

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 Individual/Entity/Organization: Walton County Board of County Commissioners and Walton County Sheriff’s Office (WCSO) as designated project lead and implementation agency by the BOCC.

Proposal Title: Walton County Public Safety Communications System

Amount of Triumph Funds Requested: \$15,384,192 (31.3%)

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$49,109,840

Brief Description of Individual/Entity/Organization: Spanning 1,038 dry square miles, *Walton County* extends from the Alabama state line to the Gulf of Mexico, borders six counties, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Command, and encompasses two protected areas and is designated a Rural Area of Opportunity. A state-accredited public safety agency, the *WCSO* serves and protects the County’s 75,305 residents (2020 U.S. Census), 5.3 million visitors (2023 Walton County Tourism Annual Report), and manages fire rescue (15 stations), ambulance, law enforcement (370 staff), and animal services.

Contact Information

Primary Contact: Sheriff Michael A. Adkinson, Jr.

Website: <https://waltonso.org>

Title: Walton County Sheriff

Mailing Address: 10 Sheriff Circle, DeFuniak Springs, FL 32433

Telephone Number: (850) 892-8111

Email Address: madkinson@waltonso.org

Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: None.

REQUIRED EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In a maximum of two (2) pages, please describe the proposed project or program and anticipated outcomes including (i) the amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast; (ii) the amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project or program; (iii) the location of the project or program; (iv) summary description of the proposed program, including how the program will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties, and (v) a summary timeline for the proposed project or program.

(i) Amount of funds being sought from Triumph Gulf Coast: \$15,384,492 (31.3%).

(ii) Amount and identity of other sources of funds for the proposed project: \$33,725,648 (68.7%) for infrastructure construction and land acquisition, if needed. Source: Walton County Sheriff's Office operating budget (2024-2041).

(iii) Location of the project: This project's scope extends throughout Walton County and its eight public safety agencies.

(iv) Summary description of the proposed project, including how the project will be transformational and promote economic recovery, diversification, and enhancement of the disproportionately affected counties:

Need: Walton County's land mobile radio (LMR) technology and tower infrastructure are insufficient to achieve coverage, interoperability, and capacity requirements. The WCSO, serving as the project implementation agency on behalf of the BOCC, needs to build a reliable, scalable public safety LMR network with high-capacity transmission to solve this problem.

(1) The WCSO contracted (2023) a third-party Public Safety Radio Analysis to diagnose the current system's degradation, queuing, dead spots, and signal losses. The resulting Technical Assessment, accounting for terrain elevations and building developments, identified the need for up to 15 additional public safety radio towers in order to meet countywide outdoor and in-building coverage requirements (95% SAR).

(2) In 2024, the State Law Enforcement Radio System (SLERS) will upgrade to a Project 25 system (P25) to enable universal interoperability (on demand voice and data communications across agencies and jurisdictions) and accommodate increased demands for radio traffic capacity.

(3) The structural limitations of Walton's six existing tower sites (constructed in 2000 and in 2012) do not currently meet the SLERS P25 capacity and coverage requirements.

(4) The existing Walton County public safety radio communication system is also at LID capacity (i.e., maximum number of radios and channels) and incapable of further expansion.

This project's objectives are to: (1) construct and equip up to 15 new radio towers; (2) install a 10-channel simulcast P25 radio system with 28 dispatch positions (five agencies); and (3) purchase 164 P25 LMRs. Beginning in 2019, the WCSO purchased 198 P25 LMRs, P25 LMRs for school guardians (FL DOE grant), and made grant application (CDBG, \$2.1 million) for school radio repeaters (20) and the replacement of 128 non-compliant LMRs.

Alignment: This project aligns with Walton County's broader Local Mitigation Strategy for reducing technological vulnerabilities; the Walton Emergency Management, Hazard Specific, and Incident Support Plans; the DMS (f.s. 282.709) SLERS P25 transition objectives designed to ensure local, interagency, and interoperable public safety communications without radio frequency congestion; and the Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. Section 288.017 (1)(d) priority to establish, train, and maintain emergency equipment and responders for local response plans.

Financial Viability: Pledging effective and timely TGC compliance, the WCSO requests last dollar committed Triumph support to fund the project's infrastructure and construction for P25 core and RF trunked equipment, dispatch consoles, LMRs, and microwave backhaul. The WCSO

commits matching funds for tower development, project management, engineering, implementation, and contingency, as well as annual system maintenance and five-year technology refreshes over a 15-year period. Tower expansion and P25 equipping forecast to require 28-42 months for completion.

Test and Analysis: The project's implementation plan integrates new technology into existing workflows that achieve countywide regulatory and coverage requirements to reduce probable risk occurrences, increase resilience, and accommodate industry, population, and visitor growth.

Economic Recovery and Diversification: TGC grades projects' long-term diversification potential to generate maximum economic benefits through net new jobs and/or augmented household income. Unfortunately, 288.017 (1)(d) projects' profitability analyses are multivariate and complex. A predictive algorithm to determine the optimal percentage of county revenues correlational to residents/visitors, LMR system expenditures, and emergency preparedness return on investment does not definitively exist. Although a no-build option to upgrade Walton's LMR infrastructure is not regulatorily feasible, this project solves for Walton County's public safety communications coverage, interoperability, and capacity insufficiencies while also meeting the demands for attracting, diversifying, and expanding business and industry growth.

Enhancement of the Disproportionally Affected Counties and Anticipated Outcomes: This project responds to actionable insights that improve countywide: (1) LMR coverage and capacity (Note: Walton's emergency evacuation rate times are among the Emerald Coast Region's slowest); (2) LMR in-building coverage (Note: Walton utilizes 22 schools as emergency shelters, and consultant data revealed LMR dead zones due to hurricane-force school construction designs); (3) interoperability with surrounding agencies (Walton County is located in the Panhandle epicenter and a focal point for TGC Region emergency management training).

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This pre-application process will **not** result in an award of funding by Triumph Gulf Coast. Rather, this process is designed to facilitate submission of ideas for potential projects or programs before the Applicant expends time and/or resources to complete a full Application. All Applicants for funding are required to complete an application, which will be reviewed and then considered for award at the discretion of Triumph Gulf Coast Board.

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.