



STIMULATING JOB GROWTH FOR OKALOOSA COUNTY

2018 Accomplishments

Expanding Community Dialogue

- ✓ Hosted Roundtable breakfast - **"Military-Friendly Doesn't Just Happen: A Conversation with Florida's Defense Support Partnerships"** featuring the Florida Defense Support Task Force, Florida Defense Support Contractors Association, Florida Defense Alliance, Defense Support Initiatives and Veterans Florida.
- ✓ Held the 2nd Annual **TeCMEN Industry Day**, where more than 300 attendees enjoyed an expo hall, keynote presentations, industry panels and educational workshops.

Enhancing Competitiveness

- ✓ Partnered with Okaloosa County to apply for and secure a **\$1.5 million grant award** from Triumph Gulf Coast for water and sewer Infrastructure to the 10,000 acre Shoal River Ranch Gigasite.
- ✓ Assisted the City of Fort Walton Beach with a comprehensive **master planning** process for the **Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park**.
- ✓ Supported educational efforts for the successful **Half Cent Sales Tax** referendum, providing vital funding for community infrastructure and public safety.
- ✓ Partnered with Gulf Power, PowerSouth and Enterprise Florida to host **Opportunity Showcase Luncheons** spotlighting the **Shoal River Ranch Gigasite** to site selectors in Atlanta and Dallas.

Supporting Workforce and Talent Development

- ✓ Partnered with the Hsu Educational Foundation and the Okaloosa County School District to host **22 area high school students** for interface with manufacturing / technology sector employers at the TeCMEN Industry Day.
- ✓ Partnered with University of West Florida to provide nine (9) **no-cost training / industry certification courses** to companies participating in the EDC's TeCMEN committee.
- ✓ Unveiled a **Talent Attraction Portal** on the EDC website complete with job listings and community information. Utilized geo-targeting technology to promote local job opportunities to Emerald Coast visitors.

Strengthening the Military Mission

- ✓ 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.
- ✓ Spearheaded a successful community educational campaign supporting the adoption of **Amendment 9** prohibiting oil drilling in state waters.
- ✓ Hosted an **Enhanced Use Lease (EUL) workshop** designed to highlight the process for proposing development opportunities on select underutilized, non-excess Federal lands.

Facilitating New Jobs and Investment

- ✓ Initiated and assisted **16** new investment projects with Projected Capital Investment of **\$45 million** and approximately **1,507** associated new jobs.
- ✓ Conducted **19 site visits** with site consultants and decision makers.
- ✓ Supported 1 County and Municipal **EDATE incentive application** and established an Incentive Policy Document with Okaloosa County Staff.
- ✓ Announced the competitive expansion of **Beast Code LLC** into the Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park. This company will create 40 new jobs paying 174% of the average wage in Okaloosa County and \$401,000 in capital investment.
- ✓ Announced the competitive expansion of **Allegiant Air LLC** at the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport. The company will create 65 new jobs and invest \$49 million to establish a year-round base.

MEMORANDUM

Date: April 16, 2018
To: Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach
From: Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County
Subject: Q1 2018 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 24 2018.

Organizational Update

- The EDC welcomed 5 new investors (Avalex, NAI Halford, Okaloosa County Airports System, Terracon, Hilton Garden Inn) during the January – March timeframe.

Marketing Initiatives

- The EDC's new website – www.florida-edc.org – was recognized with a Silver ADDY award by the American Advertising Federation. Also of note, new website features including an interactive county map with zooming capabilities for industrial parks have been added.
- Joined forces with Santa Rosa County Economic Development and Gulf Power to target aerospace industry prospects at the Pacific Northwest Aviation Association's Annual Conference in Lynwood, WA February 13 – 15
- Hosted the EDC's first Roundtable Breakfast of 2018 on March 13. Entitled "*Military Friendly Doesn't Just Happen: A Conversation With Florida's Military Support Organizations*", the event featured a panel comprised of representatives from Veterans Florida, the Florida Defense Support Task Force, the Florida Defense Alliance, the Florida Defense Contractors Association and the EDC's own Defense Support Initiatives committee.
- Held targeted meetings with eight aviation-related prospects at the Aviation Week MRO Trade Expo in Orlando April 10 – 12
- Designed and produced the EDC's 2017 Annual Report

Strategic Initiatives

- Participated in the annual Northwest Florida Defense Coalition's Washington D.C. Fly-In February 6 – 7. Meetings held with Pentagon officials and Congressional leaders focused

on preservation of the Military Mission Line against growing threats from oil exploration / drilling and enhancement of the Gulf Range.

- 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 was pleased to share in the February 13th announcement made by Governor Rick Scott and Allegiant Air (aka "Project True Blue") regarding Allegiant's decision to make the Destin-Fort Walton Beach Airport a permanent base, which will result in the location of at least two new Airbus aircraft at VPS and the creation of 66 high wage jobs with an average wage of \$65,000. This was a great community success, and one that required collaboration among multiple parties including Visit Florida, Enterprise Florida, the Okaloosa County Airports Department, the Okaloosa County Tourism Development Department and the Okaloosa County Board of County Commissioners and the EDC.

Meanwhile, the EDC continues to experience strong project activity, with 18 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, 3 are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations. The EDC is also pleased that 9 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: October 15, 2018
To: Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach
From: Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County
Subject: Q2–Q3 2018 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 October 23, 2018.

Organizational Update

- The EDC welcomed 6 new investors (Emerald Coast Science Center, Haiseal Timber, Intuitive Research & Technology, MAG Aerospace, McNeil Hotel Group and Applied Systems Engineering, Inc.) joined during the April – September timeframe.
- The EDC installed new leadership on October 4 including:
 - Chairman – Glenn Scharf, Saltmarsh Cleaveland & Gund
 - Vice Chair – Katie Sharon, BBVA Compass Bank
 - Treasurer – Ashley Rogers, Chesser & Barr
 - Secretary – Lee Lewis, AVCON Inc.
 - Member-at-Large – Ron Whitfield, ResortQuest by Wyndham

Marketing Initiatives

- Undertook a geo-targeting social media strategy designed to reach visitors to the Emerald Coast who might be good candidates to relocate here for available job opportunities
- Participated in the Team Florida mission to the Farnborough International Air Show and held targeted meetings with more than 20 eight aviation-related prospects
- Hosted the 2nd Annual TeCMEN Industry Day at the Emerald Coast Convention Center on August 23. The event drew 318 attendees representing more than 120 companies and featured a “Technology Showcase / Expo Hall” with 45 exhibitors.

Strategic Initiatives

- Launched a new “Talent Attraction Portal” on the EDC’s website – www.florida-edc.org – with the objective being to spotlight higher wage job STEM-related job vacancies with Okaloosa County businesses
- Supported Okaloosa County’s successful \$1.5M Triumph Gulf Coast application to support water/sewer line extensions east on US Highway 90 to Shoal River Ranch
- Developed a logo and brand for the “Shoal River Ranch Gigasite”
- Partnered with Enterprise Florida, Gulf Power and Powersouth to undertake the first “Shoal River Ranch Opportunity Showcase” in Atlanta on September 26 - 27 targeting site selection consultants.
- 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
- Participated in the Eglin Space Deficit Task Force, established to identify facility solutions that could remedy space shortages being encountered by both Eglin as well as by private defense contractors that support the warfighter.

Project Activity

The EDC was very pleased to join together with Governor Rick Scott and Enterprise Florida to announce the location of Beast Code in the Fort Walton Beach Commerce and Technology Park on September 18. Made possible with EDATE and cash grant support from the City of Fort Walton Beach, the company has committed to the creation of 40 new jobs at an average salary of \$70,000, which equates to 174% of Okaloosa County’s average wage. This is in addition to the existing 37 employees currently employed by the company.

Meanwhile, 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: January 11, 2019
To: Michael Beedie, City Manager, City of Fort Walton Beach
From: Nathan Sparks, Executive Director, EDC of Okaloosa County
Subject: Q4 2018 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 appearing before the Fort Walton Beach City Council to speak to these at a time of your choosing.

Organizational Update

- The EDC welcomed 4 new investors (First National Bank of Decatur County, Strand Hospitality Group, Wintner Enterprises and Murphy-Redd Marketing) during the October – December timeframe.

Marketing Initiatives

- Participated in at northwest Florida exhibit and sponsorship collaborative for the Hamburg Aviation Forum November 5 – 7 in Hamburg, Germany. The Forum is a leading event for senior aerospace industry executives and afforded the opportunity to hold private meetings with more than a dozen prospective businesses.
- Exhibited at the 44th NDIA Air Armament Symposium held at the Emerald Coast Convention Center November 7 – 8.
- Hosted a Site Consultant “Opportunity Showcase” luncheon focused on Okaloosa’s 10,000 acre Shoal River Ranch Gigasite in Dallas, Texas December 12 – 13.

Strategic Initiatives

- Supported educational efforts for the successful Half Cent Sales Tax referendum, providing vital funding for community infrastructure and public safety.
- Spearheaded a successful community educational campaign supporting the adoption of Amendment 9 prohibiting oil drilling in state waters.
- 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

- Participated in the Eglin Space Deficit Task Force, established to identify facility solutions that could remedy space shortages being encountered by both Eglin as well as by private defense contractors that support the warfighter.

Project Activity

The EDC continues to experience strong project activity, with 22 active projects currently in the pipeline. Of these, 2 are expansions of existing Okaloosa County operations. The EDC is also pleased that 14 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.