

# THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE



## **Workshop Subcommittee Minutes**

Thursday, June 20, 2024  
2:30 PM  
23718 W US Highway 27,  
High Springs, Florida 32643

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

JEFFREY ARNOLD  
CARRIE BUSH  
MICHAEL CARNEVALE  
GRACE GLENNON  
RAMONA JACKSON  
LINDA JAMES  
PATRICIA LEE  
RICK SMITH  
TRACEY TODD  
DAVID WISENER  
ELLIOTT WELKER  
YING XU

# THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## WORKSHOP SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES

Thursday, June 20, 2024

2:30 PM

23718 W US Highway 27,  
High Springs, Florida 32643

**ATTENDEES:** Michael Carnevale, Jeremy Marshall-High Springs Manager, Amy Bohannon-High Springs CRA Manager, Jessica Hurov-Alachua County Tourism Manager, Sean McLendon-Alachua County Economic Development Manager

**CALL TO ORDER** – Subcommittee Chair Carnevale called the workshop to order at 2:26 PM

### WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

City and County representatives introduced themselves.

### REVIEW OF AGENDA

### HIGH SPRINGS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES:

#### Summary **Priorities**

- **Assets:** Strong transportation links, skilled workforce, small-town charm, proximity to world-class springs.
- **Focus Areas:** Downtown revitalization, including Priest Theater renovation and improved parking.
- **Challenges:** Balancing rapid growth (Bridlewood subdivision) with community character and resources.
- **Opportunities:** Developing a rail trail, attracting day and multi-day visitors, and managing tourism-related traffic.
- **Collaboration:** Seeking partnership with the county for economic development strategies and tourism promotion.
- **Needs:** Addressing commercial truck traffic congestion and potential funding for downtown infrastructure projects.

Michael Carnevale entered an open discussion with Jeremy Marshall, High Springs City Manager, on his city's economic development priorities.

The City Manager is still learning about the economic opportunities and challenges available to the City of High Springs. He highlighted its transportation proximity to major highways and the region's talented workforce as assets for economic development.

## **THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The community's character can be defined by its small-town charm, proximity to world-class town charm, and proximity to world-class springs. The CRA is making great investments in revitalizing the downtown area to preserve and enhance these amenities.

Part of those downtown reinvestments will include appropriations supporting the historic Priest Theater. It is estimated that it needs \$1M to renovate the roof.

They are keenly interested in working with the County to see the development of a rail trail from the abandoned CSX corridor. Investments like this would fit with their strategy of adding options to day trips and multi-day visitors who may also go to Newberry, Alachua, and Gainesville.

The city benefits from many visitors, but downtown lacks convenient parking. A streetscape and paving project at a city lot near the municipal water tower may address this challenge. In addition to issues with tourism-related traffic, they have identified problems with handling commercial truck traffic through 441 and Main Street. This commercial traffic can cause slowdowns.

The community has seen development pressures. The Bridlewood subdivision could bring 1,400 additional homes to the city. Some are concerned about balancing the tax benefits of this growth with concerns about how it will meet their growth planning objectives.

County staff offered to be a resource for effectively telling their story and promoting revenue-generating events for the city. The city was also reminded of tourism-related grants of \$10k that it can apply for.

The city is complementary of the County Commission and staff's support.

### **MEMBERS COMMENTS**

**ADJOURN – The meeting adjourned at 3:35 PM.**