place

DEFINITION:

The business services sector includes firms that provide support services to a variety of companies and individuals. Often, however, their primary clients are other firms and can serve regional and national markets. This sector includes both corporate and technical services, such as funds management, corporate law, marketing and advertising, computer and software design, data storage and process, management consulting, corporate headquarters; as well as more basic business support services, such as document reproduction and data processing. It also includes technical services, such as research and testing, engineering, and specialized design services.

NAICS	Description
518111	Internet service providers
518210	Data processing, hosting & related services
522110	Commercial banking
5239-	Other financial investment activities
525-	Funds, trusts & other financial vehicles
531210	Offices of real estate agents & brokers
541110	Offices of lawyers
541211	Offices of certified public accountants
541330	Engineering Services
54151-	Computer systems design & related services
54161-	Management consulting services
541690	Other scientific and technical consulting services
541810	Advertising agencies
551114	Corporate, subsidiary & regional managing offices
561110	Office administrative services

TARGETS

NICHE OPPORTUNITIES:

- Software and IT services
- Data storage
- Other back office support operations
- Engineering, testing, and design services
- Consulting services
- Financial services
- Corporate campuses

TARGETS

BUSINESS SERVICES (cont'd) >

RATIONALE

- Potential for growth and local economic diversification, especially among upper wage professional positions.
- Continued loss of manufacturing jobs means that much of U.S. employment growth will occur in the broad services sector.
- Business services represent the majority of high wage service occupations that are being created nationally.
- Trends toward the increased outsourcing of non-core functions will mean continued growth and opportunities for entrepreneurship.
- Strengthen Lake County's status as viable business center within Central Florida.
- Lake County offers good proximity to an educated workforce both locally (especially among retirees) and throughout within the Central Florida region.
- Lake County offers a location between to three major higher education institutions (e.g., UCF, UF, and USF).

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Leverage existing professional networks present in Lake County thanks to presence of regional corporate citizens.
- Difficulty in marketing to this broad sector according to traditional economic development practices.
- Promote sites for mix-use office development, especially in close proximity to downtown areas and southern Lake County sites with infrastructure near Orlando.
- Identify and market sites suitable for corporate campuses.
- Establish formal entrepreneurship program to support startup businesses in Lake County.
- Continue to pursue the establishment of a back office location for administrative functions that support the region's major tourist destination.

DEFINITIONS:

Green building refers to the design, manufacture, and marketing of materials that promote efficiency and environmentally-friendly technologies. Activities include the research and development of materials and systems, manufacture of building components, and final assembly of complete systems. Some definitions are also stretched to include building "systems" such as concrete, modular, and panelized products. In addition, "integrated" building systems tend to use a greater degree of information technology in the design and operation of new homes and commercial buildings.

Innovative technologies in the energy sector usually involve renewable or "sustainable" sources of fuel, but may also include applications to harness the potential of fossil fuels in much cleaner ways. Those power sources most commonly associated with "clean energy" potential include solar, wind, biomass, energy-from-waste, fuel cells, alternative batteries, and hybrid engines. The R&D, manufacture, and deployment of these types of innovations is grouped under the broadly defined category of "energy technology".

TARGETS

CLEAN TECH (green building & clean energy) >

INDUSTRY TRENDS

GREEN BUILDING > As climate change emerges as a major policy priority, it is also rising as a priority for businesses that seek to capitalize on sustainability issues for profit as much as for their public image. Businesses increasingly find that "greening" the construction sector provides significant bang for the buck. In Britain, for example, construction and real estate-related activities make up just 10% of the economy, but these industries are responsible for half of the country's greenhouse gas emissions. This has prompted property investors and developers to take a more serious look at sustainable building techniques and "green building" materials. In the U.S., the Green Building Council developed a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification program a few years ago that has quickly gained acceptance. LEED certification is now actively sought by many developers as well as buyers and tenants. About 6% of commercial buildings constructed in the U.S. now apply for LEED certification and this percentage is expected to rise in the coming years. Developers and investors are doing this for profit as well as for environmental reasons. Because energy accounts for one-quarter to one-third of a commercial structure's operating expenses, reducing those costs can be a powerful incentive. As the trend toward sustainable building techniques and green building materials diffuses to more developers, investors, and individuals, the burgeoning market for green building products is poised for growth. Many of the manufacturers and distributors of these products may find it helpful to have a presence in large, fast-growing states like Florida. The Orlando area's central location within Florida makes it particularly appealing as a statewide production or distribution location for green construction materials. This is especially true since one of the tenets of the LEED certification is that a high percentage of materials be produced locally.

CLEAN ENERGY > The recent emergence of global warming as a serious political issue in the U.S. coincides with a major spike in energy prices and deregulation of many state electricity markets. This perfect storm of events has created enormous interest in environmental technologies. As recently as 1999, energy technology accounted for less than one percent of U.S. venture capital (VC) investments; by 2006, more than nine percent of all VC investments were in this niche. And it is not just investors who are paying attention. Large corporations from Wal-Mart to Dell Computer now plan significant steps toward carbon reducing their carbon emissions. If investment capital flows into energy technology and if customers buy the products, then one thing is clear: For economic development, this means that new and expanding businesses can be anticipated in this sector. Those places that recognize and capitalize on this trend position their regions for future job growth.

SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

- Proximity to concentrations of energy-related customers and research facilities
- Access to educated workforce
- Availability of Class A office space, tech/flex space, and research and technology parks
- Access to power sources
- Access to research and development
- Access to capital networks to provide financing for startups
- Light industrial, distribution space (green building); general purpose manufacturing for production, general purpose flex space for research and development (energy technology)

NICHE OPPORTUNITIES:

GREEN BUILDING:

- Materials research
- Energy efficiency systems
- Weather-proofing systems
- Computer systems integration
- Modular or prefab buildings design and assembly

CLEAN ENERGY:

- Ethanol production
- Energy-from-waste
- Applied technology development in alternative energies (nuclear, wind, solar, & clean coal)
- Related manufacturing (advanced structural composites, turbine manufacturing, photovoltaic cells, etc.)

TARGETS

CLEAN TECH (cont'd) >

RATIONALE

- Location of existing alternative energy firm with plans for expansion in Lake County: Covanta Energy.
- Growing global demand for energy and increased interest in alternative energy production in the U.S.
- Construction is the second largest sector of Lake County's economy, after retail. With the anticipated growth of Orlando (and Florida) in the coming decades, it is likely that many manufacturers of green materials may want a centrally located presence in the state. Because one of the tenets of green building is that materials should come from sources relatively near the construction site, Orlando's central location makes it an ideal site for firms that produce or distribute construction materials.
- For decades Florida has been one of the nation's fastest growing states. It is inevitable that Florida's population will surge even further in the coming decades as the national pool of retirees explodes with baby boomers exiting the workforce. The central Florida location of Lake County and metropolitan Orlando are ideal for tapping a statewide market.
- Alternative energy, as an emerging sector, remains research and development intensive. R&D related sectors tend to require more highly educated and skilled talent and, therefore, tend to pay high wages.
- Sector could provide opportunities for energy and other professionals in Lake County to startup new business enterprises, as well as generate new high wage job opportunities.
- Ability to develop upstream and downstream cluster of energy-related activities, including services, manufacturing, and innovation.

STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Assist Covanta Energy in its potential partnership with USF in the development of an energy-from-waste R&D center in Lake County.
- Encourage and support green building standards in the construction of public buildings to stimulate local market and investment.
- Pursue research from regional higher educational institutions.
- Embrace clean tech within all marketing materials, drawing linkages to sustainability and how it relates to healthy living and wellness.