To: Council Members

From: Staff

Date: March 18, 2011 Council Meeting

Subject: Local Government Comprehensive Plan Review
Draft Amendments to the City of Sebastian Comprehensive Plan
DCA Reference No. 11-1

Introduction

The Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes*, requires that the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) review local government comprehensive plan amendments prior to their adoption. Under the provisions of this law, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) prepares an Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report on a proposed amendment only if requested to do so by the local government, the regional planning council, an affected person, or if an ORC Report is otherwise deemed necessary by the DCA. If an ORC Report is to be prepared, then the TCRPC must provide DCA with its findings of consistency or inconsistency with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), and provide any comments and recommendations for modification on the proposed amendments within 30 days of its receipt.

Background

The City of Sebastian has proposed an Economic Development Element as part of the text of the City Comprehensive Plan. This is an entirely new element. The City has requested a formal review of the proposed text amendments by the DCA.

Evaluation

As pointed out by the City in the amendment materials, an Economic Development Element is an optional element of a local government comprehensive plan and is not a statutory requirement. The City indicates it wishes to “memorialize economic development efforts” by incorporating a new element on Economic Development into the City Comprehensive Plan. The City also indicates that the new element is intended to organize and clarify its economic development priorities and programs, and to ensure that the City’s economic development activities and policies are consistent with and further the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.
The data and analysis portions of the element contain the following sections:

- Introduction
- Geography/Market Relationships
- Key Industries
- Key Demographic Characteristics
- Labor Market
- Income/Poverty
- Past Studies
- Quality of Life
- Availability of Sites
- Existing Programs/Incentives
- Economic Development Partners
- Target Industries
- Attracting Green/Sustainable Industries

The Goal of this element is to “promote economic growth through commercial development, light industrial development and job creation”. The objectives under the Goal (supported by a number of policies) are:

1. In cooperation with partner organizations, strategically target industry clusters for start-up, relocation and expansion in the City, offer appropriate incentives and effectively market the City as a location for those industries.

2. Support the continual development and maintenance of a skilled labor force through the availability of education and training programs and opportunities.

3. Ensure that appropriate sites are available in the City for desired commercial/industrial development that supports the City’s economic strategy, and to ensure that information about available sites and buildings is readily available to prospective users.

4. Maintain and continually improve the quality of life offered by the City, particularly in ways that help to enhance the City’s current and future economic competitiveness.

5. Take steps to improve the attractiveness of the City for alternative energy and other green/sustainable businesses and industries.

6. Maintain and improve the City’s attractiveness for tourism.

7. Promote, develop and enhance the use of the Sebastian Municipal Airport, and encourage industrial development.

8. Increase the chances of business success in Sebastian by providing technical assistance, ensuring that City regulations are appropriate and other steps as may be necessary.
Extrajurisdictional Impacts

Under the informal agreement facilitated by the TCRPC, local governments in the northern three counties of the region are to provide copies of amendment materials to other local governments that have expressed an interest in receiving such materials. The City provided copies of the amendment materials to all adjacent and nearby local governments. Council sent a memorandum to these local governments and the Indian River County Metropolitan Planning Organization on January 26, 2011 seeking comments or any conflicts with the proposed amendments. As of the date of preparation of this report, no correspondence has been received.

Effects on Significant Regional Resources or Facilities

Analysis of the proposed amendments indicates that they would not have adverse effects on significant regional resources or facilities.

Analysis of Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

Although an Economic Development Element is an optional element of a local government comprehensive plan, it is a required element of a Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

The goals, objectives and policies in the proposed Economic Development Element for the City of Sebastian are considered to be consistent with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan for the Treasure Coast Region; specifically with Regional Goals 3.3 (regarding maintaining and expanding the tourism sector, 3.4 (regarding important and viable economic centers in the Region); and 3.5 (regarding improved transportation and educational linkages). The City is especially commended for recognizing the importance of policies which commit support to transportation alternatives to the single-occupant automobile (Policy 1.4.1), providing affordable housing opportunities for the City’s workforce (Policy 1.4.2) and support for home-based businesses (Policy 1.8.4).

Consistency with Strategic Regional Policy Plan

The contract agreement with the DCA requires the TCRPC to include a determination of consistency with the SRPP as part of the written report to be submitted to the DCA. The TCRPC finds the proposed amendments to be CONSISTENT with the SRPP.

Recommendation

The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council should adopt the above comments and instruct staff to transmit the report to the Department of Community Affairs.

Attachments
## List of Exhibits

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<td>General Location Map</td>
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<td>Future Land Use Map</td>
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Exhibit 1
General Location Map

Sebastian