



**COLUMBIA COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY BOARD**

**971 W Duval St, Suite 150**

**Lake City, FL 32055**

**AGENDA**

**January 15, 2026 8:30 A.M.**

**Opportunity for public comment shall be in accordance with Rule 4.704. Each person who wishes to address the Economic Development Advisory Board or any discussion and action agenda item shall complete one comment card for each item and submit the card or cards to County Economic Development staff in the front of the meeting room. Cards shall be submitted before the meeting is called to order.**

**Rules of decorum and rules for public participation are attached to the agenda handouts.**

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1. Call to order: Commissioner Tim Murphy
  2. Pledge to U.S. Flag
  3. Roll call
  4. Request for additions or deletions to agenda
  5. Action and Discussion items
    - a. Action items
      - i. Approve minutes from Board Meeting held December 2, 2025
      - ii. Columbia County Residential Development Incentive
    - b. Discussion items
      - i. Economic Development Agreement procedural review
  6. Economic Development Director report
    - i. SelectFlorida and Economic Development Advisory Council board meeting debrief
    - ii. Rural Counties Day
    - iii. February is CTE Month!
    - iv. 2025 Annual Report
  7. Open public comments to the Board: 3-minute limit
  8. Next advertised meeting: February 19, 2026
  9. Adjournment

**Columbia County Economic**  
**Advisory Board**

December 2, 2025-08:30 A.M.

The Columbia County Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) met in a regularly scheduled meeting held at 971 West Duval Street, in the Tourism Development Council Conference room. The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Rocky Ford followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**Committee Members Present:**

Rocky Ford, Chairman

Don Rosenthal (City Manager)

Randy Thomas (FGC)

Chani Walker

Nick Patel

Mark Magstadt

Angela Coppock

**Others in Attendance:**

Van Brown, Economic Development Specialist

David Kraus, County Manager

Melissa Williams, Deputy Clerk

Dale Williams

Dillon Adams

Chris Coleman (Representative for Tourist Development Council and Columbia County Sports Commission)

**Additions & Deletions:**

None

**MOTION** by Chani Walker to approve agenda. **SECOND** by Randy Thomas. The motion carried unanimously.

1) Action and Discussion Items: Van Brown -Economic Development Specialist

a. Action items

- i. Approve minutes from Board Meeting held on September 18, 2025.

MOTION by Chani Walker to approve Board minutes from September 18, 2025. SECOND by Randy Thomas. The motion carried unanimously.

ii. Approve Economic Development Agreement for:

1. Equipment Share (Forklift)- previously approved document, however, needs fully executed. County Manager, David Kraus stated that this is a 2-year agreement, needs a new vote. Nick Patel spoke about the \$80,000.00 for this agreement and how will the County know? County Manager, David Kraus stated that Rocky Ford already had done the forklift receipts.

MOTION by Nick Patel to approve Equipment Share (Forklift). SECOND by Chani Walker. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Robbins Manufacturing-Property Appraiser, Jeff Hampton asked that the agreement verbiage match the scoreboard.

County Manager, David Kraus stated that the Property Appraiser, Jeff Hampton asked for the vote to be redone on this Robbins Mfr.it has been over a year.

MOTION by Nick Patel to approve of redoing the vote for Robbins Manufacturing. SECOND by Randy Thomas. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Road Rangers - Rocky Ford spoke about the vote needed to be redone

Dillon Adams spoke about the FDOT District 2 Road Rangers. Chani Walker asked about the 75% tax rebate. Dillon Adams spoke about them having 15 employees and that they will construct and develop a facility consisting of an approximately (1,500,000.00 capital investment in Columbia County. The project is planned to be located and constructed on a 2.41-acre tract at 399 SW Jeff Davis Lane in Columbia County, Fl.

MOTION by Chani Walker to approve the Road Rangers vote to be redone. SECOND by Angela Coppock. The motion carried unanimously.

Amended-Nick Patel requested that Jennifer Daniels, Economic Development Director, verify that Road Rangers has 15 employees.

4. Ava Crest Project located on SR 47- Duplex

Mark Magstadt wanted to know if the agreements are copy and paste. The answer was yes.

Dillon Adams stated that the Property is fully approved and they will be like Suwannee River Townhome and will be workforce housing \$1500.00 - \$1800.00.

Nick Patel asked when they would start this project.

Dillon Adams stated when it is approved, they will start the project.

Nick Patel asked if the finance was in place.

Chani Walker asked if the incentive will transfer to the owner?

Discussion ensued.

MOTION by Nick Patel to approve the Ava Crest Project. SECOND by Chani Walker. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Rushmore Project located on Turner Road and Lake City Ave.

Dillon Adams spoke about everything being correct on the LDR.

Dillon Adams spoke about the Rushmore Project being built on 60 acres of land. They will be 2 story townhome and quad one-story duplex.

Chairman, Rocky Ford stated that there is a 5-year incentive and is already approved.

MOTION by Chani Walker to approve the Rushmore Project. SECOND by Nick Patel. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Columbia County Residential Development Incentive

Chairman, Rocky Ford spoke about the Residential Development Incentive.

County Manager, David Kraus spoke about the Residential Development Incentive.

Nick Patel asked about Minimal Housing and how much the cost of construction has skyrocketed by 35%.

Chani Walker spoke about mortgage rates at \$60,000.00 - \$80,000.00.

Chairman, Rocky Ford spoke about the lower income housing and Government rental housing.

Dillon Adams spoke about the Live Local Act and the cost per square foot and the right spot to build.

Discussion ensued.

Nick Patel suggested that Chani Walker doing a scale would be a good idea.

Economic Development Specialist, Vân Brown asked the Board to bring this back to Economic Development Director, Jennifer Daniels.

Mark Magstadt suggested we set up a workshop for more discussion on the RDI.

Chairman, Rocky Ford stated to set up a workshop and send Jennifer Daniels a list of things you want to discuss. We will request the developers to attend the workshop.

Nick Patel stated to send a date and maybe do a team meeting online.

## 2) Discussion items- Van Brown Economic Development Specialist

### 1. NFMIP Grand Opening November on November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Economic Development Specialist, Van Brown stated that it was a great event.

Discussion ensued.

### 2. 2025 Rural Summit (FREDA) November 19-21, 2025 @ World Equestrian Center in Ocala.

Economic Development Specialist, Van Brown and Angela Coppock did attend. Economic Development Director, Jennifer Daniels was asked to speak. Van Brown said that the Career Café was a big hit at the Rural Summit (FREDA).

Chani Walker asked about what other counties are doing.

## 3) Economic Development Specialist Report- Van Brown

Angela Coppock stated that Economic Future for Florida does not require a college degree. Apprentice programs are growing. Over 60% does not a degree.

Chairman, Rocky Ford spoke about getting the word out there. He stated that Bryan Zecher does something every year with the high school students on careers.

Chani Walker stated that kids are choosing trade schools over college degrees, on the right path to improve. Van Brown stated they are looking for young people they can mold.

Chairman Rocky Ford asked Randy Thomas what trades does the FGC college offer. Randy Thomas stated that they offer Automotive, HCA, Welding, Police, Fireman, EMT are just some. Chairman Rocky Ford stated that all trades are needed.

Angela Coppock spoke about building our future and CTE. She stated they take all students to the Job Fairs.

Chani Walker stated they get to hear about other things and not just college. She also wanted to know if there is an incentive for students that go to trade school.

Angela Coppock replied that there is an incentive agreement for the ones that go to college for credits.

Chairman, Rocky Ford commented that Florida Crown helps with summer programs.

Mark Magstadt spoke about the programs coming to the convention to measure the success and create a plan. FREDAs- create a strategy to keep the kids in the area, the vision is there.

Angela Coppock stated that we encourage the kids to stay local.

Economic Development Specialist, Van Brown stated that the Career Café is in a baby stage at this time.

4) Open Public Comments to the Board: 3- minute limit

Chris Coleman (Representative for Tourist Development Council and Columbia County Sports Commission) – made a comment about the Strong Man Champion League 2026 wanting to come to Lake City and set-up at the Darby Pavilion this is becoming a growing sport. The goal is to set up 85 sports events this year in Columbia County, one also being the powerboat competition.

Chani Walker asked what the incentive for them to come?

Chris Coleman responded to look at the printout he provided that talks about the sponsor tier grid. The Strong Man representatives will be in Lake City on Thursday - December 4, 2025.

Comment was made by citizen Sylvester Warren who spoke about the youth and the trade programs being great things.

Angela Coppock spoke about the many things that go into play and they do all the zip codes in Columbia County. They are providing more education for the parents and the students. The opportunity is there.

5) Next advertised meeting: January 15, 2026

6) **Adjournment:**

There being no further business, meeting adjourned at 10:14 A.M.

ATTEST:

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Rocky Ford, Chairman

Columbia County Commissioner

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James M. Swisher, Jr.

Clerk of Court & County Comptroller



ATTEST:

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Rocky Ford, Chairman

Columbia County Commissioner

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James M. Swisher, Jr.

Clerk of Court & County Comptroller

# REVISED COLUMBIA COUNTY RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE

## 1. Threshold Requirements

- **Minimum Investment Threshold:** A minimum total project cost of \$5M to ensure substantial development.
- **Compliance:** Adherence to all local zoning, land use, and building codes.
- **NO Duplication of Benefits:** Receipt of State or Federal subsidies such as Live Local Tax Incentives shall disqualify the development from any Columbia County ad valorem tax rebate.

## 2. Key Performance Indicators and Scoring Criteria

Criteria	Objective(s)	Potential Points
<b>Housing Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Units reserved for low- or moderate-income households for a set duration</li> <li>• Unit cost does not exceed 4X Median Household Income</li> </ul>	1-30
<b>Project Location</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located in a designated priority area (e.g., infill, brownfield site).</li> <li>• Located within the Designated Urban Development Area (DUDA).</li> </ul>	1-20
<b>Density/Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceeds minimum density requirements, uses high-quality design standards, or minimal setbacks.</li> <li>• Makes use of cluster development and/or mixed-use</li> </ul>	1-15
<b>Sustainability/Energy Efficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing units certified under programs like Energy Star or LEED.</li> <li>• Maximizes stormwater best practices</li> </ul>	1-15
<b>Community Benefits</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of public infrastructure upgrades (e.g., new roads, pedestrian areas), public parks, or green space.</li> </ul>	1-10
<b>Developer Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrated success with similar projects, especially affordable housing developments.</li> </ul>	1-10

### 3. Evaluation and Award Structure

- **Total Points:** Establish a maximum total (e.g., 100 points).
- **Incentive Level:**
  - 60-69 points: 25% tax rebate
  - 70-79 points: 50% tax rebate
  - 80-89 points: 75% tax rebate
  - 90+ points: 95% tax rebate
- **Incentive Length:** Five (5) years

#### **NOTES:**

There will be no incentive without an Economic Development Agreement. The Project Commencement date, including issuance of at least one permit for vertical construction, must be within 18 months of executing an Economic Development Agreement. The incentives shall begin no later than the third tax year after the County issues the project's first building permit. All rebate incentives will be for a 5 year period. Rebates shall only be paid on the amount of taxes collected in excess of the pre-construction assessment. The Developer shall be responsible for requesting the rebate annually.

If the Developer experiences inactivity for 180 consecutive days causing the Building Permit and/or Zoning Approval to expire prior to project completion, then the Housing Incentive will be void and discontinued.

This Housing Incentive Rebate program is subject to change at any time in the discretion of the Columbia County Board of County Commissioners. The program shall be re-evaluated for effectiveness not more than three (3) years after implementation. If this program is not renewed it shall expire three years from the effective date. \*\*Original Effective Date is May 30, 2020, renewed through May 2026\*\*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL



### Announcing Florida's Official Economic Development Advisory Council (EDAC)

The purpose of the EDAC is to foster synergy and ensure alignment among Florida's economic development partners as we work together to achieve economic goals. Members will contribute to Florida's statewide economic development initiatives and play a key role in partnerships with state leaders that maintain and enhance Florida's economic momentum.

#### ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP IN EDAC IS AVAILABLE TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS AND PARTNERS:

⌘ Associate Membership is Subject to Approval and an Annual Membership Fee.

#### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE:

- ⌘ Non-Profit Economic Development Organizations pay a membership fee based on annual revenue.
- ⌘ For-Profit Economic Development Organizations pay an annual membership fee of \$5,000.
- ⌘ Annual membership fees include participation in all EDAC meetings and events.

Non-Profit Annual Revenue	Annual Fee
Under \$2 million	\$600
\$2 million – under \$4 million	\$800
\$4 million and above	\$1,000

#### BENEFITS:



##### Florida's Official Economic Development Advisory Council

EDAC is the state's official advisory gathering of Florida's economic development leadership and partners.



##### Strategy Development

Participate in strategic conversations designed to drive statewide innovation and economic growth. Contribute ideas to enhance Florida's economic initiatives and achieve economic goals. Support statewide and local economic development alignment.



##### Engagement

Join quarterly meetings designed to facilitate information sharing and dialogue between state and local economic development leaders. Gain access to exclusive networking events and member gatherings. Build relationships with economic development colleagues throughout the state.

▶▶REGISTRATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO JANUARY 9◀◀



# Rural Counties Day

hosted by the Florida Rural Economic Development Association (FREDA) and on behalf of RCD Chairman Senator Corey Simon (District 3)

JAN 21-22  
2026



## Florida State Capitol | Tallahassee, FL

### Legislative Networking Reception

January 21, 2026 | 6 pm - 8 pm

Doak Campbell Stadium | Dunlap Champions Club West - Level 4

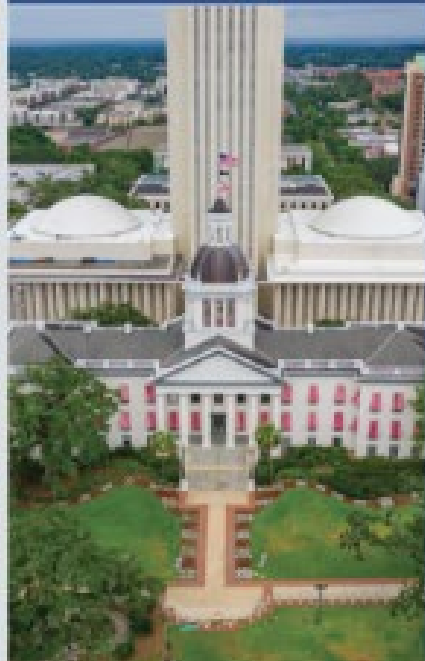
403 Stadium Drive | Tallahassee, Florida 32304

Reception Reservations  
\$45 per Ticket Paid in Advance

Join us for an evening of networking with our state legislators, key officials, and other dignitaries. We want to express our appreciation for their hard work and advocacy to improve economic development opportunities and quality-of-life issues for rural Florida. Advance payment is required to attend.

Register Today!

Registration Deadline  
January 9, 2026



### Rural County Showcase Expo

January 22, 2026 | 10 am - 2 pm

Florida State Capitol

400 S Monroe Street | Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Display area reservations will be made upon your county's contribution of \$750 on a first-come, first-served basis. Payment must be received in full prior to the event. Make county contributions payable by check to:

Rural Counties Day  
3200 Commonwealth Blvd., Suite 7  
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Booth registration includes:

- County Booth Display
- Legislator and State Agencies' Staff Networking
- Participation in the Press Event and Press Release
- Fish Fry on the Capitol Courtyard

Reserve Your Booth Today!

Registration Deadline  
January 9, 2026

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **2025 ANNUAL REPORT**

**NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** Two (2)

Economic Development Director – Jennifer L. Daniels, CEcD, MEDP

Economic Development Specialist – Van Brown

**BUDGET:** \$2,859,750

**GRANT DOLLARS AWARDED:**

**\$2M** was awarded through Florida Commerce via the Rural Infrastructure Fund (RIF) grant to construct rail at the NFMIP to attract rail served industry

**CELEBRATED BREAKING GROUND WITH:**

**Agroliquid**

This liquid fertilizer company manufactures plant nutrition products and services crop operations across the U.S. and the world. Their mission to *Prosper the Farmer* along with their commitment to promoting and prospering the agriculture industry makes them a perfect fit for Columbia County. We are excited to welcome Agroliquid as the first company to break ground at the North Florida Mega Industrial Park located on Hwy90E.

**ClearSky Health**

The new hospital will provide specialized rehabilitative care to patients recovering from disabling injuries or illnesses such as strokes, brain injuries, hip fractures, spinal injuries, Parkinson’s disease, multiple sclerosis, or other medically-complex conditions like COVID-19. Located on 7.5 acres south of West U.S. Highway 90 and treat more than 650 patients annually. It’s expected to create 100 new jobs for the area.

**Equipment Share Rental**

EquipmentShare offers equipment rentals with a focus on technology and process improvement and is located on approximately 6-acres on Hwy90E across from Lake City Gateway Airport. All construction and heavy equipment comes with built-in telematics so you can be efficient and cost effective on your project.

**Price Creek Solar**

Florida Power & Light began construction on the first of five solar energy centers east of SR 100 and south of the North Florida Mega Industrial Park. This will be the third solar installation from FPL in Columbia County, further solidifying the statement that the County produces more solar energy than it consumes in total.

### **Florida Power & Light Storm Response Center**

Located on just over 50-acres along CR 25A just south of I-10 on Hwy41N, FPL's newest storm response center will be used as a staging facility during storm events across the southeast.

### **Busy Bee**

Locating on a 35-acre parcel in the southwest quadrant of the unincorporated Ellisville I-75 exit, Busy Bee is currently under construction on their largest store to-date! Along with their exclusive treats, a stone fired pizza oven and Starbucks coffee are among the newest amenities included with the newest addition to the Busy Bee colony!

### **AND**

Hosted the **Greatest Show on Highway 90**, a grand opening event to honor the past, present, and future of the North Florida Mega Industrial Park, recognizing all of those who have worked to bring the NFMIP to reality, creating one of Florida's most developed industrial parks.

**FLORIDA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL** recognized Columbia County Economic Development with the county's first FEDC awards during the annual conference in May:

2025 Rural Deal of the Year – AgroLiquid

2025 Innovation in Public Private Partnerships – the North Florida Mega Industrial Park

### **COLUMBIA COUNTY'S BUSINESS RETENTION AND EXPANSION (BRE) PROGRAM**

CCED'S BRE Specialist, Van Brown, ended the year with over 100 contacts within the BRE Network, providing mutual support between local businesses and connections with local, state and federal resources. Additionally,

- Van spent three days with Florida Commerce's BRE manager, EJ Ghobar, directly connecting with local industry listening to their concerns and challenges, laying the foundation for new partnerships and practical next steps.
- Facilitated the first Career Café alongside Columbia County's Career Technical Education team, bringing together students from the CTE program(s) and local employers to discuss skills and training needed for today's workforce

In 2025, the Economic Development Department also:

- Launched new website including coordinating blog updates and social media outreach
- Hosted the First Annual Economic Development Week: Celebrating Progress and Partnership
- Attended Rural Counties Day in the Capitol Courtyard
- Hosted an Economic Development Master Class training workshop for elected officials
- Attended the Florida Power & Light annual Illumination conference

- Hosted the quarterly North Florida Economic Development Partnership board of directors and business meeting at the TownePlace Suites where Director Jennifer Daniels was voted in as the NFEDP Chairwoman
- Presented at various civic organizations including Kiwanas, Rotary Club (both breakfast and noon clubs), the Builder's Association Leadership Lake City, along with presentations to Florida's Economic Development Advisory Council and SelectFlorida board meetings
- Attended the annual Southeastern Economic Development Council Site Selection Summit in Atlanta
- Attended the Florida Rural Economic Development Association annual conference

The mission of the Columbia County Economic Development is "To foster a strong local economy and vibrant community by promoting a favorable business environment to attract private capital investment and employment opportunities." We will continue collaborating with our local business, educational, and civic partners to ensure that we do just that.