

TRIUMPH GULF COAST, INC. PRE-APPLICATION FORM

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. (Triumph Gulf Coast") has created a pre-application process to provide initial consideration of eligibility for potential ideas of projects or programs that may seek an award of funding. Applicants are required to participate in the pre-application process. Notwithstanding the response from Triumph Gulf Coast on the pre-application form, an Applicant may still elect to submit an Application.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Organization: Walton County Economic Development Alliance (EDA)

Proposal Title: US 331 Infrastructure

Amount of Triumph Funds Requested: \$2,000,000

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$5,000,000

Brief Description of Organization: The EDA is a non-profit 501(c)6 organization that for over two decades has served all of Walton County promoting diversification, new business, and expansion of existing business opportunities throughout the County.

Contact Information

Primary Contact: Bill Imfeld

Title: Executive Director Walton County EDA

Mailing Address: 76 North 6th Street

City: DeFuniak Springs State: Florida Zip Code: 32433

Telephone Number: (850) 892-4859

Email Address: bill@wcedafl.com

Website: wcedafl.com

Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the Proposed project or program:

Walton County Board of County Commissioners

City of DeFuniak Springs

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

See Attached

Please Select the Proposal's Eligibility Category(s)

Pursuant to Section 288.8017, Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. was created to make awards from available funds to projects or programs that meet the priorities for economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties. The disproportionately affected counties are: Bay County, Escambia County, Franklin County, Gulf County, Okaloosa County, Santa Rosa County, Walton County, or Wakulla County. See, Section 288.08012.

1. From the choices below, please check the box that describes the purpose of the proposed project or program (check all that apply):
- Ad valorem tax rate reduction within disproportionately affected counties;
 - Local match requirements of s. 288.0655 for projects in the disproportionately affected counties;
 - Public infrastructure projects for construction, expansion, or maintenance which are shown to enhance economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties;
 - Grants to local governments in the disproportionately affected counties to establish and maintain equipment and trained personnel for local action plans of response to respond to disasters, such as plans created for the Coastal Impacts Assistance Program;
 - Grants to support programs that prepare students for future occupations and careers at K-20 institutions that have campuses in the disproportionately affected counties. Eligible programs include those that increase students' technology skills and knowledge; encourage industry certifications; provide rigorous, alternative pathways for students to meet high school graduation requirements; strengthen career readiness initiatives; fund high-demand programs of emphasis at the bachelor's and master's level designated by the Board of Governors; and, similar to or the same as talent retention programs created by the Chancellor of the State University System and the Commission of Education, encourage students with interest or aptitude for science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical disciplines to pursue postsecondary education at a state university or a Florida College System institution within the disproportionately affected counties;
 - Grants to support programs that provide participants in the disproportionately affected counties with transferable, sustainable workforce skills that are not confined to a single employer; and
 - Grants to the tourism entity created under s. 288.1226 for the purpose of advertising and promoting tourism and Fresh From Florida, and grants to promote workforce and infrastructure, on behalf of all of the disproportionately affected counties.

Please Select the Priorities this Proposal's Outcomes will Achieve

1. Please check the box if the proposed project or program will meet any of the following priorities (check all that apply):

- Generate maximum estimated economic benefits, based on tools and models not generally employed by economic input-output analyses, including cost-benefit, return-on-investment, or dynamic scoring techniques to determine how the long-term economic growth potential of the disproportionately affected counties may be enhanced by the investment.
- Increase household income in the disproportionately affected counties above national average household income.
- Leverage or further enhance key regional assets, including educational institutions, research facilities, and military bases.
- Partner with local governments to provide funds, infrastructure, land, or other assistance for the project.
- Benefit the environment, in addition to the economy.
- Provide outcome measures.
- Partner with K-20 educational institutions or school districts located within the disproportionately affected counties as of January 1, 2017.
- Are recommended by the board of county commissioners of the county in which the project or program will be located.
- Partner with convention and visitor bureaus, tourist development councils, or chambers of commerce located within the disproportionately affected counties.

U.S. 331 INFRASTRUCTURE

The Walton County Economic Development Alliance (EDA) is partnering with the Walton County Board of County Commissioners and the City of DeFuniak Springs in seeking Triumph assistance with an approximate 4 mile water and sewer project on US 331 from approximately I-10 on the north to slightly below Poelkings Road on the South.

This project is entirely within a Rural Area of Economic Opportunity as defined by the State of Florida (DEO) and is expected to take approximately 18 to 24 months to complete, with engineering design and contract competing to start within 30 days of receiving the Triumph award.

The total cost of the project is expected to be about \$5 million, and Dewberry Engineers are working to determine a more finite price (including material costs, installation, and project management). The County will be providing approximately \$3 million and \$2 million is being sought from Triumph.

This project would serve not only the recently platted 300 acres on the west side of US 331 at I-10 (which is principally zoned for light commercial) all the way to a potential business park/industrial park south of Poelkings. The EDA is partnering with Walton County in negotiating for the purchase of approximately 225 acres (near Eglin Air Force Base's Site C-6) for this development.

In February 2018, during a Emerald Coast Military Fly-In to Washington D.C., a senior Pentagon official advised both Walton and Okaloosa counties to be prepared over the next 5 years for an influx of 2,000 military personnel and defense contractors from a northern facility in support of a weapons testing program. At a minimum, it is expected that the defense contractor positions will be at a pay level well above the Walton County average of \$36,000+.

Recently, we have been advised of a significant new program being implemented at Site C-6 which would result in creating an unspecified number of technical high paying positions.

The EDA has been utilizing the services of Mr. Larry Sassano (former head of Florida's Great Northwest) to help identify and recruit (especially military related) businesses along this corridor. One defense contractor has already indicated a plan to construct an office building with 40 employees over the next 3 years. Previous discussions with this contractor resulted in determining that the business would help serve as a magnet for other defense contractors. It is expected that the Site C-6 classified project would significantly support that.

There is also a project being recruited by the City along that corridor relating to technical air support for emergency helicopter transport technicians and related employees. Initial expectations are 10 to 12 higher paying jobs.

It is anticipated that the strong showing of good paying jobs along this corridor will result in an effort to further develop business segments along US 331 to the south, ultimately, at some point, reaching Choctawhatchee Bay.

Walton County would provide the necessary matching funds from the Restore Act. The County would oversee and administer the contract for the installation of the water and sewer systems. Once operational, the City of DeFuniak Springs would take over operating and maintaining both systems.

If successful in receiving Triumph support, Walton County, would have money set aside in a TIF (Tax Incremental Financing) fund, already established along this corridor to "bank" increased county-wide property tax revenues, in case there would be any necessary claw-back in the future. The City of DeFuniak Springs would also be setting aside 10% of any new water and sewer revenue along the corridor into an escrow account that would be maintained either for potential claw-back or in case of a catastrophe.

In general, this plan would provide a diversified economic growth opportunity, not solely dependent upon tourism, with a draw for good paying technology jobs. In addition, the development of the intersection of I-10 at US 331 could similarly serve as a distribution/logistics magnet for companies looking to service the Emerald Coast along both the I-10 and the US 98 (beach) corridors.