

Town of Inglis, FL Economic Development Plan



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Executive Summary

As local governments (towns, cities and counties) attempt to navigate their way toward a stable economic footing in modern America, external forces can act against their efforts in the form of nature, demography, technology and industry. Local planners and leaders should look to theories and concepts of local economic development to implement strategies aimed at developing a strong economic base for their region. At the same time, local governments should seek to eliminate the inequality and environmental harm caused by previous generations' economic development efforts.

This study is intended to highlight approaches and strategies of economic development the Town of Inglis may wish to consider Implementing in order to achieve its community goals. Specifically, what complimentary approaches towards economic development should the town consider? Are there alternative strategies that if pursued by the Town of Inglis will help the community achieve its goals? What planning processes can be utilized by Inglis and what important elements of a local strategy plan are essential for successful economic development?

The overarching premise in investing these questions is that local governments play an important role in economic development. Whether a community's primary goal is to provide greater employment opportunities for local residents, or, to improve and maintain a tax base in order to provide adequate public services, local economic development efforts are critical.

To frame our evaluation and discussion, we utilize a book entitled *Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice*. The authors – Edward Blakely and Nancy Green Leigh – are well known scholars in the field of economic development. Moreover, their work crosses policy fields, such as public management of

infrastructure and urban revitalization policy, which planners and economic development practitioners are in many cases highly involved in addressing in their community. Their suggested approaches towards economic development are by no means the only source on the theory and practice of local economic development. Nevertheless, their comprehensive approach to integrating concepts and theories of local economic development, the local economic development planning process, strategy selection, policy implementation and discussion of institutional approaches provide a robust framework to use as our guide. This report was prepared in the summer of 2011 under the supervision of Dr. Christopher Hawkins by University of Central Florida Graduate students enrolled in PAD 5356 Managing Community & Economic Development.

A brief summary of recommended courses of action:

- 1) Strategic Investments
 - a) Community Asset Inventory
 - b) Townscaping
 - c) Examine regulations for potential improvement
 - d) Education of workforce
 - e) Focus on quality of life issues

- 2) Businesses oriented strategies combined with human capital development strategies that Inglis should and could be focus on
 - a) Progress Energy Plant
 - i) Workforce training
 - ii) Negotiate first source agreements
 - b) Ecotourism
 - i) Joint marketing with regional partners

Defining Local Economic Development

Until recently, simple wealth creation has been the basis of economic development theories employed by local practitioners (Blakely and Leigh, 2010). When wealth creation alone fuels economic development efforts, a broadening of the tax base and job creation become the major focuses of a region. However, this can lead to inequalities among citizen groups that can ultimately destroy a region. One question that should be asked is whether or not more jobs will necessarily equate to better jobs. When jobs that are being created do not offer citizens the opportunity to increase their quality of life, to utilize technical skills, or to work in advanced industries, a town cannot grow or develop a strong economic base.

Additionally, blind economic growth tactics (defined as near-term expansion as opposed to long-term change from the ground up) can result in the destruction of the natural environment and lead to pollution, global warming and many other environmental threats (Blakely and Leigh, 2010). Location theory states that, because of significant advances in technology, firms are able to do business from almost anywhere, and may make their decisions of where to locate based on factors such as the quality of community life, natural amenities, and a reasonable cost of living.

Blakely and Leigh (2010) define local economic development through the following three-part explanation:

“Local economic development is achieved when a community’s standard of living can be preserved and increased through a process of human and physical development that is based on principles of equity and sustainability.”

Although it can be difficult to agree upon on a definition of “standard of living”, we argue that a minimum standard of living is achieved by jobs that provide a living wage

(earnings for full-time work that allow a family to live above the poverty line). To increase the standard of living, as mentioned in this definition, the authors suggest that residents should be able to consume better goods and services, have access to quality housing, enjoy paid health care plans, and be able to save for retirement for themselves and higher education for their children (Blakely and Leigh, 2010).

There are fundamental differences between economic growth and economic development. Economic growth creates more wealth and assets, but does not attempt to spread them among the population evenly. Economic development, however, should focus on reducing inequality between various groups, including demographic groups (age, gender, race), economic or political groups (small towns, large cities, urban, suburban, and rural areas), and spatially defined groups (natives and immigrants).

Finally, sustainability is fast becoming a necessary consideration of economic development. Without a focus on sustainability future generations can suffer the ramifications of shortsighted growth efforts and valuable greenspace and environmental areas can be lost or permanently damaged. The demand for sustainability does, however, create demand for new types of products, jobs, markets, firms, and industries that can help broaden the base for economic development (Blakely and Leigh, 2010).

Theories of Economic Development

NEOCLASSICAL ECONOMIC THEORY – focuses on two concepts: equilibrium of economic systems and mobility of capital. One underlying assumption of this theory is that economic systems will reach natural equilibrium if there is no restriction on capital. This approach generally rejects government or community regulations on movement of firms or minority and local equity participation because the firm is set up to fail under these circumstances. Critics suggest the theory tells us little about the real reasons why some areas are competitive while others fail. One element of this theory that can benefit Inglis is using their resources to attract capital.

ECONOMIC BASE THEORY – provides a guide for growth in output, income, and employment. This theory is focused on the community's demand for goods and services from outside of the community. Inglis's focus under this model would be to reduce any barriers and create a trade-free zone in areas such as tax relief and telecommunications. Economic Base Theory is helpful by providing an understanding of growth and decline on the local economy based on changes in demand for exported goods and services. A concern with this theory is that its primary focus is on exports and there is always the possibility of change of demand (e.g. if the exported services are no longer needed, business decreases or stops and jobs are possibly lost). For Inglis to implement this theory, the town would need to diversify its local economic base (with a focus on exporting based industries).

PRODUCT CYCLE THEORY – In this theory a product usually starts locally or in an area with more investing power and individuals who are willing to pay more for a product that isn't yet standardized. The production then expands which makes the demand for the product as well as the jobs needed to produce decline unless the businesses find a way to make the product different other than simply changing the

price. Inglis can use this theory to establish firms locally and expand as well as find ways to continue to produce new products and continue to expand.

LOCATION THEORY – Ultimately a company maximizes profit in a location that minimizes costs. This theory explains how a firm chooses its location and how local economies grow or decline. Theoretically, a firm will choose the cheapest location according to output. Inglis can use this theory to ensure they are properly manipulating their cost of energy, education, and labor, for example.

Theories of Economic Development

Theory	Definition	Application to Inglis
Neoclassical Theory	No restrictions on capital, systems will reach equilibrium on their own	Inglis can utilize their resources (undeveloped land, rural charm, major power plant) to attract more capital
Economic Base Theory	Focuses on the demand for the community's goods and services from outside the community	Inglis should first diversify its economic base, then lift trade restrictions
Location Theory	Utilization of location's resources, including labor, geography, infrastructure, etc. to maximize profits	Inglis should maximize their proximity to the Gulf, rural charm, low cost labor and nearness to waterways and two major highways
Central Place Theory	Development of smaller supporting businesses that provide necessary essential items	Inglis should support the establishment of businesses providing lower order goods to establish itself as a destination for employees of the power plant or possibly Crystal River

CENTRAL PLACE THEORY—This theory provides a framework oriented towards smaller businesses providing resources to support larger and more regionally based industries. There are both low order and high order goods. Most people purchase lower-order products from places in close proximity to residence or workplace. Low order goods are things such as food and household items that most human beings purchase frequently and small businesses that sell these items in small towns can survive because people will likely shop close to home. High order goods, such as cars, are not a frequently purchased item so a car dealership in a small town will not likely prosper. Inglis would benefit most from not investing in high order businesses that will likely create short-lived jobs.

Economic Development Planning Process

PRE-PLANNING STEPS

Before the planning process can begin preliminary steps must be followed. To create a local economic development plan an organizational unit must be identified to develop and oversee programs, and the scope of the project must be identified. The organizational units are typically chambers of commerce or an Economic Development Corporation (EDC). These organizations must ensure participation of critical sectors of the community, empower the local leadership, and bring legitimacy by gaining approval from a wide range of community members. Once the planners are identified, a specific area for investments should be targeted. The area should have the support of adjacent cities, the county in which the city is located, and the state.

Before any attempts can be made to shape the local economic environment, planners must decide their role and associated tasks. Defining roles early in the process will preempt any arguments over responsibilities. Petty arguments can kill development projects before they begin. The four common roles available to planning participants are listed below.

- *Entrepreneur/Developer* – Organizations take on the full responsibility of creating a business enterprise
- *Coordinator* – Local government or community groups act as a coordination body to establish policy or propose strategies for an area's development.
- *Facilitator* – A city or community group bring together a range of approaches from different functional areas into a policy statement on economic development
- *Stimulator* – Stimulates business creation or expansion by taking specific action that induces firms to enter or remain in the community.

SIX PHASES OF THE PLANNING PROCESS

The economic development planning process generally has six phases. These phases should be followed in order, but are also merely recommendations that lead to the ultimate goal of educating the community, creating a strategy, and creating a development project. The following is a brief description of the six phases.

- o Phase I: gather information about demographics, the character of the economic base, and local problems in generating jobs and wealth.
- o Phase II: select broad strategies to solve problems identified in Phase I.
- o Phase III: focus on projects that can accomplished with the selected strategies.
- o Phase IV: build action plans to implement the projects.
- o Phase V: specify details and establish monitoring/evaluation plans.
- o Phase VI: implement the project.

TYPOLOGY OF PLANNING APPROACHES

Before development planning can occur, planners need to be aware of their current planning orientation. These orientations define the way a community reacts, or wishes to react, to a particular planning problem. Local planners typically have four types of planning orientations: recruitment planning, impact planning, contingency planning, and strategic planning.

- o *Recruitment planning*– a pre–active approach to economic development. Public involvement is limited and policies implemented under this approach assume all business is good for the community.
- o *Impact planning*–a reactive approach that tries to reduce the worst effects of industrial losses in a local economy. This approach relies on federal

funds which does not allow for flexible response. Actions taken under this policy are seen as short term and only in crisis.

Consequences – planners pay less attention to developing their local economies. When federal funds disappear localities can't afford to keep the programs running.

- o *Contingency planning*—an interactive approach that anticipates the worst and best possible outcomes. Assesses the strength of all economic sectors.
- o *Strategic planning*— a proactive approach that is appropriate for all communities. It builds a local economy on the basis of local needs, adapting a long term view of development. Strategic planning selects development projects based on community needs, rather than available outside resources and opportunities.

Economic Development Strategies

LOCALITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Locality development is an approach to economic development that traditionally has focused on the ownership, regulation, and management of land and infrastructure. Transportation planning and urban design are important cornerstones of locality development. Current practices of locality development focus on mitigating environmental impacts of land development and stress the importance of creating sustainable local development. Land is one of the most vital assets a local community has when creating economic development initiatives. Therefore, the management of land and land transactions should be an intricate component for economic development.

There are three overarching goals of locality development: *Image building*, *Livability*, and *Business Improvement* (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). Image building establishes within a local community a sense of identity and a sense of place for residents. Livability is centered on improving the local community's amenities, which reflects the quality of life for residents. Business improvement focuses on how a local community can improve the attractiveness of a locality to new and relocating businesses. Recent empirical studies have indicated that a city's appearance coupled with its social and economic climate are significant elements of local economic development (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). In addition, the cityscape and the natural environment of a community contribute to the quality of life businesses actively seek out. Central to the appearance of the cityscape and natural environment is the development of a visual theme for a community. Furthermore, Locality Development is the most well known and widely used technique for economic development in establishing visual community themes (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

A visual theme focuses on the following: 1) Creating a sense of identity; 2) Improving an amenity base or livability of a community; 3) Preserving and protecting sensitive land areas and recognizing environmental equity in the community; 4) Improving the attractiveness of the civic center and using strategies to mix residential and commercial areas to improve local business and improve the quality of life for residents (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

The following are economic development strategies based on locality development that are oriented to the goals of Image Building, Amenity Improvement, and Business Improvement.

Locality Development Strategies

Tool	Image Building	Amenity Improvement	Business Improvement
Land-banking		X	X
Infrastructure Development		X	X
Speculative Building			X
Zoning Regulations		X	X
Regulation Improvement	X		X
Townscaping	X	X	X
Shopsteading	X		X
Housing & Neighborhood Improvement	X	X	
Community Service	X	X	X

Land-Banking

Land-banking is the practice of acquiring land to create contiguous sites for development. Vacant buildings and derelict property tend to have negative economic and societal affects within a community. The underlying purpose of the land-banking strategy is for the community to use an underutilized asset to establish a new use for the site (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). Land-banking is an approach done primarily in older communities where there is little available land or where there is a substantial amount of available land that the community seeks to position for investment (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). A local government might use this technique to develop a greenbelt or simply to preserve key open space or agricultural tracts. In other words, Land Banking is the practice of buying and holding pre-developed land that lies within the path of growth. Moreover, local governments can recover its land banking expenses by leasing purchased property back to an investor with certain restrictions placed on the land being leased; in which will give local government the opportunity to maintain their economic development strategy. Cities and counties may also recoup at least part of their costs by reselling the acquired land with deed restrictions that guarantee the property's continued open space use.

In order to develop a land-bank approach at the community or neighborhood level a Community Land Trust should be created. The Community Land Trust can be devised through creating a nonprofit land trust organization. The nonprofit land trust board leadership should be comprised of local neighborhood activists, community leaders, businesspersons, and relevant professionals. One disadvantage to the Land Bank or Community trust approach is the requirement of substantial capital. Given the costs associated with the

purchasing of land parcels local governments have several potential sources of funding to acquire the capital needed for such a project. For example, a few potential capital sources might exist in national, state, or local capital programs, Community Reinvestment Act funds, program related investments of foundations and intermediary institutions, and industrial development bonds (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

Infrastructure Development

The premise behind the Infrastructure Development approach resides in developing commercial and industrial land in order to attract potential business and industries (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). The incentives for the enticement of businesses and industry results from two main facets attached to the prior development of land. The first facet of attraction to investors is the amount of time saved between the acquisition of land and the time the actual business operation can take place. Expediting the amount of time it takes for a business or industry to begin operating plays a significant role in the decision making process and correlates to an increase level of effectiveness and efficiency for an investor. The second positive attribute for business and industry with this approach stems from the avoidance of financial obligations of land improvement. Another alternative for community infrastructure revitalization present in this approach is that of Adaptive Reuse. Adaptive Reuse is the practice of reclaiming old underused industrial property for other uses. Typically the Adaptive Reuse tool is used by local governments to use their resources to reconfigure streets, build parking structures, and reinforce a building to meet the basic requirements for the new users. The most commonly used incentive

undertaken by local governments using this approach results in the provision of water & sewer lines, street lighting, access roads, and sidewalks.

Speculative Building

The Speculative Building strategy is a marketing tool designed to attract firms to an area and or retain existing businesses that are in the process of expansion (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). This approach is best utilized for areas that have a shortage of industrial space, yet have an adequate labor force, transportation system, and a sufficient supply of public services. The overall premise of the Speculative Building approach relies in the local entity's ability to provide an operational work space for a business or industry. In this strategy the local entity will provide for a "shell" building while leaving the interior largely unfinished until a tenant is found. Reducing the start-up costs or expansion time for a firm increases the attractiveness for the firm to take part in this economic development approach.

Zoning Regulations

Incentive zoning typically allows for more intense commercial development on a particular parcel of land. The central premise behind this strategy is establishing flexible zones and rules in the local zoning code that promote economic development. There are generally three types of zoning strategies— Incentive Zoning, Overlay Zoning, and Special Districts (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). Incentive zoning provides developers with flexibility and promotes certain land uses and project features local governments want to implement. The incentives attached to the Incentive zoning approach are generally used to obtain public benefits in exchange for design concessions to a developer. In addition, the

most prominent type of zoning incentive used is that of bonus zoning. Bonus zoning allows for additional densities or increased floor area beyond those dictated by the zoning codes, in exchange for public benefits. A disadvantage to the zoning incentive approach is the lack of fixed standards in zoning when implementing the process.

Overlay zoning is a regulatory tool when local government's general zoning and development standards do not address a subarea's unique issues and conditions. The main attribute of the overlay zoning approach is that a special zoning district will be created and placed over an existing zoning base, therefore superseding, modifying, and supplementing its requirements. The overlay zoning technique can be used to create specialized commercial or industrial districts. Additionally, overlay zones may be used as a device to market development rights by selling to developers the right to increase plot ratios while maintaining the same overall city-wide density limits. This technique allows the local market to work more efficiently and effectively, by allowing developers to place facilities where demand exists rather than having local government officials designating the location of development.

Special districts or Special purpose districts are generally created through the county legislative authority to meet a specific need of the local community. The need may be a new service or a higher level of an existing service. These are political subdivisions of the state with legal rights and duties, and are dissolved in accordance with statutory procedures (Information, 2012). State enabling legislation sets forth the purpose of the district, procedures for formation, powers, functions and duties, composition of the governing body, methods of finance, and other provisions. The districts are usually quasi-

municipal corporations though some are statutorily defined as municipal corporations (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). The Uniform Special District Accountability Act of 1989 holds all special districts accountable and accessible to state agencies, the municipalities and counties in which they operate, and the citizens they serve (Information, 2012). Special districts have the authority to establish taxes for local businesses to generate revenue for services within the district. One disadvantage of this approach resides with the local government not having to provide for tax-mandated services due to the creation of another level of local government having the responsibility to provide those services. Another disadvantage to a special district is that it relies on the establishment of the new authority to govern within the community and having the power to create rules with minimal accountability to the entire community.

Regulation Improvement

Regulation improvement is a relatively inexpensive method to promote economic development, and if properly administered, might even produce monetary savings for the local government. Pinpointing accurate issues in the community's regulatory system in order to streamline the application process for economic development is the sole premise of this technique. Eliminating barriers within the developmental approval process such as conflicting regulations, time-consuming delays, or a negative adversarial view to development, will entice developers to invest in the community (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). Many communities across the United States have established interdepartmental panels, one-stop permit offices, and committees that review development impact to clarify any uncertainties and/or aggravation experienced

throughout the application process. This approach simplifies the development processes and allows for development to be conducted in an efficient manner.

Townscaping

The Townscaping strategy is a physical, attitudinal, and management process. Townscaping addresses the need to revitalize the shopping areas around a town's civic center. Moreover, establishing an attractive shopping environment for local residents and outsiders to shop is the central premise behind this approach. This approach recognizes that tourism is both cyclical and fickle as a primary source for economic development. The physical component to this approach is tied to the development of a localized theme for the central town area. The localized theme for the area is created with the input of local merchants, city planners, and citizen groups (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). A commonly used approach to theme development is the Main Street program, in which the town theme is incorporated into plans for building or rebuilding the existing landscape. The Townscaping strategy has had success in increasing local business traffic and tourism as a result of improving their town's visual image (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). The attitudinal component present in this approach revolves around the actions local businesses and citizens take with regard to their town center. Establishing new forums for local businesses to exchange and discuss common problems, such as creating a new local chamber of commerce is an important feature within this approach and attests to the attitudinal component inherent within the approach.

Shopsteading

Shopsteading is a new approach to economic development that is focused on community and inner city revitalization. The overall premise behind this strategy is for the local entity to purchase vacant commercial property and then sell to eligible business owners. Shopsteading has the potential for improving land use patterns in marginal commercial areas by providing incentives for other private investors to renovate any other buildings within the area (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). There are two main components to this approach. The first component is the availability of vacant properties in areas that have considerable potential for economic revitalization, which means that there must be an identifiable market for the shopstead area. Secondly, the availability of qualified individuals to satisfy the shopstead requirements is paramount in beginning this strategy. The purchaser of the commercial property needs to provide evidence of equity capital and must submit a detailed proposal as to how the individual will rehabilitate the property. Typically once the shopsteaders begin to move in they are required to begin improving the property. The property is still subject to comply with the local building codes and normally within a year the shopsteaders must have completed all renovations and have their business operations up and running. Restrictions on reselling the commercial property by the original shopsteader can be imposed by the local government.

Housing & Neighborhood Improvement

The Housing & Neighborhood Improvement strategy is focused on residential housing as a primary driver for economic development. Moreover, recent cities have become increasingly aware of the nexus between housing availability and household services influencing economic development (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

There are two main components to this approach. The first is providing diverse housing types that will provide homes for all groups within the community. The second component is the need to provide households with services ranging from child care to community facilities (i.e. swimming pools). Typically this approach is used in communities needing to redevelop blighted districts. Purchasing or trading land via local government or community groups would place those local entities in an inviting position for quality developers to build diverse housing. However, since land acquisition can be expensive, forging alliances among local community organizations for the redevelopment of certain residential areas into mixed housing developments is viable alternative.

Community Services

The premise behind the Community Service approach to economic development resides with methods in reducing costs for local entities to provide community services that are deemed vital to economic growth. The possibilities under this approach are plentiful, in that the overall premise is to create jobs while reducing costs. In this approach a local government should develop alternative mixes of public and private resources, combined with incentives, to achieve the goals (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). For example, some local governments have sublet their visitor centers to entrepreneurs, thus increasing private stakeholders' share in a local community asset that benefits both public and private sectors.

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The business development focus is to create a healthy local economy. It is done by creating a good business “climate”. Economic success is achieved when community and business development merge as a vehicle to mobilize community resources to boost the economy (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). By focusing on businesses as the primary method of economic development, communities will need to create a business friendly environment and reduce the costs of operating businesses. This approach emphasizes new business start-ups, attracting new business, and expanding existing business by increasing innovation and entrepreneurship. Startup businesses create economic opportunities for local communities by hiring within those communities and by successfully branding the community as business friendly (e.g. willing to help startup businesses). Attracting new businesses to a local economy using various development tools will increase the economic opportunities for a local region. Building on current business through localized business expansion methods is considered to be one of the least time consuming approaches to economic development and may result in quicker economic results than alternative approaches. Choice of tools is central to business development, but it depends on the business and local development strategy the community has developed. Business development strategies include one-stop centers, start-up and venture financing companies, small business development center, women’s enterprises, group marketing system, promotion and tourism programs, research and development programs, incubation centers, micro-enterprises, technology and business parks, enterprise zones, and entrepreneur development courses. Figure 3 illustrates how these tools can be integrated into a community economic and business development strategy. Details of each strategy are discussed below.

One-Stop Business Assistance Centers

One-stop business centers are information centers designed to serve as key contact point between businesses and local governments. The business assistance center must contain information on all planning and development matters of interest to all business entities. For instance, some critical information needing to be on hand is as follows: local economic indicators, labor market statistics, local development plans, land availability, building regulations, permits, and all aspects of finance (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). The turnaround time for the information requested must be prompt for under this strategy since the primary goal is to cater to businesses and developers with quick and concise information. Acting as the primary liaison between local government and businesses the one-stop centers can play dramatic role in increasing local area development. Eliminating barriers involved in procuring information can create an atmosphere of confidence for potential business development. In addition, a business assistance center can be operated through a partnership with other cities and or the county. Furthermore, a one-stop center will enable local governments to take on an organized professional approach to information distribution. This allows local government entities to project business trends and analyze any potential shortcomings in their business development strategies.

Start -Up and Venture Financing

Creating a method that allows local individuals to invest in local businesses is an important business development tool. Start-up and venture financing improves a new local business profitability while lowering their risk of failure. This development tool works well when existing financial institutions are not

equipped to adequately handle the venture capital requirements to stimulate growth for small-size enterprises within a community. Ultimately this strategy requires the establishment of a community development finance institution (CDFI). A CDFI can provide for venture capital to selected eligible small firms that are unable to secure financing from traditional lending institutions. The role of the CDFI is not to replace local lending institutions, yet rather as to act as a model for those local institutions on how to provide capital to local start-up enterprises (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). The CDFI would bring in private investors and private corporations interested in socially responsible investments and commit to either a low return on their investment or to forgo the interest return on their investment. Another approach under this strategy would be to create a development bank that might take the form of a savings and loan bank or a community credit union. The development bank would focus on providing start-up capital to local eligible firms. Providing opportunities for local development groups and local residents within the community to invest in small local business enterprises and to share in the successes of those firms without the risk of investing in just one firm makes this approach appealing. Moreover, those clients committed to the development bank become shareholders in the companies and the community shares with the stakeholders in the success (or failure) of its investment; thus cultivating a strong sense of long-term development within a local community. In order for this strategy to be successful a CDFI must invest in small enterprises, existing or new, that are commercially viable and promote the greatest opportunities to succeed. For example, some criteria points under this approach for sound investment are as follows: innovation in product, process, or marketing; potential for growth;

potential for future sales outside of region; demonstrate sound management skills; willingness to establish an experienced board of directors to assist in planning future growth of the business. It is important to note that a CDFI must also have a method of exit from its investment in order to continue its local investment opportunities. Some possible exit tactics are selling its share back to the entrepreneur, selling its share to another private investor, and or selling its share through the stock market.

Small Business Development Centers

Researchers have found that the failure rate among new and small firms is significant. The core reason is poor management. To improve the economic performance for the small business sector within a community the creation of a small business development center needs to occur. Not only does it benefit the small businesses but it is cost efficient and can stimulate the economy. These centers can provide but are not limited to management training, counseling/consulting, and research services.

The objective of these services would be the following:

- Encourage a higher rate of new business starts with the potential to succeed
- Reduce the level of failures
- Improve performance and growth rate
- Potential to stimulate the economy and generate new employment
- Raise the general level of technological innovation
- A big brother or sister for the new business

Another approach under this strategy is to focus on unemployed workers through a business resource center and turning those workers into business owners or operators. The rationale behind this approach is to tap the

entrepreneurial talents of laid-off workers and find niches within a local market that could be economically viable for a start-up company. Business resource centers can provide the following:

- Practical training in business start-ups
- Low-cost, small premises
- Centralized services (i.e., photocopying, telephone answering, accounting)
- A “big brother” or “bit sister” for the new business

Micro-Enterprise

The micro-enterprise concept is to loan funds to people within the community who plan to go into small labor-intensive businesses. Typically micro-enterprises provide funding for businesses that operate from an individual’s home or a street vendor. Given the local orientation of this strategy it allows for a flexible community approach to take hold with respects to monetary lending, such as boosting training capacity, broadening or narrowing the target population, and increasing the loan-size ceiling depending on the circumstances. Some examples are homemade jewelry or baskets and specialty foods for restaurants. There is usually some form of pre-business training and group building before loans are made to potential entrepreneurs.

Women’s Enterprises

A women enterprise program is an economic development strategy that assists women with low-to-moderate income start their own businesses. They are put through an intensive training program, which assists them to identify their talents and interest and on building the self-confidence to start their own business.

Promotion and Tourism Programs

Tourism can be a great asset if well planned and managed. As a development strategy tourism must be considered as a regional planning effort. Empirical studies have yet to conclude the overall effects of tourism as a significant economic strategy; however, studies do suggest that a tourism strategy must have explicit objectives, such as business development and needs to work in concert with all local stakeholders. Moreover, the strategy should be planned around a theme and should also target specific populations. When considering tourism and promotion regional entities and partnerships need to be established. There are three types of regions that are recognized with respect to the role tourism has in economic development within a community (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

- 1.) *Regions Lacking Tourism Significance:* These regions are denoted by areas not having any local or regional significance to tourism. Predominately these areas are rural inland regions with no particular attraction for tourism and might even be towns off the main travel routes. Specific themes for these areas to create attractions rely on unusual opportunities such as “weekend on the farm”, or capitalizing on a specific historical event.
- 2.) *Regions of High Tourism Significance:* These are regions with excellent climate and scenic wonders that are typically recognizable both nationally and internationally without increased promotion.
- 3.) *Centers of Tourism Interest:* These are regions in which tourism plays as a component to another major economic activity within the area. An example would be southern California’s film industry being clustered in a geographic area and the spinoff economic activity being tourism.

Research and Development

The economy is emerging based on technology development. Many start-up industries need a place to begin. They require a community interested in mixing uses, such as housing and retail. Communities that provide the right atmosphere for startup firms will attract them. If they nurture these firms by providing the right kind of atmosphere, they can become the headquarters for new companies or the centers of revitalization of older ones. New inventors however need a supporting environment while they are trying to come with an idea. Incubation centers (also known as “technology development centers”) are intended to provide the supporting environment. They provide low-rent workplaces and are usually located adjacent to educational institutions, which provide small inventors with equipment, facilities, and advice on business management, work support and acquiring necessary plans to approach venture capitalists. Under this strategy a newly formed approach for economic development has emerged, Technology and Business Park. Technology and Business parks are areas where commercial activities take place. Typical features found within in these parks are as follows: Campus style physical environments; mixture of ownership (Government & Private); association with some form of university or science related establishment; low-density development with high quality buildings; specific criteria for prospective occupants (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

Enterprise Zones

Enterprise zones are areas where local planning controls are minimized in order to attract prospective developers with financial incentives. The incentives used to attract developers and local investment resides in the form of tax

breaks, regulatory easement of enacted development policies, and land. The targeted geographic areas for certain economic development industries should be consistent with the skills of the localized workforce. Employment structures within a specified region should dictate the types of industries sought out by local governments for economic development. Typically enterprise zones are aimed at attracting labor-intensive industries, due in part by the ability of such industries to employ numerous workers. Enterprise zones as an economic development strategy have not indicated empirically positive results from cities that have taken on these approaches. Again there is no one approach to economic development, yet rather a multitude of approaches for successful economic development (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

Advantages of Business Development within a Community
Local Economic Development Tools and Benefits

Tool	Business Start-Ups	Business Attraction	Business Expansion/Retention	Nurturing Innovation and Entrepreneurship
One-Stop center	X	X	X	
Start-up & Venture Financing	X	X	X	
Small Business Assistance Center	X		X	X
Group Marketing System	X		X	X
Promotion & Tourism Programming	X	X	X	
Research & Development				X
Incubation Center				X
Technology and Business park	X	X	X	
Enterprise zone	X	X	X	
Entrepreneurship Development	X			X
Women's Enterprise	X			X
Micro-enterprise	X		X	X

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (PEOPLE CENTERED APPROACHES)

Human resource development and community economic development, together, have been long viewed as critical aspects to local economic development. Traditionally, economic development focuses on workforce development and education to ensure that citizens are properly trained and intellectually capable to compete with the rapid advancement of 21st century technology. Blakely and Leigh (2010) identify various types of human resource programs and economic development objectives that focus on the creation of partnerships. These partnerships are formed between local businesses, government entities, educational institutions, and the community to ensure that citizens are receiving a variety of training options that meet the skill requirements set forth by employers. Community economic development, on the other hand, primarily focuses on the socioeconomic challenges that certain groups of society face on a daily basis that are directly linked to their hardships such as lack of education, childcare, welfare, and health issues. At the same time, applying organizational forms and objectives that teaches the communities how to be self-sufficient in improving their own communities rather than waiting on outside resources to take the initiative.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Two key components of this development are economic/workforce development and education. Author Shari Garmise, states that “Workforce development is not a problem—it is an opportunity—the chance to unleash the creative, productive, and innovative forces, found only in people, for the economic and social betterment of our cities, states, and nations...”(Blakely and Leigh, 2010, pg. 297).

There are a multitude of human resource development and training programs in existence. These programs should be matched to the Town’s economic development

objectives. Several human resource development strategies include the following: Workforce Investment Boards (WIB), First Source or Targeted Hiring Agreements, Employment Maintenance, Skill Banks, Training Programs, Customized Training, Competency-Based Training, Comprehensive Training to Meet Social Needs, Youth Enterprise, University-Industry Technology Transfer, Self-Employment Initiatives, Career Ladders, and Disabled Persons Skills Development.

Workforce Investment Boards

Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) are well recognized for forming partnerships with local business owners, training boards, and community organizers, which combine their expertise/resources for the betterment of the community. They have been created to repair the continuing gulf between employment and training efforts and economic development, particularly for the disadvantaged.

First-Source or Targeted Hiring Agreements

First-source agreements or targeted hiring agreements are contracts between government and businesses, which allows interviewing of local individuals for possible intent of hiring in return for subsidies. This agreement generally stipulates the referral source and the number of referrals required before the employer can place advertisements or interview persons from outside the specified geographic area.

Training Programs

Training programs were created to assist individuals in learning job-related skills and implement new technology. Most contain provisions for special courses to meet the needs of local employers and include upgrade

training, apprenticeship courses, retraining of dislocated workers or of women reentering the workforce, as well as traditional course offerings.

Youth Enterprise

Youth enterprises appropriately train individuals under the age of 18 with significant life and business-related skills. In part, this is an attempt to rekindle entrepreneurial spirit in the nation's youth. It also represents a new emphasis on help create jobs for themselves rather than waiting for jobs to be created for them.

Self-Employment Initiatives

Self-employment initiatives were designed to lower the rate of unemployment and expand economic growth, as many individuals are becoming unemployed consistently. These initiatives attempt to assist unemployed people of any age create employment ventures themselves, using their own labor as the primary resource. They include small business start-up efforts in which the unemployed receive small loans and grants to initiate a new, independent, community-serving business.

Career Ladders

Career ladders were constructed in order for many local individuals to receive better employment and higher salaries. Career ladder programs are aimed at helping workers in low-skill and low-wage jobs move into higher-level and more secure employment. Fitzgerald described how certified nursing assistants have progressed into the licensed practical nurses through the utilization of career ladders. Career ladder programs are aimed at helping workers in low-skill and low-wage jobs move into higher-level and more secure

employment. Presently, many advanced employment positions require individuals to have a certain level of skills and higher education.

Education as the Foundation of Human Resource Development

Local economic development has relied on human resource development for two reasons. The first reason is to help close the gaps of inequality. This is achieved by raising the quality of living standards through “quality employment and providing good compensation packages” for citizens in low-income communities. The second reason is by partnering with educational institutions to ensure that these targeted communities are receiving quality education that will help prepare them for today’s competitive and innovative workforce. For years, local economic development relied on universities, Vo-Tech institutions, and community colleges to provide the knowledge, skills, and training that individuals needed to enter the workforce; while shunning the direct economic effects that the lack of early childhood education and the lack of quality primary and secondary education have on a community.

Blakely and Leigh, (2010) are convinced that investing in early childhood education and local K-12 public schools will produce both a public and private investment return. In addition, a quality education for children in this group encourages these children to seek advanced education, which in turn, will increase earning potential, attract business firms, and reduce the crime rate within the community.

Implementing a Human Resource Development Strategy

As businesses are faced with abrupt changes constantly, human resource development strategies need to be implemented to appropriately manage

employees in the following areas: Vocational Training and Education, Job Placement, Client–Oriented Job Creation, and Job Maintenance. The aim of the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis is to eliminate lapses of training and other work–related issues. Economic developers interested in applying a human resource development strategy in their community to expand jobs and improve community wellbeing need to discover how the increases in skills of current or potential workers can expand opportunities for groups of people or businesses currently not fully participating in the local community.

Tools for People Centered Approaches

Tool	Goal		
	Vocational Training and Education	Job Placement	Client–Oriented Job Creation
Workforce Investment Boards	X		
First–Source or Targeted Hiring Agreements		X	
Training Programs	X	X	
Youth Enterprises	X		X
Self–Employment Initiatives	X	X	
Career Ladders	X	X	

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community economic initiatives have been used to revitalize neighborhoods, cities, and underdeveloped countries around the world. Blakely & Leigh (2010) state “community economic development seeks to improve conditions within a geographic area that is populated by the disadvantaged and unable to control its socioeconomic

direction or resources both, human and physical” (p. 329). This statement may be relevant to the citizens in the town of Inglis as it may be necessary for local citizens to look for jobs outside of their communities, while local economic developers simultaneously try to convince outside resources, such as “investors and businesses” to come into in the community to help boost the local economy.

In order to achieve some of these goals the following organizational structures may be developed by a community: community development corporations, community cooperatives, local enterprise agencies, employee/worker ownerships, and community employment and training boards.

Community Development Corporations

Community Development Corporations (CDCs) furnish programs, extend reliable services, etc. that stimulate and sustain community economic development. Generally, CDCs concentration focus on serving individuals that falls well below the line of poverty and/or striving communities. Good CDCs develop strategies that are coordinated, comprehensive, feasible, and responsive to community needs. CDCs are a vital component in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis by regenerating communities.

**Comparison of Organization Forms of
Community-Based Economic and Employment Development**

Organizational	Objectives	Methods
Community Development Corporation	Build community level institutions	Community organization and business formation
Community cooperative	Community /worker Producer control	Collective business
Local enterprise agency	Unemployed/community Business formation	Local resource mobilization
Employee/worker ownership	Worker control	Worker Finance
Community employment and training board	Human resource development	Training

Institutional Advantages of CDC's

- Use private development techniques for public purpose
- Target benefits to communities and individuals in need
- Mobilize local initiative to address local priorities
- Take a long-term approach to development
- Link planning to implementation
- Link complementary projects within a comprehensive strategy
- Understand and work with the processes of both the public and private sectors
- Legally can, and in practice do, attract both public and private resources in a variety of roles
- Work directly with small businesses
- Reinvest resources in the community have incentives to operate programs efficiently
- Can transfer capacity among program activities

Incentives and Community Benefit Agreements

Incentives and community benefits are utilized to bring businesses and entrepreneurs to depleted communities. Incentives should be packaged to meet the needs of the firm or individual entrepreneur a community is trying to attract or encourage in the area. Throughout the last few years, communities have expounded incentives and community benefits to attract more businesses and entrepreneurs. At the same time, business being recruited to a community, or even just looking for a location to land, has come to see the offering of incentives as the norm rather than the exception.

Local Government's Role in Community Economic Development

- Developing revolving loan funds and similar financing as seed capital for community projects
- Examining means to subcontract to community groups the delivery of community services or the operation of community facilities
- Developing work spaces and facilities for community groups to commence enterprise activities
- Identifying surplus or underutilized local government equipment that might be used by community groups
- Establishing a network of people or service clubs that can provide technical assistance to community groups
- Making community-based initiatives a component of the overall local economic strategy
- Helping communities negotiate community benefit agreements

The Local Context

Traditionally, economic development in a rural area focused on creating a regional economic development strategy. This is often comprised of one or two larger areas in the region as the focus of development. Recently though, it is being realized that small rural communities are able to be extremely competitive in attracting and developing highly specialized and successful businesses, as technology has allowed business owners to stay connected to markets while providing them the opportunity to enjoy an improved quality of life.

The rural or small town lifestyle has grown more attractive as the quality of life in many urban areas has declined with congestion, crime, and the rising cost of living. Two other unfavorable aspects of urban life sometimes noted are the “placeless-ness” of many cities, and the reduced status of the individual within large, concentrated populations. “Placeless-ness” describes the phenomenon of clogged, often featureless, multi-lane highways leading past national chain stores and restaurants to reach look-alike residential developments. (Harris & Tanaka, 2002)

In order to protect the community’s quality of life, Inglis should include the concept of *sustainability* in their economic development process. Sustainability focuses on the preservation of the natural environment and preservation and enhancement of the quality of life, alongside the broader goals of economic development such as entrepreneurial development and reducing inequity and inequality. Along with Inglis’s natural beauty, the rural lifestyle is a large component of the town’s quality of life. Any economic development effort should respect both of these attributes. Doing otherwise would be shortsighted, and could degrade the local characteristics that make the area attractive in the first place.

INGLIS AS A RURAL AREA

While Inglis does not have specific future land use designations as rural residential or agricultural (Future Land Use Map, Appendix), it is nevertheless a rural area. Its residential makeup is almost exclusively low-density single family, with a very small component of multi-family and high-density residential future land uses. Levy County and all its municipalities are designated as rural by the Rural Economic Development Initiative division of Florida's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (REDI, 2011).

GROWTH IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Across the country, for example, there have been rural communities who have improved their economic status through a combination of persistence, community coordination and support funding. One community in Northern California was faced with several natural disasters and a Rand McNally designation of the worst place in the nation to live, yet, after the implementation of intense economic development initiatives, was later named by Forbes as one of the top ten rural places to do business (Johnson, 2006).

In an economic development report prepared for the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Aldrich & Kusmin (1997) summarized an economic research service analysis, on potential economic growth in non-metro counties. According to their analysis, there are many factors that were consistently associated with positive or poor growth in rural areas.

Factors associated with positive growth:

- o Low initial labor costs
- o Attractiveness to retirees
- o State right-to-work laws
- o Excellent high school completion rates

- o Good public education expenditures
- o Access to transportation networks

Factors associated with poor growth:

- o Initial higher wage levels
- o Concentrations of transfer-payment receipts
- o Concentrations of small independent businesses in the goods-producing sector

Knowing the role of these factors helps development officials gauge whether the current is running with or against them. However, the presence of substantial unexplained variations means specific local strategies and strengths, as well as less quantifiable factors, is also important. Having favorable circumstances does not necessarily ensure strong economic growth.

Inglis will benefit from economic development and improvement in the following areas: income, equality, education, jobs, poverty, and infrastructure. Studies show that education level is a highly influential factor in determining the economic conditions and quality of life within any given community or nation. Gaps within literacy rate as well as other economic opportunities have increased across all scales of the economy, with the widest gaps most prevalent in the rural communities. With globalization increasingly rising and altering the business and work for all nations, it will be to the town of Inglis' advantage to effectively plan for continual economic development, stability, and growth.

Below is a table with the planner and the recommended roles they should adopt during the planning process. The roles were chosen after evaluating each planner's resources and attributes. These roles are only suggestion, and planners may chose alternative roles if they wish.

*SELECTING PLANNERS AND THEIR ROLES**Inglis*

The town of Inglis should take on the role of entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs take on the responsibility of creating, attracting, or relocating businesses. Inglis needs this role, because they know which type of development will work within their community. The Town's Comprehensive Plan lays out several goals including managing growth, while protecting the natural habitat. The entrepreneur role will allow them to achieve their goals instead of choosing goals other entities believe are beneficial.

Yankeetown

Yankeetown should take on the role of coordinator. They need to work with Inglis to create a development strategy that would benefit Inglis with little detriment to Yankeetown. Yankeetown is ten minute from Inglis. Any development, even a small project, can impact the small town with a population of less than 700

Levy County

Levy County will act as a facilitator. They can bring approaches and strategies from the other municipalities in their jurisdiction. Inglis would need to consult with them to ensure they can handle the transportation and water issues (drainage, quality, flood measures, etc.) a new development would bring.

Withlacoochee Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber of Commerce should act as a stimulator. They can market Inglis as an ideal location to attract new business, and have current business relocate within their town limits.

Recommended Planning Roles

Planner	Role	Tasks	Justification
Inglis	Entrepreneur	Manage growth and protect natural habitats	Inglis knows the best avenue to pursue to grow their city
Yankeetown	Coordinator	Provide input on Inglis' development plans	Yankeetown will be impacted by Inglis' plans
Levy County	Facilitator	Coordinating transportation/infrastructure, and adequate services	Levy can draw on other municipality's experiences.
Citrus County	Coordinator	Coordinating transportation/infrastructure, and adequate services	Citrus can draw on other municipality's experiences.
<i>Withlacoochee Chamber of Commerce</i>	Stimulator	Market Inglis to developers, and prominently feature the towns attributes	The Chamber can market the county as an ideal location
<i>Residents of Inglis</i>	Stimulator	Work with Inglis to attract businesses, and show investors eagerness for development	Happy residents equals development
<i>Southwest Florida Water Management District</i>	Facilitator	Create potable water, storm water, and drainage requirements	The District provides uniform requirements to ensure safety
<i>Florida Department of Transportation</i>	Facilitator	Ensure the town can handle the influx of people and traffic	The Dept regulates the entire state, and has dealt with municipalities
<i>Florida Department of Environmental Protection</i>	Facilitator	Ensure the towns water supply and solid waste is handled properly	The Dept regulates the entire state, and has dealt with municipalities

Residents of Inglis

The residents of Inglis act as a Stimulator. Their willingness to advocate for a new business and their acceptance of the new development project can attract investors/developers. If the residents are against a project, the investors/developers will find a new location that is more receptive of their business.

Southwest Florida Water Management District

The Water Management District (the District) should act as a facilitator when dealing with storm water management and wetland protection issues. The District provides uniform requirements to all municipalities within their jurisdiction. They will evaluate the development plans Inglis has to determine if the current infrastructure can handle the new development and still meet the requirements or if improvements need to be made.

Florida Department of Transportation

The Department of Transportation (FDOT) should act as a facilitator when dealing with transportation issues only. FDOT provides uniform requirements for all work within state right-of-way. Levy County will also be involved in transportation discussions. However they will act as coordinator. FDOT will evaluate the development plans Inglis has to determine if the current infrastructure can handle the new development and still meet the requirements or if improvements need to be made.

Citrus County

Citrus County should act as a coordinator. They are located south of the Town, but they can provide additional input on handling Transportation and water issues.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

The Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) should act as a facilitator when dealing with environmental issues only. FDEP provides uniform requirements to all counties and municipalities in the state. FDEP will evaluate the development plans Inglis has to determine if the current infrastructure can handle the new development and still meet the requirements or if improvements need to be made

The forthcoming section will focus on Phase I and Phase II of the planning process. The later portions of the paper will explain in detail Phases III–VI, and provide strategies and examples of each phase.

PHASE I: DATA COLLECTION AND PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Phase I of the planning process is primarily focused on gathering information about demographics, the character of the economic base, and local problems in generating jobs and wealth.

Demographics

The town Inglis is located in Florida and population was previously estimated at 1,491 in the 2000 U.S. Census Bureau. As of the 2004 U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the Town of Inglis was approximated at 1,590. In the 2009 U.S. Census Bureau, the population of the town of Inglis escalated to 1,618 with an increase of 8.5% since 2000.

The median income for a household in the town of Inglis is calculated around the average of \$24,432 and the median income per family is \$27,734.

Generally, men have a base median income average of \$24,342 as opposed to \$20,278 for females. Unfortunately, a modest percentage of the population (22.3%) and families (18.9%) fall well below the line of poverty. The intent of a local economic development plan is to offer adequate and ascending standards of living for the entire population of Inglis.

Character of Economic Base

The town of Inglis, Florida is in need of economic development, including people oriented approaches, community development as well as innovation, job creation, and infrastructure investments. Implementing a human resource and community economic development initiative will be instrumental in improving the local economy, along with improving the socioeconomic issues within the community. While understanding that workforce development is vital in the revitalization process, it is equally important to ensure that citizens in the town of Inglis are actively involved in the implementation process and given the tools and resources needed to be confident that future objectives are achieved and sustained.

GOALS OF INGLIS, FLORIDA

The town of Inglis would like to improve and expand economic conditions and opportunities for its residents. This would strengthen their tax base. This community seeks to promote commercial, industrial and institutional development that can help create new jobs, increase wages and revenue. Inglis would like to develop the economic bases that are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan such as:

- Aquaculture
- Eco-tourism
- Software development
- Light industry
- Other commercial activities

With all this said, below are the town's goals according to the Comprehensive Plan:

Inglis Town Goals (A through I)

A. Future Land Use Element

Goal 1: To ensure that the character, magnitude, and location of land uses, provides a system for orderly growth and development that achieves a balanced natural, physical, and economic environment, and enhances the quality of life of all residents.

B. Transportation Element

Goal 2: To provide a system for both motorized and non-motorized modes of transportation, which serves to maximize public safety, supply convenient access to destinations, is efficient in design, and promotes energy conservation.

C. Housing Element

Goal 3: To encourage and promote the availability of affordable, decent, safe and sanitary housing to meet the needs of the present and future population of the town.

D. Infrastructure

Goal 4A: To have orderly development which maximizes the efficient use of existing facilities and natural resources and provides the adopted level of service concurrent with development.

Goal 4B: To provide sanitary treatment of wastewater in an environmentally safe manner through the year 2020.

Goal 4C: The town's contracted collection service shall collect and dispose of non-hazardous solid waste in a manner which is environmentally safe and which promotes resource recovery with a goal toward mandatory collection town-wide by 2015.

Goal 4D: Storm water shall be managed for runoff quality and quantity.

Goal 4E: To provide a safe, adequate supply of potable water to town residents and businesses through the year 2020.

Goal 4F: To maximize the recharge ability of developed land and insure a safe, plentiful supply of potable water.

E. Conservation Element

Goal 5: To preserve, conserve, and appropriately manage all of the natural resources of the Town of Inglis and to provide protection of unique and environmentally sensitive lands, life, and property from natural and man-made hazards.

F. Recreation and Open Space

Goal 6: The provision of sufficient and adequate recreation and open space opportunities enabling high quality participation for all residents and visitors of the Town of Inglis.

G. Intergovernmental Coordination Element

Goal 7: To establish viable mechanisms and process among the pertinent governmental, public and private entities to ensure awareness and coordination of all development activities, and provide effective and efficient utilization of all available resources to ultimately enhance the quality of life for present and future populations.

H. Capital Improvements Elements

Goal 8: The town shall provide public facilities, at an adopted level of service which shall be met for all existing and future development, through the financial commitment of a 5-Year Schedule of Capital Improvements, a Capital Improvements Program and a development process which

requires development to be concurrent with the town's ability to finance and complete needed public facilities.

I. Economic Element

Goal 9: The Town of Inglis seeks to improve and expand economic conditions and opportunities for its citizens and to strengthen its tax base. Thus, the town intends to promote various forms of commercial, industrial and institutional development, which create new jobs, increase wage levels and generate revenue. The town seeks to stimulate and facilitate the development of aquaculture, eco-tourism, software development, light industry, and other commercial activities, which are consistent with other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The town also seeks to foster the retention and growth of existing businesses.

PHASE II: PLANNING APPROACHES – STRATEGY SELECTION

Phase II of the planning process is oriented towards specifying the types of approaches the community will take towards economic development and selecting broad strategies to solve problems identified in Phase I. To achieve a community's goal, leaders must decide which approach or a combination of approaches will be utilized. The approaches are: Locality Development Strategy Option, Business Development Strategy Option, Human Resource Development Option, and Community-Based Employment Development Strategy Option.

SWOT Analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

In order to gather important information about the town, one of the methods that can be used is a *SWOT analysis* (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). This is consistent with the strategic planning approach. This process also provides a guide for identifying specific strategies the town may wish to pursue. The SWOT analysis should involve several stakeholders such as

community members, community leaders, business owners, local policy makers and strategic local institutions. All of these stakeholders should have an active role in assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the town. The analysis will focus in the areas needed to help reach the economic development goals of Inglis.

After gathering all the information from the SWOT analysis, these perspectives by different community groups will be studied in order to understand what planning approaches should be considered. The planning approach will depend on the external/internal culture of Inglis and the expectation of the community.

Below is a SWOT analysis conducted for Inglis based on locality, business, human resource, and community development approaches towards economic development. A two step process was conducted. First, each member of the research team identified town strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for each of the four development approaches. Each researcher then prioritized the SWOT through a ranking process. Three “stars” were allotted to individual researchers to place next to each SWOT he/she believe to be the priority item. A researcher could place all three stars next to just one item. This would indicate a very high priority. Alternatively, three separate items could be chosen with just one star provided for each. The numbers beside each statement represent how many votes each factor received.

Locality Development SWOT

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Only 5 miles from the Gulf	7	Lack of infrastructure	9
Near 2 major highway systems	5	No central sewer system	9
Natural assets	8	Distant colleges and universities	4
It's a beautiful place	2		
Opportunities		Threats	
Infrastructure improvements	4	Threats to ecosystem and waterways	6
Incentives for business development	4	Large start-up capital costs	5
Town-scapping	6	Potential nuclear plant	5

Business Development SWOT

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Public/private partnerships	6	Low Wages	7
Diverse sources of capital	7	Lack Investment Opportunities	10
Open land / available sites	7	Non-thriving environment hinders success	6
Opportunities		Threats	
Skills enhancement/training	7	Low tax base/lack of funding	7
Job and wealth creating	9	Negative perceptions of change of change from business	6
Lack of competition	5	Better available opportunities elsewhere	7

Human Resource Development SWOT

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Available workforce (loyal workforce)	8	No nearby college	5
Increases long term economic vitality	7	Lack of high paying jobs	9
Cultivates public-private and economic development organization partnerships	7	Workforce training	5
		Education opportunities matching future employee demands	2
Opportunities		Threats	
More/better jobs can increase the quality of life	8	Younger residents all leaving town	8
New jobs can increase technological awareness	7	No incentive for new jobs	4
Enhancing communications between educators, students, and the job market	3	All fastest growing jobs in FL require higher education	5
Continuing education programs	2	Funding sources for education/training	2

Community/Neighborhood Development SWOT

Strengths		Weaknesses	
Passionate City Council/citizen volunteer	5	Lack of resources because of small size	2
Wide variety of support	5	Lack of diversity	3
Support from local towns	5	Lack of participation in the regional workforce investment board	2
		Lack of entertainment	2
Opportunities		Threats	
Attract environmental based business	3	Poor economic conditions	4
Community Marketing	3	Lack of funding	5
Foster cooperation between differing groups	2	Better opportunities in neighboring communities	4
Retain high quality of life	2		

Recommended Strategic Investments

The following section describes the recommended strategic investments the town of Inglis may wish to consider. The courses of action are organized according to the four major approaches towards economic development.

LOCALITY AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Locality Development relies on upgrading the location that has been designated for industrial or commercial use. Making the area more aesthetically pleasing can attract new investors, and old ones that were deterred by their surroundings. Small applications such as regularly performing right of way maintenance and planting trees can change the look and feel of an area. Major renovations such as updating dilapidated buildings in a neighborhood can attract business as well as new residents.

The Business Development approach is used in areas where there are not enough jobs to meet the local population needs. Incentives to attract new businesses and relocate existing businesses must be implemented. Leaders should also be mindful of their loyal residents. While catering to the new businesses, community leaders must also provide a sustainable environment for their existing business to grow.

Non-prioritized Locality & Business Development Recommendations

Policy Tool	Application
<i>Zoning Regulations</i>	Establishing flexible development regulations to developers will allow for targeted growth to succeed. Additionally, this tool requires few monetary obligations for the town of Inglis.
<i>Regulation Improvement</i>	Mitigating any encumbrances in the application process for economic development will encourage developers to invest in Inglis.
<i>Townscaping</i>	Allows the town of Inglis to incorporate all facets of localized economic development (Physical, Attitudinal) by encompassing local business input into the process. This method focuses on revitalizing a community's core local businesses.
<i>Community Service</i>	Creates the opportunity for endless arrangements of economic development. Central premise is cost cutting and job creation. For instance, privatizing a visitor's center.
<i>One-Stop Centers</i>	Provides Information to Businesses (e.g. statistics, financing, permits, building regulation) Saves businesses time and eliminates frustration
<i>Tourism Promotion/Programming</i>	Inglis proximity to the Gulf of Mexico could allow for the development of tourism initiatives.
<i>Enterprise Zones</i>	Designate a geographic area and provide incentives (e.g. offering tax relief packages and wage subsidies) for businesses looking to start up or expand. Can be targeted specific industries.
<i>Small Business Development Center</i>	Provides management training, counseling/consulting, and research services for new and existing businesses.

Criteria Definitions for Decision Matrix Recommendations:

To prioritize the recommended strategic investments, a criteria and weighting system used implemented. This is presented as an analytical decision matrix. The criteria weighting scale is based on 1–10 scale, where (1) is the lowest rating and (10) being the highest rating. In this analytical decision matrix each of the recommendations is measured against six criterions, which are as follows: Equity; Effectiveness; Efficiency; Political Acceptability; Cost; Administrative Feasibility. Upon designating the individual recommendation scores based on each of the six criterions in the matrix the summation of each score for each recommendation is totaled at the bottom, with the highest scores reflecting our economic business & locality development recommendations. Eleven students participated in this process.

Equity as a criterion is defined as “The fair, just and equitable management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract; the fair, just and equitable distribution of public services and implementation of public policy; and the commitment to promote fairness, justice, and equity in the formation of public policy” (Standing, 2000). Given the public resources used in implementing economic development strategies we conclude that the latter mentioned definition of equity encompasses all the standards necessary to measure the proposed recommendations. The criteria weighting scale attributed to Equity is six (6).

Effectiveness as a criterion is defined as the manner in which the overall recommendation can effectively be implemented for the town of Inglis. The definition includes approximations of the internal capacity and resources

available to the town of Inglis. The criteria weighting scale for Effectiveness as a criterion is eight (8).

Efficiency as a criterion within our recommendation matrix is defined as the total level of inputs (i.e., resources) needed over the total level of outcomes produced (i.e., positive economic indicators). Given the restraints of the availability of quantitative data to accurately produce scales measuring efficiency for each recommendation our criteria weighting scale for efficiency is the product of conducting a literature based qualitative research on each proposed recommendation. The Efficiency criteria weighting score is seven (7).

Political acceptability as a criterion for our recommendation is defined as the willingness of local politicians in accepting the economic development strategies proposed. Local community leadership is a paramount objective in planning and implementing economic development approaches. The criteria weight given to Political Acceptability is seven (7).

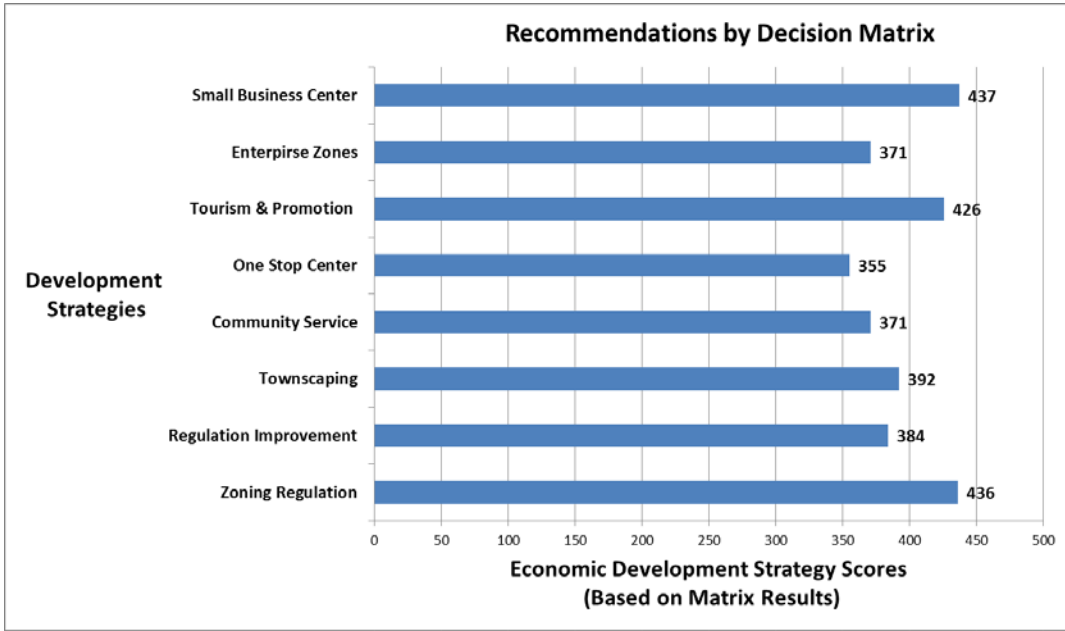
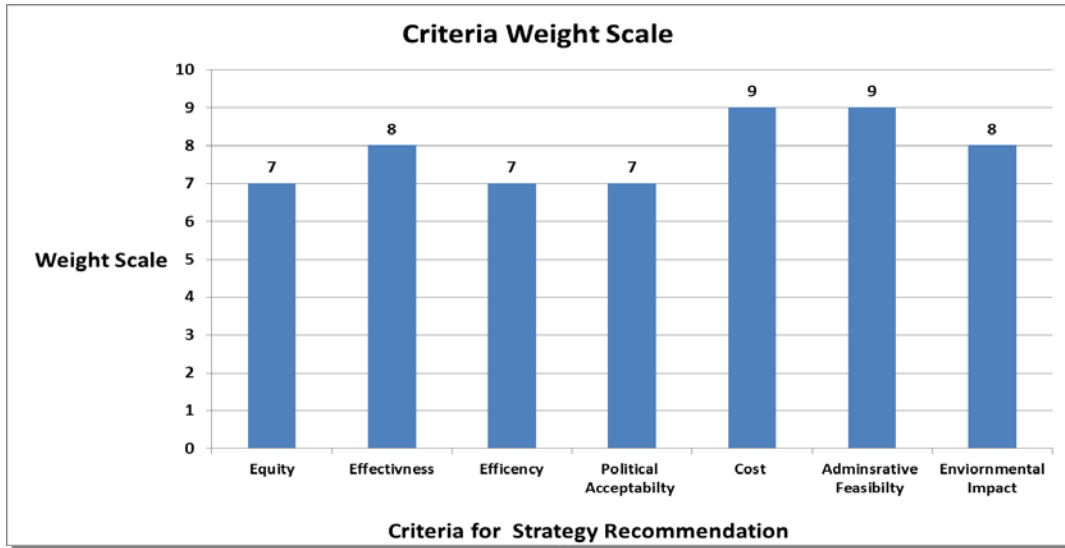
Cost as a criterion is defined within our recommendation matrix as the overall costs associated with each strategy encompassing all aspects of each approach from start to finish. The cost summation of each proposal is a qualitative assessment based on the resources needed to implement each strategy. The Cost criteria weight scale for our recommendation is eight (8).

Administrative feasibility as a criterion is defined within our decision matrix as the overall costs associated with the pre and post implementation processes for each strategy to the town of Inglis. Local government costs are assessed through the literature review of each economic development strategy

and the estimated levels of resources needed to implement. The criteria weight given to Administrative Feasibility for our recommendation is eight (9).

Environmental impact as a criteria is defined as policies and procedures aimed at conserving the natural resources, preserving the current state of natural environment and, where possible, reversing its degradation. The importance of environmental impact to our decision matrix reflects a criteria weighting of eight (8).

Evaluation Results



Recommendation Matrix (Business & Locality Strategies)

Criteria Weight Scale (1-10)	Zoning	Regulation Improvement	Town-scaping	Community Service	One Stop Center	Tourism & Promotion	Enterprise Zones	Small Business Center					
Equity (7)	8	56	9	63	4	28	6	42	5	35	10	70	
Effectiveness (8)	7	56	7	56	8	64	10	80	7	56	9	72	
Efficiency (7)	5	35	6	42	8	56	8	56	7	49	9	63	
Political Acceptability (7)	10	70	10	70	6	42	7	49	9	63	10	70	
Cost (9)	10	90	9	81	7	63	7	63	7	63	10	90	
Administrative Feasibility (9)	9	81	8	72	6	54	8	72	9	81	8	72	
Environmental Impact (8)	6	48	5	40	6	48	8	64	3	24	6	48	
Totals		436		384		392		371		426		371	437

THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT OPTION (THE SUPPLY SIDE)

This approach realizes that people generate wealth. Attracting good jobs for the unemployed and underemployed is ideal. While attracting high wage jobs it is essential to look at the current workforce and their capabilities. The current workforce may need to be trained to excel in the new jobs so the city and the workforce can continue to grow.

This approach can be used to reinvigorate the town of Inglis, Florida, a town suffering from a 10.9% unemployment rate and 9.7% college graduation rate that may be distinctively tied to a combination of both an undertrained workforce and lack of public participation in workforce development. One of the reasons Inglis may be lacking public participation in workforce development is due to the fact that most citizens work outside the community. On average most citizens travel over 35 miles to work and as a result, they are not maximizing the usage of their local resources such as their local gas stations and/or local restaurants.

In regards to the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis, the following human development and training programs are recommended: Workforce Investment Boards, First Source or Targeted Hiring Agreements, Training Programs, Youth Enterprise, Self-Employment Initiatives, and Career Ladders.

Workforce Investment Boards can be a very useful tool in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis if there is not a partnership between local business owners, training boards, and community organizers. Recently, with the help of WIB's community groups have attempted to pull together local business and community-based economic development programs into a single employment network (Blakely and Leigh, 2010, pg. 306). The town of Inglis does not have any partnerships established between the community groups, faith-based organizations, etc. A great

starting point in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis is establishing partnerships through the utilization of WIB's for community advancement.

First source or targeted hiring agreements can be a valuable instrument in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis because it expands employment of local individuals. This is done to ensure that the promises of job creation that comes from developers, and local government agencies promoting the development, will benefit the community from which both parties seek cooperation and approval. The town of Inglis does not have any first-source or targeted hiring agreements enacted to specifically hire its local individuals rather than outsiders. A crucial element of the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis is instituting first-source agreements or targeted hiring agreements for the furtherance of the community.

Training programs are considered as striking mechanisms in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis due to the increasing needs of employers. Particularly in the last decade, an observable convergence of trends has heightened the need for more, and better, job training: the increasing speed of technology change, the increasing sophistication of foreign competitors, the export of manufacturing jobs, downsizing due to pressures to increase productivity, shortcomings in the quality of formal education (particularly at the high school level), and the aging of the workforce (O'Toole et al., 2006, p.127). An additional component the town may wish to consider is initiating training programs that not only meets the requirements of businesses but also the needs of a community as well.

The town of Inglis does not have any youth enterprises in which individuals under the age of 18 can gain significant work experience. The basic idea is to start business within the skill range of youth to give them some experience in how the business system works. Youth enterprises are reflected as an important segment in the

local economic development plan of the town of Inglis due to the population under the age of 18 is considered at 20.9%.

Self-employment initiatives are an essential component in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis seeing as a small percentage of the population and families fall well below the line of poverty which certainly has an negative effect on the current unemployment rate (10.8%).

The town of Inglis has a base median income average of \$24,342 (Men) and \$20,278 (Women), which is determined largely by diminutive skills and insignificant wages. Career ladders are an imperative segment in the local economic development plan of the town of Inglis is to help individuals' progress to higher employment positions through proper training and education.

Inglis's economic growth has been stagnant due to the lack of innovation and technology. In Inglis, it is estimated that 26% of its citizens did not obtain a high school diploma and only 7.4% obtained a bachelor's degree (City-data.com, 2011). Therefore, it may be beneficial for local economic developers to invest in primary and secondary public schools in Inglis. It may encourage more children in Inglis to seek higher education, and as a long-term effect, decrease their need for "public resources".

THE COMMUNITY-BASED EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

This approach focuses on the neighborhood. Developing specific neighborhoods can provide relief to the long term unemployed, new workers and community groups looking to give back. This approach is meant to bridge the gap between the end of social welfare programs and the beginning of a productive job in the local economy. Alternative community based employment benefits those that need new skills or need to update their existing skills. Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are an vital

in local economic development. The town should consider establishing a CDS to assist in its development efforts. A CDS can assist in marketing community assets and building the capacity of the town to undertake larger development projects.

Targeting and Marketing Neighborhood/Community Assets

- Located on the Gulf Coast of Mexico
- Positioned north of Tampa, Florida
- Safe Environment for New Businesses
- Small Police Department (8 officers)
- Minimal Crime Rate
- Commercial Fishing/Shrimping Accessibility
- No Impact Fee for New Construction
- Low Construction Costs

PLANNING APPROACHES

The town should consider a strategic planning as a guide in decision making. This orientation looks toward the long-term goal of sustainability and focuses on gradually growing community assets and providing support to new ventures. Once Inglis achieves their goals, they will be able to sustain this new level of service and quality of life, without substantial help from surrounding entities.

Contingency Planning is another attractive orientation. Always assuming the worst and best possible outcomes will leave you with few surprises in the planning process. It also gives the planners a chance to evaluate several planning options. Those options can be combined to create a new strategy.

The Impact Planning method is not an attractive method, because it does not provide the community with a means to sustain their new business ventures. Once the federal funds disappear, the community will be left with the burden of paying for this new venture. If they have not created a sustainable base, during the time they were

receiving the funds, their new businesses will collapse. This leaves Inglis in a destitute state. They would need to recoup the losses from the failed business, and start the development process over.

Another non-attractive orientation is the Recruitment Planning. This orientation assumes all business is good, and does not give the public a chance to participate in the process. In a small town like Inglis public participation is important. If half of the residents are against a planned development project, that project is doomed from the start. Developers do not have a large population to draw from and keeping the residents in the loop and happy is the only way to have successful development. Also, Inglis is a small community. They need to be particular about the kind of development they attract.

MANAGING STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Provided below are recommended management plans for the strategic investments the town may wish to consider. The policy, responsible parties for implementation, proposed timeline for implementation, and pre-implementation requirements (studies, inventories, etc.), and tasks are provided in each table. Please note that economic development organization must be sufficient in the following areas:

- 1.) Research**
- 2.) Information provision**
- 3.) Marketing**
- 4.) Coordination of the activities of other groups**

Proposed Management Plan: Business Development Strategies

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Requirements and Tasks</u>
One-Stop Centers	To provide information to businesses– financing, permits, regulations– in one location	Withlacoochie Chamber of Commerce / Economic Development Team	Medium	Central location / facilities; documents and materials necessary to provide information
Tourism Promotion / Programming	To attract tourism and to stimulate economic growth	Withlacoochie Chamber of Commerce	On-going	Pamphlets, web site, brochures; marketing tools to communicate to outside community
Enterprise Zones	To provide incentives for business looking to start up or relocate	Community Redevelopment Agency (Town or County)	Medium	Marketing materials; incentives to provide to businesses
Small Business Development Center	Provide assistance (management trainings, counseling consulting, research services) to help new and existing business to be successful	Withlacoochie Chamber of Commerce / Town of Inglis or County Economic Development Team / Existing Businesses	Longterm	Human capital, facilities, research services

Proposed Management Plan: Locality Development Strategies

<u>Policy</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Responsible</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
Zoning Regulations	Establish flexible development regulations	Local business owners and government officials	Ongoing	Review comprehensive plan and zoning maps. Create incentives for targeted area
Regulation Improvement	Increase application process efficiencies	Business and government	Short-Term	Develop surveys for current businesses. Identify current inefficiencies
Townscaping	Revitalize community core local businesses	Economic development personnel (public and private)	Long-Term	Obtain work estimates. Look at other towns as models. Survey citizens. Revisit previous study
Community Service	Flexible initiatives that create jobs and cut costs	Local officials and citizens	Long-Term	Determine desired local services. Examine community service initiatives in other cities

Proposed Management Plan: Business Development Strategies

<u>Policy Tool</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Activity</u>	<u>Responsible Party</u>	<u>Timeline</u>	<u>Tasks</u>
Self-Employment Initiative	Lower rate of unemployment and promote entrepreneurship	Data	Planning Board	1-4 months	Underutilized skills employer needs, sources of funding, partnership with UF College of Business.
		Collection	Chamber of Commerce	Immediate	
		Funding	Grant Admin.	4-6 months	
		Training	Town/University	Ongoing	
First-Source/Targeted Hiring	Give local resident competitive advantage	Identify Employer	Chamber of Commerce	Immediate	List of interested employers and contacts
		Negotiate Agreement	City Manager	Short-Term	Negotiated Contracts
			Business Owner		

UTILIZE SUSTAINABILITY AS A GUIDING PRINCIPLE FOR STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Sustainability is still a fairly new concept that brings upon different opinions on how it should be used as a conceptual guide for the formation of public policy. Many view sustainability as a good thing, but what exactly is sustainability? Sustainability derives from the root word: sustain. The dictionary's definition of *sustain* is "to keep in existence, to maintain or prolong" (Beatley, 1995). The term *sustainability* is very popular in biology and ecology with the idea that resources can be used to its full potential, as long as it does not exceed its "carrying capacity" (Beatley, 1995). The best example of this notion is that any given environment should be able to sustain its population of the plants and animals. If ever the environment becomes over-populated, the environment will collapse. Sustainability became a strong theme in the 1980s within the environmental planning and policy circles. With the growing popularity of the concept, the term *sustainable development* arose, which focused more on human interventions, and how human projects have failed to respect the "carrying capacity" on the land which we build on.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development was first defined in 1987 by the World Commission and Development (WCED) as that which "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability to of future generations to meet their own needs" (Beatley, 1995). However, in 1993, the National Commission on the Environment defined sustainable development as:

"a strategy for improving the quality of life while preserving the environmental potential for the future, of living off interest rather than consuming natural capital. Sustainable development mandates that the present generation must not narrow the choices of future generations but must strive

to expand them by passing on an environment and an accumulation of resources that will allow its children to live at least as well as, and preferable better than, people today. Sustainable development is premised on living within the Earth's means" (Beatley, 1995).

As one can see, the concept of sustainable development stresses the importance of preserving the quality of life by living within the carrying capacity of the environment, so that future generations will be able to live in an environment that is better than today.

Concept and Policy Decisions

As previously mentioned, the idea of sustainable development has many differing opinions and views. This has partly to do with the fact that balancing the three E's of sustainable development (economy; environment; and equity), has been quite a challenge. Local economic developers use the resources provided by the surrounding environmental system. In a resource-based economy, growth should be tied to the rates at which renewable resources can be regenerated (Jepson, 2004). However, resource-based economy hinders expansion of the economy to beyond its environmental limits. Consumption and growth is therefore required to be limited at a "minimum acceptable level" that is determined by the availability of natural resources rather than the forces of supply and demand (Jepson, 2004). Based on resource economics, policy decisions in local economic development must consider the proper balance for the accuracy valuation and effective allocation of public amenity resources. Evidence of the effort in local appreciation would be the presence of public policies that are consistent with sustainable development.

Local economic development policy decisions must consider the amount of waste that is produced. Humans have needs, but so does the environment, in order to

endure a better life for the future generations. So, policy decisions at the local government level must try to balance their efforts in order to reach the equilibrium of sustainability.

Three Conceptual Dimensions of Sustainability

System reproduction

A system of reproduction has been described as “the rate of change of any urban system that must be sustained over time without exceeding the innate ability of its surroundings to support the process...including the ability of the surroundings to absorb the impacts of the process”. System reproduction focuses on two aspects of sustainability: the duplication of the status quo and the fostering of revitalization. The status quo refers to the maintenance of current levels of the quality of built and natural environmental systems. Revitalization results in betterment that improves or renews the physical character of these systems. For example, built environments become more livable, ecosystems become healthier and benefits of improved environmental and economic conditions become more equitably distributed. Reproduction ensures that movement from past to present is in a sustainable direction and future policies are on track to achieve progress. A focus on sustainable reproduction will allow communities to be able to continuously reproduce and revitalize themselves.

Balance (among Environmental, Economic, and Social Values)

In developing sustainable initiatives, planners must also be able to adopt a sense of balance between the sometimes competing values of the three Es: environment, economic and equity. All three of these values are vital and

necessary components to a successful sustainable economic development plan and will often require coordination, negotiation, and compromise. For example, if the environmental values are not represented in a comprehensive economic development plan, then the basic life support process on which a community depends cannot be sustained; and thus the remaining two values suffer. Both the local effort of the community and planner involvement is crucial to the achievement of sustainable development. It is also the practice of equilibrium among these 3 elements to reach the most efficient way of sustaining our world.

Link local to global concerns "Think globally, act locally"

Communities must also strive to achieve a link between local and global concerns to reach successful sustainability initiatives. The efforts involved in attaining sustainability should not just be focused on the needs of the internal community as globalization is becoming an ever increasing and important force for communities of all size. If a community effectively achieves and retains improvements in quality of life through sustainable initiatives, it must not diminish the quality of life of other communities as global economic trade and exchanges of natural resources and waste streams continue to expand.

This dimension of sustainable development focuses on the partially hidden and unknown harmful effects of certain development efforts implemented by individuals and communities on external economies. The rise of globalization has resulted in increased pressure to expand environmentally, socially and economically in the pursuit of cost-cutting competitive gains. These cost-cutting measures generally result in externalizing costs on other communities and this separates people, businesses and governments from responsibility for

their actions. This results in irresponsible and unsustainable behavior that hinders other communities.

Six Principles of Sustainability

Harmony with nature (Reproduction)

Living in harmony means respecting nature and living within its means. Economic activities such as land use and development should strive to mimic ecosystem processes rather than attempt to modify them to fit development initiatives. This will develop processes that will preserve biodiversity as well as protecting essential ecosystem processes (such as water quality).

Livable Built Environment

This principle focuses on the built environment of a community. It suggests that the location, shape, density, mix, proportion, and quality of the build environment should do three things: create physical spaces within the community that adapts to the desired activities of its inhabitants; encourages community unity by encouraging the development of wide spread access among land uses; and support any special and unique physical characteristic of urban forms that support community identity and attachment.

Place-based Economy

A place-based economy recognizes what its natural system limits are and attempts to operate and develop economic initiatives within those limits. Development efforts should strive to function without resulting in deterioration of the natural resource base, which serves as a vital capital asset for future economic development. Also, planners should identify the local ecosystems

ability to renew natural resources as well as its ability to assimilate waste discharges and operate within those limits.

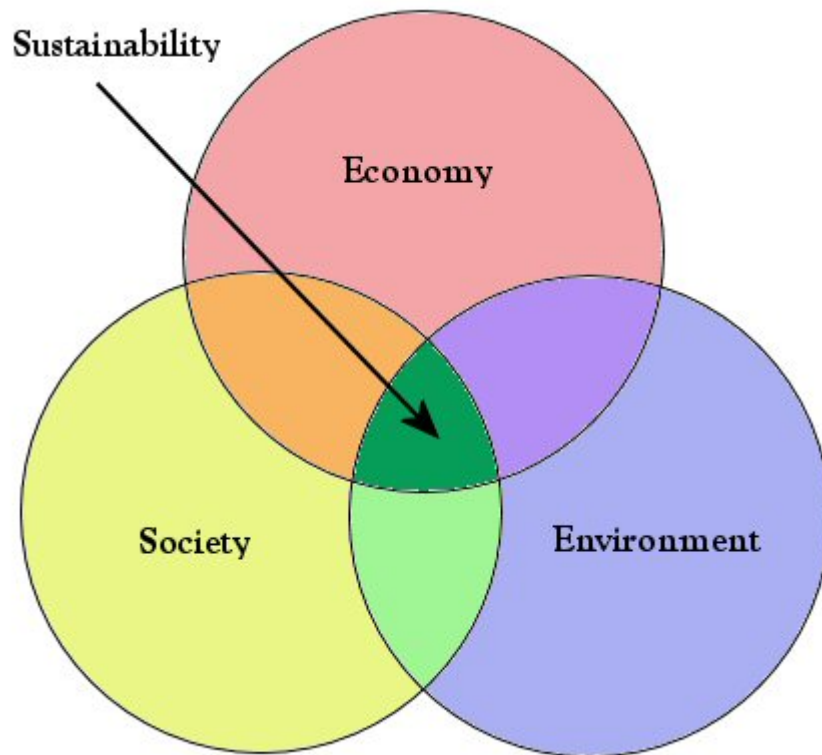
Equity

The principle of equity in reference to sustainability focuses on land use patterns and improving the conditions of low-income populations through those patterns. There should be equitable access to social and economic resources within the community so that the needs of the least advantaged inhabitants of the community can be served as well. The goal is to not deprive the low-income population of the basic levels of environmental health and human dignity.

Responsible regionalism

This principle embraces globalization and requires communities not act solely in their own interests without consideration of other communities. It calls for communities to be responsible for its decisions and actions. Local communities must strive to minimize the harm it imposes on other jurisdictions while implementing its own economic initiatives and policies. A good policy to implement under responsible regionalism is to work with surrounding communities to create business partnerships, or other ways of promoting sustainability.

Three Dimensions of Sustainability



The 3 E's, or core elements of sustainability, include protection of the Environment, promotion of social Equity, and the achievement of place-based Economic development. The planning and development process has been cited as the one area where sustainable development conflicts will be encountered and resolved.

Sprawl

Sprawl is the natural expansion of metropolitan areas as population grows at an unexpected rate that can threaten our resources. It needs to be taken into consideration when developing economic plans because the long run is very important. Sprawl is also described as undesirable land-use, whether scattered development, leapfrog development (a type of scattered development that assumes a monocentric city), strip or ribbon development, or continuous low-density development. Low-

density suburban development is a natural consequence of rising incomes, technological changes, and low to rising personal income has allowed households to spend more money on travel and on residential space.

Expectations of land appreciation at the urban fringe cause some landowners to withhold land from the market. Expectations vary, however, from landowner to landowner, as does the suitability of land for development. The result is a discontinuous pattern of development. The higher the rate of growth in a metropolitan area, the greater the expectations of land appreciation, and the more land will be withheld for future development. Therefore it is important to understand how sprawl can develop into a problem. Economic developers need to keep a constant eye on the growth rate of this land use.

Use of Resources

We continue to use resources at an accelerating rate. In the U.S. we lose 3 billion tons of topsoil yearly, extract groundwater faster than it is recharged, and continue to harvest the small remaining old-growth forests. We are filling and destroying the wetlands and some predict that by year 2020, we would have lost one quarter of the species that existed in 1980. The amounts of waste and pollution have dramatically risen as our population grows.

The projections of our population growth raise questions about environmental degradation, and the ability to feed, house, and sustain future population increases. There are people who challenge these critics on the global scale by saying that the increase in population also means an increase in the intellectual human capacity to solve problems of resource scarcity and environmental degradation.

Economic Sustainability

Sustainability interfaces with economics through the social and ecological consequences of economic activity. Sustainability economics involves ecological economics where social, cultural, health-related and monetary/financial aspects are integrated. Moving towards sustainability is also a social challenge that entails international and national law, urban planning and transport, local and individual lifestyles and ethical consumerism.

The challenge for sustainability is to curb and manage Western consumption while raising the standard of living of the developing world without increasing its resource use and environmental impact. This must be done by using strategies and technology that break the link between, on the one hand, economic growth and on the other, environmental damage and resource depletion.

Historically there has been a close correlation between economic growth and environmental degradation: as communities grow, so the environment declines. There is concern that, unless resource use is checked, modern global civilization will follow the path of ancient civilizations that collapsed through overexploitation of their resource base. Provided these guiding principles and issues related to sustainability, the town may wish to consider the following:

Environment– Promoting reduce, reuse, recycle and penalizing those who don't participate. For example, organize clean-ups of parks or open spaces.

Economic–New construction and renovation provide excellent opportunities to help meet energy, water, and sustainability goals and provide healthy workplaces. Set up business opportunities for those companies who reduce waste, disposal, and

pollution. Using a trading system for companies of Inglis to buy and sell credits of these wastes and pollution amounts.

Social– Integrating these environmental principles into their education system to make the youth aware of the environmental problems in society. Starting sustainability practices at a young age increases one’s intellectual capacity to solve problems regarding resource scarcity and environmental degradation.

LEVERAGE THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF INGLIS IN DEVELOPING A SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Traditionally, economic development in a rural area has focused on creating a regional economic development strategy. This is often comprised of one or two larger areas in the region as the focus of development. Recently though, it is being realized that small rural communities are able to be extremely competitive in attracting and developing highly specialized and successful businesses, as technology has allowed business owners to stay connected to markets while providing them the opportunity to enjoy an improved quality of life (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

The rural or small town lifestyle has grown more attractive as the quality of life in many urban areas has declined with congestion, crime, and the rising cost of living. Two other unfavorable aspects of urban life sometimes noted are the “placeless–ness” of many cities, and the reduced status of the individual within large, concentrated populations. “Placeless–ness” describes the phenomenon of clogged, often featureless, multi–lane highways leading past national chain stores and restaurants to reach look–alike residential developments. (Harris & Tanaka, 2002)

In order to protect the community’s quality of life, Inglis should include the concept of sustainability in their economic development process. Sustainability places

focus on preservation of the natural environment and preservation and enhancement of the quality of life, alongside the broader goals of economic development such as entrepreneurial development, and reducing inequity and inequality (Blakely & Leigh, 2010). Along with Inglis' natural beauty, the rural lifestyle is a large component of the town's quality of life. Any economic development effort should respect both of these attributes. Doing otherwise would be short-sighted, and could degrade the local characteristics that make the area attractive in the first place.

Inglis as a Rural Area

While Inglis does not have specific future land use designations like "rural residential" or "agricultural" (Future Land Use Map, Appendix XX), it is nevertheless a rural area. Its residential makeup is almost exclusively low density single family, with a very small component of multi-family and high density residential future land uses. Levy County and all its municipalities are designated as rural by the Rural Economic Development Initiative division of Florida's Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (REDI, 2011).

Growth in Rural Communities

Across the country, for example, there have been rural communities who have improved their economic status through a combination of persistence, community coordination and support funding. One community in Northern California was faced with several natural disasters and a Rand McNally designation of the worst place in the nation to live, yet, after the implementation of intense economic development initiatives, was later named by Forbes as one of the top ten rural places to do business (Johnson, 2006).

Establishing Sustainable Rural Development as a Focus

Inglis, through the elements of its Comprehensive Plan, has taken the first step toward fostering sustainability and economic development. The various policies included in the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan indicate a commitment to conserving the natural environment, a valuable local asset. Within the Economic Element of the Comprehensive Plan Inglis realizes the importance of the community and the surrounding natural resources. The introductory section of the Economic Element of the Comprehensive Plan for Inglis states the following (p. 9-1).

There are many aspects of economic development as set forth in this Chapter: job creation and retention; workforce training; tax-base enhancement; increase property values; economic diversity to promote stability; and maintaining and improving the quality of life.

This introductory paragraph defines Inglis's vision of future economic development of the town. These are consistent with the broad definition of sustainable rural economic development, presented earlier. Inglis has also identified the importance of an educated workforce, as a key to maintaining or improving the quality of life for its residents. In Objective 9.6, and the subsequent Policies, of the Inglis Comprehensive Plan, the town has set forth the following objective and policies (p. 9-3).

Objective 9.6 – Workforce Development

The Town of Inglis recognizes the crucial role an educated and trained workforce plays in the retention and recruitment of business and industry. Therefore, in partnership with public and private enterprise, the Town will endeavor to bring educational opportunities to the residents of Inglis.

Policy 9.6.1: The Town will specifically partner with Levy County to provide GED classes in the Community Center.

Policy 9.6.2: As appropriate, the Town will attempt to bring community college and other training courses to the residents.

Implementing a Sustainable Rural Based Development Strategy

In order to implement an effective sustainable rural based development strategy Inglis has many tools and resources to consider. Any strategy should be developed collaboratively, with the inclusion of all key community players.

Building a Network of Partners

Inglis may be able to achieve some of its economic development goals with current financial resources but other goals may require town officials to investigate external sources of funding. Therefore, in order for Inglis to realize successes in economic development, the effort needs to be a collaborative one, in partnership with both public and private entities. The organizations listed below could offer valuable resources to Inglis in their economic development efforts through the form of financial assistance, workforce training, or building regional network relationships.

Enterprise Florida

Enterprise Florida, the official economic development organization of the State of Florida, has created the Rural **Economic** Development Catalyst Project which provides funding to help the states rural regions engage in economic research, site selection, and marketing to produce economic opportunities within each region. The efforts will target those industries of tomorrow with the goal of creating high value-added jobs (Enterprise, 2011).

North Florida Economic Development Partnership

The North Florida Economic Development Partnership was created as a result of a state designation of the fourteen county regions around Levy County as a RAREC. The partnership is a non-profit organization “committed to developing, coordinating, and fostering high-quality partnerships and initiatives that promote and attract sustainable economic development” (NFEDP, 2011). As such, the organization can provide networking and resources to Inglis to assist in its economic development efforts.

State University System

In order to assist with workforce training Inglis has the potential to work with established universities. One opportunity is available through the University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, which is a partnership between federal, state and county governments that provides training in areas such as agriculture, sustainable living, and building and construction (UF/IFAS, 2011). There are local Extension offices in Bronson and near Ocala, both within a short drive from Inglis.

Levy County School Board

Within the Levy County school system there are vocational educational programs for high school students as well as an adult education program that could be a valuable resource for skills training for Inglis residents (Levy Schools, 2011).

Neighboring Municipalities

The potential for a powerful partnership with Levy County, and the municipalities located within the county, is obvious but Inglis also has the benefit of being geographically close to Marion and Citrus Counties. This increases the chances of benefits being realized through regional collaborative efforts. Local businesses, civic groups and area churches also offer possibilities for supportive networking opportunities.

Members of the Community

In addition to the networking resources listed above, the inclusion of the members of the community is an important component of any economic development plan. The town should seek out participation from as large a segment of the population as possible. This should include but not be limited to neighborhood and business groups and civic and faith based organizations.

CREATING AND USING A COMMUNITY ASSET INVENTORY

An effective tool for beginning to consider an economic development strategy is with the creation of a community asset inventory. Once the town is aware of the valuable assets already available there should be an establishment of goals. At this point, community leaders, residents, and business owners can begin to build a network of partners to increase resource availability. At this point Inglis will be in a position to begin looking for available funding.

“Even the smallest community exhibits a variety of features, both positive and negative. In the past, many planning and development efforts have started from a negative perspective, focusing on deficiencies of the community and how to remedy them. In recent years, planners have started to use a technique with a more positive approach to evaluating existing conditions. Called an asset inventory, it stresses

the assets of the community and attempts to build and capitalize on those assets, and to create linkages between them” (Harris & Tanaka, p. 3).

In general, implementation of a community asset inventory would progress through the following steps (Harris & Tanaka, p. 5).

1. Planning and organizing for the asset inventory project
2. Collecting the information for the asset inventory
3. Organizing the data
4. Writing reports
5. Using and publicizing the inventory

The creation of an asset inventory should include a broad cross section of the community, including government officials, residents, business owners, and community group members. It is intended to be an inclusive tool, drawing from the knowledge of all members of the community. The inventory should identify all positive aspects of the community. The inventory, and the process of creating it, has many positive benefits (Harris & Tanaka, 2002).

- Brings individual community members together for a common goal
- Paints a clear picture of the community’s strengths
- Can be used by residents, community groups, and government officials to determine future goals

This asset inventory can be in any form the community stakeholders wish to present it. It can be a simple list or a graphical presentation, such as a map. A secondary benefit of the inventory, according to Harris & Tanaka is, “...seeing, or helping to create, a list or map showing assets can raise citizens’ opinions of their own community and can generate enthusiasm for previously unseen local potential” (p. 4).

The content of this inventory will surely be as varied as the members of the community. The data, which can come from anywhere, such as census data, or simply from the knowledge of members of the community, should be categorized for ease of use. Harris & Tanaka (2002) include the following list, which Inglis can use as a starting point (p. 13–14).

Economic

- Employment
- Workforce
- Services
- Finance
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Construction
- Exports
- Extraction
- Tourism / Recreation
- Utilities
- Telecommunications
- Roads and highways
- Railroad access
- Air and water transport access
- Bus & taxi availability

Natural/Physical

- Climate
- Geology
- Soils
- Hydrology
- Topography
- Vegetation
- Wildlife
- Energy resources
- Mineral resources

Quality of Life

- Population and demographic change
- Public safety
- Accessibility
- Social services
- Education

Political

Quality of Life (continued)

- Elected representatives
- Partnerships with neighboring communities
- Connections to Washington, DC and other political forums
- Resident memberships in extra-community organizations
- Recreation
- Cultural assets
- Housing availability and quality
- Local government
- Ecological assets

Social

- Clubs and non-profit groups
- Group memberships
- Parent involvement in the schools
- After-school activities
- Volunteerism
- Philanthropy
- Pool of civic leaders
- Religious activities

Culture/Structures

- Historic resources
- Famous residents
- Physical design
- Streetscape
- Bike and pedestrian ways
- Houses of worship
- Local government plant
- Educational facilities
- Other structures

Once complete, the town should publicize the results through community meetings, through business leaders, or the media. *“Publicizing the inventory can increase public awareness of community conditions and often energizes local residents to take action. An obvious use of the asset inventory and any resultant reports is as an aid to broad-based community goal setting efforts.”* (Harris & Tanaka, 2002, p. 7).

Setting Goals

The results of the community asset inventory should help in establishing goals for the community. As with preparation of the asset inventory, the goal setting process should include all the key stakeholders in the town's economic community. These should include, as an example, town representatives, community groups, business leaders, the Chamber of Commerce, and interested citizens. The town should look at factors that have helped or hindered economic development in other areas similar to Inglis, factors such as those presented above from Aldrich & Kusmin (1997).

According to a study done by the University of Missouri, and listed in the article "Community-Based Entrepreneurship Development" by Dave Ivan (2009), there are seven factors that are considered key to the attraction of new businesses to a rural area. These factors are access to markets, an educated and skilled workforce, ready and affordable business sites, high quality infrastructure and amenities, access to capital, a cooperative and pro-business attitude, and a favorable quality of life. The Town of Inglis should determine which of these factors it can influence, either directly or indirectly.

An example of a goal worth pursuing is education of the residents. Quality education is one of the factors that Aldrich & Kusmin (1997) identified as related to positive economic growth in rural areas. Specifically, they identified excellent high school completion rates and adequate public education expenditures. While Inglis does not directly control the expenditures of the Levy County School Board, it can nevertheless actively participate with the School Board, in an attempt to help guide the decision making process.

Secure Funding Sources

Funding is a necessary element for any community to realize a sustainable effort in economic development. For Inglis, being a small town may limit the resources available for successful economic development, but it also means that Inglis could be eligible for state and federal funding assistance targeted especially to small, rural communities.

Rural Economic Development Initiative

At the state level the Florida Department of State implements the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) program which helps to provide funds for supporting the economic development of state designated rural counties and communities. One such funding opportunity is the Rural Infrastructure Grant which seeks to fund infrastructure projects that are related to economic development or nature based tourism and that create jobs in rural communities. The place to begin for information about this grant opportunity is through Enterprise Florida Inc.

Other assistance available through the Initiative includes a tax credit program for businesses located in a Florida designated rural areas, in order to encourage job creation in these areas, as well as a revolving loan program available for the promotion of the economic viability of rural communities. The intent of the tax credit initiative is to “encourage meaningful employment opportunities that will improve the quality of life of those employed and to encourage economic expansion of new and existing businesses in rural areas of Florida” (REDI, 2011). In general, the revolving loan program is open to the local government of a rural county

to assist with projects that create or preserve jobs, increase local diversification, or maintain an existing industry. The Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development is the administrative authority for both of these initiatives.

Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program

The United States Department of Agriculture offers the Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant (REDLG) program for the purpose of funding projects in rural areas that create or retain jobs (USDA, 2011). The REDLG funds are available for many purposes, including

- Capitalization of revolving loan funds
- Technical assistance in conjunction with projects funded under a zero interest *REDLoan*
- Business incubators
- Community development assistance to non-profits and public bodies, particularly job creation or enhancement
- Facilities and equipment for education and training for rural residents to facilitate economic development
- Facilities and equipment for medical care to rural residents
- Telecommunications/computer networks for distance learning or long distance medical care

Further information may be obtained from the regional office of USDA Rural Development located in Ocala, Florida. This is also the place to begin to find out about other available programs to assist Inglis with proposed projects.

Brownfield Designation

Another opportunity that may be of interest to Inglis is to consider parcels to designate as Brownfields. A Brownfield site is defined as a site

where redevelopment may be complicated “by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant” (EPA, 2011). The use of this designation for a site that has potential as a business or for public land use is intended to provide funding for revitalization of a community area.

There are various programs available through the Brownfield initiative under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, such as Brownfields Assessment Grants which provide funding to do inventories and assessments of sites as well as for community outreach programs. Another program is designed to provide environmental training to residents of brownfield communities and is called the Brownfields Job Training Grants program. Direct funding for cleanups of a brownfield site can be obtained through a Brownfield Cleanup Grant and is targeted to those sites intended for nonprofit, recreational, or greenspace uses. Administration of the program in Florida is through the Department of Environmental Protection.

Other Considerations

Some other federal opportunities include money for federal programs such as National Forest–Dependent Rural Communities and Rural Economic Development Loans and Grants from the United States Department of Agricultural or the Recreational Trail Program from the United States Department of Transportation (Blakely & Leigh, 2010).

Private sources of funding can also be very valuable, as large regional organizations have a vested interest in the success of surrounding communities.

As such, large corporations, such as area utility companies, financial institutions, and service organizations are often willing to sponsor local economic development initiatives.

The traditional approach to economic development has been to attract businesses from outside to relocate to the local area. Inglis is a small town with a strong sense of community but may find it difficult to compete with a larger city to attract businesses from elsewhere. Though Inglis is a small, rural community with the limited resources to match, there are opportunities available which will give Inglis the competitive edge needed to realize a positive sustainable rural economic development effort.

The Town of Inglis as a rural community interested in developing an economic development strategy already has much to offer the initiative in the form of natural resources, a high quality of life, and involved community members. Once the town is able to identify its many assets it will be ready to begin the process of establishing its goals for economic development, which will then allow town officials and stakeholders to begin the process of building partnerships and seeking available funding. Through this process the Town of Inglis will be well on its way to providing for itself a sustainable rural economic development strategy for planned growth for many years to come.

INCORPORATE ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL BASED DEVELOPMENT INTO LONG RANGE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

What is Ecotourism?

It can be a difficult task to define a concept such as ecotourism. The word ecotourism has become somewhat of a buzzword in economic

development literature with various definitions, generally biased toward promoting the interest of a particular group or organization.

Books on the subject abound, with one particularly authoritative volume entitled *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise? (2008)*. In this guide, author Martha Honey, PhD. discusses the many variations in definition and the ramifications of each. She goes on to describe ecotourism as, “one of the most rapidly growing and most dynamic sector of the tourism market” (p. 7). Dr. Honey explains that in many fragile ecosystems, ecotourism is the only economic development option that “does not lead to irreparable damage to the environment” (p. 444).

According to The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), another valued source for information about the concept, ecotourism is “Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.” The definition further describes ecotourism as a unity between conservation, communities, and sustainable travel. Those involved in the implementation and participation of ecotourism activities should be bound by the following principles (TIES, 2005).

- Minimize impact
- Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect
- Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts
- Provide direct financial benefits for conservation
- Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people
- Raise sensitivity to host countries’ political, environmental, and social climate

A statewide organization supporting this definition of ecotourism is the Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism (Florida SEE). This organization is dedicated to the ethical promotion of ecotourism around the state and offers

membership and certification programs to interested parties both public and private (Florida SEE, 2011).

In addition, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP, 2011) and the University of Florida (UFL, 2011) have programs dedicated to the protection of Florida's natural environment and offer information and education helpful to any organization interested in developing an ecotourism program.

Why Should Inglis Consider Ecotourism?

Ecotourism is BIG Business. A 2006 study, *The 2006 Economic Benefits of Wildlife-Viewing Recreation in Florida*, prepared for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, showcased the economic benefits of one part of Ecotourism... *Wildlife Viewing*. The following data comes from that report.

- Florida ranks as the second highest state (after California) in the number of people participating in wildlife-viewing recreation.
- In 2006, the nonresident wildlife viewers in Florida (746,000) equaled the population of South Dakota and brought \$653 million into the state economy.
- In 2006, wildlife-viewing in Florida generated the following economic benefits:
 - \$3.081 Billion in Retail Sales
 - Provided \$1.595 Billion in salaries and wages
 - Created or supported 51,367 full and part-time jobs
 - Generated \$312.8 Million in state sales tax revenue
 - Generated \$385.3 Million in federal income tax revenue
 - Total Economic Effect – **\$5.248 BILLION**
- Since 2001, the number of people who visited Florida to view wildlife increased 50 percent.
- With 746,000 visitors per year, more people travel to Florida to view wildlife than any other state – 24 percent more than the second-place state, California

Inglis, as a community in Florida's Nature Coast, could position itself to capture a portion of the economic benefits of ecotourism. When developing ecotourism strategies, Inglis should consider other demographics it wishes to attract. At a joint commission meeting held on May 31, 2011, at the Inglis Town Hall, participants identified a desire to attract retirees. Strategies should be developed to attract retirees as participants in ecotourism. This may be done through marketing efforts designed to attract that demographic to both visit and relocate to the town.

Local Resources

The Town of Inglis has many positive resources that will be helpful in pursuing ecotourism. In order to create a vision of how Inglis would like to implement an ecotourism strategy there needs to be an analysis of the current strengths and weaknesses as well as an examination of future opportunities and external threats. A major goal of this section is to provide information necessary to assist town officials in making informed ecotourism strategy decisions.

Once each of these areas has been identified, town officials will have a place to begin creating a plan for the proposed implementation of ecotourism. In order for Inglis to capitalize on its future opportunities the community will be able to use its strengths. Town strengths must be utilized to counter the identified weaknesses as well as a way to prepare for future threats from the environment.

Political Resources

The comprehensive plans of both Inglis and Levy County demonstrate a political capacity necessary for development of ecotourism industry. Both

entities already recognize the benefits of creating economic opportunities in such a way that will minimize industry impacts, will raise awareness of the value of the area's natural resources and will create a sustainable future for the area and its citizens. Portions of the comprehensive plans of Levy County and Inglis, which are related to protection of natural resources and a commitment to ecotourism related projects, are listed below. Comprehensive Plan – Levy County

“Levy County’s economy is anchored in the area’s abundant natural resources” (p. 11–1).

- Agriculture
- Forestry
- Natural beauty

County Concerns

- Protection of the county’s environment and natural resources
- Loss of fishing industry due to environmental conditions of waterways

Town of Inglis Comprehensive Plan

- Proposal of a bicycle pedestrian master plan (*Policy 2.10.8*)
- Development of greenways and parks planning to preserve natural areas (*Policy 5.7.4*)
- Initiation of a marketing program to promote the town’s image as an ecotourism destination (*Policy 9.2.2*)
- Promotion of Inglis as a tourism destination with emphasis on ecotourism (*Policy 9.7.2*)

One major opportunity for Inglis is that though the town is in Levy County, because of its proximity to Citrus and Marion Counties, Inglis would benefit from a regional, multi-county ecotourism strategy, including group marketing and organizational networking. According to the article “Regional Innovation: National Prosperity” in *Economic Development America*, “Economic development professionals increasingly recognize that multi-county areas are the appropriate unit for economic analysis and planning” (2006, p. 27).

A major threat facing the Town of Inglis, as it pursues a strategy supporting ecotourism, will be the availability of funding. In order for Inglis to increase its ecotourism base, development strategies will need to include availability of land, quality infrastructure, and employee training, all of which requires public funding dollars. Because ecotourism is gaining popularity around the state there will be competition for limited grant and subsidy monies.

Natural Resources

The Inglis area has the strength of many natural resources that would foster the development of a local ecotourism industry.

- The Withlacoochee River
- Proximity to the Gulf of Mexico
- The Cross Florida Greenway (Barge Canal)
- Great Florida Birding Trail
- Opportunities for fishing, including guided tours
- Hiking, kayaking, nature watching, cycling, horseback riding
- Bicycle trail that is partially complete
- Cross Florida Greenway Trailhead

One of the largest challenges Inglis may face, in the development of a local ecotourism industry, is physical access to local waterways and to the Cross Florida Greenway. Inglis neither owns nor controls any direct access to either the Withlacoochee River or the Barge Canal, within the Cross Florida Greenway.

At a joint commission meeting held on May 31, 2011, at the Inglis Town Hall, the participants identified a few parcels of land that might provide opportunity for gaining access to both the Withlacoochee and the Canal. Information regarding these parcels, from the Levy County Property Appraiser web site, is included in the Appendix.

Policy 9.7.1 of the Comprehensive Plan, which states “*The Town’s goal is to acquire and develop a significant riverfront property as a recreational and tourist attraction.*”

Although the future land use (FLU) designations of property within Inglis are representative of the town’s commitment to conservation, the current land uses do not match the FLU (see Appendix). It will take time and funding to acquire and redevelop necessary open space and public lands to support ecotourism.

Strategies for Fostering an Ecotourism Industry

The town should not rely exclusively on a single strategy to attract ecotourism businesses and visitors. A set of strategies should include tools to attract both businesses and tourists.

Business Development

Many tools are available for attracting or retaining businesses. These range from providing financial incentives to creating an attitude attractive to business. An August 2002 report prepared by Ziona Austrian, Ph.D. and Jill Norton of the Center for Economic Development, Maxine Goodman Levin College of Urban Affairs, Cleveland State University, titled, *What Works in Economic Development Practice? An Evaluation of Strategies and Tools* (p. 37), states “Among 34 factors affecting location decision, the highest ranked was the city’s general business climate and attitude towards industry. Financial inducements were ranked fourth”. According to *Planning Local Economic Development Theory and Practice 4th Edition*, Blakely & Leigh (Blakely), (p. 267), “A ‘climate’ conducive to business development is often created with the participation of local governments and neighborhoods.”

Locality Development

Blakely addresses the importance of Locality Development as a strategy to foster economic development and improve overall quality of life. These goals may be met through quality transportation planning and urban design. Some key points are as follow:

- Good transportation systems are necessary for movement of people and goods
- Create vehicular and pedestrian networks
- Create design standards to improve the locality's image
- Focus on minimizing environmental impact
- Carefully manage land resources

Land management and land deals should be an important component of economic development. According to Blakely (p. 235–6), “*A local community development plan will be thwarted if suitable sites and buildings for selected projects cannot be furnished.*” The physical environment is an extremely important factor in attracting people to an area, whether they are new residents, visitors, or business owners. The following are important components of this approach:

- Tree lined streets
- Covered walkways
- Clean well managed retail areas

A well defined entrance and exit to a city will show a visitor community spirit and pride, and that “for tourism, there are few factors more important than community appearance. Visitors do ‘judge the book by its cover.’ ”.

Human Resource Development

The greatest resources available to Inglis as it pursues economic development of any kind are the people of the community. Yet, as with any new public venture, local citizens and business owners currently lack the expertise necessary for working within an ecotourism industry and will need access to training and information.

In order for Inglis to pursue an ecotourism strategy it would be to the benefit of the town to pursue training opportunities for its citizens. The major opportunity would be to work with the public school system of Inglis to develop training programs in the high schools as well as through the adult education program. There are also training programs available through the University of Florida extension services.

As well because there are already some ecotourism activities in progress through private and other public entities, the Town of Inglis could work with these entities to create some public/private partnerships to develop training programs for area residents to specifically target skills necessary for the ecotourism industry.

Community Economic Development

When considering development of the community with respect to ecotourism Inglis already has much to offer. Going back to the definition of ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas, Inglis has many areas in and around the community considered natural areas, especially the Cross Florida Greenway and the Withlacoochee River. There are already efforts to preserve the environment as with the Great Florida Birding Trail and the building of the bicycle trail.

Inglis should focus on the resources of the overall community when developing a strategy for ecotourism. For example, there are currently a number of guided fishing operators in the town. Inglis should encourage a working relationship between the various operators, and could develop and market an industry around them. This industry could joint market with other operations, such as the kayaking, diving, and birding industries, forming a broader base for ecotourism.

Establishing Policy

The Town of Inglis, through the Conservation and Economic Elements of its Comprehensive Plan, has established policies intended to encourage the development of an ecotourism industry. The goals, objectives, and policies provide the framework on which the town can help build a thriving ecotourism industry.

Chapter 5 - Comprehensive Plan Conservation Element

One of the principles of ecotourism is to build environmental and cultural awareness and respect. In order to foster environmental awareness and respect is to take steps to protect environmental resources. Goal five of the Conservation Element of the Comprehensive Plan clearly states that the town intends to protect its environmental resources. Each objective listed under this goal, includes specific policies that were established in furtherance of the goal of the Conservation Element. The objectives, with an abbreviated definition, are listed here. The numerous policies, which fall under each objective, are not listed in the body of this report.

Objective 5.1 - Protection of air quality

Objective 5.2 – Protection of surface waters

Objective 5.3 – Protection of Groundwater

Objective 5.4 – Protection against soil erosion

Objective 5.5 – Protection of existing relic hardwood communities, habitat for threatened and endangered species, environmentally sensitive land, and unique vegetative communities.

Objective 5.9 – protection of fisheries, wildlife habitat, and marine habitat.

Chapter 9 – Economic Element

Goal nine of the Comprehensive Plan states in part that “*The town seeks to stimulate and facilitate the development of aquaculture, eco-tourism...*” In furtherance of this goal:

Policy 9.2.2 states, in part, “*...the Town will initiate and maintain a marketing program that enhances Inglis’ image as an eco-tourism destination that is friendly to clean, environmentally sensitive businesses...*”

Policy 9.7.1 states “*The Town’s goal is to acquire and develop a significant riverfront property as a recreational and tourist attraction.*”

Policy 9.7.2 states “*The Town will give special emphasis on eco-tourism*”

Implementation

As the Town of Inglis considers strategies to implement an ecotourism economic development strategy community officials and leaders must remember that ecotourism is but one industry, a rather diverse industry, yet still only one industry. A total economic development planning strategy will seek to create greater diversification for increased economic sustainability of the area.

Any strategy implemented by the town needs to consider environmental preservation, and respect the rural lifestyle of the town. These are qualities that will help with the goal of attracting Ecotourists. With specific reference to building a plan for ecotourism, though, the following implementation strategies are recommended.

- Build on what is already in place
- Identify the key stakeholders
- Include local business owners and citizens in plan development
- Identify weaknesses and challenges
- Identify opportunities to overcome existing challenges
- Identify marketing and promotion strategies
- Develop funding sources, both public and private
- Create ecotourism vacation packages

An example of how the community can work together was identified in Section 3, under Natural Resources. The Community naturally followed the implementation recommendations.

- Build on what is already in place

The participants discussed how to take advantage of a major asset, the waterways

- Include local business owners and citizens in plan development

Representatives from the town boards, local residents, local business, and representatives from a neighboring community were in attendance and all participated.

- Identify weaknesses and challenges

Lack of access to local waterways was identified as a weakness

- Identify opportunities to overcome existing challenges

Multiple parcels of land were identified that would overcome the weakness

- Develop funding sources

Discussion on potential funding started

CONSIDER REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL CLUSTERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS

Industry Clusters - What are they?

The underlying concepts of industry clusters, more traditionally known as agglomeration economics, dates back to the 1890s. However, the term industry clusters (or sometimes known as business clusters) was first introduced in 1990 by Michael Porter and cluster development has been the focus of many government programs. Industry clusters are geographic concentrations of competing, complementary, or interdependent firms and industries that are all interconnected. The connections between the firms / industries can be competitive or cooperative.

Industry clusters can develop through various ways. Clusters typically develop around a central resource or even a single large firm. For example, The University of Minnesota's report on Industry Clusters outlines some examples of cluster development; clusters have developed around large competitive firms such as Medtronic in the Twin Cities or Microsoft in Seattle. Special infrastructure or resources also give rise to clusters such as the wood products cluster in northern Minnesota, the wine industry in Northern California and tourism in southern Florida. The players in industry clusters are diverse and can include government, nonprofit organizations, educational institutions, and infrastructure and service providers, all of who supports the success of the cluster.

Further analysis of the California wine cluster can further illustrate the different players in a cluster. The California wine cluster includes commercial wineries, independent grape growers, suppliers of grape stock, irrigation and harvesting equipment, barrels, and labels, specialized publishers, public relations firms, advertising agencies, the University of California, the Wine Institute and so much more.

Benefits of Industry Clusters

There are numerous benefits that industry clusters can produce that benefit the public sector, established and emerging industries, communities and economic development. The development of industry clusters presents a wide range of opportunities and can strengthen regional economies. Michael Porter, in *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, claims that clusters affect competition in three ways: increasing productivity of the companies in the clusters, driving innovation and stimulating new businesses in the field. Clusters also provide opportunities to invest in human capital; the work force has the potential to strengthen and grow significantly.

Concluding Remarks

In closing, a local economic development plan is needed in the town of Inglis and must include both human resource development and community economic development. The human resource development should be committed to include the following concepts: Matching Human Resource Programs and Economic Development Objectives (Workforce Investment Boards, First-Source or Targeted Hiring Agreements, Training Programs, Youth Enterprise Self-Employment Initiatives, Career Ladders, and Implementing a Human Resource Development Strategy. The community economic development must be obligated to include the following notions: Community Development Corporations, Incentives and Community Benefit Agreements, and Local Government's Role in Community Economic Development. Listed below is a brief list of items the town may wish to consider pursuing as part of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

- 3) Specific Strategies that we feel that Inglis should focus on
 - a) Community Asset Inventory
 - b) Townscaping
 - c) Examine regulations for potential improvement
 - d) Education of workforce
 - e) Focus on quality of life issues

- 4) Businesses oriented strategies combined with human capital development strategies that Inglis should and could be focus on
 - a) Progress Energy Plant
 - i) Workforce training
 - ii) Negotiate first source agreements
 - b) Ecotourism
 - i) Joint marketing with regional partners

Appendix

Demographics of Inglis, Florida

Households	670
Families	426
Population Density	408.2 People per Square Mile (157.7/km2)
Racial Make-up	White 98.73%
	Asian 0.34%
	Native Americans 0.13%
	Other Races 0.13%
	Two or More Races 0.67%
	Hispanic or Latino of Any Race 1.88%
Children under 18 (living at home)	22.2%
Married	49.0%
Female-headed households	8.2%
Non-families	36.3%
Individual households	31.0%
65 years old (living alone)	15.2%
Household size	2.23
Family size	2.70
Under the age of 18	20.9%
Ages 18 to 24	5.0%
Ages 25 to 44	22.3%
Ages 45 to 64	29.0%
Ages 65 or older	22.8%

(Wikipedia.org)

Areas of Critical Improvement**Inglis, Florida– Levy County**

- Population in 2009: 1,618
- Males: 799 (49.4%)
- Female: 819 (50.6%)
- Household Income in 2009: \$31,328 (\$24,432)
- Florida income in 2009: (\$44, 736)

Demographics:

- White (non-Hispanic): 1570 (98.1%)
- Hispanic: 17 (1.1%)
- American Indian: 10 (0.6%)
- Asian: 3 (0.2%)

Education (25 years or older):

- High School or higher: 73%

- Bachelors degree of higher: 9.7%
- Graduate/Professional of higher: 2.4%

Unemployed: 8.5%

- Unemployment in March 2011: 10.8%
- Florida unemployment in March 2011: 10.6%

Common Industries from 2005–2009:

- Construction: 28%
- Retail trade: 13%
- Other services, except public administration: 12%
- Manufacturing: (7%)
- Accommodation and Foodservice: 7%
- Public Administration: 5%
- Administration and support and waste management services: 5%

Infrastructure:

- Inglis Town Hall
- Inglis Fire Station
- Progress Energy Power Station
- Forestry Youth Academy
- Eight churches
- Two banks
- Two hotels

Percentage of residents living in poverty: 24.6%

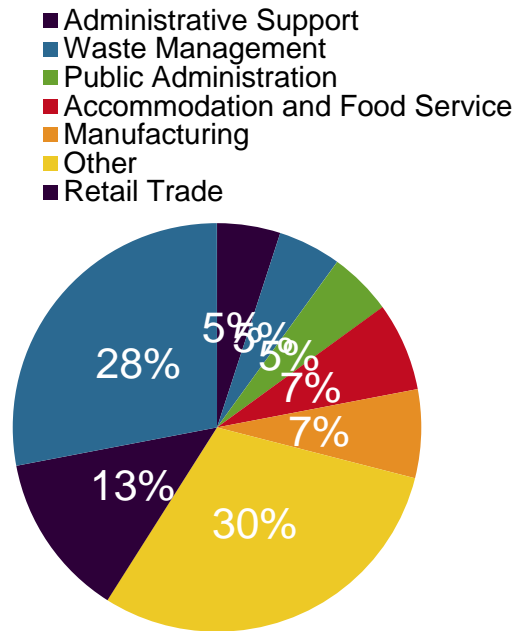
- Non-Hispanic Whites: 24.8%
- Hispanics: 11.8%
- American Indian: 40%
- Other (two or more): 0%

Inglis vs State of Florida (Economic Gaps)

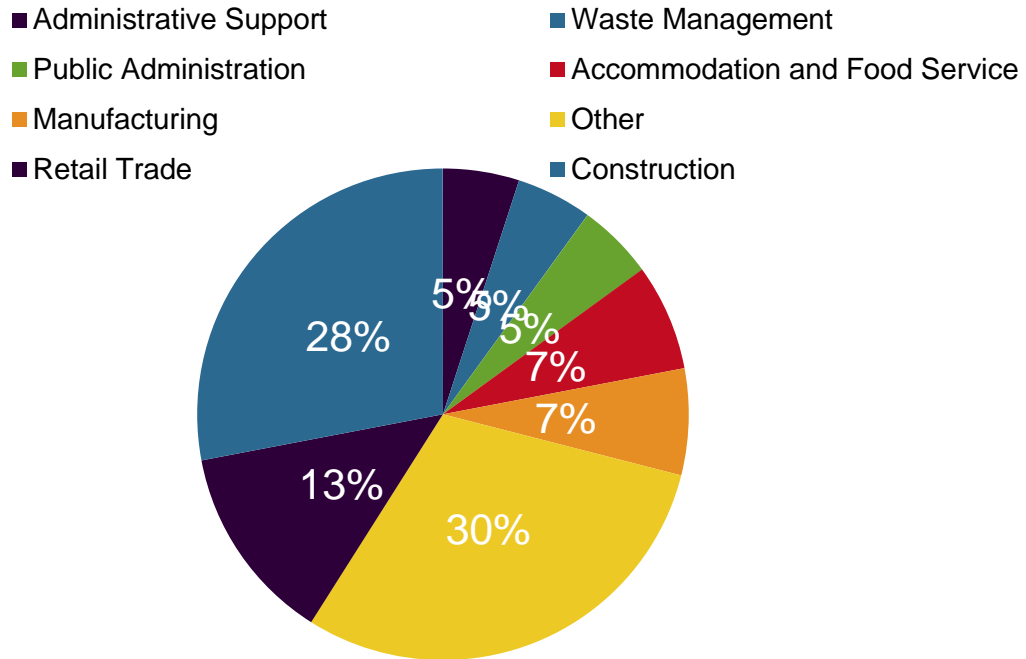
- Median age significantly above state average.
- Median Household Income and House Age below state average.
- Black Race population, Hispanic Race population, Foreign-born population, Number of college students, population with a bachelor degree of higher significantly below state average.

Socioeconomic Data, Inglis, FL
2009 Population: 1,618

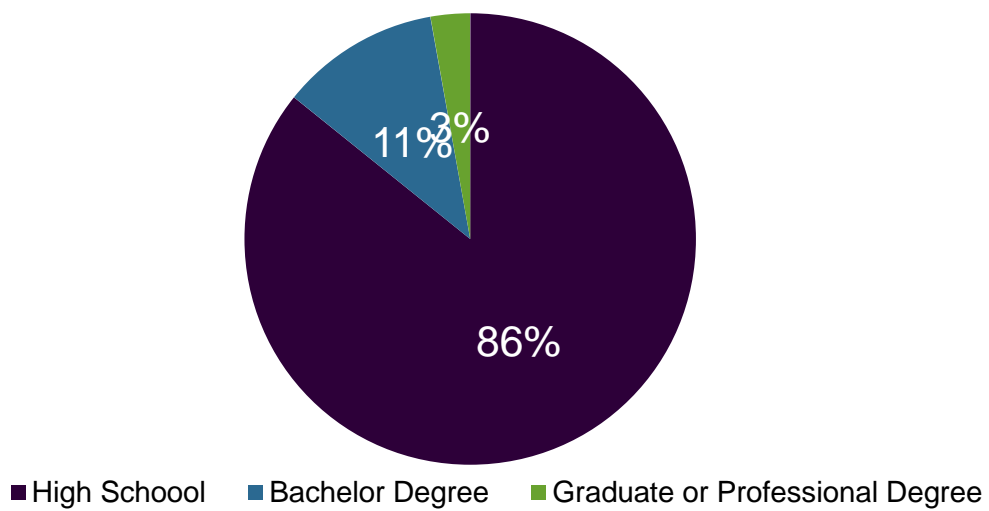
Annual Household Income



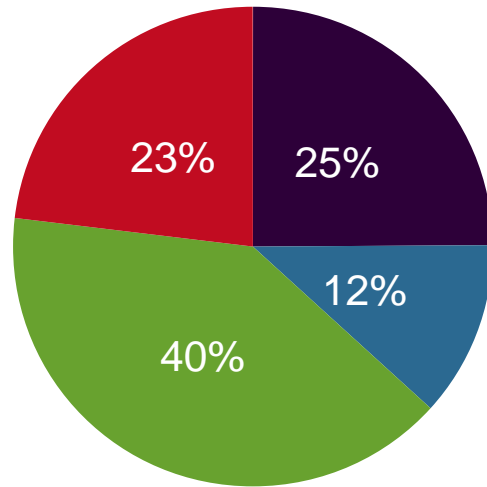
*Industries of Employment
Common Industries, 2005-2009:*



Educational Attainment (25 years or older):

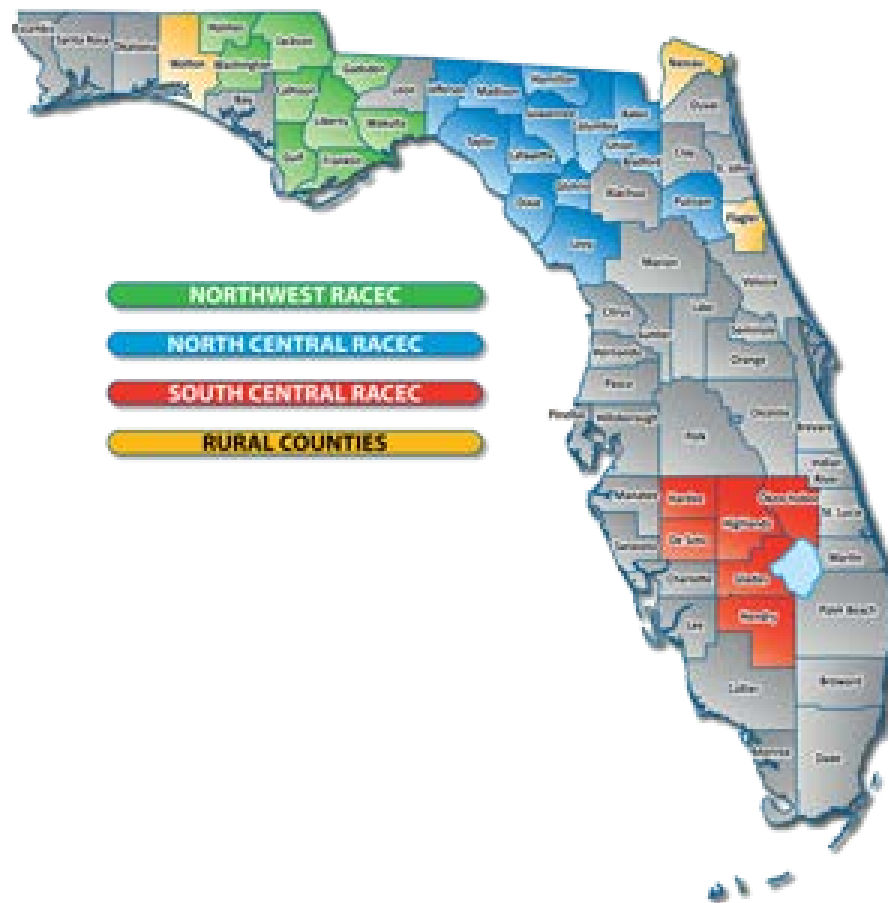


Residents Living in Poverty

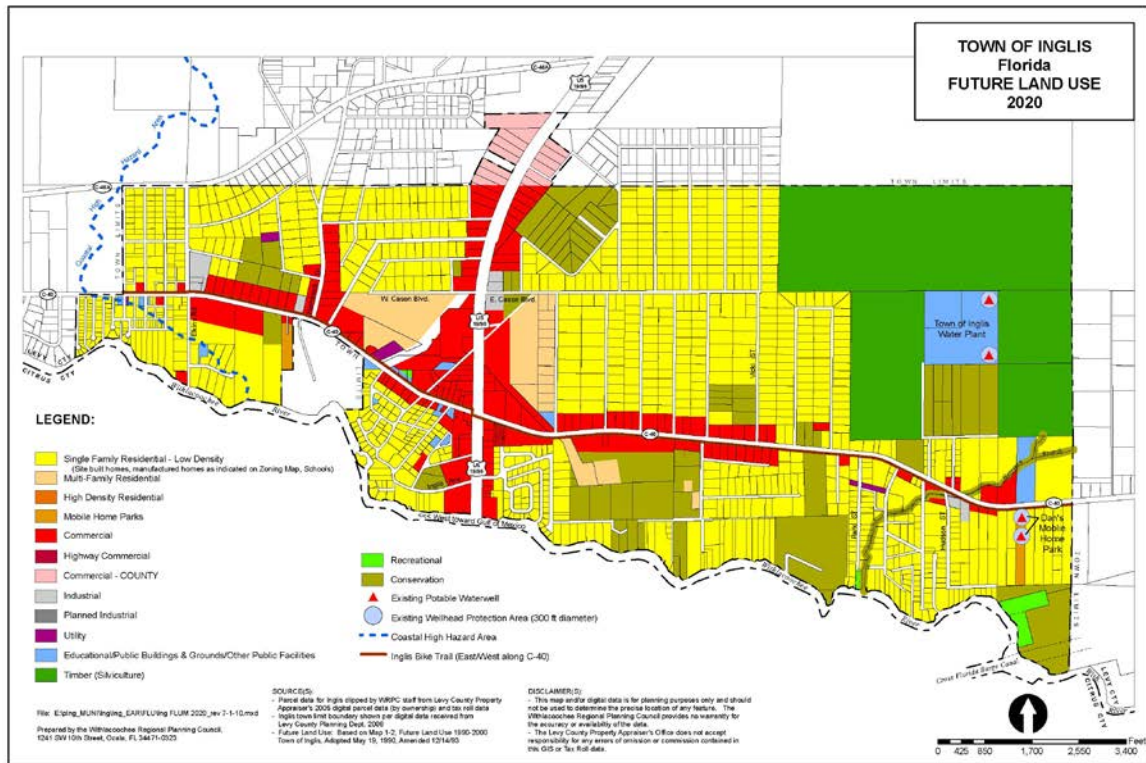


■ White (Non Hispanic) ■ Hispanic ■ American Indian ■ Other

The State of Florida established a number of Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACEC) across the state. All areas of Levy County are located within the North Central RACEC (shown in blue).



Future Use Map – Town of Inglis

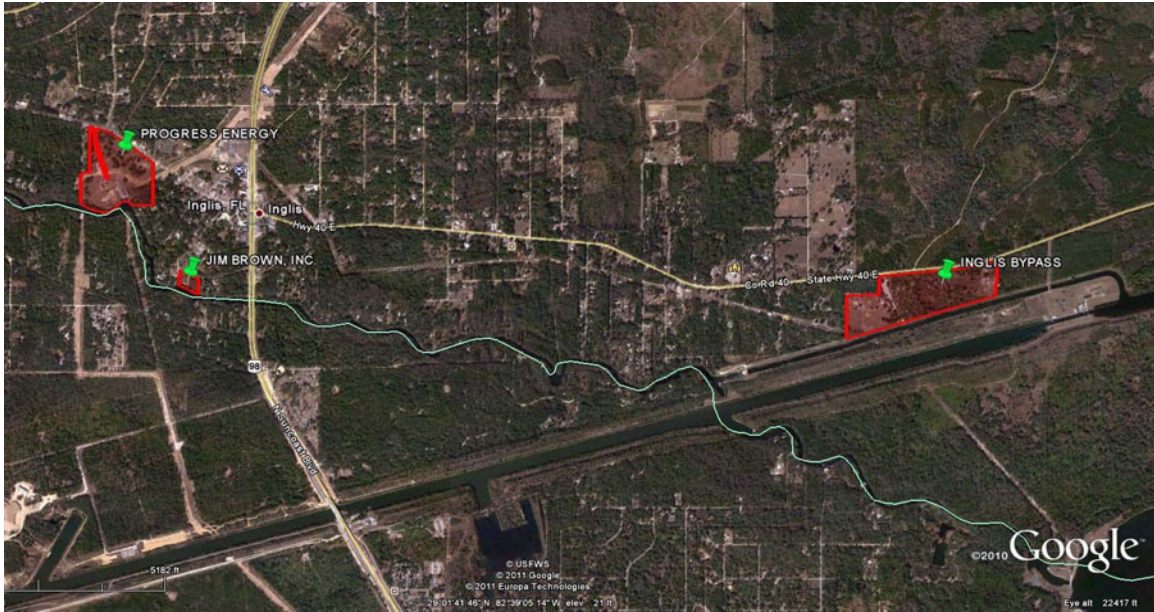


Breakdown of 2006 retail expenditures

	Residents	Nonresidents	Total
Trip Expenditures			
Food	\$90,279,272	\$175,641,624	\$265,920,896
Lodging	\$62,955,541	\$236,300,069	\$ 299,255,610
Airfare	\$21,901,712	\$54,911,245	\$76,812,957
Public transportation	\$7,116,584	\$56,906,695	\$64,023,279
Private transportation	\$49,768,204	\$73,447,849	\$123,216,052
Guide fees	\$7,469,937	\$18,545,772	\$26,015,709
Public land access fees	\$4,746,921	\$2,260,215	\$7,007,136
Private land access fees	\$77,599	\$7,164,204	\$7,241,803
Equipment rental	\$7,212,661	\$6,740,189	\$13,952,851
Boat fuel	\$686,210	\$486,717	\$1,172,927
Other boat costs	\$1,545,816	\$128,273	\$1,674,089
Heating and cooking fuel	\$1,228,372	\$420,563	\$1,648,934
Equipment Expenditures			
Binoculars, scopes	\$27,396,727	\$2,094,747	\$29,491,474
Cameras	\$126,204,502	\$3,701,686	\$129,906,188
Film and developing	\$38,240,834	\$5,749,188	\$43,990,021
Commercially prepared bird food	\$69,499,033		\$69,499,033
Other bird food	\$13,177,909	\$6,986	\$13,184,894
Food for other wildlife	\$30,836,606	\$441,892	\$31,278,498
Nest boxes, feeders	\$24,549,534	\$1,906,091	\$26,455,625
Other special equipment	\$1,076,359	\$72,339	\$1,148,697
Tents, tarps	\$12,277,912	\$519,809	\$12,797,721
Backpacking equipment	\$235,308		\$235,308
Other camping equipment	\$9,428,780		\$9,428,780
Day packs, special clothing	\$7,479,961	\$611,747	\$8,091,708
Magazines and books	\$19,122,187	\$4,856,946	\$23,979,133
Membership dues, contributions	\$31,941,477	\$363,232	\$32,304,709

Other equipment	\$1,696,966		\$1,696,966
Off-road and 4WD vehicles,	\$284,590,750		\$284,590,750
Pickups, campers, motor homes	\$517,614,174		\$517,614,174
Boats	\$302,130,123		\$302,130,123
Trailer, boat accessories	\$8,980,326		\$8,980,326
Cabin			
Other equipment	\$239,631,362		\$239,631,362
Land purchases	\$364,426,890		\$364,426,890
Land leases			
Plantings	\$42,691,136		\$42,691,136
Total trip and equipment expenditures	\$2,428,217,684	\$653,278,076	\$3,081,495,760

Potential Acquisition Parcels



*Potential Acquisition Parcels Identified by Participants in the Joint Commission Meeting
Town of Inglis, May 31, 2011*

Levy County Florida
Osborn "Oz" Barker, Property Appraiser

Property Information

Parcel Details: 03052-000-00

<p>Owners</p> <p>FLORIDA POWER CORP 100%</p> <p>TAX DEPT CX1G 100%</p>		<p>Legal Description</p> <p>SEC: 03, TWP: 17, RNG: 16 03-17-16 0044.00 ACRES BEG AT A POINT 11 CHS SOUTH & 29 CHS EAST OF NW COR RUN SOUTH 20.72 CHS EAST 19.3 CHS NORTH 20.72 CHS WEST 19.3 CHS TO POB IN W1/2 OF NE1/4 & E1/2 OF NW1/4 -LESS NORTH OF HWY IN NW1/4 OF NE1/4- & TRACT PER CIRCUIT COURT MINUTE BOOK L PAGE 92</p>
<p>Mailing Address</p> <p>Address 1 PO BOX 14042</p> <p>Address 2 TAX DEPT-PEF-131</p> <p>City ST PETERSBURG</p> <p>State FL</p> <p>Zip Code 33733</p> <p>Country</p>		
<p>Site Address</p> <p>Address 1 270 HIGHWAY 40 W</p> <p>Address 2</p> <p>City INGLIS</p> <p>State FL</p> <p>Zip Code</p>		<p>Area Map</p>
<p>Parcel Information</p> <p>Neighborhood WITH. RIVER WEST (2001.00)</p> <p>Subdivision 000000 Show Recent Sales in this Subdivision</p> <p><u>DOR Code</u> UTILITY (9100)</p> <p>Acreage 44.00</p>		


2011 Preliminary Value Summary	
Total Building Value	\$242,997
Total OB/XF Value	\$125,127
Total Land Value	\$4,526,496
Land Classified Value	\$0
Just Market Value	\$4,894,620

2011 Preliminary Taxable Value Summary	
Total Assessed Value	\$4,894,620
Total Exemptions	\$0
Total Non-School Taxable Value	\$4,894,620
Please note that property values in this office are being updated throughout the year. The final values are certified in October.	

Levy County Florida
Osborn "Oz" Barker, Property Appraiser

Property Information

Parcel Details: 03969-001-00

<p>Owners</p> <p>LEVY COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY 100% RECREATION FACILITY 0%</p>		<p>Legal Description</p> <p>SEC: 06, TWP: 17, RNG: 17 06-17-17 0012.00 ACRES SE1/4 OF SW1/4 -LESS CANAL R/W & LESS EAST 683.32 FT- OR BOOK 13 PAGE 122 RECREATION FACILITY/BALL FIELDS INGLIS/YANKEETOWN</p>
<p>Mailing Address</p> <p>Address 1 P O DRAWER 310 Address 2 City BRONSON State FL Zip Code 32621 Country</p>		
<p>Site Address</p> <p>Address 1 8350 HIGHWAY 40 E Address 2 City INGLIS State FL Zip Code 34449-</p>		<p>Area Map</p> 
<p>Parcel Information</p> <p>Neighborhood 03.00 (3.00) Subdivision 000000 Subdivision Show Recent Sales in this Subdivision DOR Code COUNTY (8600) Acreage 12.00</p>		

2011 Preliminary Value Summary	
Total Building Value	\$0
Total OB/XF Value	\$0
Total Land Value	\$80,088
Land Classified Value	\$0
Just Market Value	\$80,088

2011 Preliminary Taxable Value Summary	
Total Assessed Value	\$80,088
Total Exemptions	\$80,088
Total Non-School Taxable Value	\$0
Please note that property values in this office are being updated throughout the year. The final values are certified in October.	

2011 Preliminary Exemptions		Taxes	
Homestead	\$0	Taxing District	SW FLORIDA WT MG (Code: SW)
2nd Homestead	\$0	Millage Rate	15.6820
Widow/er	\$0	For more information about taxes, please visit the Levy County Tax Collector TAX BILL INFORMATION .	
Disability	\$0		
Seniors	\$0		
Veterans	\$0		
Other	\$80,088		

Land Lines

	Use Code	Use Description	Front	Depth	Total Land Units	Land Value
1	8600	8600	0	0	12	\$80,088

DISCLAIMER:

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Last Updated: Sunday, May 29, 2011 at 12:23:14 AM

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**Levy County Florida
Osborn "Oz" Barker, Property Appraiser**

Property Information

Parcel Details: 03967-001-00

Owners		Legal Description
LEVY COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY	100%	SEC: 06, TWP: 17, RNG: 17 06-17-17 0051.00 ACRES THAT PART OF EAST 683.32 FT OF SW1/4 & THAT PART OF SE1/4 LYING SOUTH OF SR 40 & NORTH OF CANAL -LESS EAST 1047.21 FT OR BOOK 5 PAGE 361 & OR BOOK 8 PAGE 50-ENTRANCE & PKING AREA TO INGLIS/YANKEETOWN REC FACILITY
RECREATION FACILITY	0%	
Mailing Address		Area Map
Address 1	P O DRAWER 310	
Address 2		
City	BRONSON	
State	FL	
Zip Code	32621	
Country		
Site Address		
Address 1	8786 HIGHWAY 40 E	
Address 2		
City	INGLIS	
State	FL	
Zip Code	34449-	
Parcel Information		
Neighborhood	03.00 (3.00)	
	000000	
Subdivision	Show Recent Sales in this Subdivision	
DOR Code	COUNTY (8600)	
Acreage	51.00	

2011 Preliminary Value Summary	
Total Building Value	\$0
Total OB/XF Value	\$0
Total Land Value	\$244,596
Land Classified Value	\$0
Just Market Value	\$244,596

2011 Preliminary Taxable Value Summary	
Total Assessed Value	\$244,596
Total Exemptions	\$244,596
Total Non-School Taxable Value	\$0
Please note that property values in this office are being updated throughout the year. The final values are certified in October.	

2011 Preliminary Exemptions		Taxes	
Homestead	\$0	Taxing District	SW FLORIDA WT MG (Code: SW)
2nd Homestead	\$0	Millage Rate	15.6820
Widow/er	\$0	For more information about taxes, please visit the Levy County Tax Collector TAX BILL INFORMATION .	
Disability	\$0		
Seniors	\$0		
Veterans	\$0		
Other	\$244,596		

Land Lines

	Use Code	Use Description	Front	Depth	Total Land Units	Land Value
1	8600	8600	0	0	51	\$244,596

DISCLAIMER:

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