



April 22, 2024

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County Manager
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RE: EDC FY 24-25 Program of Work

The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast's (EDC) core mission is to strengthen and diversify our economic base. Our partnership with Brevard County provides for the development of a dynamic program of work implemented by a coalition of professional staff, business, and community leaders.

Enclosed is the EDC program of work for the proposed grant for FY24/25. The EDC mission is focused on development and implementation of key programs, that together support business retention and expansion strengthening our economic base, for both today and future generations. By addressing the needs for our local industries and expanding economic drivers, we continue to attract and retain investment and jobs. This program is focused on initiatives designed to increase access to resources, talent, and training for our local manufacturing industry. As always, investment in economic development continues to be a shared role between the county and industry.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support.

Kind Regards,

Lynda Weatherman
President & CEO

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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Background: Manufacturing stands as a cornerstone of job and economic growth in Brevard County. The EDC's Business Development Team collaborates with executive leadership from corporate headquarters, site selection firms, and state partners to amplify and diversify our manufacturing landscape, with a focus on our five core industries: aerospace and aviation, advanced communications, electronics, homeland security and defense, and emerging technologies.

Over the past decade, EDC project announcements have included a diversity of industries; these companies are investing in our community and providing high-wage job opportunities for our residents. Brevard County is now home to leading manufacturers of spacecraft, aircraft, electronics, satellites, boats, communications and more. In **2022** we ranked **# 2 Fastest growing tech sector in the U.S.** by Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data. Our program of work is focused on continuing this momentum, bringing positive economic impact into Brevard County from both capital investment and job creation.

Program of Work

Objective	Actions
Secure new corporate investment into Brevard County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diligently manage inquiries and requests for formal proposals by delivering strategic responses and local guidance through our in-house professional business development team. Partner with local and regional agencies and organizations to ensure seamless and efficient project management for clients. Promote the assets of Brevard County to expanding and relocating companies, offering comprehensive support as they explore potential sites across the nation for business investment. Coordinate site visits for national and international business representatives facilitating long-term partnerships. Analyze and disseminate economic and business data into actionable intelligence tailored to meet the specific needs of clients.
Foster business growth, innovation, and resiliency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDC's Manufacturing Business Advisor and Business Development team to provide insights and access to local, regional and national resources. Streamline connections between manufacturers and local suppliers through networking and personal introductions. Build an eco-system supportive of innovation and entrepreneurship by facilitating access to angel and venture capital. Engage with industry leaders to identify barriers to growth. Strengthen local supply chain by identifying local capabilities and products for quick reference by partner organizations and businesses. Develop and maintain demographic and economic data to support business planning.

Promote expansion of site-ready land throughout Brevard County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote current site-ready property located at Spaceport Commerce Park, made possible through a partnership with FPL. Expand site-ready options by working with landowners to identify and evaluate high potential sites. Secure available grant funding to bolster development of site ready property.
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WORKFORCE / TALENT ATTRACTION

Background: Fulfilling the talent pipeline remains a priority, and the EDC is vigorously addressing this challenge through our **Talent Asset Pipeline** program. Our strategic emphasis on attracting entry-level workers has yielded significant outcomes, with more than 700 scholarships awarded to Brevard County residents since 2016. These scholarships are specifically earmarked for essential training such as Certified Production Technician training, welding courses, and other entry-level pathways leading to a fulfilling career in manufacturing. Through strategic partnerships with Eastern Florida State College and Brevard Public Schools, we are poised to further amplify our efforts. This partnership ensures the continued expansion of training programs catering to the evolving needs of local industries by delivering pertinent training.

Program of Work

Objective	Actions
Promote availability of scholarships for certified training leading to job placement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure funding from local, regional, and state organizations for scholarships for Brevard County residents. Provide access to scholarships for certifications; with a focus on CPT (certified production technician). Coordinate with Eastern Florida State College to provide Certified Production Technician course on-line to accommodate flexibility in training options. Engage with Brevard Public Schools Certified Technical Education team to secure opportunities for student internships and manufacturing tours. Promote the apprenticeship programs available through Florida DEO.
Promote manufacturing as a career of choice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reshape how individuals and influencers view manufacturing by providing factual data and imagery through an awareness campaign. Highlight local employers and showcase career opportunities and competitive salaries. Educate high school students about high-tech manufacturing jobs by presenting at career fairs. Educate high school and middle school teachers and guidance counselors on manufacturing; ensuring they are aware of certified training options.
Assist in defining industry needs and developing programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey manufacturers to identify current and future workforce needs. Communicate survey findings with local education partners including Brevard Public Schools and Eastern Florida State College (EFSC)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize strategic partnerships to develop training curriculum. • Engage with local employers and educational institutions to identify program enhancements in-line with industry needs. • Secure funding for EFSC Foundation for scholarships in manufacturing training programs.
Attract and retain recently deployed veterans and military spouses into talent pipeline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote benefits of hiring military spouses and family members with hiring guide, standardized messaging, targeted correspondence, and networking with local hiring managers. • Partner with Vet Florida to promote Brevard County within their network and increase participation of local industry in their military hiring programs, such as, SkillBridge and Hiring Our Heros. • Assist companies in identifying best practices for transitioning military skills to open positions through a skills translator tool, thereby increasing the available talent pool.

MILITARY ADVOCACY AND PARTNERSHIP

Background: The defense industry plays a significant role in the Brevard County economy. According to the *Florida Defense Support Task Force 2022 Florida Defense Industry Economic Impact Analysis*, Brevard County military was responsible for over 57,000 jobs in Brevard County, in 2020, and just over \$6.7 billion in total Gross Regional Product (GRP - total value of all goods and services produced in the region).

Working with DoD leadership and local partners, the EDC engages with community stakeholders to identify opportunities to support our military installations. Our partnership with the state of Florida has led to over \$2.5M in support of our local defense industry.

Most recently, the EDC identified a critical need for infrastructure to ensure long-term economic growth, for both military programs and our expanding commercial space industry. We secured a \$200,000 grant to conduct an initial feasibility study for a wastewater treatment facility to service Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. This project has received the attention of multiple funding agencies at the state and federal level.

EDC leadership is working with the **U.S. Department of Defense Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC)** to secure a \$750,000 grant for a Phase II study needed to bring this project to the next stage. As the project continues to move forward, the EDC will pursue additional partnerships and funding sources to gain the best outcome for our community.

Program of Work

Objective	Actions
Support infrastructure partnerships with DoD and local community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure timely completion of Phase II study for a regional WWTP supporting CCSFS, NASA and Brevard County. • Strengthen partnerships within DoD and NASA leadership by communicating the benefits of the project through ongoing communication and presentations. • Identify WWTP funding opportunities to capture maximum partnerships. • Convene local, regional, and state leaders to ensure a full understanding of the needs and funding opportunities. • Coordinate community applications with various funding partners to ensure a streamlined and coordinated effort. • Monitor East Central Florida Regional Planning Council Military Installation Resilience Review project, assisting with potential Brevard County actions. • Identify funding opportunities related to the above MIRR study findings.
Advocate for new missions and program expansions at Patrick Space Force Base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with local and state agencies to ensure streamlined response to requests for information. • Maintain ongoing communication and advocacy with DoD leaders; both in our nation's capital and in Florida. • Promote Brevard County's reputation as a dedicated partner with local installation leadership. • Promote Public-Private Partnership opportunities from DoD with Brevard County and local municipality leadership.
Advocate for Programs at NASA/KSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Brevard County as a competitive site for future potential NASA missions.

MARKETING / COMMUNITY OF CHOICE

Background: As societal values evolve across generations, the role of community takes on newfound importance. Addressing the national challenge of talent attraction and retention, the EDC initiated **Mission Space Coast**. This program aims to establish a distinct county-wide brand identity, positioning the Space Coast as the preferred destination for businesses and professionals.

In collaboration with our investors, community stakeholders and the public at large, we've identified the unique attributes that define our community's essence. In January 2024 we unveiled the community brand story.

Florida's Space Coast: Tomorrow Launches Here.

Over this program year we will push our brand story to both internal and external audiences. We will engage with leading businesses and partners to utilize the resources we have developed to assist in their talent attraction

and retention efforts. Resources include a talent attraction focused website, social media engagement, and media exposure of our dynamic community.

Program of Work

Objective	Actions
Promote Brevard County as a competitive place for business investment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and maintain website serving as online resource for business programs, economic data, incentives, and quality of life. • Implement a multi-faceted marketing strategy to promote Brevard County as an attractive destination for business investment. • Maintain an active online presence across various platforms (such as social media, forums, and industry-specific websites) to disseminate information related to living and working in Brevard County. • Engage with and outreach to national site selectors.
Generate regional adoption of community branding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the value of county-wide brand identity throughout by communicating with stakeholders and business leaders through presentations and timely updates. • Utilize campaign reporting board to promote brand message and monitor community feedback for appropriate modifications and/or additions.
Community branding promotion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create campaign resources to share with partners. • Collaborate with local organizations and community groups to leverage their networks and resources in the dissemination of campaign materials. • Place targeted advertisements in relevant locations and media outlets to increase brand visibility and reach. • Track engagement and adjust media plan as appropriate.
Maximize promotional opportunities via earned media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and submit articles to local, regional, and national media outlets. • Spotlight local company achievements and successes through nominations for awards and press/media articles; as well as facilitating interviews and feature articles in relevant publications.