



October 15, 2024

Mr. David M. Bear, Chairman  
Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.  
Post Office Box 12007  
Tallahassee, Florida 32317

Re: Wakulla County – Project Safety

**BOARD OF  
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

***Quincee Messersmith***  
Chair, District 4

***Fred Nichols***  
Vice-Chair, District 2

***Ralph Thomas***  
District 1

***Mike Kemp***  
District 3

***Charles Hess, Ph.D.***  
District 5

***J. David Edwards***  
County Administrator

***Heather J. Encinosa***  
County Attorney  
(850) 224-4070

Dear Chairman Bear,

The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners voted on September 16, 2024, to submit the attached pre-application to support job growth in our community. Through this proposal, Project Safety will add 300 new to the region jobs. If we can answer any questions regarding this application, please do not hesitate to reach out to County Administrator, David Edwards at (850) 445-4629.

Again, thank you for Triumph's support as we support the recovery and growth of our local economy.

Sincerely,

Signed by:  
  
A04CBFAB753C44B...  
Quincee Messersmith  
Chair

Enclosure

Cc: Mr. David Edwards, County Administrator  
Ms. Priscilla Colvin, Executive Director of Academics  
Mrs. Michelle Metcalf, Assistant County Administrator of Administration

## **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: Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners

Proposal Title: Wakulla County - Project Safety

Amount of Triumph Funds Requested: \$13,500,000.00

Total Estimated Project Cost: \$36,400,000.00

Brief Description of Individual/Entity/Organization:

Wakulla County is a unit of local government as defined by law.

#### **Contact Information**

Primary Contact: Melissa Corbett

Title: Grant Research & Development Coordinator

Mailing Address: PO Box 1263

City: Crawfordville

State: Florida Zip Code: 32326

Telephone Number: (850) 745-7725

Email Address: mcorbett@mywakulla.com

Website: www.mywakulla.com

Names of co-applicants, partners or other entities, organizations that will have a role in the proposed project or program: Wakulla Economic Development Council

### **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.

### **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.

# Executive Summary

## Wakulla County – Project Safety

### Proposed Project Summary

Wakulla County is requesting \$13,500,000.00 in funding from **Triumph Gulf Coast** to support the purchase of property within Opportunity Park and the development of a 150,000-square-foot building to accommodate the expansion of an existing manufacturing business known as Project Safety. This project will be matched with \$10,000,000.00 in private investment for the purchase of equipment and an additional \$12,900,000.00 in public investment through the securing of bonds or additional FloridaCommerce grants to support the project. The total capital investment for this project will be \$36,400,000.00.

Opportunity Park is a fully-entitled, 240-acre industrial park located in Wakulla County and adjacent to Leon County and within an Opportunity Zone. As a participant in Duke Energy's Site Readiness Program, the County and EDC have been working in partnership for several years to ensure that all infrastructure is in place and the development process streamlined for job creators. We market this property nationwide through opportunities provided by Duke Energy, Florida's Great Northwest, Opportunity Florida, and FloridaCommerce.

The Wakulla Economic Development Council is a public-private partnership between the Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners, regional economic development organizations, and many small and large businesses within the community.

Project Safety is a manufacturing company based out of South Florida with multiple global locations employing approximately 5,000 people. The company is seeking a southeast location to serve its commercial and defense markets. They construct body armor for law enforcement and both body armor and equipment armor for the defense sector. Through a competitive project led by Florida's Great Northwest (FGNW), the company has chosen Wakulla County as the final NWFL community, however, we remain in competition with other southeastern US states for the final decision. As such we continue to position our value in meeting their business needs.

Wakulla County proposes to construct and lease to the company a 150,000-square-foot manufacturing facility in our signature industrial park to create 300 jobs. The county is seeking Triumph Gulf Coast and Florida Job Growth Grant funds to lower the cost of construction and create a competitive lease rate. The company's facility needs have expanded from 75,000 sf to 150,000 sf since their first contact with FGNW to their most recent discussions with Wakulla. Opportunity Park in northeast Wakulla County provides the company access to markets in the southeast US, and lowers their cost of doing business thereby expanding their total Florida jobs and capital investment. Due to Wakulla's proximity to and working relationship with the FSU High-Performance Materials Institute, there is interest in expanding the scope to include what were future plans; such as, design labs and 3D armor manufacturing, which would require a high-performance press for composite materials, autoclaves for high heat and pressure bonding manufacturing purposes, and multiple presses to produce ballistic helmets for law enforcement. The Project Safety manufacturing equipment capital investment is expected to be \$10 million.

The County partnered with the Wakulla EDC and NG Wade to propose locating the new facility in Opportunity Park, a private industrial park that is actively marketed as a Duke Energy Ready Site.

This project will result in the **creation of 300 new jobs with an average annual wage of \$52,900 in addition to \$8,300 in benefits to support employees.**

## Job Projections

Year	Staffing	Jobs Added
Year 1	75	75
Year 2	125	50
Year 3	175	50
Year 4	225	50
Year 5	275	50
Year 6 and beyond	300	25

## Funding Requested

Wakulla County is seeking \$13,500,000 in Triumph funding to support Project Safety, which equates to a request of \$45,000 for each of the 300 new jobs. The county intends to match Triumph dollars with the additional grants below and requests that these funds cover some portion of land acquisition, design, or construction. In addition, the company is seeking funding from the Industry Resilience and Diversification Fund which if awarded, will provide up to \$2 million directly to the company as a cash incentive.

Grant Name	Due Date	Estimated Announcement*	Potential Amount to Request	Possible Award
Triumph Gulf Coast	Rolling	December 2024	\$13,500,000	\$13,500,000.00
Florida Job Growth Grant	Rolling	December 2024	\$6,000,000	\$2,000,000 - \$6,000,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$19,500,000</b>	<b>\$15,500,000 - \$19,500,000</b>

\*Announcement of awards is unknown, and an estimated date has been provided based on past awards.

## Estimated Timeline

Month	Task
August - September 2024	Developed grant applications and submitted draft to Florida Job Growth Grant
October 2024	Submit Triumph pre-application and full grant application
November 2024	Grants under review
December 2024	Grants announced/Procure Design-Build Contractor
February 2025	FLCOM grant agreements executed
March 2025	Design starts
October 2025	Design complete/Construction starts
Summer/Fall 2026	Construction is complete

## Cost Estimates & Potential Lease Rate Calculation

The cost estimation and lease rate calculation below present a conservative estimate. The lease rate is calculated at 7.75% of the total project cost and does not include escalation – for planning purposes only.

Category	Total Cost
Land Acquisition Estimate (20 acres)	\$400,000.00
Design & Engineering Estimate	\$2,000,000.00
Land Improvement Estimate	\$3,000,000.00
Construction Estimate (subject to change)	\$20,000,000.00
Construction Management Estimate	\$1,000,000.00
Total Estimated Cost of Construction	<b>\$26,400,000.00</b>
Potential Grant Funding Off-set	- \$15,500,000 - \$19,500,000
Difference	<b>\$6,850,000.00 - \$10,900,000.00</b>
<b>Potential Lease Rate (7.75%)</b>	Between \$513,750.00/year or \$42,812.50/month (\$3.43 /sq. ft.) and \$817,500/year or \$68,125.00/month (\$5.45/sq. ft.)