

Albemarle County's Comprehensive Plan's

Economic Development Policy

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND STRATEGIES:

GOAL: Maintain a strong and sustainable economy: 1) benefiting County citizens and existing businesses and providing diversified economic opportunities; 2) supportive of the County's Growth Management Policy and consistent with the other Comprehensive Plan goals; and, 3) taking into consideration regional (including the City of Charlottesville, and Greene, Louisa, Fluvanna, and Nelson Counties) economic development efforts.

OBJECTIVE 1: Base economic development policy on planning efforts which support and enhance the strengths of the County.

STRATEGIES:

1. Protect through diligent growth management efforts the County's distinctive natural and man-made qualities to maintain its attractiveness as a place to live and work.
2. Continue to recognize the relationship of high quality schools and public services and an outstanding level of natural and cultural amenities to positive economic development, and maintain these attributes.
3. Encourage tourism focused on the rural, agrarian, and historical resources of the County, and which does not threaten or compromise those resources.
4. Encourage agriculture and forestry by implementing when appropriate the recommendations of the Agricultural and Forestal Industries Support Committee.
5. Recognize that the University of Virginia can provide important resources for business and industry and work with the University and its associated entities to take advantage of opportunities to benefit from this resource in innovative ways.

6. Compile data on County plans, zoning, sites, and policies, and make these available on request.
7. Designate a contact point for information about the County.
8. Plan for the special needs, and utilize the talents, of the growing retired population attracted to this area.
9. Encourage employment of the local labor force, rather than heavy reliance on relocated workers.
10. Discourage business and industry which is not environmentally sustainable or friendly (such as high water users, polluters).
11. Encourage diversity in business and industry which will accommodate a variety of skill/educational levels and provide for a diversified tax base.
12. Monitor and report to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors about the volume of economic development activity and how that activity is fitting with the Goals, Objectives and Strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.

OBJECTIVE II: Plan for land and infrastructure to accommodate future business and industrial growth.

STRATEGIES:

1. Assess the quality of areas designated for business and industry through analysis of the site size variety, topography, location, and availability of infrastructure in such areas, and compile an inventory of actual, useable land.
2. Designate areas for office, commercial and industrial development that meet the development standards of the Comprehensive Plan and will provide sufficient land to meet community needs through the next Comprehensive Plan revision. Provide enough land to allow flexibility and choice without inviting sprawl or detracting from infill opportunities in areas previously designated in the Plan.
3. Utilize the rezoning process and associated proffer allowances to address needs brought about by new development and to provide the community with assurances about future development activities.
4. Encourage infill development of business and industrial uses in areas appropriately designated in the Land Use Plan.
5. Review current infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, community facilities) programs to determine their impact on business and industrial development of designated areas.

Identify infrastructure improvements that will make Growth Areas work.

6. Continue to work with property owners in designated Growth Areas to identify infrastructure needs, and promote good planning for development of such areas consistent with County growth management strategies.

OBJECTIVE III: Recognize the County's place in the regional economy.

STRATEGIES:

1. Cooperate through the TJPDC with other jurisdictions in the region, the University of Virginia, and Piedmont Virginia Community College for:
 - Development of a coordinated economic data base;
 - Continuing discussion among the TJPDC jurisdictions about working and shopping patterns, wage levels, job stability, work force development needs, housing affordability, public services, tax burdens, and other topics which relate to the purposes of local and regional economic development policy;
 - Distribution of information about development opportunities in the TJPDC to those who request it;
 - Regional work force development;
 - Addressing linkages between housing and wages;
 - Evaluating local, regional, statewide, national, and worldwide economic trends to determine the current and future economic stability of, and growth opportunities for, different types of business and industry.
2. Support mutual consultation on regional development projects along shared borders, and/or on projects of significance to more than one locality, possibly through a "Memorandum of Understanding."
3. Recognize and seek to cooperate with the City of Charlottesville's economic development objectives, and the objectives of the other counties in the Thomas Jefferson Planning District, consistent with County goals, objectives, and strategies.
4. Measure our accomplishments in economic development against the strategic questions posed in the Community Vision Statement regarding economic opportunity.

OBJECTIVE IV: Consider fiscal impact as one indicator of positive economic development, along with environmental impact and standard of living impact.

STRATEGIES:

1. Evaluate the fiscal impact of new business/industrial development.
2. Recognize that County residents place importance on job opportunities and economic growth, but not at the expense of the protection and preservation of water quality and quantity, natural resources, farmland, historic areas, and open space.
3. Recognize that the purpose of this economic development policy is to provide the local citizenry an improved standard of living, improved job and wage opportunities, and work force development opportunities, rather than to seek to stimulate further population growth.

OBJECTIVE V: Provide local business development opportunities.

STRATEGIES:

1. Support existing businesses and industries through an open door policy of communication, and exchange of information and concerns.
2. Coordinate with existing entities that assist new small, locally-owned, and minority businesses and micro-enterprises in their start-up and early operation efforts.

OBJECTIVE VI: Provide work force development opportunities.

STRATEGIES:

1. Recognize that the most fundamentally sound work force is one that has basic education and good work habits.
2. Encourage and support continuing educational and training programs to prepare the local work force for the skill demands of current and future employers, including appropriate work habits and life skills.
3. Encourage and support apprenticeship programs. Encourage the school system to teach basic life skills as a means of preparing our future work force.
4. Develop related goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan (education, housing, day care, transportation, etc.) to address barriers experienced by the local work force, particularly those with greatest needs.

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