



Stimulating Job Growth for Okaloosa County

Accomplishments for FY 2015

✓ Facilitating New Jobs and Investment

- Activated 18 new projects for FY 2015
 - Projected Capital Investment – Over \$747K
 - Projected Job Growth – 3,187
 - Conducted 5 site tour visits with consultants and decision-makers
- Announced the competitive expansion of Sun Coast Converters into the Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park reoccupying a 68K SF building that had been vacant for over 5 years. This company received the final award of the Industry Recruitment, Retention and Expansion Fund for the 3 year cycle for a \$1.45M capital investment, creating 6 new jobs and retaining 28 with an average wage of \$46K.
- Announced the competitive expansion of Bay State Cable Ties in Crestview, a \$16.85M capital investment resulting in 40 new jobs and the retention of 100 existing jobs at an average wage of \$36,152. Other project accomplishments include: first application of the County's 2014-2024 EDATE cycle; first official County application for the Expedited Permitting Process; first company to apply for the state's new High Impact Sector Incentive for manufacturing; and the only company eligible in Okaloosa County to extend the use of Enterprise Zone incentives until 2018, which sunsets for the state on December 31, 2015.
- Announced competitive expansion of Fort Walton Machining in Fort Walton Beach, a \$1.5M capital investment resulting in 30 new jobs at an average wage of \$41K. First applicant for the City of Fort Walton Beach's EDATE program.
- Coordinated two separate events in conjunction with the Office of Governor Rick Scott in September 2015 for the announcement of the expansions of Fort Walton Machining and Bay State Cable Ties.
- Supported Lockheed Martin's decision to open hangar operations in the Bob Sikes Airport in the Okaloosa County Industrial Air Park.
- Supported Boeing's decision to expand operations to an 83K SF facility in the Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park.
- Continuing efforts to increase awareness of Florida's Manufacturing Sales and Tax Exemption.

✓ Harnessing Emerging Opportunities

- Targeting suppliers to Airbus and other commercial airplane manufacturers
 - Partnered with the Okaloosa Airports Department in a shared exhibit at the National Business Aviation Association (NBAA) annual convention in Orlando in October 2014.
 - Attended the Airbus Aviation Suppliers Forum in Hamburg, Germany in December 2014.
 - Co-sponsored the Pacific Northwest Aviation Association's Annual Convention in Seattle in February 2015 and undertook a series of meetings with Boeing suppliers located in the Seattle metro area
 - Exhibited at the Montreal AeroMart in March 2015.
 - Partnered with the Okaloosa Airports Department in a shared exhibit at the Aviation Week Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) Expo in Miami in April 2015.
 - Undertook prospecting trips to Southern California (June) and Dallas (September) – two markets with a heavy concentration of aerospace suppliers.
- Targeting the emerging Unmanned Systems sector
 - Continued to advance the development of an Autonomous Vehicle Center (AVC) on the campus of the REEF; utilized grant funds provided from the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF) to assist with pre-development planning and due diligence activities.

✓ **Expanding Community Dialogue**

- Hosted EDC Roundtable breakfast highlighting Okaloosa County's 2015 Centennial through a panel discussion entitled "100 Years of Economic Progress". Sectors featured included military/defense, hospitality/tourism, manufacturing and fishing.
- Hosted high level EDC Roundtable breakfast speakers including Ms. Adrian Slack, senior executive of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (New Orleans branch), and Mr. Bill Johnson, Florida Secretary of Commerce and CEO of Enterprise Florida.

✓ **Enhancing Competitiveness**

- Secured prestigious Florida "First Sites" Certified Park designation for approximately 130 acres located adjacent to the Bob Sikes Airport in Crestview.
- Supported efforts that led to the rezoning of approximately 1,000 acres at Shoal River Ranch in Crestview for industrial use and worked with the landowner to initiate full scale master planning activities.
- Developed new capabilities brochure highlighting participants in EDC's TeCMEN (Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network). The piece is being used to showcase and promote these innovative businesses to potential customers both locally and beyond.

✓ **Supporting Workforce and Talent Development**

- Partnered with CareerSource Okaloosa Walton and the Okaloosa County School District to deliver an innovative program – "Educate the Educators". Designed to educate high school teachers, middle school principals, and high school principals on specific skills needs present in the local area, the program included tours and presentations by local industry.
- Supported the Career and Technical Education Advisory (CTE) Advisory Committee; a multi-disciplinary body created to support the efforts of Northwest Florida State College and the Okaloosa County School District to better align their CTE offerings.
- Provided No-Cost Incumbent Worker Training to businesses participating in the EDC's Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network (TeCMEN)
 - Partnership with CareerSource Okaloosa Walton and UWF; initially established in 2010
 - To date, 37 existing Okaloosa County businesses have benefited, with a total training value of approximately \$323,000 (\$90,575 of which occurred in FY 2015).
 - Expanded program to feature six courses in FY 2015 (prior years only featured one or two)
 - Courses offered included Lean Six Sigma, Project Management Professional (PMP), CMMI, APICS – CPIM, AS 9100 (aerospace certification) and CAPA certification training

✓ **Strengthening the Military Mission**

- Utilized EDC's Defense Support Initiatives (DSI) Committee for direct interface with unit commanders at Eglin AFB, Hurlburt Field, Duke Field, US Navy EOD School, and the US Army 7th Special Forces and Ranger Camp
- Participated in the Northwest Florida Defense Coalition's Washington DC Fly-In in March
- Advocated for military support at the state and federal levels
- Managed a 2015 Florida Defense Reinvestment Grant (DRG) to support DSI activities and industry diversification initiatives
- Continued facilitation of the Tri-County Partnership Initiative (TCPI); designed to assist Eglin and Hurlburt with efforts to lower operating costs / generate revenue through innovative community partnerships
 - Expanded 20+ member advisory board comprised of local leaders and added additional partners
 - Secured a second grant award from the Florida Defense Support Task Force (FDSTF) to support Year 2 TCPI objectives.
 - Coordinated with and supported Eglin-Hurlburt Community Partnership Program (CPP)
 - Represented the community on the three member Eglin-Hurlburt CPP Leadership Committee
 - Hosted a luncheon for key public sector leaders from the Tri-County area designed to better acquaint them with the TCPI / CPP process and opportunities for P4 partnerships / collaboration with area military installations.
 - Conducted a "TCPI 2.0 Workshop" with 50+ attendees designed to generate additional partnership ideas / concepts for consideration. In total, more than 70 ideas were generated.
 - Utilized opportunities afforded at the local, state and national levels to spotlight the successes of the TCPI and the Eglin-Hurlburt Community Partnership Program.
 - Facilitated the execution of six P4 MOUs

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 20, 2015
To: Michael Beedie, Fort Walton Beach City Manager
From: Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County
Subject: Q1 2015 EDC Update

The Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County greatly appreciates our long-standing partnership with the City of Fort Walton Beach and we are pleased to provide the following update for consideration by the Fort Walton Beach City Council. I look forward to answering any questions when I appear before Council on April 28, 2015.

Organizational Update

- The EDC closed out its year-long Investor Campaign on February 27. Dubbed “The Next 25”, the campaign resulted in 39 new private sector investors, 9 private sector investor upgrades and additional funding commitments from Okaloosa County, Crestview, Destin, Fort Walton Beach and Niceville.
- Additional resources are allowing the EDC to expand industry recruitment and retention programs while also supporting the OkaloosaSites.com Buildings & Sites website.

Marketing Initiatives

- Joined Gulf Power, PowerSouth and economic development organizations from Escambia, Santa Rosa, Walton and Bay counties at the Pacific Northwest Aerospace Association’s Annual Conference in Seattle February 10 – 12. Shared funding among our seven organizations was used to achieve the Signature Sponsorship level, which provided us with preferred booth space and an opportunity to address the group of 500 aerospace decision makers each day.
- Traveled to Orlando for a northwest Florida familiarization and networking event geared toward building regional awareness among new Enterprise Florida personnel on March 17.
- Joined forces with Gulf Power and PowerSouth economic development representatives to promote northwest Florida at the Montreal AeroMart April 1 – 2.
- Partnered with the Okaloosa Airports Department to promote our area at the Aviation Week MRO (Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul) Americas Expo in Miami April 14 – 16.
- The EDC’s first Roundtable of 2015 was held on March 31. The event, entitled “Fishhooks, Ferris Wheels and F-35s”, featured a panel comprised of Lt Gen Gordy Fornell (USAF, Ret),

Okaloosa County Commissioner Kelly Windes, Fort Walton Machining CEO Greg Britton and Okaloosa Tourism Development Department Director Ed Schroeder.

Strategic Initiatives

- Supported efforts of the City of Fort Walton Beach and Venture Hive to develop an innovative entrepreneurial accelerator / incubator in the City's CRA.
- Offered Project Management Professional (PMP) certification and training through UWF at no cost to local industries participating in the EDC's TeCMEN group
- Undertook select legislative advocacy geared toward:
 - Reauthorization of the State's Enterprise Zone program
 - Much needed funding for Enterprise Florida to promote Florida to businesses
 - Making the state sales tax exemption on manufacturing equipment permanent
- Spearheaded the Tri-County Partnership Initiative (TCPI), an interdisciplinary board comprised of more than 20 area leaders working in tandem with Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field. The goal of this initiative is to identify and implement specific projects that allow local military installations to reduce costs and/or generate revenue through innovative partnerships with the communities that host them and the private sector.
- Presented Okaloosa County and the tri-county area as a national leader in military / community partnership "best practices" at the Association of Defense Communities Installation Innovation Forum March 15 – 18.
- Coordinated local participation, agenda and briefing papers for the Annual Northwest Florida Defense Coalition Washington D.C. Fly-In April 13 – 15. Designed to advocate for area military installation / mission priorities, this event was attended by 38 individuals from the five county region.
- Worked hand-in-hand with the Okaloosa County Airports Department to submit extensive documentation required to achieve "Florida First Sites" certified industrial park designation for the Bob Sikes Industrial Air Park in Crestview.

Project Activity

The EDC continues to experience steady project activity, with 29 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, eight are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations with three being Fort Walton Beach companies. Of the remaining 21 projects, 11 are considering Fort Walton Beach locations while another two are not yet focused on a specific geographic area of the community. We are especially pleased to report that one project - Project Perform - is nearing announcement, and will be occupying a long-vacant building in the FWB Commerce & Technology Park. The attached graphs provide insight into the specific sectors and numbers of jobs represented within the EDC's current project pipeline.

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 5, 2015
To: Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach
From: Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County
Subject: Q2/Q3 2015 EDC Update

The Economic Development Council of Okaloosa County greatly appreciates our long-standing partnership with the City of Fort Walton Beach and we are pleased to provide the following update for consideration by the Crestview City Council. I look forward to answering any questions when I appear before Council on October 13, 2015.

Organizational Update

- The organization welcomed five new private sector investors (D.W. Armstrong, Sperry Van Ness, First NBC Bank, Venture Hive, J. Jerome Miller, Esq.) during the referenced timeframe and enjoyed two investor upgrades (Bullock Tice, Doolittle Institute).

Marketing Initiatives

- Attended SOFIC (Special Operations Forces Industry Conference) in Tampa May 18-20 in order to gauge potential for future exhibition opportunities.
- Joined partners from around the region including Gulf Power and Walton County EDA in undertaking a Southern California prospecting mission June 1-4. Held individual meetings with a total of six companies expressing initial interest in learning more about the benefits of doing business in northwest Florida. Also hosted a breakfast meeting of the Aerospace and Defense Forum's Orange County chapter, an industry networking group comprised of leading companies and consultants.
- Participated in the Team Florida Marketing Trip to New York City August 3-4. During our two days on the ground, our teams met with more than 40 leading site selection consultants.
- Joined with Santa Rosa County, Bay County and Gulf Power to undertake a prospecting mission to Dallas, TX Sept 29 – Oct 1.
- Developed new informational brochure touting the unique capabilities of Okaloosa County's technology, engineering and manufacturing business cluster.
- The EDC's second Roundtable of 2015 was held on June 26. The event, entitled "*Decoding the Federal Reserve*" featured Ms. Adrienne Slack, Senior Executive at the Federal Reserve Bank in New Orleans.

- The EDC's final roundtable of the year was held on September 10th. The event, entitled "*Charting Florida's Economic Future*" featured Bill Johnson, Florida Secretary of Commerce and President & CEO of Enterprise Florida.

Strategic Initiatives

- Undertook select legislative advocacy geared toward:
 - Reauthorization of the State's Enterprise Zone program
 - Much needed funding for Enterprise Florida to promote Florida to businesses
 - Making the state sales tax exemption on manufacturing equipment permanent
- Spearheaded the Tri-County Partnership Initiative (TCPI), an interdisciplinary board comprised of more than 20 area leaders working in tandem with Eglin AFB and Hurlburt Field. The goal of this initiative is to identify and implement specific projects that allow local military installations to reduce costs and/or generate revenue through innovative partnerships with the communities that host them and the private sector.
- Presented Okaloosa County and the tri-county area as a national leader in military / community partnership "best practices" at the Defense Communities National Summit, held in Washington D.C. June 22-24.
- Nominated Eglin Air Force Base for the 2015 Installation Excellence Award, an award they were honored with at the Defense Communities National Summit.
- Completed the nearly two year site certification process resulting in the "Florida First Sites" certified industrial park designation for the Bob Sikes Industrial Air Park in Crestview.

Project Activity

The EDC is proud of the fact that three projects were announced in the City of Fort Walton Beach during the referenced timeframe. SunCoast Converters, Boeing and Fort Walton Machining are all companies that have committed to additional job creation and capital investment within City limits. Meanwhile, the EDC continues to experience strong project activity, with 23 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, 7 are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations. The EDC is also pleased that 15 of these opportunities were "locally generated" as opposed to projects that come by way of Enterprise Florida and other state and regional partners. The attached graphs provide insight into the specific sectors and numbers of jobs represented within the EDC's current project pipeline.