



MEETING AGENDA – Friday, October 13th, 2023
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance – Executive Committee Meeting
Pensacola, FL 32502

1. Call to Order

David Bear

2. Meeting publicly noticed (10/3/23)

3. Role Call

- David Bear
- Ryan Tilley
- Dr. Charletha Powell
- Olevia McNally
- Staff
 - o Brian Hilson
 - o Melissa Stoker
- Public

4. Old Business

Brian Hilson

5. New Business

- IPC Membership
- Updated Financials
- Updated Financial Policies
- Hancock Whitney Paperwork for Check Signing Authority
- Upcoming Audits
- Investor Campaign RFP Submissions
- Agreed Upon Procedures Engagement with Saltmarsh
- Floridian Partners Agreement

6. Projects Update

7. Adjourn

Next Meeting Date: Friday, December 8th, 2023

DRAFT

FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance
Profit & Loss Budget Performance YTD
October 2022 - September 2023

	Total			
	Actual	Annual Budget	over Budget	% of Budget
Revenue				
4000 Membership Dues	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	0.00	100.00%
4200 Investor Membership Dues	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 90,000.00	-50,000.00	44.44%
4410 Non-Dues Income	\$ -	\$ 5,400.00	-5,400.00	0.00%
4420 Government Income	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 0.00	100.00%
4430 PEDC	\$ 675,000.00	\$ 675,000.00	0.00	100.00%
4500 CoLab Income	\$ 100,699.78	\$ 115,000.00	-\$ 14,300.22	87.57%
4512 Miscellaneous Income	\$ 355.00	\$ 400.00	-45.00	88.75%
4513 CD Interest Income	\$ 3,771.48	\$ 100.00	3,671.48	3771.48%
Unapplied Cash Payment Income	\$ 40,264.33		40,264.33	
Total Revenue	\$ 1,210,090.59	\$ 1,235,900.00	-\$ 25,809.41	97.91%
Gross Profit	\$ 1,210,090.59	\$ 1,235,900.00	-\$ 25,809.41	97.91%
Expenditures				
5005 Bank & Credit Card Fees	\$ 134.55	\$ 650.00	-515.45	20.70%
5060 Marketing, Adv & Promo/Investor	\$ 23,317.25	\$ 20,500.00	2,817.25	113.74%
5060a Marketing - Website	\$ 26,287.57	\$ 20,000.00	6,287.57	131.44%
5060b Business Development	\$ 6,213.33	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 213.33	103.56%
5060c Prospect Development	\$ 3,491.22	\$ 10,000.00	-\$ 6,508.78	34.91%
5060d Consulting	\$ 25,807.00		25,807.00	
5060e Tradeshow	\$ 9,034.00	\$ 10,000.00	-966.00	90.34%
5559 Workforce Marketing	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	-4,000.00	20.00%
5680 Cyber/High Growth Companies	\$ 12,028.31	\$ 15,000.00	-\$ 2,971.69	80.19%
Total 5060 Marketing, Adv & Promo/Investor	\$ 107,178.68	\$ 86,500.00	\$ 20,678.68	123.91%
5066 Database/Research	\$ 23,593.24	\$ 20,000.00	3,593.24	117.97%
5100 Audit Expense	\$ 31,400.29	\$ 28,000.00	\$ 3,400.29	112.14%
5105 Legal Fees	\$ 23,580.00	\$ 15,000.00	8,580.00	157.20%
5120 Auto Travel	\$ 6,932.10	\$ 10,000.00	-3,067.90	69.32%
5140 Business Travel	\$ 21,418.51	\$ 35,000.00	-\$ 13,581.49	61.20%
5200 Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 7,960.08	\$ 9,400.00	-1,439.92	84.68%
5310 Insur-D&O/Liab/Umbrella/EPLI	\$ 7,454.92	\$ 7,000.00	454.92	106.50%
5410 Maint & Repair- Computers	\$ 26,152.30	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 6,152.30	130.76%
5440 Meeting Expense	\$ 2,885.33	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 385.33	115.41%
5500 CoLab Expenses	\$ 125,579.55	\$ 117,000.00	\$ 8,579.55	107.33%
5600 Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 3,244.90	\$ 350.00	2,894.90	927.11%
5610 Postage	\$ 725.29	\$ 500.00	225.29	145.06%
57000 Employee Wages & Benefits	\$ 593,223.41	\$ 700,000.00	-\$ 106,776.59	84.75%
5800 Supplies	\$ 2,501.75	\$ 2,500.00	1.75	100.07%
5915 Telephone	\$ 3,275.00	\$ 4,000.00	-725.00	81.88%
5925 Cell Phones	\$ 6,454.43	\$ 6,500.00	-45.57	99.30%
5954 Copier Expense	\$ 167.83	\$ 1,000.00	-832.17	16.78%
5980 Rent Expense	\$ 51,524.85	\$ 49,500.00	\$ 2,024.85	104.09%
6000 Professional Services			0.00	
6000b Cyber Consultant	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00	0.00	100.00%
6000c Advocacy	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	0.00	100.00%
6000d Marketing Consultant	\$ 61,500.00	\$ 54,000.00	7,500.00	113.89%
Total 6000 Professional Services	\$ 128,000.00	\$ 120,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	106.22%
Total Expenditures	\$ 1,173,387.01	\$ 1,235,900.00	-\$ 62,512.99	94.94%
Net Revenue	\$ 36,703.58	\$ -	\$ 36,703.58	

FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance
Statement of Financial Position
As of September 30, 2023

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1000 Checking- Private Hancock -363	12,719.05
1010 Checking - Public Hancock- 355	191,152.72
1150 6 Month Public CD - 2138	300,000.00
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 503,871.77
Accounts Receivable	
11000 Accounts Receivable	2,604.75
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 2,604.75
Other Current Assets	
1300 Prepaid Rent	23,827.50
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 23,827.50
Total Current Assets	\$ 530,304.02
Fixed Assets	
1600 Furniture and Fixtures	43,931.73
1650 Computers	27,092.11
1700 Accum Depreciation Computers	-22,660.31
1701 Accum Depreciation Furn & Fix	-30,033.41
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 18,330.12
Other Assets	
1800 Security Deposit	1,000.00
Total Other Assets	\$ 1,000.00
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 549,634.14
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Total Accounts Payable	\$ 0.00
Other Current Liabilities	
2300 Other Payables	29,462.00
2350 Christmas Club Payable	3,300.00
Total 2300 Other Payables	\$ 32,762.00
2400 Payroll Liabilities	31,986.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 64,748.00
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 64,748.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 64,748.00
Equity	
3200 Unrestricted Net Assets	448,182.56
Net Revenue	36,703.58
Total Equity	\$ 484,886.14
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 549,634.14

FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance
Statement of Activity by Class
October 2022 - September 2023

	Private	Public	TOTAL
Revenue			
4000 Membership Dues	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	\$ 200,000.00
4200 Investor Membership Dues	\$ 40,000.00	\$ -	\$ 40,000.00
4420 Government Income	\$ -	\$ 150,000.00	\$ 150,000.00
4430 PEDC	\$ -	\$ 675,000.00	\$ 675,000.00
4500 CoLab Income	\$ 100,699.78	\$ -	\$ 100,699.78
4512 Miscellaneous Income	\$ 355.00	\$ -	\$ 355.00
4513 CD Interest Income	\$ -	\$ 3,771.48	\$ 3,771.48
Unapplied Cash Payment Income	\$ 40,264.33	\$ -	\$ 40,264.33
Total Revenue	\$ 301,319.11	\$ 908,771.48	\$ 1,210,090.59
Gross Profit	\$ 301,319.11	\$ 908,771.48	\$ 1,210,090.59
Expenditures			
5005 Bank & Credit Card Fees	\$ 134.55	\$ -	\$ 134.55
5060 Marketing, Adv & Promo/Investor	\$ 22,115.47	\$ 1,201.78	\$ 23,317.25
5060a Marketing - Website	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 23,487.57	\$ 26,287.57
5060b Business Development	\$ 6,213.33	\$ -	\$ 6,213.33
5060c Prospect Development	\$ 3,491.22	\$ -	\$ 3,491.22
5060d Consulting	\$ 25,807.00	\$ -	\$ 25,807.00
5060e Tradeshows	\$ 9,034.00	\$ -	\$ 9,034.00
5559 Workforce Marketing	\$ 1,000.00	\$ -	\$ 1,000.00
5680 Cyber/High Growth Companies	\$ 9,146.70	\$ 2,881.61	\$ 12,028.31
Total 5060 Marketing, Adv & Promo/Investor	\$ 79,607.72	\$ 27,570.96	\$ 107,178.68
5066 Database/Research	\$ 18,643.24	\$ 4,950.00	\$ 23,593.24
5100 Audit Expense	\$ 232.79	\$ 31,167.50	\$ 31,400.29
5105 Legal Fees	\$ -	\$ 23,580.00	\$ 23,580.00
5120 Auto Travel	\$ 3,644.20	\$ 3,287.90	\$ 6,932.10
5140 Business Travel	\$ 21,418.51	\$ -	\$ 21,418.51
5200 Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 6,610.08	\$ 1,350.00	\$ 7,960.08
5310 Insur-D&O/Liab/Umbrella/EPLI	\$ -	\$ 7,454.92	\$ 7,454.92
5410 Maint & Repair- Computers	\$ 10,146.35	\$ 16,005.95	\$ 26,152.30
5440 Meeting Expense	\$ 2,885.33	\$ -	\$ 2,885.33
5500 CoLab Expenses	\$ 101,131.09	\$ 24,448.46	\$ 125,579.55
5600 Miscellaneous Expense	\$ 3,244.90	\$ -	\$ 3,244.90
5610 Postage	\$ 725.29	\$ -	\$ 725.29
57000 Employee Wages & Benefits	\$ 3,153.00	\$ 590,070.41	\$ 593,223.41
5800 Supplies	\$ 2,501.75	\$ -	\$ 2,501.75
5915 Telephone	\$ 2,979.27	\$ 295.73	\$ 3,275.00
5925 Cell Phones	\$ 6,454.43	\$ -	\$ 6,454.43
5954 Copier Expense	\$ 167.83	\$ -	\$ 167.83
5980 Rent Expense	\$ 150.00	\$ 51,374.85	\$ 51,524.85
6000 Professional Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
6000b Cyber Consultant	\$ 6,500.00	\$ -	\$ 6,500.00
6000c Advocacy	\$ 60,000.00	\$ -	\$ 60,000.00
6000d Marketing Consultant	\$ 61,500.00	\$ -	\$ 61,500.00
Total 6000 Professional Services	\$ 128,000.00	\$ -	\$ 128,000.00
Total Expenditures	\$ 391,830.33	\$ 781,556.68	\$ 1,173,387.01
Net Operating Revenue	\$ (90,511.22)	\$ 127,214.80	\$ 36,703.58
Net Revenue	\$ (90,511.22)	\$ 127,214.80	\$ 36,703.58

TAX STATUS: For the purpose of state and local taxation, the Community Economic Development Association of Pensacola and Escambia County, Inc. (Florida referred to in this document as FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance is designated as a non-profit Section 501(c)(6) organization.

FISCAL YEAR: The organization's fiscal year is October 1st through September 30th.

SUBJECT: Accounting Method

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance uses cash-basis accounting. The cash-basis accounting method recognizes revenues when the cash is received and expenses when payment has been made.

SUBJECT: Bank Reconciliations

POLICY: Monthly bank statements are reconciled within ten days of receiving the statement through the mail or online. It is the responsibility of the Bookkeeper to reconcile all bank statements. The individual that reconciles the statements cannot be a check signer.

SUBJECT: Bid Requirements

POLICY: All professional service contracts, regardless of duration, are subject to an annual review for quality, compliance, and competitive pricing. In the event any or all of the above benchmarks are determined to be inadequate, other competitive bids will be sought.

The following expenditures require a minimum of two bids when possible:

- Capital Purchases – bids required for all capital expenditures exceeding \$10,000
- Purchases – single purchases exceeding \$10,000
- Professional Services – professional services, including but not limited to: banking institutions, advertising agencies, and insurance providers

The decision to approve vendor bidding on various businesses with FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will be made jointly by the CEO and Board President.

SUBJECT: Bonding of Employees

POLICY: It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to bond all employees involved in the financial functions of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance

SUBJECT: Budget

POLICY: An operating budget will be produced by the CEO with input from appropriate staff responsible for expense line items. This budget will be approved during or prior to the September meeting of the Board of Directors for the next fiscal year. This approval will authorize the CEO to approve all expenses reflected in the budget with the exception of CEO's travel and reimbursement requests. It will be used to track expenditures monthly to the Board of Directors for approval. From the public budget, the only allowable expenditures are rent, staff compensation, insurance, technology, marketing, consultants, legal, accounting, and other professional services. All other expenditures are private unless

there is executive committee approval to spend allowable expenses from the public account. Any interest income earned from public dollar investments are to be spent on public dollar approved expenditures and cannot be used for private expenses.

SUBJECT: Public vs Private Income

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance receives funding from public and private entities. Private entities are those that are owned by individuals, corporations, or public utilities. All other entities are considered public.

SUBJECT: Public vs Private Expenses

POLICY: Public funds may not be used for the following:

- i. Payments for debts such as losses arising from uncollectible accounts, other claims, and relate costs;
- ii. Payments for contingencies including contributions to a contingency reserve or any similar provisions for unforeseen events;
- iii. Contributions or donations unless otherwise expressly provided for in this Agreement;
- iv. Payments of entertainment or travel costs such as amusements, social activities, or any direct or incidental costs relating thereto, including meals, beverages, lodgings, rentals, transportation, and gratuities;
- v. Payments of fines or penalties, including but not limited to any amounts due to non-compliance with any federal, state, and local laws, regulations, or policies;
- vi. Payments for legislative lobbying or other political expenses, or any related expenses or contributions;
- vii. Payments of interest or other financial costs, including but not limited to interest on borrowings of any kind or representation, bond discounts, costs of financing and refinancing operations, legal or professional fees paid, or costs related to or in connection therewith.

SUBJECT: Bank Accounts

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance maintains separate bank accounts for private funds and public funds. Public income is deposited into the public bank account. Private income is deposited into the private bank account.

SUBJECT: Capitalization Limit

POLICY: Capitalization limit is the dollar figure under which an item is expensed in the period purchased and/or capitalized and depreciated within the period set by IRS guidelines. It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to expense assets in the period purchased if these assets cost \$1,000 or less individually. Assets costing in excess of \$1,000 individually will be capitalized and depreciated in accordance with IRS guidelines.

SUBJECT: Chart of Accounts

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance maintains a chart of accounts. All employees involved with accounting coding responsibilities and budgetary responsibilities will be issued a chart of accounts. This chart is updated by the contracted bookkeeper. The current charts of accounts for FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance and each of its subsidiaries are included as an addendum to this document.

SUBJECT: Contract Signing Authority & Financial Obligation Authority

POLICY: It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to grant authority to sign contracts, or create other financial obligations, to the CEO or his designee, as long as the financial implications of the contract are included in FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance budget. If the budget does not reflect the financial obligations of the contract, Board of Director pre-approval is required.

SUBJECT: Check Signing Authority

POLICY: To adhere to internal control and segregation of duties, the rules followed by FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance for signature of checks are:

- Persons who reconcile bank statements are not the check signers.
- Checks that are at or under \$10,000 require one signature.
- Checks that are over \$10,000 require two signatures.

It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance ALLIANCE to give check signing authority to the following persons:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- CEO
- Director of Operations

SUBJECT: Cash and Check Receipts

POLICY: Incoming checks made out to FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance are to be stamped with the restricted endorsement as follows:

FOR DEPOSIT ONLY FLORIDAWEST ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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Checks are endorsed and deposited within 48 hours of receipt.

SUBJECT: Audited Financial Statements Distribution

POLICY: It is a requirement that FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance have a financial audit

performed by an independent accounting firm once a year. The CEO will distribute the audited financial statements to the Board of Directors and to other organizations entitled to receive a copy by contractual agreement. The decision to publish and/or distribute the statements or otherwise make them available to the membership will be made by the Board of Directors.

SUBJECT: Contracting CPA Firms

POLICY: It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to contract with the CPA firm selected to audit FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance for a period not to exceed three years with extensions as permissible per the bylaws.

At the end of the contract, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance treasurer, with the assistance of the staff, will write a request for proposal to CPA firms specializing in auditing non-profit organizations. Once the proposals are reviewed, a recommendation to the Board of Directors should be made for final selection.

SUBJECT: Loans to Employees

POLICY: It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to prohibit loans to employees under all circumstances. Also disallowed are payroll advances, including paid time off –based pay.

SUBJECT: Purchase Orders

POLICY: CURRENT POLICY STATES:

It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to use a purchase order system. Authorized purchase orders are required for all obligations of goods and services. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance uses a non-numbered spreadsheet template for purchase orders. They are filled out by the receiving individual, approved by the department head, and filed for audit.

The staff person requesting a purchase must complete a purchase order form and have it authorized by department staff and CEO.

Single purchases of over \$10,000 must have accompanying bids/quotes when possible and be approved by the CEO. In the CEO's absence, the President or the Treasurer may approve the purchase.

Blanket purchases are not allowed.

Volunteers are not allowed to obligate FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance for any purchases or services.

SUBJECT: Records Retention & Destruction

POLICY: It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to retain records as required by law and to destroy them when appropriate. It is the responsibility of the bookkeeper to maintain a detailed retention schedule and at the end of each fiscal year, destroy the records that can be destroyed according to IRS and Florida Statutes Chapter 119 guidelines.

The following include files that must be stored for the minimum time required by law:

- General Ledger Journals
- Chart of Accounts

- CPA Audited Financial Statements
- Employee Personnel Records
- Meeting Minutes
- Legal Correspondence

SUBJECT: Restricted Funds

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will record and account for all restricted money separate from operational funds. Such restrictions can occur externally, by FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance accepting funds with specific restrictions, or internally through Board of Directors-approved restrictions placed on identifiable funds. These accounts shall include all funds designated regardless of amount. These funds will be used in accordance with those restrictions and guidelines.

SUBJECT: Income

POLICY: All income received is verified against accounts receivable and recorded to the appropriate line item. Excess income received is investigated and allocated to the correct line item, or returned.

SUBJECT: Public Records Requests

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will comply with the Florida Statutes Chapter 119, as it pertains to public records requests, to the extent applicable to FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's activities. It is the policy of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to charge \$.50 cents per page for any requested copies of documents that qualify as a public record. If research is required to obtain the information requested, a fee of \$25 per hour will be assessed. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will provide the requestor an estimate amount, subject to adjustment based upon actual research time and number of pages copied. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance may also require payment in full prior to the surrender of any documents to a requestor.

If FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance determines that Chapter 119 is not applicable to make the requested records a public record, it will still consider providing the records unless such provision would include providing confidential, proprietary, or other private business or other records. However, the decision about whether to provide requested records that would not be subject to Chapter 119 will be made on a case-by-case basis. If FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance elects to provide records that would not otherwise be required to be provided under Chapter 119, the same charges set forth in the preceding paragraph would apply to the research and duplication for such records as well.

The adoption of this policy is not intended to make FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance or FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance records subject to Chapter 119 on a global basis, but simply to acknowledge that FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will comply with the law, as may from time to time be amended, and to establish charges for those requesting records on that basis.

The person requesting the information may make arrangements to inspect public records at FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance as required by law.

SUBJECT: Investments

POLICY: The investment policy applies to most investment activities of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance. Exceptions are its employees' 401K funds, which are managed by an outside source. This policy is applicable to FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance Operating and Foundation Funds. Funds will remain in corporate interest-bearing checking accounts.

The objectives for FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's cash reserves are to ensure the safety of investment principal, provide for liquidity, maximize investment income, and to segregate public funds from non-public funds to ensure that funds are utilized according to contractual agreements that may exist.

The President and CEO will be responsible for researching investment opportunities and proposing recommendations. The decision to invest cash in authorized investments will be presented to the Executive Committee.

The following are current limits of authorized securities for investment. Cash balances that exceed FDIC insurance must be secured by bank-pledged assets. Revisions to the list may be made by the CEO with Board approval. All securities shall be held until maturity. Maturity dates shall not exceed two years. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's intent is to purchase securities and hold them until maturity.

- Treasury Bills, Notes, and Bonds
- FDIC-insured or fully collateralized Certificates of Deposit.
- Full faith or general faith, and credit obligations of United States Government Agency Securities
- Repurchase agreements collateralized by U.S. Treasury or Agency Securities.
- Money Market funds placed with qualified local financial institutions that are members of the FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance

Competitive rates, level of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance support, services offered, and convenience will be factors considered by FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance in making depository and investment decisions, which will be reviewed annually by the Finance Committee.

SUBJECT: Year-End Closing Procedures

POLICY: As part of the year-end book closing process, all accruals and deferrals required to bring the financial statements in compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles in the U.S. will be made. All subsidiary ledgers will be balanced and reconciled to the general ledger. Allowance for uncertain accounts and pledges will be reviewed and adjusted. All in-kind donations will be recorded and inter-company transactions will be reconciled.

SUBJECT: Audit Committee

POLICY: The Audit Committee is appointed annually by the President of the Board. The Audit Committee will meet with the selected audit firm before audit engagement start date and again after audit completion, prior to board presentation.

SUBJECT: Grants

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance receives grants from various entities. The recording, invoicing, and reporting for all grants will be the responsibility of the CEO.

SUBJECT: Travel Expense Policy for Elected Officials

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance undertakes various travel engagements as it pursues economic development opportunities for the greater Pensacola area and in the course of conducting its general business activities. Occasionally, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance members and other individuals accompany FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance personnel during travel engagements to assist FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance in carrying out its purposes at FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's expense. In order to avoid the appearance of either conflict of interest or political influence, however, it is FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's policy to not reimburse or otherwise pay for the travel expenses of elected officials.

SUBJECT: Other Expenses for Governmental Officials

POLICY: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance honors the federal restrictions on spending for individual governmental officials to no more than \$20 per source per occasion and no more than \$50 per source in a calendar year.

SUBJECT: Employee Expense and Travel Policy

POLICY:

I. General Policy

- a. All public dollars received by FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance are to be used responsibly and effectively, public dollars must be used for direct economic development business expenses as provided for herein and cannot be used for any business meals or entertainment expense.
- b. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance believes that you should live comfortably when away from home on business; however, charges should be reasonable and supported with sufficient detail. Employees should experience neither financial gain nor loss associated with business expenses. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will reimburse staff members for adequately supported and approved expenses directly connected with performance of their duties. Reimbursements and allowances should relate to the necessary business expenses actually incurred by employees and should not be considered additional compensation. All travel requiring an overnight stay should be planned sufficiently in advance and pre-approved by the CEO. The President, Vice-President Secretary or Treasurer will approve the CEO's out-of-town travel.
- c. In general, the quality of travel, accommodations, entertainment and related expenses should be governed by what is necessary, reasonable, and appropriate to the business purpose involved. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance does not require sacrifice on the part of its personnel where comfort and convenience are concerned nor does it permit superfluous spending. In this regard, exercise careful judgment in weighing the type of expenses and the costs incurred.
- d. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance respects the personal integrity of each employee and conducts expense account affairs accordingly. The approving supervisor as well as the spending employee is responsible for compliance with this Employee Business Expense and Travel Policy as well as the accurate representation and documentation of expenses on employee expense reports.

- e. The travel authorization form should be completed, providing documentation of the estimated costs, business purpose and itinerary. In general, any single entertainment expense expected to exceed \$500 should be pre-approved by the CEO. The President, Vice- President, Secretary or Treasurer will pre-approve the CEO's anticipated entertainment expenses in excess of \$500.
- f. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance employees are expected to:
 - i. Exercise good judgment with respect to expenses.
 - ii. Spend FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance money as carefully and judiciously as they would their own.
 - iii. Check the accuracy of bills and other documents before paying or accepting them.
 - iv. Report all expenses and advances promptly and accurately with the required documentation.
 - v. Within thirty days of completion of a business trip, claim reimbursement of necessary and reasonable expenses only.
- g. Expenses that must be reported on an expense report include:
 - i. Travel, meals and lodging
 - ii. Automobile expenses
 - iii. Entertainment
 - iv. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance related meetings
 - v. Conference, seminar and educational activities, including fees
 - vi. Any expenditure using FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance credit card
 - vii. Miscellaneous employee business expenses
 - viii. Other anticipated expenses not specifically mentioned above must be approved in advance.

II. Reporting and Documentation

- a. All employee business expenses must be reported within thirty days after the expense is incurred or the trip is completed. Expense reports will be processed on a monthly basis as submitted. Expense items older than thirty days will require the CEO's approval for reimbursement. Expenses older than ninety days will ***not*** be paid. Expense reports should be prepared electronically. The expense report should include sufficient detail (business purpose, charge code, dates, number of days at each location, individual involved, etc.)
- b. All out-of-town travel should be planned sufficiently in advance to take advantage of lower fares. The Travel Form should be completed, providing documentation of the estimated cost, business purpose and itinerary. In addition, any entertainment expenses expected to exceed \$500 should be pre-approved. The Travel Authorization Form must be approved by her/his designated representative before committing to travel. Upon completion of travel, an expense report is to be completed with receipts and a copy of the original Travel Authorization form attached. The expense report must be approved by her/his designated representative. If a major portion of reimbursed expenses is charged to and recovered from grants, it is particularly important that the FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance be able to furnish its grantors with detailed statements of expenses. Adequate explanations and documented support for charges are required.

- c. All reimbursable expenses must be fully described and supported on the expense report. This means that each entry must contain a clear description of both the business reason for the expenditure and the names of any other persons involved. Receipts are expected for all expenses and must be accompanied by appropriate original receipts (airline ticket stubs, hotel bills, customer copy of credit card charge slips, restaurant receipts, etc.). Receipts must be attached for all expenditures. Expenditures for lodging should be supported by detailed receipts from the hotel.
- d. Direct Payment: When requested by employees, checks will be issued directly to vendors upon presentation of properly completed and approved expense reports purchase orders and supporting invoices. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will not reimburse employees for finance charges due to late submission of expenses.
- e. Expenses that are not properly described and/or supported will be disallowed from expense reports. Properly reimbursable expenses will have to be resubmitted with the appropriate description and/or support.

III. Payment and Reimbursement

a. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance Credit Cards

- i. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance -owned credit cards will be issued to FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance employees on an “as needed” basis and are usually limited to selected employees as approved by the CEO. For those employees holding such cards, the use of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance -owned credit cards is encouraged as a method of payment.
- ii. Personal charges made on FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance -owned credit cards are not allowed.
- iii. No cash advances or ATM transactions are to be made with FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance -owned credit cards.
- iv. Employees are responsible for submitting expense reports to cover their FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance credit card bills promptly. Interest and late charges will be charged to the employee if incurred by the actions of the employee. Employees who violate the above items are subject to the retraction of their card and possible disciplinary actions.

b. Cash Advances

- i. The FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance recognizes that some employees may require monetary advances rather than rely on reimbursement for business expenses on rare occasions. An adequate cash travel advance can be obtained for travel and sustenance expenses if an employee has not been issued a FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance credit card. If you have a FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance credit card, an advance will only be issued if the employee documents the need for substantial cash outlays or are traveling to areas where credit card transactions may be difficult (some overseas destinations, for example). To request an advance, employees must complete a purchase order and have the appropriate approval by the CEO or her/his designated representative. Submit this approval request along with a copy of your Travel Expense Authorization Form.

IV. Expense Guidelines

a. Transportation

The actual cost of transportation on airlines and other public carriers, with

reasonable gratuities and incidental expenses while traveling, will be allowed. The original passenger receipts for transportation are to be attached as evidence to support the amounts included on expense reports as transportation expenses.

i. Airlines

1. Airline travel may be utilized for travel outside of a 300-mile radius of Pensacola.
2. Employees should travel economy class (or economy comfort on international trips). The board President must approve any exceptions.
3. All airline reservations should be made at the lowest available fare. "Lowest available fare" is the least expensive ticket available at the time of the reservation. This fare applies to all carriers within a one-hour span of the requested departure or arrival time.
4. Reservations should be made as far in advance as possible in order to take advantage of discounted fares.
5. Ticket refunds must be reported on expense reports.
6. All airline tickets should be charged to your personal, or a FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance credit card, or directly billed to FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance.
7. Expense reports should clearly indicate the date and the point of departure for each leg of an out-of-town trip, the city visited, and purpose (This information is included on the required travel authorization). Detail on expense reports will assist in verifying the documentation.

- ii. Taxicab/Uber/Lyft/Etc: Taxis should be used sparingly and limited generally to trips between terminals and hotels or when required when distance, time, baggage, weather, or personal safety warrants.

b. Automobiles

- i. Rented automobiles should be used only when other means of transportation are more expensive or are not conveniently available. Their use should be approved in advance. If it is necessary to rent an automobile for business use, staff members should try to rent from car rental agencies where FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance has discount agreements. Make certain that FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's discount is granted from the rental agent when traveling on FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance business.
- ii. Request an intermediate size model or smaller. The President or CEO, in advance of the rental agreement must approve any exception. Automobiles rented for FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance business purposes must include optional insurance coverage.
- iii. If the auto is rented for personal use and FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's discount is obtained, use of the optional coverage is at the staff member's discretion. The FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will not reimburse staff for losses to autos rented for personal use.
- iv. The use of personal automobile on overnight assignments must be approved by the CEO or her/his designated representative and should be permitted only when its use contributes to economy and efficiency in carrying out the work. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance should be notified immediately of any accident which occurs in

connection with the use of a rental or personal automobile for business transportation, on out-of-town assignments or under other circumstances where there is a possibility FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance might be named as a party in any legal action. As a follow-up to this initial call, a written description of events is to be supplied to the CEO or President.

- v. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will reimburse employees for the use of their personal automobile for business purposes. The reimbursement is based on actual mileage more than the employee's normal round trip commuting distance to and from work plus tolls and parking fees. The mileage reimbursement is calculated based on the current IRS mileage rate. Expense reports should clearly indicate destinations and the mileage and tolls involved. The names of staff members sharing in the use of an automobile should be listed in the expense report.
- vi. Automobile Allowances: In the event an employee receives an automobile allowance, mileage expense at the current IRS mileage rate may be claimed when traveling to a destination outside of Santa Rosa or Escambia County.
- c. Non-reimbursable Transportation costs.
 - i. It is FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance policy not to reimburse staff members for transportation costs relating to:
 - 1. Normal commuting from home to work.
 - 2. Expenses for automobile repairs, traffic and parking tickets, theft or damage in an accident.
 - 3. Charges for car rental when personal or public transportation can be used.
 - 4. Charges for first class air fare when economy class is available, or charge for air travel when less expensive transportation is used.
 - 5. Air travel insurance, unless prior approval is given.
- d. Parking
 - i. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will reimburse employees for reasonable parking charges for business purposes whether traveling or local (excluding charges relating to downtown parking for the office).
 - ii. An employee who receives a monthly automobile allowance is not entitled to parking reimbursement locally, except for economy parking at the Pensacola International Airport while on official FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance business.
- e. Lodging
 - i. Reimbursements for lodging expenses must be supported by a receipt. Submission of a credit slip or credit card statement alone is **NOT** sufficient. Receipts should contain the name of the facility, location, date and separate amounts for charges such as meals, room, telephone and valet services.
 - 1. Lodging costs include vehicle valet/parking fees when relevant.
 - 2. Charges to the room for the costs of late-night snacks and cocktails, room service (other than for reimbursable meals as necessary), television, movies, personal toiletry needs, newspapers and other incidentals **are not** reimbursable unless approved by the CEO.
 - 3. Costs incurred while staying at a distant location over a weekend because of work

commitments or because it is cheaper than flying home for the weekend are reimbursable. Excess lodging and other costs incurred over a weekend where the staff member chooses to remain at a distant location, and returning home would be less expensive, are not reimbursable.

4. Charges for hotel accommodations when staying at a residence of friend, family, etc. is not reimbursable.

f. Meals (including related tips)

- i. Meals include business-related luncheons, dinners and breakfasts while out-of-town and in-town. Specific guidelines with respect to meals are as follows:

1. While on out-of-town assignment, employees will be reimbursed for actual reasonable costs of meals. Expenses should be reasonable, customary and prudent based on the area that the employee is traveling in.
2. When a staff member works overtime or on weekends in Pensacola, meal expenses are not reimbursable.
3. The cost of departmental, staff or group luncheons, parties, meetings or other entertainment may be absorbed by FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance but only with advance approval from the President or within approved budgeted amounts.
4. Staff recruitment lunches hosted by the CEO or President with prospective professional staff are reimbursable.

g. Professional Development (training and conferences)

- i. Expenses chargeable to professional development include the cost of registration fees for meetings of business and professional groups. These are usually reimbursable. However, it may be necessary at times for FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance to limit participation in professional development activities. Staff members should therefore consult the CEO before planning to attend a conference or training session.

- ii. With respect to registration fees and other costs of attending conferences, the following guidelines apply:

1. All such attendance must be approved in advance by the CEO. Requests to attend a conference should be made on the basis of benefits to FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance, such as an increased prospect contact, increased knowledge for the participant, professional society contact, etc.
2. Requests to serve as a speaker or discussion leader of conferences, while beneficial and to be encouraged, should be carefully evaluated and selectively accepted.

h. Telephone

- i. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will not reimburse full-time employees for personal cell phone expenses. All full-time employees will have the option of receiving a FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance paid cell phone.

i. Club Memberships

- i. Country and Social Clubs: FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance paid country club and social club memberships must be approved in advance by the FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance Board. These memberships will be limited to employees who demonstrate a business need.

1. Employees must pay all charges in advance and request monthly reimbursement. (An exception will be made for unusually large amounts that are approved in advance by the FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance Board).
2. Extra dues or fees for athletic facilities, locker rental, golf membership, meals, tennis, etc. are not reimbursable.
3. Employees will be reimbursed for club/social dues and related business entertainment expenses upon receipt of a properly completed and approved

expense report.

4. The amount of annual dues that relate to personal club usage will be included in the employee's W-2 form as additional income at year-end as required by IRS guidelines. Federal and social security taxes will be withheld from the employee's pay on a monthly basis based on estimated amounts of personal usage. This amount will be adjusted to reflect actual personal usage at the end of each year.
- ii. Business Clubs, Rotary, etc.: Business clubs, Rotary, etc. memberships must be approved by the FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance Board or by the CEO if within budget. When requested by employees, checks will be issued directly to vendors upon presentation of properly completed and approved expense reports and supporting invoices.
- j. Entertainment
 - i. As a general rule, all anticipated entertainment expenses exceeding \$500 should be pre-approved by the CEO or appropriate President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer, using the Travel and Entertainment Authorization Form. All City and County public dollars received by FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance cannot be used for any entertainment expenses. When submitting an expense report for entertainment expenses (prospect or non-prospect), it is extremely important that all of the required information is documented on the expense report. Incomplete expense reports will be returned to the employee for proper completion.
 1. Business Prospects
 - a. Generally, a business prospect is an individual or representative of an entity currently considering Escambia County for business relocation or convention or tourism business, or someone with whom we wish to do this type of business. The definition may also include certain individuals or representatives or organizations from which we can derive a business-related benefit.
 - b. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance policy requires that business meals and entertainment be directly related to the conducting of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's business. In general, a business meal is "directly related" if four conditions are met:
 - i. If you have more than a general expectation of deriving income, or a specific business benefit, from the meal or entertainment. You are not required to show, however, that income or specific business benefit resulted.
 - ii. If you did in fact engage in business discussions during the meal or entertainment.

- iii. The principal nature of the expense was the conduct of FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance's business.
 - iv. The meal or entertainment expense was for you or your business guests.
 - c. Expenses should be reasonable in all cases. Lavish or expensive entertainment could have a negative impact on the prospect and will not be reimbursed.
- 2. Non-Business Prospects/ Investors/Economic Development Allies
 - a. Business meetings – FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will reimburse employees for reasonable expenses incurred during a business meeting if there is a specific business discussion. Examples of acceptable business meetings, in addition to economic development business prospects, are meetings with current and prospective FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance investors and meetings with board members and other officials and community leaders.
- 3. Special Situations
 - a. Charges for entertaining spouses and/or friends attending conferences are normally non-reimbursable, although there may be some exceptions to this rule. Prior approval by the CEO or President must be obtained.
 - b. Golf, tennis or other athletic club charges for entertaining prospects are a reimbursable expense. Prior approval by the CEO or President must be obtained.
 - c. Subscriptions to or purchases of various professional publications, technical volumes, technical services, etc. must be approved in advance by the CEO or President.
 - d. Costs of candy, flowers or other gratuities for other staff members are normally not reimbursable. These gratuities are personal expressions rather than FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance expenses. They are approved in case of a serious illness, birth of a child, death of an immediate family member, milestone employment anniversaries, etc.
 - e. Other than FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance credit cards, annual credit card fees are not reimbursable.
 - f. Membership fees in travel clubs or in airline sponsored lounge (i.e., Admirals Club, Ambassadors Club, Red Carpet Club, etc.) and frequent flyer clubs are not reimbursable.
 - g. Rental of tuxedos to attend FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance sponsored or endorsed black tie dinners are reimbursable upon CEO or President approval.
 - h. Baby-sitters, kennel fees and house sitters at any time are not reimbursable.
 - i. Clothing damaged at work is not reimbursable.
 - j. Weather-related items (umbrellas, overshoes, overcoats, etc.) are not reimbursable.
 - k. Stolen or misplaced personal property is not reimbursable.

k. Professional Fees and Expenses

- i. As a rule, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will reimburse a management level staff member for memberships in professional societies, provided this request has been approved by the CEO and is included in the budget.

l. Employee Guest Accompaniment

- i. When an employee represents FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance at an after-hour function or must travel away from home for a period to conduct company business, it may or may not be appropriate for a guest to go along. Accordingly, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance provides for the following:
 1. When a business invitation expressly includes a guest, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will assume all reasonable costs for the employee and guest, should the second person actually accompany the employee.
 2. FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will normally provide for transportation, lodging and meals for an employee who attends an after-hours business function or one that takes the employee away from home for an extended period. Should a guest accompany an employee in an unauthorized capacity, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance will not assume transportation or meal expenses for that individual. Since most lodging arrangements accommodate a guest, FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance realizes the guest could share in the company paid lodging.
 3. Except for special circumstances, such as dining with prospects and their guests, most business functions will demand an employee's full attention, and may, in fact, be "inhospitable" to guests. Employees are advised to explore this possibility with their guest before making plans for accompaniment.



***A Proposal of
Service and Commitment***

September 2023



FUNDING SOLUTIONS

Austin, Texas
(512) 917-9946
www.funsol.com



FUNDING SOLUTIONS

**FUNDING SOLUTIONS, INC. PROPOSAL
September 29, 2023**

In Response to:



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
for
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN**

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Case Examples of successful Funding Solutions Clients:

- 1. Gateway Initiative** – South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce, Foley, Alabama
- 2. ALL IN** – Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama, Tuscaloosa, Alabama
- 3. EDGE/HREGI** – Huntsville Madison County Chamber of Commerce, Huntsville Alabama
- 4. Opportunity Stanislaus**, Modesto, California

**FLORIDAWEST
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
for
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CAPITAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN**

A. Proposed Services--Phase One and Phase Two:

- 1. Identify a target timeline for each key aspect of the total project—including but not limited to planning, feasibility, recommendations, solicitation materials development, and fundraising process.**

The Funding Solutions Campaign Timetable, (Appendix A) is a full campaign visual of each phase with detail of the timeline, processes, outcomes, and responsibilities of Funding Solutions Partners, FloridaWest professional staff and FloridaWest Board leadership.

- 2. Define fees and expenses for each of the two phases. Cost should be comprehensive to include but not limited to fees and expenses.**

Funding Solutions fee structure and expenses for Phase One are as follows:

- \$45,000 plus expenses of \$7,000 to include airfare, car rental, hotel, and meals.

Funding Solutions fee structure and expenses for Phase Two are as follows:

- \$21,000 per month for six months plus expenses of \$3,500 per month

- 3. Describe your Phase One fact finding and assessment process. Include how many in-person, one-on-one interviews will be conducted and quantify other fact findings that will be accomplished and a timeline for the process.**

Phase One of the Economic Development Capital Fundraising Campaign will be conducted over a six-week time period beginning on November 2, 2023, and will conclude with the full report completed, submitted, and presented no later than December 12, 2023.

Funding Solutions will conduct a thorough assessment of the FloridaWest organization and programming through the gathering of input from staff, public and private sector leaders throughout Pensacola, Escambia County, and the northwest Florida region. In addition to our experience with public/private partnerships, somewhat similar in structure to FloridaWest, if applicable we will seek “best-in-class” examples of successful organizations nationwide that would support any recommended changes to FloridaWest’s current structure to ensure fundraising campaign success.

Funding Solutions recognizes that every client is unique and will execute several assessment approaches in Phase One to establish and nurture a base of investors for FloridaWest. This three-step process includes:

Step One:

Funding Solutions Engagement:

On-site – Fred Mickelson and Mike Dryden

Off-site support – Tom Mucks and Mike Noonan

Funding Solutions Timeline:

One week on-site

Deliverables:

Due Diligence/Discovery

The importance of Funding Solutions “getting up to speed” is critical before we interface with public and private leadership. Our review of the current FloridaWest programming and outcomes, investor rosters, communication vehicles and current political landscape are among the many areas with which we must have a high level of familiarity. This process will include 20-25 meetings in which Fred Mickelson and Mike Dryden will interface with community leadership and the FloridaWest staff. (Appendix B - Sample Discovery Questionnaire)

Board & Staff Leadership Offsite

A two-hour Discovery Offsite will be conducted with members of the FloridaWest Staff and select Board of Directors to gather additional intel and data for development of the Leadership Consensus Building Questionnaire to be utilized in “Step Two” below.

Step Two:

Funding Solutions Engagement:

On-site – Mike Dryden and Mike Noonan

Off-site support – Tom Mucks and Fred Mickelson

Funding Solutions Timeline:

Two weeks on-site with off-site Zoom meetings if needed.

Deliverables:

Leadership Consensus Building Questionnaire

The Leadership Consensus Building (LCB) Questionnaire is developed from information gathered in the Discovery process and is to be used in the Leadership Consensus Building Interviews. To ensure statistical reliability, Funding Solutions utilizes this survey instrument designed in concert with FloridaWest professional staff and FloridaWest board leadership team.

The LCB Questionnaire is strategically designed with 10-15 multi-point questions that will examine FloridaWest’s board, staff, current programming, future programming, leadership, budget, and future investment opportunities from public and private sector investors. (Appendix C - Sample LCB Questionnaire) The Leadership Consensus Building interviews will involve one-on-one in person confidential discussions with 35 to 40 area leaders.

Leadership Consensus Building Interviews

Leadership Consensus Building Interviews are conducted with current public and private FloridaWest program investors, select non-investors and other important opinion leaders. Confidential Call Reports will be prepared for each one-on-one interview to capture the input received for both current and future use.

Given the lack of a statistically valid number of FloridaWest current private sector investors, we would recommend that the majority of the LCB interviewees target “high value” private sector decision makers.

Step Three:

Funding Solutions Engagement:

Off-site support – Tom Mucks, Fred Mickelson, Mike Dryden, and Mike Noonan

Funding Solutions Timeline:

Two-three weeks off-site

Deliverables:

Leadership Consensus Building Summary Report

The Leadership Consensus Building Summary Report is prepared and presented to leadership based on the Key Findings, Conclusions and, importantly, Funding Solutions Recommendations going forward regarding future programming and proposed budget/fundraising goal.

4. Define your interview process. How will you identify the specific persons you will interview?

Funding Solutions believes that it is critical to conduct thorough interviews with the right mix of investors, select private sector non-investor decision makers and other important opinion leaders in Pensacola, Escambia County, and the northwest Florida region. We also believe that staff input throughout the process is critical as they are the “eyes and ears on the street” engaging with your business and industry on a daily basis.

The identification of persons to be interviewed is a product of “*Step One*” above. Funding Solutions partners engage with staff and each person in the “Discovery” and “Off-site” processes in order to develop a thorough list of interviewees to be selected for the Leadership Consensus Building Interviews.

5. List your expectations of the FloridaWest board and staff during both Phase One assessment/recommendations and Phase Two fundraising process.

Funding Solutions believes in full transparency as it relates to staff and the board expectations in all phases of the campaign process. As noted in the detailed timeline in section A.1. above, the following is a summary of board and staff expectations through Phase One and Phase Two:

Phase One Board Roles/Expectations:

- Offsite participation
- Leadership Consensus Building interviewee input
- Leverage setting up Leadership Consensus Building meetings if needed

Phase One Staff Roles/Expectations:

- Offsite participation
- Leadership Consensus Building interviewee input
- Leadership Consensus Building interview scheduling
- Administrative support as needed

Phase Two Board Roles/Expectations:

- Publicly endorse the campaign's goals, initiatives, and strategy
- Make a financial pledge in support of the campaign
- Assist with and/or leverage contacts with specific investor prospect meetings and closure
- Attend Campaign functions, including the public kick-off and victory celebration

Phase Two Staff Roles/Expectations:

- Participate in all campaign preparation phase activities including; 5-year action plan development, case statement development, prospect list development and marketing/communications plan development
- Strategic participation in prospect investment solicitation meetings
- Assist with prospect investment closure as needed
- Scheduling of prospect solicitation meetings
- Campaign event planning and logistics
- Administrative support as needed

6. State what information and recommendation components/categories will be included in your Phase One assessment report.

As a result of the three-step Phase One Leadership Consensus Building process, Funding Solutions will provide a thorough, statistically valid, and detailed report that will include the following four (4) detailed components/categories:

1. Assignment and Methodology – A detailed breakdown of the assigned scope of work including:
 - a. Target audience for input gathering
 - b. Specific information tested related to existing programming initiatives, including the existing strategic plan
 - c. Review of strategies to position future programming initiative opportunities for FloridaWest's ultimate success moving forward
 - d. Identification of a statistically valid fundraising goal
2. Leadership Input and Key Findings – Funding Solutions will provide detailed breakdown and statistical validation (where applicable) of each individual question in the Leadership Consensus Building Questionnaire. Each question's results will include:
 - a. Key Findings
 - b. Synopses
 - c. Representative Input
3. Recommendations – Based on our over 30 years of experience and in the professional viewpoint of the Funding Solutions partners, we will provide detailed recommendations regarding:
 - a. Board structure and development
 - b. Staff structure and development
 - c. Current FloridaWest Strategic Plan
 - d. Future FloridaWest programming initiative opportunities
 - e. Phase Two
 - i. Recommendation to proceed including alternate strategy
 - f. List of recommended Campaign Leadership
 - g. Phase Two investment campaign goal

4. Appendix
 - a. Leadership Interviewees
 - b. Leadership Consensus Building Questionnaire
 - c. Other documents as deemed appropriate

7. **At the conclusion of the Phase One assessment/recommendations process, will you share with us an individual written report of input provided by each interviewee and the dollar amount they indicated they would consider investing in the campaign?**

In light of Funding Solutions' belief in full transparency with its clients, all individual Discovery and Leadership Consensus Building reports will be given to FloridaWest for their records. It is our belief and policy that the full reports are the confidential property of FloridaWest for its current and future organizational growth.

8. **How will you determine who you will recommend to be recruited to partner with us/endorse the funding campaign? How is campaign leadership determined? When is campaign leadership recruited?**

The foundation for any successful campaign is having a clear, concise, actionable and results oriented program of work that is business and industry driven and strategically developed to meet the needs of those businesses and industries. Campaign Leadership is the second critical element of a successful fundraising campaign in order to secure the required investor dollars to meet the budget.

How will you determine who you will recommend to be recruited to partner with us/endorse the funding campaign?

The campaign leadership team is identified throughout every step of Phase One. A list of recommended community leaders will be assembled from all those involved in each of the three steps of Phase One: staff, board, Discovery interviewees and LCB interviewees. This list will be part of the LCB Report.

How is campaign leadership determined?

With involvement from the board and staff, a prioritized leadership prospect list is developed and individual recruitment strategies are put into place.

When is campaign leadership recruited?

Leadership recruitment begins early in Phase Two once the program of work has been finalized. The leadership recruitment process allows for buy-in and validation of the new program of work. (Appendix D – Campaign Leadership Roles)

Funding Solutions will recruit a Campaign Leadership Team that includes Pensacola/Escambia County's key private and public leaders. Based on the current makeup of FloridaWest's board leadership and investor structure, the leadership structure would likely consist of Campaign Co-Chairs (one public sector and one private sector; subject to change) who will be supported by a larger, 10–12-person Campaign Council. This group will endorse and validate the new program of work as well as provide oversight and support to Funding Solutions and FloridaWest staff throughout the campaign.

9. What is your process in terms of identifying prospects and once solicited, how do you follow-up-to-closure for each solicitation?

The process of prospect identification, research, cultivation, solicitation, and investment closure is that of an art and a science. Funding Solutions prides itself on our track record of successfully assisting clients in engaging leadership and investors in order to meet their campaign goal.

1. Prospect Identification – Identifying prospects can be achieved through a number of valuable local resources:
 - a. Current FloridaWest investor/members
 - b. Board and staff networks
 - c. Local organization lists; Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Association, etc.
 - d. Business Journal “Book of Lists”
 - e. Internet searches
2. Prospect Research – Research of prospects is critical in order to identify the correct decision maker within a company but also in order to eliminate prospects that do not have the propensity or capacity to support the goals and mission of FloridaWest. Prospect research is conducted in two major ways:
 - a. Board and staff market knowledge
 - b. Internet research
3. Prospect List – Once a prospect list has been compiled, Funding Solutions then conducts a next-level proprietary prospect prioritization process called “*Rate & Rank*”
 - a. *Rate & Rank* – This process consists of bringing together a group of community leaders in a one-time closed-door confidential session to review the prospect list. Outcomes of this session are:
 - i. Contact identification/clarification
 - ii. Investment request amount
 - iii. Leadership/Steward assistance for door opening and investment closure
 - iv. Additional prospect identification
4. Prospect Cultivation – A number of prospects will likely be familiar with FloridaWest and its current goals and mission. However, there will also likely be a number of individuals who are not as familiar. Specific strategies and cultivation meetings will be set for each individual investor in order to get them familiar with the organization and bring them along to a clear understanding of the benefit of their investment in FloridaWest. This could include engagement and leverage from staff, board, and campaign leadership as appropriate.
5. Solicitation – The solicitation of a prospective investor is the culmination of all the previous steps. An effective and successful solicitation meeting includes:
 - a. Solid understanding of the company and its role in the community
 - b. Knowledge and background of the individual(s) in the meeting including their authority in the decision-making process
 - c. An adequate location and sufficient time for the meeting
 - d. Clear strategy and presentation on how FloridaWest program of work benefits their company – Clear Return on Investment
 - e. Specific request for an investment dollar amount – Make the ask!
 - f. Clear follow up strategy and timeline

6. Follow-up-to-closure – Timely follow up to solicitation meetings is critical and requires good strategy and planning:
 - a. First, as stated in 5.e. above; communicate a clear follow up strategy and timeline with the prospect prior to ending the meeting
 - b. Post solicitation follow up
 - i. Funding Solutions & Staff
 1. Phone, text, and email
 2. Follow up meetings as needed
 - ii. Leadership – Steward assignments
 1. Phone, text, and email
 2. Follow up meetings as needed
 - iii. Leverage dates
 1. Key investor meetings
 2. Campaign functions/celebration

10. Describe the campaign materials that will need to be produced to support a successful campaign.

Campaign materials are also an important element in the successful execution of a campaign. Campaign materials that Funding Solutions produces includes:

1. Case Statement – The Case Statement will represent FloridaWest’s value proposition to investors by spelling out clearly defined and measurable objectives for each initiative line item. Moving forward to execution of this plan will result in quantifiable outcomes that will provide clear return on investment to investors, public sector partners, businesses and industry throughout Pensacola and Escambia County. Funding Solutions will make recommendations from the outcomes of Phase One on program initiatives from the existing strategic plan, as well as possible new initiative areas to meet the needs of business and industry. (Sample Case Statements included with this RFP package)
 - a. Funding Solutions produces a hard copy version of the Case Statement for investor meetings as well as an interactive digital version with active links. The digital version can be sent to prospective investors as well as used in investor presentations.
 - b. Case Statement is produced in house by the Funding Solutions team and our graphic designer in collaboration with FloridaWest staff. Printing is, however, outsourced. Printing cost is an expense covered by FloridaWest. The estimated cost of production of the Case Statement is \$2,000. The printing cost can be absorbed as in-kind investment by a local printing company.
2. Campaign form letters, emails and other communication documents are produced by Funding Solutions partners in collaboration with FloridaWest staff.
3. Management Oversight Report – The Management Oversight Report is a Funding Solutions campaign tracking spreadsheet. This spreadsheet tracks the pending, committed and investors that declined with dollar amounts, applicable dates, notes, etc. This document is updated regularly and shared with staff and leadership weekly throughout the campaign.
4. Marketing and Communications Plan – Funding Solutions will develop an all-encompassing marketing and communications plan for the campaign. The campaign will

consider FloridaWest's existing marketing strategy and build on and blend with the existing marketing program.

5. Investor Relations Plan – As an integral part of the communications strategy, Funding Solutions will implement an Investor Relations plan that will ensure adequate communication, information, and maximum exposure of results/ROI to the investors.
6. Execution Plan – Funding Solutions will develop and assist in the implementation of a clear and concise Execution Plan for the new five-year program of work to include:
 - a. An Execution Oversight Committee consisting of key volunteer leaders will be identified and recruited. This team will provide ongoing leadership and oversight for the total plan metrics and outcomes
 - b. A Results/Outcomes matrix based on the expected outcomes set forth in the Execution Plan for all initiatives to ensure all key milestones are tracked, achieved and communicated with investors to ensure full transparency
 - c. Documents outlining committee structure, planned actions and reporting format as needed

11. What happens if the campaign timeline needs to be extended to raise the funds needed?

With Funding Solutions over 30 years of experience we have a solid understanding of the time and manpower it requires to fully execute and complete a successful campaign. Armed with the knowledge and experience of having worked in dozens of markets of varying sizes, we feel confident in the proposed timeline submitted to FloridaWest as part of this RFP.

12. Will you need access to office space, computer and printer equipment and internet?

Funding Solutions requests a designated office area that is suitable for regular office type work and storage of documents and files. FS Partners have access to laptop computers; however, printer, internet and general office supplies will need to be supplied by FloridaWest.

13. Will you locate campaign consulting staff on-site in the community for the duration of the fundraising campaign? What are your housing/lodging expectations?

Funding Solutions Partners would commute to Pensacola for on-site weeks with FloridaWest. Airfare, hotel, car rental and meals would be a reimbursable expense paid back to Funding Solutions by FloridaWest via a detailed expense report for all reimbursable charges. Funding Solutions does make every attempt to work with staff and leadership to secure in-kind arrangements for these expenses in order to alleviate costs.

14. Do you have the capacity to accomplish both the Phase One and Phase Two process to completion given your other client commitments?

Funding Solutions has the capacity and gives our full commitment to successfully complete both phases of the campaign. We go to great lengths to work with new and existing clients and manage our FS Partner calendar in order to deliver the services and outcomes promised. As a small firm of four Partners, we maintain a client load of two clients at a time. This allows for designated partner attention to each client while allowing all four Partners to keep an active role in both clients.

15. What post-campaign services do you provide?

Funding Solutions likes to use the mantra and instill within our clients, “the fundraising never ends.” We are a committed partner with each of our clients far beyond our contract terms. Funding Solutions has successfully worked with many of our clients for 10, 20 and now 30 plus years! Two of those critical processes post campaign are the Investor Relations and Execution Plans discussed in 10.5 and 10.6 above. To ensure FloridaWest long-term success, Funding Solutions Partners provide:

- a. Regular communication/follow up
- b. Your “on-call partner”
- c. Site visits
- d. Investor Relations Audits
- e. Execution Plan Audits

B. Summary of the Proposer’s Qualifications—please provide the following:

1. Short one-paragraph summaries of three other assessment and fundraising efforts of a similar nature.

Gateway Initiative – South Baldwin County, AL
2018-2022

Goal: \$1,250,000

Raised: \$1,453,000

The five-year initiative kicked-off in January 2018 as the "Gateway Initiative, One Voice, OneVision, Moving South Baldwin Forward." Three programs of work were initiated (Talent Development and Recruitment, Community Betterment and Advocacy, Existing Business Growth and Retention), each with a specific mission, detailed objectives, and projected outcomes, all guided by some of the top business minds of the region. In July of 2019, leadership from the South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce and the Coastal Alabama Business Chamber came together to expand the programming model. Gateway is funded through private businesses and public entity investment. Collaboration between businesses, educational organizations and local municipalities within the Tri-City area is at an all-time high, and largely due to the influence of the Gateway Initiative.

(Gateway Initiative Case Statement included with this RFP package – Digital Version Only)

2023-2027

Goal: \$2,500,000

Raised: \$2,500,000

In January of 2023, the Gateway Initiative launched its new five-year program work around three initiative areas: Workforce Development & Recruitment, Entrepreneurship & Existing Business Assistance and Pro-Business Advocacy & Legislative Action. This new program is emphasized by the impending groundbreaking of a 140-acre Workforce Development Campus. This public/private \$210 million project will include mixed-use housing for 2,000 students / interim workers, academic and professional development programs offered by the University of South Alabama, Coastal Alabama Community College, and Auburn University, a 400-child extended hour day care center, a business innovation incubator, and a state-of-the-art transportation hub.

Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama – Tuscaloosa, AL

2013-2017 *Working as One*

Goal: \$2,500,000

Raised: \$3,000,000

In 2012 the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama launched its first five-year program of work, *Working as One*, that was focused on five program areas: Education and Workforce Readiness, Retail and Commercial Growth, Leadership and Community Engagement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation and Public Policy and Advocacy. Much was accomplished over this five-year period including the launch of the nationally acclaimed workforce development program, “West Alabama Works.”

2018-2022 *The Next Level Initiative*

Goal: \$3,500,000

Raised: \$3,500,000+

Building upon the success and momentum of the *Working As 1* strategic plan and capital campaign, the Chamber recognized the need and opportunity to take its ambitious efforts to the “next level.” Thus, in 2017, *The Next Level Initiative* was launched. This new five-year strategic planning process resulted in even greater involvement from business and community leaders and led to more than \$3.5 million of local investment for the Chamber’s updated strategic initiatives; Workforce Readiness and Quality Education, Diversified Economic Growth, Community Engagement & Quality of Place and Public Policy and Business Advocacy. Like the *Working As 1* plan, the accomplishments of *The Next Level Initiative* had a lasting impact throughout the region.

2023-2027 *All In*

Goal: \$4,000,000

Raised: \$4,000,000

Continuing to build on the significant success of the previous two efforts, in 2023 the Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama launched its third five-year program, *ALL IN*. This new effort brings refocused strategies around four initiative areas; Business-Driven Workforce and Talent Development, Improved Quality of Life, Improve Economic Vitality, Public Policy & Advocacy for Stronger Business Growth.

(*ALL IN* Case Statement included with this RFP package)

EDGE Initiative - Huntsville Madison County Chamber of Commerce – Huntsville, AL

1998-2003

In 1998 Funding Solutions in partnership with Huntsville Madison County Chamber of Commerce developed the EDGE initiative. The focus was business recruitment, retention, marketing, and community development.

2004-2010

Huntsville Regional Economic Growth Initiative (HREGI)

Goal: \$7,500,000

Raised: \$7,500,000

The Huntsville Regional Economic Growth Initiative (HREGI) focus was to create 2,500 new jobs with \$150 million in new investment each year for five years.

2010-2015

Huntsville Regional Growth Initiative (HREGI)

Goal: \$10,000,000

Raised: \$10,000,000

Funding Solutions partnered with the Huntsville Chamber for the third campaign. Focus of HREGI included the following.

- Growth of existing business
- Targeted recruitment
- Workforce
- Image enhancement
- Investor Relations

Important goals included the creation of 3,000 new jobs each year and to announce \$200 million annual investment in the region.

2. Submit one concise example. Consultant may redact the name of the party for which work was completed.

Opportunity Stanislaus – Modesto, CA

Following completion of the Funding Solutions Phase One process there was a clear message of willingness by business and industry to provide financial support for workforce skill set programming if business and industry set the standards for such skill set training and had policy oversight of the curriculum. Therefore, in 2016 the board leadership of its predecessor organization, the Stanislaus Business Alliance, made a bold move: after 30 years of operations, the leadership changed the structure of the organization to become a private sector-led organization and renamed it Opportunity Stanislaus. The word “opportunity” was targeted to mean opportunity for all, opportunity for a better job and a better quality of life for all citizens. Funding Solutions crafted the plan based on “Best-In-Class” analysis of similar organizations around the nation and employed our experience and knowledge to lead the funding campaign in order to launch Opportunity Stanislaus. We delved into unknown territory, creating new programs aligning with the needs expressed by potential investors and raised \$5 million over 5 years to support those needs. The five-year plan focused on four initiatives:

- Continue and expand Business and Industry Development
- Establish Demand-Driven Workforce Readiness Skill Set Training
- Increase Marketing and Messaging
- Emphasize Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Early in the execution of the plan, additional emphasis was placed on industries dire need for employee new hires who had manufacturing skill sets. Opportunity Stanislaus successfully launched VOLT Institute, an industry-led training center to help build advanced manufacturing skills, which were highly demanded by all business investors. Based on immediate 90% plus job placement of graduating students, VOLT then expanded curriculum to include leadership training, accessible and applicable to all industries. Also initiated were boot camps in PLC training, agile project management, and food safety.

Opportunity Stanislaus also grew its offerings at Valley Sierra Small Business Development Center and received local, regional, and state awards and recognition in the process. It

continued to launch talent development programs to serve the ever-growing needs of local business. Above all, leadership listened to employer concerns, developed programming, and added quality staff professionals in response to growing demand for their services. Based on the first plan's resounding success, Opportunity Stanislaus again retained Funding Solutions to conduct a Phase One and Phase Two process, write a plan and lead a campaign for the next five years. During April and May 2021, the Funding Solutions team conducted 94 Phase One interviews with local business leaders, elected officials, and other important opinion leaders to get a sense of how Opportunity Stanislaus had performed, and what the organization should focus on going forward. More than 80 percent of the investor interviewees recognized and could quantify either direct or indirect return on their investments. In 2022, as a result of this process, the new ***Opportunity Stanislaus-Next Level Together*** plan was launched along with a new five-year \$9,000,000 investment goal.

The *Next Level Together* plan consists of five initiatives:

- Expand Volt Institute
- Lead Business-Driven Talent Development
- Improve Economic Vitality in Our County
- Grow Local Business
- Drive Public Policy & Advocacy for Stronger Business Growth

Each of the initiatives was strategically crafted with a specific mission, detailed objectives, and specific outcomes; all endorsed by top community leaders. The campaign raised over \$11,500,000, far exceeding the initial goal.

In the past year since the launch of Opportunity Stanislaus' ***Next Level Together***, the organization, its staff and board leadership have made great strides towards its programmatic goals, continue to provide direct return on investment for their public and private sector investors and continue to carry out the Funding Solutions mantra of "Never Stop Raising Money"!

(*Next Level Together* Case Statement included with this RFP package)

- 3. Resume or CV of consultant's key individuals who will undertake the engagement. If any of these individuals were not part of the example provided, please state why the specific person is being recommended.**

There are many areas of expertise among the Funding Solutions team including development of key strategic plans, consensus and passion building with leadership, fundraising, marketing, and leadership and staff development and training. Perhaps most important to our clients, the Funding Solutions team of experts are successful in asking for and obtaining investment for our clients.

In two words, "We deliver".

Funding Solutions has a successful track record in setting and achieving the goals of our clients. Our extensive corporate background allows us to apply sound business principles to the non-profit arena. We have a passion for our work, and we can instill passion among leadership and others involved with FloridaWest. Funding Solutions has an accomplished team of individuals, who are committed to our clients and accountable as a funding partner.

Our partners participate in worldwide non-profit organizations and have the expertise to deal with complex issues and bring success to our clients. We are experts in marketing and board and staff leadership development.

THOMAS P. MUCKS

President

As founder of Funding Solutions in 1997, Tom has successfully directed more than 100 economic development fundraising initiatives totaling over \$400 million. These include fundraising campaigns in Tuscaloosa and Decatur, Alabama, Modesto and Ontario California, and Vancouver Washington.

A professional with over 35 years of combined experience in sales, marketing and fundraising, Tom has made over 10,000 solicitation calls to business and public leaders. He has helped organizations develop cutting-edge programs to enhance job growth and quality of life in large and small communities throughout the United States.

Tom has a successful track record of assisting chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and other non-profit organizations to develop long-term strategies, productive leadership, and success in fundraising. Tom has extensive experience and success in working with top business and public leaders to form a consensus toward a set of common goals.

Through Tom's leadership, Funding Solutions has become a reputable and nationally recognized economic development and fundraising firm. Tom has established a team of experienced partners who collaborate on each client's project from start to finish. With the expertise of Tom and the Funding Solutions team, each strategic plan is created based on the individual needs of each client.

Tom is an active member of several organizations including the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Chamber of Commerce Association of Alabama, Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives, and Florida Association of Chamber Professionals.

Prior to establishing Funding Solutions, Tom was a senior partner for The Suddes Group, a pioneer in economic development fundraising. Tom earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin. He and his wife, Marsha, live in Austin, Texas.

MICHAEL P. DRYDEN

Senior Partner

Mike has over 30 years of combined experience in sales, marketing, and commercial real estate with over 20 of those years working with institutional nonprofit and economic development organizations. He has been a member of the management team on 38 campaigns ranging from \$250,000 to over \$10,000,000 for chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and various non-profit organizations.

Mike brings extensive knowledge of campaign strategy, organization, and management from his broad experience in all phases of the campaign. He has made over 500 leadership assessment interviews as well as conducted thousands of investment solicitations with individuals of wealth, public, private and foundation leadership.

Mike began his career in development with The Suddes Group before joining the Resource Development Group as a Principal. He served as Development Director for The Salvation Army in Fort Lauderdale, FL where he managed a team that executed the daily development, marketing, and volunteer operations for the organization. In addition, he successfully directed an \$8 million capital campaign. In other business endeavors, Mike founded, built, and sold a commercial and multi-family property management business.

Mike earned a degree in Business Marketing from the University of Dayton in 1992. He has held a Real Estate Broker license in the State of Florida for over 15 years. Mike is on the Board of First Coast Crime Stoppers in Jacksonville, FL as well as a Board Advisor to Prevention Plus Wellness. He previously served as a Board member of the Broward County Association of Fundraising Professionals. Mike resides in Jacksonville Beach, Florida with his wife, Beth, and three sons: Taggert, Tyler & Baret.

H. FRED MICKELSON

Senior Partner

With more than 30 years of management and top officer responsibility in the business community, and concurrent experience as the top volunteer leader of 14 community, state and national non-profit organizations, Fred, Senior Partner with Funding Solutions for nearly two decades, brings a unique blend of business and non-profit acumen to any forum.

During the middle 1990's Fred placed emphasis on enhancing community quality of life through economic development and was appointed by California's Governor through the Secretary of Trade and Commerce on 3 occasions to select and head a California "Red Team" to retain or recruit major corporations in California. He and his handpicked private and public-sector team achieved the objective in each instance.

In his capacity as Chairman of the Board of the Orange County Business Council in California, Fred led the initiative in 1994-1995 to raise over \$8 million for economic development in Orange County in 10 months—during the middle of the internationally publicized Orange County bankruptcy. Fred has raised millions of dollars for worthy projects over his career.

Fred is in high demand as a speaker, trainer and group facilitator and is nationally certified as both an Arbitrator and a Mediator. Fred is an Advisory Board member for 3 software companies in the USA. He is a Past Chairman of the National Board of Directors of the American Cancer Society, and a member of the Governing Council of the Union International Contra le Cancer (International Union Against Cancer) with a global reach in over 180 countries.

Fred earned B.S. degrees in Economics and Administrative Science from Pepperdine University. His record of business achievement and significant contributions to business and non-profit communities has been recognized by the Marquis *Who's Who in the West*, *Who's Who in America*, and *Who's Who in the World* as recorded in its 1994 through current editions. Fred and his wife, Joan, have two children and reside on their Triple C Ranch in Gaston, Oregon.

MICHAEL S. NOONAN

Senior Partner

Mike is an executive who focuses on the growth and leadership of organizations while maintaining the bottom line. Mike spent ten years as Vice President-Investor Relations with the Orange County (CA) Business Council where he provided leadership in fundraising and ongoing investor relations for approximately 100 companies, representing \$1.5 million in annual revenue. Mike also led the development of a 34-city network within Orange County in a regional business retention effort.

Mike also has had a distinguished career with Pacific Bell (now AT&T), holding executive positions in San Francisco and Southern California. Serving as Vice President of External Affairs with Pacific Bell, his responsibilities included managing a budget of \$2 million and directing a contributions budget PAC of over \$200,000 annually. Mike also served as chair of the Orange County Chamber of Commerce fundraising committee that successfully raised more than \$8 million in pledges in 1995.

As a senior partner with Funding Solutions, Mike has developed and led successful campaigns in Alabama, California, and Indiana and brings a strong “hands on” understanding of the importance of building lasting relationships with corporate investors.

Over the past 10 years Mike has led Funding Solutions’ “Best in Class” research and analysis efforts, providing clients with valuable benchmarking data for their use in developing their own successful programs of work and maximizing their fundraising potential.

Mike is a native Californian, earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business and Marketing from Whittier College. He and his wife, Nanette, live in northern San Diego, California.

4. Three references of prior work, including the name of the organization, contact name, phone number, and email address.

Jim Page

Executive Vice President, MartinFederal Consulting, LLC
Special Counsel, Funding Solutions, Inc.

President & CEO, Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama (Former)

Phone: 256-382-4315

Cell: 205-657-6300

Email: jim.page@martinfed.com

Donna Watts

President & CEO, South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce & Gateway Initiative (AL)

Phone: 251-943-3291

Cell: 251-609-1173

Email: donna@mylocalchamber.net

Dave White

Chief Executive Officer, Opportunity Stanislaus (CA)

Phone: 209-422-6432

Cell: 209-483-4772

Email: dwhite@opportunitystanislaus.com

5. Any additional information proposer wishes to convey that illustrate proposer's understanding and knowledge of the subject matter of FloridaWest's work effort.

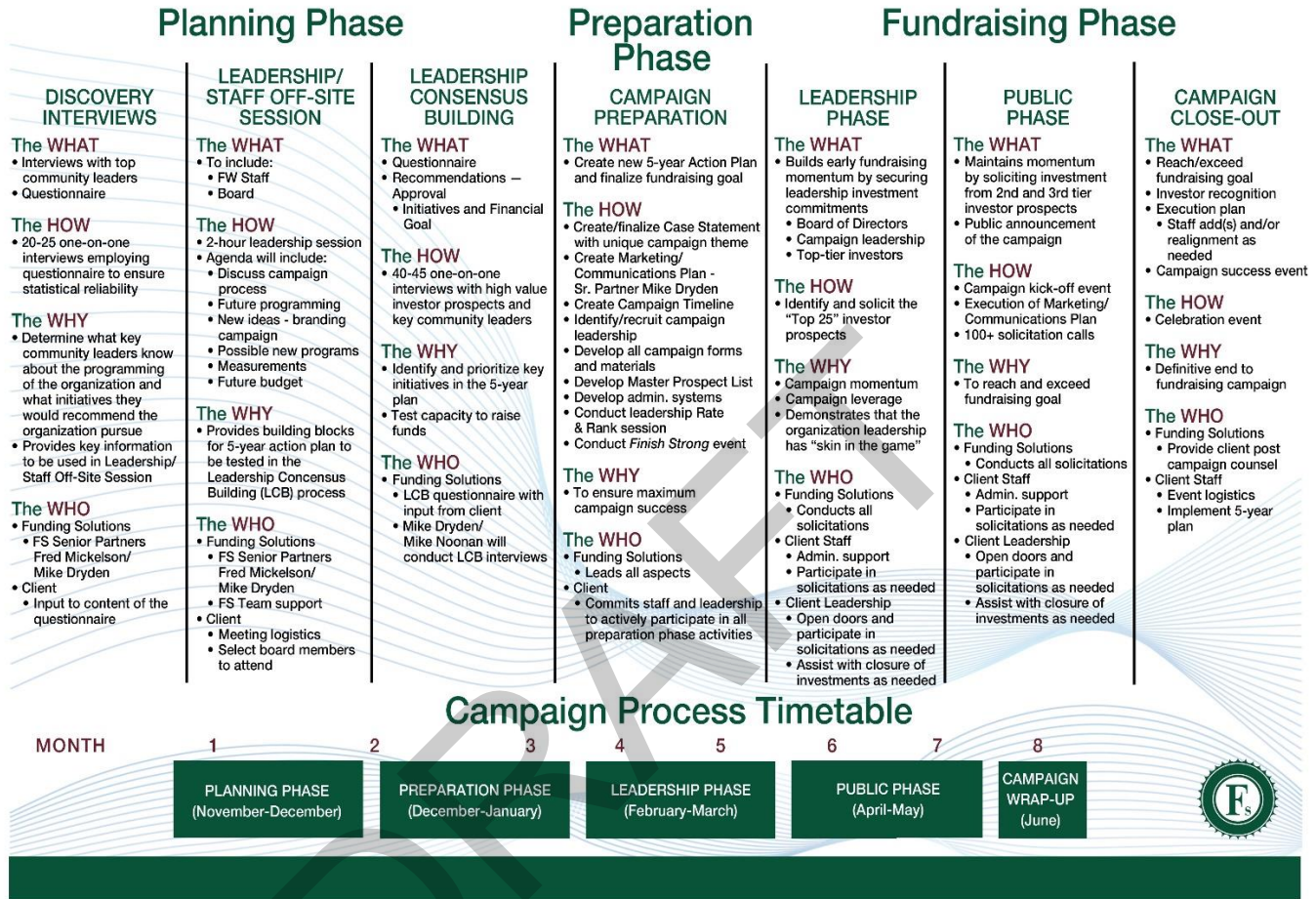
Funding Solutions methodology and proposal is to be the firm of choice by FloridaWest to conduct a Leadership Consensus Building process to develop a preliminary strategy and position funding for a capital campaign to engage the private and public sectors to invest their time and resources, and to raise funds for enhanced programs. Funding Solutions will have the responsibility and accountability to develop, with FloridaWest, the overall campaign strategy including development of FloridaWest Case Statement and complete the leadership consensus building process for the proposed funding goal.

Funding Solutions, in partnership with staff and key volunteer leadership, will develop the overall fundraising plan including the identification of investment partners, making the professional requests, and closing prospects. Our partners have extensive experience asking thousands of business leaders to invest in the programs and projects of our clients. This approach allows FloridaWest Leadership, working in partnership with Funding Solutions, to act as passionate advocates to encourage potential investors to invest in FloridaWest programming.

The philosophy behind Funding Solutions' record of success is to be hands-on and involve all our partners in every project. Funding Solutions is an Austin, Texas based firm with regional offices in California, Oregon, and Florida. Together, Funding Solutions partners have over ninety years of experience in strategic planning and fundraising and together have been successful in raising over \$400 million. We are experts in developing key strategies that evoke passion among business and community leaders and have a record of reaching and exceeding campaign financial goals for our clients.



Funding Solutions Campaign Timetable



APPENDIX B

OPPORTUNITY STANISLAUS
DISCOVERY INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

OVERARCHING PERSPECTIVE

1. What are the positives that make Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Valley Region special?
2. What is the political climate in Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Valley Region as it relates to the support of the business community?
3. What are the economic development weaknesses/areas that need to be improved in Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Valley Region?
4. What are the business, workforce, and community development opportunities you see in Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Valley Region that should be leveraged in the future and who do you feel is best able to lead a specific opportunity you name?
5. From your perspective, what would be a “Game Changer” Signature project/development (a “home run”) for Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Region?

OPPORTUNITY STANISLAUS ORGANIZATION

6. We are interested in your level of awareness of the activities/initiatives of the Opportunity Stanislaus Organization. First, your overall perceptions of the Organization

Board and staff leadership of Opportunity
Stanislaus _____

Over-arching value of initiatives and services of Opportunity Stanislaus to the communities in the Stanislaus County and Northern Joaquin Valley Region

Value of initiatives and services of Opportunity Stanislaus for you/your organization/organizations you know (specific examples of Opportunity Stanislaus response to your needs/value added services to your organization/staff would be most helpful)

Viability going forward of the current Opportunity Stanislaus private sector organizational structure

7. What do you see are key challenges/barriers faced by the Opportunity Stanislaus organization?

COVID-19

8. How has your business/organization been impacted by COVID19?
9. What are your key challenges/barriers right now?
10. What specific role(s) should the Opportunity Stanislaus Organization fulfill in COVID-19 economic development recovery?
11. What specific role(s) should Stanislaus County Government fulfill in COVID-19 economic development recovery?
12. What specific role(s) should Individual Cities in Stanislaus County fulfill in COVID-19 economic development recovery?

NEXT FIVE YEARS PROGRAM INITIATIVES

13. If you could recommend one key thing the Opportunity Stanislaus organization should change/do in the future—what would that be?
14. The Opportunity Stanislaus organization is investigating embarking on its new five year program of work that may include such initiatives as: Expansion of VOLT Institute Trade School (VOLT) training/program deliverables; workforce education/development/readiness; business growth (retention/expansion of existing businesses); recruitment of new “next step up” retail/commercial; development of new industrial sites; public policy/business advocacy; economic development; marketing/branding of the area; business education; entrepreneurship/innovation; business recruitment; international investment/trade. Are these areas you want your Opportunity Stanislaus organization to lead? Please rate each area listed on the next page.

	Unimportant	Somewhat <u>Important</u>	Very <u>Important</u>	Extremely <u>Important</u>	<u>Force Rank</u>
Expansion of VOLT Programming	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Workforce Education/ Development/Readiness	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Existing Business Growth	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Recruitment of "Next Step Up" Retail/Commercial	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Development of New Industrial Sites	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Public Policy/Business Advocacy	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
New Business Recruitment/ Economic Development	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Marketing/Branding of the Area	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Business Education	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Entrepreneurship/ Innovation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
International Investment/ Trade	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Are there other economic/community development areas you would like the Opportunity Stanislaus organization to consider leading?

APPENDIX C

OPPORTUNITY STANISLAUS

LEADERSHIP CONSENSUS BUILDING QUESTIONNAIRE

BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORK—PAST AND FUTURE

1. What do you see as the greatest challenge to our regions ability to grow jobs, improve our workforce, and ensure a great quality of life in Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Valley Region?
2. What do you see as the greatest challenges to Opportunity Stanislaus ability to recruit new and retain existing business and industry here in Stanislaus County and the Northern San Joaquin Valley Region?
3. Do you feel that Opportunity Stanislaus has a role to play in the Stanislaus County/Northern San Joaquin region ability to help educate and develop our existing workforce, and to recruit new talent to improve and grow our available workforce pool?
If yes, what role would you suggest they lead and/or partner?
4. What other organizations do you feel should be involved to ensure a successful workforce development effort in the Stanislaus County/Northern San Joaquin Valley Region?
5. What is your understanding and appreciation of the successes and impact of Opportunity Stanislaus current program of work throughout the county and region? *(Please be specific)*
6. If you are currently an investor of Opportunity Stanislaus, what has been the specific ROI of Opportunity Stanislaus programming to your business/organization?
If you are not a current investor what would a specific ROI look like to your business/organization? *(Please be specific)*
7. As an investor or Board member, how well does Opportunity Stanislaus communicate its mission, plan of work, activities, and accomplishments? And how could Opportunity Stanislaus better communicate with investors and board members? *(If not an investor or Board member, move on to question #8)*
8. As a non-investor or Board member, how well is the Opportunity Stanislaus mission, plan of work, activities and accomplishments understood by you as a community leader and by the broader business community? And how could Opportunity Stanislaus better communicate with you and the broader business community?

COVID-19

9. How has your business/organization been impacted by COVID-19?
10. What are your key COVID-19 related challenges/barriers right now?
11. What specific role(s) should the **Opportunity Stanislaus Organization** fulfill in COVID-19 economic development recovery?
12. What specific role(s) should **Stanislaus County Government** fulfill in COVID-19 economic development recovery?
13. What specific role(s) should **Individual Cities in Stanislaus County** fulfill in COVID-19 economic development recovery?

OUR VISION

The Leadership of Opportunity Stanislaus is seeking input from our investors, business, industry, and other community leaders, as we begin to develop a new 2022-2026 five-year initiative to enhance workforce development, business and industry growth and quality of life in our Stanislaus County/Northern San Joaquin Valley communities.

14. Please help us in assessing the importance to your business/organization in the following areas of business, industry, and community development throughout the Stanislaus County/Northern San Joaquin Valley area.

--Check the appropriate column for each of the 8 areas:

(Extremely Important; Very Important; Somewhat Important; Unimportant)

--Then Force Rank the areas 1-8 (your opinion as to which area is #1, #2, #3, #4, #5, #6, #7, #8)

	Unimportant	Somewhat <u>Important</u>	Very <u>Important</u>	Extremely <u>Important</u>	<u>Force Rank</u>
Expand VOLT Training/Programming	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lead Industry Workforce Education/ Development/Readiness	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lead Existing Business/Industrial Growth & Retention	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lead in the Recruitment of New Business/ Industry	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Convene Partners and Lead a Coalition to Focus on High Level "Game Changer" Type Projects	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Partner with Other Organizations To Provide Solutions to Community Issues Hampering the Region's Well-Being	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Lead Industry/Business Advocacy & Public Policy Issues	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Partner with Appropriate Agencies to Achieve Marketing/Branding of the Region	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Any other areas of Economic Development that Opportunity Stanislaus should consider leading/partnering?	_____				

15. Please identify 5 or 6 individual/organizational leaders in the county/region that, if supportive and engaged in this plan, would result in a greater likelihood of success in achieving a meaningful long-term vision.

OUR RESOURCES

16. Opportunity Stanislaus currently has a separately funded budget for its on-going successful programming. The Opportunity Stanislaus current budget is \$1.2 million per year (not including project specific foundation/government grants). In view of offering a substantially increased scope of work as part of this new five-year plan, and looking at comparative five-year action programs of peer organizations in California, *** do you believe the current \$1.2 million public/private sector annual investment could be increased, through additional support, to \$2.0 million per year?

***For comparison purposes—similar business/community development programs from peer organizations in **annual dollars**:

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| • Fresno Economic Development Corporation | \$1.9 million |
| • Kern Economic Development Corporation | \$1.0 million |
| • Greater Sacramento Economic Council | \$2.5 million |
-

17. If a concise plan of action is developed addressing the areas of importance that you helped us identify in question #9 preceding, and a specific results measurement process is in place, can we count on your financial support?

If yes—at what **annual** level? (For forecast estimates only-**no commitment today**)

\$2,500+ ____ \$5,000+ ____ \$10,000+ ____ \$25,000+ ____ \$50,000+ ____ \$75,000 ____

FloridaWest Campaign Leadership



Campaign Leadership Roles

Campaign Co-Chairs:

- Publicly endorse the campaign’s goals, initiatives, and strategy.
- Agree to the use of your name and title on campaign stationery, brochures, and other campaign materials.
- Make a financial pledge in support of the campaign. This represents your commitment to the success of the campaign and will motivate and inspire others to invest.
- Host a breakfast or lunch function as a public endorsement of the campaign, to broaden the base of involvement and to leverage others to invest. (If requested and as available)
- Assist with and or leverage your contacts with specific investor prospects as deemed appropriate.
- Attend Campaign functions, including the public kick-off and victory celebration.

Campaign Cabinet – All of the above, plus:

- Assist in prospect identification, including rating their willingness and capacity to financially support the efforts.
- Assist in developing the solicitation strategy for potential program investors, including those individuals, companies, and organizations with whom you have a personal or professional relationship.
- If needed, assist the campaign coordinator in securing appointments with selected campaign prospects and/or providing appropriate follow-up to encourage the prospect to commit their financial support.
- Attend regular Campaign update meetings to provide input, feedback, and guidance in response to the current status of committed, pending, and declined investments.
- Work with the Campaign Chairs and campaign staff to ensure the ultimate success of the campaign and realization of the funding goal.



GATEWAY INITIATIVE

2023-2027



Workforce
Development &
Recruitment

Pro-Business
Advocacy &
Legislative Action

Entrepreneurship &
Existing Business
Assistance

A Message from our Chamber Leadership



Donna Watts, IOM, AACE
President & CEO
South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce

Nearly five years ago we started with “Why.....”

South Baldwin County has a proud history and has long been known as the “Gateway to the Gulf.” From what was once a stretch of two-lane road leading to a sleepy fishing village, our Tri-City area has grown to become the destination for more than 6.5 million visitors each year. Those visitors leave behind an economic impact of \$4.6 billion and create thousands of jobs. The increased tourism, coupled with our growing business and industry (that also employ thousands of people throughout South Baldwin County) has brought about significant workforce challenges.

Prior to 2018, as *Gateway* was being developed, members of our business community were concerned about the future stability of our region and our ability to retain, recruit and train a sustainable



Greg Alexander, IOM
President & CEO
Coastal Alabama Business Chamber

workforce. At the time, unemployment was at an all-time low, at 3.9% in the County, and the top priority of the *Gateway Initiative* was to address the challenge of having an adequate supply of workforce to continue to serve those 6.5 million visitors as well as meet the employment needs of our other business and industry. Furthermore, stakeholders were adamant to provide ongoing advocacy and support for small businesses - the bedrock of the community.

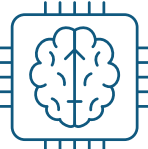



There are specific reasons “why” we created the *Gateway Initiative* and the biggest reason; It’s our *Mission and Passion*. It’s our *mission and passion* to help families, to grow businesses and industry in order to strengthen our communities within South Baldwin County. Along with investors and community partners, we are forging a brighter tomorrow and bringing about positive change through career pathing, apprenticeships, training and more. It is our goal to improve one life at a time while building communitywide economic prosperity. It is our *duty* to provide business and industry of South Baldwin County with what they need today, tomorrow and beyond. Over the next five years, we will be creating and executing solutions for employee housing, transportation challenges, shortages of available childcare; all while offering educational opportunities.

Today, *Gateway* has multiple meanings and produces real results in many areas; a “*Gateway to a Career*”, the “*Gateway to Local Legislators*”, a “*Gateway to Innovation*”, the “*Gateway to Service Excellence*”, the “*Gateway to Professional Development*”, the “*Gateway to Sustainable Economic Growth*,” and so much more. The *Gateway Initiative* was developed to meet the needs of our business and industry and we are proud of the progress we have made thus far. But, we must push forward for the real fact that many challenges remain. With the impending development of the Workforce Training Campus and the prospect of expanded programming to more businesses and industry throughout South Baldwin, now is our opportunity to capitalize on this momentum. We hope that you will join us!

Gateway Initiative by the Numbers – Business Driven Solutions

The *Gateway Initiative* has been guided by a set of strategic objectives and outcomes called our Accountability Plan. These measurements are based upon our original Case Statement, which was developed by South Baldwin Chamber leadership with guidance from Funding Solutions in 2017. The Accountability Plan’s purpose is to track and communicate Gateway’s success. It is revised bi-annually by the internal team and then approved by the Oversight Council which is comprised of four investor representatives from each chamber. Below is a sample of the accomplishments of the *Gateway Initiative* since 2018:



<p>154</p> <p>Participants in leadership, customer service and supervisory development training courses</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Community partners working in collaboration on the development of the South Baldwin Workforce Training Campus</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Regional partners involved in advocacy efforts to support regional training and workforce</p>	<p>53</p> <p>Local companies participating in Apprenticeship programs</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Job/career fairs conducted annually in collaboration with Baldwin County Schools, Career Centers and SAWDC</p>	<p>134</p> <p>Local employees who have completed or are currently enrolled in Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship programs</p>	<p> Gateway’s contract with TransfrVR provided training to students and others alike at the South Baldwin Literacy Council</p>	
<p>10</p> <p>Active Apprenticeship credentialing opportunities and two more in development</p>	<p>43</p> <p>Start-up entrepreneurs or existing businesses provided services or solutions</p>	<p>Bi-annually publish the results of the industry salary survey to better report current industry wage and benefit trends in our region </p>	
<p>5</p> <p>Industry Cluster Consortia formed to better understand local workforce and educational needs as well as increase advocacy efforts</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Chambers in the Baldwin Chamber Coalition who engage in relevant pro-business advocacy efforts, including legislative communications, and community education opportunities</p>	<p> Administered, analyzed and distributed the Baldwin County Chamber Coalition's 2022 Legislative Agenda for local elected officials</p> <p> Launched the Gateway Career Connection website</p>	

A Message from our Campaign Co-Chairs



Penny Groux
Director of Corporate Affairs
Perdido Beach Resort

"I am proud to say that we have been extremely successful to date in meeting the goals of the program. However, our job has just begun. As our area grows, we have increasingly difficult issues to tackle and that takes resources. We need your business involved and invested to keep Gateway staff members working every day on the critical issues that affect our businesses."

— Penny Groux

The first five years of the Gateway Workforce Development Initiative has set an amazing pace toward success and will show no signs of slowing down for the next five years. They will be focusing on what south Baldwin businesses need the most; an ample supply of trained and ready workforce!

The successes of the Gateway Initiative are a result of listening to the needs of business, as well as having experts on the ground finding solutions and responding with quick implementation of those solutions, while strategically developing long range plans for more permanent solutions.

The Gateway Oversight Council recognized early that bringing the two Chambers of Commerce together, who are just seven miles apart and struggling with the same workforce issues, just made sense. While the two organizations remain separate with their normal programs, events and purpose, coming together around workforce not only proved

to be doable, but highly successful and most importantly, beneficial for business.

From its inception the Gateway Initiative rapidly evolved into a powerhouse of resources for local businesses. The leadership of the Gateway Initiative has been focused on key factors for success; 1. Continuing to be business driven, 2. Collaborating with multiple partners who bring a value add to the table, 3. Being transparent with business investments and, 4. Continuous communication and conversation with investors. The record of accomplishments within this Case Statement speaks for itself.

As investors looking toward the future, the simple fact is no one can see clearly what will be needed in the next five years. But we hold tight to the things we do know; business is going to grow; visitors are going to continue to come, and shortage of workforce is not going to end. We trust the Gateway Initiative to react nimbly to changes in the economy and provide business a clear path to continuous improvement and potential solutions.

We hope you will respond positively when the Gateway Initiative Team calls on you. Please join with us as we work together to build a less vulnerable path forward for our Coastal Communities. The Cities, County and the State of Alabama need the businesses of south Baldwin to not only survive in these unfamiliar times, they also need us to thrive!



Chad Watkins
Owner
WAS Designs

A Special Thank You to our Top Investors



Investor logos displayed are Leader's Forum-level investors and above.

See all *Gateway* investors [HERE](#).

Contact our team for more details about the benefits you receive when you invest in *Gateway*!

Workforce Development & Recruitment



Gateway Training Academy

Gateway Training Academy

A major objective of the *Gateway Initiative* is to continually search out training opportunities for our investor businesses and organizations. The **Gateway Training Academy** brings world-class training and process improvement opportunities to small and large businesses, and across a variety of industry sectors. Through partnerships with *Alabama Industrial Development Training (AIDT)*, *Alabama Technology Network (ATN)*, *Columbia Southern - Supervisory Microcredential program*, and *Auburn's Technical Assistance Center (ATAC)*, Gateway is aiming to improve the workforce in South Baldwin County for the betterment of the whole community, locals and visitors alike.

Training Outcomes:

- Facilitate leadership, customer service and supervisory development training to 100 individuals, annually - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Collaborate with Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism, Coastal Alabama Community College, Gulf Regional Early Childhood Services, Auburn Technical Assistance Center, Tri-City Leadership on the development of the South Baldwin Workforce Training Campus - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Collaborate with TransfrVR to develop additional VR training opportunities to support training for south Baldwin businesses. - 3rd Quarter, 2022
- Regular meetings and advocacy efforts with/for regional training and workforce partners (i.e., ATN, SAWDC, CACC, AIDT, SBLC) - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing

Gateway Training Programs and Partner Organizations:

- Gateway to Great Customer Service
- Auburn's Organizational Management Course Series
- AIDT Leadership Training
- Alabama Ready to Work Soft Skills Training

Apprenticeships

Employers in Baldwin County are discovering a new type of employee. They create your future workforce, lift up your community, and help grow your business. We call them an apprentice. Apprenticeships are an industry-driven, high quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential. *Gateway* is a registered apprenticeship sponsor.

Apprenticeship Program Outcomes:

- Determine Pre-Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship options and career pathways in local business roles or connect employers with industry expert sponsors (e.g., CACC or AOA) - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Continued partnership with educational institutions and local business leaders to create and promote apprenticeship credentialing opportunities - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Sponsor 50 Apprentices in key industry clusters in Baldwin County (including marketing, set-up, administration, and tracking of apprentice progress) - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing

Recruiting and Hiring

Gateway Initiative is continuously working to identify opportunities to recruit new workforce in order to better meet the needs of businesses looking to hire motivated, trained and skilled workers.

Recruiting and Hiring Programs:

- Gateway Career Connection
- Job Fairs
- Local annual hiring and career events such as: World of Opportunity (WOO), SAWDC Virtual Hiring Events, Youth Apprentice Signing Day, Gulf Coast High School Career and Job Fair
- Apprenticeships as a recruiting and retention tool



Recruiting and Hiring Outcomes:

- Explore timeline and work plan for developing a recruiting, hiring, and job-sharing platform for local businesses and workforce - 1st Quarter, 2022
- Co-host job/career fairs in collaboration with Baldwin County School and Career Centers - 2nd Quarter, 2022
- Promote local job opportunities for Baldwin County's youth, support and participate in SAWDC Worlds of Opportunity (WOO; and senior event) and other similar events (in GS/OB), including promotion of pre apprenticeship and apprenticeship - 1st Quarter, 2022
- Continue to foster relationships with local educational institutions and employers in order to influence curriculum opportunities that align with local business needs (including regular meetings with career coaches and guidance counselors and promoting career tech opportunities to students and caregivers) - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing

Career Technical Education

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs are the foundation of the workforce. CTE programs prepare individuals for a wide range of careers that reflect the contemporary workplace. CTE adds to our K-12 students' education and success. As we strive to prepare every south Alabama student to be college and career ready, CTE provides our greatest collective opportunities for creating a skilled, knowledgeable, and productive future workforce.

Local High School Career Tech Programs & Academies:

- Baldwin County Career Tech Programs – 23 programs administered through 11 Baldwin County Schools, striving to prepare students for the transition to postsecondary learning and workforce opportunities
- Gulf Shores City Schools - Academies
- Orange Beach City Schools

Career Technical Education Outcomes:

- Link Baldwin County businesses to job prospects who are technically proficient and career ready
- Establish (and continue to facilitate) employer advisory committees by career cluster to advise as to what they determine as necessary skills and credentials of value for job prospects

- Advocate within the Baldwin County school system, the Gulf Shores school system, Baldwin County private schools, and Coastal Alabama Community College for the development of training programs that meet employer needs and require completion of credentials of value
- Advocate for as many dual enrollment courses as possible for career technical programs where college credit is granted for high school coursework

Direct Benefit to our Local Employers and Future Employees (our current student population)

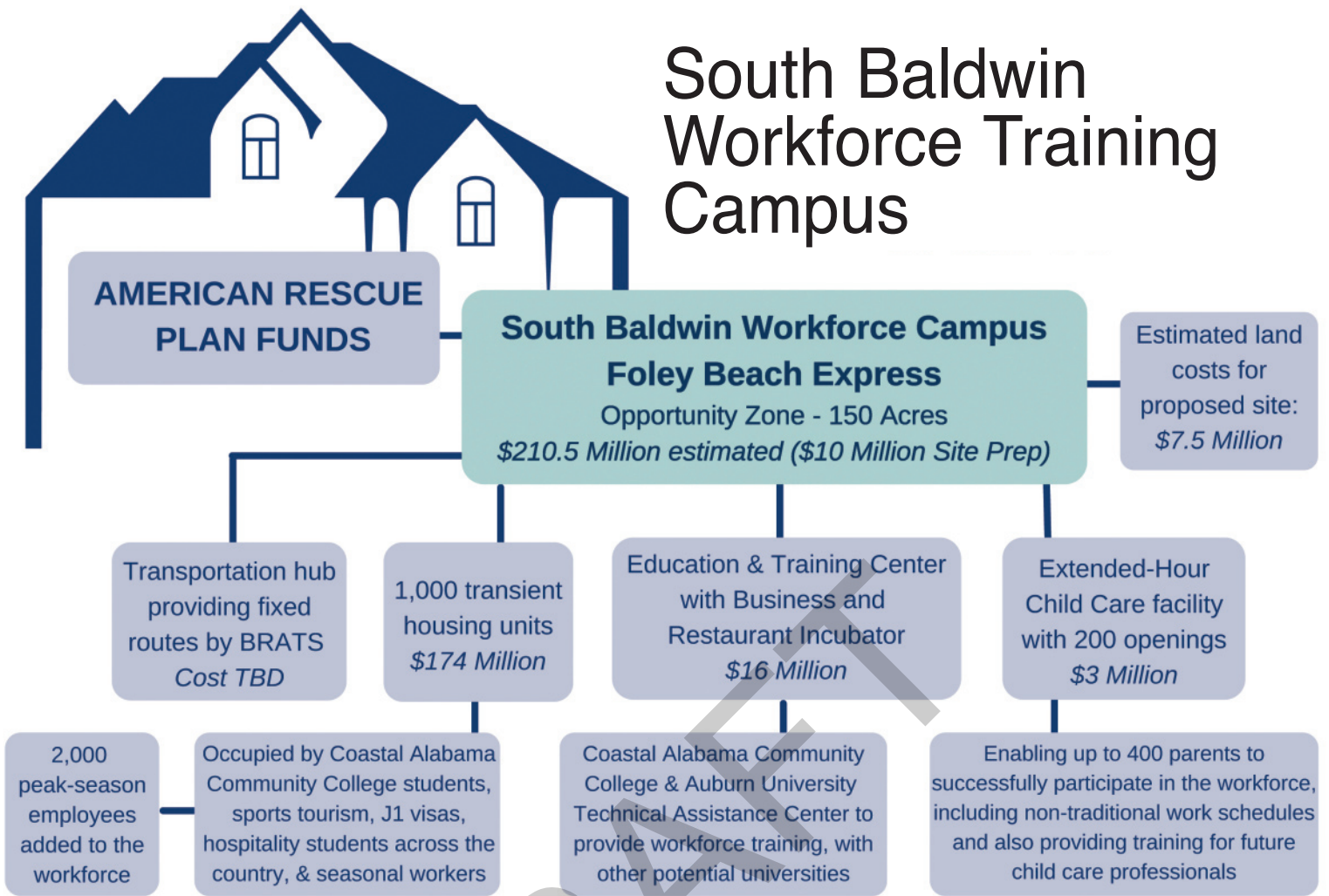
The *Gateway Initiative* in partnership with the **South Alabama Workforce Development Council (SAWDC)** manages the workforce development efforts of South Baldwin County. A SAWDC Project Manager is dedicated to providing industry cluster management, project coordination, case management/tracking, and maintaining persistent attention to the workforce needs of the employer members. Regional industry focus areas have been identified based on the make-up of business and industry in South Baldwin County. They include:

- **Hospitality & Tourism**
- **Advanced Manufacturing & Construction**
- **Aviation and Aerospace**
- **Healthcare**
- **Maritime**

Business leaders from each focus industry are encouraged to participate in regular consortium meetings to ensure that training programs are established and remain current to satisfy industry needs and to develop collaborative recruitment strategies. CTE adds to our students' education and success as we strive to make every south Alabama student college and career ready. CTE provides our greatest collective opportunities for creating a skilled, knowledgeable, and productive future workforce.



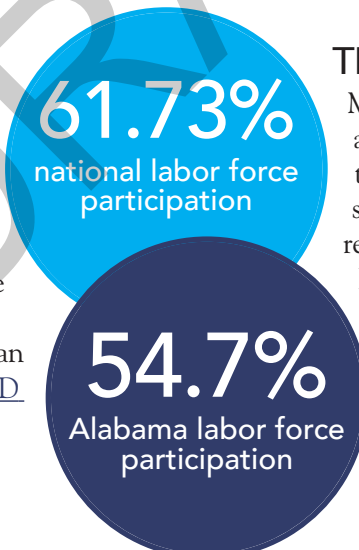
South Baldwin Workforce Training Campus



The Why

The local workforce is at least 2,500 people short of meeting peak season employment needs, while many city and business leaders say the shortage is 5x that amount. Labor force participation nationally is 61.73% with Alabama at 54.7%. A local task force would like to propose a project that can take advantage of one-time funding from the American Rescue Plan to make a permanent impact on this issue. [READ MORE](#)

Site rendering of the acreage off of the Foley Beach Express



The Cost of Inaction

More than \$90 million in tax revenue flows annually to the Alabama General Budget from the tri-city tourism and hospitality economy, seeing an average growth of more than 6% in retail sales and 7% in lodging sales annually. Inaction puts not only the potential gains at risk, but will result in a decrease in current revenues. [READ MORE](#)

The Ask

- Non-monetary Contributions
 - Grant funding
 - American Rescue Plan funds
 - Lobbying Efforts
 - A Tri-City Partnership
- [READ MORE](#)



Entrepreneurship & Existing Business Assistance

A major tenet of the *Gateway Initiative* is to promote entrepreneurship and provide assistance to existing business, always using an economic development lens. The *Gateway Team* facilitates services to entrepreneurs and existing business owners through *Gateway* programs and in coordination with community partners:

Start Up Coaching

Gateway has a broad network of subject matter experts in a variety of industries to assist in starting and successfully growing a business.

SCORE

The South Alabama Chapter of Senior Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) has partnered with *Gateway* to offer small businesses free mentor training in our area.

Business Acceleration

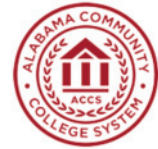
The *Gateway Team* has designed a formal process and program to learn about your operation and recommend strategies for growth.

Continuous Improvement

The Alabama Technology Network (ATN) Continuous Improvement team's primary focus is maximizing efficiency and product quality through process improvement.

Training Partners

Gateway training and educational partners offer a wide variety of business solutions through educational opportunities.



Entrepreneurship & Small Business Outcomes:

- *Gateway Initiative* Story Videos and Written Features on local business to help promote and grow their business
- Continue to provide engagement services and solutions or provide referral services to start-up entrepreneurs or existing businesses - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Continue to partner with existing local SCORE representatives to recruit SCORE mentors in order to aid local entrepreneurs - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing



Pro-Business Advocacy & Legislative Action

Baldwin County Chamber Coalition



In 2018, *Gateway* facilitated the gathering of all five Chambers of Commerce in Baldwin County to collaborate on a county-wide business legislative agenda. For the first time in more than ten years, the executives and governmental affairs committee members from each Chamber gathered to develop

the Baldwin County Chamber Coalition. Each year, the Coalition aims to support business by educating employers and their employees regarding important legislative issues. In addition we connect directly with our local elected officials about issues that matter to our business members in Baldwin County. We effectively represent 3,500 members and 74,000 employees in combined membership.

2022 Legislative Agenda

Research and Legislative Action

Gateway is dedicated to pro-business advocacy efforts that span many areas: we dove in head first to address business needs during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic and Hurricane Sally relief efforts; we actively coordinate with schools and colleges to ensure curriculum aligns with hiring needs; and we've drafted numerous communications to State and Federal congressional delegates expressing our support or dissatisfaction with proposed legislation (e.g., the single-use plastic ban, infrastructure funding, and overtime wage reimbursement laws). We also facilitate survey efforts to better understand industry needs related to employee housing, workforce training, salary and benefits offerings, and more. We are continually looking for ways to ensure business owners can achieve their fullest potential.

Committee Participation

One specific way *Gateway* advocates for local business across the State is through committee and council participation. For example:

- Governor's Technical Education Advisory Committee for Hospitality & Tourism
- Business Council of Alabama
- Advisory Board Member Alabama Education Alliance
- Advisory Board Member Alabama Department of Education for Business & IT
- Governor's Think Tank on Education & Training Innovation

Pro-Business Advocacy & Legislative Action Outcomes:

- Facilitate meetings with industry cluster consortiums to better understand local workforce and educational needs as well as increase advocacy efforts on a variety of other regional topics - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Publish the results of the 2021 bi-annual industry salary survey to better report current industry wage and benefit trends in our region- 1st Quarter, 2022
- Participate in local, regional, and state-wide Advisory Committees in order to advocate for South Baldwin businesses - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Play a lead role in facilitating local communication and info sharing forums for members and investors to include participation from local leaders and representatives during critical times - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing
- Engage Baldwin Chamber Coalition in relevant pro-business advocacy efforts, including legislative communications, and community education opportunities - 4th Quarter, 2022 and ongoing

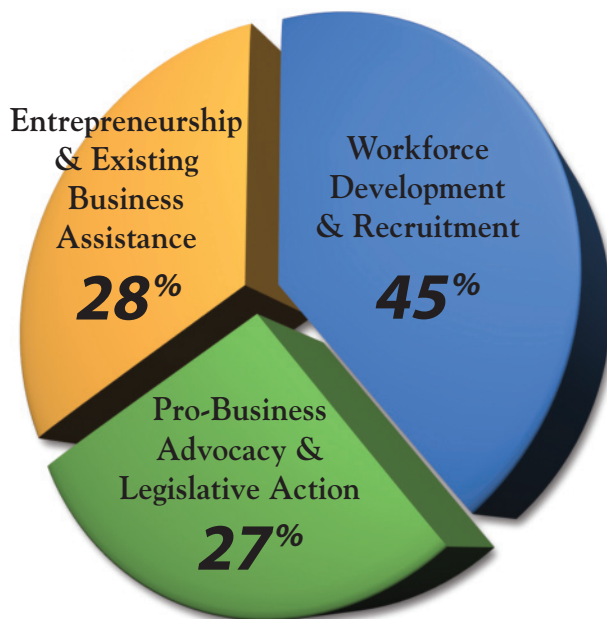


GATEWAY
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2023-2027 Campaign Goal and Budget

\$2.5 million
five-year campaign goal

\$500,000
per year



Chairman's Circle: \$20,000 +

- Chamber Membership included with your *Gateway Initiative* investment
- Apprenticeship Program for three (3) companies (3 separate EIN's)
- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- Recognition on all *Gateway Initiative* materials
- Banner ad on the *Gateway Initiative* homepage
- Direct access to *Gateway Leadership* on key issues impacting your business
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

CEO Council: \$15,000 - \$19,999

- Chamber Membership included with your *Gateway Initiative* investment
- Apprenticeship Program for two (2) companies (2 separate EIN's)
- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- Recognition on all *Gateway Initiative* materials
- Banner ad on the *Gateway Initiative* homepage
- Direct access to *Gateway Leadership* on key issues impacting your business
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

Leaders Forum: \$10,000 - \$14,999

- 50% discount on Chamber Membership included with your *Gateway Initiative* investment
- Apprenticeship Program for one (1) company
- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- Recognition on all *Gateway Initiative* materials
- Banner ad on the *Gateway Initiative* homepage
- Direct access to *Gateway Leadership* on key issues impacting your business
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

Strategic Partner: \$7,500 - \$9,999

- Recognition on the *Gateway Initiative* website based on investment level
- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- 30% discount on Chamber Membership included with your *Gateway Initiative* investment
- Direct access to *Gateway Leadership* on key issues impacting your business
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

Growth Leader: \$5,000 - \$7,499

- Recognition on the *Gateway Initiative* website based on investment level
- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- Leadership Series pre-meeting introduction and Q&A with the presenter
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- 20% discount on Chamber Membership included with your *Gateway Initiative* investment
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

Investor Colleague: \$2,500 - \$4,999

- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- Leadership Series pre-meeting introduction and Q&A with the presenter
- 10% discount on Chamber Membership included with your *Gateway Initiative* investment
- Recognition on the *Gateway Initiative* website based on investment level
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

Community Associate: \$1,500 - \$2,499

- Consultation and communication on the *Gateway Training Academy*
- Recognition on the *Gateway Initiative* website based on investment level
- VIP invitations to Leadership Series and investor only events
- Free listings on the *Gateway Career Connection Job Board* website and access to Job Fairs
- Networking opportunities with our other *Gateway Initiative* investors

Our Proud Community Partners



www.GatewayInitiative.com
www.GatewayCareerConnection.org

Gateway Initiative Campaign Leadership Team

Jim Bibby
The Wharf

John Fitzgerald
Saunders Yachtworks

Kristin Hellmich
OWA

Sted McCollough
McCollough Architecture

Mike Steward
Vision Fox Business
Advisors

H.C. (Harry) Cecil
Ala. Technology Network

Beth Gendler
Gulf Shores & Orange
Beach Tourism

Tom Knighten
Tanger Outlets

Bob McDowell
Edward Jones

Clark Stewart
WHEP Radio

Tom Debell
Riviera Utilities

Lane Gilbert
Wharf Restaurant Group

Tim Lower
RE/MAX Paradise

Christina McInnis
Woerner Companies

Ken Styron
Columbia Southern
University

Dr. Josh Duplantis
Coastal Alabama
Community College

Charlene Haber
Wolf Bay Restaurants

Tony Marzullo
Spectrum Resorts

Dr. Craig Pouncy
Coastal Alabama
Community College

Bryan Wolfe
Vulcan, Inc.

Matt Fetner
Bryant Bank

Brian Harsany
Cosmo's Restaurant
Group

Dec McClelland
Edward Jones

Dr. Margaret Roley
So. Baldwin Regional
Medical Center

Gateway Initiative Oversight Council

Gateway is guided by a group of leaders in the business community, the *Gateway Oversight Council*, composed of four Gateway Investors from each chamber, each Board of Directors Chairperson, and both chamber Presidents/CEOs. The council convenes quarterly to review program accomplishments and realign programming where necessary, and represent a diverse set of industries in south Baldwin County. Members rotate annually. 2022 Members include:

- **Chad Watkins**, WAS Design, SBCC Board Chair
- **Mike Steward**, Vision Fox, CABC Board Chair
- **Beth Gendler**, Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism
- **Jim Bibby**, The Wharf
- **Penny Groux**, Perdido Beach Resort
- **Matt Grant**, Grant Wealth Management
- **Dec McClelland**, Edward Jones Investments

GATEWAY
INITIATIVE

Meet the Gateway Initiative Team



Pictured L to R: Travis Valentine, Tyler Morgan, Ryan Moberly, Greg Alexander, Donna Watts, Ed Bushaw, Penny Hughey, Kaitlyn O'Neal, Lori Pressley

Donna Watts

President/CEO
South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce
donna@southbaldwinchamber.com

Greg Alexander

President/CEO
Coastal Alabama Business Chamber
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Ed Bushaw

Vice President of Workforce
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Kaitlyn O'Neal

Communications Manager
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Lori Pressley

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Penny Hughey

Vice President of Education + Programs
Coastal Alabama Business Chamber
penny@mygulfoastchamber.com

Travis Valentine

Vice President of Investor Relations
South Baldwin Chamber of Commerce
travis@southbaldwinchamber.com

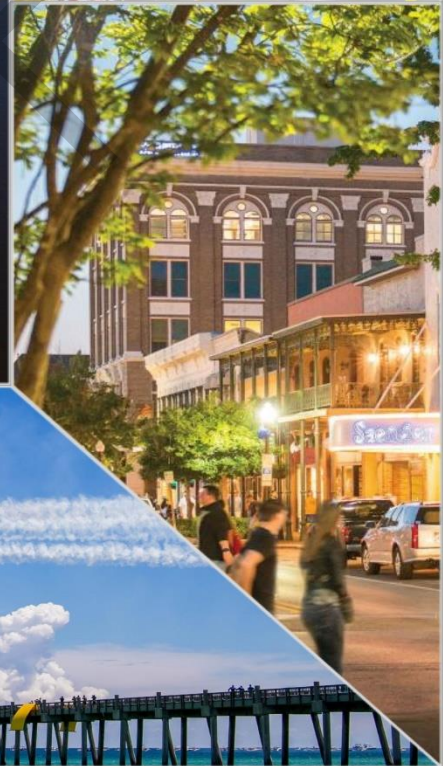
Ryan Moberly

Director of Communications
Coastal Alabama Business Chamber
ryan@mygulfoastchamber.com



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www.GatewayInitiative.com



Proposal for Fundraising Management

October 2023



National
Community
Development
Services

Tom DiFiore, President & CEO

**404-231-0730 tdifiore@ncdsinc.net www.ncdsinc.net
12460 Crabapple Rd. Suite 202-638 Alpharetta, GA 30004**



America's Leader in Community and Economic Development Fundraising

October 2, 2023

Ms. Melissa Stoker
Director of Operations
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance, Inc.
3 West Garden Street, Suite 618
Pensacola, FL 32502

Dear Melissa, FloridaWest Staff, and Executive Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to present NCDS' credentials and qualifications for assisting with FloridaWest's multi-year funding campaign. NCDS has conducted over 700 campaigns and raised over \$1.8 billion for organizations similar to FloridaWest. The attached proposal provides an overview of our experience, expertise, and methodology while also responding to the specifics of your RFP. Based on my review of your organization, information in the RFP, and VisionFirst's strategic plan, I believe there are three key factors that make us a good fit for your campaign:

1. **Our approach to the front-end feasibility analysis and goal assessment.** We will concisely package the plan for stakeholder review and comment while also issuing a "call to action" for fair and proportionate funding from those who will benefit from its implementation and from FloridaWest achieving the requisite capacity. Our confidential interviews with both existing and prospective investors will allow us to gain critical insight and feedback about the community's needs and opportunities; validate your proposed strategies and tactics; and provide honest, prescriptive analyses and recommendations that are in your organization's and the community's best interests. The confidential interviews are essential to campaign strategy, and we will conduct them accordingly. Our experience has shown that fundraising success directly results from our engagement with key investors and opinion leaders during this critical step.
2. **Compelling return on investment and economic impact data produced by our *Economic Strategy Center* using IMPLAN modeling.** This tool, and our competent application of it, allows us to consistently secure capacity-level investments from firms in dozens of industry sectors. This is one of several reasons that our clients' multi-year programs typically receive more than 60% of their funding from the private sector.
3. **Unmatched experience and expertise,** including in Pensacola. In 2010, we raised over \$4.7 million in private sector pledges for the Pensacola Chamber's Vision 2015 economic development campaign. I suspect many of those same investors will be looked to for this campaign and our knowledge (including our database) should be helpful. We are also quite proud of our 30+-year partnership with your neighbors in Mobile.

My team and I are genuinely excited about this opportunity. I look forward to meeting with you and your leadership to answer questions, provide additional details, and mutually confirm our fit as a trusted partner in this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom DiFiore".

Tom DiFiore
President & CEO

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NCDS Background & Qualifications

Our History

Founded in 1977 by Howard Benson, a senior executive at the Metro Atlanta Chamber, to replicate the *Forward Atlanta* approach in other communities.

- * **First firm to specialize in economic development fundraising.**
- * Pioneered **the multi-year strategic initiative approach** to funding chambers of commerce and economic development organizations.
- * Created the *Economic Strategy Center* in 1995 to incorporate financial analysis and economic impact **tools to demonstrate ROI to investors in client programs.**
- * Over **700 successful campaigns** in communities and markets of all sizes (populations ranging from 3,000 to 2 million+).
- * **Over \$1.8 billion raised.**
- * **124 repeat clients** (multiple campaigns) including several that have relied on NCDS to fund 25+ years of economic development programming through five, six, and seven consecutive multi-year campaigns.
- * Regularly “asked back” by community leaders to assist **other non-profits** with fundraising campaigns.

NCDS Hallmarks

- * Thorough, professional, and honest **front-end assessment of client “asking rights.”**
- * Report and Recommendations (deliverable of Feasibility Analysis) that **accurately predict achievable funding goal**; identify critical campaign success factors and potential obstacles; and offer specific suggestions for maximizing fundraising outcomes.
- * Reliable timelines and outcomes driven by **proven project management process with attention to key benchmarks and milestones.**
- * Experienced and **skilled project team**, including on-site director dedicated exclusively to a single client.
- * **Hands-on management of all solicitation activity, with all pledges secured in writing and formally transmitted to client accounting staff.**

NCDS Hallmarks

- * **Strategic use of volunteers** maximizes their influence and enjoyment while minimizing their time commitment.
- * **Identification and pursuit of industries/companies** that benefit from economic growth and development but are currently **not investing (or under-investing)** in the client organization.
- * Deployment of our *Economic Strategy Center*, which documents the **economic impact and value of client programs and projects.**
- * Comprehensive campaign close-out reports including a proprietary electronic database to assist clients with pledge collection and a practical guide to **investor relations.**

Key Differences

1. Phase I Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment

- We take whatever time is necessary to help properly **package and position** a draft document of the new multi-year initiative and proposed funding campaign.
- Confidential interviews conducted to gain needed input and insight from top investors, potential new investors, and others that will inform optimal campaign strategy. **Interviews are not “surveys.”** We ask probing questions. We engage each interviewee differently based on their situation and potential to lead or invest. **We know how to interpret what we hear and integrate the findings of this process into a successful campaign strategy.**
- The deliverable is a set of findings and recommendations that are:
 - **Insightful, relevant, and timely** (NOT boilerplate or cut and pasted from other projects).
 - Honest, candid, and **prescriptive.**
 - **A roadmap to fundraising success.**

2. “Strategy over salesmanship”

- We make sure the right leaders are fully “bought in” and have a sense of ownership in the organization, the program to be implemented, and the campaign to fund it. This objective produces **pacesetting investments** from these leaders, which, in turn, ensures their **interest and influence in a successful campaign.**

Key Differences

- Every solicitation will be made to the **right person, at the right time, for the right amount, for the right reasons, and with assistance from the right peer**. The alternative amounts to “membership sales,” which often results in token commitments and high numbers of unfulfilled pledges.

3. Economic Strategy Center

- In-house (not outsourced) research and analytic function that helps each client establish appropriate economic goals and outcomes and produces **credible economic impact analyses** based on those goals and objectives.
- Uses industry-leading **IMPLAN** economic modeling application, customized with local data, client target industries, etc.
- Works with every campaign to **customize compelling ROI rationale** for dozens of industry sectors and companies.
- Facilitates **larger pledges from key industries and commitments from new sources**.

4. Post-campaign support

- Comprehensive **guide to investor relations** supports client communications, pledge collection, and long-term sustainability.
- **Ongoing availability** for counsel, assistance, and solicitations.
- Annual or multi-year **scorecard** produced by the *Economic Strategy Center*, using data from client “wins” and progress, to prove impact and ROI. NCDS / ESC staff available to present the Scorecard to investor/stakeholder meetings.

Process & Methodology

Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment

NCDS conducts every feasibility analysis & goal assessment with no assumption or expectation that that it will produce a “go” recommendation for a subsequent campaign. This ensures several key objectives are accomplished:

- A thorough **assessment of the stakeholder community’s desire** for economic growth; their understanding of how to achieve it; and their agreement with the proposed strategies and tactics.
- Identify community, political, and organizational **dynamics that could influence levels of support and that will need to be properly navigated for fundraising success.**
- **Accurately predict** achievable fundraising outcomes, with specific recommendations (organizational improvements, program modifications, campaign leadership) for maximizing those outcomes
- Recommend steps toward “**campaign readiness**” if the confidential interviews indicate that an immediate campaign launch is not advisable.
- Allow the client to **validate NCDS’ competence and fit** as a fundraising partner.

1. Conduct a thorough debrief and “situational assessment”.

To supplement any background information already provided, we will meet with staff and leaders and review all available documents to:

- Ensure we understand local economic conditions and trends.
- Clarify structural dynamics of the organization (and partner relationships)
- Digest existing strategic plans and related research.
- Ascertain opinions, concerns, and expectations of the organization’s board leaders regarding its go-forward role, strategies, and value.
- Understand any potential impediments to a funding campaign.

Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment

2. Develop the “Prospectus” / Preliminary Case for Support - An overview document, with sufficient detail, that includes:

- Summary of FloridaWest’s mission, structure, history, and achievements.
- Documented needs & opportunities.
- **Proposed strategies and tactics** for the next five years (summary of VisionFirst’s strategic plan).
- Projected **budget requirements** for the next five years
- Proposed **goals/outcomes/performance metrics** for tracking, reporting, and demonstrating ROI to investors.
- **“Call to action.”** For FloridaWest at this moment in time, the messaging will likely:
 - Establish urgency for fully funding and executing the strategic plan.
 - Assert the need for increased private-sector funding.
 - Reinforce FloridaWest’s role as the place where shared economic prosperity is planned, directed, and executed.

This document should not be “overproduced” and should be clearly marked/positioned as a “discussion draft.” **Its purpose is to elicit feedback and input from those who will be asked to fund the new five-year program.** Integrating their feedback and recommendations into an eventual “final” version for the campaign should create increased levels of ownership, interest, and funding.

Projected Timeline: “As long as it takes,” but typically 2 weeks

3. Identify and schedule confidential interviews:

- Develop a list of **75+ prospective interviewees**, with 20-25 being identified as “priority.” The list should include:
 - Top 10-15 investor prospects
 - Elected officials
 - Opinion leaders and influencers
 - Representation from key industries, employers

Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment

- FloridaWest (and partner organizations) board members
- (NCDS may identify a handful of additions during the interview process, based on insight and suggestions from our interviews)
- Send (e-mail or USPS) a **“Pave the Way” letter** to decision makers at each prospective interviewee announcing the development of a new multi-year strategic initiative and requesting their participation in a process to gain needed input and feedback. The letter should be signed by the CEO and Board Chair (possibly others) and promise a near-term phone call to arrange a 45-minute confidential meeting at the interviewee’s office.
- Staff to follow up letters with phone calls to **schedule meetings**. Goal will be to schedule 3-5 interviews per day, 14-20 per week, 50-70 over a four-week period. ***This will be the primary administrative task required by the client during the Feasibility Analysis and goal Assessment.***

Projected Timeline: Ongoing for 3-4 weeks

4. **Conduct 50-70 confidential interviews** (in person at the interviewee’s office):
- Client to **provide NCDS with summary background information** prior to each interview (investment amount and history, level of engagement, leadership/influence quotient, industry, etc.)
 - NCDS staff will engage each interviewee in a professional, **guaranteed-confidential** discussion designed to assess **“asking rights”** across five elements:
 - i. **Need / opportunity** (for intentional, robust community & economic development)
 - ii. **The new five-year plan** (Do interviewees agree with the strategies and goals? Does it align with theirs and the region’s growth agenda?)
 - iii. **The organization** (Is FloridaWest seen as capable, competent, and uniquely suited to deliver the proposed plan?)
 - iv. **Leadership** (Are volunteer leaders of requisite stature & credibility willing to establish this as a high priority and attract others to follow them? Are there new leaders ready to step up?)

Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment

v. **Financial capacity** (Does the constituency have the collective capacity and willingness to fully fund the plan’s implementation?)

- Tools used during the interview process:
 - Customized Questionnaire / Interview Guide
 - Prospectus (Draft Plan Overview)
 - Investment Range Table

Projected Timeline: 4 weeks

5. Produce and present Report and Recommendations:

- Convey **interviewees’ opinions and feedback** through statistical data and direct, unattributed quotes.
- NCDS **analysis and interpretation** of what we “heard” as well as our observations based on experience in comparable communities & organizations.
- Recommend an **achievable campaign goal**.
- Include potential concerns and **critical success factors** for maximizing fundraising outcomes.
- **List of suggested volunteer leaders**.
- Suggestions for **program / organizational refinement and messaging**.
- Recommended campaign **strategy and timeline**.
- Presented as requested by the client to full board and/or specific committees for discussion / Q &A; also printed for distribution.

Projected Timeline: 2 weeks

**TOTAL TIMELINE FOR FEASIBILITY ANALYSIS & GOAL ASSESSMENT:
6-8 Weeks**

Campaign Management

NCDS conducts the Feasibility Analysis / Goal Assessment and the Campaign under separate agreements. This ensures that we provide honest and candid findings and recommendations. It also requires us to prove our value and fit before being retained for a campaign engagement. When we proceed to campaign management, we execute a proven project management approach, which has evolved over 45 years / 700 campaigns and is informed by what we learned during the confidential interview process. Our campaign process and key milestones are summarized below:

1. Program Refinement

- Integrates feedback from feasibility analysis & goal assessment.
- Ad hoc committee of current and prospective new leaders/investors.
- Process **ensures buy-in and ownership from the right people** and is a valuable step toward cultivation of their eventual pledge.
- Produces requisite detail and **answers to questions/objections that we are likely to get during solicitations.**
- Establishes appropriate **goals and metrics** to be used in producing economic impact analysis and ROI data for key industries and companies.
- Finalizes and clarifies **“what we’ll be selling”** during solicitations.

2. Campaign Database Development

- NCDS uses an E-Tapestry database, customized for our campaigns (E-Tapestry is a Blackbaud product)
- **Importing and exporting** investor data and prospect activity from/to the client’s platform will be **seamless.**
- Our database is designed to capture prospect information, track solicitation activity, and **document pledge/payment data and terms.** It also has pre-programmed reports for communicating campaign status/progress.
- **Will provide the client with all necessary cash flow/invoicing/audit support.**

Campaign Management

3. Case for Support

- Comprehensive document to ensure that everything about the multi-year plan and the campaign is **captured in one place**.
- Not used as a stand-alone sales document, but more as a **reference resource to ensure message consistency and** campaign leaders are “singing from the same song sheet.”
- Used as a **source document to develop campaign brochure, other multi-media messaging, and customized solicitations**.
- **Economic Impact Analysis, produced by NCDS’ Economic Strategy Center using IMPLAN:**
 - Macro, community-wide impacts
 - Consumer spending impacts (with industry sector detail)
 - Business-to-business impacts (with industry sector detail)
 - New tax revenues

4. Prospect identification and evaluation

- Sources:
 - Client and partner databases, lists, etc.
 - Feasibility interviews (financial indications from interviewees and suggestions given for others).
 - Economic Impact Analysis (shows new output for over 40 sectors).
 - Research and other “lists.”
- Evaluations (establishing “ask amounts” for all prospects):
 - Convene a **confidential committee** with a variety of expertise, knowledge, and insight into prospects’ giving history/motivations, business outlook, peer networks, leadership/influence quotient, financial capacity, “ego,” etc.
 - Evaluate top 25-30 prospects:
 - **Ask amount (interest X capacity)**
 - **Decision maker(s)**
 - **Strategy, timing, peers & influencers**
 - Ongoing evaluations of remaining prospects (middle and smaller pledges)

Campaign Management

5. Leadership Recruitment / Solicitation

NCDS believes that campaign leaders should not be enlisted without also being solicited for an appropriate pledge – as suggested by the above evaluations process. This is a significant contributor to our campaigns' success, as leaders who make "capacity level" commitments will be inclined to encourage others to do the same and will have far greater credibility and influence. Conversely, leaders who make "token" commitments have little skin in the game and will be less invested in the campaign's success.

- 8-12 leaders enlisted to serve various roles, each with a corresponding set of **qualifications and duties**, which we will use to identify candidates and enlist their service in a particular role.
- Preceding **cultivation activities** (feasibility interviews, program refinement, evaluations, and others) will usually **help identify** those with passion and interest for community prosperity and the new multi-year plan.
- Campaign leaders **need not be only major investors** – important to have diversity, various industries and communities represented, and perhaps some new, up-and-coming leaders.
- Enlisted leaders and key client staff will comprise the **campaign operations committee**, which will meet approximately every two weeks to discuss progress, challenges, and strategy for specific solicitations. These meetings are the primary time commitment required of volunteer leaders.
- **Campaign leaders are not expected to "ask for money."** However, a volunteer peer is critical to maximize and resolve every solicitation. For each of the top 25-30 prospects, we will engage the appropriate volunteer leader to participate in the solicitation meeting. For middle and smaller prospects, volunteer involvement can take the form of pre / post-solicitation communication to encourage the prospect's support. **NCDS will manage all volunteer engagement and provide tools and support to "make it easy."**

6. Advance Division Solicitations (top 25-30 prospects)

- Will begin with many of the above-mentioned campaign leaders.
- **Goal: 65% or more of the campaign goal.**
- Each ask is planned and executed with **specific, "one-off" strategy:**

Campaign Management

- Significant planning, research, and preparation.
- Compelling case for investment/motivations for investment, including “subjective” reasoning such as leadership, profile, “place at the table.”
- **Objective ROI data customized using NCDS’ Economic Impact analysis, prospect’s market share, profit margin, etc.**
- Timing/chronology (considerations include industry peers/competitors, board members, supplier/vendor relationships, etc.).
- Peer influence and solicitation “team.”

7. Public Kickoff Event or Announcement

8. General Solicitations

- Medium and smaller asks (100+ prospects).
- Conducted at a much quicker pace (8-15 per week).
- Less direct volunteer participation (open doors, provide strategic insight, assist with follow-up/pledge resolution).
- In person/face to face.
- Small group briefings to maximize access and communications to select industries or communities of interest.
- NCDS will defer to the client for a “minimum pledge” amount.

Additional Notes / Comments

- NCDS Project Executive works full-time to **manage and coordinate all aspects of the campaign** (on-site 4-5 days/week).
- Client **administrative support** is needed for scheduling, database support (prospect/activity data entry), and meeting planning.
- **Client senior management** involvement:
 - Accompany NCDS, and volunteers on select solicitations as appropriate.
 - Weekly meeting to recap previous week/preview coming week.
 - Share/impart knowledge of your programs, projects, etc. to ensure we represent you professionally and accurately.

Campaign Management

- Prospect background, strategy, etc. as appropriate.
- Administration/processing of pledges and payments.
- Review/approval of campaign materials, documents, communications, etc. produced by NCDS.
- Attend campaign operations committee meetings, as available.
- NCDS will work with client communications/design staff (or approved vendors) for campaign brochure, multi-media materials, web page, etc. We will also recruit and deploy a small **communications committee** to advise and assist with campaign and program messaging through e-mail and social media.
- Audited **Campaign Closeout Report** provided at campaign conclusion includes all pledge data and records, follow-up procedures, and a practical guide to investor relations.
- **Post-campaign services/assistance:**
 - Annual or multi-year “Scorecard” – Economic Impact Analysis of client success to communicate actual ROI to investors.
 - Review/audit of pledge collection, investor engagement, and communications.
 - Concentrated solicitation engagement (15-20 prospects over 1-2 weeks).
 - Benchmarking to 2-4 competitor communities/organizations.

NCDS will pinpoint the time required to complete the campaign during the Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment, based on a number of factors, including reaction to the proposed program, leadership availability, and decision processes of key investors. Our assumption at this point is that we will want to solicit a **minimum of 125 prospects**, including many new prospective investors. Based on that objective and a campaign goal exceeding \$5 million, we predict an eight to ten-month campaign timeline for our “standard” campaign process:

Campaign Timeline

Key Milestones	Targeted Completion
Program Refinement Campaign Database Development Economic Strategy Center: Impact Analysis Case for Support	End of Month 2
Leadership Enlistment & Solicitations	End of Month 3
Top 25-30 solicitations Pledges totaling 50% of goal (minimum) Conduct “Kickoff” Event	End of Month 5
50-70 Total Solicitations Written pledges at or above 80% of goal	End of Month 6
125+ Total Solicitations Resolve all pending decisions Campaign Closeout Report “Victory Celebration”	End of Month 8

Relevant Experience & References

Of the **over 700 campaigns** NCDS has managed, the following clients indicate our experience with similar organizations, and our ability to succeed on behalf of FloridaWest.

Mobile Chamber

Population – 410,000

NCDS has managed eight five-year campaigns for the Mobile Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber’s economic development department is the community’s “lead” economic development organization, and our campaigns have secured financial support from the City, County, and business community. The **Partners for Growth** program has similar objectives to FloridaWest EDA’s. The most recent campaign secured over \$12 million in five-year pledges (60% private) for a plan focused on Existing Business & Expansion Support; New Business Attraction; Quality of Place/Community Development; Talent & Workforce Development; and Investor Engagement. ***The Exhibits included with this proposal feature the Mobile campaign.***

David Rodgers

Vice President, Economic Development, Mobile Chamber

251-431-8657

drodgers@mobilechamber.com

Forward Sioux Falls, SD

Population – 280,000

NCDS engineered this joint venture of the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Foundation in the mid-1980s and raised \$2.5 million to get it started. Seven five-year campaigns have followed, each raising more than the previous one. Our campaign in 2021 secured over \$16 million (over 80% private) for this community’s economic development programming. Monies raised have been used for a variety of traditional economic development objectives, including seed funding for a new 2,000-acre industrial park.

Bob Mundt, President & CEO

Sioux Falls (SD) Development Foundation

605-376-8242

bobm@siouxfalls.com

Tacoma-Pierce County (WA) Economic Development Board

Population - 800,000

NCDS helped “separate” the community’s economic development function from the Chamber in the 1990’s and has funded the EDB’s programming over the course of seven five-year campaigns. The most recent one secured over \$7 million during the pandemic in 2020. The majority of the funding is private, with the Port of Tacoma and Tacoma Public Utilities also being major investors.

Bruce Kendall

President & CEO

Economic Development Board of Tacoma-Pierce County (WA)

253-208-8458

bruce@edbtacomapierce.org

Additional Information Requested in RFP

This comprehensive proposal addresses most of the information requested in FloridaWest's RFP. Questions not specifically addressed in other sections are answered below:

Expectations of FloridaWest Board & Staff:

Phase One:

Staff:

NCDS will rely on FloridaWest's senior staff to ensure that NCDS is fully briefed regarding organization and community dynamics, the new strategic plan, and financial needs. The *Prospectus* document should be edited and approved by the CEO. Senior staff should also provide NCDS with any information deemed relevant or important about specific interviewees prior to our meetings with them. FloridaWest administrative staff will be needed to schedule the confidential interviews. NCDS will provide guidance and assistance.

Board:

Board members (or the Executive Committee) will be asked to review the *Prospectus* document, make suggestions, and formally endorse it by allowing their names to be included on the cover page. They should participate in the confidential interview process and be willing to suggest candidates for the list of interviewees.

Phase Two:

Staff:

The CEO and senior staff will again want to ensure that NCDS is fully informed about the organization, the community, and the strategic plan so that we represent you professionally and effectively. The CEO can and should participate in select solicitation meetings depending on the prospect and the CEO's own assessment of when and where his participation is needed/appropriate. All campaign materials, documents, and communications will of course be subject to review, edit, and approval by designated staff. The CEO and the NCDS campaign director should have a "standing" weekly meeting to review progress and discuss pending activities and meetings. NCDS will need administrative help (approximately 5-10 hours per week) to assist with scheduling and database management. FloridaWest's CFO (or other designee) will be tasked with pledge management/accounting procedures.

Board:

Collectively, the board should fully endorse and support the campaign and the five-year strategies being funded. This will include making fair and proportionate financial commitments, likely early in the campaign. Select members of the board will be enlisted as campaign leaders. Campaign leaders will be asked to attend campaign operations meetings (usually every two weeks), suggest solicitation strategies, help open doors, and resolve pending decisions. Peer volunteers are needed to attend solicitation meetings for the top 25-30 prospects and are welcome to attend solicitations of smaller prospects. With a core group of 8-10 leaders, most will likely assist with 5-10 prospects – either as door openers or by accompanying NCDS on the ask.

What information we will share about each interviewee after Phase One:

NCDS' pledge of confidentiality at the beginning of each interview is critical in gathering candid feedback and opinions that will inform campaign success. Accordingly, we are reluctant to "share" specific details of each interview. As appropriate, we will provide FloridaWest with whatever insight and information that would be helpful after Phase One. We are willing to provide indications of potential financial support with the understanding that these are not firm commitments and many of them will be given to us as "conditional" indications.

Campaign Leadership:

Individuals enlisted as campaign leaders should represent an appropriate mix of top investors, key industries, established community leaders/influencers, and new/next-generation leaders. In short, they should be individuals whose endorsement of the effort sends a clear message that the campaign (and the program it will fund) is vital to the community's shared economic future and that stakeholders who invest can be confident that the money will be put to good use. We begin identifying candidates during confidential interviews, based on our own observations and the opinions of the interviewees about who THEY think should carry the flag for FloridaWest. The initial program refinement process of the campaign will also help identify those who appear passionate and committed to FloridaWest and the program's objectives. Leaders are enlisted early in the campaign, but AFTER the evaluations process so that we can make a financial request when we enlist them for a campaign leadership role.

Follow-up process after formal solicitations:

NCDS will manage all aspects of the solicitation process, with volunteer assistance and influence. When the ask is made, we will get agreement from the prospect on an appropriate follow-up date, based on their decision process. We will follow up on that date. If the prospect is unresponsive, campaign leadership will be engaged for strategic counsel. Specific volunteers may be enlisted to follow up with the prospect through personal contact, with "scripting" assistance from NCDS as needed.

Campaign Timeline / Extension:

Phase One will inform the campaign timeline. The confidential interviews will allow us to assess three key determinants of campaign duration:

- How much "refinement" of the program is needed?
- Are the right leaders ready and willing to assist with the campaign?
- How will most investment decisions be made? (locally vs. upstream / one or two people vs. a board decision)

If FloridaWest agrees and accepts our recommended timeline, no additional fees will be charged if the campaign extends beyond that timeline. NCDS will essentially "work for free" with FloridaWest continuing to reimburse travel and other expenses.

Office Space/Equipment needs:

Office space for the NCDS campaign director is not required but is generally preferred and produces a better client experience. We do not need a computer or other equipment but will need access to the client's printer and internet access.

On-site campaign director/housing:

The NCDS campaign director will be on-site a minimum of four days per week. Some of our directors will choose to essentially “relocate” to your community with only occasional travel to and from Pensacola. An extended-stay hotel is appropriate and acceptable for directors who travel in and out weekly. For directors who “relocate,” we suggest a corporate apartment or other more permanent accommodations than a hotel.

NCDS capacity / other client commitments:

NCDS limits its engagements to ensure quality work, with quality people for each client. If we are retained by FloridaWest, our capacity to deliver will not be compromised by other client commitments.

Post-campaign services:

NCDS will remain engaged and available following the campaign. As needed/requested, we will:

- Consult with and assist FloridaWest regarding investor communications, pledge collections, etc.
- Produce economic impact analyses during the five-year implementation period to prove FloridaWest’s impact, including a one-page “scorecard” that shows return on investment for both private and public sectors (see example in Exhibits section)
- Conduct targeted solicitations of new/additional investor prospects through a 1-2 week engagement in year two, three, or four of the program’s implementation.

Cost Proposal

Feasibility Analysis & Goal Assessment

Management Fee	\$22,500
Estimated Expenses (NCDS Team travel, may be reduced with in-kind lodging support)	\$4,000

Campaign Management

Management Fee (8-month estimate)	\$25,000 / month
Estimated Expenses NCDS Team Travel/living Collateral design/printing Meeting costs Miscellaneous	\$5,000 / month

DRAFT

NCDS Project Team



**Tom DiFiore, MBA
President & CEO**

Since joining NCDS in 1995, Tom DiFiore has directed, supervised, and developed hundreds of fundraising campaigns for diverse client organizations in communities across the U.S. Thousands of direct solicitations, confidential interviews, and committee meetings have developed his skills in aligning client programs with stakeholder interests.

After managing campaigns as an on-site director, supervising the firm's project support team, and developing new clients as a business development officer, Tom became NCDS' President in 2010. In 2018, he assumed chief executive responsibilities from the firm's founder, Howard Benson. Tom's primary role as CEO is direct engagement with every client to ensure effective delivery of NCDS' proven process in pursuit of on time, over goal campaigns and a productive experience for client staff and volunteers. He believes that the firm's success is best measured by the success of its client communities, and that campaign success is achieved through uncompromising commitment to three core fundamentals: an honest and prescriptive up-front assessment; securing buy-in and ownership from the right leaders; and adherence to sound fundraising methodology.

Tom's involvement in campaigns that have raised hundreds of millions of dollars for a wide range of projects is a great source of pride and satisfaction. He has helped develop and design new organizations and initiatives in several communities, including Missoula, MT; Hendersonville, TN; Mankato, MN; Redmond, WA; Jonesboro, AR; and Fargo, ND. He has assisted a number of arts, culture, educational and sports organizations ranging from a major ballet company to a high school football booster club. And he has played a recurring role in program design, testing, and funding for some of NCDS' most enduring client organizations in Raleigh, NC; Tacoma, WA; Mobile, AL; and Sioux Falls, SD.

Tom holds a B.A. in economics from the University of Virginia and a M.B.A. from Georgia State University. He is a former board member of the Giving Institute and is a frequent speaker / presenter for regional and national associations representing chamber and economic development professionals. He spends his free time in Atlanta on the golf course, and with his wife, three children, and two dogs.

Tom will lead NCDS' work on behalf of FloridaWest, with direct engagement throughout the project. He will also supervise a full-time project director - dedicated exclusively to this campaign. The following bios represent a likely list of candidates for assignment, based on eventual project timing; organizational "fit;" and client approval.



Tom Micelotta, CFRE
Senior Project
Executive

Two words best summarize Tom Micelotta's value to NCDS clients: experience and success. He has managed dozens of campaigns and feasibility studies in a variety of communities for a broad spectrum of community and economic development organizations, raising over \$125 million in the process. His track record is a succession of over-goal campaigns - some in small communities that had never before raised money for economic development, and many in larger metros and for multi-campaign clients. Tom is a strong believer in the firm's one-step-at-a-time campaign process and is frequently commended for his user-friendly integration of that process with client operations and staff. His campaign success is also closely tied to his proven ability to enlist and engage top volunteer leadership and his strategic use of their influence. In short, he is highly effective at "leading the leaders." Tom's most recent projects have included the fourth Yankton Economic Success (YES 4 - Yankton, SD) \$3 million campaign, the eighth Forward Sioux Falls campaign (2021), raising \$17 million for the Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce and Development Foundation and a first-time campaign for a \$5 million strategic initiative for the Erie (PA) Regional Chamber and Growth Partnership titled "Erie Forward."

His other Chamber and Economic Development assignments include: a \$15.5 million economic, workforce & community development initiative for Forward Sioux Falls 7 (SD - 2016); an \$11 million economic development campaign for the Mobile (AL) Area Chamber of Commerce; Wake County Economic Development & The Greater Raleigh (NC) Chamber of Commerce - \$10 million; North Carolina's Eastern Alliance - \$4 million; Commerce Lexington (KY) - \$5 million; Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce (SC) - \$4 million; Asheville - Buncombe County Economic Development Coalition (NC) - \$5 million; Hutchinson (KS) Chamber; Greater Durham (NC) Chamber of Commerce; Chatham County Economic Development Corporation (NC); Union County (NC) EDC; Mooresville/South Iredell County (NC) Chamber of Commerce/EDC; Albany (GA) Area Chamber of Commerce and the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) in Richmond, VA. Tom came to NCDS well suited to manage the campaign process and to solicit investments in community and economic development programming. His professional background includes fundraising and staff training positions with two national non-profit organizations, and he has earned designation as a CFRE – Certified Fundraising Executive. He attended Saint Bonaventure University and Hamilton University in his native New York, earning degrees in Theology and Economics. Tom lives in Saint Johns, Florida but enjoys being apart-time campaign resident in NCDS client communities.



Craig Glogowski
Senior Project
Executive

Craig Glogowski is a seasoned campaign director and has worked with dozens of community and economic development organizations across the U.S. He has also served non-profit organizations as a senior executive, and also as a volunteer. As a result, he is equally skilled at engaging top community leaders as he is at advising and counseling professional staff.

He has led NCDS teams in over-goal campaigns for a wide range of clients throughout the U.S., including Cheyenne, Wyoming; Youngstown, Ohio; Raleigh, North Carolina; Carrollton, Georgia, Sioux Falls, South Dakota and Joliet, Illinois. His planning and feasibility work includes projects in Huntsville, Alabama; Fredericksburg, Virginia; Aurora, Illinois; and Salt Lake City, Utah.

Craig brings his clients the added benefit of having served in senior leadership roles for two major non-profits in the education and healthcare sectors, both as Foundation Executive Director and Director of Development responsible for all fundraising and marketing of the organization. As a volunteer, he has served on the boards of the Grand Junction Economic Partnership, Western Colorado Contractors Foundation, Grand Junction Lions Club and others.

Before joining NCDS, Craig was a senior staffer for one of Colorado's United States Senators where he used his organizational skills in directing the Senator's activities in the Western part of the state. He supervised the field office and managed casework and issues while working directly with local public officials, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and the news media.

He served in the United States Marine Corps and holds a Bachelor of Business Administration with emphasis in Finance from Colorado Mesa University where he served as student body president.

Craig and his wife, Monica, and their three sons, Jacob, Joshua and Joel live in Colorado where they are very active in the Community.



Rick Duke
Senior Project
Executive

Rick offers NCDS clients deep, relevant experience in economic development along with strong management and communications skills to deliver campaigns that produce both financial resources and strategies for program implementation and community impact. His background with public-private organizations and Universities gives Rick a solid foundation for mobilizing community leaders around growth and prosperity initiatives and for empowering professional staff to deliver proven economic development programming. Since joining NCDS in 2015, he has combined that background with campaign training and experience to become an

exceptional fundraiser who has helped several economic development organizations develop and fund ambitious new plans.

Rick's initial project helped create One East Kentucky – a new regional effort in Appalachia – and raised over \$2 million for its programming and development. He has also managed several feasibility studies and campaigns in the Midwest, including the Grow Watertown (SD) initiative, where he raised \$3.9 million in a community of 22,000 people. Rick has proven to be especially skilled at leading “first time” campaigns that require careful attention to strategy alignment, tactical detail, staff development, and generating buy-in and confidence from top leaders and investors.

His expertise and exposure to trends and best practices was developed while serving as an economic development professional in higher education at four universities- Georgia Tech, the University of Southern Mississippi, the University of Mississippi, and the University of West Florida. He helped develop the strategic plan for the launch of a Center for Entrepreneurship at UWF with a minor in Innovation Leadership. The programs he led at Georgia Tech garnered national recognition in the 2002 publication *Innovation U* and in 2005 by Innovation Associates as the “best university-based economic development program in the nation.” Two programs started under his leadership appear in Georgia Tech's profile in the recent *Innovation U 2.0*.

Rick is a past Board member and Honorary Life Member of IEDC, past Director of the Basic Economic Development Course at Georgia Tech, Past President of the Georgia Economic Developers Association, and a Past President of the Rotary Club of South Hall County GA. He is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute at the University of Oklahoma. Rick is married, has two grandchildren, and resides in Atlanta.



Trygve Vigmostad
Director
Economic Strategy Center

Trygve (“Trygg”) Vigmostad brings NCDS clients broad experience raising funds and success with development programs in both the public and private sectors.

As Director of the Economic Strategy Center, Trygve uses local and national data sources and economic modeling to develop persuasive, compelling rational for public and private sector investment in nonprofit programs and organizations. The Economic Strategy Center partners with community agencies to develop market and cost/benefit analyses, and economic development strategy.

Trygve started his career as a Senior Research Associate at the Bureau of Business Research, Michigan State University. While publishing the Michigan

Statistical Abstract, he authored articles on revenue sharing and land use. He joined the Michigan Department of Commerce as an economist, to write legislation and develop statistics to support business development. He wrote market feasibility studies for Maddux Publishing in Florida, and communities in Northern Ontario.

During his 40-year career managing development agencies and private companies, Trygve set up business development, marketing and fundraising programs for: the State of Michigan, the Lansing Regional Chamber of Commerce, Christman Construction, and, PolyDisplay ASA of Norway, where he was CEO for a \$30 million technology company.

Trygve has experience with NCDS fundraising projects. He completed NCDS projects in Bloomington-Normal, IL, Wilkes-Barre, PA, Flint, MI, Stuart, FL, Estero, FL, Columbus, MS, Livingston County, MI, Coral Gables, FL, Albuquerque, NM, and Buffalo, NY.

Trygve has extensive management, legislative and public speaking experience. He was Michigan's first Director of the Office of International Development, managed offices in Europe, Asia, Canada and Africa, and set new records attracting foreign investment while developing trade. His management positions required public speaking and testimony before the State Legislature and Federal committees. He was a guest lecturer in East Germany for the University of Michigan's William Davidson Institute, teaching economic development in the former East Germany.

Trygve excels in helping communities develop strategic plans for economic and community development. In addition to directing development agencies, he personally managed major investment projects, chaired a downtown master plan committee, designed, and developed an airport industrial park, and recruited airlines. He also managed several marketing and advertising campaigns.

Trygve enjoys the challenges of government and opportunities for public/private partnerships. He served on many boards and commissions, and represented Michigan with the Industrial Development Research Council, and in Washington D.C. with the Association for International Investment. He was a State Boundary Commissioner a local Planning Commissioner and served on the Advisory Council for Michigan State University's Center for International Business and Educational Research.

Trygve has a BA in Finance and MA in Economics. He and his wife Carol have 4 children and 8 grandchildren. He served in Vietnam with the 9th Infantry Division.

Exhibits / Samples

- **Mobile Chamber “Partners for Growth” Campaign**
 - Feasibility Study Executive Summary
 - Campaign Brochure
 - Economic Impact Infographics
 - Look back “Scorecard”
 - Projected for 2028

- **NCDS ProViews**
 - Raising Money vs. Raising Enough Money
 - Four Lessons from Forty Years of Fundraising
 - Engaging Your Leadership

Mobile Chamber Feasibility Study

Executive Summary

Since 1985, the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce has delivered focused and strategic economic development programming through a series of multi-year initiatives, funded by public and private stakeholders through successive fundraising campaigns. NCDS has managed all of these campaigns, each of which secured increased funding over the preceding one. The Chamber's economic development efforts are implemented under the *Partners for Growth* (PFG) brand. The 2017 campaign raised \$11 million for the *Growing Global, Investing Local* initiative, which will conclude in 2022. Chamber and PFG leaders began planning for the 2023-2027 plan (currently called "Team Mobile") earlier this year, and NCDS was again retained to conduct a feasibility analysis and goal assessment in advance of the next campaign.

From September 20th to October 7th, 2021, NCDS representatives conducted confidential interviews with 63 people representing 57 companies, institutions, and municipal governments. Using a carefully designed questionnaire (Exhibit C), the interviews attempted to elicit candid feedback regarding:

- Local economic conditions and Mobile's assets and impediments to economic development
- Perceptions of the Chamber and the PFG program's value and accomplishments
- Strategies, goals, and objectives of the proposed 2023-2027 *Team Mobile* plan
- Potential levels of financial support for the initiative
- Candidates for campaign leadership
- Other issues that could influence campaign outcomes

The following is a brief summary of the most pertinent findings and recommendations:

1. Opportunity and need for organizational assessment

Previous NCDS feasibility studies for past *Partners for Growth* campaigns have acknowledged the reputation and goodwill the Mobile Area Chamber of Commerce enjoys among its constituency as positive factors for fundraising purposes. We observed much of the same this time around. But we also heard some criticisms that, while relatively infrequent, were quite consistent in nature. Most notable is the fact that they came from **people who have been or are currently in leadership roles at the Chamber**. Moreover, NCDS' own experience with and exposure to chambers across the country allows us to make certain observations, especially as they relate to pursuing financial support. While the departure of Bill Sisson is universally regarded as a loss for Mobile, many asserted that it presents an **opportunity for needed change and a**

“refresh” within the Chamber. While many of the issues are beyond NCDS’ expertise and the scope of our assignment, we assert that our campaign will be impacted by the degree to which investors perceive a commitment to “change and improvement.” As they relate to investor perceptions (and campaign success), the most critical areas for organizational assessment include:

- **Staff driven vs. volunteer directed:** Competent, professional staff who have earned the trust and confidence of their leaders and members is a positive asset, and the Mobile Area Chamber has achieved this position over the course of many years. The downside is that volunteer leaders may become less engaged, given their other priorities and limited time. Staff will rightly perceive their increased autonomy and authority as validation of their value and performance. But over time, organizational focus and priorities may lose some alignment with the needs of the community, members, and investors. **As volunteer direction and oversight diminish, so does their sense of ownership.** We observed this condition throughout the interview process, but our sense of it was heightened by comments from two board members. The first was quite critical of how much time, effort, and communications is dedicated to five-star accreditation. The other voiced his frustration that his only duty seemed to be to *“show up at events to give some award of the month.”*
- **Budget transparency:** Since we were testing the potential for a campaign to support a projected five-year budget for PFG programming, we encountered a variety of opinions, questions, and assertions about this budget. **Most interviewees are uncertain at best, skeptical at worst, that PFG investments are allocated exclusively for economic development purposes.** Many seem to assume (some without any real negative judgement) that PFG monies are one of several revenue sources that fund the entire Chamber operation. Others (including one major investor) were more direct in claiming *“...they have assured me that every dollar raised from the PFG campaign is used for economic development, but I don’t believe that.”* These perceptions / questions present a challenge for the campaign on two fronts: 1) Defending the need for the campaign goal and 2) Distinguishing PFG pledges from companies’ other financial commitments to the Chamber (more on this below).
- **PFG Investor vs. Board of Advisors member:** Closely related to the above discussion of budget transparency, interviewee responses suggest that the Chamber’s success in acquiring Board of Advisor members may have the unintended consequence of curbing investments in PFG – both in terms of pledge amounts and number of investors. The Board of Advisors program is well-liked, and participants generally appreciate the benefits associated with it. But many also acknowledge the difficulty in discerning the value of their respective investments in PFG and B of A. NCDS believes these programs can and should co-exist, and that both should maximize their funding potential. But **some changes in how they are packaged, positioned, and perceived may be necessary.** The PFG campaign and the process of program refinement (see below) should be used as an opportunity to optimize these important Chamber programs.

2. Partners for Growth: strong endorsement, with insightful feedback and suggestions

An overwhelming majority of interviewees view the Chamber's economic development efforts (i.e., PFG) as effective and a vital contributor to the region's growth and prosperity. Those who consider themselves "in the know" applauded the Chamber's role as part of "Team Mobile," especially as a convener and connector of private and public leaders and a facilitator of deals and projects. From a fundraising perspective, PFG's past success and positive reputation provide invaluable "asking rights." **But maximizing the campaign's outcome will require some modifications to the 2023-2027 strategic plan and a reinvigoration of the PFG steering committee.** The needed refinements will be an early focus of NCDS' campaign strategy and will include a re-imagining of PFG communications and investor relations. Specific comments, reactions, and suggestions regarding PFG's strategies and operations are included throughout the "Key Findings" section of this report. An overview of the most critical elements that should inform our program refinement process includes:

- *PFG programming and funding must become more clearly distinguished from "The Chamber."*
- *Key investors and economic development stakeholders should assume a more active and visible role in program direction and oversight.*
- *Improved and enhanced investor benefits and communications.*
- *A careful look at prioritization and funding allocation of strategic elements, especially workforce/talent and downtown redevelopment.*
- *Goals and metrics for tracking and reporting progress and impact.*

3. Recommended campaign goal: \$13.5 million

The tested goal of \$16.5 million represents a 50% increase over the \$11 million raised five years ago for the *Growing Global, Investing Local* campaign. Interviewees generally support and understand the need for an increase in PFG funding. Some even contend that \$16.5 million "should be" achievable. But most asserted that a 50% increase is too aggressive. Because most current investors indicated a willingness to consider an increase in their own level of support, and because we believe new investors should and can be secured, NCDS recommends establishing a minimum campaign goal of \$13.5 million. Achieving this goal will be dependent on several factors, most notably:

- *Adherence to the recommendations contained in this report, especially with regard to program / organizational refinement.*
- *Commensurate increases from the top 5-10 investors, particularly the City and County – whose collective investments should approximate 40% of the total raised (the same percentage they contributed to the most recent PFG campaign).*
- *Strategic identification and solicitation of new investors.*

- *Successful enlistment of credible and influential leaders to assist with the campaign AND participate in PFG governance and oversight, with specific focus on many of the new and younger leaders at key investor and stakeholder companies.*

The expedited 9-month calendar proposed to Bill Sisson in June 2021 **may** be achievable. Given current circumstances and the likely implications of the CEO search on campaign timing, we recommend initial planning for a 10-month campaign, to begin immediately.

DRAFT

Leading TEAM MOBILE

Partners for Growth 2023-2027



PARTNERS FOR GROWTH CAMPAIGN CABINET

CABINET MEMBERS

PARTNERS FOR GROWTH 2023-2027

Doug Anderson
Burr & Forman LLP

Robert Baker
Hancock Whitney Bank

Brent Barkin
Shoe Carnival

Ty Bullard
Joe Bullard Automotive
Companies

W. Allen Carroll
Wilkins Miller LLC

Kenny Crow III
Crow Shields Bailey PC

John C. Driscoll
Alabama Port Authority

Tommy Faust
Trustmark Bank

Tyrone Fenderson Jr.
Synovus

Rashawn Figures
Dortch, Figures &
Sons Inc.

Mark Fillers
Renasant Bank

Liz Freeman
Long's Human Resource
Services

Monica Garsed
Spire

Terry Harbin
Affordable Homes
Gulf Coast LLC

Abe Harper
Harper Technologies LLC

J. Guy Helmsing
Hancock Whitney Bank

Michael Holland
Bryant Bank

Bibb Lamar Jr.
Servis First Bank

Frank J. Lott III
Heritage Homes

Kate Luce
Mississippi Export Railroad
Company

Rob Middleton
Rob Middleton Construction

Leland T. Moore Jr.
S&S Sprinkler Company LLC

Eliska Morgan
Thompson Engineering Inc.

Andy Newton
Uniti Fiber

McCrary Otts
Lyon Fry Cadden
Insurance Agency Inc.

Craig Savage
Airbus Americas Inc.

Rusty Shaw
PNC Bank

Mark Spivey
Truist Bank

Richard Stimpson
Leavell Investment
Management Inc.

George Talbot
Volkert, Inc.

Mac Taul IV
Merchants Transfer
Company

Chris Tracy
Bancorp South-Cadence

Lee Walters
Goodwyn, Mills &
Cawood Inc.

Matt White
White-Spunner Realty

Cody Williamson
Poarch Band of Creek
Indians

LEADING TEAM MOBILE

MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS PARTNERS FOR GROWTH 2023-2027

The Mobile Chamber and Team Mobile, have done a tremendous job of marketing the Mobile area to domestic and international prospects. With continued growth in jobs and investments and third-party business rankings for “Best Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Strategy,” “Best Business Climate,” and “Top 20 Seaport Communities,” Mobile has become a globally significant player in multiple industry sectors.

Despite Mobile’s recent growth and progress, **now is not the time to be complacent** in our efforts to attract, grow and create businesses and quality jobs. Competition from other communities is too intense, and impediments to future growth are too acute for us to not pursue aggressive intentional strategies. To continue our success in recruiting new industry and supporting industry expansions, we must put an **enhanced focus on developing strong workforce solutions; recruiting young, smart talent to the area; and supporting downtown development** and other quality-of-life assets for the community. All of our economic development efforts must be informed by an overarching agenda for diversity, equity and inclusion. The following strategic objectives will serve as a framework for a five-year plan to ensure your investment is working toward a better Mobile.

The work we do would not be possible without your investment. It is your investment that has transformed Mobile’s economy and allowed us to effectively compete for jobs. It is your investment that will create prosperity and growth for local businesses and residents. It is your investment that will build a better Mobile.

CO-CHAIRS PARTNERS FOR GROWTH V



**Commissioner
Merceria Ludgood**
Mobile County



**Patrick
Murphy**
Alabama Power Company



**Mayor
Sandy Stimpson**
City of Mobile



**Christian
White**
Regions Bank

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: EXISTING BUSINESS & EXPANSION SUPPORT

Engage and support existing employers to identify expansion opportunities, address challenges and facilitate competitiveness.



Conduct at least **1,000 engagement calls** with the area's existing employers to identify opportunities and provide needed assistance and expertise from our strategic action teams for key sectors.

Establish and continue to lead various **sector councils**, including the MAST Initiative and South Alabama Aerospace Council, to **deliver programming to address and discuss all relevant topics within our employer community.**

Maximize awareness of and access to **incentives and other available assistance** for existing operations, including international business opportunities, education programs and technology resources.

Support Mobile's **entrepreneurial culture and innovation ecosystem**. Encourage further development of Mobile's technology corridor along St. Louis Street in downtown Mobile and other strategic locations. Promote the engagement of higher education entities into Mobile's innovation ecosystem.

Focused and enhanced services and programming to **grow the capacity and success of diverse supplier firms:**

- Training, education and mentoring programs to grow supplier diversity.
- Develop, maintain and distribute a directory of capable, diverse businesses in the region.
- Support and promote "buy local" initiatives, including a "local business covenant" to encourage greater availability, capacity development and local contractor participation by non-local firms investing in Mobile.

PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR BUDGET: \$3.75 MILLION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: INVESTOR RELATIONS ENGAGEMENT

Actively engage investors in the Chamber's economic development program activities and oversight.

Develop and implement a Partners for Growth **Investor Advisory Council (IAC)** with seats for all investors at a minimum level and rotating memberships for other investors. Utilize select IAC members for program strategy, direction and execution and provide all members regular exclusive briefings.

Provide **regular communication** to Partners for Growth investors ensuring a high level of engagement, budget transparency and that metrics are achieved throughout their investment period. Host an annual reception for PFG investors to review the previous year's accomplishments and outline goals for the next 12 months.

Continue to **promote PFG investor companies to new and expanding companies** in the Mobile area. Provide introductions of PFG investors to decision-makers to provide local resources to economic development projects.

Host an annual **State of the Economy** event.



PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR BUDGET: \$1 MILLION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: NEW BUSINESS INVESTMENT ATTRACTION

Leverage Mobile's global competitiveness to advance the creation of quality jobs and attract new capital investment to enhance economic growth.



Focus recruitment efforts on “best fit” and “most desirable” companies* by capitalizing on the region's assets, existing industry clusters and business advantages.

Organize **foreign direct investment missions** and participate in **domestic and international trade shows** to promote Mobile as the global gateway for starting a business in the United States. Work in partnership with the Alabama Port Authority, the Mobile Airport Authority and other private asset companies to leverage area infrastructure to new companies.

Identify suppliers to existing employers, including sales and back-office operations, where mutual benefits would be realized by closer physical proximity.

Lead development and marketing of new sites and buildings and market existing buildings. Effectively utilize economic development tools, such as public-private partnerships, to **enhance the development of sites and buildings**.

* Current target industries and sectors include aerospace manufacturing, metal manufacturing, chemical manufacturing and logistics & warehousing. Growth and investment in downtown Mobile will be pursued through growth in professional, technology and education-related jobs (headquarters and regional offices, tech start-ups, university or college campuses).

PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR BUDGET: \$5 MILLION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: QUALITY OF PLACE AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Prioritize the development of assets within the community to enhance the quality of life and standard of living for new and existing citizens.

Leverage, convene and collaborate with various partners to **establish a consistent brand and identity** for the area. Facilitate professional assistance where needed to establish long-term strategic plans and measure progress, including commercial development in downtown Mobile.

Provide consistent and effective leadership to accomplish key **infrastructure improvements** like transportation arteries, parks, housing, public safety and education.

Determine opportunities to facilitate **downtown development** to promote Mobile's city center as a vibrant place to live, work and play, including identifying and recruiting new mixed-use developments.

Embrace and adopt the mayor's "1,000-day Framework," including continued efforts to **reduce blight and dilapidated buildings**. This includes exploring **new public-private initiatives**, such as redevelopment authorities, to be a new tool for catalyzing development activity with the private sector.

Target higher education institutions to **establish a branch campus in downtown Mobile** to attract talent and knowledge-based employers.

Partner with the City of Mobile's Parks and Recreation, the Downtown Mobile Alliance, and other community partners to **market events and activities** including ecotourism to promote positive community image, perceptions and sustainability of our natural assets.

Encourage, support and assist specific projects and ideas that will **improve Mobile's "quality of place" for business growth and investment and increase the population in Mobile.**



PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR BUDGET: \$1.25 MILLION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE: TALENT & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMING

Improve Mobile's ability to attract, retain and develop talent in the area.



Collaborate with workforce development partners

in the city and county, including Southwest Alabama Workforce Development Council, to implement and assist with workforce development and educational programming ensuring employers' needs are being met.

Foster **relationships with the region's employers** to assess and offer alternatives to fill their workforce needs including facilitating opportunities for "spouses/partners."

Connect with key education and training partners such as local universities, local community colleges, career centers, Mobile County Public School System and its Signature Academies to **increase student engagement with employers**. Continue investigating the feasibility of new career technical education programs, internships, apprenticeships and employer-related scholarships with partners.

Support workforce needs through a **robust talent attraction program**. Actions could include a digital hub and paid advertising campaigns, "familiarization events" for regional college students and universities and establishing a Young Professionals (YP) organization as a way to cultivate & retain young talent in the area.

**PROPOSED FIVE-YEAR BUDGET:
\$2.5 MILLION**

5 YEAR GOALS/METRICS*



**TOTAL FIVE-YEAR BUDGET:
\$13.5 MILLION**



2,500 NEW PRIMARY JOBS
with average annual wages of \$62,500



\$1.5 BILLION IN NEW CAPITAL INVESTMENT
new and expansion projects



ACHIEVE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF \$52,500
in Mobile County



INCREASE LABOR PARTICIPATION RATE
to meet or exceed the national average



INCREASE POPULATION
in the 18-65 age range

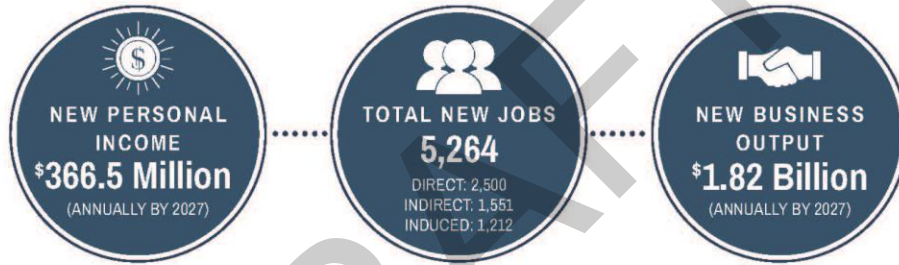
**The Chamber's economic development team will have varying degrees of "control" and "direct impact" on these metrics. As critical measures of economic growth and prosperity and indicators of progress toward our strategic objectives, we will track, monitor and report these metrics over the course of the five-year initiative.*

5-Year Strategies

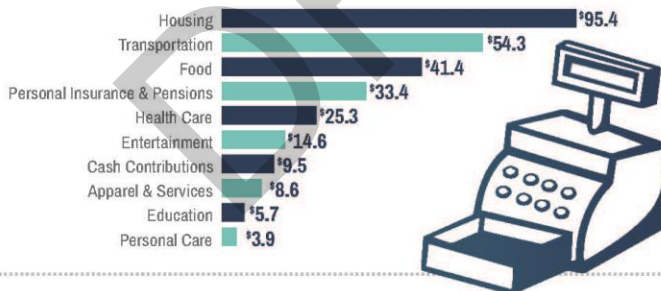
- Existing Business & Expansion Support
 - Investor Relations Engagement
- New Business Investment Attraction
- Quality of Place & Community Development
 - Talent & Workforce Development

Goals & Outcomes by 2027

- 2,500** New direct jobs with average annual wage of \$62,500
- \$1.5B** New Capital Investment
- \$52,500** Median Household Income
- Increase** Labor participation rate to meet / exceed national average
- Increase** Population of residents aged 18-65



NEW ANNUAL CONSUMER SPENDING IN MILLIONS



ANNUAL TAX REVENUE INCREASES

\$4.2 Million
Mobile County

\$9.1 Million
Mobile County Municipalities

\$3.9 Million
Special Tax Districts

\$22.4 million
State of Alabama

PROJECTED RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Analysis Source: Economic Strategy Center IMPLAN Input / Output model for Mobile County

DRAFT

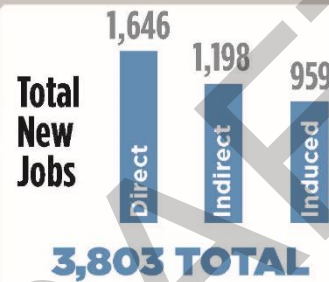


FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIES

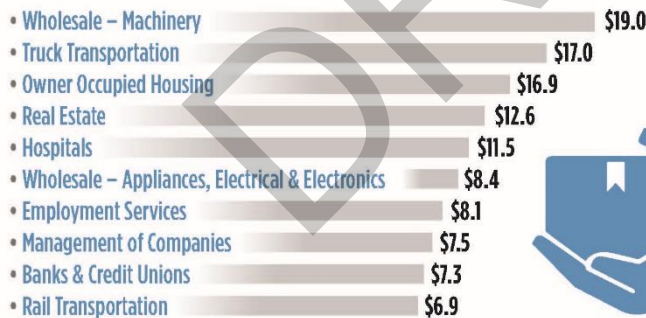
- ▶ New Business Recruitment & Investment Attraction
- ▶ Existing Industry Support, Innovation & Entrepreneurship
- ▶ Workforce Attraction, Retention & Development
- ▶ Diverse Business Development
- ▶ Business Advocacy & Quality of Place

GOALS & OUTCOMES

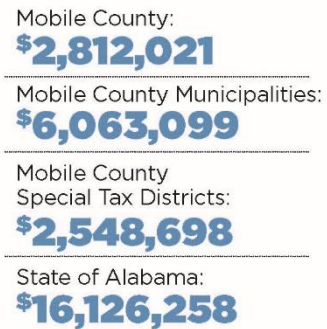
- 28 Attraction / Expansion Projects
- \$2 billion in new capital investment
- Facilitated **Innovation Portal** – a 29,000 square foot incubator/accelerator



NEW ANNUAL BUSINESS OUTPUT IN MILLIONS



Annual Tax Revenue Increases



RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Private Sector \$1 >>> **\$27.21*** * Based on \$4,497,500 investment from private sector and 7.71% average profit on \$1,587,538,656 in new annual output

Public Sector \$1 >>> **\$3.57**** ** Based on \$3,302,500 investment from public sector and new local tax revenues of \$11,423,818

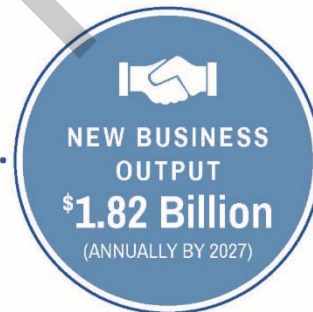
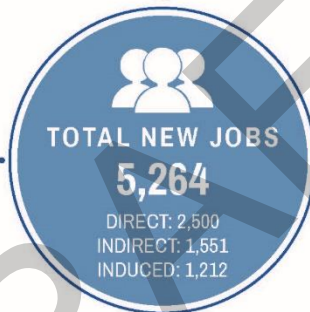
Analysis Source: Economic Strategy Center IMPLAN Input / Output model for Mobile County

5-Year Strategies

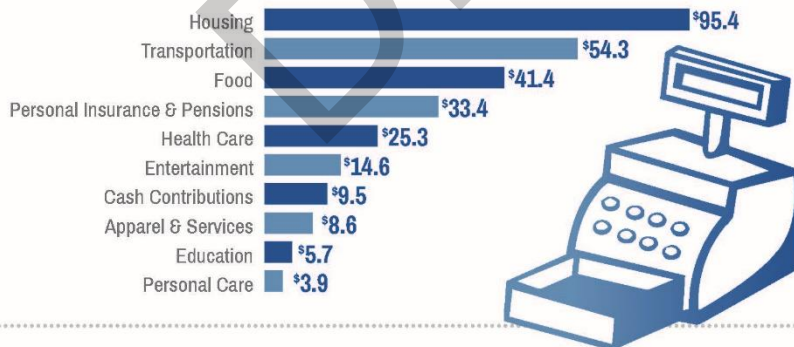
- Existing Business & Expansion Support
 - Investor Relations / Engagement
- New Business & Investment Attraction
- Quality of Place & Community Development
 - Talent & Workforce Development

Goals & Outcomes by 2027

- 2,500** New primary jobs with average annual wage of \$62,500
- \$1.5B** New Capital Investment
- \$52,500** Median Household Income
- Increase** Labor participation rate to meet / exceed national average
- Increase** Population of residents aged 18-65



NEW ANNUAL CONSUMER SPENDING IN MILLIONS



ANNUAL TAX REVENUE INCREASES

\$4.2 million
Mobile County

\$9.1 million
Mobile County Municipalities

\$3.9 million
Special Tax Districts

\$22.4 million
State of Alabama

PROJECTED RETURN ON INVESTMENT

PRIVATE SECTOR
\$1 → \$16.58*

*Based on \$8,500,000 five-year investment from private sector and 7.71% average profit on \$1.83 billion in new annual output

PUBLIC SECTOR
\$1 → \$3.43**

**Based on \$5,000,000 five-year investment from public sector and new annual local tax revenues of \$17.13 million

Analysis Source: Economic Strategy Center IMPLAN Input / Output model for Mobile County

Raising Money vs. Raising Enough Money

Since we first began raising money for chambers of commerce and economic development organizations almost 40 years ago, what we call the multi-year strategic initiative approach to funding community and economic development has become an accepted practice for communities and organizations of all types and sizes. The concept has become generically referred to by some as "superfund," or "capital campaign" with a proliferation of consultants offering fundraising services to the industry.

While we applaud the widespread acknowledgement of the effectiveness of this approach, we regret that it has become seen by some as just one more way to supplement an organization's revenue. These organizations can almost always raise some money, thanks to reputation, board influence, and the reluctance of anyone to say "no" to them. They may even be able to claim "victory," having set the fundraising bar low and intending to simply raise as much money as they can, and then figure out how to spend it. But rarely will they raise enough money to enhance their relevance, impact, and value to their constituency.

Here are three keys to raising enough money (and avoiding the consequences of just raising some money):

1. Present a solid plan

A well-conceived plan that addresses community threats or opportunities sends the message that you're not raising money for "business as usual" or to simply fund the organization. Moreover, projected budgets should allow you to "trace every dollar" to a specific element of the plan (staff, programs, marketing, etc.). Careful refinement of the plan

to ensure alignment with the needs of your top stakeholders is also a good idea.

2. Commitment to fully fund it

Ownership and buy in from top leaders and potential investors is critical. It can usually be secured through the above mentioned refinement process, and is manifested by their enthusiasm for the plan's full implementation - which will require full funding. Their commitment will elevate their sights to requisite levels of financial support, and establish the tone for all other investors. Without this commitment, you'll likely get a lot of "token" pledges, which won't be enough.

3. Execute, engage, and inform

By definition, bold aggressive plans will require several years to fully implement (hence our preferred term of multi-year strategic initiative), and should be funded by multi-year pledges that match the implementation period. Once those pledges are secured, execution of the plan must be your top priority. You need to deliver what was sold. We also recommend you find ways to meaningfully engage investors in the program delivery to maintain their sense of ownership. Finally, always keep your investors (and community) informed regarding progress, impacts, and even setbacks. Emphasis on these things has allowed our clients to collect almost 97% of pledge commitments, on average. And if you don't raise enough to begin with, you won't be able to execute (or engage and inform), resulting in a far lower collection rate.

Four Lessons from Forty Years of Fundraising

2017 marks our 40th year of raising money for community and economic development organizations. In the course of conducting over 700 campaigns in communities of all sizes across the U.S. we've seen many changes. We've also seen a handful of core principles of success validated year after year and campaign after campaign. ***Four things we've learned from successful campaigns, effective organizations, and dynamic communities:***

1. It's not only about money

The most successful fundraising campaigns focus on the outcomes and impacts that will be enabled through implementation of strategic initiatives and projects. The idea of simply "funding an organization" will rarely compel supporters to make capacity level financial commitments. The key is to sell robust and innovative plans and strategies that will create economic growth and prosperity for local stakeholders. By showing prospective investors the bottom-line benefits to their industries and companies, you transform fundraising from "asking for money" to "presenting an opportunity to generate significant return on investment." This is the secret to securing six and seven-figure pledges, and to achieving multi-million dollar campaign goals.

2. Think long-term

Meaningful economic development and community transformation take time. Paid professionals and volunteer leaders who understand this and communicate it to their constituents create an environment for organizational sustainability and continued fundraising success. Long term commitment and focus, delivered through 4/5- year strategic initiatives aligned with current needs and opportunities, is an approach adopted by many

successful communities. We have several client communities for which we have conducted four or more campaigns over the course of twenty or more years, where the tens of millions of dollars raised has been effectively spent on a progression of strategic growth initiatives. As a result of their progress, they maintain and expand their "asking rights" for funding future projects and programs.

3. Top leaders will engage

Many organizations struggle to attract and retain top business and civic leaders to their boards. We have found that busy, in demand leaders who may not have the time or interest for "organizational governance" will enthusiastically endorse and lead a multi-year strategic initiative with defined objectives and goals. We have also seen that "leaders follow their money." So if you can make a compelling case that merits a capacity level investment, you will also likely attract that decision maker to help persuade others to participate. Moreover, the implementation of the plan will benefit from engagement and oversight of these leaders.

4. Investors are different than members and sponsors

As mentioned above, investors are "buying" outcomes – not a menu of benefits. Treat them accordingly. Regular updates on the program's progress; analyses of the macro and micro impacts; opportunities to participate and assist in program delivery; and select "insider" perks will ensure pledge fulfillment. Sound investor relations will also enable future campaign success.

Engaging Your Leadership

The board voted for it, but...

One of the benefits of hiring consultants or “experts,” including fundraisers, is avoiding common mistakes and pitfalls that are often caused by following conventional wisdom or “armchair quarterbacks” within your organization or community.

One such mistake is the notion that approval and endorsement of a new program or project - and a campaign to fund it - by an executive board or committee will foster fundraising success. To be sure, such endorsement is a prerequisite to even think about launching a campaign.

Do the right people own it?

The mistake (and it's an easy one to make, even by professionals) is to assume that approval by your leaders will inevitably lead to capacity level investments from them. In our experience, the bar must be set higher than just “approval and endorsement.” Fundraising outcomes will be maximized when your organization's leaders and other top stakeholders truly buy in to the plan, and are genuinely committed to its funding and execution.

We call this “ownership” and over 700 campaigns have proven that the time and effort required to achieve a sense of ownership among the right individuals is one of the most important, and reliable, contributors to campaign success.

Endorsement vs. Ownership

You may be wondering, “What's the distinction between endorsement and ownership, and doesn't endorsement lead to the same outcomes?” The easy (but not so helpful) answer is that you'll know the difference when you see it. But the real distinction is that a leader who endorses your efforts will hope for your success; may provide some level of fundraising assistance; and will take credit for success – but no responsibility for it.

Conversely, a leader who has taken ownership will ensure your success by taking personal responsibility

and therefore committing his or her time, influence, and financial resources toward that objective.

Why ownership and commitment are better

The truly committed leader has skin in the game, and that can make a major difference in fundraising outcomes. A summary of the primary benefits of ownership and commitment among top leaders and investors:

- Intense interest in the plan's strategic details and implementation
- Provides credibility for the plan to those who may be unsure or skeptical of its value and impact
- Help identify, attract, and influence other investors
- Capacity (not token!) financial commitment
- Ensure accountability to investors and the community for fiscal responsibility and effective execution of the plan

Leadership is the best predictor of fundraising success (or failure)

We like to say that “leaders follow their money.” If you can get the right leaders to own and commit to your initiative and fundraising campaign, they will invest real money. Once they do that, your campaign – and the initiative being funded – will almost always be successful. And far more successful than if they merely “endorse and approve” it.

To learn more about why this distinction matters or how NCDS' process can help you accomplish this objective and raise more money, contact us at info@ncdsinc.net or visit us at www.ncdsinc.net.

FloridaWest EDA Capital Fundraising Proposal Scoring

Point Category	Total Possible Points	Points Awarded		Comments
		NCDS	Funding Solutions	
Clarity of Response to the Engagement	30			
Specific Goals, Costs, and Process	40			
Depth of Experience in Undertaking Work of a Similar Nature, Including Working with Board and Work Product Produced	20			
Innovative Approaches to Completion of Project	10			
Total Points	100			

June 21, 2023

The Board of Directors
FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance
3 West Garden Street, Suite 618
Pensacola, FL 32502

We are pleased to confirm our understanding of our engagement and the nature and limitations of the services we are to provide for FloridaWest Economic Development Alliance (“FloridaWest”).

You will agree to the procedures described in the attachment to this letter and acknowledge that the procedures to be performed are appropriate for the intended purpose of the engagement, which is to review selected accounting records, transactions, agreements and processes. Our engagement to apply agreed-upon procedures will be conducted in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). Those standards require that we obtain your written agreement to the procedures to be applied and your acknowledgment that those procedures are appropriate for the intended purpose of the engagement, as described in this letter. The agreement and acknowledgment are contained within this letter. A refusal to provide such agreement and acknowledgment will result in our withdrawal from the engagement. We make no representation that the procedures we will perform are appropriate for the intended purpose of the engagement or for any other purpose.

Because the agreed-upon procedures do not constitute an examination or review, we will not express an opinion or conclusion. In addition, we have no obligation to perform any procedures beyond those to which you agree.

We will issue a written report upon completion of our engagement that lists the procedures performed and our findings. Our report will be addressed to the Board of Directors of FloridaWest. If we encounter restrictions in performing our procedures, we will discuss the matter with you. If we determine the restrictions are appropriate we will disclose the restrictions in our report. Our report will contain a paragraph indicating that had we performed additional procedures, other matters might have come to our attention that would have been reported to you. You understand that the report is intended solely for the information and use of the Board of Directors and management of FloridaWest, and should not be used by anyone other than the specified parties.

There may exist circumstances that, in our professional judgment, will require we withdraw from the engagement. Such circumstances include the following:

- You refuse to provide written agreement to the procedures and acknowledge that they are appropriate for the intended purpose of the engagement.
- You fail to provide requested written representations, or we conclude that there is sufficient doubt about the competence, integrity, ethical values, or diligence of those providing the written representations, or we conclude that the written representations provided are otherwise not reliable.
- We determine that the description of the procedures performed or the corresponding findings are misleading in the circumstances of the engagement.
- We determine that restrictions on the performance of procedures are not appropriate.

An agreed-upon procedures engagement is not designed to detect instances of fraud or noncompliance with laws or regulations; however, should any such matters come to our attention, we will communicate them in accordance with professional standards and applicable law. In addition, if, in connection with this engagement, matters come to our attention that contradict the procedures, we will communicate such matters.

You agree to the procedures to be performed and acknowledge that they are appropriate for the intended purpose of the engagement.

You are responsible for providing us with (1) access to all information of which you or the appropriate party are aware that is relevant to the performance of the agreed-upon procedures on the subject matter, (2) additional information that we may request from the appropriate party for the purpose of performing the agreed-upon procedures, and (3) unrestricted access to persons with the entity from whom we determine it necessary to obtain evidence relating to performing those procedures.

At the conclusion of our engagement, we will require certain written representations in the form of a representation letter.

I am the engagement shareholder who is responsible for supervising the engagement and signing the report or authorizing another individual to sign it.

We estimate the time to complete the attached agreed upon procedures will be between 20 to 30 hours at a composite hourly rate of \$200. This estimate is based on anticipated cooperation from your personnel in answering questions and providing requesting information in a timely manner and the assumption that unexpected circumstances will not be encountered during the engagement. If significant additional time is necessary, we will discuss it with you and arrive at a new fee estimate before we incur the additional cost.

Parties to this engagement agree that any dispute that may arise regarding the meaning, performance, or enforcement of this engagement will, prior to resorting to litigation, be submitted to mediation upon the written request of any party to the engagement. All mediations initiated as a result of this engagement shall be administered by a Florida Bar Certified trial mediator selected by the parties. The results of this mediation shall be binding only upon agreement of each party to be bound. Costs of any mediation proceeding shall be shared equally by both parties.

We appreciate the opportunity to assist you and believe this letter accurately summarizes the significant terms of our engagement. If you have any questions, please let us know. If you agree with the terms of our engagement as described in this letter, please sign the enclosed copy and return it to us. If the need for additional services arises, our agreement with you will need to be revised. It is customary for us to enumerate these revisions in an addendum to this letter. If additional specified parties of the report are added, we will require that they acknowledge in writing their responsibility for the sufficiency of procedures.

Very truly yours,

For the Firm

RESPONSE:

This letter correctly sets forth the understanding of Board of Directors of FloridaWest.

Name

Title

Date

DRAFT

SCHEDULE OF AGREED-UPON PROCEDURES

1. Obtain and review a listing of transfers, if any, between private and public cash accounts during 2022 for approval, propriety of use of funds, and agreement to the general ledger and applicable bank statements.
2. Review and document FloridaWest's process for adhering to provisions of interlocal and appropriation agreements, including evaluation of propriety of expenses incurred in accordance with each agreement, approval of such expenses, and compliance with other requirements such as fiscal reporting.
3. Review grant agreements, as determined by management, and document any grantor restrictions and reporting requirements.
4. Review member agreements, as determined by management, and document any restrictions on use of member contributions.
5. Review and summarize policies and procedures regarding use of funds and safeguarding against misuse of public funds.

DRAFT



Via Email

September 19, 2022

Scott Luth Brian Hilson
Chief Executive Officer
Florida West Economic Development Alliance

Dear Mr. Luth:

This letter is intended to set forth our understanding as to the nature, scope and terms of professional consulting services FLORIDIAN PARTNERS, LLC., (hereinafter referred to as "the Firm"), has agreed to provide to Florida West Economic Development Alliance. (hereinafter referred to as "Client"), the amount of fees for said services, and the manner in which those fees and related expenses will be billed.

Firm warrants that it is capable and available to provide services described herein.

Client warrants that the signatory to this agreement is authorized to execute said agreement and commit to the payment of any and all fees due under the terms of this agreement.

1. SCOPE OF SERVICES. The Firm agrees to provide professional lobbying and advocacy services and represent Client's interests before the Florida Legislature and executive branch agencies, facilitate discussions with key decisionmakers within those offices; and assist Client in identifying policy and budgetary business opportunities within Florida government.

2. TERM. The Initial Term of this relationship shall commence on October 1, 2022 - March 31, 2023, and may be extended for up to three one-year consecutive terms upon the mutual consent of the parties. This Agreement may be terminated for convenience at any time by either party upon thirty days written notice.

3. FEES. The Firm will provide the above-referenced professional lobbying and advocacy services for a fee of \$360,000 payable in six (6) monthly installments of \$5000 each.

4. EXPENSES. Any pre-approved reasonable expenses including, but not limited to lobbyist registration fees, overnight lodging and airfare, meals, conference registration fees, and extraordinary postage or freight will be separately invoiced with receipts provided to Client.

5. CONFIDENTIALITY. The Firm will treat any and all information, communications, or materials of Client as confidential and will not disclose or divulge same unless otherwise directed or authorized by Client or ordered to do so by a court of competent jurisdiction. The Firm understands and agrees that in the event of a breach of this Section 5, damages may not be an adequate remedy and Client is entitled, inter alia, to seek injunctive relief to restrain any such breach, threatened or actual, and all costs and fees incurred by Client in the enforcement of this Section 5. Client acknowledges that Florida law requires registered lobbyists to report lobbying compensation on a periodic basis and that the Firm will comply with such required disclosure. The parties acknowledge that Florida is subject to Florida's Public Records Law, Chapter 119 of

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Tallahassee
108 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301
Phone (850) 681-0024

Miami
235 Catalonia Avenue
Coral Gables, FL 33134
Phone (305) 461-4260

WWW.FLAPARTNERS.COM

the Florida Statutes (the "Act") which requires it to provide access to its records, subject to certain limitations. The Firm agrees to allow public access to applicable records, documents, papers, letters or other material subject to the provisions of the Act and made or received in conjunction with this Agreement.

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6. REPORTING. The Firm will be available to meet or discuss the status of any activities undertaken on behalf of Client. At mutually convenient times, the Firm will schedule periodic meetings or conference calls with Client to review the progress of any given task or project.

7. INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR. The Firm and its employees, subcontractors and agents are independent contractors in the rendition of the services under this agreement and shall not hold itself out nor permit its employees or agents to hold themselves out, nor claim to be, officers or employees of Client, nor to incur any debts, obligations, or liabilities of any kind on behalf of Client.

8. ETHICAL & LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS. The Firm agrees and warrants that it will comply with all applicable local, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations in its representation of Client under this agreement. The Firm agrees and warrants it will not undertake any representation that may conflict with the representation in this Agreement.

9. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS—This agreement sets forth the entire understanding of the parties and neither party hereto is relying upon any oral representations made by the other except as set forth in this agreement. This agreement shall be governed by the laws of the State of Florida and venue for any dispute relating thereto shall lie in Leon-Escambia County, Florida. In the event that it becomes necessary for either party to institute legal proceedings to enforce the terms of this agreement, the prevailing party shall be entitled to all costs, including reasonable attorney's fees, from the non-prevailing party.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this agreement, please do not hesitate to call. Should you find these terms agreeable, please sign this letter below and return the original to me.

We look forward to working with you and your team.

Sincerely,



Jorge Chamizo, Partner
FLORIDIAN PARTNERS, LLC

Michael Cantens, Principal
FLAGLER STRATEGIES, LLC

AGREED TO & ACCEPTED BY:

Name

Title

Date