

Alachua County Advisory Boards
Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
Accomplishments Report FY2020-21/ Annual Workplan 2021-2022

Date: October 28, 2021

Board/Committee Name: Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)

Chair 2020/2021: Marlon Bruce **Board**

Liaison: Sean McLendon

Brief History of Committee: The reconstitution of the Economic Development Advisory Committee was approved by the County Commission on August 12, 2008. Its purpose is to develop and provide policy recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners related to the promotion of sustainable economic development activities within Alachua County.

Mission Statement: The responsibility of the Economic Development Advisory Committee shall be to develop and provide policy recommendations to the County Commission related to the promotion of sustainable economic development activities within Alachua County.

Note from the Out-Going Chair: The Economic Development Committee continued to make progress on its workplan even in the ongoing disruption of the pandemic. COVID has continued to impact membership and attendance. The Board's recent revision to the membership requirement is hoped to fix this. We served the Board and the community by meeting in person when possible and virtually as the Delta Variant surged. We look forward to better days in 2022 as the local economy continues to recover and expand.

Major Accomplishments in FY2020-21:

1. Major Recommendations and Project Oversight:
 - Broadband: Motion urging to County Commission to send a note of thanks to State and Federal Legislative leaders supporting broadband initiatives.
 - Oversight of Sports Events Complex Design
 - Recommendations on the Small-Producer Agriculture Capital Support Grants methodology
2. Heard Presentations and provided input regarding the following topics:
 - Local Food Initiatives - Meat Processing, Food Hub, Composting
 - Updates on Community Economic Impacts of COVID
 - Small-Producer Agriculture Capital Support Grants
 - Alachua County's FY22 Budget
 - Eco-Industrial Park Marketing Efforts
 - Alachua County Sports Event Center

- General US Army Reserve Equipment Concentration
- Broadband Opportunities and Update on the City-County Digital Access Committee
- Exploration of an Airport-Centered Industrial Park Expansion

Goals & Objectives for FY2021-22:

- Meet with all municipal governments to hear their thoughts on economic development
- Monitor and provide recommendations to Alachua County's investment in the Sports Event Center at Celebration Pointe
- Monitor and provide recommendations to the development of the business and marketing plan of the Alachua County Eco-Industrial Park
- Encourage initiative to advance reliable and affordable internet infrastructure in Alachua County.
- Support the development of municipalities' bike/pedestrian plans and ecotourism for integration into a County-wide plan (Trail Towns)
- Monitor and provide input related to the new CRA funding allocated for East Gainesville and the City of Newberry
- Monitor and support Gainesville Regional Airport initiatives and determine if Alachua County can be of assistance in supporting their growth
- Promote the reuse/circular economy potential in Alachua County (added by BoCC in 2021) - This item will include a review of the business selection criteria

Standing Goals:

- Continue to encourage responsible east county development and provide recommendations to BoCC.
- Support initiatives to diversify local economy in targeted industries.
- Provide recommendations to the BoCC regarding economic development activities and projects at the Old Fairgrounds, Eco-Industrial Park, and East County development as needed.
- Provide recommendations, as necessary, to the BoCC related to QTI proposals; Florida Flex; future business development; grant funding; zoning; and, incentives zones.
- Committee will take a more public proactive role in the community in evaluating and advancing the County's competitiveness.
- Support regional workforce board and education training entities in training and retraining to prepare individuals for skilled employment. Support innovative programs such as Startup Quest and eWITS.
- Collaborate with state economic development agencies in promoting economic development in Alachua County.
- Extend invitation to smaller municipalities to participate in EDAC monthly meetings.
- Invite economic development stakeholders to attend one EDAC meeting to discuss alignment and economic development priorities in the community.

- Monitor, support as appropriate, engage, and provide input regarding the new Gainesville Chamber strategic plan and implementation
- Assist County Economic Development Coordinator in accomplishing goals and objectives of EDAC work plan.

Last modified September 14, 2021