

City of Eustis- Advisory Committee on Economic & Cultural Development

Vision Overview

Purpose and Definition

The City of Eustis Advisory Committee on Economic & Cultural Development will serve as a strategic partner to the City Commission, connecting economic growth with cultural vitality.

The Advisory Committee ensures that Eustis grows stronger, more connected, and more prosperous — a city where economic opportunity and cultural identity work hand-in-hand to secure a vibrant future for generations to come.

The Committee will:

- **Advise** on strategies that promote economic opportunity, cultural enrichment, and community engagement.
- **Connect** business, cultural, civic, and community leaders to align efforts and maximize impact.
- **Recommend** policies, programs, and events that strengthen the city's economy and quality of life.
- **Bridge** government, local businesses, artists, cultural organizations, and residents.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Committee will actively contribute by:

- Supporting cultural events, festivals, and arts programming.
- Encouraging tourism development while protecting community character.
- Advising on grants, partnerships, and sponsorship opportunities.
- Helping shape and promote Eustis' brand and identity through a balance of commerce and culture.
- Reviewing and providing input on architectural design standards to ensure they support economic vitality, cultural identity, and community pride.

Structure

The Committee will represent a cross-section of stakeholders, ensuring broad input and collaboration:

- **Business leaders** – Lake Eustis Area Chamber - local business owners, developers,.
- **Cultural representatives** – artists, arts councils, heritage organizations.
- **Community stakeholders** – nonprofits, neighborhood associations.
- **Government liaisons** – city manager, CRA, planning & zoning, and other key staff.

Connectivity Across Organizations

The Committee will act as a central hub, aligning and coordinating efforts across organizations and initiatives, including:

- **Japanese Cultural Center** – international exchange & cultural diplomacy.
- **America in Bloom** – beautification & community pride.
- **Sports Foundation** – youth engagement, sports tourism, and healthy lifestyle initiatives.
- **African American Heritage Committee and Festival** – honoring heritage and building inclusion.
- **Lake Eustis Area Chamber of Commerce** – business advocacy and regional partnerships.
- **LEAD (Lake Economic Area Development)** – advancing workforce and economic growth.
- **Lake County Tourism** – expanding reach through tourism promotion.
- **International Business Opportunities** – fostering relationships with Mexico, Japan, and the Czech Republic to expand trade, investment, and cultural exchange.

Imagine the collective impact when all of these organizations are aligned, supporting one another, and amplifying their contributions to the City of Eustis.

Strategic Partnerships

- Collaborate with regional institutions such as Lake Tech, Lake Sumter College, UCF, AdventHealth, UF Health.
- Connect Eustis with state, national, and international networks to bring new opportunities, resources, and visibility. Such as Select Florida and Florida Commerce and work with our State Representatives.

Advisory Expertise & Deliverables

The Committee will provide informed input to the City Commission, including:

- Annual reports summarizing recommendations and progress.
- Event calendars integrating economic and cultural activities.
- Strategic plans linking cultural vitality to economic growth.
- Public forums and workshops to capture community voice.
- Research and data to support long-term decision-making

Outcomes for the City of Eustis

- A vibrant and resilient downtown and waterfront.
- Expanded international opportunities positioning Eustis as a regional hub.
- Increased civic pride through festivals, beautification, and cultural exchange.
- A sustainable, connected, and prosperous future where economic growth and cultural identity thrive together.

🌟 Key Lessons for Eustis

- **Start with culture, build toward commerce:** Many of the most successful Sister City programs began with **cultural festivals, education, or arts exchanges**, which then led to trade and business opportunities.
- **Anchor with institutions:** Universities, chambers of commerce, and hospitals often play central roles in making exchanges long-term and impactful.

- **Visibility matters:** Festivals, gardens, and cultural events create *public buy-in* and make the partnership visible beyond government circles.