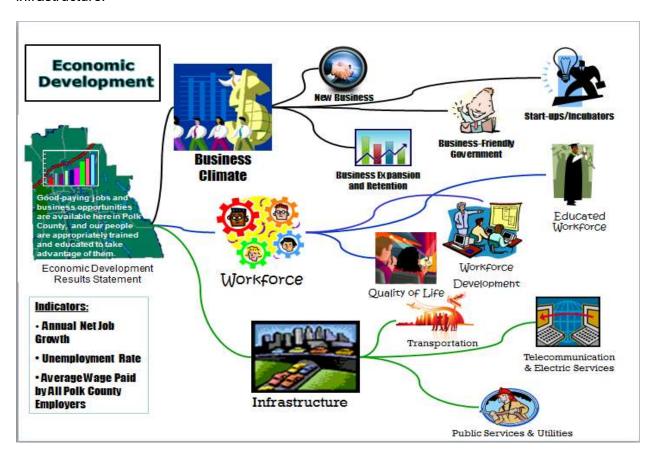


Economic Development

"Good paying jobs and business opportunities are available here in Polk County, and the people are appropriately trained and educated to take advantage of them."

Primary Factors for Achieving the Result

As shown below on the Economic Development causal map, these are the primary factors the Polk County Board of County Commissioners' (BoCC) have to obtain to meet the residents' expectations: (1) healthy business climate, (2) educated workforce, and (3) adequate infrastructure.



Strategies for Achieving the Result

All of the programs included in the Economic Development Result Area provide services that enhance the Economic Climate of Polk County through one or more of the following strategies:

- 1. Attract higher wage industries, continue to diversify the economic base, and grow Polk County existing businesses
- 2. Try to ensure a skilled and educated workforce exists in Polk County to support business needs today and in the future
- **3.** Provide a responsive and fast government

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION PROGRAM SUMMARY

		Α	dopted FY 23/2	24		Plan FY 24/25	
Program (number listed is the program number)	FTE	General Fund	Other Funds/ Sources	Total	General Fund	Other Funds/ Sources	Total
Economic Development							
Economic Development Reserves/Transfers - 1081	0.00	2,316,615	-	2,316,615	2,321,310	-	2,321,310
Economic Development Contributions - 1665	0.00	112,250	-	112,250	117,000	-	117,000
Economic Development and Business Incentives - 1714	0.00	5,910,638	-	5,910,638	5,004,670	-	5,004,670
Subtotal	0.00	8,339,503	-	8,339,503	7,442,980	-	7,442,980
Equity Office							
Small, Women, and Minority Business Assistance - 1713	0.00	50,000	-	50,000	50,000	-	50,000
Subtotal	0.00	50,000	-	50,000	50,000	-	50,000
Tourism/Sports Marketing							
Tourism 5th Penny Activities/Commitments - 405	0.00	-	9,924,967	9,924,967	-	4,003,632	4,003,632
Tourism CIP Projects - 312	0.00	-	2,471,565	2,471,565	-	-	-
Tourism Professional Sports Facilities - 310	0.00	-	2,481,655	2,481,655	-	2,482,211	2,482,211
Tourism Reserves/Transfers - 311	0.00	-	7,689,801	7,689,801	-	13,948,674	13,948,674
Tourism Development - 399	22.00	-	13,436,768	13,436,768	-	12,989,406	12,989,406
Visitor Services/Outpost 27 - 406	5.63	_	1,747,235	1,747,235	_	1,688,426	1,688,426
Subtotal	27.63	-	37,751,991	37,751,991		35,112,349	35,112,349
TOTAL BoCC	27.63	8,389,503	37,751,991	46,141,494	7,492,980	35,112,349	42,605,329

Programs highlighted in gray are not printed

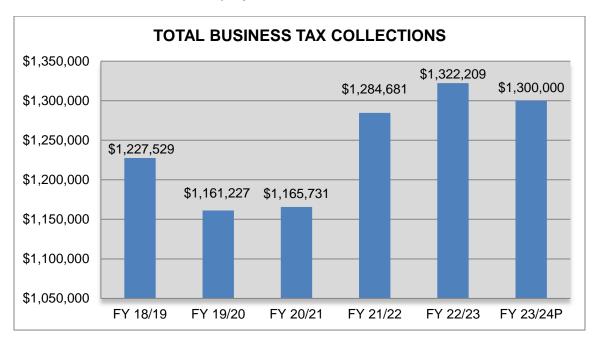
Economic Development

Appropriations	Actual FY 20/21	Budget FY 21/22	Adopted FY 22/23	Plan FY 23/24
Personal Services Expenses	1,905,750	2,190,782	2,459,495	2,524,493
Operating Expenses	6,865,501	10,156,959	13,197,944	11,317,905
Capital Expenses	11,788	61,850	2,645,000	45,000
Debt Service	3,518,877	3,526,005	2,966,346	2,970,641
Grants And Aids	1,102,872	5,461,670	9,249,299	7,308,345
Interfund Transfers	1,297,000	47,000	6,054,000	54,000
Indirect Expense	610,587	739,250	600,003	600,003
Reserves	0	6,890,781	8,294,913	13,368,253
Total Result Area	15,312,375	29,074,297	45,467,000	38,188,640
Revenue by Fund	Actual FY 20/21	Budget FY 21/22	Adopted FY 22/23	Plan FY 23/24
00100 General Fund	1,407,892	7,034,836	6,957,432	7,020,552
10150 Special Revenue Grants	50,218	30,000	30,000	30,000
12160 Tourism Tax Funds	16,048,585	22,009,461	38,479,568	31,138,088
Total Result Area	17,506,695	29,074,297	45,467,000	38,188,640
Personnel				
Full Time Equivalents	26	27	28	28

TRENDS AND ISSUES

The programs in this Result Area are dedicated to improving the overall economic climate in Polk County. Residents have informed the County that they expect Polk County to have good-paying jobs and business opportunities available and its residents have access to education to be appropriately trained to take advantage of them. To address this expectation, these programs focus on (1) attracting higher-wage industries, (2) continuing to diversify the economic base, (3) growing existing businesses, (4) ensuring a skilled and educated workforce exists in Polk County to support business needs today and in the future, and (5) providing expedited permitting for projects. The narrative below presents the trends and issues affecting the economic development divisions and programs.

This budget reflects the Board's direction to continue to provide a consistent level of public funding from prior years to support the economic development program, including allocating the occupational license fee (business tax) revenue to economic development initiatives. In FY 23/24, Business Tax collections are projected to increase to \$1.3 million.



Polk County continues to maintain funding for the Polk County Incentive Program in FY 23/24. These funds are used to incentivize companies to locate in Polk County and to provide matching funds for existing projects in the State Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program (QTI). The QTI program was discontinued by the State in FY 20/21. All unused funds are held in reserve for use in future years for the Incentive Program.

Polk County continues to make population growth news and new statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau confirm it. The County is now ranked as the fastest-growing county in Florida and the fifth fastest-growing county in the country. Polk's population grew 8.6% between April 2020 and July 2022. The Board's investment in economic development is critical to continuing to build higher wage opportunities for County residents. An economically-prosperous community attracts

and retains quality businesses with high-paying careers. A strong business environment uniquely positions a community with an enhanced tax base. Residents moving to the area need quality jobs, and the Board's investment promotes Polk County as Florida's Best Place for Business.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has estimated County employment to be 352,000, which is the highest level ever reached in the county, driven by both a growing population and strong labor markets. The percentage of working age population of the labor force has also grown by 11% over the last five years. The largest job gains were in the industries of health sciences, logistics, leisure and hospitality, business services, manufacturing, and government.

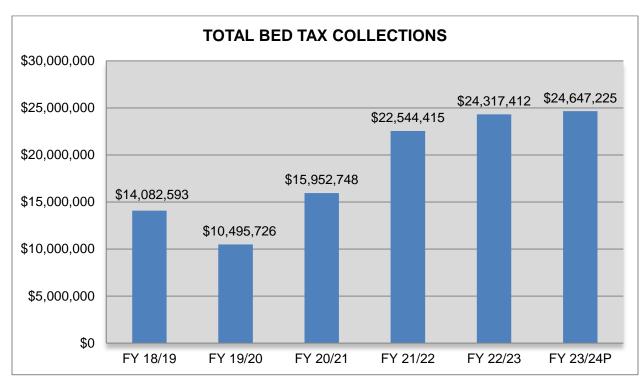
During FY 12/13, Polk County adopted an ordinance authorizing an Economic Development Ad Valorem Tax Exemption (AVTE) for companies locating or expanding in Polk County. The exemption program was originally set to expire on November 6, 2022. A ten-year extension of the program was approved and reauthorized by the overwhelming support of 74.6% of the voters on November 3, 2020 to continue the program until November 5, 2030. This exceptional vote of support speaks to the community's interest in building economic opportunities for residents. Exemptions are for County ad valorem taxes only and are weighed by job creation and capital investment by qualifying companies. The AVTE program is continuously monitored by a third party ensuring each company meets the agreed-upon job and capital investment. The program is expected to continue its growth as existing companies expand and new companies move to the area.

Tourism and sports combined are one of Polk County's top three economic engines, attracting 5.83 million visitors annually, employing more than 37,700 residents, and generating more than \$4.14 billion in economic impact for Polk County. Polk County Tourism & Sports Marketing (PCTSM) focuses on two primary strategies: driving demand and developing tourism/sports-related supply. Since the pandemic, PCTSM recovered faster than any of the contiguous counties and the State of Florida. In FY 22/23, PCTSM continued its 25-month consecutive monthly revenue record and set yet another annual record by generating the most Tourism Bed Tax Collections in the County's history. Learn About Central Florida and Polk County at www.visitcentralflorida.org/about.

In large part, PCTSM's record-setting performance was a result of a results-oriented strategic plan and aggressively activating that plan across key market segments. While many in the tourism industry were still recovering to pre-pandemic levels, PCTSM's game plan, particularly the emphasis on the recession-resistant sports industry, enabled Polk to capitalize on emerging trends and gain market share. The once-in-a-lifetime 100th Anniversary of Water-Skiing campaign was a smashing hit at the beginning of the fiscal year. For FY 23/24, a brand new culinary/farm-to-fork marketing initiative coupled with the 50th anniversary of Sun n Fun campaign will dominate Visit Central Florida's marketing plan during the next fiscal year.

Six supply-side capital improvement projects are either complete or scheduled to open in the next 18 months. At Lake Myrtle, the multi-purpose stadium and the new championship ski lake are open. The Chain of Lakes Baseball Complex is scheduled to be complete in 2024. Five existing fields at the Simmers Young Soccer/multi-purpose complex will be converted to turf playing surfaces. The PCTSM headquarters office will be undergoing an expansion to accommodate several governing bodies, including the American Powerboat Association, USA Water Ski and Wake Sports, and more. Finally, the Bartow 555 Sports Complex will have four refurbished fields which create a total of eight competition fields at one site.

PCTSM's economic development initiative has been leading the charge by keeping up with Polk's growing demand for hotel and alternative forms of accommodations (RVs, VRHs, etc.). There has been significant progress with more than 1,200 new hotel rooms the pipeline; several are either opening or currently under construction. PCTSM has also made significant headway recruiting a new commercial airline to Lakeland Linder International Airport. PCTSM and the airport are further along now in the commercial airline recruiting process than at any time in the last ten years.



Economic Development and Business Incentives

Program Number:	1714
Result Area:	Economic Development
Division:	Economic Development
Section:	N/A

Program Offer Description:

Effective October 1, 2015, the Economic Development (ED) strategies for the County transitioned to the Central Florida Development Council, Inc. (CFDC) and are funded via the Business License Tax; therefore businesses fund economic development not ad valorem. Funds are a pass through in the General fund per Ordinance 09-070 section 4, passed December 1, 2009 and pursuant to Florida Statute 205.033 (7). Economic Development's ultimate goal is to attract businesses that provide quality jobs to a skilled and educated workforce.

In 2005, the Polk County Board of County Commissioners established the Polk County Business Incentive Program (PCBI) to help create higher paying jobs, diversify the economy, and assist in the generation of capital investment by new and expanding companies.

II. **Contribution to Result:**

Economic Development serves as a business concierge for Polk County, assisting new and existing companies in order to create new job opportunities and capital investment. Since 2017, Economic Development announced the creation of 5,972 total jobs including Polk County Business Incentives (PCBI) participants and \$1.13 billion in capital investment. The CFDC team has continued its announcement schedule of significant projects with a wide variety of new businesses including manufacturing, aviation, and logistics companies. In addition to ED's efforts having a positive impact on the County's ad valorem revenue collection, ED also positively impacts the Polk County School Board by providing additional ad valorem revenue to the School Board's annual budget, thus providing opportunities for Polk County children to obtain a higher-quality education, compete better in the global economy, and be more productive citizens.

Full funding through the Local Business Tax collections will allow economic development to continue its aggressive outreach to consultants and decision makers, expand the opportunities for local companies, reach out to existing industry, further branding efforts, and create jobs. Residents' support of economic development will directly affect long-term economic development prospects and the County's future general revenue fund inflow by increasing ad valorem collections. Polk County residents will gain by way of more opportunities to grow their wages and experience greater financial freedom.

This Program is: Not Mandated (Mandated: Federal () State (Local (X)

III. Performance Objectives:

Facilitate the location of new companies or expansion of existing companies in Polk County. These are called company announcements, which are made when CFDC staff assists locating or expanding businesses with finding a site, permitting, financing, labor and training considerations, and other such services. To be credited as an announcement, the company must have at least one of the above assistance criteria performed by staff.

- Facilitate the retention or expansion of existing companies 2
- 3 Facilitate the creation of quality jobs for Polk County citizens
- Help generate increased capital investment for Polk County through company locations and expansions

IV. Measures:

	Key Obi.	Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Workload Indicators:		,			,_•
# of announcements	1-4	7	10	10	10
# of jobs created/retained	1-4	898	1,300	1,500	1,300
\$ of capital investment	1-4	\$269M	\$120M	\$300M	\$400M
Effectiveness Indicators:					
% of announcements	1-4	100.00%	100%	100%	100%
% of jobs created/retained	1-4	150.17%	100%	100%	100%
% of capital investment	1-4	190.06%	100%	100%	100%

Economic Development and Business Incentives

Significant Changes

Business Tax revenue for FY 23/24 is expected to increase to \$1.3 million. Business location decisions have been slowed due to uncertainty in the market because of supply chain issues and labor availability. The project pipeline remains full, and it is anticipated that businesses will migrate to more open markets when they are able to return to a sense of normalcy.

This budget reflects the Board's direction to continue providing the same level of public funding to support the economic development program, including allocating the business tax license fee (formerly Occupational tax) revenues as the funding source for this program.

The CFDC's organizational pillars are:

- * Promote Polk County as Florida's Best Place for Business
- * Advocate for Key Business Issues
- * Facilitate Collaborative Partnerships
- * Advance Strategic Initiatives

Personnel:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Full Time Equivalents		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Funding Sources:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
General Fund Subsidy Cash/Fund Balance Forward Interest Taxes	Total Program	0 0 0 1,223,303 1,223,303	500,000 3,077,926 475 1,024,118 4,602,519	0 4,806,510 0 1,104,128 5,910,638	0 3,906,974 0 1,097,696 5,004,670
Revenue by Fund:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
General Fund	Total Program	1,223,303 1,223,303	4,602,519 4,602,519	5,910,638 5,910,638	5,004,670 5,004,670
Appropriations:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Operating Expenses Grants And Aids	Total Program	1,045,844 122,114 1,167,958	1,076,603 3,525,916 4,602,519	1,168,878 4,741,760 5,910,638	1,165,396 3,839,274 5,004,670

Small, Women, and Minority Business Assistance

Program Number:	1713
Result Area:	Economic Development
Division:	Equity and Human Resources
Section:	Small, Women, and Minority Business Assistance

I. Program Offer Description:

The Small, Women, and Minority Business Assistance (SWMB) program provides technical support to existing and startup businesses in Polk County. The SWMB services include consultation services with business owners and potential business owners to make an overall assessment of the functional capabilities of the business, its current structure, and existing workflows. More specifically, this program provides entrepreneurial, business development, technical, and management support services to help businesses be better prepared to compete for procurement opportunities with Polk County and other agencies.

II. Contribution to Result:

The Small, Women, and Minority Business Assistance program provides assistance to businesses in order to improve the economic stability of Polk County and create jobs for residents. Through this program, healthy local businesses build a healtheir Polk tax base and are a core component of strong, sustainable communities.

This Program is: Not Mandated ()	Mandated: Federal ()	State () Local ((X
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III. Performance Objectives:

- 1 Provide business development and technical support to SWMBs in building their capacity to be able to competitively compete for procurement opportunities in Polk County and beyond
- 2 Assist and advise Small, Women, and Minority businesses to start up, expand, maintain, and/or improve operations
- Provide one-on-one technical and management counseling and assistance to Small, Women, and Minority businesses regarding back office operations
- Publicize and promote SWMB development support services and resources

IV. Measures:

	Key Obj.	Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Workload Indicators:					
# of businesses provided technical assistance/mangerial	1-4	52	100	125	125
# of new businesses/startups provided technical	1,2	126	50	25	25
# of business assisted with CARES Funding	2,3	7	N/A	-	-
# of educational COVID workshops/classes conducted	1	-	-	-	-
# of businesses assisted with PPP Loans	2,3	-	-	-	-
# of pre-launch business provided technical assistance/managerial support	2,3	N/A	-	20	25
# of community collaborations (CRA w/Haines City, Winter	1	N/A	-	3	3
# of businesses assisted with ARP funds	2,3	N/A	-	20	20

Significant Changes

Most of the calls and assistance this period was with pre-launch businesses (this means they want to start-up, but have not yet), they may or may not become a business. Therefore, we will add and measure this workload indicator going forward.

Additionally, we received requests from cities and chambers to partner with them to provide technical support and education assistance to businesses in their cities and/or that are a part of their chambers, and we did so. We expect more of these requests and we will partner with them. Therefore, we will add and measure this workload indicator going forward.

The consultant received ARP funds this period. Thus, we will add and measure this workload indicator to report on the number of SWMBs assisted with ARP funds going forward.

Small, Women, and Minority Business Assistance

Personnel:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Full Time Equivalents		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Funding Sources:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Taxes		16,950	50,000	50,000	50,000
	Total Program	16,950	50,000	50,000	50,000
Revenue by Fund:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
General Fund		16,950	50,000	50,000	50,000
	Total Program	16,950	50,000	50,000	50,000
Appropriations:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Operating Expenses		16,950	50,000	50,000	50,000
	Total Program	16,950	50,000	50,000	50,000

Tourism Development

Program Number:	399
Result Area:	Economic Development
Division:	Tourism and Sports Marketing
Section:	N/A

I. Program Offer Description:

Market Polk County as a tourist, sports, and business destination, which generates overnight stays, increases direct expenditures, economic impact, jobs, sales, and tourism tax revenue for Polk County. Enhance the economic climate and quality of life for the businesses and people of Polk County through tourist and sports development.

II. Contribution to Result:

This program contributes to Economic Development, as Tourism and Sports (combined) is Polk County's top economic engine. In a normal year the industry employs more than 21,000 residents and generates more than \$2.39 billion in economic impact for Polk County. Moreover, tourism and sports are fundamentally exports, which increase the volume and velocity of money in the local economy. Several of Polk County Tourism & Sports Marketing's (PCTSM) projects, including LEGOLAND Florida, the Lake Myrtle Business Cluster, the several community investment projects, softball and baseball spring training, aviation expansion, hotel recruitment, and more than a dozen economic development initiatives continue to generate millions in capital investment, thousands of jobs, and prosperity throughout Polk County. National and statewide statistics verify that tourism and sports development continue to be the State's leading economic engines.

This Program is:	Not Mandated ()	Mandated:	Federal ()	State ()	Local (X)

- II. Performance Objectives:
- Develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and sales program that promotes Polk County as a destination for leisure, sports, and business travelers
- Increase the quantity of overnight stays in Polk County accommodations, direct expenditures from travelers, as well as sales and tourism tax revenue
- Recruit, assist, and develop special events as well as maintain cooperative partnerships with local, state, national, and international organizations
- Develop and manage corporate partnership programs that generate revenue, in-kind services, visibility, and community involvement in the tourism industry
- 5 Increase customer/client recruitment, retention, and satisfaction through customer centric initiatives
- 6 Expand and increase the quantity and quality of tourism-related economic development in Polk County

IV. Measures:

	Key Obj.	Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Workload Indicators:					
# of sports and special events recruited, assisted, and managed	1,2,3,5	300	280	305	315
# of conventions, sales missions, and industry shows where PCTSM had representation	1,2,3	70	65	60	60
# of volunteer intern hours	1,2,3,4	2,400	2,352	2,400	2,400
# of media releases, articles, and feature stories produced	1,2	167	230	200	200
# of collateral and in-house creative projects produced	1,2	50	35	50	50
# of familiarization tour (FAM) participants	1,2,5	39	35	40	40
# of economic development projects	6	8	12	8	7
Effectiveness Indicators:					
\$ amount (gross revenue) of accommodations revenue	1-6	\$462,407,726	\$459,265,400	\$508,190,211	\$518,354,015
\$ amount of tourism tax collection (total new revenue)	1,5	\$22,426,775	\$22,303,661	\$25,409,511	\$25,917,701
\$ of overall economic benefits generated	1,2,3	\$3.2B	\$3B	\$3.51B	\$3.58B
\$ of economic benefits generated from sports and special events	1,2,3	\$175M	\$170M	\$192M	\$197M
Total visitors to Polk County	1,2,3,4	5,495,900	5,500,000	5,650,000	5,800,000
Revenue and in-kind services generated	1,2,3,4	\$419K	\$334K	\$425K	\$450K
Quantity of guides and collateral distributed	1,2,3,5	300,265	300,000	305,000	310,000
Hours of television/radio/streaming visibility produced	1,2,3,4	1,508	1,076	1,200	1,200
# of website unique visitors per year	1,2,5	1,737,600	1,000,000	1,800,000	1,800,000
# of advertising impressions per years	1,2,5	103M	180M	150M	150M
\$ value of intern hours	1,2,3,5	\$60K	\$58,000	\$69K	\$65K
\$ amount of non-paid media visibility generated	1,2	\$30M	\$20M	\$30M	\$30M
# of jobs created by tourism/sports	6	28,300	20,000	29,000	30,000
\$ of capital investment from development projects	6	\$56.6M	\$56M	\$88.1M	\$70M
Efficiency Indicators:				•	•
Sports and special events return on investment (ROI)	1,2,3,5	\$147	\$150	\$140	\$140

Tourism Development

Significant Changes

PCTSM has been preparing for what they believe will be new challenges on the road ahead. A major focus as they activate these new strategies will be a very heavy emphasis on the development of low-risk, high-yield supply, including new accommodations. PCTSM will be focusing on the development of new facilities, aggressively recruiting recession-resistant sporting events, and targeting outdoor recreational leisure travelers, including the red-hot RV market. PCTSM will continue to recruit and assist in the development of new accommodations, facilities, increasing demand, and total revenue. Balancing a results-oriented combination of supply and demand strategies, which complement one another, creates a balanced portfolio and recession resistant hedge, which ultimately creates a sustainable tourism destination.

Personnel:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Full Time Equivalents		21.00	22.00	22.00	22.00
Funding Sources:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Tourism Tax Funds Cash/Fund Balance Forward Interfund Transfer Intergovernmental Miscellaneous	Γotal Program	9,089,238 0 19,121 1,792 239,567 9,349,718	12,396,357 757,625 0 30,000 120,000 13,303,982	13,013,310 213,458 0 60,000 150,000 13,436,768	12,705,464 73,942 0 60,000 150,000 12,989,406
Revenue by Fund:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Special Revenue Grants Tourism Tax Funds	Гotal Program	20,913 9,328,805 9,349,718	30,000 13,273,982 13,303,982	60,000 13,376,768 13,436,768	60,000 12,929,406 12,989,406
Appropriations:		Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Personal Services Expenses Operating Expenses Capital Expenses Debt Service Grants And Aids Interfund Transfers	Гotal Program	1,736,303 7,429,890 114,587 2,817 0 66,121 9,349,718	2,011,811 10,893,171 45,000 0 300,000 54,000 13,303,982	2,038,735 10,984,033 60,000 0 300,000 54,000 13,436,768	2,122,083 10,443,323 70,000 0 300,000 54,000 12,989,406

Visitor Services/Outpost 27

Program Number:	406
Result Area:	Economic Development
Division:	Tourism and Sports Marketing
Section:	N/A

I. Program Offer Description:

The primary goal of Visitor Services is to put heads in beds and make cash registers ring. Staff provides concierge services, visitor information (collateral), wayfinding services, discount attraction tickets, and educational programs in an effort to convert visitors to the area, create local brand ambassadors, and achieve the organizational mission. Staff conducts customer and market research, analysis, and subsequent reporting which are used to formulate strategic marketing plans and budgetary projections.

II. Contribution to Result:

The program's contribution directly and indirectly accomplishes Polk County Tourism & Sports Marketing's (PCTSM) mission of "putting heads in beds and making cash registers ring" as a result of converting visitors into Polk County customers. Tourism is Polk's largest economic engine and drives the creation of jobs, diversifies the economy, creates new revenue, and generates sales tax revenue throughout the County.

This Program is: Not Mandated () Mandated: Federal () State () Local (X)

III. Performance Objectives:

- Utilize the visitor centers, kiosks, brochure racks, events, research, and related resources to effectively execute the conversion process, which in turn increases overnight stays and direct spending, while improving the overall economic climate for internal and external industry stakeholders
- Provide a wide variety of visitor services to industry stakeholders such as wayfinding signage, collateral distribution, marketing partnerships, and education/training programs
- 3 Provide fulfillment services for all divisions of PCTSM and additional external customers
- Collect and analyze visitor research continually in an effort to assist PCTSM and its stakeholders with better understanding the visitor's interests, demographics, and psychographics

IV. Measures:

	Key Obj.	Actual FY 21/22	Budget FY 22/23	Adopted FY 23/24	Plan FY 24/25
Workload Indicators:					
# of visitors assisted at the Outpost	1,2,4	26,484	35,000	30,000	31,000
# of visitors assisted at the LEGOLAND Visitor Center	1,2,4	51,064	75,000	55,000	60,000
# of visitors assisted at community events/presentations	1,2,4	15,744	17,500	18,000	19,000
# of hours of operation (open to the public)	1,2,3	3,222	3,222	3,222	3,222
# of meetings, functions, and events	1,2	45	65	50	55
Effectiveness Indicators:					
# of visitors converted (additional spend)	1,2	20,658	25,000	25,000	25,000
Amount of PCTSM collateral distributed	1,2	300,265	300,000	305,000	310,000
Amount of fulfillment pieces distributed	1,2,3	47,310	30,000	45,000	47,500
Attraction ticket sales generated at Outpost 27	1,2	\$234,315	\$225,000	\$250,000	\$275,000
Efficiency Indicators:					
Visitor impressions generated through billboards, advertising, and promotions	2	207,030,920	155,000,000	200,000,000	210,000,000
# of volunteers hours worked	2	1,425	2,100	1,500	1,750

Significant Changes

According to research conducted by Downs & St. Germain, 54% of visitors to the County indicated visiting friends and family as a top activity, during their stay in Polk County. Therefore, creating local brand ambassadors is crucial to extending the reach and effectiveness of the Visitor Services staff. The Certified Ambassador of Tourism and Sports (CATS) training initiative directly increases the brand ambassador base through a certification process, which requires training, testing, and first-hand experience at many attractions, restaurants, and/or events. Maintaining partnerships with industry stakeholders will prove vital moving into next year, as the County strives to increase visitation, broaden the reach of the education efforts, and continue the distribution of all PCTSM collateral materials through more than 100 local businesses. 90% of visitors to Polk County arrive by car, and the expectation is for that statistic to remain flat moving into next year. PCTSM collateral continues to be available at the State of Florida Welcome Centers, and increased signage and billboards will be a priority. Through research we know that 78% of the visitors that engage with the Visitor Services staff spend more money while in Polk County. FY 23/24, the division will be bringing a mobile visitor information center online in order to maximize the opportunity to engage with visitors across the County in high-traffic locations and at marquee special events. As many macro economic factors work against the growth of the tourism industry, including inflation and dwindling discretionary income, it will be integral to cultivate and promote new discount opportunities throughout the County for visitors in an effort to prevent leakages. The continued expansion of the Sunshine Savings Pass and the Adventure on Tap Pass will be priority moving into FY 23/24 as more than 40% of visitors indicated that the presence of discounts are a primary driver in choosing a destination.

The Visitor Services team also conducts extensive research as well as gathering and analyzing data for the entire PCTSM staff. Assistance is also provided to and in cooperation with, Downs & St Germain, which is critically important as the industry continues to move forward out of the pandemic and subsequent declines. Staff will use in-person surveys, e-mails, and phone calls, which provide critical information, including the demographics, psychographics, and attitudinal dynamics of visitors, as well as the status of resident industry stakeholders. The information obtained is utilized to determine core target markets and consumer wants and needs ultimately generating a higher volume and spending by Polk County visitors.

Visitor Services/Outpost 27						
Personnel:		Actual	Budget	Adopted	Plan	
		FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	
Full Time Equivalents		5.63	5.63	5.63	5.63	
Funding Sources:		Actual	Budget	Adopted	Plan	
-		FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	
Tourism Tax Funds		1,192,553	1,565,854	1,697,235	1,638,426	
Miscellaneous		38,356	50,000	50,000	50,000	
	Total Program	1,230,909	1,615,854	1,747,235	1,688,426	
Revenue by Fund:		Actual	Budget	Adopted	Plan	
•		FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	
Tourism Tax Funds		1,230,909	1,615,854	1,747,235	1,688,426	
	Total Program	1,230,909	1,615,854	1,747,235	1,688,426	
Appropriations:		Actual	Budget	Adopted	Plan	
		FY 21/22	FY 22/23	FY 23/24	FY 24/25	
Personal Services Expenses		413,234	447,684	497,235	518,426	
Operating Expenses		765,024	1,068,170	1,150,000	1,150,000	
Capital Expenses		0	100,000	100,000	20,000	
Debt Service		52,651	0	0	0	
	Total Program	1,230,909	1,615,854	1,747,235	1,688,426	