

## Update to the Triumph Board – 1.27.26

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Good afternoon! First, I want to say thank you for your commitment, as both board members and staff, to the economic development efforts across Northwest Florida. Your strategic focus is making a lasting impact that we feel every day.

When we talk about economic development projects, we often focus on the number of jobs created and capital investment. But what I want to highlight today is something I'm calling the Triumph Ripple Effect. Because of your strategic investments, we are shifting the global perception of Northwest Florida and creating an environment so visible it's acting as a magnet for world-class companies.

One example is Project Britain, a UK-based aerospace company. Florida's Great Northwest met with their CEO at the MRO Americas show in Atlanta last April. They were already considering Georgia and South Carolina for their first US facility, but we convinced them to look at Northwest Florida. Fast forward to two weeks ago, and you may have seen that FloridaWest EDA and Florida's Great Northwest announced that Field International would not only be opening up a US facility in Escambia County with 50 employees to start, but they would be moving their corporate headquarters to the area as well.

This foreign direct investment project did not have a need to seek Triumph funding and that's because of the Triumph Ripple Effect. They chose Northwest Florida because of the strong ecosystem you've been investing in through workforce development, public infrastructure, and allowing Florida's Great Northwest to market these assets to the world!

Of course, incentives like Triumph are still vital to "close the deal". We're still competing vigorously with Alabama, Georgia, and the rest of the Southeast, so adding Triumph to our value proposition allows us, first to make the team, and then, keeps us in the game.

As we close the first month of 2026, our pipeline of leads and projects is the healthiest it has ever been and I want to share just a few of our active projects:

- Project Jayhawks, an aerospace company considering one of our rural airports
- Project Celtics, an industrial-scale metal production facility
- Project Atlas, a processing company in the sustainable energy space

And this doesn't touch on our lead and relationship development. For example, I started my Monday morning speaking with a company based in Germany, considering a new US location.

Plus, we're leading regionally on the effort to restore America's Maritime Dominance, working closely with the Navy's Maritime Industrial Base and the Defense Industrial Base Institute, continuing our Airbus Suppliers Strategy, and we're confident that our updated regional strategy, Northwest Florida FORWARD, will be another catalyst to help Florida's Great Northwest identify new targets and opportunities.

When we're telling the Northwest Florida story in meetings with companies, we give these top three reasons of why to consider our region for expansion opportunities.

1. The unprecedented resources for Coastal Northwest Florida through Triumph Gulf Coast
2. Our Hidden Talent Pipeline in our Military and Veteran Talent
3. Our safe, affordable, and welcoming communities

In your packets today, you will see two items that focus on our top two 'reasons why'.

The first is the new Triumph Gulf Coast Fact Sheet. You'll notice how we package it all together into one regional pitch.

Next, you see our Military Talent brochure. This study and campaign was funded by a FloridaCommerce grant, and it's important because it provides data-driven support related to our hidden talent pipeline.

Now backed by research conducted by the UWF Haas Center, we know that 5,200 men and women are exiting our six military bases each year. Through survey data, we know that 47% plan to stay in the region after retirement, and 19% are undecided. These men and women are young, with an average age of 38, and are a proven, dedicated workforce.

This is how we are marketing Northwest Florida to the world and it's clear our collective efforts are paying off.

These numbers are from our Labor Supply and Demand Analysis that was funded by our Triumph grant.

- Between 2019 and 2025, our region added over 42,000 jobs. Our 8.7% growth rate beats the national average, which is at 5.9%.
- Average earnings in our region rose by nearly 19%.
- Occupations aligned with our targeted sectors expanded by 12%, adding nearly 8,000 new jobs, with earnings growth exceeding 26%.

These numbers tell a story: regional diversification and workforce investments are transforming our economy.

You have created a climate where we are no longer the forgotten panhandle – we are the crown jewel of Florida and a global contender. And I think each of you should be proud of the part you have played in these endeavors.

I'd be happy to answer any questions.