

Alachua County Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Accomplishments Report FY2023-24/ Annual Workplan 2024-2025

Date: October 24, 2024

Board/Committee Name: Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC)
Chair 2023/2024: Tracey Todd, Vice-Chair: Jeffrey Arnold
Municipal Engagement Subcommittee Chair: Michael Carnevale
Board Liaison: Sean McLendon

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

Mission Statement: The Economic Development Advisory Committee's responsibility is to develop and provide policy recommendations to the County Commission regarding the promotion of sustainable economic development activities within Alachua County.

Note from Chair:

The Economic Development Committee continued its outreach efforts to partner institutions and municipalities to learn about their economic priorities and what the County may do to assist. To expand our ability to engage, EDAC created a Municipal Subcommittee chaired by Michael Carnevale.

Going forward for 2025, the Committee is eager to help the merger of Tourism with Economic Development into a new department and to provide guidance in its formative years. The Committee looks forward to beginning FY2025 with new opportunities to impact the community.

Significant Accomplishments in FY2023-24:

- 2024 Small Municipality and Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement. Continuing their outreach work from 2022, the Committee visited three stakeholders to better understand their interests and preferences for economic development. The Committee will bring the Board summary recommendations on engaging with the small municipalities as they meet with them.
 - October - UF Innovate Sid Martin
 - February – City of Hawthorne on Economic Development Priorities
 - March – City of Archer on Economic Development Priorities
 - June – City of High Springs on Economic Development Priorities
 - June – City of Gainesville Presentation on GCRA
 - August - City of Newberry Economic Development Priorities

- EcoLoop – Reviewed GreenEdge and Sunshine Compost applications and recommended the Board accept both proposals. The Committee provided general oversight of the EcoLoop prospect selection methodology and review of applications for Board

consideration. The Committee considered aerospace, aviation, and semiconductor industrial land use as an expansion of the park's PD.

- Reviewed the consolidation of Tourism and Economic Development functions for FY25.
- Created a Subcommittee to facilitate Small Municipality and Stakeholder Engagement better. Michale Carnevale is the subcommittee chair.
- Discussed the growing opportunities of Trade Jobs and a supporting vocational pipeline with Shannon Ritter, M.Ed, Director, Career & Technical Education, Alachua County Public Schools

- Oversight of Small Farmer Grant agriculture grants supporting small farms.
 - The Committee has provided staff feedback on improvements to the program for the 2024 funding cycle.
- Oversight of Community Redevelopment Funds for the Gainesville Metropolitan Area - The Committee continued to oversee the Airport Gateway Phase I Analysis.
 - Airport Gateway Objective – Promote a sense of place through a unified vision of 21st-century light industrial and commercial property opportunities in the Airport-Waldo Road and 39th Avenue (Airport Gateway). This will be achieved via three phases. The first phase will be a City-County jointly funded property analysis and a follow-up market and real estate study of the project area's industrial and commercial property. This analysis will also make recommendations suitable to guide A phase 2 master planning effort.
 - Phase 1 will also provide recommendations about governance, incentives, and public-private collaboration options to promote light industrial and commercial property opportunities.
 - Phase 2: Master Plan—The second phase will involve a master planning effort. In advance, matching funding will be sought from the US Economic Development Administration (USEDA).
 - Phase 3: Construction - The third phase also seeks USED A funding to construct facilities and infrastructure supporting the master plan.
- Discussed tourism's economic impact as part of the consolidating mission of the FY25 Tourism and Economic Development Department

EDAC Goals & Objectives for FY2024-25:

Municipal Engagement

EDAC recognizes the importance of all the County’s municipal partners to economic well-being. Based on this regular engagement, EDAC will make recommendations on how the County can promote the economic priorities of small municipalities.

To facilitate these discussions, the Committee created a subcommittee in 2024. Below is a tentative list of 2025 meetings and topics. If cities are unwilling to participate in a forum, staff will move on to the next town. Some conversations may come out of order depending upon the towns' availability.

2025 Tentative Municipal Engagement Subcommittee Meetings

Time	Location	Topics
February	Archer	Shovel Ready Industrial Lands
March	Lacrosse	General Discussion
April	Micanopy	General Discussion
May	Waldo	General Discussion
June	Hawthorne	General Discussion, Surtax, Gas Tax Formula,
August	Alachua	Economic diversity, CRA investments
September	High Springs	CRA-Downtown Redevelopment, High Springs-Newberry Rail to Trail, Residential Development
October	Newberry	Regional Wastewater Services, Ag-Tech Park Development

The EDAC Committee will provide guidance to the new Department of Tourism & Economic Development through 2025. These major topics will be discussed over multiple meetings.

2025 Tentative Major Topics for Regular Meetings

Time	Location	Topics
January	Downtown Gainesville	Joint Tourism & EDAC Meeting
February	Santa Fe College -Charles R. Perry Construction Institute	Construction and Technical Program, Green Jobs Pipeline
March	Alachua County Sports Events Center	Sports & Cultural Economic Impacts
April	UF Innovate/UF Astraeus Space Institute	Bioscience, Semiconductors, Aerospace & Aviation
May	Downtown Gainesville	Ecotourism: Blueways, Greenways & Trails; Conservation Lands
June	Downtown Gainesville	301 Study Corridor – East Alachua County Economic Metrics; Airport Gateway Project Update
August	Downtown Gainesville	Shovel-Ready Industrial Sites: Locations & Comprehensive Marketing
September	Downtown Gainesville	Overall Economic Development Community Marketing and Branding
October	Downtown Gainesville	Agritourism, Small Farming Grants, Workforce Development, and Small Farmer Program

- Further explore regional water and wastewater service for communities to support economic development and environmental goals.
- Support inter-city dialog around blueways and greenways.
- Make recommendations to promote entrepreneurship in the County
- Continue to engage with all municipal governments to hear their thoughts on economic development
- Monitor and provide recommendations for Alachua County’s investment in the Sports Event Center at Celebration Pointe
- Encourage initiatives 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 on CRA projects for East Gainesville – particularly Waldo and 8th Avenue redevelopment proposals.
- Monitor and support the Airport Gateway project in 2023 as the analysis progresses.
- 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
- Monitor and provide recommendations for the development of the business at the Alachua County EcoLoop

Standing Goals:

- Continue to encourage responsible east county development and provide recommendations to BoCC.
- Support initiatives to diversify the local economy in targeted industries.
- As needed, provide recommendations to the BoCC regarding economic development activities and projects at the EcoLoop and East County development.
- Provide recommendations, as necessary, to the BoCC related to future business development, grant funding, zoning, and incentives zones.
- The committee will take a more public, proactive role in the community in evaluating and advancing the County's competitiveness.
- Collaborate with state economic development agencies to promote economic development in Alachua County.
- Extend an invitation to smaller municipalities to participate in EDAC monthly meetings.
- Invite economic development stakeholders to attend one EDAC meeting to discuss alignment and community economic development priorities.
- Monitor, support as appropriate, engage, and provide input regarding the Greater Gainesville Chamber's strategic plan and implementation
- Assist the County Economic Development Manager in accomplishing the goals and objectives of the EDAC work plan.

Last modified September 23, 2024