



# Stimulating Job Growth for Okaloosa County

## 2017 Accomplishments

### ✓ Expanding Community Dialogue

- Hosted Roundtable breakfast - “**New Leadership for a New Age – Education**” featuring Dr. Martha Saunders, President, University of West Florida, and Dr. Devin Stephenson, President, Northwest Florida State College.
- Held the inaugural **TeCMEN Industry Day** with speakers from Triumph Gulf Coast, Boeing, Lockheed Martin, BAE Systems, L3 Crestview Aerospace, DefenseWerx, Florida Makes, PTAC, Eastern Shipbuilding and Airbus.

### ✓ Enhancing Competitiveness

- Partnered with Okaloosa County to secure a **real estate purchase option agreement** for 1665 acres at Shoal River Ranch, strategically located near Crestview with frontage on I-10, Highway 90 and CSX railroad.
- Assisted the City of Fort Walton Beach with efforts to initiate a comprehensive **master planning** process to include improved access, landscaping and signage at the **Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park**.
- Successfully advocated for continued state funding support for **Enterprise Florida** and **Visit Florida**.
- Successfully advocated in support of **Triumph Gulf Coast** legislation resulting in \$300 million in funding support for catalytic infrastructure, education and targeted workforce development projects in northwest Florida.

### ✓ Supporting Workforce and Talent Development

- Partnered with the Hsu Educational Foundation and the Okaloosa County School District to host 20 area **high school students** for interface with manufacturing / technology sector employers at the TeCMEN Industry Day.
- Partnered with University of West Florida to provide eight (8) **no-cost training courses** to companies participating in the EDC’s Technology Coast Manufacturing & Engineering Network (TeCMEN).

### ✓ Strengthening the Military Mission

- Hosted Teran Judd, Director, Community Partnership & Encroachment, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Installations (SAF/IE) for a **best practices review** of the EDC’s Tri-County Community Partnership Initiative (TCPI).
- Undertook targeted **Federal legislative outreach** in support of the modernization / enhancement of the Gulf Range and extending the current moratorium on offshore oil drilling activities in the eastern Gulf of Mexico.
- Collected Resolutions in support of maintaining the **Military Mission Line** from 20 regional partners including County Commissions, Chambers of Commerce and other business support organizations.

### ✓ Promoting Location Opportunities

- Conducted an aggressive **trade show marketing program** directed toward the EDC’s targeted business sectors.
- Partnered with the City of Destin, the Destin Area Chamber of Commerce and Gulf Power to host leading fishing equipment companies for a **familiarization tour** highlighting Destin as a competitive business location.
- Unveiled a new, comprehensive and mobile platform responsive **website** – [www.florida-edc.org](http://www.florida-edc.org) – designed to showcase community assets to growing businesses operating within targeted sectors.
- Developed a TeCMEN **promotional video** highlighting the specific capabilities of businesses operating within Okaloosa’s technology, sectors.

### ✓ Facilitating New Jobs and Investment

- Initiated and assisted 15 new investment projects
  - Projected Capital Investment – \$2.081 Billion
  - Associated New Jobs – 5,286
- Conducted 9 site visits with site consultants and decision makers.
- Supported 2 County and Municipal EDATE incentive applications.

## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** April 5, 2017  
**To:** Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach  
**From:** Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County  
**Subject:** Q1 2017 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 Tuesday, April 11, 2017.

### **Organizational Update**

- The organization welcomed two new investors (Pendulum Services, Stamp Idea Group) and experienced three investor upgrades (Certified Manufacturing, Pioneer Technologies, Sacred Heart Emerald Coast) during the referenced timeframe.

### **Marketing Initiatives**

- Hosted the EDC's first Roundtable Breakfast of 2017 on March 21. The event, entitled "New Leadership for a New Age: Education" spotlighted Dr. Devin Stephenson and Dr. Martha Saunders as the new presidents of Northwest Florida State College and the University of West Florida, respectively.
- Joined forces with Enterprise Florida, Gulf Power and other northwest Florida economic development partners to target prospective aviation / aerospace companies at the Pacific Northwest Aerospace Alliance's annual conference in Seattle February 13 – 15.
- Produced the EDC's 2017 Annual Report (will distribute in person).

### **Strategic Initiatives**

- Partnered with Florida's Great Northwest and economic development organizations from other northwest Florida counties to continue the development of "Northwest Florida Forward – a transformational regional economic development strategy.
- Actively opposed HB 7005, which would effectively eliminate Enterprise Florida as the state's primary economic development organization.
- Supported the passage of HB 7077 by the Select Committee on Triumph Gulf Coast, and ultimately by the Florida House of Representatives.
- Served as a panelist at Governor Scott's Jobs Summit in Orlando on February 2.

- Continued coordination and oversight of the Tri-County Community Partnership (TCPI); a collaborative forum for identifying opportunities for area military installations, communities and the private sector to enter into innovative and cost saving partnerships.
- Attended the Association of Defense Communities' (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum in San Antonio and moderated a panel spotlighting the unique partnership between Okaloosa County Water & Sewer and Eglin AFB which resulted in the construction of the Arbennie Pritchett Reclaimed Water facility and 17 miles of wastewater lines to serve the 7 SFG (A).
- Solicited and collected Resolutions of Support from 21 chambers of commerce and chamber Military Affairs Committees in the tri-county area requesting that the eastern Gulf of Mexico remain protected from oil drilling/exploration.
- Represented CareerSource Okaloosa Walton at the National Association of Workforce Boards in Washington D.C. March 26 – 27.
- The EDC's Defense Support Initiatives (DSI) leadership met with Florida's Congressional delegation and other key staff members regarding the importance of honoring the existing moratorium on oil drilling / exploration in the Eastern Gulf of Mexico and also the need to invest in modernization of the Gulf Range April 3 – 5.

### **Project Activity**

The EDC continues to experience strong project activity, with 24 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, 4 are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations. The EDC is also pleased that 16 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.

## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** August 15, 2017  
**To:** Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach  
**From:** Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County  
**Subject:** Q2 2017 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 Tuesday, August 22, 2017.

### **Organizational Update**

- The organization welcomed 8 new investors (Stamp Idea Group, Enco Electronic Systems, Foster Ventures, Homes & Land, Okaloosa Clerk of Courts, Precision Measurement Inc., Props Craft Brewery and the University of Florida) during the April – July timeframe.

### **Marketing Initiatives**

- Joined forces with Enterprise Florida, Gulf Power and other northwest Florida economic development partners to target prospective aviation / aerospace companies at the MRO Americas trade show in Orlando April 25 – 27 and at the Paris Air Show June 19 – 23.
- Attended the ICAST fishing equipment industry trade event in Orlando July 12 – 14.
- Facilitated community inventory / asset tours with new Gulf Power and Powersouth economic development personnel.
- Undertook extensive planning and coordination activities for the August 29 “TeCMEN Industry Day” – a comprehensive symposium and trade expo taking place at the Emerald Coast Convention Center and designed to highlight the region’s manufacturing , technology and engineering sector.

### **Strategic Initiatives**

- Served on the Fort Walton Beach Commerce and Technology Park Master Plan Bid Evaluation Committee
- Received authorization from the Okaloosa Board of County Commissioners to enter into negotiations with Shoal River Ranch ownership regarding the possibility of a Purchase Option for industrial zoned acreage.
- Secured a State of Florida Defense Reinvestment Grant to support military advocacy and economic diversification initiatives.

- Partnered with Florida's Great Northwest and economic development organizations from other northwest Florida counties to continue the development of "Northwest Florida Forward – a transformational regional economic development strategy.
- Actively opposed HB 7005, which would have effectively eliminated Enterprise Florida as the state's primary economic development organization.
- Supported the passage of HB 7077 by the Select Committee on Triumph Gulf Coast, and ultimately by the Florida House of Representatives.
- Continued coordination and oversight of the Tri-County Community Partnership (TCPI); a collaborative forum for identifying opportunities for area military installations, communities and the private sector to enter into innovative and cost saving partnerships.
- Hosted Teran Judd, Director, Air Force Community Partnership Initiative, with community tours and attendance at the July 25 TCPI Meeting.

### **Project Activity**

The EDC continues to experience strong project activity, with 21 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, 2 are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations. The EDC is also pleased that 11 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.

## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** December 4, 2017  
**To:** Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach  
**From:** Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County  
**Subject:** Q3/Q4 2017 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 Tuesday, December 12, 2017.

### **Organizational Update**

- The EDC welcomed four new investors (AAA Accounting, Gigli Enterprises, Rocky Bayou Christian School, Rita Benz) during the August – November timeframe.
- The EDC held its Annual Officer Installation Reception on October 17. The EDC's FY 2018 Officer Slate features:
  - Mr. Kim Wintner, Alliance Association Management – Chairman
  - Mr. Glenn Scharf, Saltmarsh Cleaveland & Gund – Vice Chairman
  - Ms. Katie Sharon, Okaloosa County Clerk of Courts – Treasurer
  - Ms. Ashley Rogers, Chesser & Barr – Secretary
  - Mr. Lee Lewis, AVCON – Member-at-Large
  - Ms. Kelly Murphy-Redd, Ruckel Properties – Immediate Past Chairman

### **Marketing Initiatives**

- Successfully executed the “TeCMEN Industry Day” – a comprehensive symposium and trade expo – designed to highlight the region’s manufacturing , technology and engineering sector on August 29. Event featured 43 exhibitors and nearly 300 attendees including select Okaloosa County high school students.
- Successfully executed the Destin Fishing Equipment Industry Familiarization Tour Oct 19 – 22. Event was co-sponsored by the City of Destin, the Destin Area Chamber of Commerce, the EDC of Okaloosa County and Gulf Power. FAM Tour attendees represented five different fishing equipment companies and one fishing industry trade publication.

- Exhibited at the NDIA Air Armament Symposium Oct 31 – Nov 1 held at the Emerald Coast Convention Center.
- Unveiled the EDC's new on-line presence – [www.florida-edc.org](http://www.florida-edc.org)

### **Strategic Initiatives**

- Partnered with Florida's Great Northwest and economic development organizations from other northwest Florida counties to continue the development of "Northwest Florida Forward – a transformational regional economic development strategy.
- Continued coordination and oversight of the Tri-County Community Partnership (TCPI); a collaborative forum for identifying opportunities for area military installations, communities and the private sector to enter into innovative and cost saving partnerships.

### **Project Activity**

The EDC continues to experience strong project activity, with 20 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, 2 are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations. The EDC is also pleased that 11 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.