

GOAL 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (2030 GOAL 12)

BACKGROUND, DATA, AND ANALYSIS

To set the stage of how we approached Goal 9 revision, it makes sense to include some background on our vision as a working group as well as the world’s evolving understanding of the meaning and application of sustainability and how it fits in with economic development in our technological times. First, our observations revealed, and research supports, a clear distinction from the old “environmentalism” of past decades to a growing grassroots consumer-citizen desire to integrate “applied sustainability” within a broad context of related domains, many of which we wrestled with while reviewing the City’s 2030 Comprehensive Plan. We are now witnessing this sustainable “systems” integration approach picking up steam and prevailing around the world in all areas, including economic development.

Second, we noticed a critical need to recognize the changing beliefs and challenged assumptions around narrow economic growth strategies which informed many economic development plans of the past 20-30 years and were manufacturing/industrially-driven. One such assumption is that sustainability comes at the cost of economic growth i.e. employment is sacrificed with an increase in sustainable business practices, which is being proven false.¹ This awareness has given rise to a demand for an inclusive, creative, sustainable economic development model, using solid data collection and assessment of all sectors. It seems the time has come: the choice is early adoption or late to the party.

For our purposes, sustainable development is economic development without depletion or degradation of natural resources and allows the use of resources in a way that renews or replicates for future generations. Resilience is a closely related term and is used in some of the suggested economic development policies. Resilience is the ability of the environment or economy to renew itself after natural or man-made disruption/disaster strikes. The City must focus on both **sustainability** and **resilience** for the greatest possible outcomes.

¹ Portney, K. E. (2013). Local Sustainability Policies and Programs As Economic Development: Is the New Economic Development Sustainable Development? *Cityscape*, 15, 1st ser., 45-62. doi:JSTOR

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With the wide-spread adoption of sustainable operations across many domains, now is a great opportunity, and just makes sense, for the City to model this in our local economic development plan. We are well aware of the past melodrama of typecasting: pitting environmentalists against developers² which has led to polarization without progress. An applied sustainable approach moves way beyond spotty “smart growth” lip service and integrates sustainable practices across the board, systematically, with strong consideration for the real outcomes in employment quality and local revenue retention. A sustainable focus will closely evaluate assumptions about what will produce desired economic outcomes, more equitably among stakeholders, while pinning down these answers early instead of the trial and error of unforeseen and costly policy impacts. A sustainable economic development approach encourages more viewpoints, broadening the definition of stakeholders and improving social justice. Most importantly, a sustainable ethic in the City’s economic development goal would incorporate the 3 E’s³ in creating programs, giving equal weight to the economy/employment, ecology/environment, and equity/equality simultaneously.

The head-spinning 21st century’s business and employment changes are testing and pressuring traditional economic policies in every way. The present-day “COVID 19” economy looks vastly more disrupted and diffuse, more digitized and remote, and blurs the lines between local, state, and national economies. While the digital economy is growing and enabling collaboration and remote work options across the street and the globe, there is also growing demand for place-based, well-governed communities more than ever. In the face of this juxtaposition of a work-whenever-you-are digital economy and citizen’s desire for belonging to a tangible, local “goods and services” economy, this intersection offers a great opportunity for leveraging the benefits of both worlds.

On a macroeconomic level, most of us have noticed the massive shift in consumer awareness that is rewarding sustainable practices financially. A quick search on Youtube reflects a universe of “influencers” speaking to conscientious consumers. Savvy businesses (virtual and local) are quickly responding to consumer “dollar-voting” and shareholder values by becoming

² Portney, K. E. (2013). Local Sustainability Policies and Programs As Economic Development: Is the New Economic Development Sustainable Development? *Cityscape*, 15, 1st ser., 45-62. doi:JSTOR

³ Edwards, Andres R. *The Sustainability Revolution: Portrait of a Paradigm Shift*, New Society Publishers, 2007.

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better corporate citizens. Shame is quickly doled out on social media when poor corporate practices are disclosed and share price takes a hit. As a result, investors are selecting their investments using an ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) policy to rank and invest in publicly traded companies.⁴

Of great importance to the working group was that, while not easily quantifiable, the City and island possess environmental attributes that carry financial value when considering economics, finance, and accounting, thus greater weight should be given to preserving the financial value of our natural environmental assets or costs should be attributed for use of them.

“If we think about ecosystems as a type of natural capital, then the big question is what benefits society derives from that sort of living, natural capital — from land, freshwater systems, oceans, and so on....key issue in asking whether we can afford sustainability gets down to how we value those things.”⁵

Especially in the case of the City of Fernandina Beach (CoFB), sustainable economic development prioritizes the value of the environmental asset as *the* competitive advantage. This value may be immeasurable but is certainly the draw for residents and visitors alike, tied closely to Fernandina Beach’s distinct “sense of place” -- the aggregate of the environment, character, history, and community, the reason people are here and not somewhere else. As this changes or degrades, the appeal can change for many and quickly shift the delicate balance of our visitor/resident populations, and in turn, our economic resiliency.

Yet sustainable practices aren’t one size fits all, each application is custom to its domain and industry and requires forethought, strategy, and refinement. We are all learning as we go. However sustainable businesses and governments all share one thing in common: a vision that assures practices that meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.⁶ The City can be instrumental in paving the way with

⁴ Environmental, social and governance, or ESG investing, is a form of sustainable investing <https://www.nerdwallet.com/article/investing/esg-investing>

⁵ Curtis, Ken, Kauffman, Richard, Mendelsohn, Robert O., Daily, Gretchen (2010) Can We Afford Sustainability. Yale Insights, Management in Practice, <https://insights.som.yale.edu/insights/can-we-afford-sustainability>

⁶ Edwards, Andres R. *The Sustainability Revolution: Portrait of a Paradigm Shift*, New Society Publishers, 2007.

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forward-thinking economic development policies that meet desired outcomes and inform and attract a culture that values environmental and economic sustainability *equally*.

The modifications made by our working group were drafted with the vision that a future committee, with public input, will continue this process to remodel the Economic Development Goal to integrate with the other goals of the 2045 Comprehensive Plan. It should be noted that during draft stages, we sought outside citizen-reviewers to comment on Goal 9 in order to incorporate a mix of viewpoints. This input came from business owners to long term residents in service/hospitality positions, from new residents to self-employed citizens to those heading prominent volunteer organizations, and finally to long term residents who have voluntarily left the City/island.

Our goal was to clarify objectives and policies more precisely, add a focus on environmental sustainability, and describe accountability and transparency practices that will increase community understanding and involvement -- ensuring fidelity to the City's vision and community EAR. To begin editing Goal 9, the group used Goal 12 (Economic Development) of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan as a roadmap.

In the first objective, we specifically defined a leadership model for Goal 9. The first objective was changed from Leadership and Intergovernmental Coordination to Leadership. This objective defines accountability in managing economic development policies and the coordination efforts required with all stakeholders. Evolving governance best practices and demand for public trust led the group to advise in hiring a City CFO responsible for carrying out the objectives of Goal 9. As a fast-growing coastal City, the need became apparent for a public-facing CFO with an improved fiduciary responsibility to all taxpaying citizens. This position must not only have advanced finance and accounting competencies, but also sophisticated skills in strategic fiscal and financial planning and project vetting on behalf of taxpayers. *Per Liz Farmer in Governing: The Future of States and Localities, "where CFOs were once primarily in charge of numbers -- making sure the books were balanced, bills paid, and audits clean -- they now are called on to be strategists with an eye to developing the city's economy".⁷* We concur with this visionary view and see this as a way to connect the health of the local economy with the many

⁷ Farmer, Liz. (2016) *Governing: The Future of States and Localities*.
<https://www.governing.com/archive/gov-chief-financial-officer-job-description.html>

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interrelated goals in the Comprehensive Plan, ensuring, at the very minimum, a fiduciary allegiance to taxpayers.

We added a new objective, following Leadership, with Data Collection and Process. In our review, it was challenging to understand how Goal 12 (now Goal 9) collected and measured data, implemented processes and procedures from devised strategies and tracked and assessed outcomes. We added more clarity here, adding policy changes that improve data collection procedures, processes, and metrics.

Another change was from the term used in the 2030 Comprehensive plan, of “targeted” to “compatible” businesses. This goal was reworded to reflect a necessary connection between economically-viable business sectors and the vision, needs, and wants of the City/island residents. Reviewers suggested that a “targeted” business approach may have come from past traditional industrial policy that sought large industrial or corporate headquarters to employ significant employee populations. This policy often produces questionable long term financial results, including unforeseen soft and hard costs to the City and intended beneficiaries. Both the economic climate, demographics, and scale of CoFB don’t match well with this model anymore, so we offered a new term that shows greater consideration for the invisible workplace, citizen-consumer wants and needs, the community vision and economic resilience.

As suggested by the term “targeted businesses” in the 2030 plan, compatible businesses, among other characteristics, could be pre-identified business sectors that, in some way, share CoFB resident values. Ideally, these businesses would also support the goal of increasing employment and wage quality, increase local revenue retention, demonstrate sustainable operations, and preserve core community assets. Advanced identification of compatible businesses (or desired models) could fill in missing and needed goods and services so that entrepreneurs are encouraged and desired business applications are fast-tracked for approval. An eye toward increasing business sector diversity is important for adding economic resilience and avoiding dependence on any one company or business sector in cases of economic disruption.

We noted that CoFB’s Economic Development goal was written traditionally to “attract, retain and expand employment by targeting brick and mortar corporations and manufacturing. One primary policy for attracting external employers was by developing skilled and wage competitive

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human capital. Our local reviewers echoed much evidence-based research, suggesting we rethink this approach's practicality due to finite limits on CoFB's/island's carrying capacity, as well as its effectiveness, given shifts in economic trends in business and employment. We recognized in Fernandina Beach the same trends in the greater economy -- that much living/high wage employment has shifted toward entrepreneurial medium/smaller businesses as well as to an increase in remote/virtual employment,, self-employed professionals, independent tradespeople, and cottage industry workers, among others. While there is nothing fundamentally wrong with preparing the local workforce for local jobs, this is just one strategy of which there should be many more. For instance, we must also train our young residents not only to be employed but to *employ*. This is one way to inherently increase innovation, increase local revenue, and grow economic resilience. There, of course, are many others that must be researched and evaluated for CoFB and the island.

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<https://www.governing.com/archive/gov-chief-financial-officer-job-description.html>

REVIEWERS:

Working Group Members

City entrepreneurs/business owners

Area employees

Community leaders

Previous residents

GOAL 9 OBJECTIVES

9.01 ENSURE LEADERSHIP

9.02 DEVELOP DATA AND PROCESS

9.03 INTEGRATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CITY PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

9.04 IDENTIFY COMPATIBLE BUSINESSES

9.05 PROMOTE ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

9.06 PROTECT LAND USE AND JOB OPPORTUNITY AREA (JOA)

9.07 PROMOTE HIGH-QUALITY HUMAN CAPITAL

9.08 IMPROVE PRODUCT LOGISTICS, MOBILITY AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

9.09 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

(2030 GOAL 12)

Pursuant to Section 163.3177(7)(j), Florida Statutes. *An economic element setting forth principles and guidelines for the commercial and industrial development, if any, and the employment and personnel utilization within the area. The element may detail the type of commercial and industrial development sought, correlated to the present and projected Comp Plan/LDC Working Group: January 31, 2021*

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employment needs of the area and to other elements of the plans, and may set forth methods by which a balanced and stable economic base will be pursued.

For Fernandina Beach, the purpose of the Economic Development Element is to protect and enhance the primary economic asset underpinning employment, quality of life, and fiscal resilience: the non-renewable, protective resources of Amelia Island’s maritime ecosystem and the historical, cultural, and community character of Fernandina Beach. To that end, the Economic Development Element will first work to sustain these economic assets by stopping their depletion and work toward their regeneration. The City will do this by defining and measuring the real value, scale, and diversity of the organic economy, both visible and invisible, much generated by local residents and including existing and emerging, locally-owned, remote, self-employed, and home-based entrepreneurs. The City’s Chief Financial Officer, with input from a newly established citizen-based Economic and Fiscal Advisory Board, must create and implement an economic development plan that:

- 1. Will develop goals and procedures to increase living/high wage employment of existing City/island residents and promote the local circulation of income.**
- 2. Will create a strategy and procedures to expand diversity in business and employment to ensure wage growth and quality and fiscal and economic resilience.**
- 3. Will ensure individual business/business model compatibility with community and City vision to preserve the City’s *top* economic asset: the natural ecosystem and the historic character, culture, and community of the city.**
- 4. Will track, measure, and increase resident innovation/entrepreneurship through the promotion of entrepreneurial skills, locally owned businesses, and support of locally self-employed citizens.**
- 5. Will track and measure and support the growing portion of remote/self/home-based employment industries without brick and mortar presence.**
- 6. Will track, measure, and increase use of City/island resident workforce through economic policies and affordable housing support to meet transportation goals (Policy 9.06.04) and increase the quality of life.**
- 7. Will increase employment with a net neutral effect on the island’s carrying capacity in terms of resource use (natural and city).**
- 8. Will diversify and maximize tax revenue base without reducing the quality of life or services (LOS reductions even if State compliant) and ensuring value proposition to taxpayers.**

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9. Will recognize heritage industries for both employment and historical value, such as shrimping, mills, port airport, etc.

The economic development plan will ensure citizens' quality of life, attract and educate an eco-aware visitor and attract and support well-matched business models that create living/high wage employment without depleting protective, natural infrastructure.

Another goal of this element is to establish a process the City will use to ensure a resilient and sustainable local economy during shifting economic cycles. A resilient economy is one that can recover from sudden economic shifts such as natural disasters, health crises, or financial contraction. A sustainably-oriented economy is one where businesses can be profitable while preserving a healthy environmental and economic ecosystem. The economic development element will plan for, diversify, and maximize tax revenue sources for city fiscal resiliency and taxpayer equity and value. The CoFB will ensure economic development policies are continually evaluated for meeting objectives and will show a return on investment or benefit, equitably, to the majority of its residents.

In addition to regional and state data, this element will create the framework for defining, measuring, and assessing the real economic health of the City through local economic metrics including employment of CoFB residents including self-employment as one of many measures of entrepreneurship/innovation, locally derived GDP estimation and rigorous and transparent tax revenue analysis. From this data, specific economic strategies can be implemented, mapped, and evaluated for their intended outcomes.

OBJECTIVE 9.01. ENSURE LEADERSHIP

The City's Chief Financial Officer (defined in Goal 1 Public Trust) will be the single point of contact to implement the Economic Development element. If the position is vacant, it will be incumbent upon the City Manager to perform the requirements of the Economic Development Element. The position will be accountable for creating strategy and planning procedures using the City's vision and ample citizen input, to build a robust, resilient, and equitable local economy benefiting all residents. The role will devise best-practice methods for identifying critical and informative local economic data to create highly effective economic development programs and policies. Further, this role will set realistic metrics and evaluation standards for each program objective with an annual evaluation cycle for assessing objective progress. To increase public trust and citizen input, the CFO will create a fiscal and economic advisory board

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to assist in accomplishing the goals of the Economic Development Element. The CFO must collaborate with the Floodplain Manager and Chief Resilience Officer to ensure the City continues to move in a direction appropriate for our barrier island’s sustainability and resilience.

POLICY 9.01.01. The City will assign the responsibility for developing and managing the Economic Development Element to the City Chief Financial Officer (Public Trust - Goal 1) or the City Manager in the event of a CFO vacancy. The Economic Development leader will be responsible for devising strategic planning and procedures to implement the objectives and policies of Goal 9.

POLICY 9.01.02 The City CFO will establish and direct an Economic Advisory Board and Fiscal Advisory Board to involve broad citizen input into all fiscally and economically relevant matters including economic development goal management. The City CFO may establish additional advisory groups as needed. All advisory groups must equitably represent the cross-section of citizens/residents with emphasis on working residents and local employers.

POLICY 9.01.03 The City CFO will ensure economic development policies are annually evaluated for meeting objectives and will show a return on investment or benefit, equitably, to the majority of its residents/stakeholders/taxpayers.

OBJECTIVE 9.02 DATA AND PROCESS

POLICY 9.02.01 In addition to regional and state data, the City, through the CFO and advisory groups, will devise a robust, directly sourced annual data collection process including new metrics that clearly define, measure, and assess the City’s microeconomic health to create, propose, implement and achieve stated economic goals. Best practice economic strategies will be mapped to objectives and policies, implemented with fidelity, and evaluated for their intended (and unintended) outcomes. At a minimum, the following must be tracked and measured:

- a. Metrics will be identified and annually updated on comprehensive City demographics, residency, household incomes, employment status to create a baseline for estimating the size and needs of the local economy.

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- b. Metrics will be identified to accurately calculate net changes annually, at minimum, of City residential employment rates within the City and island, by the business sector.
- c. Metrics will be identified to wage and salary surveys and turnover of resident employees of local and remote businesses to calculate wage/salary trends by sector.
- d. Data collection will include comprehensive annual surveys of employers and resident employees as well as self-employed workers. Surveys can be done anonymously.
- e. Metrics will be devised to track how much money remains circulating within the city and island versus sent out of the area from local business and local employment.
- f. Metrics will be established to assess and develop local entrepreneurship programs for students and career changers.
- g. Metrics will look to create a calculation to estimate locally-derived GDP, percentage of employees that commute from out of the county and State to City and island businesses, tax revenue analysis by source, and more.

POLICY 9.02.02 The CFO, with bi-annual public survey input, and with the Economic Advisory Board input will continue to research and update relevant and meaningful City economic metrics and refine existing metrics to refine insight into the health of the City economy as well as spotting trends for future planning.

POLICY 9.02.03 The CFO will implement a rigorous annual City tax revenue analysis by source and business sector and other relevant criteria, both historically and going forward.

POLICY 9.02.04 The City will publish all of its data, data sources, and economic assumptions/models online for full transparency to citizens, business owners, and future investors.

POLICY 9.02.05 The CFO will research, evaluate and propose the use of financial forecasting and modeling software for advanced revenue modeling for forecasting and planning, for analysis and vetting of proposed development projects and subcontractor/consulting proposals and, all other economic development impacts based on current City data inputs. Reporting software will ensure analysis of return on investment (ROI) to taxpayers annually on past projects. The CFO will prepare easy to understand taxpayer reports of ROI on projects including detailed back-up. This function should be performed in-house and not outsourced to outside consultants.

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POLICY 9.02.06 The CFO will implement monthly procedures and processes including a multi-step, cyclical calendar for data collection, data assessment, data refinement, strategy assessment, strategy refinement, advisory review and input, public review, input, and proposal process for City Commission review of new economic development proposed changes for the coming year.

OBJECTIVE 9.03 INTEGRATE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CITY PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

The City must consider all economic development impacts by integrating and coordinating with other City departments such as Transportation for parking, transit and traffic issues, Public Facilities, Capital Improvements for infrastructure and amenities, Parks and Recreation for health, fitness, and quality of life as well as Finance and Budgeting, housing and other affected City operations.

9.03.01 The City CFO must educate all City departments and the City Commission about the interrelationship of their respective departments and economic development to coordinate efforts for greater support, improved mutual efficiencies, and maximum taxpayer return. The CFO must proactively involve City departments, early in the process of economic development strategic planning, to account for potential impacts and mitigate the financial risk of unintended or other unforeseen consequences.

9.03.02 The City CFO must work to align economic development goals with plans of all City departments involved in infrastructure budgeting and planning and maintaining LOS standards (transportation, parking, housing, technology, sidewalks, water, sewer, streets) to best support the growth of quality businesses in the City.

9.03.03 The City CFO must thoroughly review processes and policy across the departments that impact economic development efforts and work with them to synchronize and refine policies that are clear, mutually supportive of department/program goals, and that increase cross-department efficiencies.

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OBJECTIVE 9.04 IDENTIFY COMPATIBLE BUSINESS

With a priority on natural asset preservation, the needs and wants of citizens, and on preserving historical and cultural character, the City will research, evaluate and publish a list of compatible business models that support community/City vision and increase living wage or better employment. Compatible businesses will be well-matched to the natural setting and character of the island, will benefit residents and visitors equitably, will employ, train and promote local un- or underemployed residents and student workforce. Enhanced employment opportunity will bring living wages, encourage locally-owned or locally-managed businesses and comply readily with zoning and land use codes, without substantive variance, and will factor in all costs including building impacts and tax incentives.

POLICY 9.04.01 The City CFO, with the fiscal and/or economic advisory board and broad citizen taxpayer input through surveys, etc. and in coordination with Nassau Economic Development Board (NCEDB) will establish a list of citizen-desired, island-friendly sustainable businesses/business models that are compatible with 1.) available land and land use/zoning designations 2.) Serve the desired needs/wants of citizen taxpayers 3.)Are net-neutral on the island carrying capacity and LOS impacts. 4)have compatible business plans.

POLICY 9.04.02 The City CFO working with its citizens and other organizations must evaluate and implement marketing strategies that promote the City as entrepreneurially-focused and as a historic and unique shopping/cultural district to assure a robust and locally-focused economy. As a resort destination, visitor marketing must be well aligned with citizen’s values (as expressed in on-going surveys and the EAR) with City vision and comprehensive planning and to attract visitors who share resident values concerning the City/island’s natural environmental assets.

POLICY 9.04.03 The City CFO must demonstrate, through its adherence to the comprehensive plan and land development code policies, a commitment to preserve and enhance the city’s aesthetic characteristics in alignment with its historical, cultural, and environmental assets for its tax-paying citizens and to attract mutually beneficial businesses.

POLICY 9.04.04 The City CFO must, when purchasing products and services, work to keep tax-funded expenditures within the local and county economy by seeking bids from local/regional

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businesses and/or locally-based, company representatives of regional/national companies that provide the taxpayer with the best return on investment in terms of benefits, productivity, and costs etc.

OBJECTIVE 9.05 PROMOTE ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

The City and CFO must promote all economic sectors equitably; prioritizing each for how they add to the financial health and resiliency of the local economy, to local wage/employment quality, and how well they preserve the character and natural assets of the area. The City (CFO) will strengthen the local economy and build economic resilience by quantifying, supporting, and increasing diversity and growing industry sectors including self-employed citizens, local business owners, and telecommuting employees, recognizing visible sectors such as retail, hospitality, entertainment, healthcare/home care, and educational services.

POLICY 9.05.01 The City CFO and its citizens, striving for a balanced representation of stakeholders, must develop procedures to analyze industry sectors using rigorous and transparent metrics to determine which are of high value to citizens and the City. Qualitative and quantitative criteria will be created for comprehensively assessing the quality of life and environmental impacts, financial benefits to the City and community in terms of tax revenue and wage/employment quality.

POLICY 9.05.02 The City, through its land development code, must establish policies that promote high quality and living wage employment of its citizens, by industry and businesses that support the city's comprehensive plan goals of sustainability and resilience through preservation and regeneration of key economic assets including natural maritime ecosystem and protective natural systems, historical character and aesthetics, diverse culture and sense of community.

POLICY 9.05.03 The City CFO must clearly and comprehensively calculate, analyze and report on the City's total commercial tax base by source, sector, total residents employed, wages, and more.

POLICY 9.05.04 The City CFO and advisory boards must create programs to encourage the development of new, emerging, and creative business sectors, especially those that are clean

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and green, to diversify the local economy and leverage the City's competitive advantage offered in the natural assets of its coastal location.

POLICY 9.05.05 The City CFO, with fiscal and/or economic advisory board involvement, must work to preserve heritage industries that contribute to the City's economy (maritime, tourism/hospitality, aviation, and paper mills) while encouraging their evolution and adaptation to community values, changing demographics, environmental demands, and 21st century economic needs.

9.06 LAND USE AND JOB OPPORTUNITY AREA (JOA)

The City will protect existing land designated for employment-generating uses by compatible businesses, whether vacant or developed, from the encroachment of incompatible uses. The City will ensure sustainable development and redevelopment of properties within the designated Job Opportunity Areas by ensuring no adverse impacts to City/island natural resources or ecosystem services that benefit all life on the island.

POLICY 9.06.01 The City's designated job opportunity areas (JOA see 2030 attached map update needed) INCLUDE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, THE 8TH STREET, AND 14TH STREET COMMERCIAL AREAS, THE COMMUNITY REDEVELOPMENT AREA (CRA), THE SADLER ROAD/SOUTH FLETCHER AVENUE ACTIVITY CENTER, THE MAIN BEACH ACTIVITY CENTER AT ATLANTIC AVENUE, THE MUNICIPAL AIRPORT. WITHIN THESE AREAS THE CITY, in partnership with the NECDB, will rely on the list of identified compatible businesses and citizen input on needed/wanted products and services for these areas to support consumer demand, quality of life and economic resiliency.

POLICY 9.06.02 The City must prioritize the retention of land within its designated JOA suitable for high-quality employment generating uses which meet or exceed the City's and citizen's goals for creating low impact, energy-efficient development using sustainable building techniques. The City will recognize priority during its review of plan amendments, future land use map designations and/or rezoning (as may be necessary), site plan review, and permitting processes.

POLICY 9.06.03 The City CFO or appointed position must systematically survey property owners/business owners/residents in the JOA to identify challenges and issues (e.g., permitting, parking, construction disruption, land use planning reforms, and marketing) possible solutions,

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and specific actionable changes for improvement, and then assist in the implementation of recommendations.

POLICY 9.06.04 The City will encourage, where supportive land use designations exist, urban development patterns that foster a compact mix of residential, civic, and commercial uses to reduce car travel, increase employment opportunities near essential housing and improve quality of life by improving convenience, accessibility and energy efficiency.

OBJECTIVE 9.07 PROMOTE HIGH-QUALITY HUMAN CAPITAL

The City will develop a multi-skilled, 21st-century resident workforce through coordination with educational institutions to develop and maintain high demand trade, technology, and business skills of its residents for local and remote/virtual employment and new business creation. A competitively trained workforce will be prepared for multiple occupations or business sectors for greater responsiveness to economic volatility and sector disruptions. The City will coordinate support and training for entrepreneurial development, self-employment, or remote/virtual employment to boost varied work options, in turn boosting personal income and tax revenue for greater City economic resilience. The City will track employment and wage data to assess program outcomes.

POLICY 9.07.01 The City will create and maintain partnerships with key post-secondary schools in Northeast Florida and the region to prepare local post-secondary students with a dynamic skill set for varied entry-level through high skilled local and remote/virtual careers and self-employment in local/regional and remote businesses.

POLICY 9.07.02 The City will leverage and coordinate the use of K-12, post-secondary and vocational programs offered through FSCJ and NCSB to enhance the STEM and trade skills and increase the competitiveness of the City’s resident workforce for jobs both locally and remotely/virtually as well as the development of future business owners. Where applicable, the City will partner with NCEDB, leveraging programs and grants to fund broad workforce training and entrepreneurial skills of City residents to assure maximum high wage employment in the community.

POLICY 9.07.03 The City will foster the partnership between city businesses and educational institutions to ensure communications and development of necessary high-value skills for

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Deadlines Must Be Reset

Highlighted = updates needed

Goal 9 (Goal 12 in Current 2030 Comprehensive Plan)

growing local/regional and remote industry sectors or entrepreneurial/self-employed sectors as well as service sector skills. The City will track the size of the City resident workforce employed by City/island businesses.

OBJECTIVE 9.08 PRODUCT LOGISTICS, MOBILITY, AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

While preserving the City’s historic and environmental character, the City will actively engage in on-going design and refinement of transportation (mobility) and communication infrastructure which results in secure, efficient, and expedient movement of data, goods, and people through the City and region. The City will optimize the configuration of the multi-modal mobility plan that connects underserved populations to jobs and services while increasing expedient movement of goods and people, offering accessibility and convenience to the growing resident and visitor population.

POLICY 9.08.01

Island and City carrying capacity and limited land resources prohibit expanding some congested roadways. Therefore, the City will actively engage residents and neighborhoods, essential agencies, and all necessary parties including Nassau County to configure a regional multi-modal transportation system that ensures secure, quick, and efficient movement of people and freight in and out of the region. Alternative strategies include leveraging advanced logistics technology and capital road improvements of port and commercial truck traffic to reduce congestion, air pollution and increase safety. To address shared roadway access, improvements will be made that enhance multimodal cross-access and connectivity within uses to encourage walking, biking and smaller vehicles shared use paths. The City will work with all relevant agencies to secure adequate funding for a multi-modal transportation network.

POLICY 9.08.02 The City must ensure high quality, consistent broadband services to support digital businesses, remote work, government communication, and the general population using existing providers, wireless networks, and municipally-owned facilities. The City must implement a plan for emergency broadband communication in case of natural disaster or other disruption for residents and visitors.

POLICY 9.08.03 The City must, through a variety of methods, provide safe, accessible, energy-efficient/low emissions, sustainable and economically viable mobility options, connecting

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neighborhoods, including those underserved, to employment, healthcare, and other essential resources to meet the needs of City residents, employers, employees, and visitors.

OBJECTIVE 9.09 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City will engage with all appropriate and useful government entities and public/private partnerships to create a unified perspective and coordinated data, strategy, and goals for economic development in the City and affected, contiguous areas on the island.

POLICY 9.09.01 The City must work with the Nassau County Economic Development Board (NCEDB) to support the City’s economic development goals and as a vehicle for technical and financial assistance in support of a cohesive economic development vision and strategy.

POLICY 9.09.02 The City must coordinate with and support the NCEDB in pursuit of a cohesive operational and unified County-wide, values, and outcome-driven economic development strategy.

POLICY 9.09.03 The City must seek opportunities to leverage available economic development funding through local, regional and state organizations.

POLICY 9.09.04 The City must engage with other comparably-sized U.S. cities or municipalities that are implementing sustainably-driven and outcomes-based economic development plans to gather research for future strategic planning.