



COMMUNITY, ECONOMY, & LEADERSHIP



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT of
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

www.floridajobs.org/competitiveflorida

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	OVERVIEW	1
II.	HISTORY AND BACKGROUND	3
	a. Statutory Authority	3
	b. Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development	4
	c. Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants	4
	d. Leveraging Technical Assistance Funds to Advance Economic Development	4
	e. Feedback Workshops	5
	f. Pilot Communities	6
	g. Holistic Community Economic Development	8
III.	COMPETITIVE FLORIDA PARTNERSHIP PROCESS	9
	a. Competitive Analysis	9
	b. Community Asset Mapping Exercise and Report	9
	c. Community Conversations	10
	d. Action-Oriented Economic Development Strategy	10
	e. Resource Matching	11
	f. Continued Collaboration	11
	g. Community Network	12
IV.	SUCCESS STORIES & COMMUNITY PROFILES	13
	a. Pilot Communities	13
	b. 2014-2015 Partnership Participants	15
	c. 2015-2016 Partnership Participants	16
	d. Exploring Alternative Forms of Partnership	17
	e. Competitive Florida Partnership Success Stories	18
V.	NEXT STEPS	20

APPENDICES

- A.** Statutory Authority
- B.** Division of Community Development Strategic Plan
- C.** 15 Ways to Make Florida Communities More Competitive
- D.** Competitive Florida Partnership Expectations
- E.** Competitive Analysis
- F.** Competitive Analysis Sample: City of Starke
- G.** Asset Mapping
- H.** Asset Mapping Sample: Gadsden County
- I.** Community Conversations Best Practices
- J.** Economic Development Strategy Sample: City of Webster
- K.** Economic Development Strategy Requirements
- L.** Resource Matching Sample: Town of White Springs
- M.** Select News Clips from Competitive Florida Communities

OVERVIEW

Communities that take action to build and enhance their local economy while staying true to what makes them unique have a competitive advantage. Seizing that advantage, the Competitive Florida Partnership helps a community value



those assets that makes them special and challenges them to set realistic goals for advancing their economic development vision. A community that participates in this technical assistance program is committed to innovative strategies that promote partnerships, community design, and a viable economy. This partnership will create a network of vibrant communities and passionate leaders who gain ideas on how to reach their goals through the success and lessons learned from their peers. A community that makes a formal commitment to a Competitive Florida Partnership receives enhanced support from the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) as well as statewide recognition and celebration of their successes along the way.

Asset-based economic development is a bottom-up approach that focuses on developing and promoting existing local resources to strengthen the local economy. This approach emphasizes the economic advantages of a rural community's tangible and intangible assets and identifies how these can be leveraged into sustainable economic growth and prosperity. Assets in a community may include, but are not limited to: individuals and human capital; associations and voluntary networks; political advocates; historical and cultural resources; natural landscapes (including renewable and nonrenewable material resources); financial assets; the built environment including transportation networks, communications facilities, utilities, public facilities, and commercial buildings; and institutions such as schools, hospitals, and government agencies. DEO works with partnership communities to identify and market these assets and facilitate promotional opportunities to bring economic development to their community.

The Competitive Florida Partnership was designed by the Division of Community Development to carry out the mission of DEO utilizing available resources. This initiative is one of the many ways that DEO continues to challenge existing paradigms and change the way state government operates and interfaces with communities and other partners.

The Competitive Florida Partnership was designed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Tie the programs and staff of the Division of Community Development together through a coordinated effort to increase local competitiveness.
2. Foster long-term partnerships with local governments, sister state agencies, and other partners.
3. Help participating communities develop the capacity to implement their own vision by leveraging their unique assets.

Based on the positive feedback received from participating and interested communities, state agency partners, and other participating organizations, DEO will continue to seek ways to enhance this technical assistance opportunity and help implement community action plans. Currently, communities receive additional planning funds in the second year of the partnership to initiate projects included in their strategy.

In the future, it is the hope that more resources and tools from other agencies will be integrated into the technical assistance process and that community action plans will be viewed as strategically crafted work plans providing additional support for acquiring state and federal funding to implement projects.

In addition to the individual community focus of the Competitive Florida Partnership, DEO also emphasizes the regional partnership network created through interaction, mentoring, and collaboration among the participating communities.

By sharing experiences, resources, and best practices, communities in the Competitive Florida network provide cross-support outside of the DEO technical assistance partnership, providing long-term benefits well beyond the two funded years of the program. As more communities are selected into Competitive Florida, this network will create regional ties and strengthen the communities across rural areas of the state through their mutual investment in economic development.

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

Statutory Authority

In 2011, the Florida Legislature passed the Community Planning Act which made significant changes to the state's growth management laws. The passing of this Act included recognizing the need for innovative planning and development strategies to promote a diverse economy and vibrant rural and urban communities, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas.¹ The Legislature directed DEO to help communities find creative solutions for fostering vibrant, healthy communities, while protecting the functions of important state resources and facilities. DEO, in partnership with other appropriate state and regional agencies, is advised to use various means to provide direct and indirect technical assistance with available resources. **Appendix A** contains the full reference to Chapter 163.3168, Florida Statutes as well as other statutory directives that support the creation of the Competitive Florida Partnership.

Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development

In addition, the 2011 Legislative Session tasked DEO with developing a five-year strategic plan to guide the future of Florida's economy. This planning effort was one step in the development of an integrated statewide vision for addressing economic development, land use, infrastructure, environmental stewardship, talent development, and community development over a 50-year period.² Among other requirements, the Legislature called for a plan that contained specific provisions for the stimulation of economic development and job creation in rural areas and midsize cities and counties of the state, including strategies for rural marketing and the development of infrastructure in rural areas.³ The resulting statewide strategic plan is grounded in the vision statement, "Florida will have the nation's

Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development

Goals

1. *Lead the nation in global competitiveness as the location for business, investment, talent, innovation, and visitors.*
2. *Lead the nation in economic growth and prosperity.*
3. *Lead the nation in quality of life.*

Objectives

1. *Improve and sustain employment in Florida.*
2. *Foster opportunities for prosperity for all Floridians.*
3. *Grow Florida Businesses.*
4. *Expand Florida's global commerce.*
5. *Increase Florida's attractiveness to workers, residents, and visitors.*

¹ Section 163.3168, Florida Statutes

² Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development

³ Section 20.60(5)(a)(4)c, Florida Statutes

top performing economy and be recognized as the world's best place to live, learn, plan, work, and do business.” This vision is guided by several goals and objectives called out on the previous page.

Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants

Since 2011, the Legislature has provided an annual allocation of grant funding in the General Appropriations Act for technical and planning assistance. These funds are used to assist counties and municipalities in developing economic development strategies, meeting the requirements of the Community Planning Act, addressing critical local planning issues, and promoting innovative planning solutions to challenges identified by the local government applicants. Through a competitive proposal solicitation process, one-year grants are awarded to local governments to complete planning projects that will further the goals of their community. Past projects include:

- Local Comprehensive Plan updates based on economic development objectives,
- Economic Diversification Strategies,
- Land Development Regulation updates,
- Neighborhood Plans,
- Urban Design Master Plans, and
- Other local planning and development strategies.

Leveraging Technical Assistance Funds to Advance Economic Development

DEO took inventory of the various resources within the Division of Community Development and other areas of the agency and evaluated how their resources could be used to spur economic development activities in these small communities that face significant challenges. Based on this inventory, the Division of Community Development created a Strategic Plan to use its resources in a concerted effort to carry out the mission of the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development. **Appendix B** includes a summary of the Division of Community Development Strategic Plan.

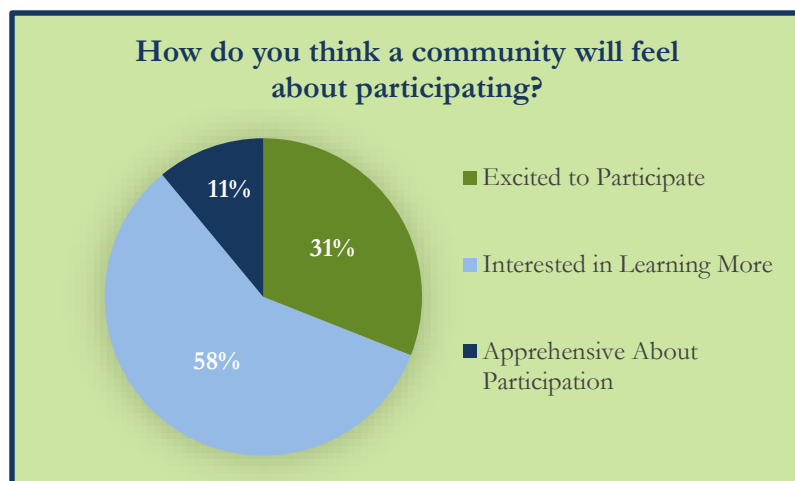
In conjunction with grant funding, the Division of Community Development offers direct technical assistance to local governments through staff expertise. The Division employs certified grant managers, trained meeting facilitators, community planners with advanced degrees, and staff with significant experience

in the unique challenges surrounding economic development in rural areas. Recognizing the direction of the Legislature to, “use various means to provide direct and indirect technical assistance within available resources,”⁴ DEO began to consider ways to leverage grant funding with staff expertise targeting local government projects focused on economic development. DEO recognized that this type of hands-on technical assistance may be most meaningful in communities with staffing capacity challenges, specifically rural areas.

In addition to staff expertise and grant funding, the Division of Community Development serves as the coordinating agency for the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). REDI is a statutorily authorized effort involving more than 17 state and regional agencies and organizations that assist rural communities in solving problems which affect their fiscal, economic, or community viability.⁵

Feedback Workshops

In line with the direction of the legislature and strategic planning documents, DEO staff prepared a draft outline of a way to provide better technical assistance to communities around the state, branded as the Competitive Florida Partnership. Recognizing that rural communities often do not have the same level of capacity for economic development as their urban counterparts, the approach focused on how to best serve rural counties and cities.



Feedback from participants at 2013 Regional Workshops held in rural communities around the state.

DEO first announced this concept at the 2013 Economic Development Boot Camp in Okeechobee, Florida. A preliminary outline was presented and participants were asked a series of questions to better understand how the effort could be crafted to fit their needs. It was also at this boot camp that the concept of asset mapping was introduced to Florida communities. Asset mapping is a field exercise that evaluates a community’s on-the-ground assets and brainstorms ways those assets can be enhanced to spur economic development. Based on feedback received on the initial draft of the Competitive Florida Partnership and the

⁴ Section 163.3168(3), Florida Statutes

⁵ Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes

popularity of asset mapping, DEO revised its approach. The newly formed outline of the Competitive Florida Partnership was presented to rural communities in workshops around the state. Again, professionals from economic development, community planning, workforce development, and other backgrounds were asked to provide candid feedback to help shape the program. From these workshops, DEO gained many insights. As shown in the chart above, approximately 89% of participants expressed excitement to participate in a program such as this or were interested in learning more.

When asked what role DEO and other state staff could play to help with planning and implementing local economic development activities, the following feedback was received:

- Let stakeholders and communities know about funding resources and provide funding through grants.
- Provide economic development training for communities: educate the public, educate elected officials, and build the capacity of local staff.
- Provide in-person assistance and build a relationship with the community.
- Recognize and embrace the difference between rural and urban character. Retain the unique character of each community.
- Provide assistance to communities in evaluating and identifying assets, moving towards statewide asset mapping.
- Build a program that provides clear access to important statewide programs and resources.
- Develop a toolbox with a clearinghouse of coordinated information, resources, and advice.
- Position this program and DEO as a facilitator that connects existing programs, resources, and active organizations. Utilize coordination and partnership without redundancy.

Pilot Communities

Following the workshops, DEO made further changes to the approach in response to what local governments expressed as important to them and in 2014 implemented a pilot technical assistance program in four communities. Initially funded within the budget of DEO's Division of Community Development office for local planning technical assistance, the Competitive Florida Partnership provides communities

with deliverables consistent with the Community Planning Technical Assistance grants. Additionally, DEO identifies technical assistance opportunities from other state agencies, helping communities perform a competitive assessment of assets and develop a local economic development strategy that defined how those assets can be leveraged for local economic growth.

Based on proposals submitted to DEO, four Florida communities were selected for the Competitive Florida pilot effort – the City of Port St. Joe, the Town of White Springs, the City of Newberry, and DeSoto County. DEO worked with each of these communities to identify local assets and develop unique plans for utilizing such assets. The following outcomes were achieved in each of the communities:

- A list of major assets was developed for each community.
- A team of state and regional partners, coordinated through the Rural Economic Development Initiative, visited community assets and provided recommendations on how assets could be enhanced. The feedback was captured, along with a community economic analysis, in a report for each community.
- Community conversations targeting residents and business owners were held to determine community priorities for economic development and growth.
- Based on the information gathered through recommendations from state and regional partners, community conversations, and other existing economic development efforts, each community created or enhanced an economic development strategy, specifying projects and actions that will help them reach their goals.
- DEO staff identified resources available to implement the projects identified in each community's economic development strategy, captured in a resource matching report.
- DEO Leadership visited each community to recognize their economic development successes and accomplishments. Leadership also met with local business owners and community leaders to discuss needs and priorities.
- Each community prepared a case study that details economic development successes in the community and how they accomplished priority projects.

As members of the Competitive Florida Network, communities that participate in the Partnership will continue to work with DEO to review progress and provide lessons learned that can be utilized by other Florida communities wishing to undertake this bottom-up approach.

Holistic Community Economic Development

In a 2008 report by the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center entitled “Small Towns, Big Ideas: Case Studies in Small Town Economic Development,” researchers conclude that in small towns especially, community development is economic development.

DEO also recognizes that economic development is more than just the attraction of new jobs and industries – especially in small communities across the state where the fundamentals are needed in order to build the foundation for success. In addition to this, DEO recognizes that many cities and counties value the small town charm of their communities and find value in enhancing what is already within their borders.

It is for these reasons that the Competitive Florida Partnership advocates for a comprehensive approach to economic development that encompasses the following fifteen elements that aim to increase community competitiveness, for an extended explanation see **Appendix C: Take a Whole Community Approach to Planning and Implementation; Work to Retain Current Businesses and Support their Expansion;**

Attract New Businesses and Industries; Build Human Capacity and Develop the Workforce; Encourage Innovation and Entrepreneurship; Create and Preserve Sense of Place and Important Resources; Build Community Leadership; Improve Resiliency to Disasters; Provide Quality Education; Support Neighborhood District Revitalization; Encourage Commercial District Revitalization; Increase the Availability of Affordable Housing for the Workforce; Provide and Promote Recreational Opportunities; Ensure the Availability of Quality Healthcare Facilities; and Promote Sustainable Building and Economic Development Practices.

Small Towns, Big Ideas: Case Studies in Small Town Economic Development

If community development – compared with economic development – is generally considered to include a broader set of activities aimed at building the capacity of a community, then these case studies demonstrate that capacity-building and other strategies typically associated with community development are analogous with actions designed to produce economic outcomes. This is especially true, it seems, when these efforts are included as parts of a comprehensive package of strategies designed to address a community’s core challenges and opportunities. For example, in [the City of Ord, Nebraska], a broad-based and inclusive approach that included leadership development, youth entrepreneurship and philanthropy enhanced the community’s capacity to take on more traditional economic development projects, such as recruiting an ethanol facility (with dozens of new jobs) into the jurisdiction. Further, communities that incorporate economic and broader, longer-term, community development goals stand to gain more than small towns that take a piecemeal approach (North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center).

COMPETITIVE FLORIDA PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

The Competitive Florida Partnership process, while always an engaging effort, is most intensive during the first year. Communities are challenged to prepare action-oriented economic development strategies within a short period of time and then work hand-in-hand with DEO and other state agencies to begin to move forward with the steps needed to take action through plan implementation. **Appendix D** contains an in-depth review of the process through the first year of the Competitive Florida Partnership and **Appendix E** includes Competitive Florida expectations for DEO and each community.



There are nine elements of a Competitive Florida Community's first year that both begins and ends with community outreach.

Competitive Analysis

All communities that participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership receive a Competitive Analysis prepared by DEO Staff in the Division of Community Development and Bureau of Labor Market Statistics. This analysis uses local capacity data gathered by the community as well as the Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application. The competitive analysis aims to provide a comprehensive, quantitative assessment of the existing conditions and developing trends within the community and local



Representatives from DEO, the Department of State and Town of White Springs visit a historic asset in the community.

economy, as well as a comparison to the workforce region, the state of Florida, and the nation as a whole. For further explanation on the data within the competitive analysis document, see **Appendix F**. The City of Starke competitive analysis has been included as an example in **Appendix G**.

Community Asset Mapping Exercise and Report

DEO also facilitates an asset mapping exercise in each Competitive Florida Partnership Community. The community first develops a list of unique tangible assets, places that can be visited. A team of

representatives from DEO and other partnering agencies, coordinated through REDI, travel to the community for a day. **Appendix H** further defines the asset mapping process and outcomes for the Competitive Florida Communities. The Gadsden County asset mapping report has been included in **Appendix I** as an example. The information provided in the report is intended to serve as a brainstorming tool to support the development or update of the community's economic development strategy.



Asset mapping team members reconvene to brainstorm recommendations in the City of Port St. Joe.

Community Conversations

For a community's economic development strategy to be effective, it must be the collective vision of the community and not just a select few. Recognizing this necessity, communities that participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership are encouraged to use creative methods for gathering input from members of the community. The partnership advocates for community conversations or public meetings that involve more opportunities for participants to talk rather than listen to presentations from government officials.

Appendix J addresses best practices recommended for community conversations.

Action-Oriented Economic Development Strategy

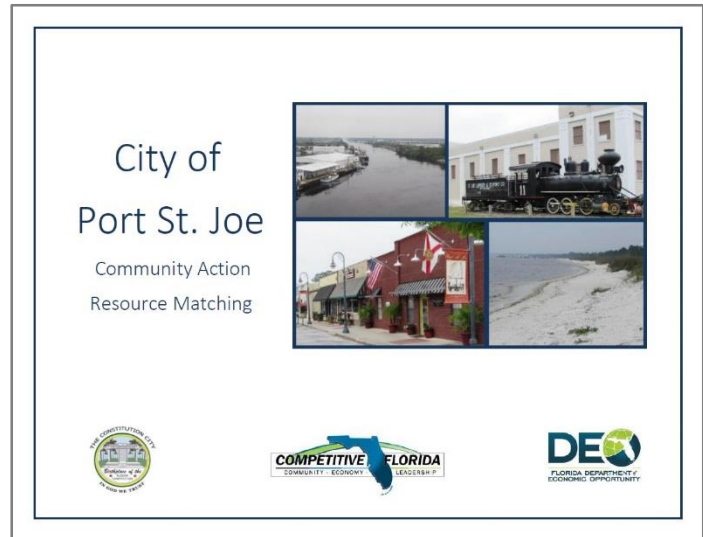
The Competitive Florida Partnership advocates for an action-oriented economic development strategy that guides long-term decision-making and investment in the community. There are three main sources of information that will help guide the development of this strategy: 1) Competitive Analysis, 2) Asset Mapping Reports, and 3) Community Conversations. The Economic Development Strategy for the City of Webster can be found in **Appendix K** and a list of the components communities are required to address in their strategy is included in **Appendix L**.



Resource Matching

After a community completes their economic development strategy it is sent to DEO staff to help match potential resources with each action or project identified in the plan. Representatives from all state agencies engaged in REDI review the action plans and brainstorm agency resources that may be helpful to the community. DEO staff compile a report listing funding opportunities, contacts, guidance, and applicable examples from other communities. The resource matching report prepared for the Town of White Springs has been included in **Appendix M** as an example. This list of

potential funding opportunities, contacts, and resources serves as a starting point for Competitive Florida Partnership communities to use when implementing their action plan. DEO is careful to caution communities that although potential funding resources may be identified for actions, funding is not guaranteed.



DEO staff, in cooperation with the Rural Economic Development Initiative, prepare a resource matching report for each community.

Continued Collaboration

It is often the case that the needs of a community align closely with one specific state agency or entity. The state agency representatives who meet community officials through the asset mapping exercise will often set up follow-up meetings with specific communities to provide details on the resources that they may have to help a community move forward and provide direction on how to access those resources. For example, the City of Port St. Joe identified many different improvements that they would like to make in their downtown historic district, including alternative transportation opportunities. Florida Department of Transportation representatives arranged a follow-up meeting to discuss potential pedestrian and bicycle pathways with city officials and



DEO and Department of State representatives conducted a follow-up meeting with the City of Port St. Joe to discuss the Florida Main Street Program.

DEO staff, including an overview on grant funding that may be available to help them move forward. In addition, the Department of State sent a team of individuals to the City of Port St. Joe to discuss the Florida Main Street Program as well as the process to apply for historic preservation funding.

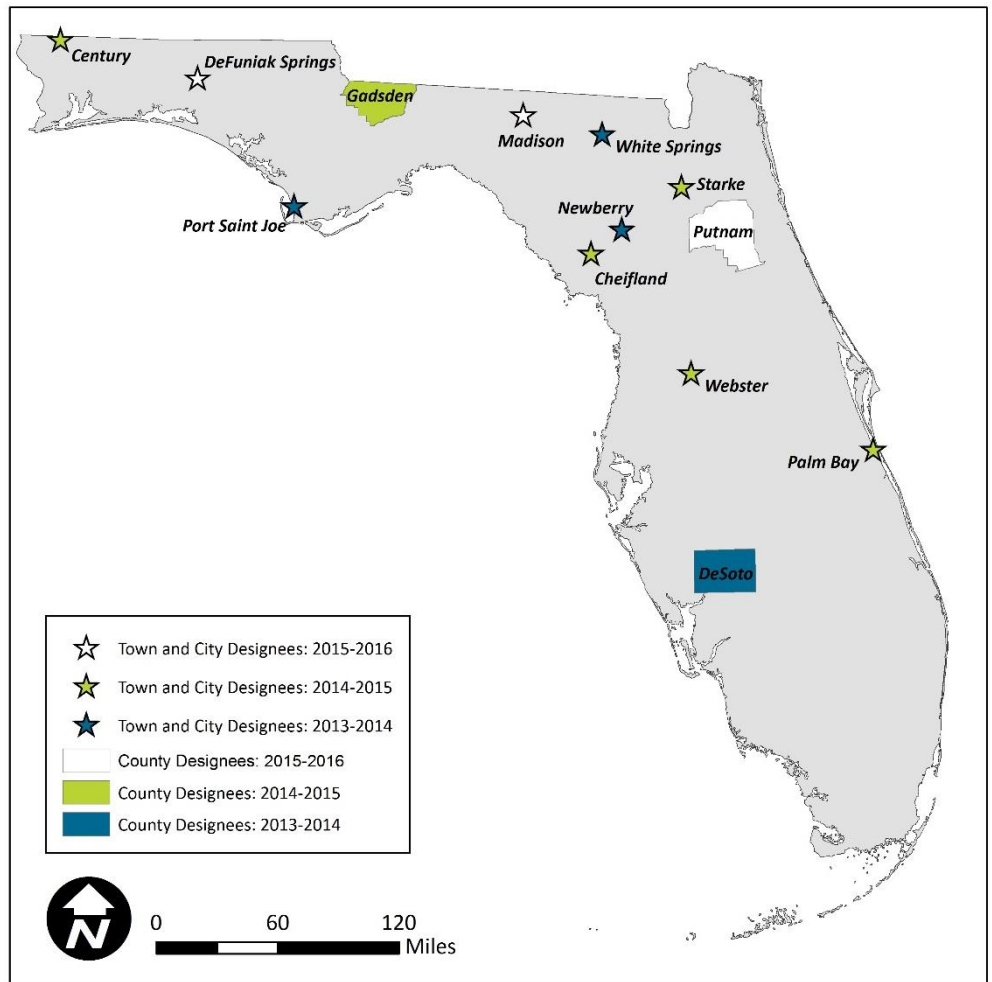
Community Network

On an annual basis, leaders from communities participating in the Competitive Florida Partnership will meet to network and exchange ideas on challenges and opportunities. These meetings will take place in one of the participating communities and include guest speakers to share information on current topics of interest, tours of local successes, and deep discussions about current economic development challenges faced by rural communities and strategies to overcome these challenges. The intent of this meeting is to recognize that the state government does not have all of the answers and often the best ideas or approaches come from collaborative thinking with likeminded individuals. These meetings will help to create bonds between the champions in each of our communities so that they begin to look to each other as resources and team members.

SUCCESS STORIES & COMMUNITY PROFILES

Pilot Communities

The **Town of White Springs** expressed concern in its Competitive Florida proposal over major job loss in the area, with more layoffs anticipated. Nestled on the Suwannee River, the town was once a major tourist destination in Florida with the presence of the historic White Sulfur Springs. Through their efforts with the Competitive Florida Partnership, White Springs has worked to diversify the local economy with a focus on ecotourism. Home to the Suwannee Bicycle Association and the annual Florida Folk Festival at Stephen Foster Folk



Culture Center State Park, and located along both the Florida Trail and the Suwannee River Wilderness Trail, the town is rich with recreational opportunities. The primary obstacle identified was a lack of lodging for visitors. During the second year of the Partnership and through assistance from the Competitive Florida Partner Network, the Town of White Springs partnered with the University of Florida on the design of eco-friendly lodging and the Suwannee River Water Management District conveyed property to the town for the development of these new accommodations. This will provide both river and trail access, sharing the natural beauty that the Town has to offer.

The **City of Port St. Joe** entered the Competitive Florida Partnership with a focus on the development of their port as an economic catalyst in the city and surrounding area. Located along the beautiful St. Joseph Bay, the city is recognized for its charming business district just blocks from the waterfront, complimented by a network of waterfront parks and trails and historic assets such as the Port Theater and the nearby Cape

San Blas Lighthouse. In addition to the promising trade opportunities that could result from the development of the port, the City of Port St. Joe continues to see major opportunities for growth in tourism. In recent months the city has received the necessary initial permits to dredge and reopen the Port of Port St. Joe and has relocated the Cape San Blas Lighthouse into its waterfront park system. Through partnerships formed in part by Competitive Florida, they hope to receive grant funding for the restoration of the Cape San Blas Lighthouse through the Department of State 2017 Special Category Grant for Historical Resources, and are currently also working to secure funding needed to upgrade the municipal sewer and water system to support economic growth in their business district.

The **City of Newberry** is rooted in its agricultural history but has seen diversification with the establishment and growth of manufacturing businesses in recent years. Often labeled as a bedroom community to Gainesville, with many of its residents working and spending their money there, Newberry joined the Competitive Florida Partnership eager to identify ways to attract jobs and commerce that they were seeing go elsewhere. One of the city's assets is its affordable, ready-to-use industrial buildings and sites. With a major talent pool located in Gainesville, Newberry is seeking to bring some of that talent to the community in the form of new businesses. The city has also made significant investments in recreational facilities with the development of Easton Newberry Sports Complex and Champions Park, both of which host regional sporting events year-round, but the city loses business to Gainesville due to a lack of lodging options in the community. In an effort to attract new businesses and additional lodging opportunities, the city utilized its second year in Competitive Florida to develop a comprehensive marketing and branding strategy, including a multi-media presentation, development of a website, and design of print materials.

DeSoto County was the only county to serve as a pilot in the first year of the Competitive Florida Partnership. In 2004, Hurricane Charley caused significant damage to DeSoto County and the surrounding region. In an effort to guide the redevelopment of the area, the county developed a long-term redevelopment plan in partnership with FEMA that identified projects that would help the community recover and diversify the economy in the future. The county used this plan as a jumping off point for the Competitive Florida Partnership effort to determine what had been completed and to reevaluate economic development priorities 10 years later. Through a series of community conversations, the county sought meaningful feedback on local priorities. This feedback, in addition to analysis conducted by economic development experts, helped to inform their economic development strategy. The county worked in their second year to design landscaping for important corridors that serve as gateways into their community to address public and economic development priorities. They see this as a win-win that will both enhance

community pride and appeal to potential investors who will see this as a positive sign of investing in their own community.

2014-2015 Partnership Participants

The **City of Webster** possesses a unique and established economic history in Florida, boasting the largest flea market in the state, as well as the birthplace of the Parson Brown Orange. Through the Competitive Florida Partnership, the city has continued their ongoing effort to build economic development in the community, while nurturing the agricultural roots for which the community is known. Webster would like to continue using the Competitive Florida Partnership process to preserve their history, while simultaneously developing a more diverse economic base. The community supports Webster's vision, as cooperative partnerships with local stakeholders and agencies have begun to take root and future strategies include maintaining a community stakeholder group and establishing a local volunteer base for projects. The city will be using their second year Competitive Florida technical assistance funds to develop a master plan, including complete streets, in-fill development standards, historic areas overlay, and zoning code updates.



City of Webster Officials and DEO Staff kick off the Competitive Florida Partnership.

The **City of Starke's** first year in Competitive Florida demonstrated their commitment to building partnerships and constructing a countywide vision for economic development. Their Envision Bradford 2023 process, initiated in 2013, involved approximately 75 community leaders and stakeholders from the entire community and resulted in a list of recommendations and next steps. Starke is using the Competitive Florida Partnership process to make progress on some of these next steps by identifying their assets, developing an economic development strategy to move them forward, and targeting resources to carry out actions identified. One example of a key partner in this process for Starke is their relationship with Santa Fe College as a key player in both workforce development and business incubation in the region. Their commitment to the City of Starke's success is strong and may serve as a catalyst for moving forward and a best practice for rural communities. Going into their second year, Starke will use Competitive Florida technical assistance funds to focus on their downtown event capacity through the design and engineering of an additional parking lot and public restrooms to be used during downtown festivals.

The **City of Chiefland** was selected to participate in the second round of the Competitive Florida Partnership program among 18 local government applications. In the first year of the Partnership, the City of Chiefland mapped their assets and completed an economic analysis to determine how to best market the community to interested industries. Their close proximity to the City of Newberry and Town of White Springs is beneficial to the community as they have drawn from other community experiences through the Competitive Florida Partnership network. In their second year, Chiefland intends to revise their comprehensive plan to align with their newly drafted Economic Development Strategy as well as investigate design ideas to beautify their downtown and the US-27 corridor.

Gadsden County was selected to participate in the second round of the Competitive Florida Partnership program because of the County's drive to form partnerships. Through the Gadsden County Development Council, a non-profit economic development organization, Gadsden County has worked hard to develop partnerships with all municipalities, the local chamber, the regional workforce board, the school board, the regional planning council, and many local businesses. This strong collaboration benefitted the county in the first year of the Competitive Florida Partnership to get a baseline analysis of economic conditions and inventory competitive assets. Entering into their second year, Gadsden County will perform a tourism strategic site inventory on two locations within the county as well as three additional projects, including updating their website to address marketing and branding in their community.



Gadsden County representatives celebrate their designation with DEO Staff.

2015-2016 Partnership Participants

The **City of Madison** was designated by VISIT FLORIDA as one of the “Best Little Towns in Florida,” and their Competitive Florida proposal boasts about their variety of assets including natural, historic, and cultural attractions. The city demonstrated a strong level of engagement through 25 letters of support for the Competitive Florida Partnership from local business owners, elected officials, and the religious community, among others. With more than 40 named stakeholders on the steering committee, the City of Madison clearly indicated their commitment and enthusiasm for furthering economic development in its community through Competitive Florida. They hope to use this opportunity to clarify their vision, re-focus their major priorities, and develop working partnerships with state agencies committed to sustainable economic development in rural areas while maintaining the small town charm of their community.

The **City of DeFuniak Springs** established in their proposal that they would be an active member of the Competitive Florida network due to having already established a committed Economic Development Committee that is poised for action and comprised of business owners and managers, education professionals, and the city manager. As a previously interested community, DeFuniak Springs spent a year determining its imperatives, generating public conversations, and securing funds for special projects, prior to their proposal in 2015. DeFuniak Springs is looking forward to working with their stakeholders and the Competitive Florida network as their economic development efforts are taken to the next level.

Putnam County is located in North Central Florida near several major cities, offering prospective businesses and individuals a variety of attractions and opportunities for growth. With a myriad of natural resources outlined in their Competitive Florida Partnership proposal, such as the St. Johns River, Rodman Reservoir, bike trails, and Ravine Gardens State Park, Putnam County is a beautiful place to live and work, but currently lacks an economic development strategy to capitalize upon those resources. Their proposal focused on these attributes, including employment opportunities, as well as their extensive community engagement in the form of 20 letters of support for the program, indicating that Putnam County is energized, motivated, and committed to improving economic development within their community.

Exploring Alternative Forms of Partnership

In addition to the eleven communities discussed above, the Town of Century and City of Palm Bay are also included in the Competitive Florida Partnership. These cities followed an alternative process based on the unique needs of each community. DEO assisted the Town of Century as they implemented a newly created economic development strategy and the City of Palm Bay served as a pilot community for applying enhanced technical assistance in areas that are not rural. While the Competitive Florida Partnership's focus is on rural areas, nearly half of the communities that expressed interest in participating in the partnership were not rural in nature. This brought to light the need to explore how to fulfill this need as well.

The **Town of Century** is a small, rural town located in northern Escambia County on the Alabama border. The town's proposal expressed that they have experienced a myriad of socio-economic issues leading to economic stagnation. However, with assets such as a 140-acre master planned industrial/commerce park, four-lane access to two major interstates, four-lane access to the Port of Pensacola as well as immediate rail access, there are opportunities to increase the community's competitive advantage. In partnership with the University of West Florida Haas Center, the town recently completed an economic development strategic

plan. This planning process, similar to that of the Competitive Florida Partnership, resulted in 50 actionable items to be implemented over the next five years. Therefore, the Town of Century requested assistance with implementation of their plan as opposed to development. DEO assisted in identifying economic development action items for implementation and provided funding for those items to be successfully completed by June 2015. Century is now part of the Competitive Florida Partnership Network and can share lessons learned from their experiences.

The **City of Palm Bay** is an urban area located in Brevard County that desired to create an economic development strategy for the Bayfront Village area of their Community Redevelopment Agency. To date, the city, which has a population of more than 100,000 people, does not have a center or gathering area for its citizens. Given the location of the Bayfront Village along Palm Bay, the namesake of the city, the community believes that the development of this location will create a sense of place, providing the community an identity. Through the Competitive Florida Partnership, the city evaluated the economic feasibility of various visions and from thoughtful engagement with the community, determined a vision for the area going forward. Once the strategy was in place, DEO helped the city identify resources to move it forward, building momentum behind the project. DEO's partnership in an urban location helped with program development and the lessons learned improved the planning of how Competitive Florida resources may be best allocated in urban and suburban locations moving forward.

Competitive Florida Partnership Success Stories

The Competitive Florida Partnership has brought together many different units within DEO to work together on a common goal. As an agency that is five years old, it has helped to bring together teams and resources that historically have not worked closely together. The Competitive Florida Partnership also helped rebrand the way DEO provides assistance to local governments' community and economic development issues focusing on proactive engagement, rather than reactive regulatory action.

One of the goals of Competitive Florida was to unite the bureaus that exist within the Division of Community Development. The teams had a common focus of assisting local governments and people at the community scale, however were not always involved in the process at the same time. For example, the community planning staff focuses on reviewing local comprehensive plan and development while the community revitalization staff provides funding to implement projects identified in community plans. Assistance is also offered through Community Action Agencies, offering a hand up to members of the community and helping them become self-sufficient. Finally, the economic development staff focuses on a

broad range of financing and loan programs for businesses as well as provides technical and grant support to rural communities. Through the Competitive Florida Partnership, DEO holistically assesses the needs of the community and better matches resources to areas that have a significant need. This is an opportunity to both market our programs and engage at the community and individual scale more often to determine if there are ways we could make improvements to better serve our partners.

In addition to recalibrating the focus of the Division of Community Development, the Competitive Florida Partnership has encouraged interaction between programs in other parts of the agency. For example, the Division of Workforce Service's Bureau of Labor Market Statistics is currently providing quantitative information on existing conditions and developing trends to communities through the Florida Research Economic Information Database Application (FREIDA). FREIDA is a free online tool that compiles and analyzes a host of community labor market data and other information. Through Competitive Florida, DEO brings that information into the community and provides click-steps in the Competitive Analysis report so that it can be modified in the future. In addition, the Competitive Florida Partnership encourages communities to think about how their goals may align with the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development, managed by the Division of Strategic Development.

Through Competitive Florida, DEO and other close partner agencies such as CareerSource and Enterprise Florida, Inc. can partner on providing assistance to communities and model the relationships that exist at the state level for successful economic development. In return, this encourages local governments to work hand-in-hand with their regional and local economic development organizations and regional CareerSource Boards as valuable partners with resources to implement local economic development strategies.

Competitive Florida Partnership Communities have received positive attention in local newspapers and other outlets. This is an important part of community successes because it brings positive attention to local efforts. A few select clips have been included in **Appendix N** to showcase local successes.

NEXT STEPS

The Competitive Florida Partnership, now in its third year, is expected to continue to grow. DEO hopes to advance its work to increase community competitiveness in rural areas around the state. In addition, the agency hopes to enhance the program by adding new ways to assist communities in the future. Below are some of the ways DEO hopes to further the effort in the future.

- **Continue to adapt program based on feedback from participating communities.** All communities participating in the Competitive Florida Partnership are encouraged to be candid with DEO staff to help them identify ways to improve the program to better meet local needs. While significant improvements were made based on experiences with pilot communities, DEO recognizes that this is an evolving initiative and will continue to enhance the program along the way to ensure that it is responsive to the ever-changing needs of communities.
- **Continue to build partnerships.** In order to broaden the knowledge base brought to communities through the Competitive Florida Partnership and increase the availability of resources, DEO will continue to reach out to partnering state and federal agencies as well as non-profit and private organizations. By building a stronger network of support agencies, participating communities will have extensive access to new information and a better understanding of the resources offered by various partners.
- **Expand technical assistance offerings.** DEO will continue to build the professional and technical expertise of its staff and explore assets inside and outside of the Division of Community Development to meet the needs expressed by communities. This may include offering training on best practices for business incubation and entrepreneurial support in rural areas or helping communities understand how to tailor building codes and other policies to further its goals and priorities.
- **Build Competitive Florida Partnership Community Work Plans.** DEO wishes to further the action-oriented nature of the economic development strategies prepared through the Competitive Florida Partnership. This may be through existing grants or other funding opportunities and will be complied through a transparent proposal process. By demonstrating that the proposed project connects to a broader economic development strategy or goal, the community can show that the

long-term benefits of projects will result in a return on investment larger than the current or immediate impact.

- **Explore technical assistance opportunities for urban areas or downtowns.** While the Competitive Florida Partnership was originally developed with rural communities in mind, there has been significant interest from urban and suburban areas. In response to this interest, DEO piloted a modified enhanced technical assistance approach in the City of Palm Bay. The agency will continue to explore this model and determine alternative ways to become a resource for urban areas revitalizing downtowns and community centers.
- **Connect the goals of communities with the regulatory frameworks in place.** Communities that undertake large visioning and planning efforts sometimes develop patterns and designs that do not reflect the desires expressed in their strategies. This can often be attributed to regulatory structures such as land development codes and permitting processes that were not revised in light of the new direction. DEO hopes to better explore this linkage and assist communities that wish to align their regulatory framework with their economic development strategies.

Appendix A

Statutory Authority

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

The following statutes guide different aspects of the development and implementation of the Competitive Florida Partnership, as referenced in the report.

Planning Innovations and Technical Assistance

Section 163.3168, Florida Statutes:

(1) The Legislature recognizes the need for innovative planning and development strategies to promote a diverse economy and vibrant rural and urban communities, while protecting environmentally sensitive areas. The Legislature further recognizes the substantial advantages of innovative approaches to development directed to meet the needs of urban, rural, and suburban areas.

(2) Local governments are encouraged to apply innovative planning tools, including, but not limited to, visioning, sector planning, and rural land stewardship area designations to address future new development areas, urban service area designations, urban growth boundaries, and mixed-use, high-density development in urban areas.

(3) The state land planning agency shall help communities find creative solutions to fostering vibrant, healthy communities, while protecting the functions of important state resources and facilities. The state land planning agency and all other appropriate state and regional agencies may use various means to provide direct and indirect technical assistance within available resources. If plan amendments may adversely impact important state resources or facilities, upon request by the local government, the state land planning agency shall coordinate multiagency assistance, if needed, in developing an amendment to minimize impacts on such resources or facilities.

(4) The state land planning agency shall provide, on its website, guidance on the submittal and adoption of comprehensive plans, plan amendments, and land development regulations. Such guidance shall not be adopted as a rule and is exempt from s. 120.54(1)(a).

State of Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development

Section 20.60(5)(a)4, Florida Statutes:

4. Develop a 5-year statewide strategic plan. The strategic plan must include, but need not be limited to:

- a. Strategies for the promotion of business formation, expansion, recruitment, and retention through aggressive marketing, international development, and export assistance, which lead to more and better jobs and higher wages*

for all geographic regions, disadvantaged communities, and populations of the state, including rural areas, minority businesses, and urban core areas.

- b. The development of realistic policies and programs to further the economic diversity of the state, its regions, and their associated industrial clusters.*
- c. Specific provisions for the stimulation of economic development and job creation in rural areas and midsize cities and counties of the state, including strategies for rural marketing and the development of infrastructure in rural areas.*
- d. Provisions for the promotion of the successful long-term economic development of the state with increased emphasis in market research and information.*
- e. Plans for the generation of foreign investment in the state which create jobs paying above-average wages and which result in reverse investment in the state, including programs that establish viable overseas markets, assist in meeting the financing requirements of export-ready firms, broaden opportunities for international joint venture relationships, use the resources of academic and other institutions, coordinate trade assistance and facilitation services, and facilitate availability of and access to education and training programs that assure requisite skills and competencies necessary to compete successfully in the global marketplace.*
- f. The identification of business sectors that are of current or future importance to the state's economy and to the state's global business image, and development of specific strategies to promote the development of such sectors.*
- g. Strategies for talent development necessary in the state to encourage economic development growth, taking into account factors such as the state's talent supply chain, education and training opportunities, and available workforce.*

Rural Economic Development Initiative

Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes:

(1)

- (a) Recognizing that rural communities and regions continue to face extraordinary challenges in their efforts to significantly improve their economies, specifically in terms of personal income, job creation, average wages, and strong tax bases, it is the intent of the Legislature to encourage and facilitate the location and expansion of major economic development projects of significant scale in such rural communities.*
- (b) The Rural Economic Development Initiative, known as "REDI," is created within the department, and the participation of state and regional agencies in this initiative is authorized.*

(2) *As used in this section, the term:*

- (a) *“Catalyst project” means a business locating or expanding in a rural area of opportunity to serve as an economic generator of regional significance for the growth of a regional target industry cluster. The project must provide capital investment on a scale significant enough to affect the entire region and result in the development of high-wage and high-skill jobs.*
- (b) *“Catalyst site” means a parcel or parcels of land within a rural area of opportunity that has been prioritized as a geographic site for economic development through partnerships with state, regional, and local organizations. The site must be reviewed by REDI and approved by the department for the purposes of locating a catalyst project.*
- (c) *“Economic distress” means conditions affecting the fiscal and economic viability of a rural community, including such factors as low per capita income, low per capita taxable values, high unemployment, high underemployment, low weekly earned wages compared to the state average, low housing values compared to the state average, high percentages of the population receiving public assistance, high poverty levels compared to the state average, and a lack of year-round stable employment opportunities.*
- (d) *“Rural area of opportunity” means a rural community, or a region composed of rural communities, designated by the Governor, which has been adversely affected by an extraordinary economic event, severe or chronic distress, or a natural disaster or that presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.*
- (e) *“Rural community” means:*
 - 1. *A county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.*
 - 2. *A county with a population of 125,000 or fewer which is contiguous to a county with a population of 75,000 or fewer.*
 - 3. *A municipality within a county described in subparagraph 1. or subparagraph 2.*
 - 4. *An unincorporated federal enterprise community or an incorporated rural city with a population of 25,000 or fewer and an employment base focused on traditional agricultural or resource-based industries, located in a county not defined as rural, which has at least three or more of the economic distress factors identified in paragraph (c) and verified by the department.*

For purposes of this paragraph, population shall be determined in accordance with the most recent official estimate pursuant to s. 186.901.

- (3) *REDI shall be responsible for coordinating and focusing the efforts and resources of state and regional agencies on the problems which affect the fiscal, economic, and community viability of Florida’s economically distressed rural communities, working with local governments, community-based organizations, and private organizations that have an interest in the growth and development of these communities to find ways to balance environmental and growth management issues with local needs.*

- (4) *REDI shall review and evaluate the impact of statutes and rules on rural communities and shall work to minimize any adverse impact and undertake outreach and capacity-building efforts.*
- (5) *REDI shall facilitate better access to state resources by promoting direct access and referrals to appropriate state and regional agencies and statewide organizations. REDI may undertake outreach, capacity-building, and other advocacy efforts to improve conditions in rural communities. These activities may include sponsorship of conferences and achievement awards.*
- (6)
- (a) *By August 1 of each year, the head of each of the following agencies and organizations shall designate a deputy secretary or higher-level staff person from within the agency or organization to serve as the REDI representative for the agency or organization:*
- 1. The Department of Transportation.*
 - 2. The Department of Environmental Protection.*
 - 3. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.*
 - 4. The Department of State.*
 - 5. The Department of Health.*
 - 6. The Department of Children and Families.*
 - 7. The Department of Corrections.*
 - 8. The Department of Education.*
 - 9. The Department of Juvenile Justice.*
 - 10. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.*
 - 11. Each water management district.*
 - 12. Enterprise Florida, Inc.*
 - 13. Workforce Florida, Inc.*
 - 14. VISIT Florida.*
 - 15. The Florida Regional Planning Council Association.*
 - 16. The Agency for Health Care Administration.*
 - 17. The Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS).*

An alternate for each designee shall also be chosen, and the names of the designees and alternates shall be sent to the executive director of the department.

- (b) *Each REDI representative must have comprehensive knowledge of his or her agency's functions, both regulatory and service in nature, and of the state's economic goals, policies, and programs. This person shall be the primary point of contact for his or her agency with REDI on issues and projects relating to economically distressed rural communities and with regard to expediting project review, shall ensure a prompt effective response to problems arising with regard to rural issues, and shall work closely with the other REDI representatives in the identification of opportunities for preferential awards of program funds and allowances and waiver of program requirements when necessary to encourage and facilitate long-term private capital investment and job creation.*
- (c) *The REDI representatives shall work with REDI in the review and evaluation of statutes and rules for adverse impact on rural communities and the development of alternative proposals to mitigate that impact.*
- (d) *Each REDI representative shall be responsible for ensuring that each district office or facility of his or her agency is informed about the Rural Economic Development Initiative and for providing assistance throughout the agency in the implementation of REDI activities.*

(7)

- (a) *REDI may recommend to the Governor up to three rural areas of opportunity. The Governor may by executive order designate up to three rural areas of opportunity which will establish these areas as priority assignments for REDI as well as to allow the Governor, acting through REDI, to waive criteria, requirements, or similar provisions of any economic development incentive. Such incentives shall include, but are not limited to, the Qualified Target Industry Tax Refund Program under s. 288.106, the Quick Response Training Program under s. 288.047, the Quick Response Training Program for participants in the welfare transition program under s. 288.047(8), transportation projects under s. 339.2821, the brownfield redevelopment bonus refund under s. 288.107, and the rural job tax credit program under ss. 212.098 and 220.1895.*
- (b) *Designation as a rural area of opportunity under this subsection shall be contingent upon the execution of a memorandum of agreement among the department; the governing body of the county; and the governing bodies of any municipalities to be included within a rural area of opportunity. Such agreement shall specify the terms and conditions of the designation, including, but not limited to, the duties and responsibilities of the county and any participating municipalities to take actions designed to facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the area, as well as the recruitment of new businesses to the area.*
- (c) *Each rural area of opportunity may designate catalyst projects, provided that each catalyst project is specifically recommended by REDI, identified as a catalyst project by Enterprise Florida, Inc., and confirmed as a catalyst project by the department. All state agencies and departments shall use all available tools and*

resources to the extent permissible by law to promote the creation and development of each catalyst project and the development of catalyst sites.

- (8) *REDI shall submit a report to the department on all REDI activities for the previous fiscal year as a supplement to the department's annual report required under s. 20.60. This supplementary report must include:*
- (a) A status report on all projects currently being coordinated through REDI, the number of preferential awards and allowances made pursuant to this section, the dollar amount of such awards, and the names of the recipients.*
 - (b) A description of all waivers of program requirements granted.*
 - (c) Information as to the economic impact of the projects coordinated by REDI.*
 - (d) Recommendations based on the review and evaluation of statutes and rules having an adverse impact on rural communities and proposals to mitigate such adverse impacts.*

Appendix B

Division of Community Development Strategic Plan

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

In 2013, DEO began to rethink how to tie together the resources of the Division of Community Development to create a state of distinctive communities ready to compete in a global marketplace. In order to carry out the mission of the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development, a plan was created for the Division that contained the following four strategies:



Strategy One: Foster Community Competitiveness. In order to continue to provide the quality of life desired by our communities, communities must be prepared to compete for jobs by cultivating their own unique assets to sustain a distinctive edge. DEO will help foster an environment that provides long-term economic growth without compromising the community’s cultural and environmental attributes that bestow economic success.

Goals:

- Make Florida an attractive investment through appropriate management of land uses, infrastructure, and natural resources.
- Promote a built environment that attracts economy-enhancing individuals.
- Integrate economic development with community planning and development.
- Improve the connections between rural and urban Florida.
- Provide tools to make rural communities competitive.

Strategy Two: Partner with Other Entities. The Division strengthens its position by seeking out collaboration opportunities to enhance common goals. Our planning processes ensure that interested parties are able to participate. We strengthen established relationships while creating new ones.

Goals:

- Cultivate professional relationships.
- Encourage broad participation in the planning and development process.
- Eliminate obstacles to collaboration.
- Leverage the strengths of other organizations.

- Be an active participant with regional and local entities.

Strategy Three: Be a Visible Resource. As a trusted resource, the Division will educate the leaders and citizens of our communities on planning and development issues. DEO will be immersed in the communities served to better understand their needs. We will actively engage all levels of the community by utilizing an effective multimedia strategy.

Goals:

- Promote an informed community.
- Enhance the Division's community presence.
- Communicate through appropriate media for targeted audiences.
- Lead the discussion on community competitiveness.
- Understand the needs of communities.

Strategy Four: Build a Reputation for Excellence. The Division of Community Development provides knowledge-based customer service and strives to be the respected planning and development leader in the state. We will recruit and train a highly-skilled staff that is rounded in professionalism and customer service. We will establish a culture that challenges existing paradigms.

Goals:

- Create a culture of effective compliance and monitoring.
- Reward creativity and calculated risk-taking.
- Prioritize customer service.
- Promote successes to the public.
- Provide predictability, fairness, and effectiveness through simple and consistent processes.

This strategic plan served as the foundation for the Competitive Florida Partnership and spurred the early internal brainstorming efforts on how the partnership might best serve communities around the state.

Appendix C

15 Ways to Make Florida Communities More Competitive

15 WAYS TO MAKE FL COMMUNITIES COMPETITIVE

The Competitive Florida Partnership advocates for a holistic approach to job creation that goes beyond recruitment of new businesses and industries. For this reason, the components listed below should be considered when determining what to include in your economic development vision and strategy.

There are many actions a community can take to attract new industry and keep the ones they currently have, while working to build partnerships and encourage innovative community design. In the future, you'll be able to visit our website for further guidance, tips and tools on each of the topics listed below.

Take a Whole Community Approach to Planning and Implementation.

Arguably one of the most important aspects of community development and increasing competitiveness is having a long-term vision that lays out future development priorities and actions with which to plan for improved economic development. In addition, it is vital for a community to develop or participate in a countywide economic development organization that serves as the lead agency for coordinating future projects in the community's surrounding area. DEO recommends that the community view their local comprehensive plan as a tool for promoting economic development.

Work to Retain Current Businesses and Support their Expansion.

Historically, up to 80 percent of net new job growth comes from the expansion and enhancement of existing businesses. For this reason, it is important that communities support existing businesses and give them the tools they need to grow their businesses and explore new opportunities.

Attract New Businesses and Industries.

A new business or industry in a community can not only increase the number of jobs but can also work to diversify the economy. A diverse economy is more resilient to the ups and downs experienced by all communities.

Build Human Capacity and Develop the Workforce.

It's important to ensure that those in need of jobs are ready to enter the workforce. Programs that work towards building human capacity can help to reduce unemployment rates by increasing the skills of the labor pool and take steps to end the cycle of multi-generational poverty.

Encourage Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

When developing strategies for economic development communities may overlook one of the most important community assets: local entrepreneurs. There is evidence that small businesses generate 75% of the net new job growth in the US (SBDC). Communities that foster the growth of these individuals and encourage innovation are likely to be more competitive. In fact, communities are unlikely to capture the “big fish,” a major industrial facility, unless their local entrepreneurs are succeeding (LCN).

Create and Preserve Sense of Place and Important Resources.

The local economy in Florida communities is often driven and supported by natural, cultural and historical resources that make it unique place. It’s important to prioritize and preserve these local assets to ensure they continue to add value to the community.

Build Community Leadership.

Successful communities are built by passionate leaders who love their hometown and want to see amazing things happen. Communities can do things to support these champions and foster the development of new local leadership along the way.

Improve Resiliency to Disasters.

Coastal storms and other hazards are part of the way of life in Florida. By taking steps to increase disaster resiliency, communities can ensure that local government services, businesses and the overall economy can rebound quickly and efficiently after a disaster. Promoting hazard mitigation techniques to residents and business owners can also decrease the amount of damage to structures and impact to the local economy from future disasters.

Provide Quality Education.

Our schools are training the next generation of members of the local workforce. Excellent K-12 and post-secondary educational opportunities help improve the ability of future generations to enhance the local economy. In addition, they act as an attractive feature for businesses looking for a new location.

Support Neighborhood District Revitalization.

Safe neighborhoods where people can live, shop, work and play are an important feature to any community wishing to lure in new opportunities. Supporting neighborhood district revitalization draws

upon the understanding that efforts led by the community members themselves result in great places that are self-sustained due to community leadership having a stake in the outcome.

Encourage Commercial District Revitalization.

Commercial district revitalization efforts, such as those often associated with the Main Street Program can breathe life into downtown corridors that may otherwise be suffering. In communities with declining downtown or commercial centers, visioning efforts driven by community and business leaders can help a community retain current businesses and attract new opportunities to important town centers.

Increase the Availability of Affordable Housing for the Workforce.

The availability of housing that is priced appropriately for the industries a community is trying to attract or retain is key element of enhancing the ability of a community to grow its economy. Communities should explore grant opportunities and planning strategies that promote affordable housing for the workforce.

Provide and Promote Recreational Opportunities.

Communities should prioritize quality of life factors that make it an attractive place to live, work and play. Recreational opportunities are not only essential for the promotion of a destination community, but also provide a competitive advantage when trying to attract new businesses and industries.

Ensure the Availability of Quality Healthcare Facilities.

Access to quality healthcare facilities is vital to the community growth. Infrastructure such as hospitals, senior care and specialized medical practices can help support a growing population of employees. Furthermore, these facilities are essential for part-time residents wishing to locate to your community. Programs that promote opportunities to age-in-place also encourage lifelong commitments to an area.

Promote Sustainable Building and Economic Development Practices.

Economic development and community planning practices should think ahead to consider future vulnerabilities and take into consideration practices to reduce energy consumption and promote adaptation to changing climates through the promotion of green building and other sustainable practices.

Appendix D

Competitive Florida Program Framework

COMPETITIVE FLORIDA PARTNERSHIP PROCESS

DEO engages communities on a regular basis. Staff with the Division of Community Development continue to develop relationships with local leaders through the comprehensive plan update process, various grant application processes, the Waterfronts Florida Program, the Rural Economic Development Initiative, and other programs and opportunities. DEO starts a conversation with the community about how they might increase their community competitiveness through the existing ways we interact with individuals. This includes the following:

- *Comprehensive Plan Update Process* – All cities and counties are required to examine their local comprehensive plan every seven years. DEO staff will send out a short self-assessment and will act as community advocates to help the community determine if they could benefit from incorporating this into their update.
- *Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application process* – Communities regularly meet with staff in an effort to get funding to complete large economic development-related projects. DEO staff will encourage the communities to complete the short self-assessment as part of a conversation about ways to increase their competitiveness.
- *Community Assessment of Community Action Agencies* – Every three years a Community Action Agency must complete an assessment of their area, highlighting needs that help build human capacity. Staff may suggest this program as a way to tackle those needs in a holistic manner.
- *Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) process* – When a community comes to REDI for assistance, it may be appropriate to see if the assistance we offer we could try to help them in a way that advances their Community Competitiveness scoring.
- *Small Business Development Assistance* – When economic development organizations or councils come to staff for assistance, we may encourage them to take part in this program to holistically accomplish their goals.
- *Community Planning Technical Assistance Grants* – DEO staff encourages communities to use technical assistance grants to participate in the process or achieve their goals.
- *Local Disaster Recovery Support* – DEO staff often provide support to communities recovering from economic disasters. It may be appropriate to use this framework to address economic recovery.

Outreach to Communities

If a community wants to know more about participating in a Competitive Florida Partnership, DEO will spend time getting to know their needs and answer any questions that they have about Competitive Florida Communities. During this process, a Division of Community Development Planner serves as the DEO Coordinator for the effort.

An important part of economic success is having a plan that lays out where a community is headed and what actions are needed to take to get there. One question asked of communities prior to proposal submittal is, “Does your community already have a clearly defined holistic vision for economic development with actionable projects listed to accomplish its goals?” If so, DEO will work with the community to implement that vision. If there is no clear comprehensive vision, the first step is to update or create this strategy. DEO will work with the community to evaluate the existing strategy and determine if improvements are needed.

Proposal Development

DEO accepts proposals to participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership from counties and municipalities on an annual basis. The proposal must include the following components:

- **Letter of Request.** A Letter of Request that details what the community hopes to achieve through the Competitive Florida Partnership as well as what makes them a good fit for the technical assistance opportunity.
- **Economic Development Strategy Review.** A review of their existing economic development strategy or other plan that guides economic development in their community, using a self-assessment crosswalk prepared by DEO.
- **Economic Development Stakeholder Group/Steering Committee.** A list of current members within the community’s economic development stakeholder list or steering committee. If the community doesn’t have a steering committee, they must provide a list of individuals and organizations they plan to engage to guide the effort.
- **Letters of Support to Demonstrate Partnerships.** Recognizing that successful economic development efforts require partnerships, the community must demonstrate buy-in from many different organizations. At a minimum, cities and counties must demonstrate that they

will be working in partnership with one another regardless of which entity is taking the lead on the effort. They must also show a strong partnership with the local economic development organization(s) in their community.

Communities are encouraged to include letters of support from the following organizations:

1. Community Action Agency,
2. Regional CareerSource Board,
3. County School Board,
4. Regional Planning and Economic Development Organizations,
5. Local Business Owners, and
6. Any other organizations or entities deemed appropriate by the community.

Proposals are reviewed and communities are selected based on how well they demonstrate communitywide support for comprehensive economic development. Selected communities will enter into a grant agreement with DEO and be expected to take on certain tasks

Once approved, DEO helps communities organize a kick-off effort where the community will be invited to get engaged in the process. DEO pulls together an internal team of staff that works closely with the community based on the request for technical assistance. The community will build a local team of champions and kick-off the effort with a celebration to energize community leaders about the effort.

Understanding that it is important to set achievable goals with timeframes for completion, the community prioritizes and groups the actions into clusters that make sense and identifies benchmarks to demonstrate successful points. Once the benchmarks are set, it is time to take action! Along the way, the community reviews their progress and will choose new actions to maintain momentum. Through webinars, in-person meetings and other means, communities can share their success stories and accomplishments with other communities working to increase their competitive advantage. The goal is to create a network of vibrant communities and passionate leaders who gain ideas on how to reach their goals through peer-to-peer engagement.

Next Steps

DEO recognizes that Florida's communities have different needs and each path will be unique. The communities decide which activities make sense for them and begin to build their scope for the Competitive Florida Partnership effort. Elements which are part of the first year, and potentially addressed in the second year, are listed below:

- **Map Community Assets.** As a first step in the Partnership, the community will identify their assets. This may include, but is not limited to: natural and working landscapes (including coastlines and working waterfronts), local institutions, existing infrastructure, historical and cultural resources, industry clusters, and human capital. Communities will rate themselves and determine where they need to improve. They will also identify the things that make them special as well as any current needs in the community that might lead to future economic opportunities. In addition, the community will evaluate their local comprehensive plan's ability to capture the vision for the community in terms of design for economic viability.
- **Competitive Analysis Data Collection.** All communities that participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership receive a competitive analysis prepared by DEO staff in the Division of Community Development and Bureau of Labor Market Statistics. This analysis uses local capacity data gathered by the community as well as the Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application. The competitive analysis aims to provide a comprehensive, quantitative assessment of the existing conditions and developing trends within the community and local economy, as well as a comparison to the workforce region, the State of Florida, and the nation as a whole. Due to data availability, much of the analysis is conducted at the county level and consists of the following elements: population, education, health, income, housing and infrastructure, and employment and wages.
- **Community Conversations.** For a community's economic development strategy to be effective, it must be the collective vision of the community and not just a select few. Recognizing this necessity, communities that participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership are encouraged to use creative methods for getting input from members of the community. The partnership advocates for community conversations or public meetings that involve more opportunities for participants to talk rather than listen to presentations from government officials.

- **Improve or Develop the Strategy.** DEO staff working with other state partners will conduct a courtesy review of the community and suggest ways to improve economic development assets and strategies. This will include a review of a local comprehensive plan and recommendations on how it may be used as a strategic vision to make the community more competitive and increase job capacity. It will also include a review of the community assessment conducted by their community action agency and any existing economic development strategies. The developed economic development strategy should be action-oriented and a product of the findings from the competitive analysis, asset mapping report, and community conversations.
- **Resource Matching to Implement Actions.** Tapping into our network of agency and organization partners, DEO and partners take the drafted economic development strategy and help the community identify resources to implement the actions on the list. This may include grant opportunities or supplemental expertise from state, federal, and non-profit agencies. This list of potential funding opportunities, contacts, and resources serves as a starting point for Competitive Florida Partnership communities to use when implementing their action plan.
- **Community Celebrations.** An important part of the implementation process of Competitive Florida is the community celebration that occurs after a community has completed the steps in the first year of the partnership. This is an opportunity for the community to tout economic development successes and highlight the importance of priority projects in the future. The celebration is an opportunity to bring positive attention and awareness to the work of the community. Community members are provided the opportunity to see that they are a part of something that will have a positive impact on their future. It also brings a higher level of attention to our rural areas who may be overlooked during business location decision-making. This positive press helps to bring rural communities into the conversation as a viable option that is ready and willing to work with business owners.

Appendix E

Competitive Florida Partnership Expectations

COMPETITIVE FLORIDA PARTNERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

The Competitive Florida Partnership is a locally driven effort with state support. Staff from the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) can support local planning and implementation efforts where feasible, but the responsibility of growing a sustainable economy is recognized to be a long-term effort that is only successful when developed, driven and endorsed locally. The table below describes the roles DEO and the community are expected to play through this partnership.

What DEO will do...	What the Community will do...
Coordination and gathering of information and stakeholder input.	
Visit the community multiple times throughout the effort to present an overview of the Competitive FL Partnership and to guide action.	Communicate directly with steering group members and stakeholders and invite appropriate local partners to the table for meetings.
Help the community brainstorm potential stakeholders and steering group members.	Document the meetings held during the grant agreement period and include short summaries of outcomes.
Provide the community with grant funding, when possible, to enable them to complete the Competitive FL deliverables.	Complete all deliverables on time and use the funding to hire the support they need.
Participate in planning, visioning, special project, stakeholder or steering group meetings as much as possible.	Handle logistics for all meetings: locations, equipment (DEO can provide projectors/computer but will need to know in advance), etc.
Create or update an asset-based Economic Development Strategy with action plan.	
Help facilitate a visioning and planning process (i.e. visioning exercises aimed at gaining input from stakeholders to build or refine the economic development strategy or a certain project) including the development of a detailed process agenda that identifies roles and responsibilities during the meeting, if requested.	Work with DEO to plan and organize visioning, planning and project specific meetings ahead of time and provide appropriate information to assist with the preparation of a detailed process agenda that identifies roles and responsibilities during the meetings.
Review all draft deliverables and provide comments back to the community and provide assistance on specific sections of the document, as needed.	Draft the strategy and assemble the final economic development strategy and/or action plan.
Organize and lead the community asset mapping inventory exercise, including providing the equipment, staff leads, materials/packets and facilitating the debriefing and brainstorming sessions.	Identify stakeholders and team members to participate on the community asset mapping teams, including four locals who are familiar with the community to drive team around during the exercise.
Prepare a written summary of the community asset mapping exercise results with recommendations for the community, based on discussion outcomes.	Fill in any gaps or missing components not covered during the asset mapping exercise, including non-physical assets and prepare a draft and final asset inventory.
Assist the community with gathering data associated with non-physical assets.	Compile the asset inventory and put it in a format that is most useful for dissemination by the community.
If agreed upon in the scope of work, provide a Competitive Analysis that details trends and identifies opportunities for the community.	Provide information or data, if available, to the Competitive Analysis team.
Match community actions with resources and build the Competitive Florida network of leaders.	
Work with other state agencies and partners to identify funding and other resources to carry out priority projects for the community. DEO cannot guarantee funding opportunities through the Competitive FL Partnership.	Pursue opportunities identified, including grant writing and following up with appropriate contacts.
Organize Competitive Florida community collaboration meeting and reimburse the travel for up to two members of the community to attend a community collaboration meeting.	Attend the community collaboration meetings. Travel costs associated with community collaboration meetings after the first year may not be covered by DEO.
Identify potential state partners that may be helpful and arrange requested meetings with the community, based on specific needs.	Identify missing key state partners that would be helpful for local efforts.
Provide a generic format to help guide development of the case study and review/provide comments on the case study draft.	Prepare a case study that highlights successes and challenges and in a separate section provides information on the community's experience with the Competitive FL Partnership.
Match communities with one another for peer-to-peer exchange through the asset-mapping process.	Attend the asset mapping exercise of another community participating in the Competitive FL Partnership.
Provide a template for the case study that details community successes and challenges from an economic development perspective.	Compile a case study, complete with pictures, to be featured on the DEO website that features the accomplishments of the community and how they were able to achieve success.

Appendix F

Competitive Analysis

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

All communities that participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership receive a Competitive Analysis prepared by DEO Staff. The analysis provides a comprehensive, quantitative assessment of existing conditions and developing trends within the community, as well as a comparison to the workforce region, the state of Florida, and the nation as a whole. The document supplements the more qualitative approach of the asset mapping process, and helps guide the development of local economic development strategies. The competitive analysis utilizes publicly accessible sources, and provides step-by-step methods by which communities can track their progress. A primary source of data is the Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application, developed and maintained by DEO's Bureau of Labor Market Statistics. Due to data availability and limitations much of the analysis is conducted at the county level and includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:



- **Population:** An analysis of the community's demographics will help to identify changes and trends in the general population, as well as the age cohorts and overall median age within the community.
- **Health:** Community health numbers shed light on how well the local population prevents disease and avoids expenditures that affect individual productivity and impact the local workforce.
- **Income:** Income analyses provide insight, not only on the individual spending power within the community, but also the growth of the local economy. More income translates to greater collective purchasing power, which can be utilized to attract new businesses.
- **Education:** The quality of the local education system is assessed, as it can impact the community's appeal and development today and can forecast the readiness of the future local workforce. This educational focus carries beyond high school and onto adult education opportunities, such as training programs, technical colleges, and regional institutions.
- **Housing and Infrastructure:** Existing housing and infrastructure quality can affect a community and economy's ability to grow. An assessment of the existing conditions will include a broad look at housing availability and affordability, expansion capacity of local and regional infrastructure, and recent tax rates and revenues that both benefit from and support each of these components of a community.
- **Employment and Wages:** A comprehensive look at the local and regional workforce will range from identifying trends in income sources and employment types to determining major industry sectors. This also includes trends in the number and size of establishments as well as details of regional commuting patterns for employment.

Appendix G

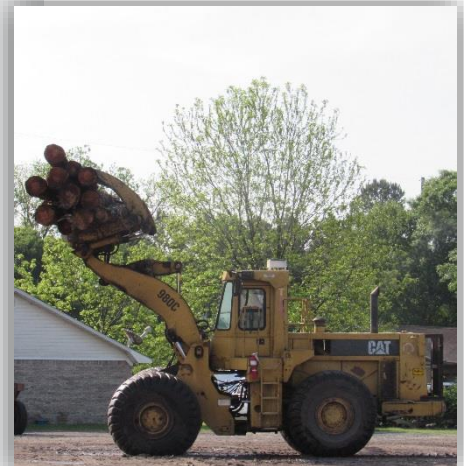
Competitive Analysis Sample

City of Starke

STARKE

COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Introduction

This Competitive Analysis aims to provide a comprehensive, quantitative assessment of the existing conditions and developing trends within the Competitive Florida community and local economy, as well as a comparison to the Workforce Region, the State of Florida, and the nation as a whole. Due to data availability and limitations, much of the analysis will be conducted at the county level and will consist of the following elements:

Population

An analysis of the community's demographics will help to identify changes and trends in the general population, as well as the age cohorts and overall median age within the community. This may also provide insight into public health indicators that can impact the community's competitiveness.

Education

The quality of the local education system will be assessed, as it can impact the community's development today and can be a reflection of the local workforce to come. This carries beyond the high school level and onto adult education opportunities, such as training programs, technical colleges, and regional institutions.

Health

Community health numbers shed light on how well the local population prevents disease and avoids costly expenditures, such as smoking habits, that can affect individual productivity and greatly impact community income.

Income

Income analyses provide insight, not only on the individual spending power within the community, but also the growth of the local economy. More income translates to greater collective purchasing power, which can be utilized to attract new industries.

Housing and Infrastructure

The existing housing and infrastructure quality can affect a community and economy's ability to grow and develop. An assessment of the existing conditions will include a broad look at housing availability and affordability, local and regional infrastructure capacities and assets, and recent tax rates and revenues that both benefit from and support each of these components of a community.

Employment and Wages

A comprehensive look at the local and regional workforce will range from trends in income sources and employment types to major industry sectors. This also includes trends in the number and size of establishments as well as the details of regional commuting patterns for employment.

Data Sources

The following data sources are used for the development of the Competitive Analysis:

- Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application (FREIDA)
- Florida Department of Education
- Florida Department of Revenue
- U.S. Census Bureau
- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

Table of Contents

Population	7
Total Population Change	7
Median Age	8
Age Cohorts	8
Education	13
Local School System	13
Educational Attainment	15
Local Education Resources	16
Health	17
Medical Facilities in a 50-Mile Radius	20
Affordable Child Care Facilities	20
Income	21
Housing	25
Infrastructure	29
Utilities	29
Water and Sewer	29
Power Sources and Capacity	29
Transportation	29
Tax Revenues	31
Tax Incentives	31
Capital Improvements Priorities	31
Employment	33
Labor Force	33
Industry Sector Establishments, Employment and Wages	35
Job Flow and Commuting Patterns	43
Job Flow and Labor Force	44
Commuting Demographic and Employment Patterns	45
Conclusion	51
Appendices	53
Appendix A: Demographics	53
Appendix B: Employment	55
Resources	73
Data Sources	73
Glossary of Terms	74

Population

Analyzing population changes, from total population to age cohorts, can help predict what the workforce, tax base, and consumer market may look like in the future. The community's population changes are compared to the state and the nation as a whole to help put trends in perspective to see if changes are comparable with the larger population or if the community's population trends are a result of local circumstances.

Population changes can be due to a number of factors, such as births, deaths, immigration, and emigration. Digging deeper into the population data to look at the age cohorts of the changing populations can help determine the primary causes of any population changes.

Major data findings are provided below, but all data acquired can be referenced in Appendix A.

CLICK STEPS: POPULATION

All data for the population analysis originates from the 2000 Census and 2010 Census, retrieved using the U.S. Census Bureau's American FactFinder Tool:

<http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Once arriving at the American FactFinder Tool, the following steps can guide you to the desired population data:

- Enter the geography (state, county, city, town, or zip code) and select "Go."
- Select the "Population" tab.
- Select the link to the data you would like to see, based on the year.
- Data can then be downloaded to view, use, and manage in Excel or PDF format by selecting "Download."

Total Population Change

Starke's population decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010, while Bradford County experienced modest growth. This slight population decline pre-dates similar trends in neighboring Union and Baker counties, which appear to have made considerable gains between 2000 and 2010, only to see a slight decline begin between 2010 and 2013.

Estimates for 2013 population numbers suggest that the State of Florida saw growth between 2010 and 2013; however, Bradford County's population has begun to decline. Starke's population is estimated to have declined as well from 2010 to 2013.

Census population data does include people incarcerated within the area which may have an effect on Bradford County with the presence of Florida State Prison and Lawtey Correctional Institution.

Total Population Changes, 2000-2010, 2013					
	2000	2010	Percent Change	2013 Estimate	Percent Change, 2010-2013
Starke	5,593	5,449	-2.57%	5,397	-0.95%
Bradford County	26,088	28,520	9.32%	26,850	-5.86%
Florida	15,982,378	18,801,310	17.6%	19,091,156	1.5%
Union County	258,916	331,303	28.00%	333,503	0.70%
Baker County	118,085	141,236	19.60%	140,214	-0.70%

Median Age

The generalized trend for the State of Florida and the nation as a whole is that the overall population is aging, as is indicated by the increase in median age for both between 2000 and 2010.

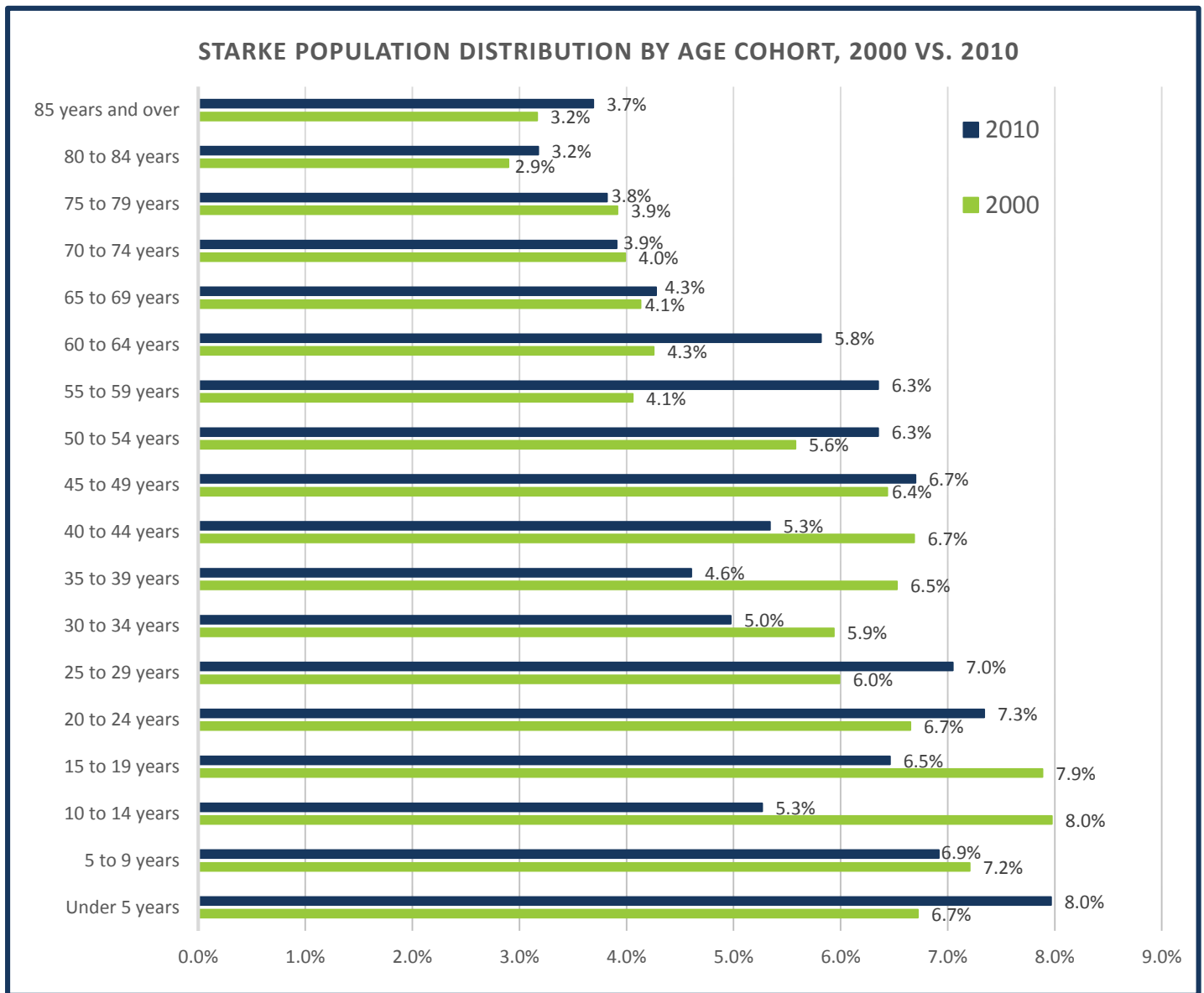
While Bradford County's median age increased by two years between 2000 and 2010, Starke's median age increased by more than three years, more than both the state and the nation. Both Starke and Bradford County have a median age that is slightly lower than the state and slightly higher than the nation. From the local level to the national level, the trend reflects an aging population.

Median Age of Population, 2000 vs. 2010				
	Starke	Bradford County	Florida	United States
Median Age 2000	36.2	37.2	38.7	35.3
Median Age 2010	39.4	39.5	40.7	37.2
Total Change	3.2	2.3	2	1.9
Percent Change	8.8%	6.2%	5.2%	5.4%

Age Cohorts

Population age cohorts are grouped into five or ten year increments, based on available data. Care should be taken to acknowledge the effects of these delineations on cohort size when analyzing the presented data.

Moving from 2000 to 2010, there may be shifts in a given cohort's size or its share of the total population resulting from persons aging from one cohort into another. It is important to recognize that the most recent Census was 2010, that age cohorts have shifted five years since the last Census survey was conducted, and that cohort members may have aged into older cohorts in the interceding years.



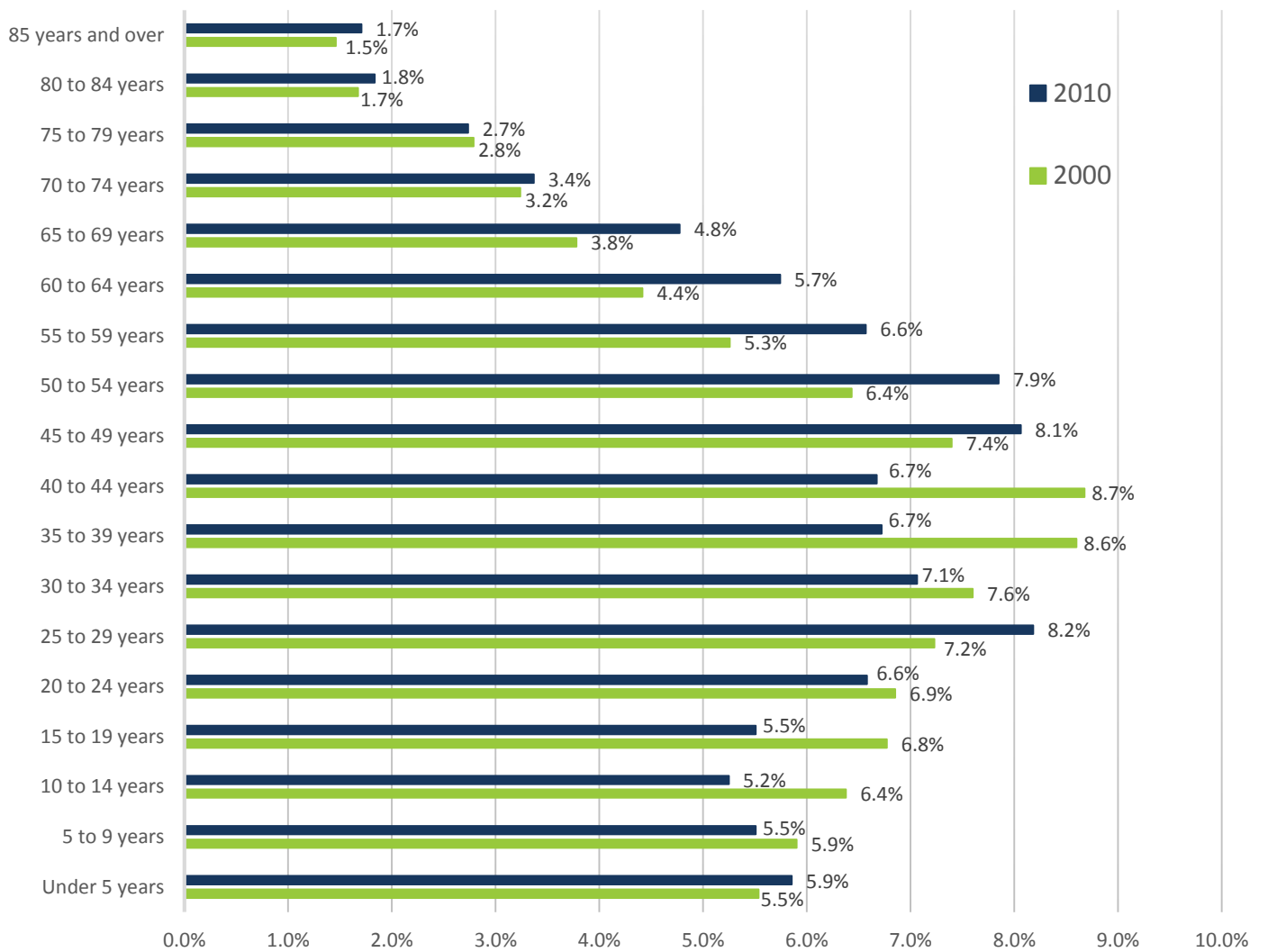
Shifts in the share of the population occupied by different age groups are reflected by changes in Starke’s median age, which increased between 2000 and 2010.

The overall population aged 65 and older remained nearly static, while the younger cohort of 55 to 64 increased dramatically.

At the younger ages, the population saw growth for residents aged 20 to 30 and decline for residents aged 30 to 34. The population aged 19 or younger shrank for all cohorts except newborns (under five years). Aside from a strong uptick in residents aged 50 to 64 and decline in numbers of residents aged 19 and younger, changes in the age composition of Starke’s population between 2000 and 2010 did not follow the trends of Bradford County.

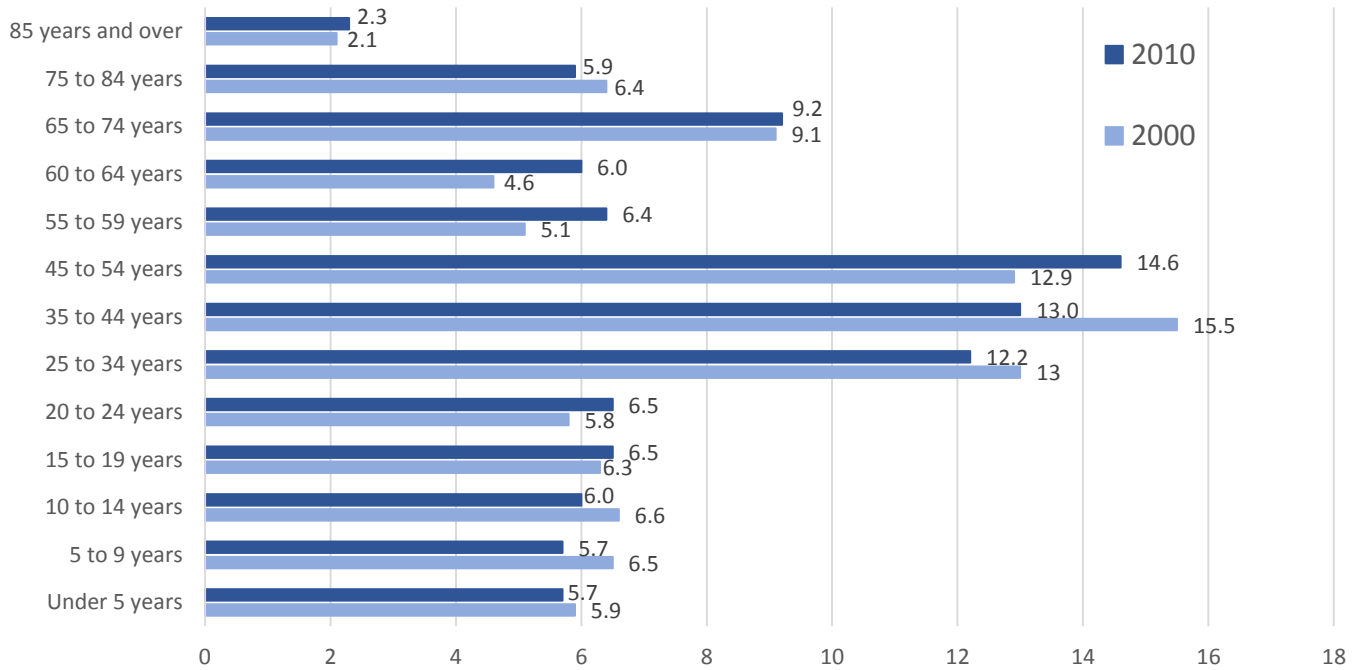
In Bradford County, cohorts aged 45 and older all increased between 2000 and 2010. This coincided with a decline in the population aged 10 to 19.

BRADFORD POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE COHORT, 2000 VS. 2010

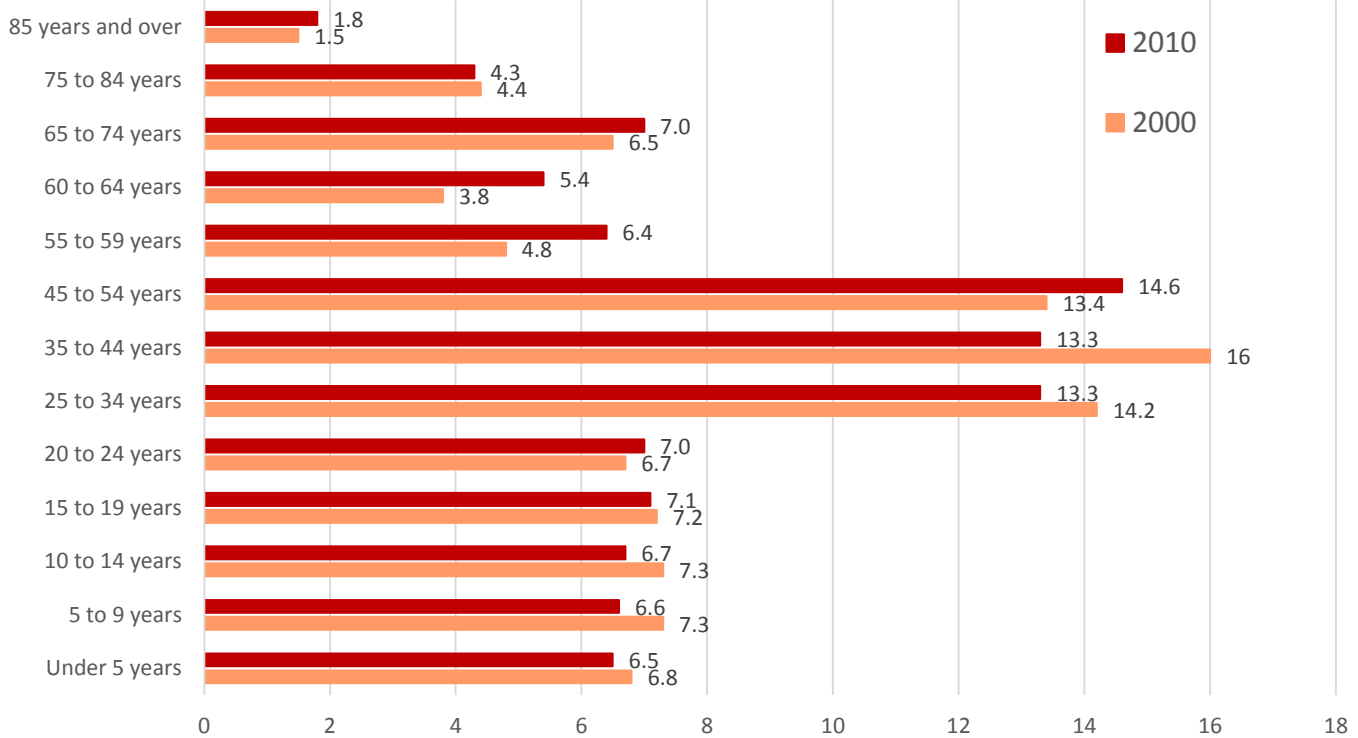


As evidenced by the shape of each population graph, Starke's age distribution by cohort does not closely mimic Bradford County, and neither is reflective of Florida or the United States. While the state and the nation both exhibit a larger share of people aged 25 to 54, Starke's population is more evenly distributed among different age cohorts. This may indicate that although Starke replaces its population via new birth, migration flows into and out of Bradford County have resulted in a declining population.

FLORIDA POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY AGE COHORT, 2000 VS. 2010



UNITED STATES POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY COHORT, 2000 VS. 2010



Education

The local education system plays a major role in the development and sustainability of a community. The K-12 school system can reflect the future of the local workforce, act as an attractor or detractor of potential new residents and businesses, and may have a substantial impact on real property values. Reports indicate that educational attainment is closely connected to personal well-being: adults with higher education levels report better health, social and emotional wellbeing, and are less likely to divorce or be incarcerated.¹ The educational attainment of the workforce-aged population can also be an attractor or detractor of potential new businesses and possibly even impact the ability of existing local businesses to grow and prosper. Adult or secondary education resources can be excellent partners and assets in a community and can help the local workforce further develop and improve.

Local School System

The Florida Department of Education has several metrics for measuring school and school district quality, with the school and districts grades each year being the sum of the various metrics. Starke's school and district grades for the last five years were reviewed, as well as funding sources and expenditures for the Bradford County School District.

CLICK STEPS: LOCAL SCHOOLS

All school grade and district grade data used was acquired from the Florida Department of Education's Florida School Grades web page: <http://schoolgrades.fldoe.org/>

Once arriving at the Florida School Grades web page, the following steps can guide you to the desired school grade data:

- Under "2013-2014 School Accountability Reports" locate where it states "School Grades for 2014 are available in Excel Format."
- Select the link "School Grades, Basic Information on Schools."
- This will instruct you to download an Excel file with all data.
- By downloading and opening the Excel workbook, school grades and other characteristics for all schools across the state are available to view, use, and manage.

All school district revenue and expenditure data used was acquired from the Florida Department of Education's Profiles of Florida School Districts web page:

<http://www.fldoe.org/schools/k-12-public-schools/profiles-of-fl-school-diss.stml>

¹ Source: <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=educational-attainment>

Bradford County District grades have remained steady since 2004, with a short dip in 2012 and 2013. The elementary and middle schools within the district scored higher than the district as a whole. While Bradford High School saw lower scores on average, it is common for high schools in a school district to score lower than elementary and middle schools. However, Bradford High School has witnessed improvements since 2010.

Bradford County School District, Starke Public School Grades											
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
DISTRICT GRADES	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	D	D	C
Starke Elementary School	C	B	B	B	C	A	C	A	B	C	C
Southside Elementary School	C	C	B	B	A	B	B	B	C	C	D
Lawtey Elementary School	B	A	B	C	B	B	C	B	C	C	D
Brooker Elementary School			B		A	B			D		A
Hampton Elementary School	A	A	A	A	A	C	A	C	B	C	A
Bradford Middle School	C	C	C	C	B	B	C	B	C	D	C
Bradford High School	C	D	C	D	C	D	D	C	B	C	C

Educational Attainment

This section looks beyond schools and into human capital, in the form of years involved in the formal education system. The U.S. Census Bureau reports educational attainment from high school diplomas through graduate or professional degrees, and breaks it down by age cohorts.

CLICK STEPS: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The educational attainment was analyzed using the U.S. Census Bureau's American FactFinder tool. Data was from the 2000 U.S. Census and 2012 American Community Survey. All data used can be sourced at: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>.

Once arriving at the American FactFinder Tool, the following steps can guide you to the desired education data:

- Enter the geography (state, county, city, town, or zip code) and select "Go."
- Select the "Education" tab.
- Select the link to the data you would like to see, based on the year.
- Data can then be downloaded to view, use, and manage in Excel or PDF format by selecting "Download."

For the number of residents aged 25 and older with only a high school education, Starke experienced a decline, while the State of Florida increased. Nevertheless, Starke's percentage of the population with a high school degree is still higher than the state at large. The greatest increase occurred among residents attaining a bachelor's degree, followed by residents attending some college but not completing a degree. The percentage of Starke residents obtaining associate's degrees is outpaced by Florida and national percentages, as are percentages of Starke residents finishing graduate and professional degrees. Thus, while the percentage of residents completing high school and some college outpace that of state and nation, the achievement of college degrees still lags behind.

Educational Attainment, Population 25 Years and Over									
Educational Attainment	Starke			Florida			United States		
	2000	2013	Change	2000	2013	Change	2000	2013	Change
High school	40.0%	35.8%	-4.2%	28.7%	29.8%	1.1%	28.6%	28.2%	-0.4%
Some college, no degree	20.0%	22.2%	2.2%	21.8%	21.1%	-0.7%	21.1%	21.3%	0.2%
Associate's degree	5.6%	5.70%	0.1%	7.0%	8.7%	1.7%	6.3%	7.7%	1.4%
Bachelor's degree	6.5%	9.0%	2.5%	14.3%	16.8%	2.5%	15.5%	17.9%	2.4%
Graduate or professional degree	4.9%	6.6%	1.7%	8.1%	9.4%	1.3%	8.9%	10.6%	1.7%
Sum	77.0%	79.3%	2.3%	79.9%	85.8%	5.9%	80.4%	85.7%	5.3%

From 2000 to 2013, the percentage of Starke’s population with a high school education or higher increased in two age cohorts, 35 to 44 years and 65 years and older, and decreased in two cohorts, 25 to 34 years and 45 to 64 years. This contrasts with the State of Florida and the United States as a whole, both of which experienced an increase in the percentage of their populations with a high school education or higher across all cohorts during this same period.

Educational Attainment by Age Cohort										
Educational Attainment	Cohort	Starke			Florida			United States		
		2000	2013	Change	2000	2013	Change	2000	2013	Change
High School Graduate or Higher	25 to 34 years	74.6%	71.0%	-3.6%	82.7%	86.9%	4.2%	83.9%	87.5%	3.6%
	35 to 44 years	82.1%	86.3%	4.2%	84.1%	88.2%	4.1%	85.0%	87.5%	2.5%
	45 to 64 years	87.1%	86.7%	-0.4%	82.0%	88.0%	6.0%	83.2%	87.8%	4.6%
	65 years and over	62.5%	70.1%	7.6%	71.2%	80.0%	8.8%	65.5%	77.9%	12.4%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	25 to 34 years	6.5%	2.5%	-4.0%	23.3%	26.3%	3.0%	27.5%	31.6%	4.1%
	35 to 44 years	10.7%	8.2%	-2.5%	23.6%	28.6%	5.0%	25.9%	31.8%	5.9%
	45 to 64 years	15.0%	19.3%	4.3%	24.5%	27.1%	2.6%	26.4%	28.8%	2.4%
	65 years and over	10.0%	20.2%	10.2%	17.6%	22.9%	5.3%	15.4%	21.5%	6.1%

Similarly, the percentage of Starke’s population with a bachelor’s degree or higher increased in two age cohorts, 25 to 34 years and 35 to 44 years, and decreased in two cohorts, 45 to 64 years and 65 years and over. This again contrasts with the State of Florida and the United States as a whole, both of which experienced an increase in the percentage of their populations with a bachelor’s degree or higher across all cohorts during this period.

Local Education Resources

Identification of higher education and training resources within the community, from universities to technical colleges, can provide insight into the opportunities for local workforce advancement.

Santa Fe College is located nearby in Gainesville. Santa Fe offers a variety of associate’s, bachelor’s, and certificate programs as well as an extensive continuing and workforce education catalogue. More information is available at <http://www.sfcollege.edu/>. Santa Fe is also an active partner in educational programs in Starke, with a satellite facility located in downtown Starke.

Bradford-Union Technical Center is located in Starke and offers several different career-oriented programs of study. Programs offered include certification in Accounting Education, Cosmetology, Commercial Vehicle Driving, and Certified Nursing Assistantship. More information is available at <http://www.butc.edu/>

Health

The health of a community can play a role in building a competitive economy. It can affect the community's workforce, the ability for its citizens and economy to grow and prosper, and the community's appeal to potential new residents or businesses. Poor health in a community can create an economic burden to individuals, companies, and regions. An unhealthy workforce may lead to higher costs associated with preventable healthcare expenditures, higher healthcare costs to businesses and individuals, and costs associated with lost productivity from absenteeism. Businesses often cite high health care costs as a reason for relocation, and businesses often look to locate to areas with healthier populations, where the costs of healthcare expenditures and lost productivity will be lower². Additionally, communities with accessible, high quality medical provider facilities can be a primary element in making a community livable for a competitive workforce, and it is an attractive resource for prospective residents, including families, retired citizens, and businesses. High quality medical facilities can also lead to the creation of new industry agglomerations (including other medical facilities and businesses that supply products and services to healthcare facilities) and may have the potential to become a basic industry within the local economy as well as increasing the attractiveness of the community.

CLICK STEPS: HEALTH

The Florida Department of Health provides data for as recent as 2014 on several health indicators at the county level through the Florida Community Health Assessment Resource Tool Set (CHARTS), comparing county rates with the state as a whole and placing all counties in a quartile ranking system for each indicator. This data is available at:

<http://www.floridacharts.com/charts/SpecReport.aspx?RepID=1341&tn=24>

Once arriving at the CHARTS web page, the following steps can guide you to the desired health data:

- Select the county that you wish to retrieve data for.
- Select the year for which you would like to retrieve data.
- Select "Display Report" and a window will open with a County Health Status Summary for the selected county.

When reading the data presented, it is important to understand that if a county is in the first quartile of all Florida counties then its statistics are "most favorable" compared with all Florida counties. Conversely, if a county is the fourth quartile of all Florida counties then its statistics are "least favorable" for all Florida counties.

² <http://coveraz.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Economic-Benefits.pdf>

According to Bradford County's Health Status Summary, Bradford County ranks in the top half of Florida counties for adults who consume five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. The rate of adults who are current smokers in Bradford County is in the more favorable half of Florida counties, and the county is in the most favorable quarter for overweight adults as well as adults with high blood cholesterol. Therefore, for four out of seven indicators, Bradford County does better than half of other counties in the state.

Bradford County ranks in the fourth quartile of all Florida counties for two behavioral risk factor surveillance indicators, adult hypertension and adult obesity. Similarly, Bradford County ranks in the slightly more favorable third quartile for inactive or insufficiently active adults.

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Indicators (Data Year 2013)			
	Age-Adjusted Rate	State Age-adjusted rate	Quartile
Adults who have ever been told they had hypertension	46.3%	34.6%	4
Adults who have ever been told they had high blood cholesterol	28.4%	33.4%	1
Adults who are inactive or insufficiently active	56.9%	52.9%	3
Adults who consumed five or more servings of fruits or vegetables per day	16.1%	18.3%	2
Adults who are overweight	31.8%	36.4%	1
Adults who are obese	46.0%	26.4%	4
Adults who are current smokers	17.7%	16.8%	2

Bradford County ranks in the less-favorable half of the state for 13 out of 15 chronic disease-related rates. However, the county does rank in the more-favorable half of the state for stroke hospitalizations and adults who currently have asthma.

In terms of health resource availability, Bradford County trails the state average in four indicators: licensed Florida family practice physicians; licensed Florida physicians; total licensed family dentists; and total hospital beds. This implies that Bradford County residents may have more difficulty accessing these healthcare resources than residents of other counties. However, the number of total nursing home beds in Bradford County dramatically exceeds the state average; this implies availability of this resource to Bradford County residents that may not be true in other Florida counties.

Levy County Chronic Disease Rates, Per 100,000 people					
Disease	Indicator	Age-Adjusted Rate	State Age-Adjusted rate	Quartile	Year of Data
Coronary Heart Disease	Deaths	135.1	102.5	4	2011-2013
	Hospitalizations	377	352.7	3	2010-2012
Stroke	Deaths	34.2	31.3	3	2011-2013
	Hospitalizations	245	266.2	2	2010-2012
Heart Failure	Deaths	13.2	9.7	3	2011-2013
	Hospitalizations	136.1	111.6	3	2010-2012
Lung Cancer	Deaths	69.3	44.5	4	2011-2013
	Incidence	77.8	63.4	3	2009-2011
Chronic Lower Respiratory Diseases	Deaths	55.7	39.6	3	2011-2013
	CLRD Hospitalizations	459.6	368.2	3	2010-2012
	Adults who currently have asthma	8.00%	8.30%	2	2013
	Asthma hospitalizations	849.6	780.4	3	2010-2012
Diabetes	Deaths	12	19.6	4	2011-2013
	Hospitalizations	1031	2291.2	4	2010-2012
	Adults who have ever been told they had diabetes	13.60%	11.20%	3	2013

Bradford County Health Resources Availability, Rate per 100,000 People			
Indicator	3 year rolling rate		Data Year
	Bradford County	Florida Average	
Licensed Florida Family Practice Physicians	19	24.5	FY 11-12- FY 13-14
Licensed Florida Physicians	54.7	267.2	FY 11-12- FY 13-14
Total Licensed Family Dentists	21.4	54	FY 11-12- FY 13-14
Total Nursing Home Beds	856	435.5	2011-2013
Total Hospital Beds	174.8	320.2	2011-2013

Medical Facilities in a 50-Mile Radius

The following medical facilities are currently available within a 50-mile radius of Starke:

- The Bradford County Health Department in Starke offers a variety of programs and services to protect, promote, and improve public health.
- Shands Starke Regional Medical Center in Starke is an acute care hospital offering emergency, lab, outpatient, respiratory care, and state-of-the-art medical technology.
- UF Health Shand's Hospital nearby in Gainesville is ranked among the nation's best hospitals in several specializations. "Centers of Emphases" include Cancer, Women's and Children's Services, and Heart Care.
- Lake Butler Health Department in nearby Lake Butler offers a variety of programs and services to protect, promote, and improve public health.
- Acorn Dental Clinic in nearby Brooker provides low-cost medical and dental care to low-income families and qualifying residents.

Affordable Child Care Facilities

Episcopal Children's Services Early Learning Center, located in Starke, operates the Head Start program for Bradford County. This program is aimed at providing comprehensive, developmental services for low-income preschool children ages three to five, and social services for their families³.

Starke and the surrounding area currently has several privately-owned affordable childcare facilities.

³ <http://www.floridaheadstart.org/program%20directory.html>

Income

Trends in income levels and income sources can be an indicators of the growth of a local economy, such as the ability to support various industries through the amount of disposable income available, housing demands and property values, and the amount of money circulating through the local economy. However, even if income levels are growing they may not be keeping pace with inflation and growth in the national economy. Therefore growth rates should be tracked to see how income levels are changing relative to the regional, state, and national economies.

CLICK STEPS: INCOME

Median household incomes were analyzed using data from the 2000 U.S. Census and 2012 American Community Survey estimates, retrieved using the U.S. Census Bureau's American FactFinder tool, accessible here: <http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Once arriving at the American FactFinder Tool, the following steps can guide you to the desired income data:

- Enter the geography (state, county, city, town, or zip code) and select "Go."
- Select the 'Topics' tab, then expand "People."
- Select the "Income and Earnings" link.
- Select the link to the data you would like to see, based on the year.
- Data can then be downloaded to view, use, and manage in Excel or PDF format by selecting "Download."

Median household income increased from 2000 to 2013 in Starke, Bradford County, Florida, and the United States, although this rate of increase was greatest in Starke. However, median income in Starke remained lower than that of Bradford County, the state, and the nation in both 2000 and 2013.

Median Household Income, 2000 vs. 2013				
	Starke	Bradford County	Florida	United States
2000	\$27,021.00	\$33,140.00	\$38,819.00	\$41,994.00
2013	\$35,880.00	\$40,259.00	\$47,309.00	\$53,046.00
Total Change	\$8,859.00	\$7,119.00	\$8,490.00	\$11,052.00
Percent Change	32.8%	21.5%	21.9%	26.3%

CLICK STEPS: PERSONAL INCOME

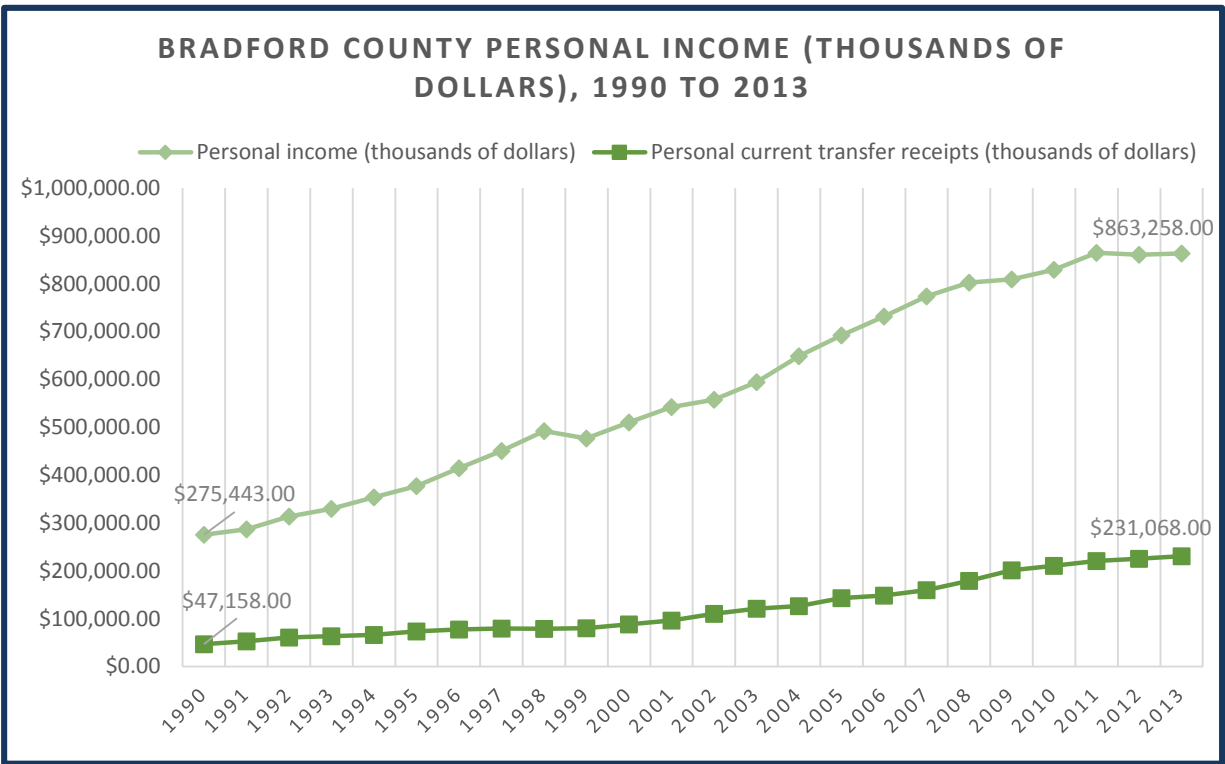
All personal income and transfer receipt data was retrieved using the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis's Interactive Data tool, which can be accessed here: http://www.bea.gov/iTable/index_regional.cfm

Once arriving at the Interactive Data tool, the following steps can guide you to the desired income data:

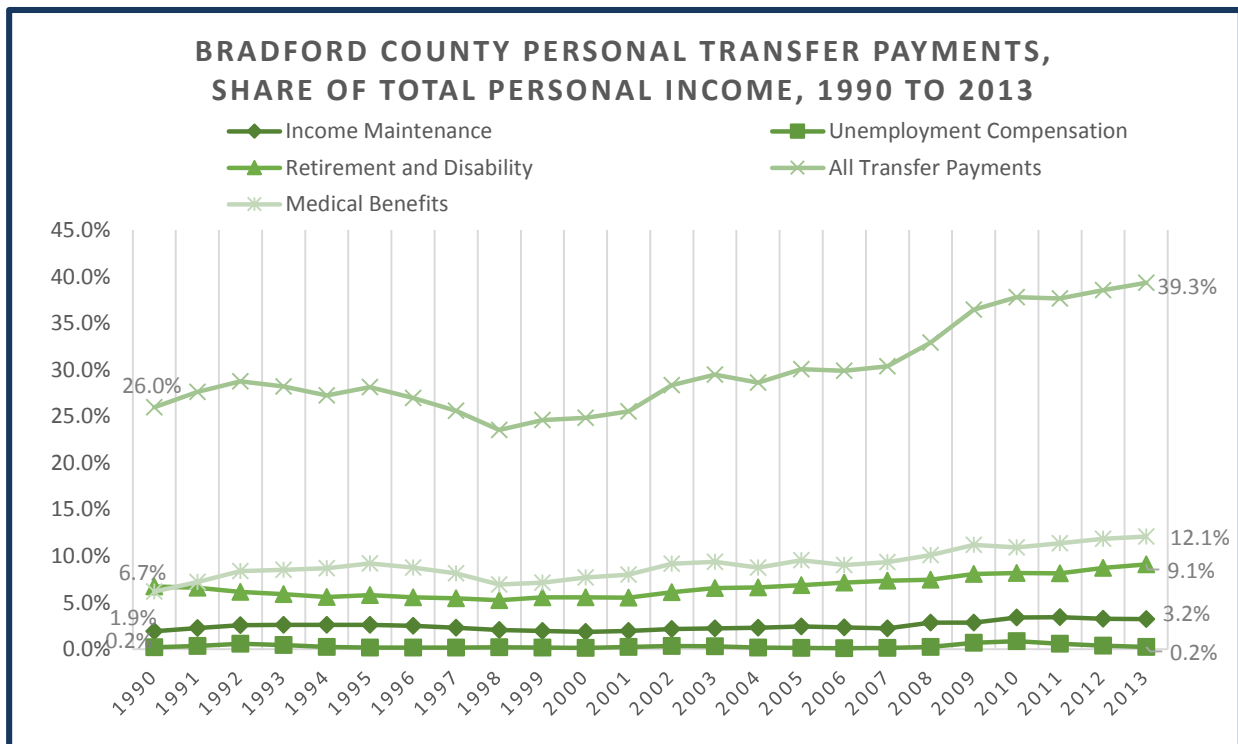
- Select "Begin using the data...."
- Select "Local Area Personal Income and Employment" and the specific data type you would like to access.
- Specify the desired geography, unit of measure, specific statistics, and time period, and select "Next Step."
- Data can then be downloaded to view, use and manage in Excel or PDF format by selecting "Download."

While many people get their personal income from their salary or wage, government income sources such as social security, Medicare, or unemployment insurance compensation also contribute to the local economy. However, those income sources will primarily support service industry sectors that are typically comprised of moderate- to lower-salaried and waged jobs. Additionally, persons that receive the majority of their personal income from government transfers are often times not in the workforce providing a service in return, nor do they have the opportunity for personal income growth.

Personal income in Bradford County increased steadily from 1990 to 2013 from a low of \$275,443.00 to a high of \$863,258.00; this figure was likely influenced by population growth in the county during this period as well as overall currency inflation nationwide. Similarly, transfer payments also increased in the county during this period from a low of \$47,158.00 to a high of \$231,068.00.



Personal transfer payments in Bradford County increased from 26.0 percent to 39.3 percent of total personal income over the period from 1990 to 2013. Medical Benefits, which includes Medicare and Medicaid recipients, has maintained the largest share of transfer payments, making up more than 12 percent of all income in Bradford County in 2013. Medical Benefits, paired with Retirement and Disability combined, increased to make up more than 21 percent of Bradford County's total income in 2013.



Housing

Housing quality, availability, and affordability can play a significant role in a community's ability to retain or attract a workforce and is also a major contributor to local tax revenues through property taxes. The types of housing available can also factor in to each of these things, and communities can benefit by tracking what types of housing are in the highest demand.

CLICK STEPS: HOUSING

All housing data is from the 2000 U.S. Census and the 2010 U.S. Census, and was retrieved using the U.S. Census Bureau's American FactFinder tool, accessible here:

<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Once arriving at the American FactFinder Tool, the following steps can guide you to the desired housing data:

- Enter the geography (state, county, city, town, or zip code) and select "Go."
- Select the "Housing" tab.
- Select the link to the data you would like to see, based on the year.
- Data can then be downloaded to view, use, and manage in Excel or PDF format by selecting "Download."

Starke witnessed an overall decrease in its housing occupancy rate between 2000 and 2010. While the number of occupied units increased 3.2 percent, a 9.6 percent increase in the total housing stock, including a 57 percent increase in vacant units, caused occupancy levels to decrease from 88.1 percent to 83 percent. Additionally, the number of owner-occupied housing units decreased, and the number of renter-occupied housing units increased, in both absolute and relative terms.

Starke Housing Characteristics, 2000 vs. 2010						
OCCUPANCY STATUS	2000		2010		Total Change	Percent Change
Occupied housing units	2,003	88.1%	2,068	83.0%	65	3.2%
Vacant housing units	270	11.9%	424	17.0%	154	57.0%
Total housing units	2,273	100.0%	2,492	100.0%	219	9.6%
Occupancy Status	2000		2010		Total Change	Percent Change
Owner-occupied housing units	1,314	65.6%	1,258	60.8%	-56	-4.3%
Renter-occupied housing units	689	34.4%	810	39.2%	121	17.6%

Vacancy Status	2000		2010		Total Change	Percent Change
For rent	125	46.3%	207	48.8%	82	65.6%
For sale only	28	10.4%	73	17.2%	45	160.7%
Rented or sold, not occupied	16	5.9%	12	2.8%	-4	-25.0%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	6	2.2%	6	1.4%	0	0.0%
For migratory workers	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	1	N/A
Other vacant	95	35.2%	125	29.5%	30	31.6%

Most of the vacant housing in Starke in 2000 and 2010 was rental units. However, nearly 30 percent of all vacant housing units in Starke are classified as “other vacant,” meaning they are not for rent, sale, or seasonal use. The US Census⁴ reports that housing units described as “other vacant” can imply the following:

- The housing unit owner does not want to rent or sell.
- The owner is using the unit for storage.
- The owner is elderly and living in a nursing home or with family members.
- The unit is being held for settlement of an estate.
- The unit is being repaired or renovated.
- The unit is being foreclosed.

Bradford County experienced an increase in its total number of housing units, both vacant and occupied, between 2000 and 2010. However, a 38.6 percent increase in vacant housing units saw the overall occupancy rate drop.

Bradford County Housing Characteristics, 2000 vs. 2010						
OCCUPANCY STATUS	2000		2010		Total Change	Percent Change
Occupied housing units	8,497	88.5%	9,479	86.1%	982	11.6%
Vacant housing units	1,108	11.5%	1,532	13.9%	424	38.3%
Total housing units	9,605	100.0%	11,011	100.0%	1406	14.6%
Occupancy Status	2000		2010		Total Change	Percent Change
Owner-occupied housing units	6,709	79.0%	7,235	76.3%	526	7.8%
Renter-occupied housing units	1,788	21.0%	2,244	23.7%	456	25.5%
Vacancy Status	2000		2010		Total Change	Percent Change
For rent	257	23.2%	426	27.8%	169	65.8%
For sale only	129	11.6%	197	12.9%	68	52.7%
Rented or sold, not occupied	66	6.0%	40	2.6%	-26	-39.4%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	222	20.0%	256	16.7%	34	15.3%
For migratory workers	7	0.6%	3	0.2%	-4	-57.1%
Other vacant	427	38.5%	613	39.8%	186	43.6%

⁴ From: <http://www.census.gov/housing/hvs/files/qtr113/PAA-poster.pdf>

This decrease in housing occupancy seen by Starke and Bradford County occurred across the state between 2000 and 2010 while the national occupancy rate saw an increase.

Housing Occupancy Rate		
	2000	2010
Starke	88.1%	83.0%
Bradford County	88.5%	86.1%
Florida	86.8%	82.5%
United States	86.8%	88.6%

Bradford County also experienced a decrease in its percentage of housing units occupied by owners in favor of an increase in the percentage of housing units occupied by renters; unlike in Starke, however, the number of owner-occupied housing units in Bradford County increased during this period.

Similar to Starke, rental and “other vacant” units constituted the largest components of vacant housing in Bradford County between 2000 and 2010; however, “other vacant” units, not rental units, were the largest such component in Bradford County. Both communities also saw seasonal, recreational, or occasional use units decrease as a percentage of vacant housing due to an increase in the overall housing stock, although in Bradford County this was accompanied by an increase in the number of these units. Seasonal, recreational, or occasional use housing was also much more prevalent in Bradford County over the entire period, pointing to a demand for such housing in Bradford County that is not present in Starke.

As in the State of Florida and the United States as a whole, in Starke and Bradford County between 2000 and 2010, the percentage of housing units occupied by owners decreased, while the percentage of housing units occupied by renters increased. However, the rate of housing units occupied by owners in 2010 was still lower in Starke, and higher in Bradford County, than in Florida and the United States.

Housing Tenure Status								
	Starke		Bradford County		Florida		United States	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Owner-Occupied	65.6%	60.8%	79.0%	76.3%	70.1%	67.4%	70.1%	65.1%
Renter-Occupied	34.4%	39.2%	21.0%	23.7%	29.9%	32.6%	29.9%	34.9%

Infrastructure

Utilities

Water and Sewer

Currently, 91 percent of residents in Starke are on the City's water system while nine percent are on well.

The City's water system currently has the capacity to produce 1.3 million gallons per day above what is currently being utilized, pointing to significant room for expanded use of the system.

20 percent of Starke residents are on the City's sewer system, while 80 percent are on septic systems.

The treatment plant currently has capacity for 670,000 extra gallons per day, indicating significant room for expanded use of the system.

Power Sources and Capacity

Electricity is provided to Starke by the City of Starke, Florida Power and Light (FPL), and Clay Electric at the following rates per kilowatt hour (kWh):

- Residential, 1st 1000 kWh: \$0.0695/kWh
- Residential, over 1000 kWh: \$0.0915/kWh
- Commercial: 0.0900/kWh

The City has the capacity to expand electricity services within territorial boundaries if demand increases.

Natural gas is available at the following rates:

- Residential: \$0.76/therm
- Commercial: \$0.67/therm

The City also has the capacity to expand natural gas services within territorial boundaries if demand increases.

Transportation

Starke is served by four State of Florida Highways:

- US 301 / 200, which travels north/south.
- US 16 which enters the city from the northwest, travels east/west across the city, and veers northeast outside of the city.
- US 100, which enters the city from the west, travels east/west across the city, and veers southeast outside of the side.
- US 230, which originates in Starke at US 301 and travels eastward outside of the city.

The four state highways serving Starke include roadways that comprise part of the State's Strategic Intermodal System, meaning that freight traffic also travels through the city. Each of these roadways is assessed by the Florida Department of Transportation, and the latest results are reported below.

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Level of Service (LOS) is a measure of the amount of congestion experienced on a road. An "F" represents part of the road (traffic engineers call it a 'segment') where the number of vehicles driving on it exceeds the road's capacity.

A common misconception is that Level of Service standards A-F is similar to school grades. Measured from a traveler's perspective, LOS A is the best with the lowest level of congestion and LOS F is the worst with the highest level of congestion. However, a road with LOS A, especially during peak travel hours, can mean an inefficient use of resources with a roadway being underutilized. Therefore, from a transportation perspective LOS A may not always be the most desirable Level of Service for a roadway.

Level of service standards for the State Highway System during peak travel hours are D in urbanized areas and C outside of urbanized areas. More information is available in the [Florida Department of Transportation's 2013 Quality/Level of Service Handbook](#)

For each of the above state highways, the following Level of Service grades were given:

- US 301 / 200 received a "C" grade for the portion within the north part of the city, a "D" grade downtown and moving southward, and a "B" grade further south in the city.
- US 16 received a "B" grade on the portion west of US 301, and a "D" grade on the portion east of US 301.
- US 100 received a "B" grade on the portion in the far west of the city, and a "C" grade for all other portions of the roadway within the city.
- US 230 received a "C" grade on the portion within the city.

For the portions of US 301 and US 16 that received D grades, future roadway and transportation expansion options may need to be addressed (such as widening, multi-modal facilities, etc.) in order to prevent congestion. For the majority of Starke roadways, however, current road sizes satisfactorily handle daily traffic loads.

Tax Revenues⁵

Looking specifically at ad valorem tax revenues such as property taxes and Sales and Use taxes, Starke saw its largest revenue contribution from ad valorem taxes during both 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Of note, ad valorem revenues are projected to decrease by 21.6 percent from 2013-2014 to 2014-2015 (the latter year is an estimate). Sales taxes are expected to rise modestly; however, the difference will not fully account for ad-valorem revenues lost.

City of Starke Estimated Select Tax Revenues, FY 2013-2014 vs. FY 2014-2015				
	FY 2013-2014	FY 2014-2015	Gross Change	Percent Change
Ad Valorem Taxes	\$ 789,112	\$ 618,291	\$ -170,821	-21.6%
Sales and Use Taxes	\$ 416,038	\$ 432, 000	\$ 15,962	3.8%

Tax Incentives

The City of Starke passed Resolution 2014-19 to allow tax abatement for businesses.

Capital Improvements Priorities

Infrastructure and Equipment have been identified as Starke's current capital improvements priorities.

⁵ From: <https://cityofstarke.ishopserver.com/Sites/17/Images/2014-2015%20Final%20Budget.pdf#page=39>

Employment

Labor Force

The total labor force in any economy includes both the employed and the unemployed, where the unemployed are those without a job who are actively seeking work. Therefore, a local economy may see more people entering the labor force seeking employment, but if the additions to the labor force are not finding employment then it means that the unemployment rate is increasing.

CLICK STEPS: EMPLOYMENT

All Employment data used was retrieved using the Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application (FREIDA), a data dashboard developed and managed by DEO's Bureau of Labor Market Statistics, located here: <http://freida.labormarketinfo.com/>

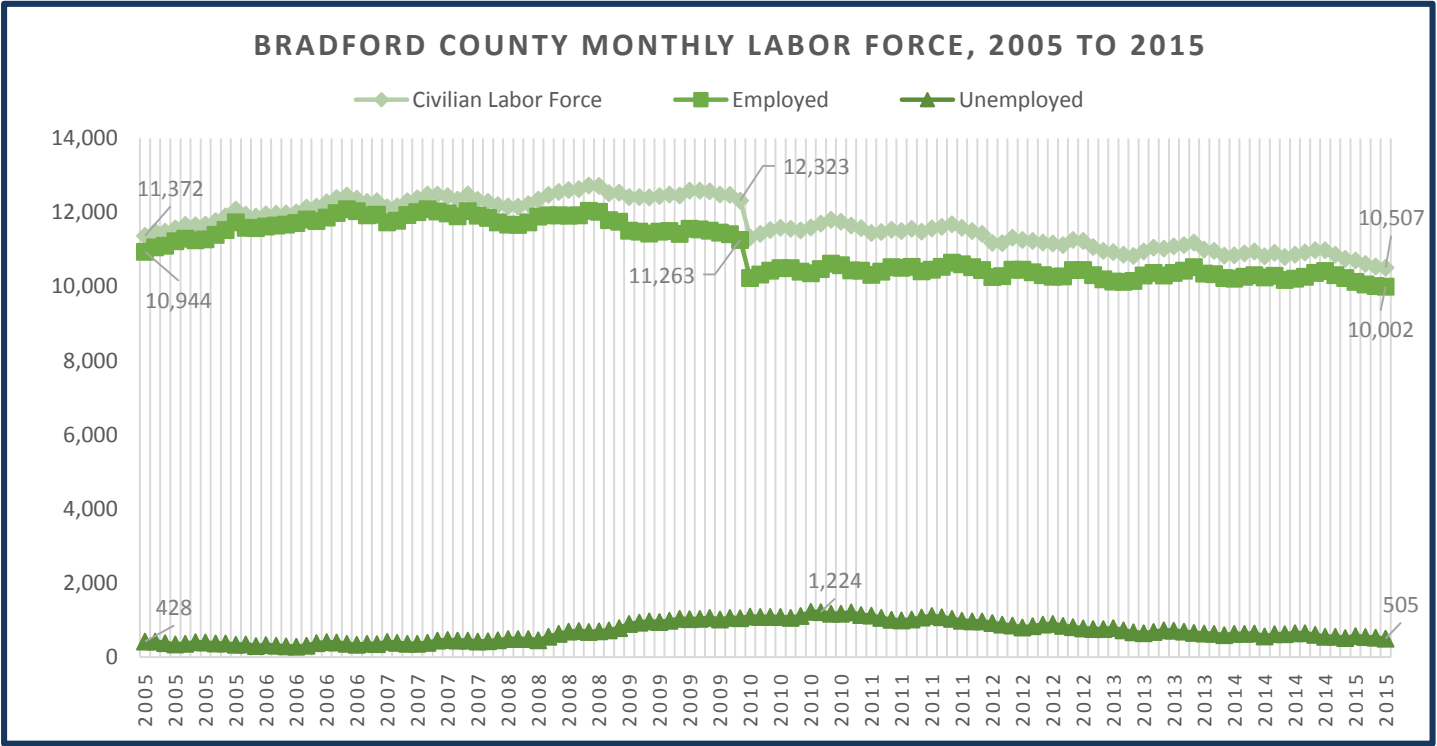
Once the FREIDA site is accessed, the following steps will lead to the desired employment data:

- Select "Local Area Employment Statistics (LAUS)," located under "Labor Market Data."
- Check the box next to the county of interest, then click "Select."
- Choose the time delineations (monthly or annual) and time periods of interest. More than one time period may be selected. Click "Select."
- Desired data will be displayed.

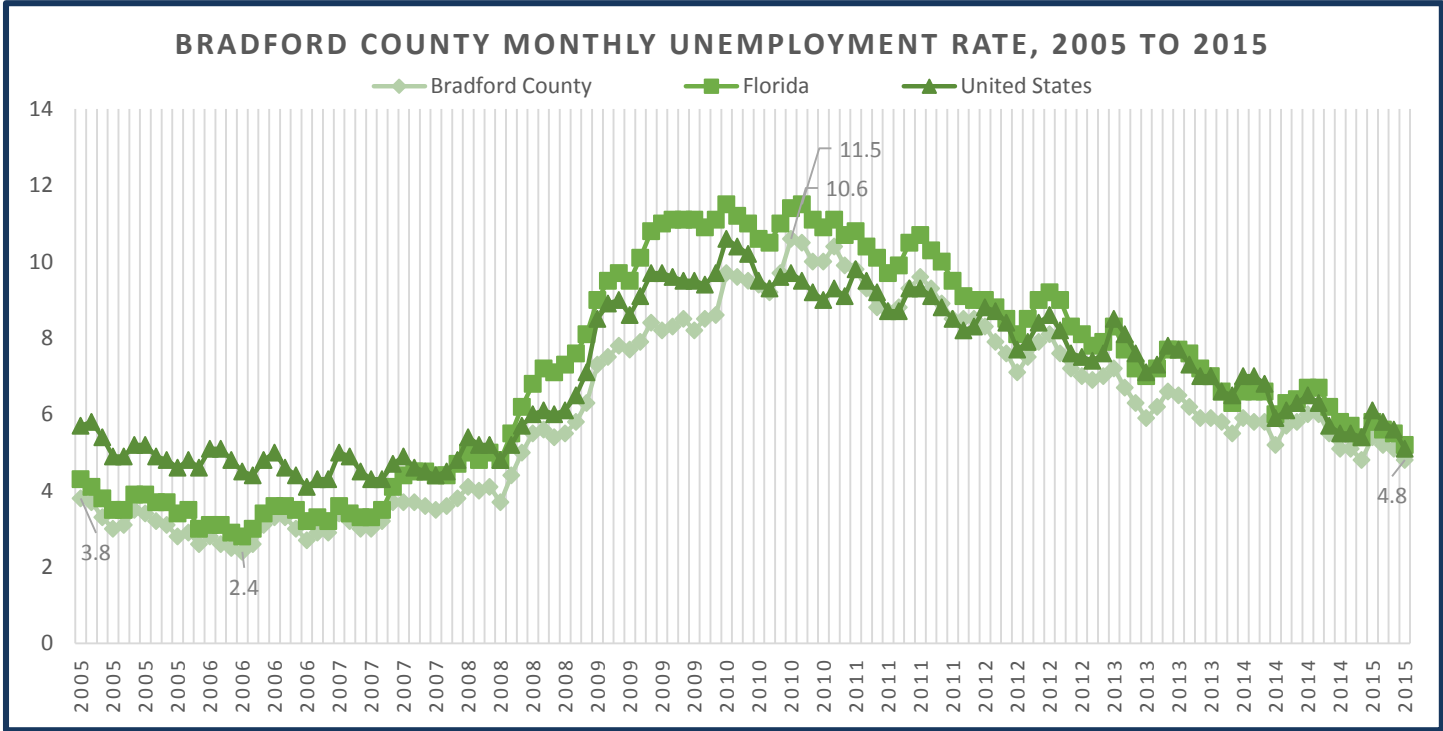
Data can then be downloaded to view, use, manage, and print in Excel or text format by selecting the desired options.

It should be noted that a redesign in Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) was done by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in January 2015, with historical county labor force data being adjusted back through 2010. Therefore, significant changes in labor force data from December 2009 to January 2010 may be due to the updated data, in addition to local circumstances

Bradford County's civilian labor force increased by approximately 1,000 between 2005 and 2009. After a sharp drop in 2009, the number of workers in the labor force continued to decline to 10,507 in spring 2015. However, after reaching more than 12,000 workers, Bradford's employed population began to decline in 2008, reaching a 10-year low of 10,002 in May of 2015. Rising unemployment numbers coincided with declines in the employed workers beginning in 2008. Unemployment numbers have declined in Bradford County since late 2010, though a lack of increasing employment numbers indicates that unemployment is decreasing due to workers leaving the labor force, as is reflected by the declining overall labor force in Bradford County.



Unemployment in Bradford County between 2005 and May 2015 tracked closely with unemployment in the State of Florida and the United States. Unemployment during this period was lowest in mid-2006, then increased to a peak of 10.6 percent in 2010, though it was still lower than statewide unemployment rate of 11.5 percent. Since that time, Bradford County's unemployment rate has been on a steady decline, reaching a seven-year low of 4.8 percent by May 2015. Bradford County's unemployment rate also primarily remained lower than the state and national rates throughout the duration of the observed time period.



Industry Sector Establishments, Employment and Wages

Each local economy sees its own distribution of employment across different industry sectors and each sector's contribution to the local economy. Where a community may specialize in one industry, bringing money into the local economy, it may have room for growth in others—in terms of new establishments, increased employment, or higher wages.

Following the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS), the community's major industry sectors were analyzed using quarterly data over a 10-year span and were compared with: CareerSource North Central Florida, which includes Alachua County and Bradford County; the State of Florida; and the nation as a whole.

CLICK STEPS: EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES

Employment and Wage data was retrieved and analyzed using the Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application (FREIDA), a data dashboard developed and managed by DEO's Bureau of Labor Market Statistics available here: <http://freida.labormarketinfo.com/>

Once arriving at the Database Application, the following steps can guide you to the desired employment and wage data:

- Select "Labor Market Analysis" at the top of the page.
- Under "Historic Data Analysis" on the left-hand side, select "Employment and Wage Data."
- Select 'Industry Data' then "Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)."
- Select the desired geography.
- Select the desired time frame.
- Select the desired industry sector.

Data can then be downloaded to view, use, and manage in Excel format by selecting "Excel."

All Bradford County data retrieved is available in Appendix B, and definitions of each NAICS industry sector can be found in the Glossary of Terms.

Each industry sector that is either a major contributor to the local economy or saw significant changes over the 10-year span is analyzed. The community's establishment, employment, and wage distribution is analyzed from a local, regional, and state perspective as compared with the national employment and wages trends for each quarter.

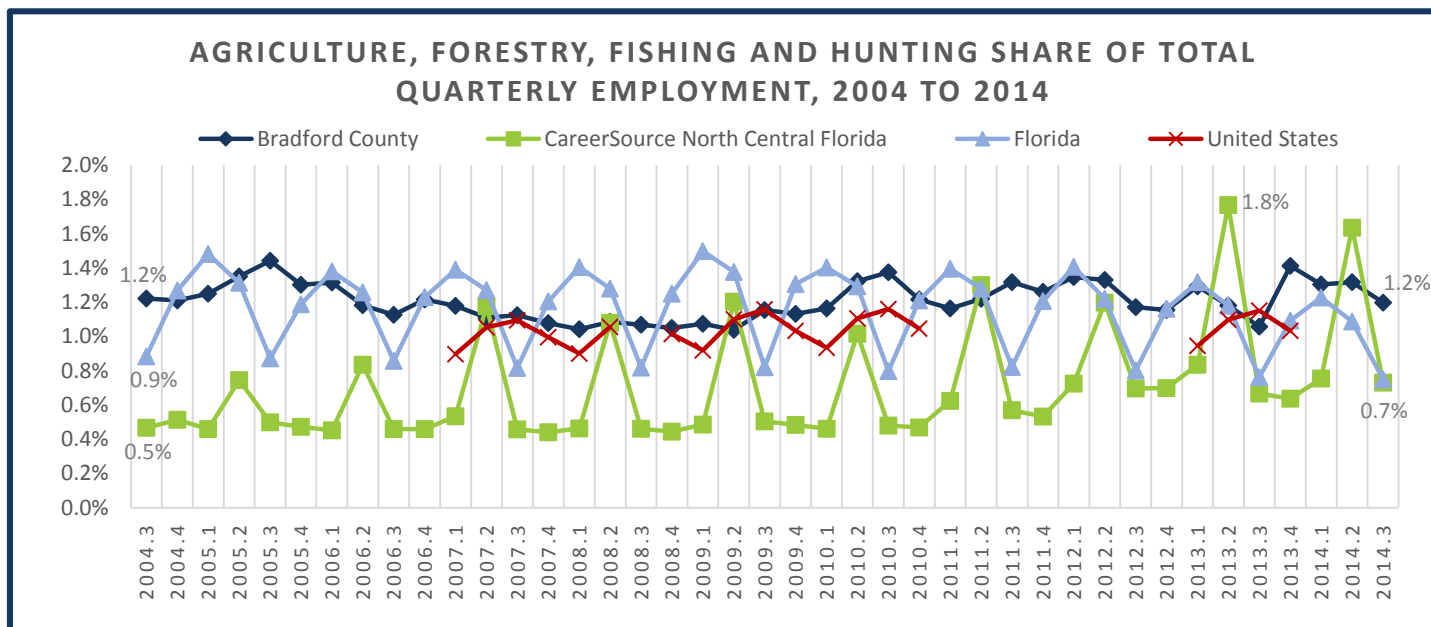
If employment in a specific industry in a local economy is a higher percentage of the local economy's total employment than that of the larger economy, particularly the national economy, then that industry is considered to be a net export of goods or services for the local economy and brings money into the local economy. Looking at average employment per establishment can indicate if there may be several small employers in an industry, increasing opportunities for growth, or a few large employers supporting the industry locally.

Between 2004 and 2014, Accommodation and Food Services; Administrative and Waste Services; Health Care and Social Assistance; and Retail Trade experienced the largest increases in the number of establishments in Bradford County, while Manufacturing; Professional and Technical Services; and Public Administration experienced the largest decreases.

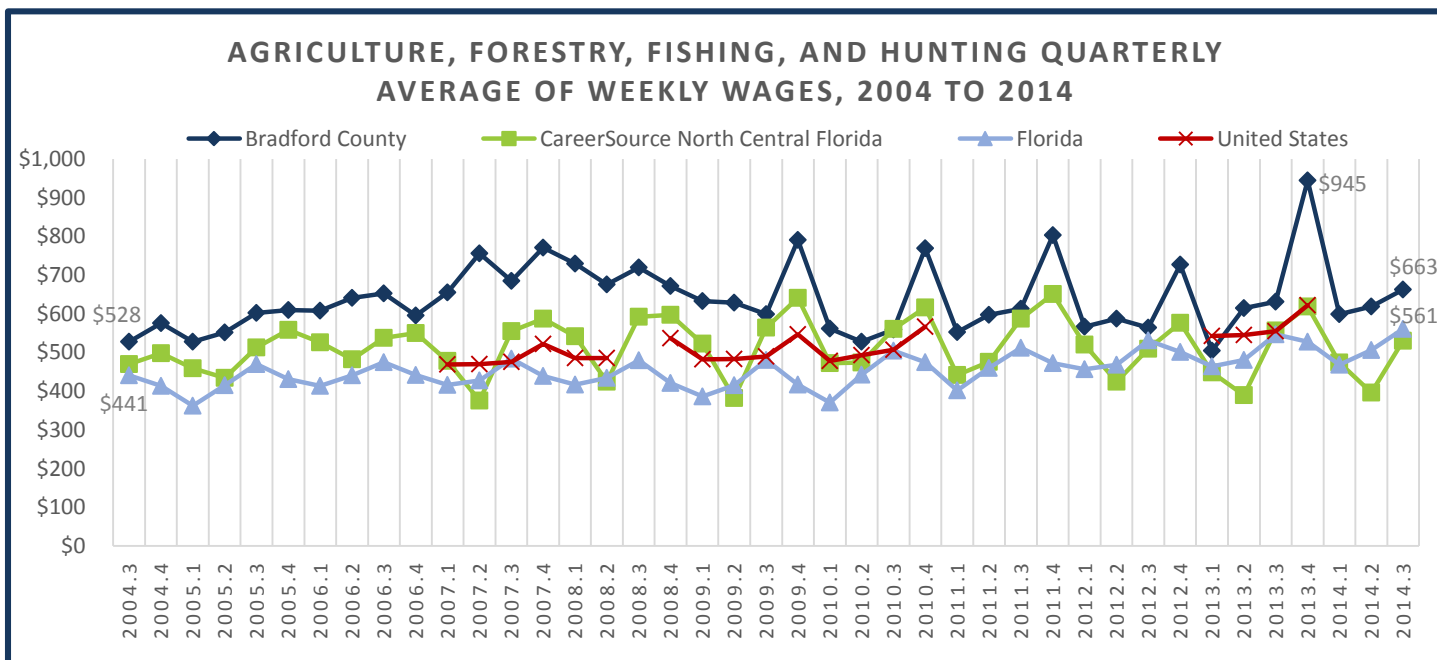
Bradford County Industry Sector Establishments and Employment, 2004 and 2014									
Industry Sector	Industry Establishments			Average Industry Employment			Average Establishment Size		
	2004	2014	Change	2004	2014	Change	2004	2014	Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting	13	16	3	76	66	-10	5.8	4.1	-1.7
Accommodation and Food Services	34	46	12	718	709	-9	21.1	15.4	-5.7
Administrative and Waste Services	21	36	15	60	89	29	2.9	2.5	-0.4
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3	8	5	12	33	21	4.0	4.1	0.1
Construction	61	61	0	472	182	-290	7.7	3.0	-4.7
Finance and Insurance	15	20	5	101	125	24	6.7	6.3	-0.4
Health Care and Social Assistance	32	44	12	746	834	88	23.3	19.0	-4.3
Information	7	6	-1	50	38	-12	7.1	6.3	-0.8
Manufacturing	22	20	-2	528	243	-285	24.0	12.2	-11.8
Other Services	36	37	1	280	83	-197	7.8	2.2	-5.6
Professional and Technical Services	43	37	-6	216	104	-112	5.0	2.8	-2.2
Public Administration	32	29	-3	1,832	1,296	-536	57.3	44.7	-12.6
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	18	18	0	45	59	14	2.5	3.3	0.8
Retail Trade	76	93	17	782	874	92	10.3	9.4	-0.9
Transportation and Warehousing	23	27	4	215	642	427	9.3	23.8	14.5
Wholesale Trade	17	26	9	90	132	42	5.3	5.1	-0.2

Over this same period, Health Care and Social Assistance; Retail Trade; and Transportation and Warehousing experienced the largest increases in average industry employment in the county, with the gains in Transportation and Warehousing being several times the gains experienced by the next-closest industry. Construction; Manufacturing; Other Services; Professional and Technical Services; and Public Administration all saw a decrease of more than 100 employees, with Public Administration seeing the largest overall change over that time, decreasing by 536 employees.

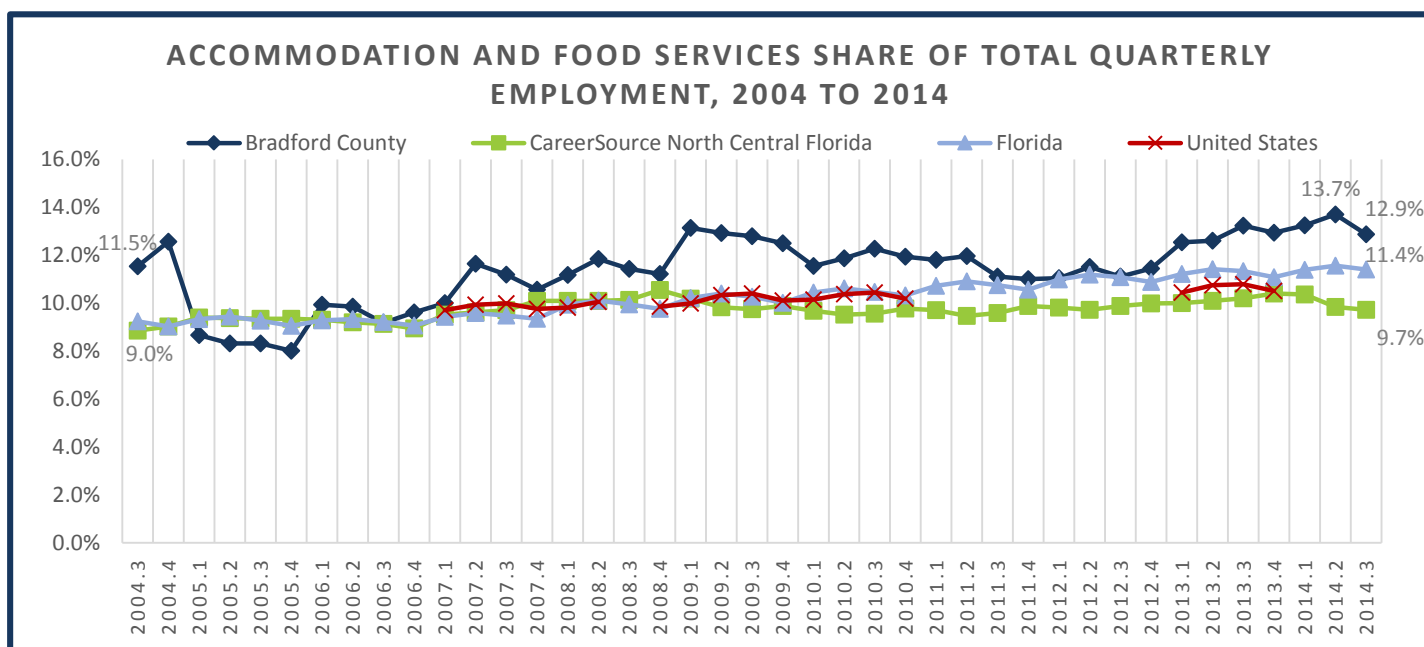
Bradford County's employment in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting does not see the seasonal cycles that the state, CareerSource region, or nation experience, but overall employment share remained at or above national levels consistently between 2004 and 2014. Since 2013, the CareerSource region has seen a rise in its employment share in the industry sector, with seasonal peaks surpassing Bradford County, while the state has witnessed a decline in its employment share in the industry sector, with seasonal peaks falling below Bradford County employment share rates.



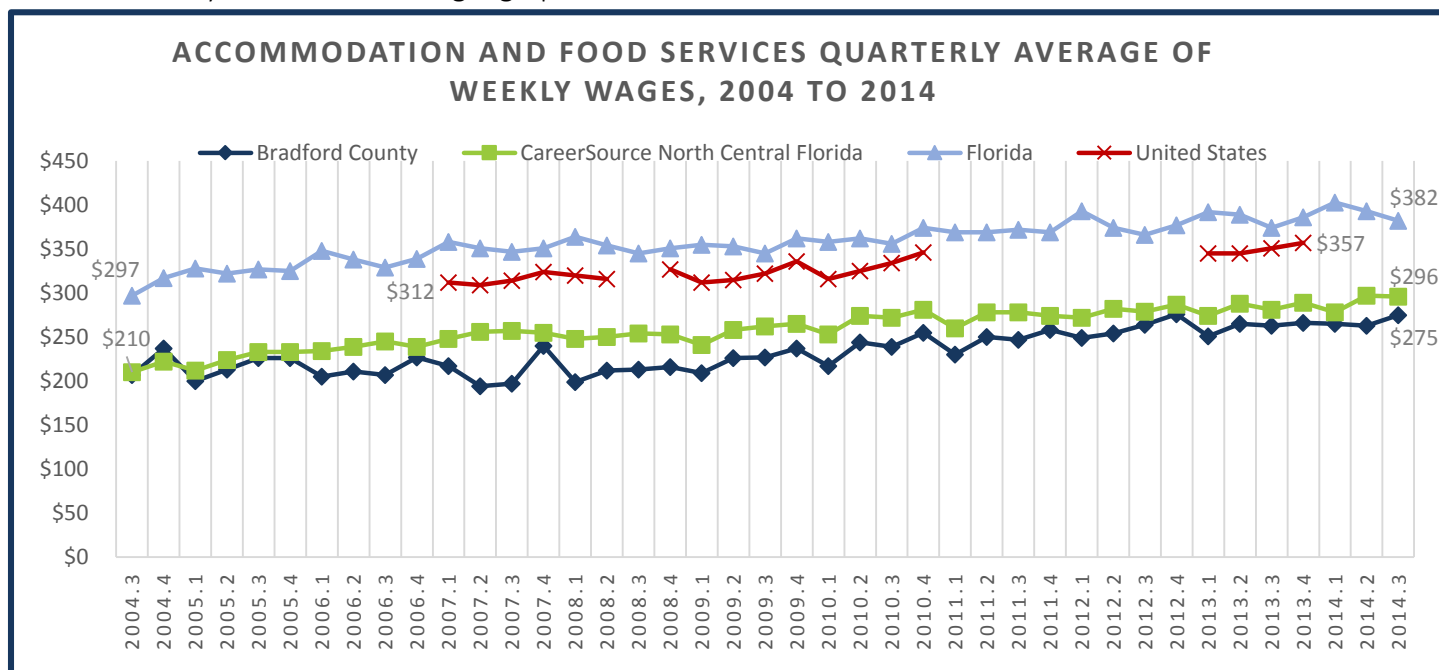
Average weekly wages in Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting in Bradford County began to develop seasonal wage patterns similar to the CareerSource region, state, and nation since 2004. Even with these cyclical changes, Bradford County's average weekly wages were above all other geographies for the majority of the 10-year span, with wages on the rise since the beginning of 2013.



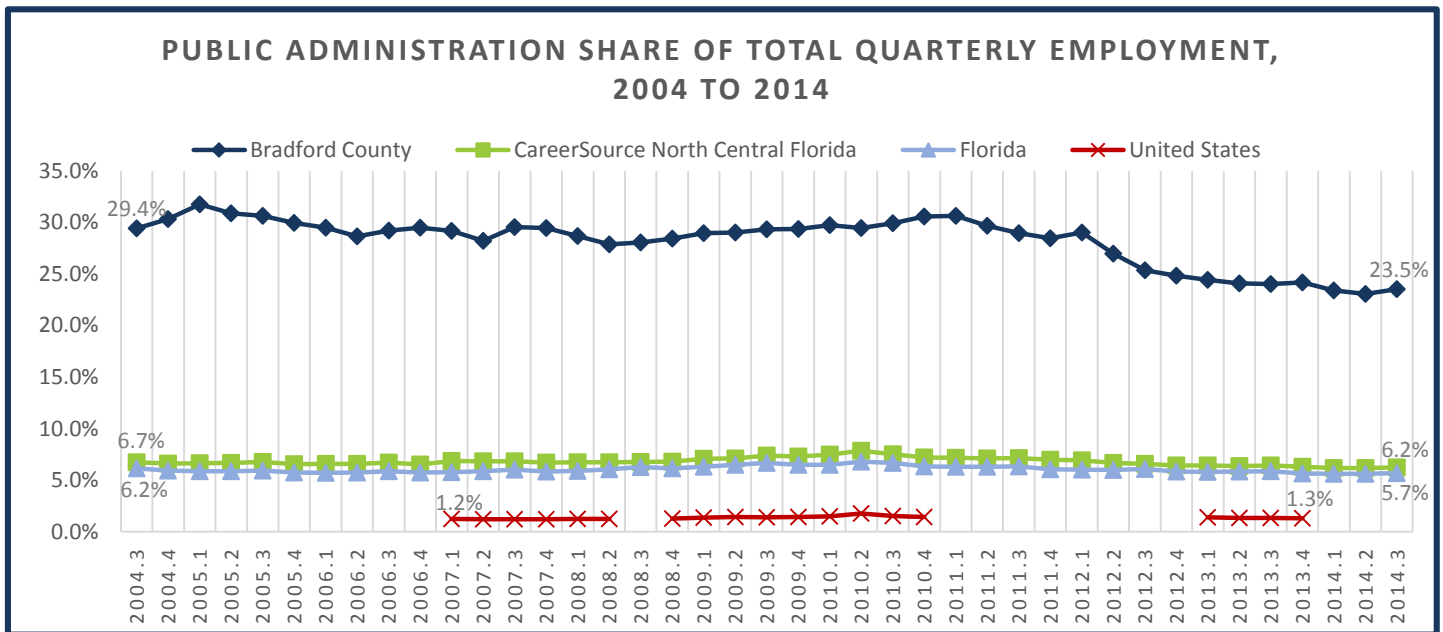
Employment in Accommodation and Food Services as a share of total employment in Bradford County generally trended upward from 2004 to 2014, seeing a 10-year high of 13.7 percent in 2014. This contrasts with employment in the CareerSource region, the State of Florida, and the United States, which all saw only slight increases. For most of this period, employment in these sectors made up a larger portion of total employment in Bradford County than in the other geographies, indicating that the industry sector may currently be an economic base for the local economy.



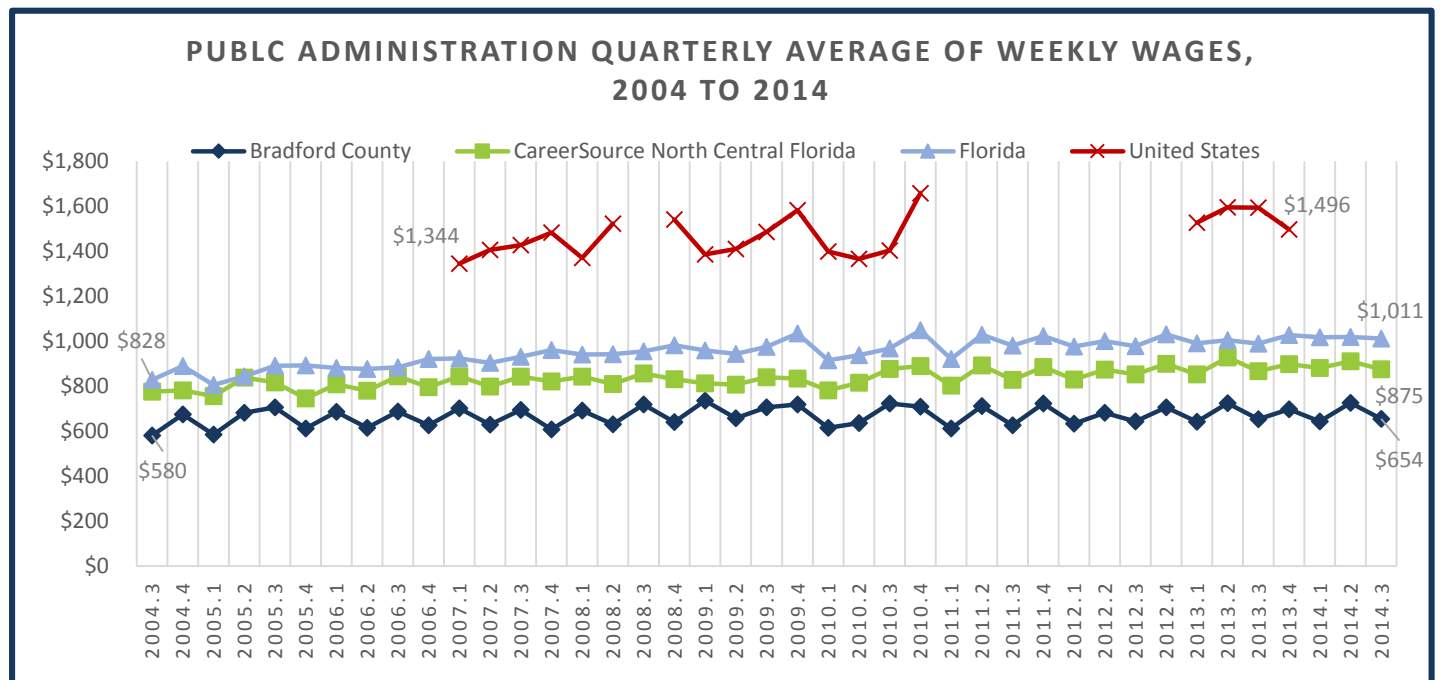
Average weekly wages in Accommodation and Food Services increased fairly steadily, with some deviation, in Bradford County from 2004 to 2014; this pattern was similar to that experienced by the CareerSource region, the State of Florida, and the United States. However, average weekly wages in these sectors were generally lower in Bradford County than in the other geographies.



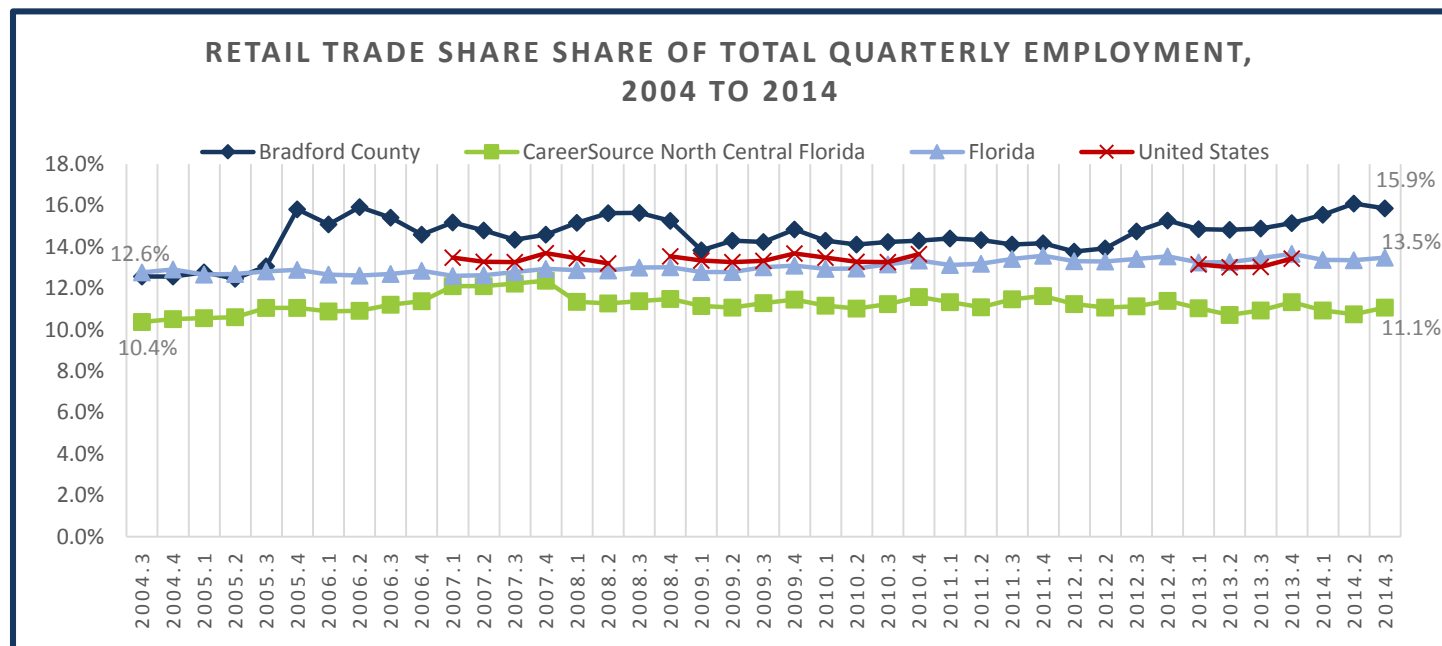
The share of total employment constituted by Public Administration from 2004 to 2014 was much higher and more variable in Bradford County than in the CareerSource region, the State of Florida, and the United States. While a slight decline in this sector's share of total employment was evident in the CareerSource region and the State of Florida across this period, a much steeper decline was readily apparent in Bradford County, losing six percent of the industry sector's employment share in the local economy over the 10-year span. However, Public Administration still remains the largest industry sector in Bradford County.



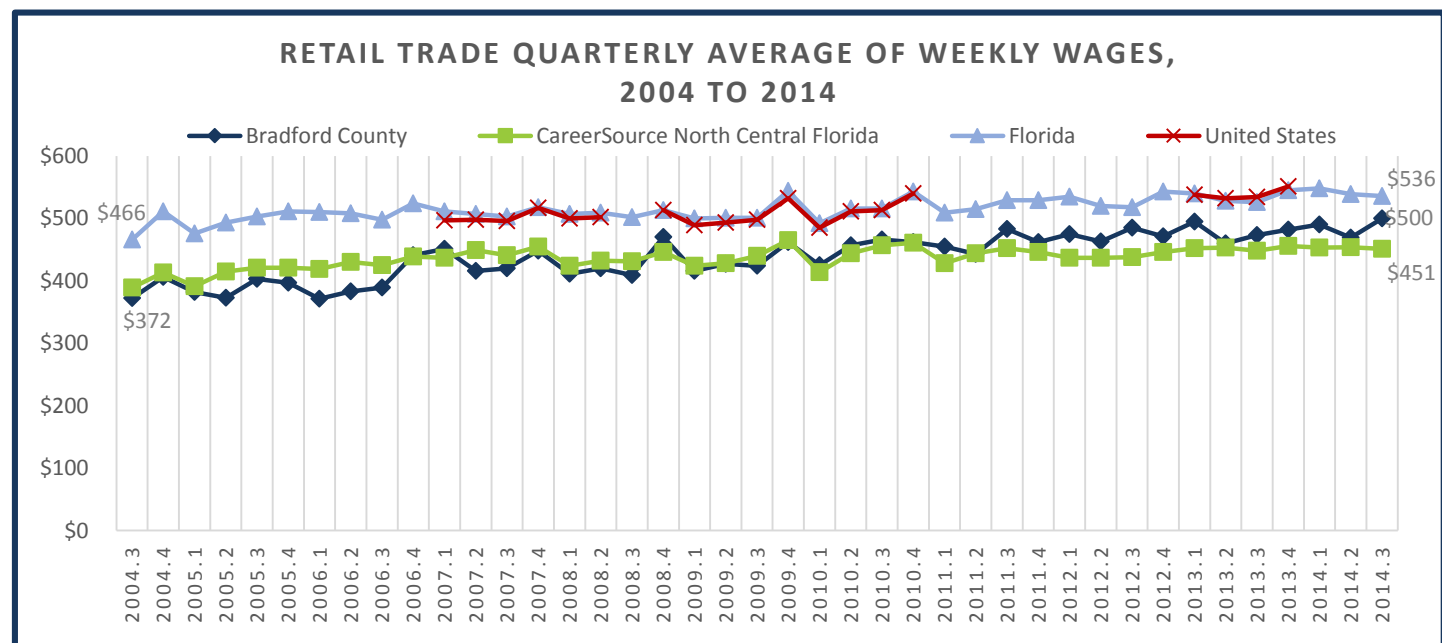
Average weekly wages in Public Administration from 2004 to 2014 were very cyclical, especially in Bradford County. Wages in this sector remained lower and flatter in Bradford County than in the other three geographies throughout this entire period; in contrast, average weekly wages in the CareerSource region and the State of Florida both experienced positive growth.



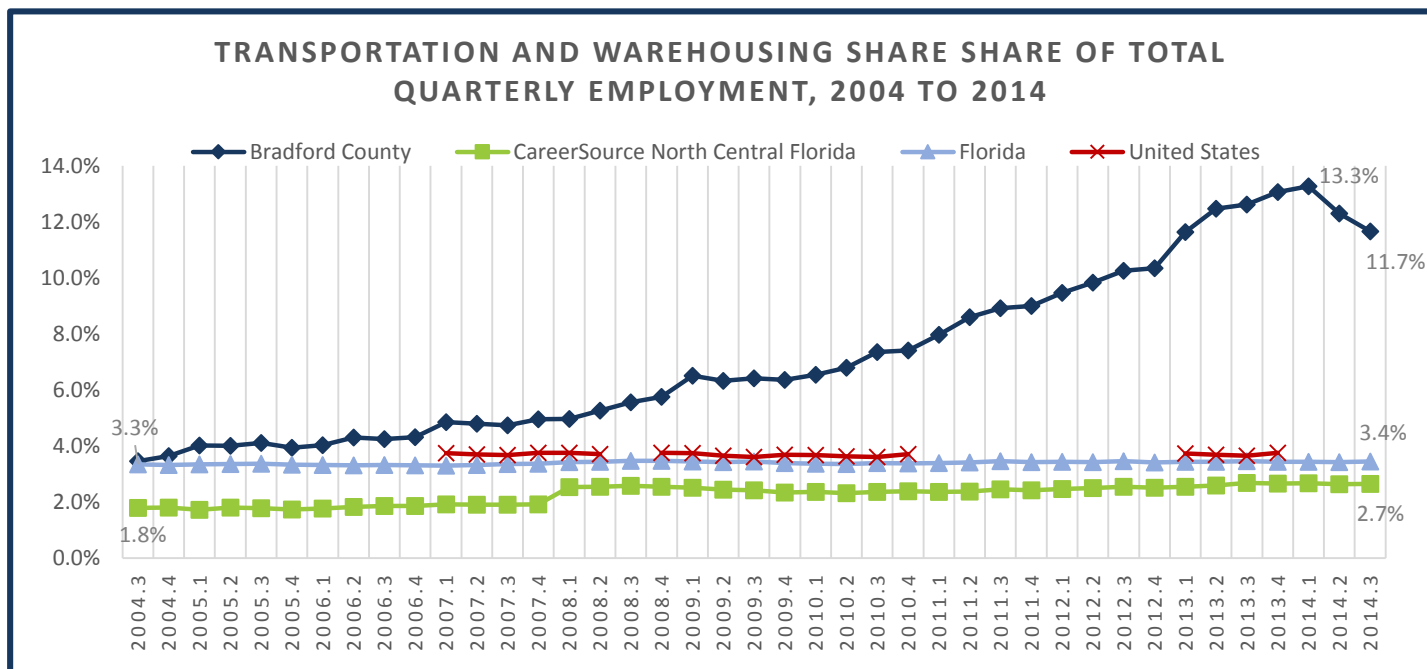
The share of total employment constituted by Retail Trade generally increased across all geographies for most of the period from 2004 to 2014 but was both higher and more varied in Bradford County than in the CareerSource region, the State of Florida, and the United States. Total employment share constituted by Retail Trade in Bradford County rose by more than three percentage points over the 10-year span, a rate of increase greater than any of the other three geographies.



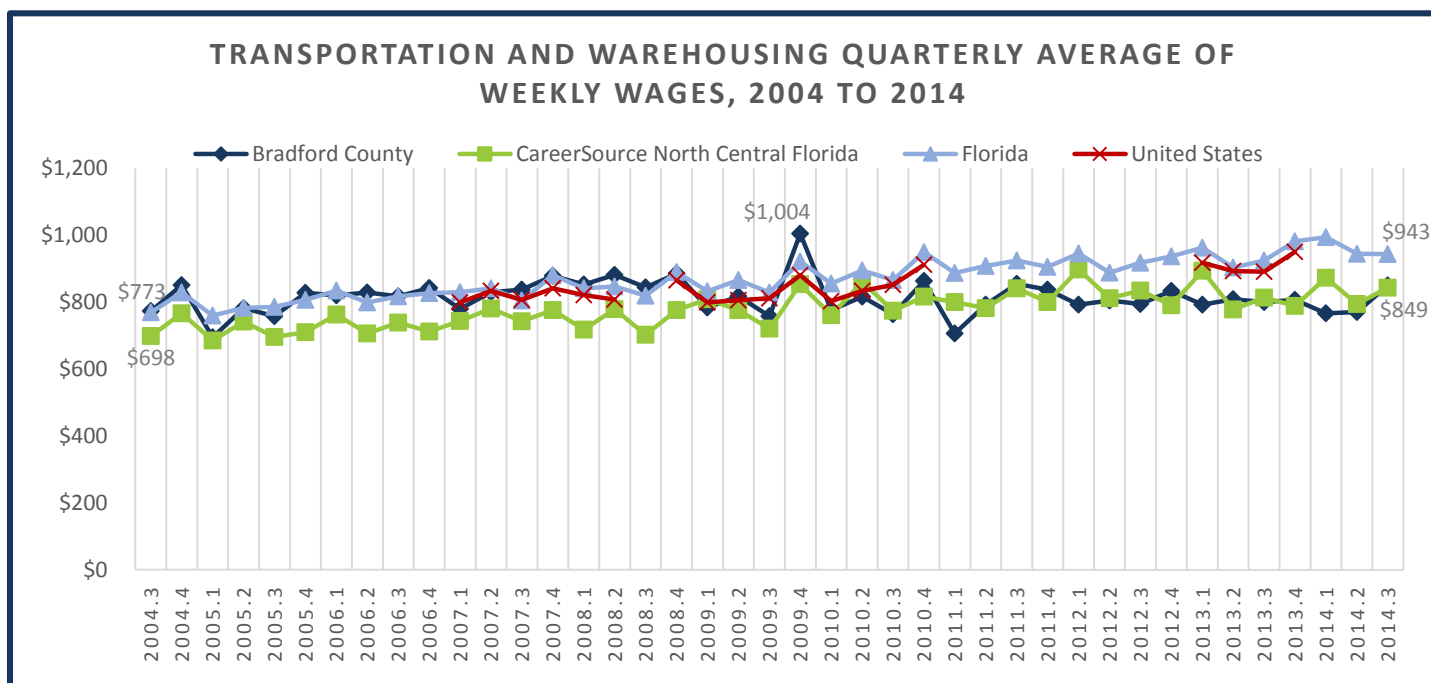
Average weekly wages in Retail Trade generally increased in Bradford County, the CareerSource region, the State of Florida, and the United States from 2004 to 2014. Although wages in Bradford County and the CareerSource region were both below those in the state and nation over this period, average weekly wages in Retail Trade in Bradford County surpassed those of the CareerSource region during this time, reporting a 10-year high of \$500 in the third quarter of 2014.



The industry sector that saw the most growth in Bradford County between 2004 and 2014 was Transportation and Warehousing. While the CareerSource region, state, and nation saw little to no change in the industry sector, Bradford County saw an employment share increase of approximately 10 percentage points to reach a 10-year high of 13.3 percent in early 2014. Although the industry sector saw a decline in 2014, it still remained more than eight percentage points higher than in 2004 and is a major economic base for Bradford County.



Average weekly wages in Transportation and Warehousing from 2004 to 2014 in Bradford County tracked closely to average weekly wages in the CareerSource region, the State of Florida, and the United States. However, as average wages in the state and nation have been on a steady rise, Bradford County and the CareerSource region have remained relatively stagnant, causing a growing divide in average weekly wages between the geographies.



Job Flow and Commuting Patterns

Understanding the employment location of the labor force can help to identify how efficient a community is at keeping its residents employed in the local economy. Conversely, it can provide insight into how many outside residents are commuting into the county for employment. The patterns of these commutes can help guide recommendations and strategies for keeping more residents employed locally and capitalizing further on those employed in the community but residing elsewhere.

CLICK STEPS: JOB FLOW AND COMMUTING

Data for Starke job flow and commuting patterns was retrieved using the U.S. Census Bureau's **OnTheMap analysis tool**, accessible here: <http://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>. OnTheMap provides data mapping analyses for annual employment and demographic data from 2002 through 2011 for geographies as specific as the ZIP code and Census Block Group up through the city, county, and statewide level.

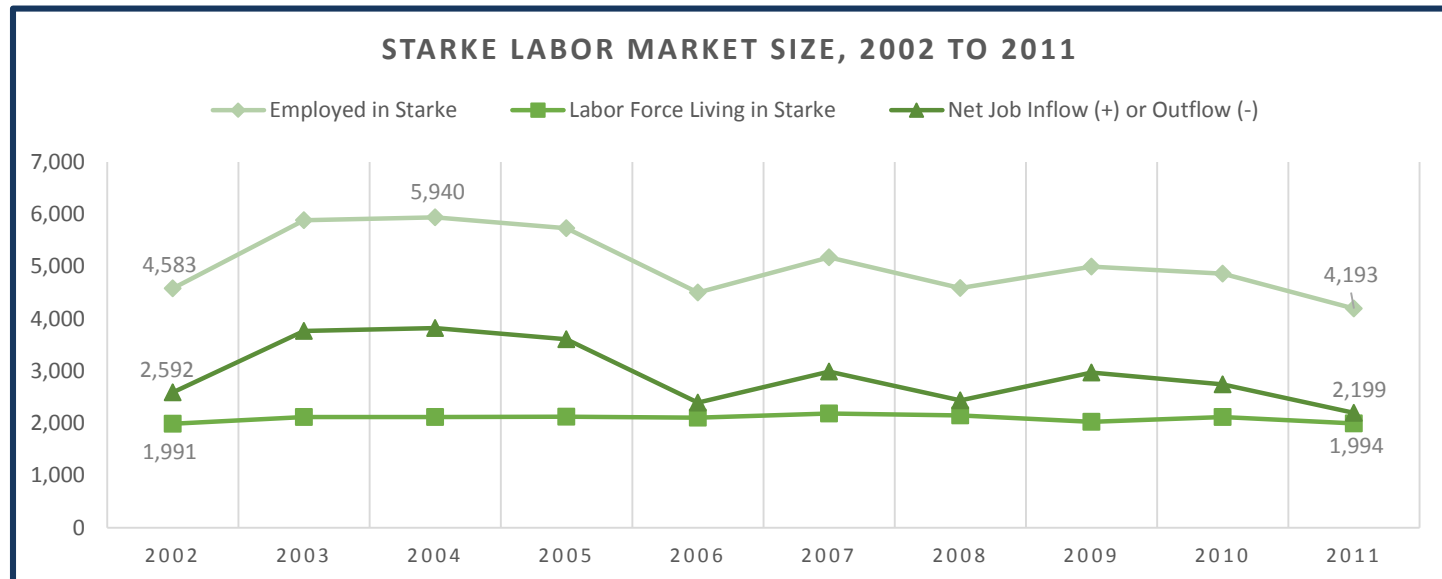
To access the data used in the Job Flow and Commuting Patterns section of the Competitive Analysis:

- First begin by searching for and selecting the desired geography. Once selected, the option will appear to "Perform Analysis on Selection Area." This will then allow you to customize your analysis.
- For the sake of this study, under "Analysis Type" the comprehensive "Inflow/Outflow" analysis was chosen.
- After selecting the years to analyze and job type, by selecting "Go," a mapping of the selected data will appear.
- In order to export the data to a usable format, such as Excel, under "Report/Map Outputs" select "Detailed Report," then "Export to XLS."

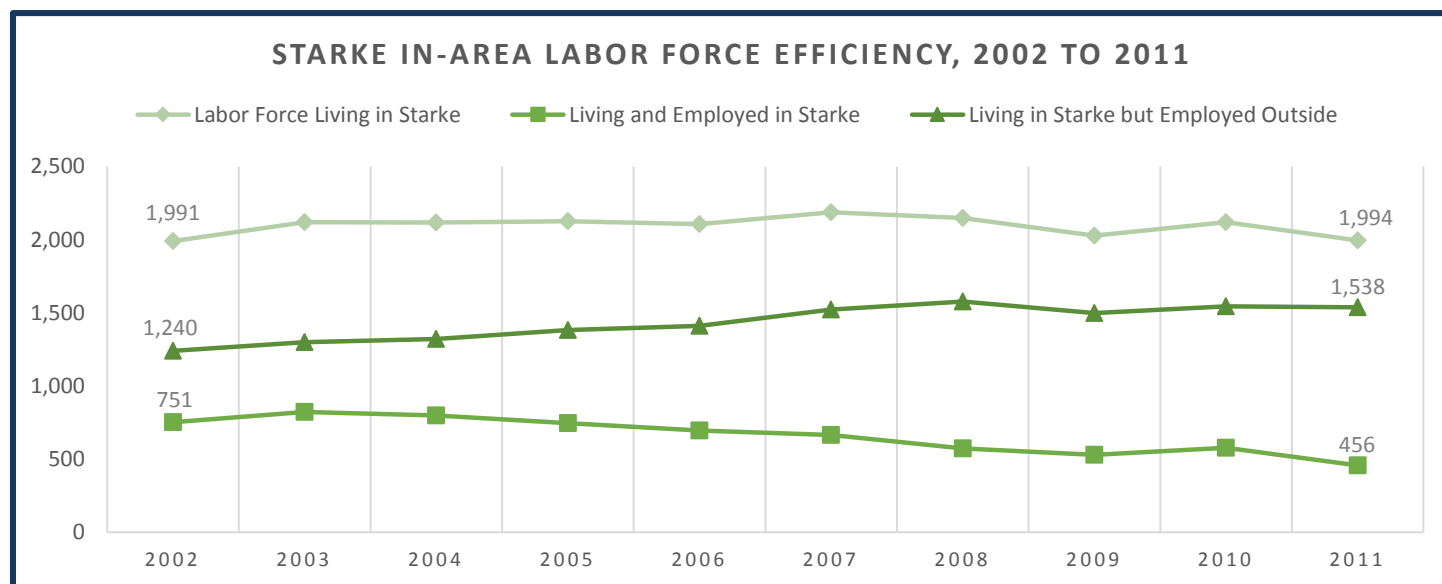
From here the data can be organized however the user prefers, such as the line charts presented below. The job type used for the Competitive Analysis was "Primary Jobs." The Census defines this as the highest paying job for an individual worker, both public and private.

Job Flow and Labor Force

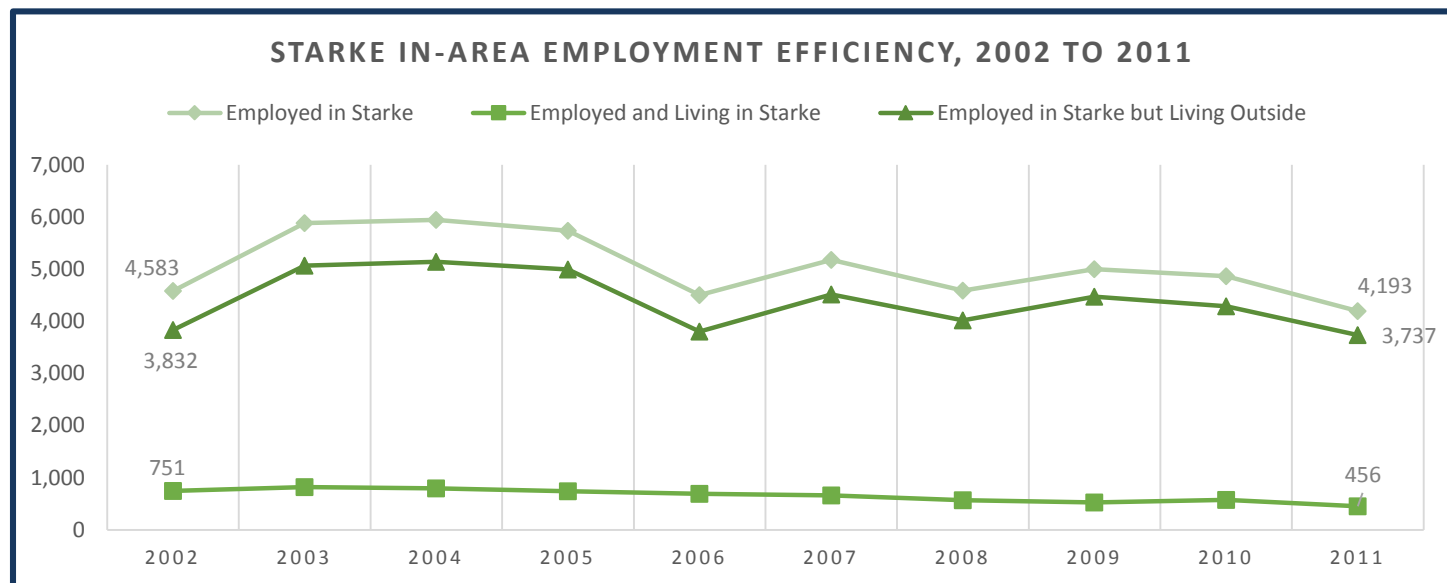
The number of those employed in Starke increased from 4,583 in 2002 to 5,940 in 2004 before declining to 4,193 in 2011. However, the labor force living in Starke was just under 2,000 in 2002 and saw little change over that time. This indicates that there is a large net inflow of workers in Starke that live outside of the city limits, and the fluctuation in the number of people employed in Starke is primarily due to changes in the inflow of workers.



The number of members of Starke's labor force that lived in the city stayed relatively constant from 2002 to 2011. However, the number living and employed in Starke decreased by nearly 300 over this same period, while the number living in Starke but employed outside increased over this time by nearly 300.

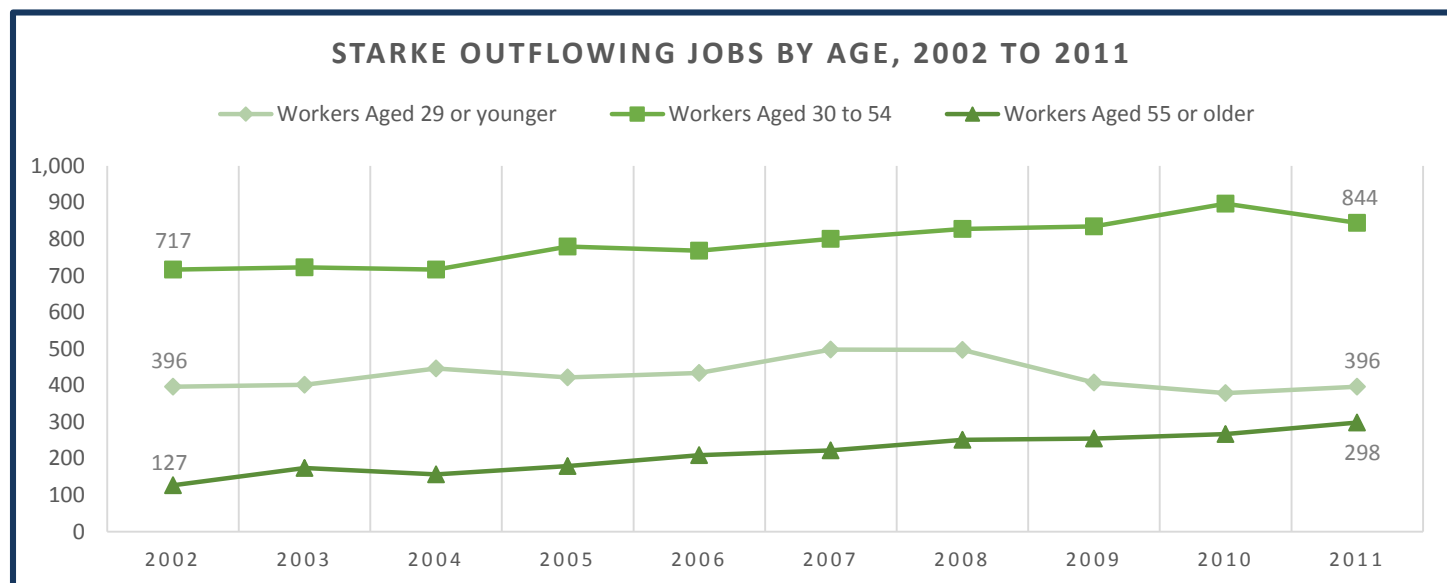


The number employed in Starke declined overall from 2002 to 2011. From 2002 to 2004, Starke experienced an increase from 4,583 to 5,940 before declining to 4,193 by 2011. Those workers employed and living in Starke only accounted for approximately 16 percent of all workers employed in Starke in 2002, and that declined to less than 11 percent by 2011. The majority of workers employed in Starke live outside of the city, with employment patterns being similar to the overall pattern of workers employed in Starke.

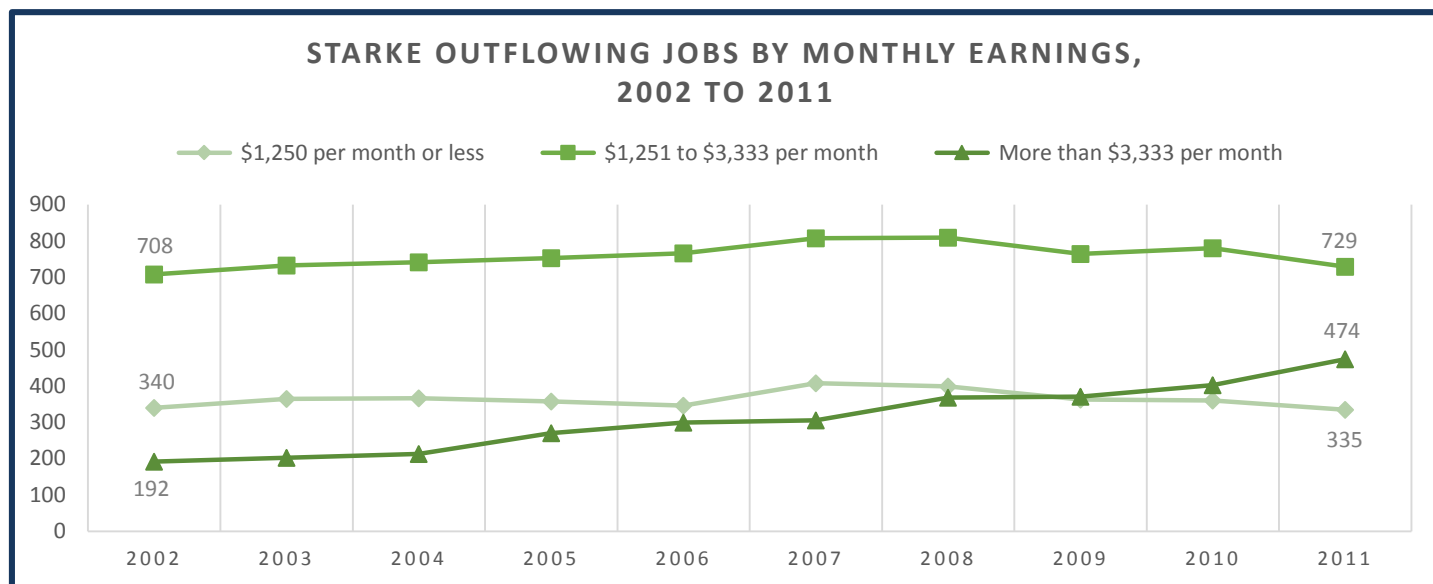


Commuting Demographic and Employment Patterns

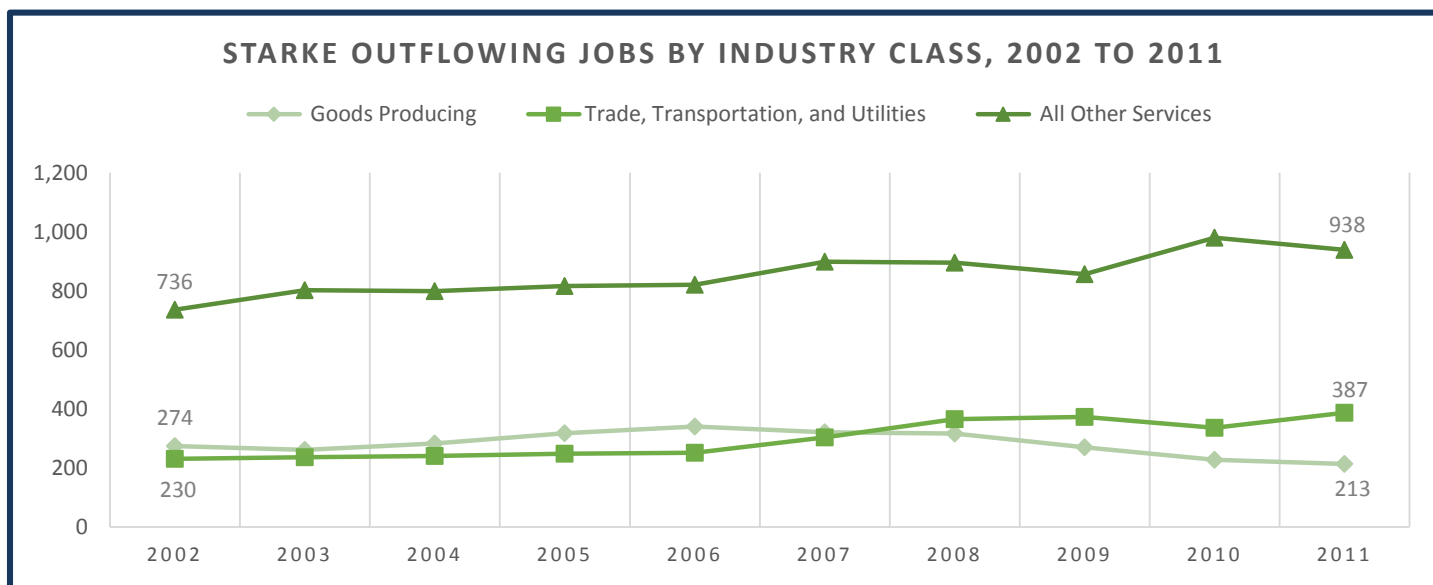
Workers aged 30 to 54 constituted the largest group of people commuting out of Starke for employment, and a steady rise from 2002 to 2011. The number of workers 55 and older was the smallest group but saw the greatest overall increase between 2002 and 2011. The number of workers aged 29 or younger living in Starke but working outside stayed fairly flat over this period, having the same number of workers commuting out of Starke in 2002 as in 2011.



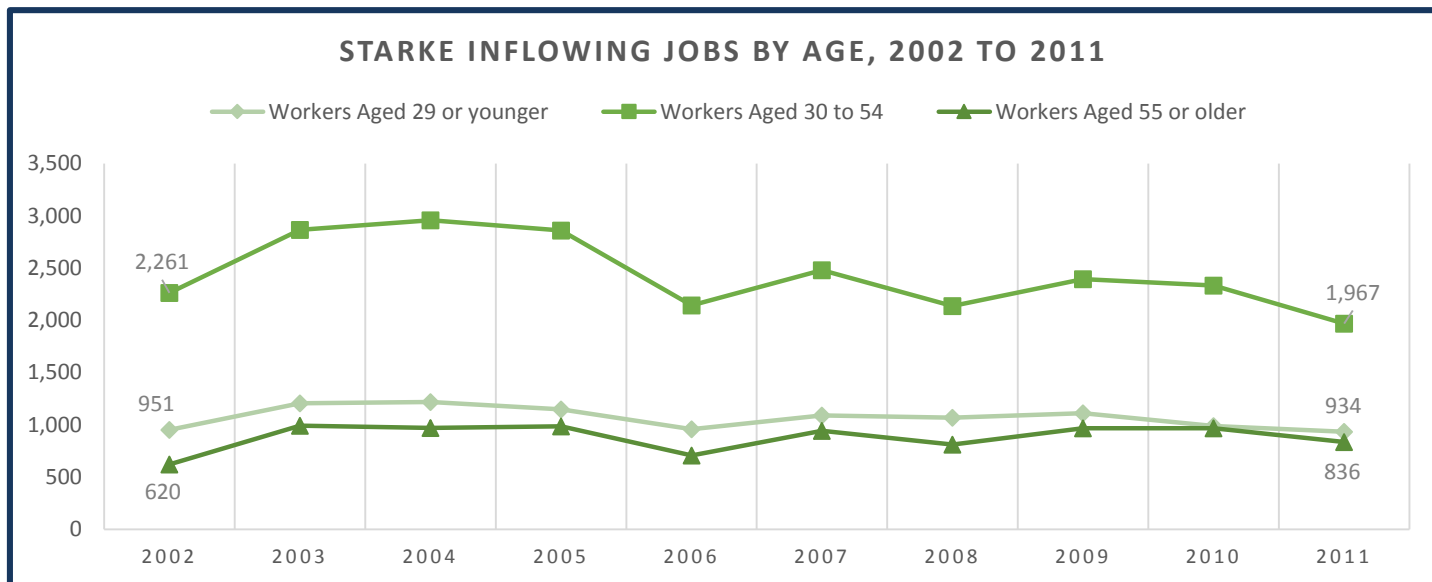
Workers earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month was the largest group commuting out of Starke for employment, seeing a slight increase between 2002 and 2011. While the number of workers earning \$1,250 per month or less saw little change between 2002 and 2011, it was surpassed by the number of outflowing jobs earning \$3,333 per month or more in 2009, which more than doubled between 2002 and 2011.



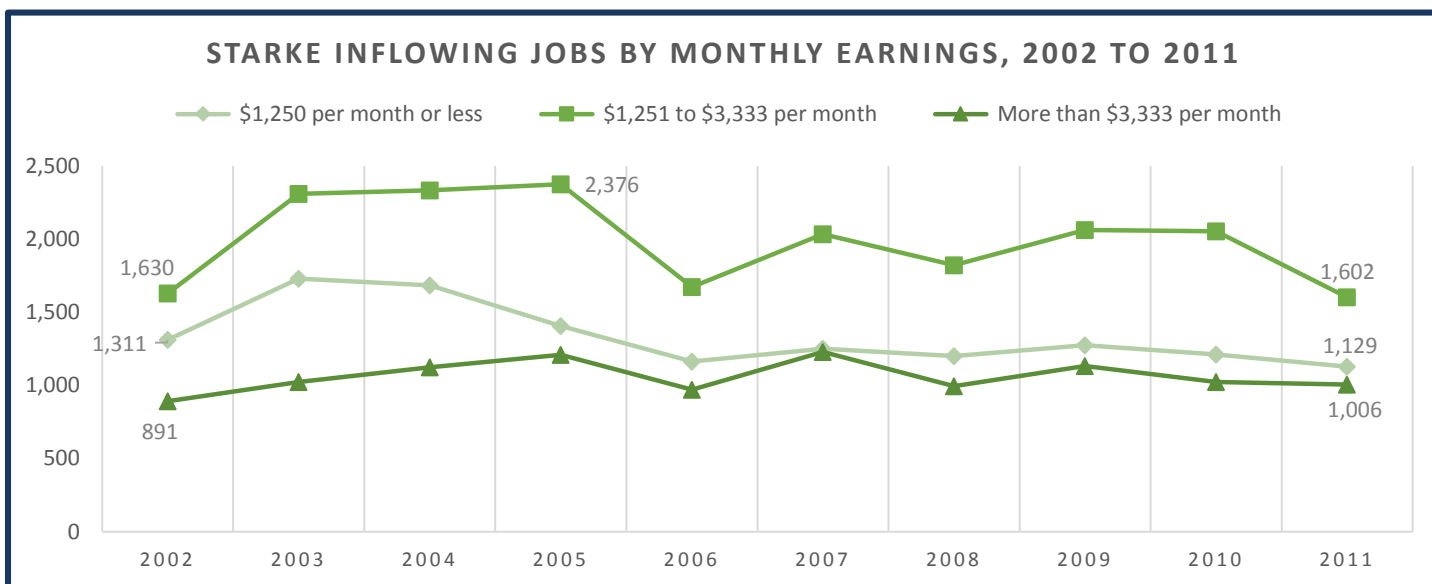
The majority of workers commuting out of Starke for employment are in the All Other Services industry class, seeing an overall increase of more than 200 between 2002 and 2011. The number of workers commuting out of Starke in the Trade, Transportation, and Utilities increased by more than 150 between 2002 and 2011, surpassing those in the Goods Producing industry class, which saw a steady decline from 2006 to 2011.



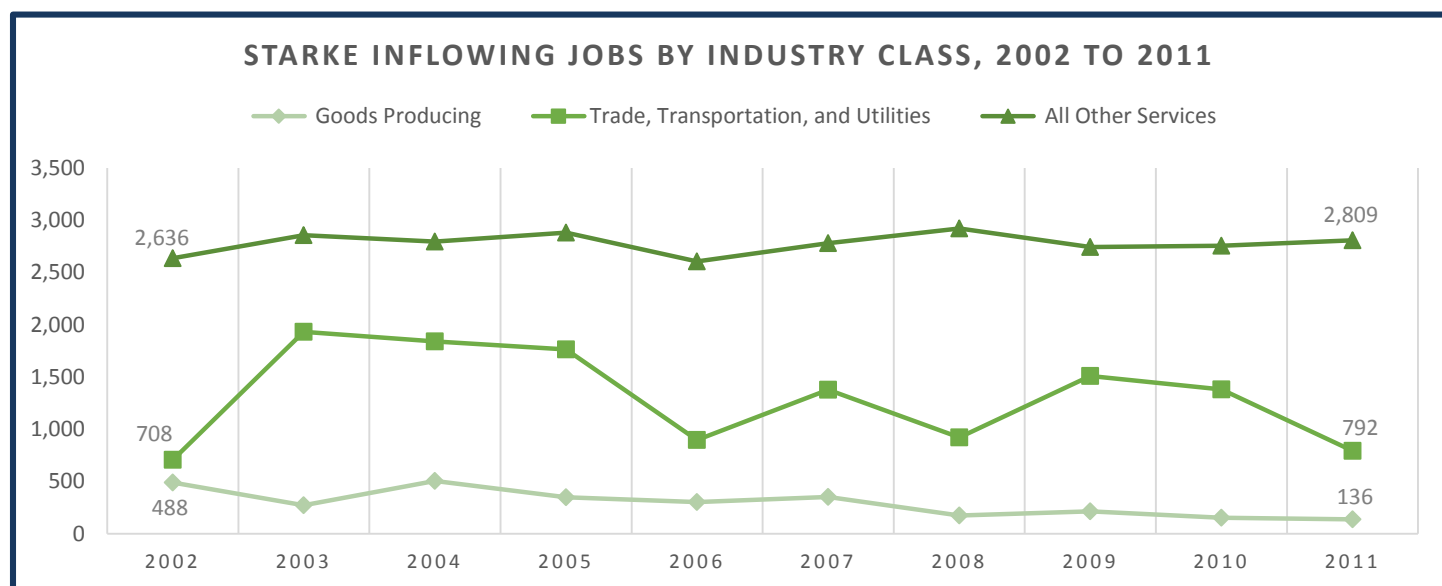
Workers aged 30 to 54 constituted the largest group of those employed in inflowing jobs throughout the entire period of 2002 to 2011. The number of workers aged 29 or younger and aged 30 to 54 commuting into Starke for jobs both decreased from 2002 to 2011. In contrast, the number of inflowing jobs taken by workers aged 55 or older saw an overall increase of more than 200 from 2002 to 2011.



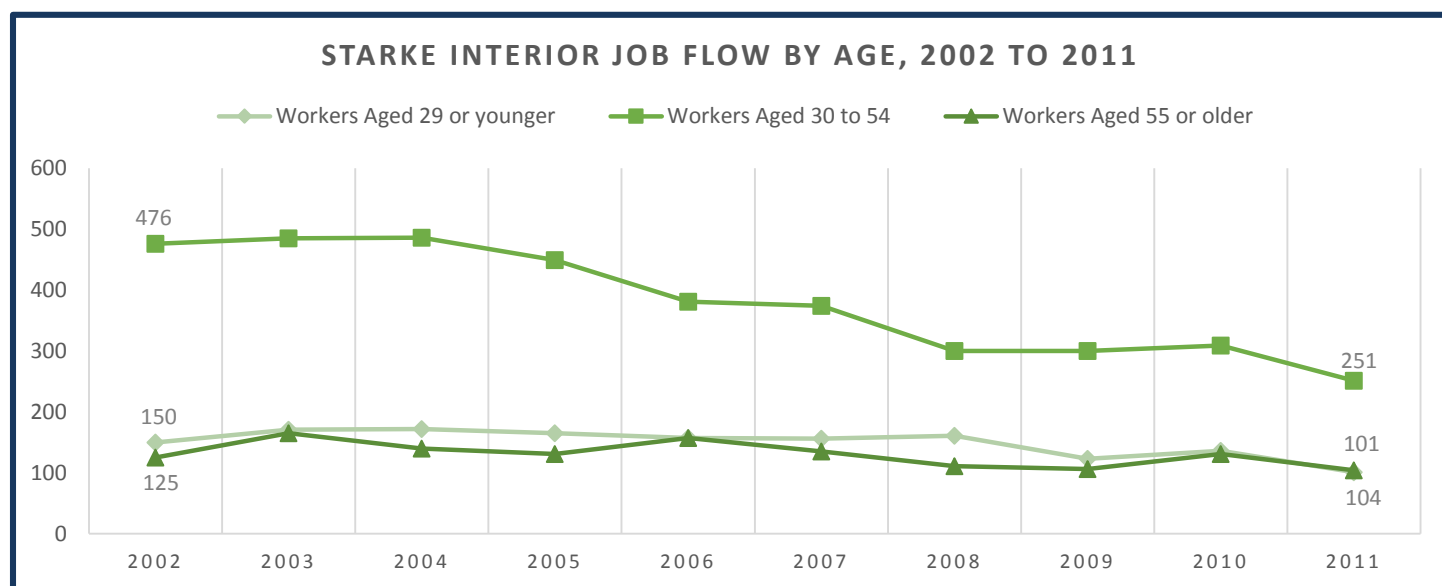
Jobs earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month made up the largest group of jobs inflowing to Starke from 2002 to 2011. The number of jobs in this income group saw fluctuation during this period, with a decline of more than 700 between 2005 and 2011. Jobs earning \$1,250 per month or less made up the second-largest group of jobs inflowing to Starke, though it saw an overall decline from 2002 to 2011. The only income level that saw an increase of inflowing jobs was for those earning more than \$3,333 per month, growing by more than 200 between 2002 and 2011.



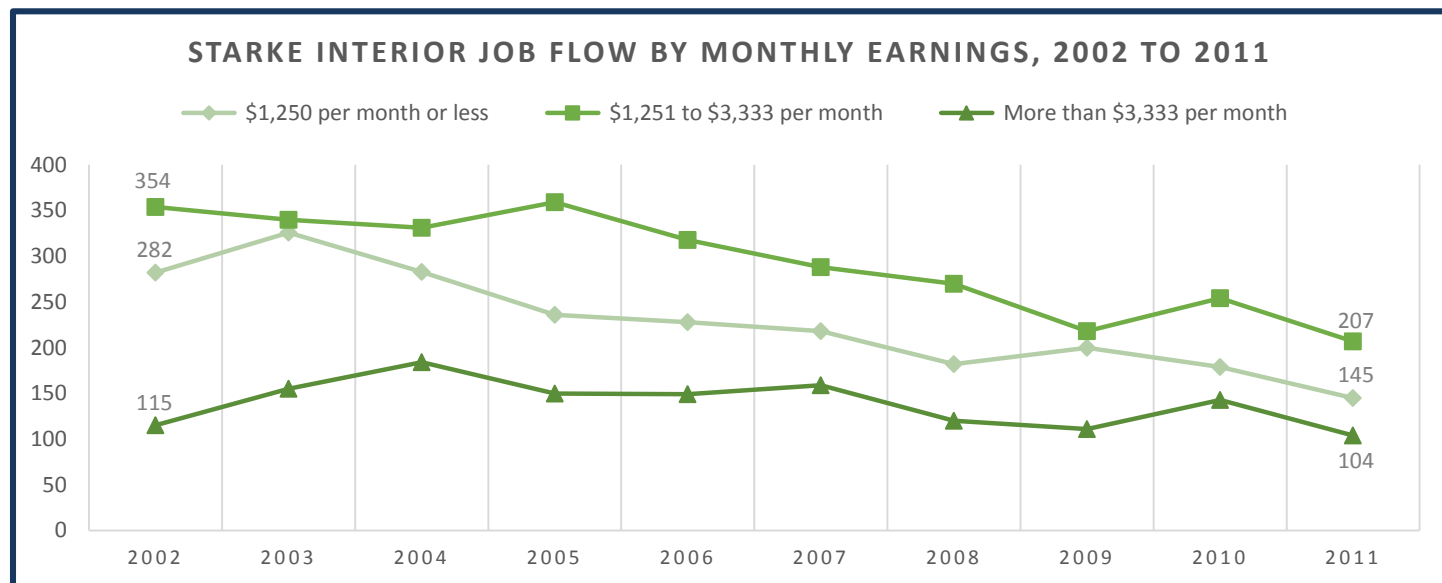
Goods Producing industries had the smallest number of jobs inflowing to Starke from 2002 to 2011, and saw a decline of approximately 350 jobs during that time. The number of jobs produced by these industries decreased from 488 in 2002 to 136 in 2011. Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industries had the second-largest number of inflowing jobs, but saw a high level of fluctuation. The number of jobs produced by these industries increased overall from 708 in 2002 to 792 in 2011; however, this growth was characterized by periods of rapid growth followed by large subsequent declines. All Other Services produced the largest number of jobs inflowing to Starke from 2002 to 2011, seeing a steady overall increase during this time.



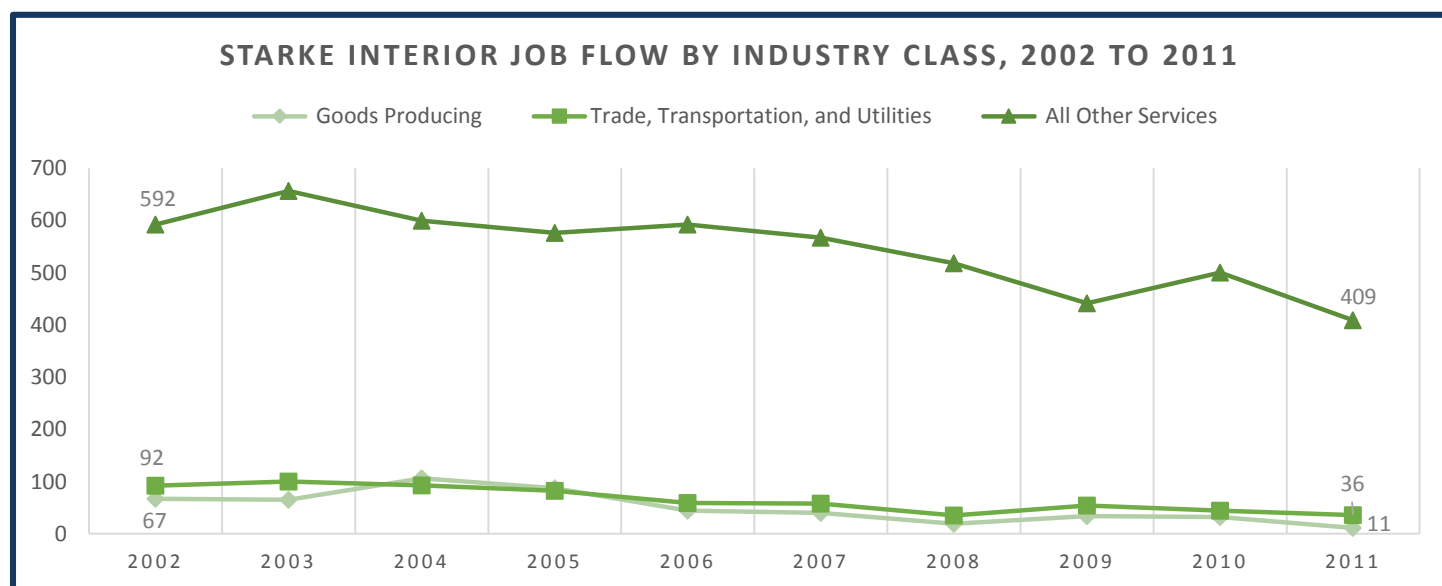
The number of jobs in Starke occupied by Starke residents from 2002 to 2011 decreased across all age groups. Workers aged 30 to 54 were the largest age group during this time, but also saw the largest overall decrease of more than 200 jobs. Workers aged 29 or younger and 55 or older that both live and work in Starke maintained similar numbers from 2002 to 2011, seeing steady declines during that time period.



The number of Starke jobs occupied by Starke residents decreased across all monthly earnings brackets from 2002 to 2011. The largest income group of interior jobs, those earning \$1,251 to \$3,333, had the largest decrease from over this period of nearly 150. Those earning \$1250 per month or less saw the second-highest decrease but remained the second-largest group. Finally, the number of interior jobs earning more than \$3,333 per month, constituting the smallest group, saw a slight overall decline during this time, though it experienced several instances of growth.



The number of Starke jobs occupied by Starke residents from 2002 to 2011 decreased across all industry classes. The All Other Services group was both the largest and saw the greatest decline during this time, decreasing by more than 180 jobs. The number of interior jobs in Trade, Transportation, and Utilities as well Good Producing industries both saw a steady decline from 2002 to 2011, with Goods Producing industries reaching its lowest mark during that time in 2011.



Conclusion

The Competitive Analysis is aimed at providing a bird's-eye, comprehensive overview of the community that may be informative for strategic decision making. This analysis was conducted from an outsider's perspective with limited local knowledge and should be recognized as such.

This document also stands to provide guidance on how a community can access data moving forward, whether to track progress or inform decisions, and ultimately utilize public data to the community's advantage.

For any questions or comments, please contact CompetitiveFlorida@deo.myflorida.com.

Appendices

Appendix A: Demographics

Bradford County Population Distribution by Age Cohort, 2000 vs 2010				
Cohort	2000	Percent	2010	Percent
5 years	1,444	5.5%	1670	5.9%
5 to 9 years	1,540	5.9%	1571	5.5%
10 to 14 years	1,664	6.4%	1497	5.2%
15 to 19 years	1,767	6.8%	1571	5.5%
20 to 24 years	1,788	6.9%	1877	6.6%
25 to 34 years	1,886	7.2%	2334	8.2%
35 to 44 years	1,983	7.6%	2015	7.1%
45 to 54 years	2,244	8.6%	1917	6.7%
55 to 59 years	2,264	8.7%	1904	6.7%
60 to 64 years	1,930	7.4%	2300	8.1%
65 to 74 years	1,678	6.4%	2239	7.9%
75 to 84 years	1,372	5.3%	1874	6.6%
85 years and over	1,152	4.4%	1638	5.7%

Starke Population Distribution by Age Cohort, 2000 vs 2010				
Cohort	2000	Percent	2010	Percent
5 years	376	6.7%	434	8.0%
5 to 9 years	403	7.2%	377	6.9%
10 to 14 years	446	8.0%	287	5.3%
15 to 19 years	441	7.9%	352	6.5%
20 to 24 years	372	6.7%	400	7.3%
25 to 34 years	335	6.0%	384	7.0%
35 to 44 years	332	5.9%	271	5.0%
45 to 54 years	365	6.5%	251	4.6%
55 to 59 years	374	6.7%	291	5.3%
60 to 64 years	360	6.4%	365	6.7%
65 to 74 years	312	5.6%	346	6.3%
75 to 84 years	227	4.1%	346	6.3%
85 years and over	238	4.3%	317	5.8%

Appendix B: Employment

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	13	76	1.2%	\$528	2009.4	11	71	\$791	1.1%
2004.4	12	74	1.2%	\$576	2010.1	11	72	\$562	1.2%
2005.1	12	73	1.2%	\$528	2010.2	11	82	\$528	1.3%
2005.2	13	81	1.4%	\$552	2010.3	11	83	\$559	1.4%
2005.3	13	86	1.4%	\$602	2010.4	12	74	\$769	1.2%
2005.4	13	81	1.3%	\$610	2011.1	11	71	\$553	1.2%
2006.1	12	83	1.3%	\$608	2011.2	12	75	\$597	1.2%
2006.2	12	76	1.2%	\$641	2011.3	12	81	\$613	1.3%
2006.3	12	73	1.1%	\$653	2011.4	12	77	\$803	1.3%
2006.4	12	78	1.2%	\$596	2012.1	12	80	\$567	1.3%
2007.1	10	76	1.2%	\$655	2012.2	12	79	\$587	1.3%
2007.2	11	74	1.1%	\$756	2012.3	12	67	\$564	1.2%
2007.3	11	73	1.1%	\$685	2012.4	11	66	\$727	1.2%
2007.4	11	69	1.1%	\$771	2013.1	12	73	\$505	1.3%
2008.1	12	68	1.0%	\$730	2013.2	13	68	\$615	1.2%
2008.2	11	71	1.1%	\$676	2013.3	13	61	\$631	1.1%
2008.3	11	69	1.1%	\$720	2013.4	15	82	\$945	1.4%
2008.4	10	67	1.1%	\$672	2014.1	15	73	\$599	1.3%
2009.1	10	68	1.1%	\$633	2014.2	15	74	\$619	1.3%
2009.2	11	66	1.0%	\$629	2014.3	16	66	\$663	1.2%
2009.3	11	73	1.2%	\$599					

Accommodation and Food Services									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	34	718	11.5%	\$207	2009.4	42	784	12.5%	\$237
2004.4	35	769	12.6%	\$237	2010.1	43	715	11.6%	\$217
2005.1	32	507	8.7%	\$200	2010.2	45	736	11.9%	\$244
2005.2	33	499	8.3%	\$213	2010.3	43	741	12.3%	\$239
2005.3	33	496	8.3%	\$226	2010.4	44	727	11.9%	\$255
2005.4	36	499	8.0%	\$226	2011.1	42	720	11.8%	\$230
2006.1	38	627	9.9%	\$205	2011.2	43	736	12.0%	\$250
2006.2	37	634	9.9%	\$211	2011.3	43	684	11.1%	\$247
2006.3	37	595	9.2%	\$207	2011.4	44	672	11.0%	\$258
2006.4	38	617	9.6%	\$227	2012.1	43	656	11.0%	\$249
2007.1	40	645	10.0%	\$217	2012.2	44	684	11.5%	\$254
2007.2	40	777	11.6%	\$194	2012.3	40	636	11.1%	\$264
2007.3	40	727	11.2%	\$197	2012.4	39	655	11.5%	\$276
2007.4	40	676	10.6%	\$240	2013.1	44	708	12.5%	\$251
2008.1	42	729	11.2%	\$199	2013.2	44	727	12.6%	\$265
2008.2	40	775	11.9%	\$212	2013.3	47	764	13.2%	\$263
2008.3	42	739	11.4%	\$213	2013.4	47	752	12.9%	\$266
2008.4	43	716	11.2%	\$216	2014.1	47	742	13.3%	\$265
2009.1	44	832	13.1%	\$209	2014.2	46	770	13.7%	\$263
2009.2	43	822	12.9%	\$226	2014.3	46	709	12.9%	\$275
2009.3	43	809	12.8%	\$227					

Administrative and Waste Services									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	21	60	1.0%	\$666	2009.4	27	107	1.7%	\$555
2004.4	22	62	1.0%	\$689	2010.1	28	170	2.7%	\$488
2005.1	21	50	0.9%	\$583	2010.2	31	186	3.0%	\$487
2005.2	25	56	0.9%	\$553	2010.3	30	179	3.0%	\$538
2005.3	24	63	1.1%	\$543	2010.4	35	181	3.0%	\$516
2005.4	24	64	1.0%	\$533	2011.1	35	192	3.1%	\$447
2006.1	26	79	1.3%	\$591	2011.2	36	205	3.3%	\$493
2006.2	26	83	1.3%	\$568	2011.3	37	214	3.5%	\$512
2006.3	27	86	1.3%	\$617	2011.4	35	207	3.4%	\$501
2006.4	30	102	1.6%	\$542	2012.1	36	205	3.5%	\$436
2007.1	31	109	1.7%	\$504	2012.2	36	233	3.9%	\$407
2007.2	31	106	1.6%	\$516	2012.3	34	195	3.4%	\$476
2007.3	31	97	1.5%	\$597	2012.4	33	187	3.3%	\$499
2007.4	30	95	1.5%	\$691	2013.1	35	142	2.5%	\$517
2008.1	29	90	1.4%	\$647	2013.2	37	143	2.5%	\$494
2008.2	30	115	1.8%	\$608	2013.3	38	137	2.4%	\$516
2008.3	28	112	1.7%	\$557	2013.4	36	135	2.3%	\$405
2008.4	29	115	1.8%	\$636	2014.1	33	81	1.4%	\$496
2009.1	29	96	1.5%	\$569	2014.2	35	85	1.5%	\$469
2009.2	30	105	1.7%	\$571	2014.3	36	89	1.6%	\$476
2009.3	28	97	1.5%	\$537					

Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	3	12	0.2%	\$207	2009.4	7	39	0.6%	\$185
2004.4	3	12	0.2%	\$164	2010.1	11	42	0.7%	\$200
2005.1	-	-	-	-	2010.2	11	46	0.7%	\$180
2005.2	-	-	-	-	2010.3	11	48	0.8%	\$217
2005.3	3	11	0.2%	\$220	2010.4	10	49	0.8%	\$172
2005.4	3	11	0.2%	\$188	2011.1	7	46	0.8%	\$162
2006.1	5	27	0.4%	\$187	2011.2	7	45	0.7%	\$163
2006.2	5	30	0.5%	\$218	2011.3	7	46	0.7%	\$170
2006.3	5	28	0.4%	\$186	2011.4	7	44	0.7%	\$154
2006.4	6	30	0.5%	\$199	2012.1	8	37	0.6%	\$198
2007.1	6	38	0.6%	\$179	2012.2	8	45	0.8%	\$208
2007.2	6	41	0.6%	\$198	2012.3	8	50	0.9%	\$271
2007.3	7	42	0.6%	\$188	2012.4	8	48	0.8%	\$269
2007.4	7	39	0.6%	\$202	2013.1	8	38	0.7%	\$181
2008.1	6	37	0.6%	\$195	2013.2	8	42	0.7%	\$170
2008.2	6	34	0.5%	\$255	2013.3	8	40	0.7%	\$200
2008.3	7	34	0.5%	\$237	2013.4	9	37	0.6%	\$179
2008.4	7	37	0.6%	\$227	2014.1	9	41	0.7%	\$201
2009.1	7	39	0.6%	\$190	2014.2	9	27	0.5%	\$188
2009.2	7	40	0.6%	\$196	2014.3	8	33	0.60%	\$232
2009.3	7	39	0.6%	\$193					

Construction									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	61	472	7.6%	\$700	2009.4	70	273	4.4%	\$528
2004.4	59	346	5.7%	\$592	2010.1	66	273	4.4%	\$484
2005.1	63	318	5.4%	\$492	2010.2	70	265	4.3%	\$525
2005.2	65	375	6.3%	\$481	2010.3	65	238	3.9%	\$552
2005.3	68	348	5.8%	\$450	2010.4	57	223	3.7%	\$629
2005.4	71	350	5.6%	\$444	2011.1	56	232	3.8%	\$535
2006.1	71	335	5.3%	\$479	2011.2	57	247	4.0%	\$603
2006.2	73	359	5.6%	\$496	2011.3	56	256	4.2%	\$623
2006.3	72	353	5.4%	\$508	2011.4	61	245	4.0%	\$600
2006.4	77	376	5.9%	\$505	2012.1	68	258	4.3%	\$575
2007.1	83	387	6.0%	\$509	2012.2	65	259	4.4%	\$571
2007.2	83	407	6.1%	\$503	2012.3	66	275	4.8%	\$575
2007.3	81	383	5.9%	\$498	2012.4	66	287	5.0%	\$592
2007.4	82	375	5.9%	\$453	2013.1	65	272	4.8%	\$556
2008.1	88	362	5.5%	\$442	2013.2	62	259	4.5%	\$565
2008.2	90	330	5.0%	\$473	2013.3	65	250	4.3%	\$580
2008.3	94	327	5.1%	\$502	2013.4	63	230	4.0%	\$587
2008.4	83	305	4.8%	\$497	2014.1	58	168	3.0%	\$550
2009.1	73	278	4.4%	\$494	2014.2	64	168	3.0%	\$566
2009.2	72	279	4.4%	\$486	2014.3	61	182	3.3%	\$564
2009.3	69	280	4.4%	\$498					

Finance and Insurance									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	15	101	\$659	1.6%	2009.4	21	129	\$665	2.1%
2004.4	14	100	\$554	1.6%	2010.1	19	116	\$563	1.9%
2005.1	14	100	\$541	1.7%	2010.2	19	115	\$576	1.9%
2005.2	14	102	\$553	1.7%	2010.3	20	113	\$599	1.9%
2005.3	15	100	\$583	1.7%	2010.4	21	113	\$599	1.9%
2005.4	15	103	\$635	1.7%	2011.1	20	110	\$566	1.8%
2006.1	17	104	\$587	1.6%	2011.2	19	113	\$570	1.8%
2006.2	17	104	\$547	1.6%	2011.3	20	117	\$594	1.9%
2006.3	18	131	\$493	2.0%	2011.4	18	111	\$667	1.8%
2006.4	18	134	\$541	2.1%	2012.1	17	98	\$586	1.7%
2007.1	19	111	\$612	1.7%	2012.2	17	95	\$668	1.6%
2007.2	17	107	\$595	1.6%	2012.3	17	96	\$610	1.7%
2007.3	17	110	\$630	1.7%	2012.4	17	97	\$723	1.7%
2007.4	17	105	\$655	1.6%	2013.1	16	92	\$646	1.6%
2008.1	19	132	\$545	2.0%	2013.2	16	89	\$718	1.5%
2008.2	19	137	\$529	2.1%	2013.3	15	92	\$645	1.6%
2008.3	20	137	\$594	2.1%	2013.4	15	89	\$731	1.5%
2008.4	20	147	\$545	2.3%	2014.1	19	108	\$615	1.9%
2009.1	20	133	\$580	2.1%	2014.2	18	122	\$630	2.2%
2009.2	21	145	\$522	2.3%	2014.3	20	125	\$583	2.3%
2009.3	21	136	\$621	2.2%					

Health Care and Social Assistance

Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	32	746	12.0%	\$476	2009.4	43	831	13.2%	\$683
2004.4	33	762	12.5%	\$543	2010.1	40	821	13.3%	\$616
2005.1	34	742	12.7%	\$491	2010.2	40	848	13.7%	\$606
2005.2	35	780	13.0%	\$532	2010.3	40	784	13.0%	\$522
2005.3	38	777	13.0%	\$543	2010.4	40	812	13.3%	\$599
2005.4	37	758	12.2%	\$567	2011.1	39	803	13.2%	\$552
2006.1	39	745	11.8%	\$552	2011.2	41	810	13.2%	\$561
2006.2	36	735	11.4%	\$535	2011.3	43	861	14.0%	\$635
2006.3	37	784	12.1%	\$550	2011.4	43	871	14.3%	\$632
2006.4	38	789	12.3%	\$559	2012.1	42	809	13.6%	\$603
2007.1	38	768	11.9%	\$586	2012.2	42	832	14.0%	\$602
2007.2	38	835	12.5%	\$561	2012.3	42	837	14.6%	\$590
2007.3	39	810	12.5%	\$628	2012.4	39	803	14.0%	\$642
2007.4	40	851	13.3%	\$616	2013.1	43	796	14.1%	\$580
2008.1	43	810	12.4%	\$622	2013.2	43	802	13.9%	\$734
2008.2	42	828	12.7%	\$598	2013.3	43	802	13.9%	\$700
2008.3	43	839	13.0%	\$625	2013.4	43	790	13.6%	\$756
2008.4	46	848	13.3%	\$613	2014.1	44	835	14.9%	\$816
2009.1	42	824	13.0%	\$629	2014.2	43	856	15.2%	\$834
2009.2	42	837	13.2%	\$621	2014.3	44	834	15.1%	\$823
2009.3	42	834	13.2%	\$650					

Information									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	7	50	0.8%	\$486	2009.4	7	50	0.8%	\$551
2004.4	7	48	0.8%	\$564	2010.1	7	43	0.7%	\$541
2005.1	7	49	0.8%	\$434	2010.2	7	40	0.6%	\$553
2005.2	7	44	0.7%	\$571	2010.3	7	42	0.7%	\$599
2005.3	8	37	0.6%	\$716	2010.4	7	39	0.6%	\$633
2005.4	8	48	0.8%	\$523	2011.1	8	39	0.6%	\$604
2006.1	6	56	0.9%	\$433	2011.2	7	41	0.7%	\$534
2006.2	6	49	0.8%	\$481	2011.3	7	40	0.6%	\$674
2006.3	6	49	0.8%	\$474	2011.4	7	46	0.8%	\$593
2006.4	7	59	0.9%	\$517	2012.1	8	45	0.8%	\$537
2007.1	7	50	0.8%	\$506	2012.2	8	42	0.7%	\$631
2007.2	7	56	0.8%	\$478	2012.3	8	40	0.7%	\$592
2007.3	7	56	0.9%	\$482	2012.4	8	40	0.7%	\$762
2007.4	7	55	0.9%	\$530	2013.1	7	40	0.7%	\$560
2008.1	7	47	0.7%	\$543	2013.2	7	40	0.7%	\$669
2008.2	7	54	0.8%	\$449	2013.3	7	39	0.7%	\$626
2008.3	7	50	0.8%	\$525	2013.4	7	39	0.7%	\$672
2008.4	7	51	0.8%	\$471	2014.1	6	34	0.6%	\$640
2009.1	7	48	0.8%	\$480	2014.2	6	31	0.6%	\$586
2009.2	7	46	0.7%	\$473	2014.3	6	38	0.7%	\$607
2009.3	7	45	0.7%	\$550					

Manufacturing									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	22	528	8.5%	\$519	2009.4	23	353	5.6%	\$778
2004.4	21	459	7.5%	\$615	2010.1	21	329	5.3%	\$739
2005.1	22	456	7.8%	\$531	2010.2	21	311	5.0%	\$871
2005.2	23	468	7.8%	\$593	2010.3	21	243	4.0%	\$912
2005.3	22	452	7.6%	\$708	2010.4	20	230	3.8%	\$866
2005.4	19	474	7.6%	\$740	2011.1	20	217	3.6%	\$718
2006.1	20	455	7.2%	\$637	2011.2	21	220	3.6%	\$763
2006.2	20	449	7.0%	\$630	2011.3	21	232	3.8%	\$772
2006.3	20	451	7.0%	\$681	2011.4	22	244	4.0%	\$819
2006.4	21	434	6.8%	\$719	2012.1	22	250	4.2%	\$732
2007.1	21	433	6.7%	\$603	2012.2	23	247	4.2%	\$777
2007.2	21	417	6.2%	\$619	2012.3	22	245	4.3%	\$776
2007.3	21	417	6.4%	\$731	2012.4	22	237	4.1%	\$874
2007.4	22	402	6.3%	\$858	2013.1	19	224	4.0%	\$825
2008.1	29	454	7.0%	\$658	2013.2	18	229	4.0%	\$844
2008.2	26	446	6.8%	\$671	2013.3	19	219	3.8%	\$803
2008.3	25	431	6.7%	\$740	2013.4	18	223	3.8%	\$857
2008.4	24	410	6.4%	\$795	2014.1	19	222	4.0%	\$829
2009.1	21	393	6.2%	\$677	2014.2	19	213	3.8%	\$789
2009.2	21	379	6.0%	\$714	2014.3	20	243	4.4%	\$812
2009.3	22	352	5.6%	\$701					

Other Services									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	36	280	4.5%	\$850	2009.4	43	116	1.8%	\$495
2004.4	38	294	4.8%	\$771	2010.1	42	110	1.8%	\$445
2005.1	38	288	4.9%	\$879	2010.2	42	85	1.4%	\$477
2005.2	38	299	5.0%	\$762	2010.3	44	91	1.5%	\$443
2005.3	37	298	5.0%	\$748	2010.4	46	95	1.6%	\$447
2005.4	37	288	4.6%	\$766	2011.1	46	93	1.5%	\$416
2006.1	38	164	2.6%	\$379	2011.2	46	86	1.4%	\$481
2006.2	35	160	2.5%	\$375	2011.3	43	89	1.4%	\$500
2006.3	39	160	2.5%	\$392	2011.4	39	80	1.3%	\$516
2006.4	37	150	2.3%	\$424	2012.1	39	84	1.4%	\$516
2007.1	39	158	2.5%	\$403	2012.2	38	87	1.5%	\$514
2007.2	40	163	2.4%	\$394	2012.3	38	85	1.5%	\$471
2007.3	44	166	2.6%	\$404	2012.4	37	88	1.5%	\$522
2007.4	41	146	2.3%	\$448	2013.1	37	79	1.4%	\$554
2008.1	45	191	2.9%	\$353	2013.2	38	84	1.5%	\$567
2008.2	47	155	2.4%	\$419	2013.3	39	81	1.4%	\$523
2008.3	45	151	2.3%	\$415	2013.4	38	80	1.4%	\$616
2008.4	43	141	2.2%	\$442	2014.1	36	78	1.4%	\$618
2009.1	44	132	2.1%	\$410	2014.2	36	78	1.4%	\$631
2009.2	45	125	2.0%	\$453	2014.3	37	83	1.5%	\$561
2009.3	44	126	2.0%	\$443					

Professional and Technical Services									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	43	216	3.5%	\$524	2009.4	48	170	2.7%	\$828
2004.4	45	213	3.5%	\$611	2010.1	49	185	3.0%	\$553
2005.1	49	272	4.7%	\$497	2010.2	51	183	3.0%	\$668
2005.2	49	296	4.9%	\$497	2010.3	49	175	2.9%	\$612
2005.3	49	290	4.9%	\$536	2010.4	47	176	2.9%	\$813
2005.4	49	300	4.8%	\$573	2011.1	45	187	3.1%	\$564
2006.1	50	307	4.9%	\$509	2011.2	46	180	2.9%	\$603
2006.2	52	325	5.1%	\$485	2011.3	48	179	2.9%	\$631
2006.3	52	344	5.3%	\$449	2011.4	46	185	3.0%	\$730
2006.4	57	297	4.6%	\$542	2012.1	42	165	2.8%	\$552
2007.1	53	246	3.8%	\$518	2012.2	41	159	2.7%	\$582
2007.2	52	261	3.9%	\$540	2012.3	42	154	2.7%	\$617
2007.3	53	217	3.3%	\$597	2012.4	43	152	2.7%	\$740
2007.4	53	217	3.4%	\$605	2013.1	40	139	2.5%	\$613
2008.1	53	214	3.3%	\$627	2013.2	41	140	2.4%	\$649
2008.2	52	218	3.3%	\$565	2013.3	40	120	2.1%	\$684
2008.3	52	218	3.4%	\$621	2013.4	39	111	1.9%	\$731
2008.4	54	209	3.3%	\$719	2014.1	37	100	1.8%	\$629
2009.1	47	180	2.8%	\$579	2014.2	37	100	1.8%	\$657
2009.2	45	164	2.6%	\$625	2014.3	37	104	1.9%	\$709
2009.3	46	180	2.8%	\$543					

Public Administration									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	32	1832	29.4%	\$580	2009.4	33	1842	29.4%	\$718
2004.4	32	1856	30.3%	\$674	2010.1	33	1840	29.7%	\$614
2005.1	32	1857	31.8%	\$584	2010.2	33	1826	29.5%	\$636
2005.2	32	1852	30.9%	\$681	2010.3	33	1807	29.9%	\$722
2005.3	32	1828	30.6%	\$706	2010.4	32	1862	30.6%	\$708
2005.4	31	1865	30.0%	\$611	2011.1	32	1868	30.6%	\$612
2006.1	31	1860	29.5%	\$685	2011.2	32	1827	29.7%	\$711
2006.2	31	1841	28.6%	\$615	2011.3	33	1782	29.0%	\$626
2006.3	31	1894	29.2%	\$687	2011.4	33	1738	28.5%	\$722
2006.4	31	1891	29.5%	\$626	2012.1	33	1724	29.0%	\$633
2007.1	30	1881	29.2%	\$702	2012.2	32	1602	27.0%	\$682
2007.2	30	1883	28.2%	\$629	2012.3	32	1451	25.4%	\$643
2007.3	33	1920	29.6%	\$694	2012.4	31	1421	24.8%	\$706
2007.4	33	1885	29.5%	\$607	2013.1	31	1380	24.4%	\$642
2008.1	32	1872	28.7%	\$692	2013.2	31	1388	24.1%	\$724
2008.2	32	1824	27.9%	\$630	2013.3	31	1387	24.0%	\$653
2008.3	32	1813	28.1%	\$718	2013.4	31	1405	24.2%	\$697
2008.4	32	1814	28.4%	\$640	2014.1	31	1310	23.4%	\$643
2009.1	34	1835	29.0%	\$735	2014.2	31	1297	23.1%	\$726
2009.2	33	1846	29.0%	\$657	2014.3	29	1296	23.5%	\$654
2009.3	33	1855	29.3%	\$706					

Real Estate and Rental and Leasing									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	18	45	0.7%	\$381	2009.4	22	42	0.7%	\$469
2004.4	19	44	0.7%	\$386	2010.1	19	43	0.7%	\$410
2005.1	21	57	1.0%	\$433	2010.2	19	37	0.6%	\$375
2005.2	23	56	0.9%	\$412	2010.3	17	33	0.5%	\$422
2005.3	25	56	0.9%	\$433	2010.4	17	37	0.6%	\$372
2005.4	24	53	0.9%	\$460	2011.1	16	23	0.4%	\$295
2006.1	22	49	0.8%	\$502	2011.2	15	24	0.4%	\$287
2006.2	24	59	0.9%	\$572	2011.3	15	23	0.4%	\$335
2006.3	23	60	0.9%	\$478	2011.4	14	26	0.4%	\$338
2006.4	23	62	1.0%	\$487	2012.1	14	24	0.4%	\$378
2007.1	22	61	0.9%	\$462	2012.2	15	25	0.4%	\$411
2007.2	21	57	0.9%	\$517	2012.3	15	27	0.5%	\$364
2007.3	23	61	0.9%	\$541	2012.4	16	32	0.6%	\$372
2007.4	21	60	0.9%	\$644	2013.1	15	24	0.4%	\$332
2008.1	22	51	0.8%	\$446	2013.2	15	30	0.5%	\$349
2008.2	20	42	0.6%	\$563	2013.3	16	44	0.8%	\$404
2008.3	20	45	0.7%	\$540	2013.4	18	55	0.9%	\$599
2008.4	19	51	0.8%	\$1,036	2014.1	17	53	0.9%	\$743
2009.1	22	57	0.9%	\$478	2014.2	17	58	1.0%	\$765
2009.2	22	58	0.9%	\$515	2014.3	18	59	1.1%	\$525
2009.3	22	57	0.9%	\$505					

Retail Trade									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	76	782	12.6%	\$372	2009.4	96	931	14.8%	\$462
2004.4	78	769	12.6%	\$406	2010.1	95	885	14.3%	\$425
2005.1	78	747	12.8%	\$382	2010.2	94	875	14.1%	\$457
2005.2	82	748	12.5%	\$373	2010.3	86	860	14.2%	\$466
2005.3	81	780	13.1%	\$403	2010.4	86	871	14.3%	\$462
2005.4	82	985	15.8%	\$397	2011.1	86	879	14.4%	\$455
2006.1	80	952	15.1%	\$371	2011.2	86	882	14.3%	\$443
2006.2	84	1024	15.9%	\$383	2011.3	87	869	14.1%	\$483
2006.3	82	1000	15.4%	\$389	2011.4	86	866	14.2%	\$462
2006.4	84	936	14.6%	\$441	2012.1	81	818	13.8%	\$475
2007.1	86	979	15.2%	\$451	2012.2	83	828	13.9%	\$463
2007.2	85	988	14.8%	\$416	2012.3	89	844	14.8%	\$485
2007.3	85	932	14.4%	\$420	2012.4	89	874	15.3%	\$471
2007.4	89	934	14.6%	\$448	2013.1	91	839	14.9%	\$495
2008.1	98	990	15.2%	\$411	2013.2	89	855	14.8%	\$460
2008.2	98	1022	15.6%	\$420	2013.3	88	859	14.9%	\$473
2008.3	97	1011	15.6%	\$409	2013.4	90	880	15.1%	\$482
2008.4	98	974	15.3%	\$470	2014.1	92	871	15.6%	\$490
2009.1	94	877	13.8%	\$416	2014.2	95	905	16.1%	\$469
2009.2	91	910	14.3%	\$427	2014.3	93	874	15.9%	\$500
2009.3	94	901	14.2%	\$424					

Transportation and Warehousing

Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	23	215	3.5%	\$773	2009.4	26	399	6.4%	\$1,004
2004.4	24	223	3.6%	\$850	2010.1	27	405	6.5%	\$775
2005.1	25	235	4.0%	\$694	2010.2	27	421	6.8%	\$816
2005.2	26	240	4.0%	\$781	2010.3	26	444	7.4%	\$763
2005.3	27	245	4.1%	\$757	2010.4	24	451	7.4%	\$862
2005.4	31	245	3.9%	\$827	2011.1	25	486	8.0%	\$706
2006.1	30	254	4.0%	\$819	2011.2	25	529	8.6%	\$792
2006.2	31	277	4.3%	\$828	2011.3	25	549	8.9%	\$854
2006.3	28	275	4.2%	\$817	2011.4	23	549	9.0%	\$837
2006.4	29	277	4.3%	\$841	2012.1	24	562	9.5%	\$792
2007.1	31	313	4.9%	\$779	2012.2	25	584	9.8%	\$804
2007.2	31	320	4.8%	\$829	2012.3	25	587	10.3%	\$794
2007.3	30	308	4.7%	\$837	2012.4	27	592	10.3%	\$833
2007.4	30	317	5.0%	\$878	2013.1	27	657	11.6%	\$792
2008.1	29	324	5.0%	\$852	2013.2	26	719	12.5%	\$808
2008.2	29	344	5.3%	\$881	2013.3	27	728	12.6%	\$799
2008.3	29	359	5.6%	\$843	2013.4	27	759	13.1%	\$806
2008.4	29	367	5.8%	\$884	2014.1	27	743	13.3%	\$766
2009.1	26	412	6.5%	\$783	2014.2	27	691	12.3%	\$770
2009.2	27	402	6.3%	\$817	2014.3	27	642	11.7%	\$849
2009.3	26	406	6.4%	\$757					

Unclassified									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	-	-	-	-	2009.4	-	-	-	-
2004.4	-	-	-	-	2010.1	-	-	-	-
2005.1	-	-	-	-	2010.2	-	-	-	-
2005.2	-	-	-	-	2010.3	-	-	-	-
2005.3	-	-	-	-	2010.4	-	-	-	-
2005.4	-	-	-	-	2011.1	-	-	-	-
2006.1	-	-	-	-	2011.2	-	-	-	-
2006.2	-	-	-	-	2011.3	-	-	-	-
2006.3	-	-	-	-	2011.4	-	-	-	-
2006.4	4	6	0.1%	\$99	2012.1	-	-	-	-
2007.1	4	5	0.1%	\$170	2012.2	-	-	-	-
2007.2	5	10	0.1%	\$166	2012.3	-	-	-	-
2007.3	4	8	0.1%	\$215	2012.4	-	-	-	-
2007.4	4	10	0.2%	\$170	2013.1	-	-	-	-
2008.1	4	9	0.1%	\$135	2013.2	-	-	-	-
2008.2	-	-	-	-	2013.3	-	-	-	-
2008.3	-	-	-	-	2013.4	-	-	-	-
2008.4	-	-	-	-	2014.1	-	-	-	-
2009.1	-	-	-	-	2014.2	-	-	-	-
2009.2	-	-	-	-	2014.3	-	-	-	-
2009.3	-	-	-	-					

Wholesale Trade									
Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage	Year	Average Establishments	Average Employment	Share of Total Employment	Average Weekly Wage
2004.3	17	90	1.4%	\$509	2009.4	28	137	2.2%	\$867
2004.4	17	87	1.4%	\$519	2010.1	28	137	2.2%	\$805
2005.1	17	94	1.6%	\$561	2010.2	28	144	2.3%	\$779
2005.2	17	101	1.7%	\$550	2010.3	28	155	2.6%	\$795
2005.3	18	98	1.6%	\$535	2010.4	28	146	2.4%	\$999
2005.4	18	101	1.6%	\$519	2011.1	27	132	2.2%	\$842
2006.1	22	211	3.3%	\$1,017	2011.2	28	133	2.2%	\$862
2006.2	23	223	3.5%	\$927	2011.3	28	132	2.1%	\$929
2006.3	24	200	3.1%	\$943	2011.4	28	143	2.3%	\$974
2006.4	24	176	2.7%	\$954	2012.1	25	123	2.1%	\$972
2007.1	26	186	2.9%	\$1,011	2012.2	24	138	2.3%	\$989
2007.2	25	173	2.6%	\$831	2012.3	24	133	2.3%	\$971
2007.3	25	167	2.6%	\$804	2012.4	24	141	2.5%	\$1,146
2007.4	25	163	2.5%	\$850	2013.1	25	142	2.5%	\$1,003
2008.1	23	143	2.2%	\$908	2013.2	25	149	2.6%	\$1,029
2008.2	21	144	2.2%	\$807	2013.3	24	147	2.5%	\$971
2008.3	20	128	2.0%	\$924	2013.4	24	142	2.4%	\$1,347
2008.4	21	127	2.0%	\$847	2014.1	25	140	2.5%	\$1,049
2009.1	23	130	2.1%	\$848	2014.2	25	144	2.6%	\$1,051
2009.2	25	134	2.1%	\$769	2014.3	26	132	2.4%	\$1,155
2009.3	27	135	2.1%	\$818					

Resources

Data Sources

- [Florida Research and Economic Information Database Application \(FREIDA\)](#) – A collection of economic statistical data and reports. FREIDA focuses on employment data, and includes libraries of information arranged according to the following categories:
 - [Labor Market Data](#) – Includes a Quarterly census of wages, current employment, and multiple other statistics.
 - [Products and Services](#) – Includes data transformations and analyses by the Labor Market Statistics Center.
 - [GIS / Charts Library](#) – Features maps of unemployment and employment over time and commuting patterns.
 - Presentations – Available at the main site link, the presentations section consists of interesting overviews of economic inquiries, such as “the labor market demand for bachelor’s degrees”.
- [Florida Department of Education](#) – Department of Education is responsible for the policy, finance, accountability, teaching, schools and academics of the State. FDOE’s *Profiles of School Districts* provides an in-depth look at the funding, and performance of schools and county school districts.
- [Florida Department of Revenue](#) – DOR oversees the taxes, property, and financial information services for the State of Florida. Their information on [Revenues](#) provides an insightful look at local government cash flow.
- [U.S. Census Bureau](#) – The US Census bureau’s mission is *to serve as the leading source of quality data about the nation’s people and economy*. Within this pursuit, the US Census provides a large quantity of tables and population information, accessible via the [factfinder.census.gov](#) website.
- [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis](#) - The Bureau of Economic Analysis *promotes a better understanding of the U.S. economy by providing the most timely, relevant and accurate economic accounts data in an objective and cost-effective manner*. Their [regional data](#) provides important information on where people live, in relation to where they work.

Glossary of Terms

- **Ad-valorem tax** – a tax, determined by the value of that which is being sold. Used commonly to refer to property and real estate monthly taxes.
- **Personal transfer payment** – Payments received by persons for which no services are performed. These can include injury, retirement pension, and social security payments.
- **Sales tax** – a tax resulting from the sale of an item. The Florida rate of sales tax is 6 percent. Communities may add additional rates.

North America Industry Classification System (NAICS) – The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) is the standard used by Federal statistical agencies in classifying business establishments for the purpose of collecting, analyzing, and publishing statistical data related to the U.S. business economy.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/>

- **Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting** – The Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in growing crops, raising animals, harvesting timber, and harvesting fish and other animals from a farm, ranch, or their natural habitats.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=11&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Accommodation and Food Services** – The Accommodation and Food Services sector comprises establishments providing customers with lodging and/or preparing meals, snacks, and beverages for immediate consumption. The sector includes both accommodation and food services establishments because the two activities are often combined at the same establishment.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=72&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Administrative and Waste Services** – The Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services sector comprises establishments performing routine support activities for the day-to-day operations of other organizations. These essential activities are often undertaken in-house by establishments in many sectors of the economy. The establishments in this sector specialize in one or more of these support activities and provide these services to clients in a variety of industries and, in some cases, to households. Activities performed include: office administration, hiring and placing of personnel, document preparation and similar clerical services, solicitation, collection, security and surveillance services, cleaning, and waste disposal services.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=56&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation** – The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector includes a wide range of establishments that operate facilities or provide services to meet varied cultural, entertainment, and recreational interests of their patrons. This sector comprises (1) establishments that are involved in producing, promoting, or participating in live performances, events, or exhibits intended for public viewing; (2) establishments that preserve and exhibit objects and sites of historical, cultural, or educational interest; and (3) establishments that operate facilities or provide services that enable patrons to participate in recreational activities or pursue amusement, hobby, and leisure-time interests.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=71&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Construction** – The Construction sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in the construction of buildings or engineering projects (e.g., highways and utility systems). Establishments primarily engaged in the preparation of sites for new construction and establishments primarily engaged in subdividing land for sale as building sites also are included in this sector.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=23&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>

- **Finance and Insurance** – The Finance and Insurance sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in financial transactions (transactions involving the creation, liquidation, or change in ownership of financial assets) and/or in facilitating financial transactions.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=52&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Health Care and Social Assistance** – The Health Care and Social Assistance sector comprises establishments providing health care and social assistance for individuals. The sector includes both health care and social assistance because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the boundaries of these two activities. The industries in this sector are arranged on a continuum starting with those establishments providing medical care exclusively, continuing with those providing health care and social assistance, and finally finishing with those providing only social assistance. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals. All industries in the sector share this commonality of process, namely, labor inputs of health practitioners or social workers with the requisite expertise. Many of the industries in the sector are defined based on the educational degree held by the practitioners included in the industry.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=62&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Information** – The Information sector comprises establishments engaged in the following processes: (a) producing and distributing information and cultural products, (b) providing the means to transmit or distribute these products as well as data or communications, and (c) processing data.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=51&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Manufacturing** – The Manufacturing sector comprises establishments engaged in the mechanical, physical, or chemical transformation of materials, substances, or components into new products. The assembling of component parts of manufactured products is considered manufacturing, except in cases where the activity is appropriately classified in Sector 23, Construction.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=31&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Mining** – The Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction sector comprises establishments that extract naturally occurring mineral solids, such as coal and ores; liquid minerals, such as crude petroleum; and gases, such as natural gas. The term mining is used in the broad sense to include quarrying, well operations, beneficiating (e.g., crushing, screening, washing, and flotation), and other preparation customarily performed at the mine site, or as a part of mining activity.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=21&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Other Services** – The Other Services (except Public Administration) sector comprises establishments engaged in providing services not specifically provided for elsewhere in the classification system. Establishments in this sector are primarily engaged in activities such as equipment and machinery repairing, promoting or administering religious activities, grantmaking, advocacy, and providing drycleaning and laundry services, personal care services, death care services, pet care services, photofinishing services, temporary parking services, and dating services.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=81&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- **Professional and Technical Services** – The Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services sector comprises establishments that specialize in performing professional, scientific, and technical activities for others. These activities require a high degree of expertise and training. The establishments in this sector specialize according to expertise and provide these services to clients in a variety of industries and, in some cases, to households. Activities performed include: legal advice and representation; accounting, bookkeeping, and payroll services; architectural, engineering, and specialized design services; computer services; consulting services; research services; advertising services; photographic services; translation and interpretation services; veterinary services; and other professional, scientific, and technical services.
Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=54&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>

- Public Administration** – The Public Administration sector consists of establishments of Federal, State, and local government agencies that administer, oversee, and manage public programs and have executive, legislative, or judicial authority over other institutions within a given area. These agencies also set policy, create laws, adjudicate civil and criminal legal cases, provide for public safety and for national defense. In general, government establishments in the Public Administration sector oversee governmental programs and activities that are not performed by private establishments. Establishments in this sector typically are engaged in the organization and financing of the production of public goods and services, most of which are provided for free or at prices that are not economically significant.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=92&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- Real Estate and Rental and Leasing** – The Real Estate and Rental and Leasing sector comprises establishments primarily engaged in renting, leasing, or otherwise allowing the use of tangible or intangible assets, and establishments providing related services. The major portion of this sector comprises establishments that rent, lease, or otherwise allow the use of their own assets by others. The assets may be tangible, as is the case of real estate and equipment, or intangible, as is the case with patents and trademarks.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=53&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- Retail Trade** – The Retail Trade sector comprises establishments engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=44&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- Transportation and Warehousing** – The Transportation and Warehousing sector includes industries providing transportation of passengers and cargo, warehousing and storage for goods, scenic and sightseeing transportation, and support activities related to modes of transportation. Establishments in these industries use transportation equipment or transportation related facilities as a productive asset. The type of equipment depends on the mode of transportation. The modes of transportation are air, rail, water, road, and pipeline.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=48&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- Utilities** – The Utilities sector comprises establishments engaged in the provision of the following utility services: electric power, natural gas, steam supply, water supply, and sewage removal. Within this sector, the specific activities associated with the utility services provided vary by utility: electric power includes generation, transmission, and distribution; natural gas includes distribution; steam supply includes provision and/or distribution; water supply includes treatment and distribution; and sewage removal includes collection, treatment, and disposal of waste through sewer systems and sewage treatment facilities.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=22&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>
- Wholesale Trade** – The Wholesale Trade sector comprises establishments engaged in wholesaling merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise. The merchandise described in this sector includes the outputs of agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and certain information industries, such as publishing.

Source: <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/sssd/naics/naicsrch?code=42&search=2012%20NAICS%20Search>



Appendix H

Asset Mapping Explanation

ASSET MAPPING

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity provides community asset-mapping as an advanced form of technical assistance through the Competitive Florida Partnership. The community first develops a list of unique tangible assets, places that can be visited, which may include the following: Schools or Higher Learning Facilities; Unique Local



Businesses and Large Employers; Agricultural-based Businesses; Public Facilities; Vacant Property; and Buildings Available for Development, Parks and Recreational Space, Downtown/Business Districts, Historic/Cultural Structure or Place, Shopping Centers, Hospitals/Health Clinics, Museums or Educational Facilities, and Infrastructure (Road, Rail, Port, Airport, Wastewater Treatment, etc.).

A team of representatives from DEO and other partnering agencies travel to the community for a day. In addition to DEO staff, the following organizations have participated in asset mapping exercises to-date: Local Institute of Food and Agricultural Services (IFAS) Extension Office, Local State/Community College, Local Health Department, Regional Planning Councils, Water Management Districts, Rural Area of Opportunity Organizations, CareerSource Representatives, Community Action Agencies, Department of Transportation, Department of State, Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Department of Environmental Protection, Department of Elder Affairs, Enterprise Florida, Inc., and Florida League of Cities. The team, joined by community representatives, visit unique assets identified by the community to snap photographs, interview on-site experts, and collectively evaluate the assets for opportunities to make improvements or enhancements.

Upon completion of the field work, participants will reconvene to discuss their findings with the community and provide critical feedback. Top assets with the most untapped potential in the community will be identified and practical suggestions on how those assets can be utilized to improve quality of life and/or economic gain will be discussed.

DEO Staff then develops a report detailing the information gathered along with recommendations and suggestions based on community discussion. The information provided is intended to serve as a brainstorming tool that will hopefully influence the development or update of the community's economic development strategy.

Appendix I

Asset Mapping Sample
Gadsden County

GADSDEN COUNTY

COMPETTIVE FLORIDA ASSET MAPPING REPORT

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Top Assets Identified.....	7
Additional Assets.....	17
Recommendations.....	23
Conclusions.....	39
Appendices	
Appendix A. All Assets Visited During Exercise.....	41
Appendix B. Participants.....	43
Appendix C. Pictures.....	45

Acknowledgements

The Department of Economic Opportunity would like to thank Gadsden County and all community members and State agency partners for their enthusiastic participation in the community asset mapping exercise. For a complete list of all individuals who participated, see Appendix B.

Introduction

Gadsden County is a partner community in the Department of Economic Opportunity's Competitive Florida Partnership Program. Competitive Florida helps communities map their strengths and identify what makes them unique. Communities then target economic development opportunities and improvements that fit within their character. The recommendations included in this report were developed through an asset mapping exercise, an integral part of the Competitive Florida Partnership. On March 31-April 1, 2015, a team of experts from state and regional agencies partnered with community leaders to visit the unique assets in Gadsden County. In addition, the teams brainstormed potential opportunities to expand upon the assets in ways that may further economic and community development within the County. Building on the assets already present within the County is a strategy to minimize the amount of outside resources needed to achieve the County's goals, while also embracing and staying true to those characteristics that make Gadsden County unique.



Economic development can generally be defined as long-term actions of policy makers and communities that promote a high and rising standard of living and economic health of a specific area. These are the actions that a community can take to incrementally improve itself, which can lead to the attraction of residents and increase business attraction, retention, and expansion. A report by the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center states that in small towns, community development is economic development. It goes on to say, "Capacity-building and other strategies typically associated with community development are analogous with actions designed to promote economic outcomes in rural areas." The recommendations in this report are centered on the fifteen principles outlined in the Competitive Florida Partnership Program to make communities more competitive.

We ask our readers to please bear in mind:

Many of the observations and recommendations in this resource were developed by agency and regional representatives who may lack the local knowledge of past projects, current challenges, and future plans. These recommendations are meant to provide a snapshot of the community from individuals with an outside perspective. Those that know Gadsden County best may find some recommendations more feasible or appropriate for the community than others, but the hope is to provide thoughts to help guide those closest to the community in the creation of a local economic development action plan.

Top Assets Identified

Assets are existing local resources that the community can build upon to strengthen the local economy. The asset mapping teams pointed to the following list of places, sites, groups, and institutions as the top assets in the community.

Industry

10/90 Industrial Center

1660 Commerce Blvd., Midway, FL

The 10/90 Industrial Center is a well-established industrial and commerce park that serves the Tallahassee metropolitan area and surrounding region. It is advantageously located near Interstate 10, U.S. Highway 90, rail facilities, and fueling stations; it is also in close proximity to Tallahassee Regional Airport. Current customers include many regional businesses and organizations such as Dixie Paving, AJAX Building Corporation, T-Formation of Tallahassee, Inc., Bodybuilding.com, Safelight Autoglass, Michelin Tire, the Florida State University Film School, Fox 49, Apache Asphalt, WastePro, and Pods. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) also has a sub-district office located at the entrance to the center. The 10/90 Industrial Center is outgrowing its original footprint and logistical design parameters as traffic grows. It may benefit from some upgrades as well as expansion and re-alignment of traffic flows. In particular, the entrance to the center, which has ingress and egress challenges, may need to be modified to meet existing and growing traffic needs.

Brickyard Industrial Center

1800 Business Park Rd., Midway, FL

The Brickyard Industrial Center is just under 200 acres and is mostly undeveloped, with designated land available for growth. The Brickyard rail spur is fully functional and is currently being utilized by contractor Anderson-Columbia to unload and store road/construction building materials. The property's land use is designated as Heavy Industrial and forms a part of the Gadsden Station Development of Regional Impact (DRI). A DRI in Florida is described as having a substantial impact upon the health, safety, or welfare of citizens in more than one county. On-site central sewer and water are available at Brickyard through Talquin Utilities Cooperative. Excellent commercial and industrial linkages in close proximity to a major urban center are one of the most attractive features of the Brickyard Industrial Center. In addition to the site being located less than 10 miles from Tallahassee Regional Airport, the east-west CSX Transportation rail line passes along the south side of I-10 adjacent to Brickyard. CSX is the single largest operating railroad in Florida, with an extensive network that links east to Jacksonville, Atlanta, Savannah, and south Florida. It also extends west to Panama City, Mobile, and New Orleans. The Apalachicola Northern Railway (AN), a 96-mile short line freight railroad owned by Genesee & Wyoming, serves the seaport in Port St. Joe and connects to CSX in Chattahoochee.



Together, the 10/90 Industrial Center, the Brickyard Industrial Center, and other nearby lands form a regional industrial, distribution, and commercial hub proximate to and serving metro Tallahassee, north Florida, and south Georgia. Other sites in this hub support commercial and industrial business such as Ring Power, Seminole Trusses, and Flying J, a major gas station and trucking fueling depot. The City of Midway shares jurisdiction management with Gadsden County for portions of the 10/90 Industrial Center and Brickyard Industrial Center. Infrastructure for sewer and water is provided by Gadsden County at 10/90 and by Talquin Electric at Brickyard. There is also potential opportunity for collaboration with Gadsden Technical Institute in designing job training programs to meet the staffing needs of local employers.

Quincy Industrial Park

1 Corporate Ct., Quincy, FL

Quincy Industrial Park is owned by the City of Quincy and currently has vacant lots available for sale. The Park consists of 300 acres in total with approximately 118 acres currently available for development. Access to water, sewer, electric, and gas is available on-site. The Park is located in an Enterprise Zone and includes a two acre University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Educational Center. Transportation infrastructure is in place, with convenient access to both rail and highway. Ultimately, this park is “shovel ready” for large-scale industry.

Hammock Creek Industrial Park

Riverbirch Rd., Midway, FL

Hammock Creek Industrial Park is owned by the St. Joe Company and is currently occupied by an Anheuser-Busch regional distributor, which operates with its own fleet and fits into a regional distribution network. The Park has 117 acres divided into 15 parcels, which vary in size from 1.4 to almost 25 acres and many of which are currently available for light industrial and bulk distribution development. Infrastructure is already in place for these parcels, which are also located near a fire station (2.6 miles away), Tallahassee Regional Airport (13 miles away), and Interstate 10 (14 miles away). Potential opportunity for development abounds at this site- Phase I of the Park was constructed in 2003, but Phase II has not been constructed.

Havana Industrial Park (Formerly Gadsden Commercial Center)

Garrett Drive, Havana, FL

Havana Industrial Park consists of approximately 118 acres with space for growth and supporting infrastructure available. The Park consists of 11 parcels, four of which are currently vacant. Current tenants include construction, supply, and industrial businesses. Lots generally range from two to four acres in size. Central water is available to the site. The location is within a half mile of CSX rail line and just over 10 miles north of Interstate 10. The property is designated as Heavy Industrial use on the Future Land Use Map.

Quincy Municipal Airport

1300 Airport Dr., Quincy, FL

The Quincy Municipal Airport has been in operation since 1932. It is now owned by the Quincy-Gadsden Airport Authority and has grown to 75 hangers serving surrounding counties. The Airport is located on Highway 12, just northeast of Quincy on the currently developing bypass route. It has a single 2,964 feet by 75 feet paved runway that uses low intensity edge lighting. Both ends of the runway have displaced thresholds for landing. The full length of the paved surface is available for takeoff in both directions. There are no paved taxiways. There is a lighted windsock and a rotating beacon near the airport’s terminal building on the east side of the runway. 100 Low Lead Aviation Gasoline is available near the terminal and maintenance is available on the field. Running parallel to the paved runway, the turf area to the east is an unofficial turf runway. This area is used by ultralights, gliders, skydivers, homebuilt aircraft, helicopters, and occasionally regular aircraft





during normal operations. There is a VOR (Very High Frequency Omni Directional Radio Range) approach navigation system off the Seminole (SZW) VOR near Tallahassee as well as a GPS approach navigation system.

The Airport is home to the School of Human Flight, the only United States Parachute Association Member drop zone in the Florida panhandle. Extensive parachute operations take place at the Airport. The Airport's location near the new Quincy bypass should improve transportation linkages. It is expected to see increased traffic flows and business opportunities over time.

Local Businesses

Creek Entertainment

501 Racetrack Dr., Gretna, FL

Creek Entertainment Gretna is a 165-acre property. It contains a 21,500 square foot gaming facility and an equestrian track located off I-10 at exit 174. The facility currently features a poker room, has the ability to simultaneously broadcast multiple races being held at different venues which patrons can place wagers on while at Creek Entertainment, and offers dining. Studies show that 15 million cars per year pass exit 174 along I-10, providing a large potential market. Given its relatively close proximity to popular Florida beaches, this facility may draw some of the gaming-centric tourism seen in Mississippi and Alabama. The site designed to eventually accommodate expanded retail, entertainment, and equestrian-related activities. The facility is owned by Gretna Racing, LLC, whose members include PCI Gaming Authority and three Florida investors. Creek Entertainment Gretna is managed by WindCreek Hospitality, which also operates similar facilities in northwest Florida and Alabama.



Ingram's Marina

354 Lois Ln., Quincy, FL

Ingram's Marina, fronting Lake Talquin, has provided bait, tackle, and limited/essential groceries to the area for the past 30 years and is located in close proximity to a popular hunting area. Marina amenities include boat ramp access, cabins, boat rentals, showers, restrooms, laundry services, and RV sites with utility hook-ups; however, most sites are occupied year-round.

Whippoorwill Sportsman's Lodge and "The Whip Waterfront Pub n Grub"

3103 Cook's Landing Rd., Quincy, FL

Located on Lake Talquin, the Whippoorwill Sportsman's Lodge offers cabin rentals, a dock, a ramp, three cabins, six RV sites, and a small campground. "The Whip" Waterfront Pub n Grub offers lunch and dinner occasionally accompanied by live music. "The Whip" is best known for ribeye steak and local fresh seafood and draws customers from surrounding counties. For nearly 40 years, it has hosted a local bass fishing tournament every year before Easter. Nineteen boat slips in total are available at the lower end of the lake.



BASF (Badische Anilin- und Soda-Fabrik/Baden Adiline and Soda Factory)

1101 North Madison St., Quincy, FL

The BASF Plant and Mining Facility, located in Quincy, supports mining operations encompassing more than 18,000 acres in Florida and Georgia. BASF's mining operations center around attapulgite, also called Fuller's Earth, which is a mineral specific to this region and which was first mined in the County in 1910. Known for its absorbent properties, attapulgite is used in wide range of applications, from pet litter to pharmaceuticals. In addition to the mine, the site has five main buildings housing the administrative front office, accounting and mining offices, maintenance offices; maintenance shop, and quality assurance laboratory. With approximately 79 employees, BASF is a large local employer that is currently working with Tallahassee Community College to design a curriculum for a certification specific to their needs. It plans to make this program available to current and future employees.

TeligentEMS

102 Technology Way, Havana, FL

TeligentEMS is a one-stop Electronic Manufacturing Services supplier with specialized technological expertise in assembling and testing complex assemblies including RF (radio frequency), optical, laser, power, control and sensor-based products. The company has over 30 years of experience providing Electronics Manufacturing Services to Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM's) including global procurement and strong supply chain capabilities which results in cost effective solutions to their customers. While the main manufacturing facility is located in Gadsden County, the firm has sales offices in Jacksonville as well as in several other locations in the eastern US.



TeligentEMS has experienced success by staying competitive as a small player in a very large industry through maintaining a focus on building and maintaining relationships with clients and has the potential to expand if desired. TeligentEMS has a good relationship with the City of Havana and employs 170 people and operates seven days week in two proximate but separate facilities. However, the company is constantly challenged to find employees with the right education, background, and expertise, particularly because prior experience in electronics manufacturing is the only experience relevant to many of the company's positions and this is fairly rare to find. It is currently working with Tallahassee Community College to design programs to address its employment needs. However, engineering and manufacturing talent is often found using national searches.

Coastal Industrial Products (Coastal Lumber and Plywood Company)

8007 Florida Georgia Hwy, Havana, FL

Coastal Lumber and Plywood Company employs approximately 230 people in manufacturing and ten to twelve people in timber and land management in Gadsden County. The company owns a 565-acre timber manufacturing and wood treatment facility in which multiple types of plywood are produced. The company owns approximately 12,000 acres in the region and generates its own power. Products produced by this company include sanded plywood, concrete form, radiant barrier sheathing, performance related sheathing, and underlayment plywood. Coastal Lumber and Plywood Company is a member of the American Panel Association and has recognized the need for sustainable forest management throughout its history. All of the logs used in the manufacturing of plywood at the facility are procured within a 100 mile radius of Havana, Florida, and come from American southern pine forests. The company meets all local, state, and federal regulations and guidelines regarding sustainable forest management. Company management notes that transportation is their number one cost and that they are often in need of truck drivers.



Historic Downtowns

Quincy Historical District

±36 block area located in downtown Quincy, FL

Quincy was once considered the “richest small town in America” because of its involvement with the tobacco industry and Coca-Cola. The City’s Downtown is unique in character and includes buildings dating back to the late 1800s and early 1900s. The district covers a 36 block area of the City and was designated as a historic district on the National Historic Register in 1978.

The Courthouse was originally constructed in 1912 and serves as the focal piece of the Downtown Square, as it sits directly across the street from several other recently renovated County offices. The Downtown Square includes residential and non-residential structures in close proximity to the government center and historic Courthouse. Several of the historic structures on the Square have the potential for upstairs apartments. There is potential for construction of additional highly walkable space, including the redevelopment of an old department store. Some of the buildings also have upstairs office space, and there are two bed-and-breakfasts located in historical structures within the district. The Quincy State Bank building has a stage and vaulted ceiling, evidencing its former use as an opera house. Entertainment is provided by the jazz club, Sugar’s, along with the Leaf Theatre and Arts Center. The City incorporated a Downtown courtyard into its most recent master plan in an attempt to facilitate the connection of the existing Leaf Theatre, Gadsden Arts Center, Dance School, Sugar’s, Quincy historic Courthouse, and Main Square into a large array of evening entertainment options. Alterations and renovations are reviewed by the Quincy Historic Preservation Commission.



Chattahoochee Main Street

West Washington St., Chattahoochee, FL

Chattahoochee was established as a ferry landing on the Apalachicola River during the 1820s and was originally known as Mount Vernon. Prior to that time, the site had already served as a major landmark during Florida (pre)history. Chattahoochee is the site of the Chattahoochee Landing Mounds, a major Fort Walton era (Mississippian) mound group. It was also the site of Nicholls' Outpost, one of only two British forts built in Florida during the War of 1812. The Apalachicola River, which flows past the mounds, was the site of a major battle of the First Seminole War. The Chattahoochee Arsenal, completed in 1839, was Florida's only US Arsenal during the Antebellum Era. This "City on a Hill" grew to become a thriving riverboat port during the height of paddlewheel and steamboat traffic on the Apalachicola River. Many of the historic structures along Washington Street (Highway 90) date from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



Today, Chattahoochee is emerging as a unique heritage and eco-tourism destination. It has classic small town Southern charm and fits well into Visit Florida's Cultural, Heritage, Rural, and Nature Committee, which works to develop and promote the growing segments of nature based tourism, cultural heritage, tourism, and rural tourism. Its parks highlight both natural and cultural history and include nationally recognized blueway and greenway trails. The city is home to the Jim Woodruff Dam, the largest dam in Florida, and backs up to Lake Seminole, which is a world-renowned bass fishing lake. Chattahoochee is the "gateway" to the Apalachicola River, a nationally recognized river and Blueways paddling trail.

The City is a Main Street community and is currently undergoing a visioning process aimed at establishing a new plan to revitalize the downtown area. Even though attracting traffic to the Downtown area has not been an issue, the main street is designed to move traffic through; a lack of businesses or urban design conducive to pedestrian/multi-modal transportation discourages the re-establishment of the Downtown area as a destination in itself.



Possible improvements have focused on lane reduction and "complete street" options. Strategies proposed to increase the economic vitality of the Downtown area include streetscaping; increasing available parking, including angled parking; implementing traffic calming measures; and the retrofitting of what is currently a continuous open turn lane into a small landscaped median. As many storefronts are currently vacant, support is needed for business development and revitalization, including of the historic Downtown Theatre.

Downtown Havana

±12 miles north of Interstate-10, off of US 27 (FL-GA Highway)

Havana is a classic small town. Havana is located about 15 miles from Tallahassee, 25 miles from Bainbridge, and 35 miles from Thomasville, which provides an easy drive and ready access to a marketing area of more than 420,000 residents in a 45 mile radius. Its Downtown area is a well-defined, walkable district constituted of multiple blocks of homes and commercial facilities.

Many of the local shops offer new and vintage home décor (of which Havana has a strong reputation dating back to the 1990s) and approximately 80 percent of available retail space is currently leased. The Havana Merchant's Association is well established and provides opportunities for collaborations between business owners. Large annual events are held, including the Pumpkin Festival, the Holiday Festival, the Lawnmower Parade, and Havana Day. Smaller events are held as well, including bead festivals and the Dog Days of Summer Festival.



Local Agriculture

Rocky Comfort Farm

6441 Pat Thomas Parkway, Quincy, FL

Rocky Comfort Farm features more than 230 acres of pastoral scenery of an untouched natural environment containing numerous species of wildlife. The Farm allows visitors to experience life on a family-owned historic farm by providing opportunities to interact with farm animals and to enjoy fun farm activities such as hayrides, a wagon train, and a children's playground. The property also contains unique hiking trails that vary in length but are accessible to all. Rocky Comfort has approximately 75 cattle, two acres of pumpkins, and two acres of millet (a gluten free material). They also raise bees and collect honey,



which is very popular for both consumption and homeopathic medicinal use. The honey is sold in the gift shop along with the works of local craftsmen. The facility also provides educational classes to area schoolchildren; these classes allow the children to feed cows, practice milking on a wooden cow, and churn their own butter. From September through November, the Farm hosts an average of 100 children per day, totaling 3,174 last school season. At the end of each field trip, each child is given a mini pumpkin to take home as a unique memento of their visit. They also receive a coupon for free admission for a future visit. The Farm also hosts seasonal events, including the Fall Fun Festival and the Christmas Tunnel of Lights.

Parks and Trails

Apalachicola River Blueway National Recreational Trail

Flows from the Jim Woodruff Dam, south 107 miles to the John Gorrie Bridge in Apalachicola and the Gulf of Mexico.

The Apalachicola River Blueway received its national designation in 2014. It runs the length of the Apalachicola River (approximately 107 miles) from Lake Seminole and the Jim Woodruff Dam to the John Gorrie Bridge in Apalachicola and the Gulf of Mexico; it connects with the Apalachicola River Paddling Trail System in the lower estuary portion of the River. This 100-mile matrix of scenic waterways was developed by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and designated a National Recreation Trail in 2008. This area serves as a popular destination for canoeing, kayaking, fishing,

boating, bird watching, and camping. Maps, GPS coordinates, and other trip planning resources can be found online at www.apalachicolablueway.com.

A large draw for tourists is the extensive range of species that call the Apalachicola River Basin home. The unique nature of the area makes it an ideal habitat for approximately 60 species of trees, 1300 species of plant, 131 species of fish, 33 species of mussel, 308 species of bird, and 57 species of mammal. Included among these are Gulf sturgeons, Apalachicola dusky salamanders, and Florida yews. This watershed is a primary spawning and nursery habitat for fish and other aquatic species and is a critical migratory bird route. The Apalachicola Bay supplies 90 percent of all oysters harvested in Florida and is the second largest of 25 existing National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) sites selected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The River Basin's varied habitats, from rare steephead ravines (with the only native *Torreya taxifolia* [i.e., Florida Torreya tree] found anywhere) to bottomland hardwood forests, give it the highest species density of amphibians and reptiles on the North American continent north of Mexico.

Torreya State Park

2576 NW Torreya Park Rd., Bristol, FL

Torreya State Park is an underutilized but potentially important natural resource asset available to bolster Gadsden County. The southern Liberty County portion of the Park has been very successfully developed with hiking, camping, historic resources, and more along the Apalachicola River Bluffs and unique feeder ravines and streams with remnant north Georgia flora micro-niches. The Gadsden portion was acquired more recently and has yet to be developed, although plans to do so are included in the current Park master plan.



Torreya State Park is known for its steep ravines, calcareous bluffs, and unusual calcareous forests that support numerous extremely rare and unusual plant species, most notably the federally endangered Florida Torreya tree. The Park is widely known to campers and hikers in Florida and the region as it provides an almost north Georgia experience in Florida of steep hills, cool ravines, and high bluffs. It is one of the highlights of the Florida State Park system.

Clyde Hopkins Park and the City of Chattahoochee River Landing

400 River Landing Rd., Chattahoochee, FL

Close in proximity to the Angus Gholson Jr. Nature Park, the Clyde Hopkins Park and the City of Chattahoochee River Landing are located along the beautiful Apalachicola River. The area contains spaces for picnics, grills for cooking, camping facilities, and facilities for boating and small events. There is significant opportunity for photography, kayaking, and other forms of eco-tourism.



The old U.S. Highway 90 bridge, also known as the Victory Bridge, provides an opportunity for the development of a pedestrian bridge just south of the Lake Seminole Dam at Clyde Hopkins Park in Chattahoochee. The area also holds historical relevance, as it is home to three of the remaining Fort Walton Indian mounds. Proposed to be held here are events and activities such as paddleboat tours that celebrate Chattahoochee's rich historical legacy.

Potential Partners

Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) Research Farm

4289 Bainbridge Highway, Quincy, FL

The Florida A&M University (FAMU) Farm is located near the Florida-Georgia state line. It consists of more than 100 acres of farmland, pine trees, and lakes. A spacious conference center overlooks acres of pecan trees and picket fences. It is home to a variety of animal species, including goats, pigs, and horses. The Farm is open daily and is available for tours upon request. The FAMU Farm is operated by the FAMU College of Engineering Sciences, Technology, and Agriculture Cooperative Extension Programs. Courses of study offered include Veterinary Technology Program and a Small Ruminant Program. The Research Farm deals with many different aspects of agricultural assistance and education, including alternative marketing strategies, farm planning, farm financial management, enterprise development and alternative production practices, and risk management education. The FAMU Farm and the New North Florida Cooperative collaboratively operate the Farm to School Program, which involves assisting schools in incorporating fresh local and regional produce into school nutrition programs while simultaneously utilizing the schools as an alternative market outlet for small-scale farmers. Another collaborative training program the FAMU Farm is involved in is the Youth Agricultural Entrepreneurship Program, designed to enhance agricultural entrepreneurship among, increase work ethic in, and teach effective teamwork skills to area young people. Similarly, the New and Beginning Farmers Training Program provides educational opportunities and technical assistance that improves the likelihood of success for the next generation of small farmers. The program utilizes non-traditional approaches, including web-based, self-directed training, and a beginning farmer demonstration and training site. Another program, the Specialty Crop Project, focuses on the development of specialty crop enterprises that enhance profits and marketing success for small-scale specialty crop producers by strengthening the links between producers and consumers.



facility is outfitted with a large lecture hall, which is available for public use. IFAS often collaborates with national and foreign companies, thereby bringing a small amount of tourism into Gadsden County.

Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce

208 N Adams St., Quincy, FL

Incorporated in 1946, the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce expanded from the former Quincy Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is concerned with issues in Gadsden County related to community, business, and economic development, as well as with tourism and promoting the community. The Chamber frequently collaborates with the Havana Merchant's Association, Quincy Main Street and Community Redevelopment Agency, and Chattahoochee's Main Street Program. Now 250 members strong and growing, the Chamber is led by 16 community leaders who all have a vested interest in Gadsden County.

Gadsden Technical Institute

201 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Quincy, FL

Gadsden Technical Institute (GTI) first opened in August 1973. Current curricula are geared towards students seeking training for initial entry into the workforce or who are seeking to develop and retrain for new career paths. Gadsden Technical Institute offers training in the following areas: applied welding, automotive repair, barbering and cosmetology, nail technology, gasoline and small engine repair, nursing, and business technology. The school also has an adult education program that prepares students to pass the GED and provides support for students seeking to earn a traditional high school diploma. GTI is currently seeking accreditation, which will enable the facility to provide federal financial aid. In the future, the GTI administration hopes to work with local employers to develop curricula tailored to the needs of local businesses.

Talon Range- Talon Training Group, LLC

550 Commerce Blvd., Midway, FL

Since opening for operation little more than a year ago, Talon Range has attracted 14,000 initial visits and has sold around 2,000 annual memberships. The facility is operated by former law enforcement and provides an additional resource for current law enforcement who need a place to practice. The owners and staff emphasize safety and education. Talon provides in-depth training to individuals of all ages (including minors accompanied by guardians). They strive to



remove fear, curiosity, and stigma from gun use and promote respect and responsible use. This is the only facility of its kind on this side of the United States, providing facilities for multiple shooting disciplines and drawing visitors from all over the country. Talon also operates and sells firearms accessories, such as holsters. The facility networks with local sellers and provides customers with the opportunity to test firearms before purchasing them from local retailers. Talon Range hosts multiple local competitions a month and has even held national competitions. There are currently plans to collaborate with a nationally syndicated TV show on a match this year.

Range facilities include a pro shop, ten individual ranges for handguns, five competition ranges with three side berms, a 200 yard rifle range, golf cart rental, available steel reactive targets, two training classrooms, a full 3-D archery course with a static archery range, restrooms, covered shooting lines, professional staff on duty and available for private classes, and competitive shooting events. Talon Range plans on making available a 400-plus yard rifle range, a sporting clays facility, and trap/skeet ranges in the future.

Additional Assets

Historic Assets

Quincy Leaf Theatre

118 East Washington St., Quincy, FL

Built in 1946, the Quincy Leaf Theatre quickly became the premiere movie theater in the Big Bend and is a staple of downtown Quincy. The Theatre initially seated 1,200 people and offered a sound-resistant cry room so upset children would not disturb the rest of the audience. The Theatre was resurrected in 1983 and underwent extensive renovations, including the removal of the front half of the seating to make room for a stage to accommodate live musical performances. The Leaf Theatre is a non-profit organization and North Florida's largest and only all-musical community theater. There are 325 seats downstairs and 125 balcony seats. Seasons consist of five musical shows over two weekends and average seven performances of each show. Casts for these shows consists of volunteers and talent is drawn from FSU, FAMU, and TCC. The Leaf has hosted many sold out performances, such as the recent production of CATS. It hosts very popular summer workshops in which children practice and perform their own show, often drawing patrons from outside of the participant's families.



Gadsden Arts Center

118 East Washington St, Quincy, FL

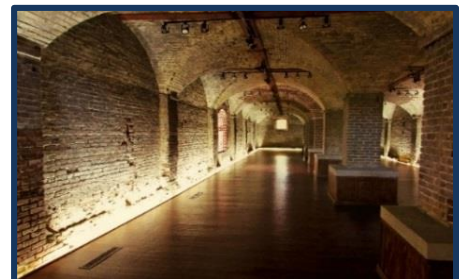
Housed in a former hardware store built as early as 1915, the Gadsden Arts Center features fine art exhibitions that draw nationally recognized artists and exhibits and hosts year-round educational programs in historic Quincy, Florida. The Arts Center draws an average of 2,500 visitors per year. There are currently plans to expand the Arts Center into a nearby building and construct a hands-on teaching classroom for children, which will add extra capacity to that provided by the mixed-use classroom already existing in the facility. The Center hosts field trips and summer programs, on which it collaborates with other local entities such as the Legacy School of the Arts. There is room in the building for a gift shop as well as rentable space for meetings, events, and gatherings. The Center aims to improve the quality of life in Gadsden County and the region more broadly by fostering understanding and appreciation of the visual arts. Overall, the Arts Center works to provide art and cultural learning opportunities for local residents and to stimulate economic growth in the local community.



Apalachicola Arsenal

100 N Main St, Chattahoochee, FL

The Apalachicola Arsenal is located on the 650-acre campus of the State Hospital at Chattahoochee. The arsenal was originally built in 1832 and is currently listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. The structure is a brick powder magazine; some of this brick was locally produced. The Arsenal was used in the Seminole Wars and later in the Civil War. The building was renovated within the last several years with a lot of participation from locals. Restoration was



completed in November 2013, and the building is currently used for conferences and meetings. The State Hospital currently plans to turn the Arsenal into a non-profit museum, which will be run and managed by a non-profit organization that would also run and manage the conference center.

Tobacco Barns

Gadsden County is often associated with Fuller's earth, Coca Cola, and shade tobacco. Shade tobacco was the County's first major industry. Tobacco was brought to Gadsden County in the 1820s, but only later was it discovered that Gadsden County was only one of a few places in the United States suitable for the growth of the "wrapper leaf," the outer leaf used to wrap cigars. These places are "The Georgia-Florida Shade Tobacco District," made up of Gadsden and Madison Counties in Florida and Grady and Decatur Counties in Georgia. In 1946, these two districts produced over 95% of American-grown wrapper leaf. Today, shade tobacco is grown only in the Connecticut River Valley and the shade tobacco barns in Gadsden County are most often seen in paintings and photographs. However, on a number of properties in Gadsden County still stand picturesque old tobacco barns where the fresh cut tobacco leaves were hung to dry and cure before use.



Community-Supported Agriculture Facilities

Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) is a socio-economic model of agriculture and food distribution, consisting of a community of individuals who pledge support to a farm operation so that the growers and consumers share the risks and benefits of food production; weekly delivery to or pick-up of produce by consumers is usually included. The guiding philosophy behind CSA is that distributing the financial burden of the farm across members allows farmers to concentrate on growing and nurturing the garden rather than on financial solvency.

Johnnie's Garden

285 Strom Rd., Quincy, FL

Johnnie's Garden is a member-based organic farm co-op that provides fresh produce to Tallahassee through CSA. A member joins the co-op at Johnnie's Garden by paying a fee, which varies depending on the size of the member's household and which commits the member to the co-op for a particular term or season (usually three months in duration). The member then receives farm-fresh produce once a week. The produce that members receive during a particular week varies depending on what the farm is currently producing.

Full Earth Farm

1050 Solomon Dairy Rd., Quincy, FL

Full Earth Farm started in 2009 and has been a Certified Naturally Grown Farm (a non-governmental organic certification) since 2010. Grown at this location are small amounts of many different vegetables, including heirloom varieties and varieties deemed endangered by the Slow Foods Ark of Taste. The soil is fertilized using compost and seasonal cover crops. Full Earth Farm sells produce through the Tallahassee Farmers' Market (a CSA program located at Market Square in Tallahassee), the Red Hills Online Market, and to Tallahassee-area restaurants. The Farm is a member of the Red Hills Small Farm Alliance, a farmer-run organization working to facilitate economic development and educational opportunities for small farmers within the region.

Blue Ridge Farm Hydroponics

804 Frank Smith Rd., Quincy, FL

Blue Ridge Farm aims to provide fresh salad greens to local restaurants and farmers' markets. The facility utilizes the Organic Materials Review Institute-certified organic fertilizer "OceanSolution." Located on-site is a greenhouse open to interested visitors, who may choose to purchase produce directly from the facility. Blue Ridge Farm also has an orchard that produces chestnuts and Fuyu persimmons.

Ragged Glory Farm

162 Hawkridge Dr., Havana, FL

Ragged Glory Farm focuses exclusively on the propagation and production of organic, open-pollinated heirloom vegetable, herbs, and insect-attracting varieties of flower. The facility offers contract and client-requested growing of flowers, as well as the sale of composted rabbit manure, the design and installation of raised beds, rototilling services, and garden consultation.

Longview Farms

1990 Concord Rd., Havana, FL

Longview Farms is a family farm that grows vegetables using all-natural compost, compost tea, and biochar; no herbicides, pesticides, or chemical fertilizers are used. Beef cattle and pastured chickens are raised humanely. Livestock are fed exclusively on "salad bar" pastures that are fertilized only with compost, cover crops, and fish oil. Longview Farms is happy to provide tours of the property to any interested customer.

Lake Talquin

14850 Jack Vause Landing Rd., Tallahassee, FL

Located between Quincy and Tallahassee, Lake Talquin is an 8,800 acre reservoir, with depths ranging from 15 to 40 feet. The lake was created by the construction of the Talquin Dam, which is used to generate hydroelectric power and hosts one of the few hydroelectric power plants in Florida.

Lake Talquin is a very popular recreation area and fishing spot, nationally renowned for high quality black crappie (speckled perch) fishing from January through April. At other times of year, people are drawn to the lake for fishing of largemouth bass, bluegill, red ear, white bass, and striped bass. There are three public boat ramps and two public fishing piers on the lake within Gadsden County. Canoes, kayaks, and power boats are allowed, which provides access to great freshwater fishing, bird watching, and the tranquility of North Florida's natural beauty. Primitive campsites at High Bluff Campground can be accessed by vehicle, canoe, kayak, or boat. Primitive campsites at the Fort Braden Tract are accessible only by canoe, kayak, boat, or hiking.

Parks and Forests

Lake Talquin State Forest

14850 Jack Vause Landing Rd., Tallahassee, FL

Since 1977, Lake Talquin State Forest has been managed by the Florida Forest Service using the multiple-use concept, in which environmental, recreational, and resource-use needs are balanced. Emphasis is put on reforestation, ecosystem restoration, and outdoor recreation. Most of the forest adjoins the Ochlocknee River and Lake Talquin. Lake Talquin State Forest is comprised of more than 17,000 acres, almost 11,000 of which are in Gadsden County. Lake Talquin State Forest is located just west of Tallahassee and is composed of 10 main tracts of land, along with several smaller tracts. Each tract offers a variety of recreational opportunities.

High Bluff Camping Area is a primitive campground on the northern side of Lake Talquin, adjacent to the Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area. Facilities available include 34 primitive campsites with ground grills and picnic tables, restrooms, a fishing pier, and a boat ramp. RVs and tent campers are welcome. Horseback riding is welcome on open roads in the forest, and the Fort Braden Tract contains a 12-mile designated equestrian trail. Off-road bicyclists can enjoy the open roads. The Lines Tract contains a designated off-road bicycle trail that offers a nine-mile course for beginner- to intermediate-level cyclists. Fishing is available in most waterways. Under special agreement with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Lake Talquin State Forest was opened to hunting in 1977. There are three Wildlife Management Areas open for hunting: Joe Budd, Ochlockonee, and Talquin wildlife management areas. All other Lake Talquin State Forest tracts are closed to hunting.



Bear Creek Educational Facility and Forest

8125 Pat Thomas Pkwy., Quincy, Florida

Bear Creek Educational Forest is located on a 492 acre tract of Lake Talquin State Forest and is home to wildlife such as alligators, as well as more than 500 species of plants, including several endangered species. Bear Creek offers unique steephead and ravine trail systems. Bear Creek has three trails: the Ravine Trail (2.5 miles), the Bear Creek Trail (3.5 miles), and the Living Forest Trail, a three-quarter mile trail that uses voice recordings to animate their talking tree interactive exhibits to teach visitors about indigenous species.

In October 2015, Bear Creek will celebrate 10 years of coordination and outreach with the local school system. This tract of land is strictly used as an environmental education facility for students in pre-K through twelfth grades and follows a curriculum aligned with state standards. The forest facility hosts Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, and Project Aquatic Wild, all of which are interactive. The facility hosts adult programs, including tree identification workshops. Programs can be catered to the interests of individual groups. There are also opportunities available for hosting private and corporate events in the state of the art audio visual facility, which can accommodate up to 60 people. They also proudly host and co-sponsor a program with the Wounded Warrior Project that allows veterans to go on two hunting excursions a year.



Angus Gholson Jr. Nature Park

Morgan Ave., Chattahoochee, FL

The Angus K. Gholson, Jr. Nature Park is approximately 100 acres, including trails and a picnic facility. The location contains many high-quality slope forests that feature springs and many rare plants; however, invasive exotic species are a threat. The Angus Gholson Nature Trail is one of the three trails making up the Chattahoochee Nature Trail System. The Trail is slightly less than half a mile long but offers access to a botanically rich habitat featuring the bluffs and ravines near the Apalachicola River. This Trail is used for short hikes. The Chattahoochee Spring is included in the park. The Apalachicola National Recreational Trail has rich historical value as it was, among other things, the site of several wars, a treaty signing for the creation of the Seminole Nation, and a link to the original Old Spanish Trail across Florida.

Public Institutions

Florida Public Safety Institute

85 Academy Dr., Havana, FL

Formerly known as the Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy, the Florida Public Safety Institute is located on approximately 1,500 acres just south of U.S. Highway 19, a few miles from Quincy and Midway. It is a statewide institute owned by Tallahassee Community College (TCC) that provides training to law enforcement officers, firefighters, correctional officers, fish and wildlife personnel, and corrections and probation officers, along with continuing education training and more. The campus serves approximately 60 individual agencies within three regions. There are dormitories on site totaling 330 beds and a dining hall that seats around 500. The facility hosts roughly 40,000 to 70,000 people a year. It has an 11,000 square foot convention center, classrooms and administration offices, driving and firing ranges, a helicopter landing, and more. Additionally, the Florida Department of Corrections has a "Reentry Center" for inmates on 50 acres of the adjacent land. TCC/the Florida Public Safety Institute has partnered with them in developing workforce and skill training for, as well as providing assistance in obtaining GEDs to, the inmates housed there.



Florida State Hospital

100 N Main St., Chattahoochee, FL

The Florida State Hospital is a major landowner and economic lynchpin in the City of Chattahoochee. Though the patient population and corresponding service workforce at the Hospital has decreased substantially in recent years, the Hospital remains a major employer and presents opportunities for local business growth. The Hospital treats individuals with severe and persistent major mental illnesses. Two categories of patients are treated at the hospital; those civilly committed under Statute 394, who represent a small portion of the hospital's resident; and those forensically committed under Statute 916, who constitute a much larger portion of the patient population. One portion of the hospital houses adult and elderly individuals who have been civilly committed to the hospital alongside forensic residents who have been "stepped down" to the civil unit. These civil units are also known as Forensic Transition units. The Hospital campus has considerable building vacancy, as the treated patient population has been reduced over the past several years. This may present opportunities for growth in the housing of civilly- or criminally-committed adult and elderly individuals, as Florida has a growing number of such populations. Both public and private management approaches for such facility development have been considered. Florida State Hospital also maintains a forensic wing within which the Florida Department of Corrections cares for inmates who have been adjudicated through the criminal justice system to be incompetent to proceed to trial or to be not guilty by reason of insanity.

Recommendations

Recognizing the assets available within the community, the following recommendations look to capitalize on existing opportunities and identify additional opportunities.

Private Business

Support and Further the Efforts of the Gadsden County Economic Development Council

The Gadsden County Economic Development Council (EDC) has done a commendable job on working to broaden Gadsden County's visibility as a place to live and do business. It should be recognized that an economic development entity of this quality is something that many communities do not benefit from. Moving forward, the County should continue to keep the Gadsden County EDC as a major partner and driving force in implementing the County's economic development strategy.

Create Business Incentives and Funding

The growth and success of small businesses is a crucial component of communities and local economies. Incentives such as subsidized loans, tax incentives, and infrastructure improvements can make a municipality much more competitive over communities that are not offering incentives. If a community wants to retain businesses and encourage additional businesses to locate within its jurisdiction, it must work closely with the local business community to design appropriate incentives.

Recognizing their importance, DEO has have several programs targeted at small businesses, specifically the Microfinance Program which offers loans obtained by loan administrators, as well as loan guarantees to support loans originated by commercial lenders. These products range from as little as several thousand dollars up to \$250,000. Another program supporting small businesses is the State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) designed to accommodate larger capital needs. Similar to the Microfinance Program, SSBCI offers loan guarantees, loan participations, and venture capital positions, and the amounts range from a low of \$250,000 up to \$5,000,000. DEO staff are available to present either of these programs to Gadsden County local officials, local lenders, and the business community.

Gadsden County and its individual municipalities might consider working with local lending institutions to develop a downtown entrepreneurial loan program that offers small and micro-loans to businesses to mitigate the costs of startup, acquisitions, and building rehabilitation and upgrades; they might also consider collaborating with local utility providers on creating time-limited rate breaks on businesses and services within downtown areas and/or CRAs. Similarly, they could also look into providing a reduced tax liability to businesses and services within these areas for a defined period of time. Gadsden County and its individual municipalities might also consider identifying, prioritizing, and proceeding with projects and infrastructure improvements in these targeted downtown areas.

Gadsden County, in collaboration with the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce, could develop a portfolio of business incentives. This could include, but is not limited to, City- or County-backed revenue bonds for small loans issued for the purchasing of capital, supplies, and construction costs or equipment; and specific incentives for agreeing to develop a specific area.

Another option may be tax increment financing (TIF). While this funding strategy may directly benefit the City or County, it can indirectly support business retention and expansion by funneling reinvestment and funding for improvements into a business district where a TIF is implemented.

Provide Housing Assistance to Local Business Employees

Employee retention was an issue identified during the Competitive Florida group meetings; this may be exacerbated by the inability of the Gadsden County workforce to afford housing and points to a need to establish a home-buying assistance program. Various state, local, and not-for-profit organizational support exists to help with such efforts. Gadsden County might consider working with each municipality to establish and market some of these incentives in a coordinated approach with the County's major employers, both private and governmental.

The State of Florida, the Florida Housing Coalition, and the Florida Housing Finance Corporation administer housing programs that offer, among other things, down payment assistance to first-time homebuyers. The most common down payment assistance comes in the form of state-level grants, secondary lending, and 100 percent financing assurance. As the amount and type of assistance varies, Gadsden County will need to work with these entities to further develop down payment assistance programs for resident workforce employees. More information can be found at <http://www.flhousing.org/>.

Down payment assistance can also be provided through secondary financing providers. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) connects first-time homebuyers with the down payment assistance they need through the Down Payment Assistance through a Secondary Financing Providers (DAP) program. DAP is a network of HUD-approved lenders, entities, and organizations that offer homebuyers the opportunity to finance their down payment and closing costs separate from their primary mortgage loan.

The federally enacted American Dream Down Payment Assistance Act provides down payment assistance up to \$10,000 or six percent of the property's total purchase price (whichever is greater) as part of the HOME Investment Partnership Program. Qualifying first-time homebuyers in all 50 states can receive the grant and can use the money to fund down payments, closing costs, and, in limited properties, rehabilitation. Eligible homeowners do not pay back any of the grant after purchasing their homes.

The Neighborhood Gold Down Payment Assistance Program is a private, charitable program coordinated by the Buyers Fund that helps fund down payments for certain homebuyers. Homebuyers can receive between three percent and ten percent of the property's total purchase price, which they can use as a down payment and to cover their closing costs. There is a one percent "origination" fee, although recipients can deduct this fee from the grant itself.

Active service members, reservists, active members of the National Guard, and retired veterans have access to additional resources. The US Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) offers up to 102.5 percent financing for qualifying service members, veterans, and their spouses. Under this program, the entire home purchase price, including the down payment, is eligible to be financed and recipients are eligible to borrow up to an additional 2.5 percent of the property's total purchase price. USAA, a private member-owned insurance and lending institution for military members and their families, provides 100 percent financing, grants, and other assistance to first-time homebuyers who have served or are serving in the US military.

Utilize Existing Resources to Support Local Entrepreneurs

Gadsden County has a growing number of eager entrepreneurs that can be fostered into strong local businesses of the future. Opportunities may be available to develop supporting resources for local entrepreneurs such as trainings and

workshops, funding, or even opportunities to fill vacant storefronts. The many local and regional education resources, as well as CareerSource Capital Region or FAMU's Small Business Development Center may be able to provide many of these services.

Infrastructure Improvements

Address Septic Issues in the Midway, 10/90 Industrial Area, and Brickyard Industrial Area

The City of Midway and Gadsden County might consider coordinating on an assessment of the Midway, 10/90, and Brickyard industrial areas to identify the specific areas wherein septic systems are used, areas with the greatest need for central sewer services, areas where septic systems can remain in-place, potential central sewer providers, and initial estimated costs for providing the upgrades. Replacing Midway's failing sewer system will encourage economic development because jobs replacing the sewer system will be created. It will stabilize the values of the homes in the Midway subdivision, which will create increased real estate taxes. This will encourage companies, and accompanying jobs, to relocate to the area, as those subdivisions will provide housing for individuals that work in the industrial park.

Potential alternative funding sources to assist correcting these septic system problems and central sewer services could include: low interest, time-extended loans from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection revolving loan fund; DEO and US Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant Program funds; Economic Development Administration linked public works and development facilities grants; the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and the Rural Utilities Service programs.

Improve Apalachicola River Public Access and Infrastructure

The scenic Apalachicola River Blueway offers great potential to create opportunities for tourism and economic development. Facilities located near the Blueway currently offer limited parking, small pavilions, and a few seating areas. However, this area still holds a lot of potential for appropriate growth, which highlights the need to upgrade infrastructure to support it. For example, the City of Chattahoochee may need to expand parking options at its waterfront and improved public access to the river in order to accommodate the desired level of increased tourism. With the plans for the operation of a paddlewheel steamer replica between Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Columbus, Georgia, this may require additional supporting infrastructure around the steamboat landing area, and further drive the need for added parking and public access at the waterfront.



Marketing

Consider an Active and Collaborative Marketing Approach

One of the biggest concerns throughout the Competitive Florida exercise was that so few people involved, even those from neighboring counties, knew these assets existed. Many participants were unfamiliar with the diverse natural assets, rich historic heritage, artistic talents, and well-developed, successful businesses and industries that Gadsden County has to offer.

With this in mind, the County might consider developing marketing materials and actively distributing these materials to individuals that would be likely to visit, tour, and/or relocate to Gadsden County, as well as industries likely to locate and operate within the County. This could involve regular marketing to the greater Tallahassee/Thomasville/Bainbridge areas on the events and resources available in Gadsden County.

For example, Downtown Havana has great potential to be a day trip tourist destination and might benefit, as might the entire region, from marketing that links it to similar nearby destinations such as Quincy, Chattahoochee, Gretna, Bainbridge, and Thomasville. There is real potential for economic growth based upon Havana's past antiques industry and its current retailing, furniture, and home décor market.

Agriculture-related industries could also benefit from collaborative marketing measures in Gadsden County. The County could coordinate with IFAS and FAMU and encourage collaboration among participants when organizing annual County-wide and regional events to advertise and market locally produced crops and agricultural operations and businesses, possibly even working to build the capacity of local farmers and increase opportunities for horticultural marketing. This would also serve to enhance promotion of existing efforts, as those likely to attend one local agriculture-focused event are likely to attend another. Mutual calendar listings and promotions for seminars, workshops, certification programs, summer youth programs, and other agricultural development and product marketing initiatives may therefore also be considered.

Along the same lines, the County might consider supporting the collective marketing of industrial areas. Gadsden has numerous areas within its borders that are suitable for industrial development, including five industrial park locations with lots platted for commercial and industrial use, supporting infrastructure in place, and proximity to Interstate 10 or U.S. Highway 90. Some of these have rail connections and some are located relatively close to the Tallahassee Airport. Collaborative marketing may help the regional business community increase its apparently low current awareness of the unique opportunities offered by these Parks.

The County might also consider collaborating with nearby municipalities to jointly market eco-tourism assets. Natural resources could be marketed by resource areas (Apalachicola River, Torreya State Forest, Lake Talquin, etc.). These marketing efforts could focus on the natural beauty of these resources as well as the opportunities for recreation they provide, such as hiking, biking, canoeing, kayaking, camping, birding, and other outdoor activities. The pooling of local resources would help make this approach successful. County government could also coordinate with the Gadsden County Tourism Development Council on education initiatives and marketing related to local events, specific seasons for fishing and hunting, and other opportunities provided by each large area.

As part of this County-wide approach to marketing, Gadsden County could collaborate with each of its municipalities to coordinate and promote a series of festivals and events throughout the County. This could be promoted as a series of events and festivals and would facilitate the pooling of resources and prevention of scheduling conflicts, thus enabling the

most efficient use of resources and allowing interested parties to participate in as many of these events and festivals as possible. Such events and festivals would help to showcase the local community and create an awareness of what Gadsden County has to offer. Recurring events and festivals in particular hold the potential to draw tourists back to see other attractions within the County.

Address Signage Needs

One issue illuminated during the asset mapping exercise was a lack of consistent, coherent (*i.e.*, easy to read, understand, well-placed and located), and themed signage to direct tourists. Signage is needed to inform travelers on Interstate 10 and other nearby State and federal highways of the major historical and natural resource attractions within Gadsden County. To create economic growth, it is necessary to draw travelers off of these highways to experience the various attractions within Gadsden County.

First, asset owners and managers in this area might consider meeting to discuss their signage needs, the logistical and aesthetic aspects of sign construction (sign type, size, delegation of entity responsible for maintenance, etc.), and where this signage ought to be located to capture the maximum volume of both local resident traffic and out-of-town traffic along major through roads (Interstate 10, State Road 20 and U.S. Highway 90). Second, these asset owners and managers should consider coordinating with the Gadsden County Roads Department and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to discuss agreed-upon common signage needs and to seek input and support in getting the useful and proper signage installed appropriately. More specifically, the City of Havana may want to coordinate with FDOT to explore having their city's name replaced on the Interstate sign for exit 199 off U.S. Highway 27.

Lake Talquin and related assets may want to explore options for installing directional signage, as Lake Talquin forms the southern boundary of the County and is accessible from several major regional highways serving through traffic (Interstate 10, State Road 20, U.S. Highway 90) and State Road 267 (Pat Thomas Parkway) to several spur roads (County Road 65C at the Bear Creek State Recreational Area, Cooks Landing Road, Hopkins Landing Road, Highway 268, and Highbridge Road), with spurs to Peters Road to High Bluffs Landing Road.

The City of Chattahoochee may want to explore options for adding historical markers and signage to the significant areas around the Apalachicola River, which would add strength and validity to each asset as well as providing many opportunities to learn about each site. This would go a long way toward making historical preservation and celebration a priority and complement the creation of historic tours and trails. To this end, the City might consider building an ongoing relationship with the Bureau of Historic Preservation in the Florida Department of State.

Celebrate Successes

Consider acknowledging and celebrating some of the local successes experienced by area businesses. Doing a success story highlights past growth and future opportunities while showing appreciation for the business's choice to operate in Gadsden County, which may well serve to encourage other businesses and industries to (re)locate in the County.

Advertise Rentable Community Space

Gadsden County has plentiful space available for public use. This would include the historic arsenal in Chattahoochee, IFAS, the green spaces alongside the Apalachicola River (with facilities such as pavilions), the Bear Creek Educational Facility, and more. These spaces would be great for meetings, gatherings, company retreats, and small events. The County should consider ways to advertise these spaces as a way to bring more individuals into the community.

Recognize and Consider the Desires of Millennials and Retirees

Whether related to housing, recreation, or amenities, Gadsden County may consider guiding many of its strategies with the appeal to retirees and Millennials in mind. The largest shift in population share for any single age cohort between 2000 and 2010 in Gadsden County was in the 35 to 44 year old cohort, seeing an overall decline of nearly 1,200. In addition to this, the number of school aged children decreased by nearly 900.

Conversely, the greatest population increases during that time were seen in the older cohorts. The cohort of 55 to 64 years old saw an overall increase of nearly 2,200, and the total population age 55 and older in Gadsden County had an approximate increase of 3,000. If Gadsden County continues to follow trends of the State of Florida and the nation as a whole, it will likely continue to see aging demographics. Therefore, it may be important to recognize what the desires, demands, and overall market will be created by these shifting demographics.

With its proximity to Leon County and the major colleges and universities, Gadsden County may look to attract some of the nearby recent graduates and young professionals. Beyond the immediate benefits, such as a strengthened workforce, Millennials today can be the families tomorrow that take root in Gadsden County and keep its community, economy, and leadership moving forward.

Recognizing and Developing Tourism Opportunities

Consider Holding Reenactments, Music Festivals, and Outdoor Concerts, Competitions, and Plays

Special cultural events, sporting events, and competitions are effective at drawing tourists in to spend time and money within Gadsden County. Numerous annual or semi-annual events, such as the reenactment of the Battle of Scott's Landing, agricultural festivals, fishing tournaments, and more can be cross-promoted. Together, these events function to underscore the natural and historical resources of the Gadsden County area, promote and increase community involvement, and create a sense of place, belonging, and pride. These events can also bolster word-of-mouth marketing as well as entice people to relocate to Gadsden County.

The County might consider organizing and sponsoring a steamboat festival in Chattahoochee as well as heritage festivals in the County more generally. Heritage festivals could highlight the history of the Ft. Walton Indians and the mounds they created and left behind, historic battles and treaty signing, or the history of life in river-edge Florida. These festivals could highlight folk music, folk art, local literature (perhaps making use of the small pavilion near the river's edge), local camping and RV facilities, and Victory Bridge. Coordination of these events across the entire County could be a great way to showcase and spur involvement and to market the combined events across the North Florida, South Georgia, and South Alabama region.

Potential plans to create a steamboat service between the cities of Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Columbus, Georgia offer a unique opportunity for the promotion of Gadsden County, including public relations opportunities surrounding the opening of the service in Chattahoochee and the staging of recurring events around the steamboat landing.

Develop a Focused Effort to Support Local Agritourism

Agricultural tourism (“agritourism”) is a commercial enterprise at a working farm, ranch, or agricultural plant conducted for the enjoyment or education of visitors and that generates supplemental income for the owner. Agritourism can include farm stands or shops, facilities where visitors pick their own produce, farm stays, tours, on-farm classes, fairs, festivals, pumpkin patches, Christmas tree farms, winery weddings, orchard dinners, youth camps, barn dances, hunting, fishing, guest ranches, and more. Visiting a working farm can be a wonderful



family activity, educational and entertaining for children and adults alike. Gadsden County already has a number of these enterprises that are active and form part of a larger base of related businesses in the Tallahassee/South Georgia region. These businesses tend to be involved with organic agriculture. Produce is sold at local restaurants and grocery stores and supports direct delivery to consumers of locally-grown foods.

A supportive County initiative in the form of marketing local downtown markets and market days would likely support the growth of these local businesses. Partners might include: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; Visit Florida; UF’s IFAS office in Gadsden County; Florida A&M University Research Farm; the Farm Bureau; the US Department of Agriculture; and the Leon County Food Co-Op, among others.

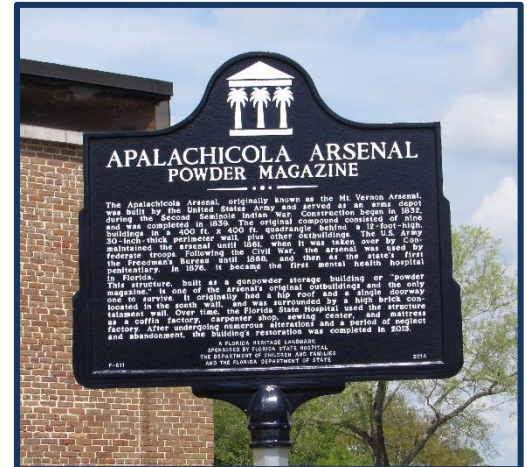
Develop the Gadsden County Portion of Torreya State Park

A potentially important but to-date underdeveloped natural resource asset available to bolster the Gadsden County tourism economy is Torreya State Park, located along the bluffs of the Apalachicola River. It is one of the highlights of the Florida State Park system. Gadsden County might consider working with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Florida Park Services staff and the Nature Conservancy (which owns the linked “Garden of Eden” bluff parcels in Liberty County) to further develop and advance the development of tourism facilities in the northerly Gadsden County portion of the park. As a possible supporting action, FDOT could be included in discussions concerning improving access to the park, since one of Florida’s more unique rest stops is located in Gadsden County. It is just after the Apalachicola bridge crossing on Interstate 10 and might offer a northern Torreya State Park entrance and linkage to Aspalaga Road within the Park, a connectivity improvement which may produce positive financial consequences for the County.

Arts and History

Create Driving Tours and Heritage Trails

Gadsden County's environmental features and rich cultural heritage, along with its proximity to near half a million local residents and numerous tourists due to the regional transportation corridors of U.S. Highway 90 and Interstate 10 make it a prime candidate for an organized effort to develop a network of driving and biking tours. Potential sites for inclusion in a driving tour or historic trail include Native American heritage sites, Victory Bridge, the Old Spanish Trail, early colonial frontier battlegrounds and buildings, Civil War sites, the Apalachicola Blueway, tobacco barns, and numerous old classically southern homes and homesteads located throughout Gadsden County's municipalities and countryside.



The County might consider creating a working group (including Gadsden County Planning, and various Main Street organizations, among other entities) to develop and apply for grant funding for the creation of a driving and biking tour and/or heritage trails linking these multiple assets and that include existing historical markers. This working group may also identify resources needed, such as additional historic destinations and necessary directional and informational signage.

This project might include the development of related mobile device application tools and Google Earth links with geo-locational points providing written descriptions of on-the-ground assets. A possible geo-cache approach may provide additional interest for auto and biking trail users. Potential support may be provided by the Florida Department of State Division of Historical Resources, FDOT, and the history and environmental science departments of Florida State University, FAMU, and Tallahassee Community College. Such a grant effort may be a good graduate student project and could potentially serve as an internship opportunity.

Multiple trails could be designed, taking into account the characteristics of each particular asset and its proximity to other assets. Some trails may be more suitable for bike and pedestrian uses, while others could be designed for and marketed towards motorists. Some specific options that have been suggested:

- A bike- or auto-based day tour could be designed to link various old and scenic tobacco barns throughout the County. Other historic structures such as old homesteads and grist mills could be included, along with historical markers along the designated paths. Linking the trail to mobile media devices, Google Earth, and other modern GPS and mapping could provide a great deal of interactivity to the trail.
- An Apalachicola River corridor historic trail could be developed that focuses on specific locations and paths and that describes the corridor's historic, environmental, and cultural assets. Those involved in its creation could coordinate with the local heritage and natural resource experts to develop a well-researched and clearly delineated trail linking the natural and historic resources. Potential sources of assistance may be provided through the Florida Department of State's Division of Historical Resources grant funds, private foundation grants, DEO grants, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, and Office of Greenways and Trails grants. A sub-portion of this effort could be dedicated toward exploratory work for a Chattahoochee cultural and heritage museum.

Develop an “Arts Experience Destination”

Several of the municipalities within Gadsden County are rich in arts and cultural resources. For example, Quincy has the Gadsden Art Center, a dance school, a jazz club, and the historic Leaf Theatre, which routinely stages music, dance, and cultural events. Quincy and several of the County’s other municipalities should be promoted as destinations for visitors interested in art and culture. The historic character of these areas within the county will serve to enhance the experience of visitors to these destinations.

The County might consider exploring opportunities to incorporate these art-centered municipalities into more overarching existing art or antique trails. Possible emphases include antiquing, historical building sites, and art performance. Funding opportunities may be provided through the Florida Department of State’s Division of Historical Resources grants, private foundation grants, DEO grants, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Some of these already existing trails and sample trip itineraries are outlined on websites such as www.naturalnorthflorida.com. In many cases, Gadsden County is briefly referenced but assets are not described in any detail. Increased visibility on these websites could be a valuable form of free advertising and networking for Gadsden County art areas.



The County and its individual municipalities might also consider encouraging the development of college and university art and music outpost centers and the usage of downtown and surrounding historic areas for studio and classroom purposes. This could potentially encourage the creation of artist colonies, which would further perpetuate a reputation of an art-centric destination.

Renovation, Design, and Planning

Plan for Complete Streets

Complete Streets are context-sensitive solutions to issues tied up into the planning, design, construction, reconstruction, and operation of urban areas and are intended to promote safety, quality of life, mobility, and economic development; Complete Streets initiatives often emphasize planning for multiple modes of transportation rather than just planning for automobile use. DEO assistance is available to develop an integrated, connected network of streets that are safe and accessible for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities. The County should consider coordinating with individual municipalities to develop and adopt clear amendment(s) to each municipality’s comprehensive plan that identify the specific Downtown district area wherein a Complete Streets/multimodal transportation strategy is intended to be implemented. Municipalities might also consider providing a set of corresponding goals, objectives, and policies to guide planned actions and outcomes for this district. These goals, objectives, and policies might emphasize adoption of long-term strategies to facilitate development patterns that support a multimodal approach, including appropriate urban design schemes, mixes of land uses, appropriate intensity and density of development, exemptions or discounted impacts for locally-desirable developments, assigning secondary priority to vehicle mobility and primary priority to ensuring a safe, comfortable, and attractive pedestrian/bicycling environment, and the reduction of fees for local development to incentivize development within the identified district area. Municipalities may also wish to pursue additional funding through Safe Routes to School grants or other funding with the support and participation of the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) and Gadsden County.

More specifically, the City of Quincy might consider working with owners of Downtown buildings, local governments, and willing community partners to develop an urban form-based approach to planning that emphasizes walkability and “community-for-a-lifetime” objectives that emphasize senior-friendly design. Quincy may learn from a current DEO Technical Assistance project being implemented by the small town of Zephyrhills for the development of a form-based approach to planning for their Downtown area. Chattahoochee may wish to learn from this work as well.

The City of Chattahoochee might also consider removing the center lane of its Downtown thoroughfare, as it currently operates at half-capacity. The main source of through traffic originates locally, consisting largely of employees of local hospitals or jails. The City might consider redesigning its streetscape to be more similar to that of a traditional Downtown, with angled parking on one side of the street and parallel parking on the other, as well as a small landscaped median. Funding can be sought under a DEO Technical Assistance grants to do more specific “transportation redesign” for the main street along U.S. Highway 90 and the Downtown business district up to the Apalachicola River. This could help design a Chattahoochee Main Street and Downtown that is to more conducive to business activity, pedestrian and other multi-modal transportation options, and safety. Additionally, the use of alleyways and the development of other shared parking alternatives in the Downtown can provide more parking options.



The City of Havana may wish to explore options with the Florida Mainstreet Program and work with Florida Department of Transportation to design improvements and adjustments to the streetscaping on the portion of U.S. Highway 27 that passes through Downtown Havana.

Facade Maintenance and Streetscaping in Main Streets and Downtowns

A concern that repeatedly surfaced during the asset mapping exercise was that many storefronts were barren or left unmaintained. Building facades and storefronts can go a long way toward establishing a community identity and creating curb appeal for locals and passersby alike.

The City of Quincy may consider assessing building facades in the Downtown and neighboring blocks and working to develop some common facade parameters for the area. Various funding sources could then be explored, such as local business assistance grants, loans, and funds to update facades.

Chattahoochee might consider creating a unique community identity through setting design standards that are tied to streetscaping plans and facade renovations. One option for currently unoccupied structures may be maintenance of these structures by the City until a private client can start a business in the building and assume responsibility for its maintenance. Funding for this may be sought under local Community Redevelopment Agency, State or federal grants, and business-supported low interest loans aimed at improving and beautifying the Downtown area. Chattahoochee might consider coordinating with Main Street Program participants to develop a possible theme by which to standardize a facade design scheme.

Consider Organizing a Community Paint Day

Gadsden County as a whole as well as each of its municipalities might consider organizing and holding a Community Fix Up and Paint Day. This event would be aimed at encouraging residents and businesses to conduct small-scale cleaning and paint restoration for downtown business fronts in need. Such programs are relatively inexpensive and serve to spur community involvement. The work improves the appearance of the Downtown area and makes it more attractive to visitors and tourists.

Consider Building Re-Use, Creation of Vertical Mixed Uses, and Additional Parking

Each of the small Downtown areas within Gadsden County (particularly in Havana, Chattahoochee, and Quincy) might consider creating an inventory of vacant buildings in the Downtown and neighboring blocks that lists identified owners, the willingness of these owners to redevelop, or sell for redevelopment, and/or the owner's redevelopment plans. With an inventory in place, a concerted effort could be made to work with owners toward common redevelopment objectives.



Cities might consider providing logistically laid-out parking areas with clear directional signage (using both on-street and shared lot parking approaches) servicing Downtown businesses, arts-oriented venues, and a growing mix of Downtown developments. Alleyways could be used for parking as well as creating pedestrian and bicycle connections and linkages to the City's Downtown. Additional parking could be made available by removing certain dilapidated units.

Each municipality might consider working to develop multiple uses in the second and higher floors of Downtown buildings. These could serve as apartments that appeal to working youth and active retirees, as well as art studios, office and work space, and other commercial uses. This would be especially beneficial for Downtown Quincy. Some of these properties are private and the County and City may need to develop a variety of incentives to assist redevelopment of these buildings.

Other potential actions Cities might consider include assessing the relevant comprehensive plan and land development code and removing or streamlining provisions that present obstacles to property owners wishing to redevelop their property. Cities may also research and provide specific redevelopment incentives for their Downtown area. These incentives may include time-limited property tax reductions for the rehabilitation of Downtown properties; reduction of parking requirements via the implementation of shared parking; working to identify and link property owners with any available State or federal funding, such as funds for increasing energy efficiency and weatherization; and the implementation of form-based codes or other flexible zoning alternatives in the Downtown district.



Provide Street Lighting for Evening Safety in Quincy

During the asset mapping exercise, it was noted that the City of Quincy has a need to plan and provide good nighttime lighting for the Downtown and associated parking areas. Quincy may consider enhancing street lighting, including the construction of well-lighted paths to parking areas serving the Downtown evening arts and related business-oriented

venues. Gadsden County, the City of Quincy, and Quincy Main Street should coordinate to plan and develop an integrated Downtown parking, lighting, and pedestrian enhancements plan that includes shared parking, good directional signage, and well-lighted streets, alleyways, and parking areas.

Historic Quincy Courthouse Restoration

The Quincy Courthouse is a unique architectural resource originally constructed around 1912-13 in Classical Revival Style. It is located in the center of Quincy's City Square, which is also the seat of Gadsden County's government as well as a Downtown focal point. Restoration and maintenance of the facility and surrounding area is critical to maintaining a viable historic city center. The Courthouse and Courthouse Square are the center-stage and focal point of Quincy's urban form. There may be funding available from the Florida Department of State for restoration grants, which in the past have been up to \$500,000 with only a 10 percent matching requirement. Gadsden County may consider implementing into the design of the area surrounding the Courthouse ample parking as well as pedestrian enhancements such as benches, shade, crosswalks, night-time lighting, and landscaping.

Create a Look-Out Point in Chattahoochee

Gadsden County and the City of Chattahoochee may consider developing a property overlooking the Apalachicola River along the northern side of U.S. Highway 90. The development could potentially include a hotel, parking overlooking the River, an observation tower/deck, and/or a trailhead for both a greenway and the Blueway. Initial actions might include inventorying potential sites overlooking the River, working to acquiring parcels for the look-out point and associated public access, parking, care needs such as restrooms, working to link pedestrian trails to the site, and exploring potential actions that would support to adjacent private property owners in developing businesses that would further support and enhance a City look-out point and park on the bluffs over the Apalachicola River.

Attract Desired Business in Downtown Areas

A strong desire for new restaurants and businesses related to everyday activities in Gadsden County was highlighted during the asset mapping exercise. Gadsden County and its individual municipalities would be well-served to coordinate their efforts to seek new business development in the Downtown areas.

Quincy, Havana, and Chattahoochee might encourage restaurants and businesses to incorporate outdoor seating to complement their new streetscape designs. This would be popular in good weather and draw the interest of passing motorists, thus providing much desired exposure to the restaurants and neighboring stores. In particular, Quincy could incentivize the development of a wine bar and restaurants catering to patrons of the Leaf Theatre, Art Center, and other Downtown destinations. Chattahoochee might consider encouraging the start-up of a bait, tackle, and trailhead shop, as fishing and hiking are popular activities in the area.

Each of the communities in Gadsden County would benefit from the development of bed and breakfast-type accommodations in the Downtown areas. Online and mobile services such as "AirBnB" and similar businesses may help communities encourage a number of the existing homes in the walkable Downtown areas to consider providing overnight accommodations.

Community Outreach and Education

Expand Educational and Community Programs

All three of the agriculturally-focused assets (Rocky Comfort Farm, Bear Creek Educational Facility, and Coastal Lumber) visited in the mapping exercise have implemented educational programs, many of which are targeted toward Gadsden County youth. While the facilities note that children seem to enjoy them, they also voiced a general concern regarding engagement. Several of the assets provide educational classes and activities but require field trips, which can sometimes be difficult for school staff, students, and parents to accommodate. The County might consider partnering with these assets to design in-classroom presentations to complement and develop interest in these areas and in visiting these sites to better take advantage of the resources already offered. Rocky Comfort Farm might be able to visit schools with small presentations about what they do and what students could look forward to if they were to visit. Bear Creek could do something similar to increase attendance by those within Gadsden County. Coastal Lumber could do a mini-lecture for older children about conservation and how they operate sustainably. The County might also consider collaborating with all three of these facilities in an Earth Day celebration.

Another possible initiative might be to increase the availability of these programs to some of the metro area's senior and assisted living facilities. For example, Bear Creek has wheelchair accessible trails and works with the Wounded Warrior Project to provide veterans with hunting opportunities. The development of senior- and disabled-friendly programs could bring a new audience to these assets and be beneficial overall.



Create Community Gardens and Agricultural Programs

Gadsden County might consider collaborating with IFAS, FAMU, and Rocky Comfort Farms to create a community garden. Community gardens can be a widely beneficial and relatively low-cost use of underutilized land. This could work in conjunction with the annual programs and field trips already implemented and help to foster an education in and appreciation for agriculture within the community. A community garden can also help to develop partnerships that provide surplus produce to local businesses and entities such as restaurants, food banks, schools, and grocers. Grant funding to support community food projects such as community gardens may be available through the USDA's Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.

Gadsden County might also consider coordinating with IFAS, FAMU, and other related assets to provide lectures targeting recipients of the New Farmer Program through the USDA grant. It may also prove beneficial to create local programs for the socially disadvantaged that provide instruction in farming opportunities, farming management, worker needs, and small business development.

Foster Internships and Youth Volunteer Opportunities

Gadsden County might consider collaborating with all assets to expand opportunities for student internships and externships. These could provide an opportunity for Gadsden County youth to gain helpful experience and provide a strong foundation for developing an educated workforce within the County.

View Night Skies at Rocky Comfort Farms

The Rocky Comfort Farm is the perfect rural location to conduct educational nighttime astronomy events, and Rocky Comfort expressed interest in these kinds of events during the asset mapping exercise. Gadsden County might consider

working in conjunction with the Tallahassee Astronomical Society and the social media resources of Project Night Sky to sponsor outdoor astronomy events.

Teach Gun Safety at Talon

Gadsden County might consider collaborating with Talon, Inc. in designing and implementing gun safety courses. Talon's owners have expressed a desire to teach more in-depth training courses and have the appropriate professional background to design a safety course. These classes could provide a great opportunity for youth to learn about safety measures should they ever encounter a gun and could be paired with a seminar for adults teaching them precautions to take when keeping guns in the home.

Facilitate Local Business with Tallahassee Community College and Gadsden Technical Institute Curriculum

As many successful businesses in Gadsden County have already done, the County and its municipalities might consider coordinating with local industries in their efforts to collaborate with educational institutions such as the Gadsden Technical Institute (GTI) and Tallahassee Community College. Programs could be designed to provide students with training and certification in various plant operations and skills such as welding, pipe fitting, electrical wiring, and other skills in demand by businesses within the County. This cooperative effort is needed to grow local industries and help replace workers nearing retirement. Specific actions to consider could include job fairs and developing and offering specific vocational and plant operations management courses. Reaching out to local businesses to ascertain what their educational needs for employment are could potentially open new doors for the County's resident workforce.

Collaboration

Develop a Cooperative Fuel Depot in Gadsden County for Agriculture-Related Business and Partners

The asset mapping meetings produced a recommendation to develop a cooperative fuel depot in Gadsden County, which would correspond nicely with the County's interest in growing "corporate citizenship." A fuel co-op of this type may follow the lead of Southern Loggers Fuel Cooperative, which is an existing agriculture-based fuel buying membership cooperative. A fuel cooperative buys fuel and other items in bulk quantities at low prices and then sells to co-op members at a lower rate. Southern Loggers Fuel Cooperative has paid around a million dollars back to members over the past several years. It also retails other items to members, such as tires and parts, at discount prices.

In Gadsden County, a fuel co-op may be especially helpful especially for smaller farmers and agriculture-related businesses. Coastal Industrial Products suggested the establishment of a cooperative fueling depot near their plant or possibly on the Coastal Industrial property. The Coastal Industrial company representative involved in the asset mapping exercise is involved in the Southern Loggers Fuel Cooperative leadership and may be able to help guide this effort. Further, IFAS Center and FAMU Farm might serve as willing partners with Coastal Lumber and others in working toward the establishment of a cooperative fueling depot. Anyone involved with agricultural and forestry in the Gadsden region would be eligible to join. More insight can be found at www.southernloggers.com.

Foster Business Mentorships

Gadsden County is fortunate to have many successful companies, such as TeligentEMS, that offer a unique opportunity to provide insight and advice to both potential startup companies within Gadsden County and to the County, to which these companies can provide insight about creating an environment conducive to business growth. The County might consider approaching these assets to establish a business mentorship program, provide incentives to the participating businesses, and create strong network of involved companies.

Create a Supportive Network for Local Agriculture

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) can help support the development of local agriculture. CSA is a partnership between local farmers and consumers in which the consumer pays a fee to local farmers and in return receives a weekly supply of harvested farm products during the season. Opportunities to develop such a system with existing Gadsden County and regional growers should be further explored. The County might consider contacting and working with local food vendor cooperative efforts such as the Tallahassee New Leaf Market Co-op Program, thus supporting local growers and producers in marketing locally grown or sourced farm products and supporting the development of agritourism opportunities.

Continue to Utilize and Connect Local and Regional Education Resources

Gadsden County benefits from a variety of educational resources that can act as a vehicle in economic development and workforce development. Within the County is access to three major public institution resources with the University of Florida's IFAS Extension, FAMU Cooperative Extension Program, and Tallahassee Community College's Public Safety Institute, as well as the main campus of Tallahassee Community College, Florida A&M, and Florida State University in neighboring Leon County. Whether through trainings and workshops, developing programs, or working on special projects, the County should continue to seek out opportunities to partner with these valuable resources, and may even work to better connect each of them into collaborative efforts rather than working with each individually. In addition to these resources is the growing Gadsden Technical Institute, which is working to develop a skilled workforce and trade professionals within the community. Efforts to connect these resources into the local school system and vertically network the educational assets in the County can help to improve the local school system, continue to develop a skilled workforce, and bolster larger economic development efforts.

Continue to Strengthen Ties between Municipalities

Gadsden County faces a challenge in coordinating efforts between six cities within it, as well as with the County itself. However, as the community conversations indicated, each community may have its own localized issues but they share many of the same goals. Each community brings its own piece to the rich cultural diversity and history of Gadsden County, and with that they bring diverse solutions, opportunities, and resources for moving forward. The County should continue to recognize and emphasize the importance of collaboration for community and economic development efforts and highlight successes at the local level.

Conclusion

Working with the leadership, residents, and business owners in Gadsden County has truly been a motivating experience for all regional and state partners involved in this effort. The County's diverse resources and passionate community leaders can be the driving force towards the future, and serve as an example for other communities to follow.

Of note, Gadsden County has several key assets that may serve as a growth foundation that attracts supporting businesses. These key assets may be promoted, accelerated, or otherwise enhanced to ensure that the existing strong assets add to their impact. The County's municipalities' historic downtowns, local agriculture, and affiliated industries bring strong growth potential to Gadsden County.

Fostering partnerships beyond municipal borders with State agencies, organizations, and universities can be a major tool in helping Gadsden County implement its vision. However, it is those passionate community leaders who will be the difference between seeing the vision and reaching the vision, and Gadsden County has no shortage of those leaders. DEO staff and the Rural Economic Development Initiative partners who worked with Gadsden County appreciate the relationships formed and the knowledge gained from working with members of the community and spending time in Gadsden County.

Just a friendly reminder:

Thank you for reading! The information in this report, along with the ideas shared during the asset mapping exercise, are intended to be used as a brainstorming tool for the County when creating their economic development action plan. Many of the recommendations contained in this report are the result of a snapshot observation from individuals with limited perspective. The County and community as a whole will ultimately carry the vision and decide what steps to outline in the Economic Development Strategy to realize this vision.

Appendices

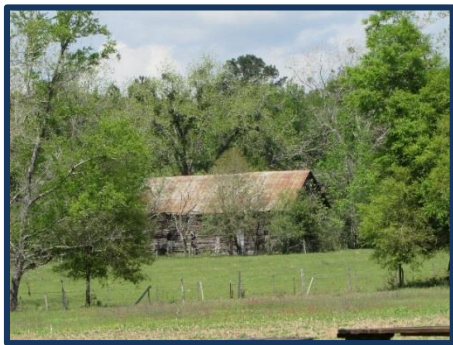
Appendix A: All Assets Visited During Exercise

1. 10/90 Industrial Center
2. Apalachicola Arsenal
3. Apalachicola River Blueway
4. BASF (Badische Anilin- und Soda-Fabrik/ Baden Aniline and Soda Factory) Plant
5. Bear Creek Educational Forest
6. Brickyard Industrial Area
7. Chattahoochee Main Street
8. Chattahoochee River Landing
9. Coastal Industrial Products (Coastal Lumber)
10. Creek Entertainment
11. Florida A&M University Research Farm
12. Florida Public Safety Institute
13. Florida State Hospital
14. Gadsden Arts Center
15. Hammock Creek Commerce Park
16. Havana Downtown
17. Havana Industrial Park
18. Ingram's Marina
19. North Florida Research and Education Center/IFAS
20. Quincy Historical District
21. Quincy Industrial Park
22. Quincy Leaf Theatre
23. Quincy Municipal Airport
24. Rocky Comfort Farms
25. Talon Gun Range
26. TeligentEMS
27. The Whip Waterfront Pub and Grub

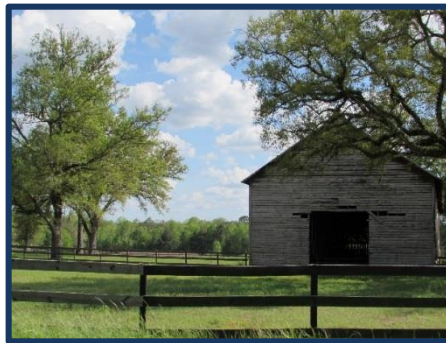
Appendix B: Participants

1. Alissa Slade Lotane, Florida Department of State
2. Allara Gutcher, Gadsden County
3. Allison Bryant, Florida Department of Elder Affairs
4. Beth Kirkland, Gadsden County
5. Bruce Ballister, Apalachee Regional Planning Council
6. Dan Evans, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
7. Dan Pennington, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
8. Janice Watson, Apalachee Regional Planning Council
9. Jill Jeglie, Gadsden County
10. John Reddick, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
11. Ricky Thompson, City of Starke
12. Rob Nixon, Gadsden County
13. Samantha Parks, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
14. Sean Lewis, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
15. Tim Center, Capital Area Community Action Agency
16. Tim Johns, Enterprise Florida, Inc.
17. Tim Rogers, U.S. Department of Agriculture
18. Virgie Bowen, Florida Department of Transportation, District Three

Appendix C: Pictures



Tobacco Barn



Tobacco Barn



TeligentEMS



The Whippoorwill



TeligentEMS



Talon Gun Range



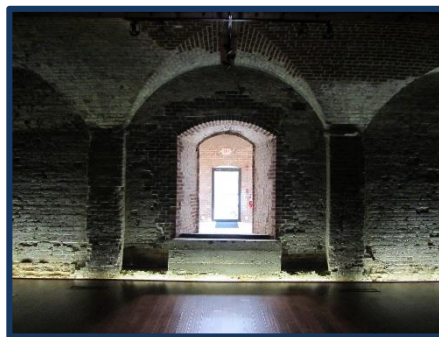
Rocky Comfort Farms



Talon Gun Range



Gadsden 10/90 Commerce Park



Apalachicola Arsenal



Group Discussion



Apalachicola Arsenal



Coastal Plywood Company



Carry Field



BASF



Chattahoochee Main Street



Rocky Comfort Farms



FAMU Extension



Downtown Havana



Creek Entertainment



Coastal Plywood Company



Chattahoochee Boat Landing



Quincy Courthouse



Bear Creek Educational Forest



Creek Entertainment



Gadsden 10/90 Commerce Park



Leaf Theater



Downtown Havana



Chattahoochee Main Street



Midway Industrial Park



Bear Creek Educational Forest



Chattahoochee Boat Landing



Florida Public Safety Institute



Downtown Quincy



FAMU Extension



Quincy Courthouse



Hammock Creek Commerce Park



Leaf Theater



Quincy Fire Station



Appendix J

Community Conversations Best Practices

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS BEST PRACTICES

For a community's economic development strategy to be effective, it must be the collective vision of the community as a whole. Recognizing this necessity, communities that participate in the Competitive Florida Partnership are encouraged to use creative methods for getting input from members of the community. The partnership advocates for community conversations or public meetings that involve opportunities for participants to talk rather than listen to presentations from government officials.



Community members meet in a church to discuss improvements for DeSoto County.

Below is a list of best practices for successful public meetings:

- **Choose a time that is convenient.** This is often afterhours and may even be on the weekend in some communities.
- **Choose a place that is convenient.** In larger communities (such as county communities), it may be appropriate to hold multiple meetings in different locations to encourage participation. Bring the meeting to the community, rather than asking the community to come to the meeting.



In the City of Newberry, new ideas are posted on boards and community members help to prioritize issues using dots.

- **Develop a clear agenda for your meeting and stick to it.**

Include a well-defined purpose and timeframe. This will ensure that your meeting stays on track and on topic.

- **Broadly advertise your meeting.** Public meetings are required to be advertised, however communities are encouraged to go beyond the formal requirements. Reaching out through community organizations, email, newspapers and broadcasts, websites, marquee signs, social media, phone trees, and personal invitations from leadership can be effective ways to encourage attendance.

- **Place information and materials on your website.** In addition to the agenda, it can be important to include resources for meeting participants to view ahead of

time so they can come prepared to ask questions and offer input. This may also include links to DEO's website to explain the Competitive Florida Partnership.

- **Designate a meeting facilitator.** The role of a meeting facilitator is often different from that of a presenter. The facilitator will ensure that the meeting stays on time and on topic. It's best to select someone who is trusted by the community or a neutral party. It's good to anticipate heated issues that may derail the meeting and think about how to redirect conversation back on the topics listed on the agenda.



DeSoto County residents and business owners review past plans, county improvements, and projects.

- **Ensure that local elected officials are present.**

Community members want to know that their suggestions are being heard by the decision makers in their community. It is important to ensure that local leadership will be present.

- **Provide refreshments for attendees.** Meetings are often scheduled after work and before dinner, therefore light snacks can help ensure that people stay focused. If budgets are tight, consider partnering with local businesses to sponsor your refreshments or asking those who are helping to lead the meeting to bring potluck snacks (Please note: DEO grant funds cannot be used to purchase refreshments).

- **Design the room in a way that encourages conversation.** Settings that encourage conversation are often in open community rooms where chairs can be placed in semi-circles or small groups. Theater or classroom-style (rows) may be appropriate in small spaces where large crowds are expected. Commission Chambers are often not the best places for community meetings due to the room design that places emphasis on those that are seated on the stage, with seating that cannot be moved around. Leadership should be encouraged to sit among the community members. Community centers, church fellowship halls, school cafeterias, etc. can be great locations for community meetings.



DEO representatives discuss economic development ideas with DeSoto County resident.

- **Establish ground rules.** Setting ground rules can help minimize interruptions during the meeting. While most ground rules just reiterate common sense, it can be beneficial to draw attention to them in the beginning. Ground rules may include: 1) Start and end the meeting on time; 2) Everyone participates; 3) Only one person talks at a time – don't interrupt; 4) Raise your hand to speak; and 5) Respect everyone's ideas.

- **Place the focus on listening, not talking.** If someone shows up to a public meeting, chances are they have something to say or contribute. Make sure to keep presentations from leadership short and spend the majority of the time gathering input.



Community Conversations should be held in places convenient for residents and business owners, like school cafeterias.

- **Designate a timekeeper to keep things on track.** The timekeeper will be responsible for making sure that the agenda stays on track and will provide speakers with signals to show when their time is almost up (i.e. a “one-minute sign” or “time is up” sign).
- **Allow multiple ways for people to provide input.** Not everyone feels comfortable speaking in public, therefore other options such as surveys, small group discussions, and exercises that ask for input from everyone (i.e. post-it notes on the wall) may be utilized.
- **Consider including other ways to gather public input.** With busy schedules and personal commitments, it can be hard to get residents and business owners to take time out of their day to attend a meeting. Offer other ways to make suggestions using online survey tools, social media posts (#YourCommunity), school art contests, etc. Get creative!
- **Follow-up with participants.** Sometimes great ideas can come after a meeting. Send out an email to all who participated in the meeting thanking them for their attendance and providing directions on how they can contribute additional thoughts and comments.

Appendix K

Economic Development Strategy Sample
City of Webster



Florida Department of Economic
Opportunity Competitive Florida
Partnership

Grant #P0135

June 2015

City of Webster, FL

Economic Development Strategy





Project Background

The Economic Development Strategy in this report represents a first attempt to form a specific economic plan for the City of Webster, FL. This effort was made possible through a grant received from the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Competitive Florida Partnership program.



The Economic Strategy Plan was developed using the 15 strategies to increase economic competitiveness developed by the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Competitive Florida Partnership program. These strategies were also used to develop presentation materials and a survey to gather community ideas and feedback. Ongoing refinement of this plan is necessary to allow additional community and stakeholder input. The Economic Strategy will be reviewed within six months and then annually by city staff, city council and community stakeholders.

During the course of producing this project, it became clear that many of the strategies used for the 15 goals overlapped. This led to the development of a list of nine individual projects that stood out as important for Webster to capitalize on the existing assets that would act as a catalyst for redevelopment and increase tourism. These projects are outlined and described in Section 2.

City of Webster Economic Development Strategy Mission and Vision Statements

Mission Statement: The City of Webster actively works to retain and enhance existing businesses and community assets to attract new businesses and foster compatible growth.

Vision Statement: Create and maintain a business environment that promotes the retention and expansion of existing businesses, while attracting new businesses that will complement the unique and authentic character of the community.

The City of Webster's Economic Development efforts will be conducted within a framework endorsed by the City's elected officials and in the best interests of the citizens of Webster. Through the implementation of its comprehensive economic development strategy, the City of Webster will develop business retention, expansion and attraction programs that will help bring employment opportunities for its citizens while expanding the community's tax base.

The City's Economic Development program will strive to maintain and enhance the small-town character through sensitive redevelopment, historic and scenic preservation and through the promotion of the development of the South Sumter Connector trail alignment along the abandoned railroad corridor through the City of Webster. The South Sumter Connector trail is part of the planned 250-mile Coast-to-Coast-Connector (C2C) from St. Petersburg, FL to Cape Canaveral, FL. The economic development program will also promote programs that strengthen the historic agricultural base of the community, and take positive steps to preserve and promote Webster's authentic character and rural quality of life.

Goals:





1. Engage the Community in Planning and Implementing an Economic Strategy
2. Retain Current Businesses and Support Business Expansion
3. Attract New Businesses and Industries
4. Build Human Capital and Develop the Workforce
5. Preserve Webster's Sense of Place
6. Encourage Innovation and Entrepreneurship
7. Build and Maintain Community Leadership
8. Encourage commercial district revitalization
9. Improve Resiliency to Disaster
10. Provide Quality Education
11. Increase the Availability of Affordable Housing for the Workforce
12. Provide and promote recreational activities
13. Ensure the Availability of Quality Healthcare Facilities
14. Promote Sustainable Building and Economic Development Practices
15. Support Neighborhood Revitalization

Projects Developed:

1. Develop a "Beef Up Webster" Campaign
2. S.R. 471 Improvements
3. Identify, Preserve and Promote Webster's History
4. Identify and Preserve Canopy Trees
5. Promote the Authenticity of Webster and Expand on Existing Assets
6. Promote and Plan for the C2C Connector Trail through Webster
7. Build on the Downtown and Promote the Retail Trailhead Concept
8. Increase Housing Availability
9. Plan for City Growth



Section 1 - Economic Development Strategy

1.0 Goal: Engage the Community in Planning and Implementing an Economic Strategy

Objective 1.1: Form a Stakeholders Group.

Strategy: Continue to engage stakeholders to refine the Economic Strategy Plan.

Project: Form a “Beef Up Webster” campaign (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Tactic: Work with State Agencies, the Lake~Sumter MPO, the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Sumter County and the Chamber of Commerce to ensure strategies are represented on a larger scale and compatible with other plans.

Tactic: Include the cities of Bushnell and Center Hill to have more regional influence and to expand business development opportunities.

Objective 1.2: Provide a method for communicating the Economic Strategy Plan with residents, stakeholders and potential businesses.

Project: Develop a “Beef Up Webster” campaign (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Project: Create a City of Webster Website and/or Facebook page to communicate ideas with the citizens of Webster and provide a means for receiving feedback. To reduce City staff time, the development and maintenance of a website and Facebook page would need to be led by volunteers or another agency, and overseen by City staff.

Tactic: Provide links to state and local websites such as Sumter County Chamber of Commerce, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and Department of Economic Opportunity.

Tactic: Research the possibility of using the Competitive Florida Partnership Website as an interim and/or additional method for showcasing community assets and providing business information and opportunities.

Tactic: Expand the presence of the DiscoverSumterCounty Website for showcasing community assets and providing business information and opportunities.

Tactic: Research the possibility of using the Sumter Scenic Byway Website as an interim and any other additional method for showcasing community assets and providing business information and opportunities.

Tactic: Expand the presence of Webster on the Sumter County Website.

Objective 1.3 Garner support from the Webster City Council.

Strategy: Pass municipal resolutions to support applicable economic strategies.

Strategy: Adopt the Economic Development Plan.

2.0 Goal 2: Retain Current Businesses and Support Business Expansion

Objective 2.1: Identify businesses in the Webster area and analyze services/products provided.

Strategy: Continue to engage business owners within the Webster region to understand their staffing needs, and obstacles to expansion.

Project: Develop a “Beef Up Webster” campaign (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Project: Implement an annual survey of businesses to solicit input from the business community. Work with the Webster Markets and the Webster Auto and Cycle Swap Meet to conduct a survey to collect information from vendors and visitors to determine needs, concerns and opportunities.

Strategy: Work with the Sumter County Economic Development Department to coordinate business retention efforts for nearby employment centers/businesses.

Strategy: Develop recommendations to the Webster City Council on policies that mitigate regulatory barriers to business growth or provide low cost/high return incentives for business growth.

Strategy: Research and review the potential to expand Webster area exports such as hay and calves.

Strategy: Encourage businesses to join the Chamber of Commerce.



Objective 2.2: Create programs that support and enhance the local agricultural economy.

Strategy: Develop tactics that help protect the agricultural base of the community.

Project: Develop a “Beef up Webster” campaign (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Tactic: Verify that businesses are listed in the Agri-tourism Directory for Sumter County.

Tactic: Investigate and incorporate policies that allow compatible agricultural uses into the City’s Land Development Code.

Tactic: Identify opportunities for business expansion to include agri-tourism.

Tactic: Promote Webster as a hay source for outside regions suffering from drought and flooding.

Tactic: Expand the production of calves as an export.

Strategy: Continue to Promote, “Farm to Restaurant” and “Farm to Schools” projects.

Strategy: Continue to utilize University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Sumter County Extension (IFAS) and work to develop programs to best educate or assist the Webster community.

Tactic: Encourage local agriculture-related businesses to join Florida State Horticulture Society to increase educational and networking opportunities.

Tactic: Engage the Farm Bureau.

Tactic: Engage the Florida Cattlemen’s Association, Florida Cattle Women, Florida Beef Council and Florida Cattlemen’s Foundation.

Tactic: Enter discussions to hold the Florida Ranch Rodeo & Cowboy Heritage Festival at the Sumter County Fairgrounds.

Objective 2.3: Participate in State and regional economic development initiatives.

Strategy: Work with State and local planning agencies to develop and maintain economic development opportunities.

Tactic: Continue to expand relationships with the DEO, FDOT, DEP and Visit Florida.

Tactic: Expand Webster’s presence on DiscoverSumterCounty.

Tactic: Work closely with State agencies, the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, the Lake Sumter~MPO and Sumter County, Florida to refine and ensure compatibility of visions and strategies while maintaining Webster’s autonomy and unique identity.

Strategy: The City of Webster will take advantage of State and regionally-sponsored opportunities to participate in the publication of regional marketing materials where practicable.

Strategy: Work with Sumter County to showcase county-wide community assets.

Tactic: Promote other “country markets” in Sumter County for tourist day trips.

Tactic: Create and or participate in an annual Farm to City Tour event.

Objective 2.4: Create a positive image for Webster visitors.

Strategy: Improve the appearance and congestion along SR 471 and enhance the qualities that make it part of the Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway.

Project: SR 471 improvements (see Project #2 in Section 2).

Project: Create a list of properties along SR 471 that detract from Webster’s image and list actions for improvement.

Tactic: Continue community clean up days.

Tactic: Increase code enforcement.

Tactic: Have a competition for “Most Improved” property and provide public recognition.

Project: Review parking needs and traffic congestion along SR 471 (See Project #2 in Section 2) for Market Mondays. Include the review of emergency access and the possibility of having a shuttle (private or public) from the downtown Webster area.

Tactic: Charge for on-site parking with funds going toward the “Beef up Webster” promotional campaign (see Project #1 in Section 2).



Tactic: Promote the establishment of a shipping store in downtown Webster, for shoppers who wish to take advantage of immediate shipping opportunities for their recent purchases.

Project: Improve curb appeal near the Market area (see Project #2 in Section 2).

Objective 2.5: Continue to promote the Coast -to -Coast Connector Trail.

Project: Promote and Plan for the C2C Connector Trail through Webster (see goal 3 and Projects #6 and #7 in Section 2).

Objective 2.6: Promote Webster as the “Auction Capitol of Florida”.

Strategy: Provide auction services at the Flea Market, Farmer’s Market and for the Webster Auto Cycle Swap Meet, etc.

- Flea Market-Monday afternoons (1400 Vendors)
- Produce-Monday afternoons
- Cattle, Horses-Tuesdays (\$53 million in livestock sales annually)
- Automobiles and Motorcycles-Sundays
- Farm Equipment-Tuesday afternoons
- Estates-Saturdays

3.0 Goal 3: Attract New Businesses and Industries

Objective 3.1: Promote the alignment of the potential C2C Connector Trail through Webster and ensure its connectivity.

Project: Promote and plan for the C2C Connector Trail through Webster (see Project #6 in section 2).

Project: Build on the Downtown and promote the “retail trailhead” concept (See Project #7 in Section 2).

Tactic: Apply for grants, such as the Recreational Trails Program grant, to provide downtown trailhead amenities for future trail users.

Tactic: Reduce development review fees for businesses that cater to trail users. Develop criteria which designate businesses as “trail-friendly”.

Tactic: Partner with outside agencies, businesses and organizations to promote the C2C Trail (See Project #6 in Section 2) through meetings, promotional materials, social media and discussions with stakeholders.

Tactic: Tie the potential C2C trail alignment to the Webster Market area, Webster Elementary and South Sumter Middle School and other community destinations (see Project #6 in Section 2).

Objective 3.2: Provide information on the Webster area.

Project: Develop a “Beef Up Webster” campaign (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Tactic: Use social media as a vehicle to promote Webster as an existing destination with potential for spin-off business from the Webster Markets and potential future C2C Connector trail.

Project: Identify, preserve and promote historic and cultural assets (see Projects #3, #4 and #5 in Section 2).

Objective 3.3: Promote Webster Community Assets.

Strategy: Showcase positive community attributes.

Project: Create an informational package for potential investors which includes the top ten reasons to locate a business or develop housing in Webster (See Project #1 in Section 2).



Projects: Establish and promote regular events (See Projects #1, #4, #5 and 7 in Section 2).

Tactics: Organize, hold and promote events:

- Food truck and movie night at “Central Avenue Park”
- Community Clean-Up Days
- “Spur on Development” equestrian events
- “Run with Trails” running event to support the C2C
- “Spurs & Spokes” equestrian and bicycle riding event
- “Weekends at Webster” – quarterly weekend events at the Market to extend the Flea Market and Farmer’s Market customer base.
- “A Day in the Country”- provide tours of community assets including the Markets, downtown, canopy oaks, the Plantation House, the “trail”, historic walking tour, historic cemetery tour, Milk-A-Way Dairy tour with ice cream and kayaking at Gant Lake.

Strategy: Provide a business-friendly environment.

Project: Identify types of businesses that fit the needs of the Webster area and are desired by the community. Seek business to fill those needs.

Tactic: Encourage existing business owners to reach out to potential business owners.

Project: Develop a pamphlet for potential business owners with a list of agencies and associations that may assist with business start-up, maintenance and growth (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Strategy: Review and revise policies to encourage flexible development.

Strategy: Encourage the Film Industry to use Webster by adopting an ordinance to provide rapid permitting for filming opportunities.

4.0 Goal 4: Build Human Capital and Develop the Workforce

Objective 4.1: Provide a variety of housing opportunities (see Goal 11 and Project #8 in Section 2).

Objective 4.2: Develop/promote local workforce programs that complement target industries.

Strategy: Provide quality education and daycare.

Tactic: Review the possibility of having a Head Start program in Webster.

Tactic: Promote a Webster location for the Lake Sumter State College branch.

Tactic: Work with Sumter County School Board to encourage technical programs that support Webster’s targeted industries.

Objective 4.3: Create opportunities for volunteers (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Objective 4.4 Provide options for transportation.

5.0 Goal 5: Encourage Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Objective 5.1: Promote, encourage and support existing businesses to develop services and/or products that will increase diversification and provide opportunities for business expansion and stability.

Strategy: Promote Webster and business development ideas.

Project: Develop a “Beef Up Webster Campaign” (See Project #1 in Section 2).

Strategy: Recognize and promote new businesses.

Tactic: Formally recognize new businesses at Webster City Council meetings, through social media and at events.

Objective: 5.2 Develop strategies to encourage public/private improvements

Strategy: Seek grants that will improve the infrastructure, appearance or image of public property to act as a catalyst for redevelopment and private investment.

Project: SR 471 improvements (see Project #2 in Section 2).

Project: Build on the Downtown and promote the “retail trailhead” concept (see Project #7 in Section 2).



Project: Promote and plan for the C2C Connector Trail through Webster (see Project #6 in Section 2).

6.0 Goal 6: Preserve Webster's Sense of Place

Objective 6.1: Preserve Webster's Rural and Authentic Character

Project: Promote the authenticity of Webster and expand on existing assets (see Project #5 in Section 2).

Project: Identify, preserve and promote Webster's history (see Project #3 in Section 2).

Project: Identify and preserve canopy trees (see Project #4 in Section 2).

Objective 6.2: Create a memorable experience for visitors

Strategy: Improve the appearance of Webster and create memorable landmarks.

Project: SR 471 improvements (see Project #2 in Section 2).

Project: Create gateways at three primary locations:

- Central Avenue and SR 471 (see Project #2 in Section 2)
- The Plantation House and SR 471 (see Project #2 in Section 2)
- East Central Avenue and CR 478 (near Sam S. Harris Memorial Park)

Project: Develop a list of day trip opportunities from the Webster area (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Strategy: Understand current customer perceptions and develop high standards for customer service

Project: Survey customers and visitors to determine perceptions of sales/service interaction quality, facility desirability, and business accessibility (physical and online). Develop and apply methods to improve perceptions to reflect survey results. (See Project #1 in Section 2).

7.0 Goal 7: Build and Maintain Community Leadership

Objective 7.1: Continue to elect and hire leaders with vision.

Strategy: Set up a government framework that best suits the City of Webster.

Project: Amend the City Charter to allow a "City Manager" form of government to provide the City with a wider pool of professionals and to better seek and capture opportunities. Request reissuance of the Charter from State Legislature (See Project #9 in Section 2).

Strategy: Hire, maintain and support exceptional city staff.

Tactic: Develop benefits to offset low salary/pay such as reduced hours and flexibility of hours.

Tactic: Recruit a volunteer coordinator to oversee the development of a volunteer program to assist City staff, meet citizen needs, and to improve Webster as a place to live. Potential tasks include:

- Assisting with answering phone calls and staffing the front desk.
- Developing brochures and projects outlined in this report.
- Attending "Beef up Webster" campaign meetings (see Project #1 in Section 2).
- Developing a list of agencies to help meet community needs. Providing phone numbers, contact name and services.
- Researching and writing grant applications.
- Organizing "Webster Works" to identify part and full time openings in the area and people that may be able to fill positions. Working to determine housing needs, transportation needs and assist with recommendations. Finding volunteers to assist with resume writing, job searches and volunteer positions that may turn into paid work.
- Creating, maintaining and posting a Community Calendar at City Hall. Listing monthly events on the water bill postcard.



- Assisting with attendance at the Chamber of Commerce, Lake~Sumter MPO, ECFRPC, Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway and Sumter County functions and providing meeting summaries to City staff.

Strategy: Expand “Webster in Bloom” to include design assistance, painting help and sprucing-up using volunteers organized by church groups, associations and residents. Work in conjunction with the local Historical Society for historic property improvements.

Objective 7.2: Increase the financial stability of the City

Strategy: Continue to pursue grants for planning, implementation and maintenance of city properties.

Strategy: Reduce non-essential services that are not sustainable.

Tactic: Consider a fee-for-service model.

Tactic: Continue annexation efforts to increase the tax base.

Tactic: Continue to promote the use of Webster’s water and sewer (25% increase if outside City limits).

Strategy: Eliminate or reduce unnecessary costs to the City.

Project: Determine suitable development for the Pioneer Heritage Veterans’ Memorial Park property and develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a developer or list the property for sale (see Project #9 in Section 2).

Project: Continue to seek funding to replace the grinder pump for the Johnson subdivision (see Project #9 in Section 2).

Project: Determine if the Sam S. Harris Park ball fields can be maintained using money from traveling baseball groups (see Project #9 in Section 2).

8.0 Goal 8: Encourage Commercial District Revitalization

Objective 8.1: Expand the commercial districts.

Strategy: Expand commercial opportunities.

Project: Research the possibility of extending the downtown commercial area eastward to connect to CR 478 to increase visibility and access from CR 478.

Project: Develop a conceptual master plan and apply for grants (see Project 7 in Section 2).

Project: Research the possibility of regaining a commercial area in the Johnson Subdivision.

Strategy: Provide a list and map of available properties for development.

Project: Create a conceptual master plan showing potential uses for vacant properties that will support the downtown and potential C2C trail (see Project 7 in Section 2).

Strategy: Provide free access to AirMax in Downtown Webster.

Objective 8.2: Improve the attractiveness along SR 471

Strategy: Develop conceptual plans and seek funding for streetscaping.

Project: SR 471 improvements (see Project # 2 in Section 2).

Strategy: Reduce parking congestion on Mondays.

Project: Provide a shuttle to Downtown Webster to increase exposure of downtown and reduce traffic congestion near the Market area along SR 471 (See Project #2 in Section 2).

Objective 8.3: Encourage visitors to extend their visit in Webster.

Strategy: Capitalize from spin-off traffic from Monday’s Farmers’ Market and Flea Market and Tuesday’s Cattle Auction, Saturday’s Farmers Market, Auto and Motorcycle Swap Meets on Sundays and Sumter County Fairground events.

Strategy: Provide a range of choices for overnight accommodations in the Webster area (see Project #5 in Section 2).

Strategy: Create a strong, supportive business network.

Project: Create a directory of business services and products (see Project #1 in Section 2).



Tactic: Work together to cross-promote businesses with the use of signs, coupons, group advertising and business card displays.

Project: Plan for potential trail-related service needs (see Project #7 in Section 2).

Strategy: Enhance shopping experiences to ensure each trip is safe, convenient and entertaining.

Project: Improve pedestrian features along SR 471 and within the Market District (see Project #2 in Section 2).

Project: Build on the Downtown and promote the “Retail Trailhead” concept (see Project #7 in Section 2).

Project: Provide a shuttle to downtown to increase exposure of Downtown Webster and to reduce traffic congestion at the Market area (see Project #2 in Section 2).

Tactic: Include trivia questions for trolley users.

Tactic: Provide packaging services for Market and antique shoppers.

Objective 8.4: Continue to incorporate flexible zoning (See Project #8 in Section 2).

Strategy: Allow mixed-use zoning to encourage development that may provide residential living above downstairs shops, “Tiny Houses” developments, etc. Review codes for impediments to adaptive reuse of historic buildings.

Objective 8.5: Provide a resource for business development assistance.

Strategy: Provide contact information for area business development programs such as the Lake-Sumter SCORE and Lake Sumter State College.

Objective 8.6: Schedule regular events in commercial areas of the city.

Strategy: Increase awareness of local businesses through promotional events (see Project #1 in Section 2).

Objective 8.7: Provide wayfinding (identification and directional signage) for governmental, historical, recreational and business attractions (see Project #2 in Section 2).

9.0 Goal 9: Improve Resiliency to Disaster (See Project #9 in Section 2)

Objective 9.1: Improve communication.

Strategy: Create a community member list.

Project: Create a voluntary list of phone numbers and email addresses for residents.

Project: Research using Reverse 911.

Project: Promote low-cost internet services made possible by AirMax using the City water tower.

Strategy: Provide emergency Information to residents.

- Provide a list of nearby shelters to include the new Sumter County Fairgrounds building, Webster Elementary School and Center Hill Recreation Center. Include maps, directions and phone numbers.
- Develop an evacuation plan
- Designate a shelter for pets, horses
- Provide list of emergency-related agencies with contact information
- Work with Sumter County Emergency Management Department
- Establish a “NextDoor Neighbor” community online site
- Establish Webster community Facebook page

Objective 9.2: Continue to enhance community relationships.

Strategy: Create a supportive network of services (using volunteers).

Tactic: Provide a list of food access resources such as “Meals on Wheels” and school based programs.

Tactic: Work with area church groups and organizations to communicate community ideas and to develop a larger volunteer base.



Project: Re-establish a community garden near or in Downtown Webster.

Project: Start up a “Webster Works” program to match residents with employment opportunities (see Goal # 7).

10.0 Goal 10: Provide Quality Education

Objective 10.1: Continue to provide quality education and increase efforts to provide educational opportunities in the Webster area.

Strategy: Continue to promote, support and partner with Webster Elementary and South Sumter Middle School.

Tactic: Promote the “A” designation for Webster Elementary School and the “B” designation for South Sumter Middle School in promotional brochures, presentations or online.

Tactic: Add volunteering at the schools to community volunteer opportunity lists.

Strategy: Continue to hold Extension Services classes at the Webster Community Center.

Strategy: Promote the idea of adding a branch of the Lake Sumter State College to Downtown Webster.

Strategy: Continue Early Learning Coalition and Voluntary Pre-K Program.

Project: Research the possibility of starting a Webster area Head Start Program through the Mid-Florida Community Services Agency.

Strategy: Support educational efforts by local experts.

- Animal husbandry (Future Farmers of America, 4H).
- Sworn and unsworn officer mounted patrol training (Suncoast Equine).
- Other types of equine activities.
- Beautification through planting (Webster in Bloom).

11.0 Goal 11: Increase the Availability of Affordable Housing for the Workforce

Objective 11.1: Increase housing availability (see Project # 8 in Section 2).

Objective 11.2: Retain architecturally contributing homes.

Strategy: Maintain and preserve contributing historic structures.

Project: Identify contributing historic structures and create a Historic Overlay District (see Project #3 in Section 2).

Strategy: Utilize State and local agencies for assistance with historic structure stabilization and rehabilitation.

- USDA
- Habitat for Humanity
- CDBG
- Florida Division of Historical Resources

Objective 11.3: Work to promote appropriate infill to increase the housing base.

12.0 Goal 12: Provide and promote recreational activities

Objective 12.1: Promote the Coast-to-Coast Trail through Webster (see Project #6 in Section 2).

Objective 12.2: Develop a Parks program to reflect community needs and resources

Strategy: Designate the abandoned railroad corridor as a linear park (see Projects #6 and #7 in Section 2).

Strategy: Sell Pioneer Heritage Veterans’ Memorial Park (see Project #9 in Section 2).

Strategy: Work with travel baseball groups to run and maintain Sam S. Harris Memorial Park (see Project #9 in Section 2).

Project: Consider equestrian events at Sam S. Harris Memorial Park using the trail into town (see Project #9 in Section 2).

Strategy: Consider having the shuttle from Downtown Webster to B. M. Hewitt Park to create activity and promote the downtown and the Johnson Subdivision.



Strategy: Work with the School district to determine the possibility of joint-use facilities.

Strategy: Increase the use of community service and volunteer help.

Strategy: Increase programming to include regularly scheduled recreational activities.

- Horse parade
- Historic Walking Tour
- Trail clearing and community clean-up events
- Kayaking at nearby Gant Lake
- Walking school bus or riding bike trail programs for students
- Running, walking or horse riding events and tours

13.0 Goal 13: Ensure the Availability of Quality Healthcare Facilities

Objective 13.1: Provide access to healthcare facilities for residents of Webster (See Project #9 in Section 2).

Strategy: Solicit one of the area hospitals to build an urgent care center.

Strategy: Ensure zoning allows medical facilities.

Strategy: Create a list of the closest healthcare facilities with contact information and provide contact and fee information for transit access.

14.0 Goal 14: Promote Sustainable Building and Economic Development Practices

Objective 14.1: Preserve existing contributing architecture (See Project #3 in Section 2).

Strategy: Establish a historic district overlay.

Tactic: Find grants to assist with restoration and preservation of historic homes and buildings.

Tactic: Use long-lasting materials for new construction and renovation.

Strategy: Maintain the grid street pattern and dense land use.

Objective 14.2: Retain the authenticity of Webster (See Project #5 in Section 2).

Strategy: Build in flexibility with zoning and redevelopment (see Project #8 in Section 2).

Project: Encourage mom and pop investors.

Project: Create a master plan to guide growth

- Trail-focused development
- Design for all users
- Provide safe access to schools
- Connect the Market area to the potential trail corridor
- Promote the trail from Webster to Florida Grande and Center Hill

Tactic: Encourage appropriate commercial development in the Johnson Subdivision (the area already zoned commercial).

Strategy: Involve community leaders and identify champions.

Project: Create a master plan to guide growth and formulate a community vision (see Projects #1, #6, #7 and #9 in Section 2).

15.0 Goal 15: Support Neighborhood Revitalization

Objective 15.1: Build community pride.

Strategy: Identify, preserve and promote Webster's History (see Project #3 in Section 2).

Strategy: Maintain low crime and increase safety.

Tactic: Expand the use of horse patrol and consider adding bicycle patrol.

Tactic: Provide historic-themed lighting in Downtown Webster.

Tactic: Apply "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)" techniques.

Objective 15.2: Improve the appearance of the community.

Strategy: Recognize preservation and property improvement efforts (see Projects #1 and #2 in Section 2).



Tactic: Provide awards for building preservation (yearly).

Tactic: Seek grants to provide matching funds for exterior improvements.

Strategy: Increase Code Enforcement (Sumter County).

Strategy: Seek assistance from programs like CDBG, Habitat for Humanity and USDA.

Strategy: Support and expand Webster in Bloom.

Strategy: Continue to hold regular clean-up days using community service and volunteer help.

Objective 15.3: Maintain grid street pattern and land use pattern.

Strategy: Create a Historic Area Overlay District (see Project #3 in Section 2).

Tactic: Revise policies using the City of Lake Helen, Florida and others for guidance.

Tactic: Create a city-wide master plan to include the preservation and expansion of the grid street layout in the Historic Overlay District.



Section 2 - Potential Projects

Project #1: Develop a “Beef Up Webster” Campaign

Description: Form a group of public stakeholders and business owners/managers and property owners to work on a “Beef Up Webster” campaign. Meet quarterly at different business locations.

Project Lead: City of Webster to initiate and find an organization or association that will volunteer to lead.

Action: Identify existing businesses, provide contact information, determine number of employees and create a list of services or products for each business. Develop ten methods to cross-promote businesses and/or do joint-marketing.

Target Completion Date: 6 months

Action: Create and maintain a list of community volunteers and list of volunteer opportunities. Include fundraisers and seek volunteers from:

- Webster Travel Park (250 residents, 50 permanent)
- Florida Grande Motor Coach Resort
- Sumter County Farmers’ Market Board Members
- The Villages
- Church groups and schools
- Area businesses
- Individuals

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Create an informational package for potential investors that includes the top ten reasons to locate a business or develop housing in Webster.

1. Existing customer base from the Markets on Monday, Tuesday and Saturday and spill-over from Sumter County Fairground events
2. The potential C2C trail
3. Infrastructure availability (include water and sewer rates and comparisons)
4. Low cost of living (include comparisons)
5. Unique, authentic, historic, small town living
6. Available structures and property
7. SR 471 visibility and access
8. Rural beauty
9. A/B-rated schools
10. Central location (list top destinations within an hour’s drive)

Provide information on the Webster area, including major employers, education, health care, population and services. Provide a list of agencies and associations that may assist with business start-up, maintenance and growth.

Target Completion Date: 12 months





Action: Develop a list of day trip opportunities to the Webster area. Showcase the authentic, to include:

- The Flea Market
- The Farmers' Market
- Cattle Market auction tours
- Milk-A Way Dairy- (potential tours)
- Historic walking tour/cemetery tour
- Horse rides
- Gant Lake kayaking, fishing or bird watching
- Blueberry Picking

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Collect historic photographs to develop a brochure and website/Facebook page. Include a calendar of events and volunteer opportunities. Link to the Sumter County Tourism's DiscoverSumterFL.com website, Visit Florida, Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway and other related websites. As an interim measure, provide updated images and information for uploading to DiscoverSumterFL.com.

Target Completion Date: 6 months for interim measure and 12 months for brochure

Action: Create a Website and PowerPoint presentation showing information on community businesses, available properties, South Sumter Connector Trail information and a list of potential businesses that would complement existing businesses. Make presentations to the Chamber of Commerce, Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway, Sumter County and other agencies or potential businesses. Update the presentation twice a year.

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Work with City staff to review and refine the Economic Development Plan for formal adoption by the City of Webster. Review and update the plan quarterly for one year and annually thereafter.

Target Completion Date: 12 months, ongoing

Action: Work with Sumter County and other agencies to create a business incubator in downtown Webster or nearby.

Target Completion Date: 3 years

Action: Review the possibility for charging a minimal amount for on-site parking on Market event days with funds donated to the "Beef up Webster" promotional campaign.

Target Completion Date: 24 months



Project #2: S.R. 471 Improvements

Description: Create a conceptual plan for SR 471 for planning purposes and future grant opportunities.

Project Lead: City of Webster/FDOT

Action: Review parking needs and traffic congestion along SR 471 for Market Mondays. Include the review of emergency access and the possibility of having a shuttle (private or public) from downtown Webster to B.M. Hewitt Park (adjacent to the Markets).



Review and include the following:

- Work with FDOT to determine the ability to reduce posted speed limit on SR 471 through the City of Webster.
- Extend parallel parking along SR 471 using curb bulb-outs and new streetscaping. As an interim measure, re-paint SR 471 through Webster to clarify legal parallel parking locations.
- Widen/add sidewalks on both sides of SR 471 from the Plantation House to CR 478A.
- Provide safe crossings near Webster Elementary School, Central Avenue (potential future trail crossing) and near the Webster Market area.
- Create “bulb-outs” at intersections to provide traffic calming and places for decorative street trees.
- Research the possibility of placing utilities underground and providing historic-themed street lights, signage and other appropriate street elements.
- Include “Gateways” near the Plantation House and at the intersection of Central Avenue (this will also be the gateway for the potential C2C Trail). As an interim measure, plant with wildflowers.

Action: Improve curb appeal near the Webster Market area (Beef Up Webster Committee as lead).

- Work with the owners, managers and stakeholders of the Webster Market properties to develop a conceptual plan that will create an inviting appearance when viewed from SR 471. Work in conjunction with public agency efforts to create a streetscaping plan for SR 471 in the Webster area.
 - Provide multi-lingual kiosks with maps, list events and provide directional signage.
 - Ensure the market area is safe and comfortable for all users.
- Have a competition for “Most Improved” property and provide public recognition.



Target Completion Date: 12 months for the conceptual plan and 4 years for implementation



Project #3: Identify, Preserve and Promote Webster's History

Description: Create a Historic Area Overlay and work to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Webster.

Project Lead: City of Webster/Sumter County Development Services/Historical Society.

Action: Identify and map historic buildings and structures. Create a Historic Area Overlay that includes the majority of these structures/places.

- Identify historic structures and note year built, architectural style, historical significance and list structure condition and status. Register applicable structures on the National Register of Historic Places if owner is willing.
- Identify community members that know the history of Webster and have stories to tell. Record audio stories, create videos and develop ways to provide access to these stories (Historic Walking Tour Brochure, a mobile phone app, etc.).
- Seek funding to preserve structures (USDA, CDBG, etc.).
- Preserve the grid street pattern within the designated Historic Area Overlay.
- Increase code enforcement (Sumter County).
- Seek grants to assist with matching façade Improvements, historic preservation, etc.

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Provide events or programs to promote the unique history and rural character of Webster.

- Create a Historic Walking Tour Brochure.
- Hold a Christmas parade downtown and offer prizes for the best decorated bicycle, tricycle and horse.
- Offer carriage rides along the trail, the downtown, the historic area and to the markets.
- Capitalize on the cattle market auctions and equestrian community and hold "cow-town" and equestrian-related events.

Target Completion Date: 18 months





Project #4: Identify and Preserve Canopy Trees

Description: Identify and map historic canopy trees that are visible and within 100' from roadways or the potential trail alignment within Webster. Create a plan to preserve and maintain canopy trees and views of trees.

Project Lead: City of Webster

Action: Identify type of tree and size (dbh-diameter breast height), location (using GPS), determine if it is on private property, or public property. Identify tree health and determine maintenance budget.



- Determine eligibility for Champion Tree Status or other programs that identify historic trees.
- Create a map and historic canopy tree brochure. Determine if the brochure can be combined with the historic structures and places brochure.
- Create an App for the historic canopy tree tour.
- Provide annual bike/horse/drive tours that include the Historic Canopy Trees and a tour of the historic structures and places.
- Develop a funding source for maintaining the historic trees and have an arborist check-up every five years.
- Identify gaps in the urban tree canopy and institute an ongoing tree planting program with volunteers and city/business/civic group support.

Target Completion Date: 18 months



Project #5: Promote the Authenticity of Webster and Expand on Assets

Description: Build on the Webster/Sumter Markets and Sumter County Fairgrounds.

Project Lead: Farmers' Market

Action: Promote Webster as the "Auction Capital of Florida" and provide auction services at the Flea Market, Farmers' Market and for the Car Swap Event and Motorcycles and for farm equipment. Review the possibility of providing auctioning services for the following:

- Flea Market-Monday afternoon (1400 Vendors)
- Produce-Monday afternoon
- Cattle, Horses-Tuesdays (\$53 million in livestock sales annually)
- Automobiles and Motorcycles-Sundays
- Farm Equipment-Tuesday afternoon
- Estates-Saturdays

Target Completion Date: 3 years



Action: Showcase positive community attributes:

- "Weekends at Webster" – quarterly weekend events at the Market to extend the Flea Market and Farmers' Market customer base.
- "A Day in the Country"- provide tours of community assets including the Markets, downtown, canopy oaks, the Plantation House, the "trail", historic walking tour, historic cemetery tour, Milk-A-Way Dairy tour with ice cream, and kayaking at Gant Lake.

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Provide a range of choices for overnight accommodations.

- Work with the owner of the Plantation House to establish upstairs lodging.
- Identify locations for RV hook-ups such as Webster sunshine Village and Webster Travel Park.
- Locate suitable camping areas.
- Encourage property owners to list available properties using Vacation Rental By Owner (VRBO) or similar websites.
- Review the potential of using "Tiny Houses".

Target Completion Date: 3 years





Project #6: Promote and Plan for the C2C Connector Trail through Webster

Description: Promote the Coast-to-Coast Connector Trail alignment through downtown Webster connecting to Center Hill using the abandoned railroad corridor. Tie the potential C2C trail alignment to the Webster Market area, Webster Elementary and South Sumter Middle School and other community destinations.

Project Lead: City of Webster

Action: Share draft ideas, concepts and information concerning the economic benefit of the trail through Webster with the FDOT Feasibility Study Team.

- Status: forwarded the Draft Economic Development Strategy Report developed with DEO Technical Assistance grant funding.
- Recommendation: Stay involved with the Feasibility Study project through completion, estimated for June 2016.

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Outline the trail in paint within the Central Avenue median in the downtown area and paint a temporary crosswalk to help residents visualize the trail within the abandoned railroad corridor through the City of Webster.

- Status: Completed in April/May, 2015

Target Completion Date: completed

Action: Create an image of the trail through the downtown area of Webster showing potential users, including a bicycle rider, horse rider, walkers and joggers.

- Status: Created in April for PowerPoint presentations and reports.
- Recommendation: Create a map of the proposed trail alignment through Webster and add the image showing the proposed trail to a poster board to display at the Public Library, City Hall and Farmers' Market.

Target Completion Date: 6 months

Action: Clear and maintain the existing rail corridor through the City of Webster using community service assistance and volunteers. Rezone, update the comprehensive plan, and designate the abandoned railroad corridor through Webster as a park.

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Develop a bicycle master plan that includes connections to the potential trail alignment through Webster and provide for an interim, on-road connection for users of the C2C trail that will allow a designated route for travelers until the trail is constructed.

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Develop a pedestrian master plan that builds from previous efforts to create a connected series of sidewalks and trails to support easy pedestrian access, ADA accessibility and school access.

Target Completion Date: 18 months





Action: Develop an equestrian master plan that provides connectivity to the potential South Sumter Connector trail through the City of Webster and connects to the many equestrian-related destinations in the Webster area.

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Create a conceptual master plan showing potential uses for vacant properties that will support the potential C2C trail and provide economic benefit to the City of Webster.

Target Completion Date: 18 months





Project #7: Build on the Downtown and Promote the Retail Trailhead Concept

Description: Develop and promote Downtown Webster and promote the “Downtown Retail Trailhead” concept.

Project Lead: City of Webster

Action: Identify and map the downtown district.

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Develop concept plans showing a layout for trail-related amenities, services and activities.

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Apply for grants, including the Sumter County Tourist Development Council Tax Funds and the Recreational Trails Program grants, to provide downtown trailhead amenities for future trail users.

Target Completion Date: 36 months

Action: Increase activity in Downtown Webster.

- Work with food truck vendors and downtown merchants to create a regularly scheduled food truck night with outdoor movies.
- Consider poetry readings or book clubs, possibly based at Frog in the Window Bookstore.
- Research the possibility of providing a trolley from downtown to the B.M. Hewitt Park adjacent to the Markets to relieve traffic congestion on Mondays and promote the downtown area as a destination.
- Hold equestrian events downtown such as a “Spur on Development” to increase equestrian programming and interest. Equestrian users can hold a parade and provide assistance clearing and maintaining the trail corridor through Webster.
- Hold “Spurs and Spokes” events to increase collaboration between horse riders and bike riders. Events could include a tricycle race, bike race, horse rides and awards for best decorated horse, bicycle or tricycle. Events near Christmastime could include a lighted bike/horse parade.
- Hold running races to support the trail and the downtown or for other fundraisers.

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: To gather ideas and learn best practices, organize a tour for key community leaders, of small communities that have successfully incorporated a trail into their downtown.

Target Completion Date: 6 months

Action: Increase visibility and access to the downtown Webster area.

- Create a wayfinding plan and design signage themed specifically for Webster. Provide kiosks at the Webster Markets that include maps. Coordinate design and planning efforts with the Countywide Wayfinding Signage that is currently under construction.
- Provide directional signage on SR 471 (both directions) and along CR 478 to Central Avenue (downtown). Coordinate design and planning efforts with the Countywide Wayfinding Signage that is currently under construction.
- Improve the appearance and functionality of the area near the intersection of SR 471 and Central Avenue (See Project #2).
- Improve the intersection of Central Avenue and CR 478 to allow easier access to Central Avenue for west-bound motorists.
- Provide Gateway features at SR 471 and Central Avenue and at CR 478 and Central Avenue.





- Establish wildflowers along the downtown Central Avenue median that extends from SR 471 to CR 478. For additional gateway appeal, provide wildflowers on the north side of Central Avenue west of SR 471 for a depth of approximately 50' beyond the sidewalk.

Target Completion Date: 24 months

Action: Provide aesthetically pleasing housing and shops downtown to create a more urban, downtown environment.

- Review the possibility of using the vacant parcel on the SE corner of SE 1st St and E. Central Avenue for creating a town square lined with “tiny houses”. Alternatively, the tiny houses could be used to create a small village of shops. Contact “Tiny House” manufacturers to determine the possibility of showcasing the homes in the city and use as rentals.

Target Completion Date: 5 years

Action: Encourage development of the historic train station platform for retail use. As an interim, consider adding a pavilion structure and access ramp for outdoor community events. Possibly use the platform for local auctions. (Note: this property is currently for sale)

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Infill structures should be sited and styled to be compatible with existing downtown structures to create a downtown atmosphere. Include sufficient room for future sidewalk cafes, sidewalk merchandise and heavy sidewalk usage. Adopt guidelines similar to Lake Helen, FL. to promote appropriate infill.

Target Completion Date: 18 months



Project #8: Increase Housing Availability

Description: Work to identify ways to increase opportunities for housing and review and revise codes and regulations to increase flexibility.

Project Lead: City of Webster and “Beef Up Webster” group

Action: Build in flexibility into policies and regulations to allow for creativity.

- Tiny houses (as opposed to mobile homes)
- Upstairs residential
- Adaptive re-use
- Mixed-use
- Equestrian-friendly
- Vacation rental by owner
- Mother-in-law, accessory dwelling units
- Review land development regulation requirements to encourage affordable housing

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Master plan concepts for housing

- Create a concept plan for the development of the Pioneer Heritage Veterans’ Memorial Park and market the property to developers.
- Create concepts for housing/commercial downtown.
- Work with major employers, such as Cutrale, to identify housing needs, optimum locations, and transportation options.

Target Completion Date: 18 months

Action: Retain architecturally contributing homes (see Project #3 in Section 2).

Action: Continue to research Live Oak Park, owned by Homes in Partnership, as an opportunity for new housing. There are currently 58 lots remaining and loans are provided through the USDA based on income. Work with Homes in Partnership to explore the use of “Tiny Houses” or similar architecturally contributing homes. Also review the potential to add a community stable to create an equestrian village.

Target Completion Date: 6 months

Action: Continue to pursue annexation of the Webster Travel Park to add to the housing base for Webster.

Target Completion Date: 2 months for Live Oak Park and 2 years for annexation



Project #9: Plan for City Growth

Description: Improve City of Webster government policies, procedures and structure to provide capacity to meet the demands of planning and for accommodating growth.

Project Lead: City of Webster/Sumter County Development Services

Action: Amend the City Charter to transition to a City Manager form of government, so that the City can draw from a wider pool of professionals and better seek and capture opportunities. Request reissuance of the Charter from State Legislature.

Target Completion Date: 11 months

Action: Revise the Land Development Code to ensure codes reflect the values and visions specific to the City of Webster, FL

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Action: Seek funding to create redevelopment plans for Webster that will preserve natural, historic and cultural features while providing a balanced plan for growth to include the following:

- SR 471 streetscaping (see Project #2 in Section 2)
- Historic structure identification and the creation of an overlay district (see Project #3 in Section 2)
- Abandoned railroad corridor as a linear park (see Project #6 in Section 2)
- Downtown master plan and design guidelines (see Project #7 in Section 2)
- Trail and sidewalk master plan (see Project #6 in Section 2)
- Bicycle master plan (see Project #6 in Section 2)
- Equestrian master plan (see Project #6 in Section 2)
- Canopy tree master plan (see Project #4 in Section 2)
- Market area improvement master plan (see Projects #1 and #2 in Section 2)
- Overall city plan laying out opportunities for housing and business redevelopment and policies that guide appropriate growth.

Target Completion Date: 9 months

Action: Continue to streamline city-provided services and reduce costs to work within the City's budget. Review City-owned property and city services that deplete resources to determine if property can be sold or services reduced.

- Determine suitable development for the Pioneer Heritage Veterans' Memorial Park property and develop a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a developer. List the property for sale.
- Continue to seek funding to replace the grinder pump for the Johnson subdivision.
- Determine if the Sam S. Harris Park ball fields can be maintained using money from traveling baseball groups.

Action: Retain a professional planner to perform and oversee planning work.

Target Completion Date: 12 months

Appendix L

Economic Development Strategy Requirements

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY COMPONENTS

The Competitive Florida Partnership advocates for an action-oriented economic development strategy that guides long-term decision-making and investment in the community. There are three main sources of information that will help guide the development of this strategy: 1) Competitive Analysis, 2) Asset Mapping Report, and 3) Community Conversations. Below is a list of the components communities are required to address in their strategy.



Vision Statement, Goals, Objectives and Actions.

- **Vision or Mission Statement.** A clearly defined vision or mission statement that demonstrates what the community strives to be in the future.
- **Goals and Objectives.** Goals and measurable objectives that guide the community towards the vision or mission statement.
- **Actionable Projects.** Actionable projects that span multiple years to accomplish the community's goals and objectives.
- **Multi-Jurisdictional.** If more than one community is included in the strategy, projects to support each of the communities in the strategy.
- **Timeline.** A timeline built into the action plan that assigns a date or time period for the completion of each action.
- **Project Assignments.** An organization identified to lead each project.
- **Funding/Resources.** Funding sources or other resources identified to carry out each project. DEO will help to fill the gaps through resource matching.
- **Update Process.** A defined process for updating or maintaining the strategy and action plan.

Partnerships

- **Steering Group.** A group of individuals that meet regularly to discuss the implementation of the community's action plan.
- **Community Support.** Formal support from stakeholders, including: Elected Officials, Residents, Business Owners, Economic Development/Chamber Organizations, Non-profit Organizations, and Community Action Agency.
- **Regional Partnerships.** Demonstration of partnerships and collaborative efforts with neighboring jurisdictions.
- **Adoption/Endorsement.** Strategy adopted by resolution or endorsed formally by the lead organization and/or local government.



Mayor Helen Miller of White Springs hand delivered the Town's Economic Development Strategy to team members involved in the partnership.

Data and Support

- **Inventory of Assets.** Comprehensive inventory and evaluation of assets.
- **Public Participation.** Demonstration of creative and engaging opportunities for the public to express their priorities for economic development and community growth.
- **Guiding Principles.** All strategies should also address the 15 ways to make communities more competitive. This includes: 1) Take a whole community approach to planning and implementation; 2) Work to retain current businesses and support their expansion; 3) Attract new businesses and industries; 4) Build human capacity and develop the workforce; 5) Encourage innovation and entrepreneurship; 6) Create and preserve a sense of place and important resources; 7) Build community leadership; 8) Improve resiliency to disasters; 9) Provide quality education; 10) Support neighborhood district revitalization; 11) Encourage commercial district revitalization; 12) Increase the availability of affordable housing for the workforce; 13) Provide and promote recreational opportunities; 14) Ensure the availability of quality healthcare facilities; and 15) Promote sustainable building and economic development practices.

Appendix M

Resource Matching Sample

Town of White Springs

Town of White Springs

Community Action
Resource Matching



This list of potential funding opportunities, contacts, and resources is meant to serve as a starting point for Competitive Florida Partnership communities to use when implementing their action plan. The Department of Economic Opportunity appreciates the input provided by agency and regional partners through the Rural Economic Development Initiative. It is important to recognize that although potential funding resources may be identified for actions, funding is not guaranteed. Some projects may be listed as potential second year projects. This indicates that the project may be eligible for funding or resources under the second year of the Competitive Florida Partnership. However, due to funding and staff limitations, it may not be possible to fund all potential projects. Communities are encouraged to reach out to DEO staff to discuss projects for second year implementation efforts and confirm eligibility.

While research was conducted for resources matching, the department recognizes that this may not be exhaustive. If further guidance is needed or would like to explore any opportunities in greater detail, please do not hesitate to contact DEO staff.

Julie A. Dennis,

Community Program Manager

Julie.Dennis@DEO.MyFlorida.com

(850) 717-8478

John C. Reddick,

Government Analyst

John.Reddick@DEO.MyFlorida.com

(850) 717-8485

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
<p>Recruit principal investigator to prepare proposal for DOE 21st CCLC program funding for White Springs HOPE after school and summer programs for K-12.</p>		<p>Contact DCD Staff to discuss. We would like to meet specifically to discuss this project and also meet with the DOE to determine creative ways that other communities have used to get these funds for the community.</p> <p>DOE 21st CCLC Staff:</p> <p>Ive Vintimilla, Director (850) 245-0852 Ive.Vintimilla@fldoe.org</p> <p>Dawn Davis Program Specialist (850) 245-3266 Dawn.Davis@fldoe.org</p>	<p>Florida Afterschool Network</p> <p>Afterschool Alliance</p> <p>Building and Managing Quality Afterschool Programs, National Center for Quality Afterschool</p>

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
<p>Organize committee of local community leaders to either lead effort to convert SHE into a public charter school or start-up a new charter school in White Springs. Committee members to contact the Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools, Florida Charter School Alliance, and the Florida Department of Education's Office of Independent Education and Parental Choice to identify charter school management company willing to work with SHE parents and community leaders.</p>		<p>Adam Emerson, Charter Schools Director Florida Department of Education Adam.Emerson@fldoe.org (850) 245-0502</p> <p>Adam Miller, Executive Director School Choice Program Florida Department of Education Adam.Miller@flodoe.org (850) 245-0502</p>	<p>A New Frontier: Utilizing Charter Schools to Strengthen Rural Education.</p> <p>A compilation of guidance and resources for rural charter schools.</p>
<p>Town staff to reach out to CareerSource North Florida to request assistance with reemployment and training programs for community members, especially in light of Potash Corp. White Springs recent layoffs. Town to request detailed labor market data and wage surveys and labor projections, as well as workshops on business recruitment and retention. Town to request mobile unit for special events such as resource and job fairs to provide information on assistance available</p>		<p>Chris Jones Career Source North Florida Chris.Jones@careersourcenorthflorida.com (850) 973-4291 (850) 464-3470 (cell)</p>	<p>The Talent Equation: Finding, Developing and Keeping Talent with CareerSource Solutions</p>

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
through their staff and others' organizations.			
Town to discuss Career Source North Florida internship agreement for non-paid interns to gain on the job training on basic workforce skills. Internship program may be beneficial to organizations and facilities, such as the library, the Nature & Heritage Center, and Town Hall.		Chris Jones Career Source North Florida Chris.Jones@careersourcenorthflorida.com (850) 973-4291 (850) 464-3470 (cell)	
Beginning in 2014, the Mayor's recognition of volunteers and public service, conducted in conjunction with the Point of Light Foundation for award of the President's Volunteer Service Awards, will showcase and reward community leadership for projects and events performed in White Springs.			
Beginning in 2015, candidates for town council will be invited to participate in "Town Council Election Forums" to present their qualifications and ideas for town governance and growth at public meetings.			
Continue to utilize the Nature & Heritage Center as a small business incubator to assist local artists and crafters in their entrepreneurial activities. Town manager to	USDA Rural Development Grant Assistance *Potential 2 nd Year Competitive Florida Implementation Project*	The Division of Community Development is currently working on compiling resources through a short training opportunity for rural communities that would like	Identifying Obstacles to the Success of Rural Business Incubators, National Business Incubation Association

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
develop and implement policies and procedures to support innovations and entrepreneurship with the town's existing assets and resources.	USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program	to create business incubators. Contact John Reddick for interim resources.	National Business Incubation Association, Incubating in rural North America: Successful Programs in Small Communities
Research opportunities to fund a small business incubator to assist the development of entrepreneurial business ventures. DOE's 21st CCLC program donated career development equipment and technology to the town's HOPE program. Start-up funds are needed for operating expenses and a technology-proficient manager for the incubator. The incubator would provide technical training as well as offer services not currently available in White Springs.	USDA Rural Development Grant Assistance USDA Rural Business Enterprise Grants Program		
Implement DEP Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation Project. Town manager to work with Mittauer and Associates to implement the Sanitary Sewer project. Design phase of project underway - Summer 2014. Estimated completion is 2016.	DEP Small Community Wastewater Treatment Facilities Grants Florida Department of Environmental Protection State Revolving Fund Funds are currently available for Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund projects.	Tim Banks Department of Environmental Protection (850) 245-8358 Timothy.Banks@dep.state.fl.us	Florida Rural Water Association, Funding Strategies

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
Implement DOT Historic SR 100 Signing & Lighting Project. Town manager to work with Ryan Asmus, FDOT project manager and Tyler Strickland, Gresham, Smith and Partners project manager. Design phase of project underway - Summer 2014. Estimated completion is 2016.		Please contact Division of Community Development Staff if there is a way that we might be able to help with this project.	
Town manager to work with North Florida Broadband Authority (NFBA) contractor Affiniti to implement retail broadband services in White Springs. Vice Mayor Walt McKensie, NFBA Board Member, to provide assistance to town manager. Affiniti marketing representative to visit with town manager to develop schedule of milestones to market broadband services to town residents.			
Initiate effort to improve cell phone coverage in White Springs. Town manager to conduct cell feasibility study, beginning in Fall 2014.			
Town manager to meet with Duke Energy to discuss Duke's plans to reduce utility power failures, and conduct study to estimate cost of moving utilities underground. Town manager to meet with Ryan	USDA Rural Development Grant Assistance – may be an opportunity.	Please contact Division of Community Development Staff if there is a way that we might be able to help with this project.	

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
Asmus, FDOT project manager, to discuss approach for coordinating SR 100 Historic Signing & Lighting project with town objective of moving to underground utilities. Meetings to take place in Summer/Fall 2014.			
Town manager to discuss storm water system funding feasibility with DEP as a follow-on project to the sanitary sewer project currently underway. Project to be scheduled to begin in 2016.	Clean Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program, DEP	Tim Banks Department of Environmental Protection (850) 245-8358 timothy.banks@dep.state.fl.us	
Town will utilize VISIT FLORIDA web page as a marketing tool. White Springs is a VISIT FLORIDA marketing partner, and in this capacity has access to a free web page to attract visitors to the community.		Brenna Dacks VISIT FLORIDA (850) 205-3870 bdacks@visitflorida.org	VISIT FLORIDA White Springs website .
Town staff/volunteers will implement the Nature & Heritage VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Grant awarded the town beginning July 1 for its USPS Pictorial Postmark Promotion Program.			
Nature & Heritage Tourism Center artist/volunteer Kathy Wynne will continue construction of the Facebook page which will provide biographical information on each of the artisans showcasing their			Linked below are some helpful videos and resources used by and recommended by the DEO Office of Communications and External Affairs.

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
work at the Center, as well as photographs of the art and craft items available for sale. The Facebook page will also provide additional information about the town, its history, vision statement, inventory of historic and business assets, current economic development strategy, and projects being implemented to enhance the community.			Social Media Training for Business Pros Twitter Marketing for Your Business How To Use Social Media Using Social Media Successfully in Your Small Business Marketing 23 Twitter Best Practices Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Vine – Social Media Best Practices
Partner with Florida Division of Historic Resources to prioritize fundable projects, identify proficient proposal preparer, request funding from Hamilton County Development Authority and/or other funding agency to secure funding needed to contract for proposal preparation services.	Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources Grants	Alissa Slade-Lotane Bureau of Historic Preservation, Chief Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer (850) 245-6357 Alissa.Lotane@dos.myflorida.com	
Work with Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park to prepare the required Management Plans for the sub-leased properties: Nature & Heritage Tourism Center, Delegal Service Station, and 2+ acres of undeveloped land across		Jennifer Carver DEP Division of Recreation & Parks, Office of Park Planning. (850) 245-3063 jennifer.carver@dep.state.fl.us	DEP is available to provide guidance and answer questions related to the development of the management plans for the subleased parcels.

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
US 41 from the south entrance to Stephen Foster. Edited by Jennifer Carver as: Work with Florida Department of Environmental Protection to prepare the required Management Plans for the sub-leased properties: Nature & Heritage Tourism Center, Delegal Service Station, and 2+ acres of undeveloped land across US 41 from the south entrance to Stephen Foster Folk Culture Center State Park.			
Reactivate the Hamilton County <i>Florida Main Street Program</i> . The town manager will conduct a study to determine the feasibility of reactivating the Main Street program in partnership with Hamilton County through Department of State at the countywide level or refine the mission of this program as it relates to the Town of White Springs.		Ronni Wood Florida Main Street Coordinator Ronni.Wood@DOS.MyFlorida.com (850) 245-6345 Katherina Paliwoda Program Assistant Katherina.Paliwoda@DOS.MyFlorida.com (850) 245-6346	
Initiate Eco-Lodge Development on the Barnett Tract, property of the Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD). Mayor Miller made request for conveyance of the Barnett Tract at the June 25 meeting of the SRWMD lands committee, which was approved. Once the property is conveyed to the town, the town	*Site design and site infrastructure plan - Potential 2 nd Year Competitive Florida Implementation Project* Discuss options for site infrastructure plan with Sherri	Julie Dennis Community Program Manager Bureau of Economic Development Division of Community Development (850) 717-8478 Julie.Dennis@deo.myflorida.com	

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
will commence the following activities in Fall 2014: eco-lodge development design project/s to be conducted by UF's Professor Kohen and her Design, Construction and Planning class in Fall 2014; site infrastructure plan to be developed by former town manager Bob Farley; request submitted to Navy Seabees for a construction exercise to implement the site infrastructure plan; request submitted to Hamilton County Development Authority to fund the purchase of materials and supplies needed by the Seabees to implement the site infrastructure plan; and identify private sector investors/developers/management companies as partners to fund, construct, market and operate the eco-lodge enterprise.	Martin for Rural Infrastructure Grant.		

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
<p>The development of the I-75 interchange as an asset can be greatly enhanced by running utilities out to the interchange. The first step to accomplish this is to create a cooperative agreement between the town and the three counties, since all four government jurisdictions would need to be involved in the effort to install the infrastructure needed. Once this is accomplished, the Cooperative could advertise available properties along this area for development. The Cooperative would then explore the Transportation Regional Inventive Programs available through the Florida Department of Transportation.</p>	<p>*Potential 2nd Year Competitive Florida Implementation Project – to be eligible, a letter of support would be needed from all three counties and the city – supporting the exploration of a partnership for the development of this interchange*</p>		
<p>The State Farmer's Market, administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, is located in Suwannee County near the I-75 interchange at County Road 136. Town leadership has discussed with the counties' commissioners the opportunity to re-program the Farmers' Market into an attraction that would motivate interested travelers off of the interstate, as well as conducting research to identify other potential distribution opportunities for the facility.</p>		<p>Danny Raulerson, Chief Bureau of State Farmers Markets Danny.Raulerson@FreshFromFlorida.com (850) 617-7380</p>	

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
The industrial park in Genoa is a site located on US 41 north of White Springs in Hamilton County. The park is undeveloped, but with water and sewer available. The town manager will coordinate with Susan Ramsey, HCDA executive director, to identify and recruit potential tenant/s.			
Town manager/staff/volunteers will contact the USDA's Farmers' Market Promotion Program to determine if grant funding is available to support the development of a farmers' market in White Springs. Manager/staff/volunteers will also contact the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Bureau of State Farmers' Markets to determine if state support is available.	USDA Farmers' Market Promotion Program	Danny Raulerson, Chief Bureau of State Farmers Markets Danny.Raulerson@FreshFromFlorida.com (850) 617-7380	
Town manager/staff/volunteers will contact the USDA's Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program to determine if funding may be available to the town for establishing a community garden.	National Recreation and Parks Association, Darden Foundation Grant	FDACS Division of Food, Nutrition and Wellness has been involved in community gardens that are affiliated to K-12 schools. They might be able to provide technical assistance or funding. Main phone numbers are:	Building a Community Garden in Your Park: Opportunities for Health Community and Recreation. Community Gardens in Parks: Case Studies.

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
		1-800-504-6609 (850) 617-7400	UF IFAS: Starting a Community Garden How to Organize an Allotment Community Garden
Opportunities to develop a Community Supported Agriculture system between regional farmers and consumers will be explored by the town manager for those who are willing to pay for this exchange.		<p>Farmers wishing to start a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program can register with FDACS: Carl Penn Carl.Penn@FreshFromFlorida.com (850) 617-7384</p> <p>Farmers willing to travel to Gainesville for produce delivery should contact UF's office of sustainability to join the Gator CSA program: info@sustainability.ufl.edu (352) 392-7578</p> <p>Area farmers could also participate in CSA programs in Tallahassee or Jacksonville, as long as they are willing to drive for produce delivery</p>	

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
100% of students attending South Hamilton Elementary are eligible for the Free Lunch Program. Town staff/volunteers will contact the USDA Farm to School Program and the Hamilton County School District to determine if SHE students are receiving locally sourced fresh foods, and if not, what actions will be required to access the program.		<p>FDACS – Division of Food, Nutrition and Wellness administers this program. Farmers wishing to participate in the program should contact Christie Meresse from the Procurement Compliance Section:</p> <p>Christine Meresse FDACS (850) 617-7427 Christine.Meresse@FreshFromFlorida.com</p>	
Town staff/volunteers will contact the Farm Share Program to determine its applicability for the church-operated food bank in White Springs. The Farm Share Program utilizes inmate labor and volunteers to re-sort and package surplus food and distributes it to individuals, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, churches, and other organizations throughout Florida, free of charge.		<p>Dave Reynolds Farm Share - Quincy (850) 627-9500 Dave@farmshare.org</p>	Steps to become a Farm Share Agency

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
<p>Efforts are underway to provide vision care services to HOPE summer program participants. The Suwannee/Hamilton counties health departments' Miles of Smiles dental bus is providing free dental services to HOPE summer program participants this year. Town staff and volunteers will continue to incorporate as many health care services to community youth through the HOPE summer enrichment program on a yearly basis.</p>	<p>Florida Department of Health, Rural Health Grants</p> <p>USDA Community Facility Grants</p> <p>Regional contact for Hamilton County:</p> <p>Peggy Johns, Area Director, Lake City Rural Development Area Office, (386) 719-5590 (855) 474-6983 fax peggy.johns@fl.usda.gov</p>	<p>Florida Department of Health's Office of Rural Health's responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance to rural communities and health care providers; • Compile and disseminate information about rural health; • Acquire and administer grant funds for rural health programs and providers; • Work to improve access to emergency medical services in rural areas; • Administer the rural health network, rural hospital capital improvement, 3RNet, and Local Health Planning Council programs; and • Coordinate with other state/federal programs and agencies to improve access to and quality of health services to rural residents <p>Florida Department of Health, Office of Rural Health (850) 245-4446</p>	<p>Rural Health Partnership of North Central Florida</p> <p>Kendra I. Siler-Marsiglio, Ph.D. Director, Rural Health Partnership Co-Director, CommunityHealth IT kendrasm@wellflorida.dev.acceleration.net</p>

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
		Bob Pannell, Supervisor, Office of Rural Health (850)245-4444 ext. 2705 Robert.Pannell@flhealth.gov	
Town manager to contact the state and county health departments to determine feasibility of recruiting medical personnel to staff a community walk-in health care clinic. Town manager to contact the federally-funded North Florida Medical Center organization for information about regional facilities that are available to residents of White Springs area.	Florida Department of Health, Rural Health Grants USDA Community Facility Grants Regional contact for Hamilton County: Peggy Johns Area Director Lake City Rural Development Area Office (386) 719-5590 (855) 474-6983 fax peggy.johns@fl.usda.gov	Florida Department of Health, Office of Rural Health (850) 245-4446 Bob Pannell, Supervisor, Office of Rural Health (850) 245-4444 ext. 2705 Robert.Pannell@flhealth.gov Florida Department of Health's Office of Rural Health's responsibilities include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide technical assistance to rural communities and health care providers; • Compile and disseminate information about rural health; • Acquire and administer grant funds for rural health programs and providers; • Work to improve access to emergency medical services in rural areas; 	Rural Health Partnership of North Central Florida Kendra I. Siler-Marsiglio, Ph.D. Director, Rural Health Partnership Co-Director, CommunityHealth IT kendrasm@wellflorida.dev.acceleration.net

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administer the rural health network, rural hospital capital improvement, 3RNet, and Local Health Planning Council programs; and Coordinate with other state/federal programs and agencies to improve	
Town manager will organize committee of volunteers to pursue a Wellness Center project.	*need more information on this concept to consider what resources might be appropriate*		
Willie Guy Turner Park is the only town park in White Springs. It contains playground equipment for small children and picnic tables for family and community parties. This park is in need of improvements and upgrade. Application has been made to DEP's Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program for funding to upgrade the park.	Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program	Mary Ann Lee or Angie Bright Land and Recreation Grants Florida Department of Environmental Protection (850) 245-2501 MaryAnn.Lee@dep.state.fl.us Angie.Bright@dep.state.fl.us	
Integrate Hazard Mitigation Planning into White Springs Comprehensive Plan. The Town of White Springs Comprehensive Plan Amendment No. 14-1ER (Previously 13-1ER) was adopted by Ordinance No. 14-01 and has been submitted to DEO for review.		Contact Julie Dennis for assistance with this process. Julie Dennis Bureau of Economic Development Division of Community Development (850) 717-8478	Protecting Florida's Communities: Land Use Planning Strategies and Best Development Practices for Minimizing Vulnerability to Flooding and Coastal Storms. Hamilton County Profile: Integration of the Local Mitigation

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
The new town manager will review the Comp Plan to confirm that hazard mitigation planning has been integrated into the current amendment.		Julie.Dennis@deo.myflorida.com	Strategy into the Local Comprehensive Plan (dated document: 2006)
Town leadership will meet with UF and other agencies to explore establishing a "tiny houses" building program. Such a program could establish an apprenticeship-based skills training program working in concert with regional high schools to prepare participants for the General Contractor's licensing exam.			
Town manager will explore energy-efficient, low-cost housing options with the CDBG program staff and USDA Rural Development staff to determine if opportunities exist for constructing affordable housing in White Springs.	Rural Repair and Rehabilitation Loans and Grants : Goes towards housing improvements, but only awarded to individual residents, up to \$7,000. Must be low-income, and older than 62. HUD HOME Investments Partnerships Program provides grants to States and local governments to fund a wide range of activities including 1) building, buying, and/or rehabilitating housing for rent or homeownership or 2) providing direct rental assistance to low-income families. It is the largest	Tim Rogers, Area Director USDA Rural Development (850) 526-2610 Tim.Rogers@fl.usda.gov Roger Doherty DEOPanning Manager, Florida Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program, (850) 717-8417 Roger.Doherty@deo.myflorida.com	

Action	Grant Funding	Contacts	Other Resources
	Federal block grant program for State and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.		

Appendix N

Select News Clips from Competitive Florida Communities

SELECT NEWS CLIPS

Town of White Springs

First Business Spin-Off to Create 25-50 New Jobs in White Springs:

DEO Competitive Florida Partnership Pilot Program Reaches Economic Development Goal, The Jasper News

April 17, 2014

White Springs officials have announced the opening of Roosters Outfitters Shop, located at 16520 Hamilton Avenue in the downtown historic district. Roosters Outfitters offers equipment and supplies for fishing, backpacking, archery and camping, and is the first small business spin-off after being incubated at the Nature & Heritage Center – thereby exceeding expectations of the Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) Competitive Florida Partnership pilot program.

Officials are even more enthusiastic about the prospect of a fishing rod production facility slated to be up and running by the end of August. Keith “Rooster” Knipp, the Nature & Heritage Center Studio Artist turned entrepreneur, is setting up his production lines and ordering supplies. He anticipates that he will recruit 25 employees to start, but will increase hires to about 50 as business and orders progress.

Third generation master bamboo fishing rod craftsman, Knipp initially volunteered as a Studio Artist at the Nature & Heritage Center. Customers response to his hand-crafted bamboo fishing rods and other fishing gear was so strong, and his need for more floor space grew so quickly, that he decided to spin-off as a new business in White Springs.

Knipp sells in-store and through the internet. News of the range of Knipp’s exceptional fishing rods did not go unnoticed by two international distributors who approached him about production contracts. Knipp decided on one of the distributors and is in the process of setting up his production company, which will be known as Rooster’s Rod Co. of White Springs, Florida. Initial orders are for 2,000 rods per week.

Knipp anticipates taking advantage of Career Source North Florida (workforce) services. Plans include a one week employee orientation, followed by a 6-month on-the-job-training schedule, which he believes is required for new employees to achieve proficiency.

Career Source North Florida is one of White Springs' partners in its Competitive Florida Partnership program being piloted by the DEO. White Springs is one of only four rural communities selected for the DEO pilot program.

Knipp credits Mayor Helen Miller for the supportive business climate in White Springs and his decision to implement his entrepreneurial vision. I really appreciate the mayor for helping me with this," stated Knipp. "She's not a procrastinator – like me, she likes to get things done. The mayor has done more for this town than anyone else, and that's the truth," concluded White Springs' newest entrepreneur.

"It's been a real pleasure to work with Mr. Knipp," said Miller. "His eco-tourism production and retail businesses are a perfect fit with the economic revitalization vision we've been hard at work developing."

After investing several years of work with state agencies, universities and key individuals in the private sector, Miller says that White Springs is now better positioned for sustainable growth that will benefit the community and its residents.

Participation in the Competitive Florida Partnership program is providing much-appreciated financial and technical resources to shorten the time horizon needed to implement specific community and economic development projects.

Key assets acquired in recent months include the Nature & Heritage Center which is being re-programmed from strictly a state tourism information center to a regional center that promotes tourism in Columbia, Hamilton and Suwannee counties, as well as sells a range of regionally made arts and crafts.

The Heritage Center is run primarily by studio artists who volunteer their time. Volunteer studio artists include Wendy Jacobs and Betty Barnes.

A financial contribution from the Hamilton County Tourist Development Council (TDC), as well as consignment fees, are the primary source of revenue used to pay for utilities and operating expenses. The TDC also assigned staffer Cindy Eatmon to the center for 12 hours per week. Eatmon's professional manner and extensive knowledge of the region are an added bonus when responding to tourists' request for information.

"The \$2,500 Hamilton County TDC grant to the Heritage Center was a great investment," said Miller. "How often does a \$2,500 grant result in a business spin-off that will employ 25 to 50 full-time workers?"

We are extremely grateful to County Commissioner Josh Smith and the members of the TDC board for their support of our efforts to change the paradigm for promoting eco-tourism.”

Julie Dennis, DEO project manager for the Competitive Florida Partnership, Sherri Martin, director of the Rural Economic Development Initiative and their colleagues will be in town on Friday, April 25, for the next phase of the program. The entire day will be spent mapping and assessing key assets in the community.

The historic Delegal Service Station on US 41, as well as the 2-plus acre of undeveloped land immediately across from the south entrance of Stephen Foster State Park – both properties now under long-term sub-lease held by the Town – will be priorities for restoration and development.

One of the original Gulf Oil Distributorship buildings, located in Jasper and used by the Camp Family as a warehouse in recent decades, will also be assessed with the intent of relocating the building to White Springs as a regional museum. The Camp and Abel families donated the building to the town two years ago. These properties and several others will be inspected and evaluated for economic development prospects by DEO teams on April 25.

The same business spin-off from the Nature & Heritage Center is serving to reinforce the need for a local Entrepreneurship Center and Business Incubator to assist entrepreneurs with their start-up ventures. Readers of the Jasper News may recall that two years ago the HOPE Program piloted a successful CNC woodcarving venture with two teams of teenagers during the summer months.

The CNC woodcarving equipment and software purchased by the HOPE Program, in addition to over \$20,000 of technology donations for the Florida Department of Education's 21st Century Learning Center program, comprise a significant inventory of marketable tools to begin operations as a business incubator. Products that could be produced in the incubator include specialty t-shirts (silk screening equipment) and coffee mugs, business signs, bumper stickers, plaques, jewelry and keepsake boxes.

Recently, a high skilled retiree has offered to manage the incubator and train teenagers and young adults in the operations of the production technologies. As soon as an appropriate site for the incubator and working capital grant are secured, the small business incubator can begin operations.

Can the incubator attract customers, and how quickly? Keith Knipp already has a list of items that he wants produced for his retail and production companies. The Nature & Heritage Center is requesting t-

shirts with local designs for tourists, and community members planning large family reunions say they'd also like to buy local.

White Springs has a long and well-honored history of volunteering and working together to achieve important goals – from Teddy Bear, Richard Tennis, John Henry White and David McKire who have made the HOPE Fuel Bank a success, to the volunteers who built the Volunteer Fire Department Annex, to Willie Jefferson, former Mayor McKire and others who care for Eastside Cemetery, to the parents, grandparents and community members who always remember our children at South Hamilton Elementary.

Now on the horizon is working with partners outside the community to turn the page in efforts to revitalize the economic health and vitality of White Springs.

City of Port St. Joe

Taking Stock of the Community's Assets, The St. Joe Star

Tim Croft, January 9, 2014

New eyes often offer new perspective on old sights.

Such was the exercise last week as the Competitive Florida Partnership process began the assessing, or mapping, of the assets that make Port St. Joe well, Port St. Joe. And if beauty is in the eye of the beholder, having roughly a dozen pairs of new eyeballs focused on the local landscape provided testimony of things maybe many residents take for granted. The great parks, the beautiful bay, gorgeous beaches and canopies of oaks, pines and palms – new eyes provided a new coat of shellac for the postcard that is Port St. Joe.

“I would love to live here,” said Bob Farley, city manager in White Springs, one of three communities other than Port St. Joe participating in the Department of Economic Opportunity pilot project Competitive Florida Partnership. “We just don’t have what you have here. I am so impressed with this area. There is a true Florida lifestyle here.”

Farley was among roughly a dozen folks who came from out of town to participate in a Community Asset Mapping Exercise, which is a significant part of the Competitive Florida Partnership process. The Partnership aims to provide a template for local economic development in a community.

Along with Farley came staff from state agencies such as the Department of Environmental Protection (an individual involved with considering the port's application for dredging the ship channel), the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Department of State. Enterprise Florida and Florida's Great Northwest, quasi-public economic development agencies, were also represented as was the Florida League of Cities and the Capitol Area Action Agency.

"The goal is to bring a fresh perspective to the assets the community has and also provide a resource for ideas from the outside," said Julie Dennis, program coordinator for the DEO.

Included in that group was Farley from another Competitive Florida Partnership community.

"We try to bring in people from the other communities we are working with," Dennis said. "They can gain ideas to take back home with them or provide new ideas they have tried at home that worked."

The group, which included local representatives from the city, Tourist Development Council, Port St. Joe Redevelopment Agency, Gulf County Economic Development and Chamber of Commerce, was divided into four teams and sent into the community to assess, photograph and verbally record assets, ranging from parks to education to health care to the waterfront.

After a morning assessing, the teams returned to discuss what they had seen, noting community strengths and suggesting ways to build upon those strengths, offering everything from branding slogans to improvements for the Centennial Building and Constitution Convention Museum.

"This is meant as a brain-storming exercise for the community," Dennis said. "We had some really good conversations. This is a brain-storming exercise to help the city come up with action plans."

Some of those action plans are already in black-and-white, as distributed by Marina Pennington, the city's consultant on planning and the comprehensive plan.

Those projects include restoration of the Centennial Building, the possible relocation of the Constitution Convention Museum to a bay front park; renovation of the museum and existing Constitution City Park; and relocation of the Cape San Blas Lighthouse to George Core Park, among other items.

Under the Competitive Florida process the idea is to match action projects and plans with economic development. The groups also came back with a host of observations about Port St. Joe and ideas about how to improve what is already here.

“To hear the opinions of other people of what we see every day was very interesting,” said Paula Pickett, director of the Chamber of Commerce.

There were obvious assets – Sacred Heart on the Gulf; the Gulf/Franklin Center and access to higher education; the waterfront and the many options it provides; the Port of St. Joe and the deepwater bulkhead on the old mill site; the many city parks; the Port City Trail; downtown historic areas; and the Arizona Chemical site owned outright by the Port Authority.

“We thought the downtown had a great start and we would want to continue those improvements,” said Alissa Slade-Lotane with the Department of State. “Reid Avenue is a major asset.”

The group identified opportunities for improvements – better signage; improvements of the low docks; creating after-school programs and opportunities for students; the Washington Recreation area; creating a gateway to the city through highway beautification as just a few examples.

And the group also identified threats that hold the city back – a lack of trust across races and economic classes; somewhat segmented demographics; and the lack of affordable housing among the most pressing.

“The city needs to own its own destiny,” said Tim Center of the Capitol Area Action Agency. “It is about the community that is here and how it will sustain itself.”

And part of that destiny, almost certainly, will be an operational port. Hanging over last week’s exercise was the impact that economic development will have on the varied assets that make the city what it is.

“We’ve looked at existing assets,” said Mark Yelland of the DEO. “How will they be affected by such a big effort with the port?”

A quandary most of the folks in the room, seeking to fuel local economic development, seemed eager and willing to contemplate.

City of Newberry

Snakes, Sprints Drive Newberry's Economy, The Gainesville Sun

Chris Eversole, October 27, 2014

Newberry is growing economically with the help of snakes, batteries, sports and historic charm.

That was the message that city officials, business leaders and state officials delivered Wednesday (Oct. 22) in a celebration at the Easton Newberry Sports Complex. The event marked the completion of a year-long pilot project of the Competitive Florida Partnership program and the launch of the second year of the program. Through the partnership, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity assists communities in economic development. DEO Executive Director Jesse Panuccio and other senior staff attended the event.

"This is a very energetic community," said Bill Killingsworth, director of the Division of Community Development. "Its quality of life is an important part of what makes it competitive."

A business-friendly attitude also helped, said Bill Brant, the founder of Gourmet Rodent, a company that runs an indoor reptile farm employing 83 people in warehouse buildings less than a mile from downtown. As the company, founded in 1986, grew at its former site off Williston Road, Alachua County officials clamped down on it – following a single complaint, Brant said.

They set the requirement that the company obtain a special use permit, with the condition that it cut its number of employees (then 70) to 25 and operate on only five of the 15 acres at its site.

Brant turned to Newberry. "What we saw there was open-mindedness," he said. Brant has sold company to Mike and Betsy Layman, who were unable to attend the event. The company is growing steadily in meeting the strong market for pet snakes and other reptiles.

The event also celebrated the success of Inspired Energy, which manufactures high tech batteries that have electronic chips that monitor their use and perform other functions. The batteries power small electronic devices. About 30 percent of used in health care, 30 percent by the military and 30 percent in industry. The final 10 percent in other uses, including powering the lights in the costumes of performers in Cirque du Soleil. The company formerly operated at the former battery plant located in unincorporated Alachua County outside the City of Alachua.

When it sought county approval for a new building, county officials balked. “They said, ‘It’s going to be dirty. Wouldn’t you rather be a lawyer,’” said Dave Baggaley, the sales and marketing director.

Inspired Energy talked with Newberry officials, assuring them that it uses battery cells that are manufactured elsewhere and assembles them into its battery packs, minimizing any chemical risk.

“It’s been great to work with a city that is fully onboard,” Baggaley said. Now the company is building a second factory next to its current one in the Newberry Commercial Park, and it expects to double its workforce of 75 over the next 10 years.

The roles of sports in the Newberry economy include operating the archery complex, which an Olympic training site, in cooperation with the Easton Foundation. Newberry also operates Champions Park (formerly called Nations Park), a \$7 million, 16-field baseball and softball complex that was built with Alachua County Tourist Development Tax dollars. After a slow start, Champions Park is coming into its own. It will host both the state tournament and the World Series for most age groups for the Babe Ruth softball this summer, Newberry Parks and Recreation Director Brad Carmen said. The City of Alachua will continue to host the World Series for 12-year-olds.

While Newberry grows economically, it is dedicated to preserving its charm, which its historic downtown represents, said Dr. Jerry O’Neil, chairman of the city’s Economic Development Steering Committee.

“We’re enhancing the future by embracing the past,” he said.

City of Chiefland

Chiefland to Get State Economic Planning Assistance

Hanna Marcus, November 17, 2014

The city of Chiefland has been selected to participate in the second round of the Competitive Florida Partnership, a program that focuses on improving economic development in rural areas.

Chiefland was picked by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity from among 18 other applications. The first round of the program, which began last year, included Newberry and White Springs.

Laurie Copeland, accounting specialist for Chiefland, said the program is instrumental in helping small cities accomplish feats they couldn't on their own. "The state is going to come and assist us with planning and doing asset mapping exercises to help further our vision for economic development," she said. "The city itself doesn't have a professional planner, or the funds to hire one, so we're excited to take advantage of (the state's) expertise."

Both Copeland and Chiefland Mayor Teal Pomeroy cited natural resources as a key asset for the city. They hope that having close proximity to the Suwannee River and Manatee Springs State Park will encourage ecotourism. Their geographical location is another key point they plan to emphasize. "One of the city's main assets is that we sit at the junction of a main corridor of U.S. 98 and 27, so we're the perfect place for commercial businesses to set up because we have access to transportation routes," Copeland said.

While many residents now drive to Gainesville for work, Pomeroy hopes that by enhancing Chiefland, more people will be able to work in the city. "We always have the need for jobs, and that's something we're looking for," he said. "We're a pretty small group and it makes me proud we were selected. I think it shows the dedication of our city staff."

Gadsden County

Agency Aims To Promote Healthy Outlook

Kendrick Brown, December 18, 2014

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity had a kick off meeting for its Competitive Florida Partnership with Gadsden County at the FAMU Research and Extension Farm on Monday morning. During the event, FDEO representatives detailed a six -month plan for helping Gadsden County agencies foster a mentality conducive to attracting better economic opportunities.

The Competitive Florida Partnership is a program for rural community development launched by the FDEO in 2013 aiming "to bring additional resources and partnerships in support of the work of the County's designated economic development organization, the Gadsden County Development Council," according to an October 2014 press release announcing the partnership. The partnership will conduct a conversation with the community to help determine what the economic development strategy should be in April 2015 at a location to be disclosed, and that strategy should be planned out by June.

Bill Killingsworth of FDEO said the partnership helps counties find grants for community projects that may encourage economic growth and provides assistance in developing a strategy. For instance, Killingsworth said the FDEO connected the City of Port St. Joe, Fla. with the University of Florida, who helped that city renovate a historic theatre.

“We allocate a grant to help the local community through that first year and they identify certain action items they want to accomplish going forward,” Killingsworth said. “We take those action items to our state agency and regional partners and find out what resources they can plug in to have the communities achieve that.”

However, FDEO’s responsibilities in the partnership do not include contacting businesses or directly bringing industries to the area.

“This is really about the local communities developing the capacity to leverage their own assets and resources,” Killingsworth said, “and the state brings in some resources to help them develop that capacity. It’s not about the state coming in and doing these things for them.”

Killingsworth said one of the reasons FDEO chose Gadsden County for the Competitive Florida Partnership was the community involvement and signs of appreciation for economic development expressed in letters and phone calls from not only the Chamber and Commerce and GCDC, but representatives for small businesses and churches, amongst other community organizations.

Agencies represented at the kickoff meeting include the GCDC, Gadsden Arts Center, UF-IFAS Center, Talquin Electric, and the Chamber of Commerce, amongst others. The representatives who attended the kick off meeting agreed that there are four major areas requiring development in Gadsden County: community, economic, workforce, and tourism. Joe Munroe of the Gadsden Arts Center and Main Street initiative in Quincy said he thinks the county is not utilizing it’s full potential to attract tourists, especially tourists from the baby boomer generation.

