

Ocala/Marion County Economic Action Team Key Initiatives Status Update June 2010

At the October 29, 2008 Economic Growth Summit, which convened nearly 100 business executives, community leaders and elected officials, a twelve-point plan was activated to help stimulate growth in our economy. The Economic Action Team is aggressively implementing this plan and has attached a status update on their activities.

1. Expand Dislocated Worker Funding, Workforce Board Funding and Training Grants
2. Provide Training and Educational Resources for Dislocated Workers
3. Infrastructure Improvement, Creation of New Business Parks including Ocala International Airport
4. Impact Fee & Permit Mitigation Relief for Economic Development Projects
5. Define Specific Areas in the Community for Redevelopment for Business Improvement Zones and Pass State Legislation for an Enterprise Zone
6. Expedited Permitting by State and Local Governments
7. Competitive Rates and Policies for Ocala Utility Services
8. Intensify the EDC's Business Recruitment and Marketing Efforts
9. Strengthen Business Retention Programs
10. Support the Chamber's "Buy Local" Initiative
11. Improve Small Business Assistance Delivery System and Entrepreneurial Development Capability
12. Explore "Green" Industry Attraction as a Possible Target Industry

Initiative	Description	Lead Organization (s)	Status Updates
Expand Dislocated Worker Funding, Workforce Board Funding and Training Grants	Provide immediate safety net for dislocated workers and pursue avenues for training to help them secure new jobs/career paths	Workforce Connection and College of Central Florida (CF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Connection was awarded a \$2.9 million Pathways out of Poverty grant. Through this funding source, CF has provided entry-level training for green careers to 85 students. Additional training is scheduled through September 2010. • Workforce Connection has applied for an additional \$470,000 Manufacturing grant (NEG). • CF provided \$10,800 non-credit scholarships were awarded to unemployed or underemployed students who do not qualify for other scholarships or tuition assistance for workforce development programs.
Provide Training and Educational Resources for Dislocated Workers	Access and availability for training to pursue new career paths	Workforce Connection/ College of Central Florida (CF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Connection has partnered with CF and Monster.com to provide Power Seeker Workshops and Talent Marketplace Workshops. • 127 displaced workers have completed re-careering training in healthcare. New training programs were developed based on community need including a Silver Certified Nursing Assistant program for long-term care. • CF has provided training programs designed for reentry into the job market for veterans returning from active duty. In January CF added Career Coaching to the Veterans program and trained local veteran retirees to provide volunteer career coaching services. Job placement has increased by 25% since coaching began. • CF has partnered with Shaw Industries to create a skilled workforce ready for employment in less than 6 months. Over 30 local residents have completed the training and have become NCCER certified. Job placement is at 50% at this time.

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<p>Infrastructure Improvement, Creation of New Business Parks Including Ocala International Airport</p>	<p>Become more competitive with other communities by creating “shovel-ready” sites</p>	<p>City of Ocala/Marion County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Marion County Commission partnered with the EDC to contract National Site Location Consultant John Rhodes, Moran, Stahl & Boyer to produce a Business Park Study and marketing plan to further the EDC’s business recruitment and expansion efforts. • The City has designed the extension of SW 67th Avenue and all related utilities through the Ocala Business Park and will seek construction bids within 45 days from issuance of State related permits. Staff continues to work independently and in conjunction with the partnership on several opportunities that have expressed interest in locating operations at the business park, developing retail components along SR 40, and the airport terminal project. The exact nature and level of involvement of each company and related project varies. • In addition, the City continues to work independently and in conjunction with the partnership to establish a new business park at the former Magna property at I-75 and US 27. To that end the City in conjunction with Marion County, the TPO, and the DOT are discussing the possibility of a county-wide interchange study to determine the off-site transportation improvements necessary to support business park development.
<p>Impact Fee & Permit Mitigation Relief for Economic Development Projects</p>	<p>Remove barriers that impede the process for companies that would create jobs in our community</p>	<p>City of Ocala/Marion County</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marion County Board of County Commissioners extended a suspension on transportation impact fees through December 2010. • The City is currently working with a consultant to consider reductions in water and sewer impact fees and simplification of the process. City Council is considering an ordinance that eliminates front foot connection charges and allows impact fees to be paid at time of certificate of occupancy rather than building permit. Also, the City is currently working with a

			consultant to evaluate utility services including electric in the areas of organizational efficiency and competitiveness, wholesale power acquisition, and alternatives and utility of system sale.
Define Specific Areas in the Community for Redevelopment for Business Improvement Zones and Pass State Legislation for an Enterprise Zone	Generate incentives to entice companies to expand/locate to Ocala	City of Ocala/ Marion County/EDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EDC assisted Santelli Tempered Glass, Signature Brands LLC, and Fire Program Systems through the state and local application processes to create an anticipated 154 jobs within the Enterprise Zone. The State established the Ocala Enterprise Zone on January 1, 2010. Since that time two companies have expanded into the Zone including Signature Brands, LLC and Santelli Tempered Glass with the combined commitment to invest over \$15,500,000 in building, equipment, and machinery and creating over 126 new jobs. In addition, city staff has been in communication with over 103 businesses expressing an interest in State related incentives. In addition, over the next six months the City will be working with its urban planning consultant to develop a city-wide vision and evaluate the possibility of creating additional community redevelopment areas in support of business development.
Expedited Permitting by State and Local Governments	Remove barriers that would impede the process for companies that would create jobs in our community	City of Ocala/Marion County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both Santelli Tempered Glass and Signature Brands, LLC acknowledged the collaborative work in permitting and customer service by state and local governments as a key factor in their site selection process.
Federal Legislative Support	Determine availability of Federal programs to assist with local recovery efforts	Congressman Cliff Stearns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Florida Back to Work program brought an influx of Federal stimulus dollars to Marion County and private sector companies to assist with job creation. After meeting with Marion County community bankers, Rep. Stearns wrote a letter that was signed by the entire Florida Congress to FDIC seeking forbearance to community banks so they can lend locally again.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rep. Stearns worked with The Florida Horse Park in getting expedited 501c3 status with the IRS. • Rep. Stearns worked with the branches of the U.S. Military and was able to secure an Army JROTC unit for Francis Marion Military Academy in Ocala.
Competitive Rates and Policies for Ocala Utility Services	Remove barriers that impede the process for companies seeking to create jobs in our community	City of Ocala	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ocala Utility Services is completing their rate feasibility study.
Intensify the EDC's Business Recruitment & Marketing Efforts	Recruit solid companies to expand and/or move to the community, creating quality jobs	EDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.LocateOcala.com went live on June 2 and promotes Business Parks in Ocala/Marion County. • Workforce Connection submitted company names of Taylor, Bean & Whitaker suppliers and competitors, as well as suppliers and competitors of another company that chose not to locate in Ocala. Applied Marketing further developed the list with executive phone and e-mail contacts as well as some specific company research. There are 63 financial companies in this list. • Applied Marketing has identified an additional 135 companies that were delivered at the end of March. Direct calls began in April and continued through May. • In April, the EDC entered into an agreement with the Site Location Partnership to efficiently and economically increase participation and exposure at industry trade shows. The first of six shows was the North American Logistics Show in Cleveland. There were 23 SLCs hosted at the reception. The EDC has received profile information on these consultants. There were 27 company leads generated for follow-up from the trade show booth. • The EDC participated in CoreNet Global Summit during April 18-20th in New Orleans and Florida Site Consultants Event.

			<p>CoreNet is the international association of corporate real estate executives. Several Florida economic development groups including the Ocala/Marion County EDC hosted a group of 16 site consultants and real estate executives on the business advantages of Florida.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chamber and EDC will be working with Enterprise Florida on hosting a delegation of interested business representatives from Germany in June 2010.
Strengthen Business Retention Programs	Effectively communicate available programs that could assist local companies with growth and job creation	EDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EDC assisted Rasmussen College with their local investment application process to create an anticipated 20 high wage, professional jobs, and capital investment of \$5.2 million.
Support the Chamber's "Buy Local" Initiative	Keep money spent by local businesses and individuals in the community	ALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chamber is launching an online business directory that provides information on local businesses in addition to job postings, news releases, events, coupons and more in an effort to raise awareness and visibility of local companies throughout Marion County and beyond. The site is public although all features have not been launched, WhyOcala.com • The Chamber is reconvening a group of business leaders to analyze, research, and move forward with procurement policy suggestions specifically for the School Board and City of Ocala. • Chamber continues to utilize new marketing initiatives to bolster the "Buy Local" campaign including TV and radio public service announcements.

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<p>Improve Small Business Assistance Delivery System and Entrepreneurial Development Capability</p>	<p>Effectively communicate available programs that could assist local small businesses and/or entrepreneurs with growth and job creation</p>	<p>Chamber/ Small Business Development Council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chamber hosted an Economic Gardening summit with Steve Quello and GrowFL to lay out a concrete plan for identifying and assisting “Stage 2” resident companies in the area grow. • The Chamber and the EDC hosted a Colombia Sales Mission briefing with Enterprise Florida and local companies interested in exporting goods and services to Colombia (Florida’s 3rd largest trading partner). Sales mission to Bogota and Cartagena to take place in August 2010.
<p>Explore “Green” Industry Attraction as a Possible Target Industry</p>	<p>Research to determine our competitiveness and possible strategies to attract companies in this industry</p>	<p>EDC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through their contract with Site Location Partnership, the EDC participated in the Wind Power Expo in Dallas in May. • The Chamber along with Workforce Connection and CFCC hosted a Green Business Roundtable which explored a variety of topics and garnered a high level of participation from a variety of businesses and industries looking to capitalize on green industry growth. • The Chamber will be launching a “Green” certification and recognition program locally that will be partnered with the nationally recognized “Green Plus” program. As consumers search for "Green Businesses", this certification will place certified businesses in a national green business data base.

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