



EDC QUARTERLY REPORT

APRIL – JUNE 2024

St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce
Economic Development Council



| | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Year |
|----------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Revenue Growth | 3.01 | 3.22 | 2.54 | 1.18 | 0.51 | 0.10 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.18 | 0.46 | 1.28 |
| Revenue | 3.01 | 3.22 | 2.54 | 1.18 | 0.51 | 0.10 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.18 | 0.46 | 1.28 |
| Avg. | | | | | | | | | | | |



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The third quarter brought more positive news for the County. The local legislative delegation championed through a number of funding bills that yielded over 108 million dollars for St. Johns County. This significant funding will not only provide much-needed support for various infrastructure and beach renourishment projects but also contribute to the overall development and well-being of our community. It also includes funding for a Regional Fire Training Center and a Unified Command Center, further enhancing our safety and preparedness.

This year's SJC Chamber Annual Legislative Update was a resounding success, with a strong turnout that underscored our community's commitment to progress. The Chamber welcomed esteemed guests such as Paul Renner, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives; Sarah Arnold, SJC Commission Chair; Mayor Nancy Sikes Kline, City of St. Augustine; Mayor Dylan Rumrell, City of St. Augustine Beach; Shorty Robbins, Legislative Aide to Representative Cyndi Stevenson; and Craft Talbot, Legislative Aide for Senator Travis Hutson. Each provided a detailed update on their accomplishments and challenges during this past year, inspiring us all with their dedication and achievements.

Unemployment continued to remain low in the region. FloridaCommerce announced that the unemployment rate for the Jacksonville region was 3.0 percent in May 2024, down slightly from 3.2 percent in April 2024 and 3.4 percent in March 2024. In May, St. Johns County continued to have the lowest unemployment rate in the region at 2.7 percent.

The Cooperative Education and Internship Association recently held its 61st annual conference in Tampa, Florida. Employers from St. Johns and Duval Counties served as the luncheon keynote panel. Doreen Lund, Apprenticeship Manager with CareerSource Northeast Florida, moderated the panel, which featured speakers from Miller Electric, UF Health St. Johns, and a representative for Northrop Grumman. The panel discussed apprenticeship programs at each facility, sharing their challenges and successes.

Also supporting our local workforce, the Sapna Foundation launched state-of-the-art software to revolutionize local employment opportunities by connecting community talent with local companies. Hirelocal.org will transform communities by bridging the gap between local talent and businesses. By leveraging behavioral science and advanced analytics, HireLocal.org's patented platform aligns the Skills, Interests, Talents, and Aspirations of students, veterans, and the unemployed with the needs of local small businesses. This innovative approach not only fosters economic growth but also strengthens community ties.

Finally, we successfully launched our new St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce Foundation and began planning the celebration of our 120th year as a Chamber. The Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit organization that aims to serve the community through leadership opportunities, workforce education, and economic development programs. The Foundation expands the Chamber's mission by offering additional programming and philanthropy beyond the traditional business sector.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL: PURPOSE & ROLE

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Economic Development Council is multifaceted: to promote the economic growth of St. Johns County by attracting new business and industry into the community, enhancing the growth and expansion of existing business and industry, fostering entrepreneurialism and innovation and supporting workforce development and business education programs and serving as the ESF 18 business and industry lead for emergency response and disaster recovery in coordination with St. Johns County Emergency Management and Economic Development departments.

ROLE

The Economic Development Council (EDC) provides support to business owners, executives and entrepreneurs who seek to start, expand or relocate enterprises in St. Johns County.

Our efforts are leveraged by collaboration and cooperation with federal, state, regional and local partners, including St. Johns County Government and the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION & EFFORTS

EDUCATIONAL TRAINING & ACTIVITIES

Educational Training & Activities – Throughout the second quarter Chamber Staff participated in educational training and activities with partner agencies including:

| | | | |
|------------|--|---------|---|
| Apr. 2 | First Coast Technical College Career Fair | May 16 | JAXUSA Talent Advancement Network |
| Apr. 3 | The Link Technology Career Fair | May 20 | State of the County with Joy Andrews – Beacon Lakes |
| Apr. 8 | Industrial Development Authority Meeting | May 23 | Elevate Women Conference |
| Apr. 9-11 | Cooperative Education and Internship Conference | May 30 | Jacksonville Transportation Authority Meeting |
| Apr. 15-17 | Florida Economic Development Council Conference, Sawgrass Marriott | May 31 | JAXUSA Regional Partner Meeting |
| Apr. 18 | JAXUSA Business Development Advisory Board | Jun. 11 | Florida Chamber Small Business Development Council |
| Apr. 19 | St. Johns River State College Business Advisory Board | Jun. 13 | Putnam County Economic Development Council Luncheon – Gray Swoope |
| Apr. 25 | SJC Career and Technical Education Awards | | |
| May 9 | WEB EOC Hurricane Preparedness Training | | |
| May 9 | State of the County with Joy Andrews – Rivertown | | |
| May 10 | State of Tourism Industry Presentation | | |

BUSINESS EDUCATION TRAINING & COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS

The Chamber provides training, business education, networking opportunities and outreach activities for its members and the community.

- Apr. 2 Ambassador Monthly Meeting
- Apr. 4 Public Policy Committee Meeting
- Apr. 4 Women with Vision – Letti Bozard, VP of Bozard Ford Lincoln



- Apr. 12 Historic St. Augustine Area Council – Locally Made Roundtable featuring Danielle Brooks, Owner of The Honey Truck



- Apr. 17 Chamber After Hours – Lisa Barton Team Ponte Vedra – Keller Williams Realty Atlantic Partners
- Apr. 18 Tourism and Hospitality Council – Workforce Panel



Apr. 24 Chamber After Hours – Land Title of America

Apr. 25 St. Johns County Chamber Foundation Launch Party – bestbet of St. Augustine



Photo: Jackie Hird Photography

May 2 Public Policy Committee Meeting

May 8 Economic Development Council Committee Meeting

May 15 Chamber at Noon – Dianya Markovits, Director of Public Relations at SJC Cultural Events Inc.

May 17 Legislative Update

May 22 Chamber After Hours – Rise at Nocatee

May 23 Chamber After Hours – Emergency Restoration Xperts

May 30 Ambassador Board Meeting

Jun. 6 Chamber Before Hours – First Florida Credit Union

Jun. 12 Chamber Before Hours – TPC Sawgrass

Jun. 12 Chamber at Noon – Hurricane Preparedness with Kelly Wilson, SJC Emergency Operations Center



Chamber Celebrate Event and Awards

Jun. 13 Women with Vision – Vicky Oakes, Supervisor of Elections

Jun. 20 Tourism and Hospitality Council – Troy Blevins, Jalaram Hotel Group

Jun. 25 Pitch Factory Kickoff

Jun. 26 Chamber After Hours – Wells Fargo Nocatee

Jun. 27 Chamber After Hours – Freedom Boat Club

Jun. 28 Ambassador Board Meeting

RIBBON CUTTINGS, GRAND OPENINGS & GROUNDBREAKINGS

Apr. 4 Stretch Lab St. Augustine Beach ribbon cutting



Apr. 10 Flamingo Crossing Apartments ribbon cutting

Apr. 11 4Ever Young St. Johns ribbon cutting

Apr. 18 Flagler Crossing Apartments ribbon cutting

Apr. 25 Land Title of America ribbon cutting

Apr. 26 Extract Juicery ribbon cutting

Apr. 26 Old Coast Pickleball ribbon cutting



Apr. 30 Baptist South / Wolfson Children's Emergency Room and Imaging Center ribbon cutting

May 1 Urgent Care Cure Silverleaf ribbon cutting



May 10 Myth and Legend ribbon cutting

May 17 Strive Counseling ribbon cutting
May 20 Culvers of St. Augustine North ribbon cutting



May 22 Advanced Business Solutions 20 Year Celebration

May 24 Tropical Smoothie Café ribbon cutting

May 31 Patients not Prisoners ribbon cutting

Jun. 7 Flagler Health and Wellness ribbon cutting

Jun. 13 Pacetti Road Self Storage – St. Augustine ribbon cutting

Jun. 26 Longleaf at St. Johns Luxury Apartments ribbon cutting

Jun. 27 FastSigns ribbon cutting

Jun. 28 Conquer Health Chiropractic ribbon cutting



ST. JOHNS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

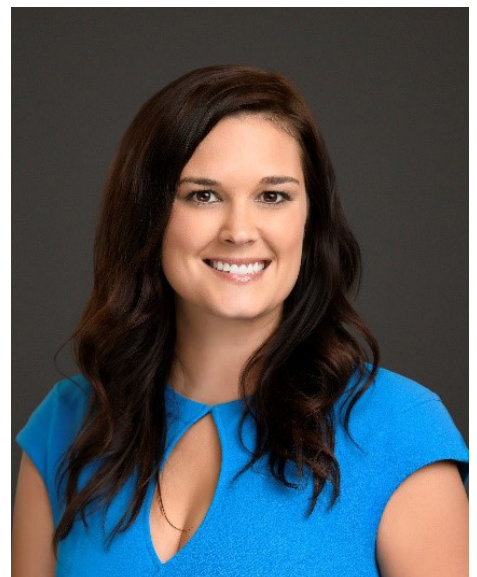
There was a strong turnout for the SJC Chamber Annual Legislative Update this year. The Chamber welcomed Paul Renner, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives; Sarah Arnold, SJC Commission Chair, Mayor Nancy Sikes Kline, City of St. Augustine; Mayor Dylan Rumrell, City of St. Augustine Beach; Shorty Robbins, Legislative Aide to Representative Cyndi Stevenson; and Craft Talbot, Legislative Aide for Senator Travis Hutson. Each provided a detailed update on their accomplishments and challenges during this past year. Each speaker highlighted their part of the 108 million dollars in appropriations allocated to St. Johns County from the legislators.

Paul Renner, Speaker of the House of Representatives, stated, “The State Legislators work hard to balance the budget. This year we actually paid down debt early and maintained one of the lowest debt ratios of any state in the country. With that, we are still investing record amounts in roads, land conservation, the environment and our teachers and educational institutions.

Craft Talbot, Legislative Aide for Senator Travis Hutson echoed that. She also pointed out the 7.5 million designated for the Regional Fire Training Center and Unified Command Center and another 7.5 million for a new public safety center. This investment in our first responders highlights the focus of the legislators on public safety.

Commissioner Arnold provided updates on the County’s legislative priorities, including initiatives to address the recruitment, retention and long-term care for emergency responders and critical transportation projects that will provide traffic relief along I-95 and US 1. [A video produced by the County’s Office of Public Affairs captured the event’s highlights.](#)

Arnold said, “This year, our 2024 take home, pending we don’t get vetoed by the Governor, was more than \$53 million in appropriations. Out of that, \$26 million is for public safety. We have been very active in initiating and prioritizing new legislation for a presumptive disability for our first responders regarding neurological deficits from chemicals these first responders are exposed to in fires.” Business Retention & Expansion



BUSINESS RETENTION & EXPANSION EFFORTS

FLORIDA COUNCIL OF 100 UNVEILS STRATEGY TO ADD UP TO 200,000 JOBS IN HIGHER-WAGE INDUSTRIES BY 2030, CONTRIBUTING \$100B IN GDP TO THE STATE



The private-sector-led “Beyond Sunshine” strategy can focus resources, accelerate Florida’s growth trajectory, and strengthen the state’s economic future.

The Florida Council of 100, a group of over 150 business leaders dedicated to fostering economic growth and improving the quality of life in Florida, today announced a first-of-its-kind economic development strategy to harness the private sector and propel Florida into a new era of success. The “Beyond Sunshine” initiative, detailed in a report released today, provides a roadmap to leverage the Sunshine State’s regional strengths and attract jobs in higher-wage industries, promoting long-term economic resilience and a better future for all Floridians.

With an annual GDP of nearly \$1.3 trillion, Florida has grown in recent decades into a thriving hub ideal for locating and building globally competitive businesses. The Beyond Sunshine strategy outlines a path to sustain and accelerate this growth. Developed by the Florida Council of 100 in partnership with state economic development leaders, the strategy focuses resources to nurture higher-wage economic clusters in Florida’s six major regional economies and three rural areas of opportunity. Florida Council of 100 research indicates that investment in these clusters and regions could add up to 200,000 new jobs in higher-wage industries in Florida by 2030, contributing nearly \$100 billion in added GDP to the nation’s fourth-largest economy.

“Florida has an incredible opportunity to accelerate growth and cement our place as a global leader in entrepreneurship, research, innovation, and commerce,” said Florida Council of 100 Chair Eric Silagy. “Through targeted investments in higher-wage sectors, we will not only navigate the rapidly changing economic and technological landscape—but help to shape it for the benefit of everyone who calls Florida home today and for future generations.”

Florida boasts the second-lowest unemployment rate among the top 10 largest states and leads in GDP and income growth rates. Its favorable business climate, characterized by low taxes and light-touch regulation, supports a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem that has seen over 266,000 new businesses formed in Florida in 2024 alone. Additionally, Florida was the top state for corporate relocations in 2023. Florida’s educational system, ranked first in the nation, provides a robust talent pipeline for emerging industries.

The Beyond Sunshine strategy outlines three priorities to build on this strong foundation and ensure continued economic growth:

- **Nurturing Existing Higher-Wage Economic Clusters:** Focusing investment in regional clusters of opportunity in sectors poised for additional growth, such as aerospace, financial services, e-commerce, clean technology, biotechnology, and manufacturing, to drive regional economic specialization and expansion.
- **Higher-Wage Job Creation:** Coordinating with university, state college, career and technical education (CTE) programs, and industry partners to align education and workforce development with higher-wage job opportunities and catalyze economic activity across sectors.
- **Elevating Florida's Economic Success Story:** Changing perceptions both domestically and internationally to highlight Florida as the best place to start a career, build wealth, and raise a family.

The Florida Council of 100 will coordinate implementation of the Beyond Sunshine strategy, working in partnership with regional economic development organizations, education partners, and the state to steer investment to higher-wage sectors, align talent with opportunity, and address challenges to sustained expansion.

“Working in partnership with our state and regional leaders, the Florida Council of 100 is uniquely positioned to help businesses align with higher-wage industries and drive the next stage of our economic development,” said Florida Council of 100 President & CEO Michael Simas. “Our goal is attracting even more investment to these industries in Florida, building resilience and ensuring the state remains the destination of choice for businesses, investors, employees, and their families.”

“I applaud the Florida Council of 100 for laying out this data-driven strategy to accelerate economic growth and elevate Florida’s communities and families,” said Florida Secretary of Commerce J. Alex Kelly. “Florida’s economic ecosystem provides certainty for entrepreneurship and innovation to thrive and is well-equipped to chart a course toward our next stage of development. I look forward to partnering with the Council to make the state an even better place to work and live.”

For more information about the Beyond Sunshine report and the Florida Council of 100, visit <https://fc100.org/research/beyond-sunshine>

The Florida Council of 100 is a private, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of business leaders committed to promoting economic growth and improving the quality of life for the people of our state. First established in 1961 by Governor Farris Bryant, for more than six decades, the Council has been charged with providing advice on key policy issues from the business community’s perspective to Florida’s elected leaders and government officials across the political and ideological spectrum. Today, the Florida Council of 100 represents 150 businesses with over 1.3 million employees.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

TALLAHASSEE LEGISLATIVE SESSION UPDATE



The 2024 Legislative Session is in the books and all attention now turns to Gov. Ron DeSantis, who over the next three months will receive and review the FY 2025 Florida Budget and numerous other bills approved by the Florida Legislature before their adjournment on March 8. Following is a recap and highlight of major issues your Chamber has actively engaged with over the past three months.

Florida Legislature approves \$117.5 Billion budget for FY 2025

Why does this matter? These are pocketbook issues for small businesses. More dollars for infrastructure improvements, Visit Florida tourism marketing, teacher salaries and the SAIL/SHIP Affordable Housing programs are important to St. Johns County if we hope to continue our trajectory of growth. Lower taxes in the form of a significant cut in the business rent tax mean more money in your pockets each month.

Status: The Florida House and Senate agreed on a \$117.5 Billion budget and are in the process of sending the legislation to Governor DeSantis. The Legislature also approved a \$1.5 Billion Tax Package that includes: \$500 million in savings on exemptions on property insurance taxes and fees; the creation of a childcare tax credit to incentivize businesses to assist their employees with childcare costs; and four distinct sales tax free holidays estimated to save Florida consumers nearly \$290 Million.

Business Rent Tax Initially, the Florida House proposed an additional .75% cut in the business rent tax good for one year only (2025) and the Senate countered with a proposal pushed by Governor DeSantis to exempt certain property insurance policies from taxes and fees for one year. The Senate position ultimately prevailed. Nevertheless, the business rent tax is still scheduled to drop from its current 4.5% down to 2% on June 1, 2024. Recall that in 2021, the SJC Chamber strongly supported the Florida Legislature's action to reduce the business rent tax from 5% to 2% by the summer of 2024. This significant reduction allows for reinvestment back into local communities, businesses, and Florida's workforce.

Tourist Development Tax Referendum/Discretionary Sales Tax Referendum

Notably absent from the final tax package was an onerous provision requiring periodic reapproval of **tourist development taxes** by local voters, which was a priority of the Florida House. The Tourist Development Tax (also known as the “Bed Tax” is paid primarily by out-of-County tourists on every night they stay in a hotel or other lodging facility. The dollars collected by St. Johns County (FY 2023 exceeded \$20 million) are in turn used by the County and the Visitors and Convention Bureau to promote tourism, provide beach replenishment and a host of other services in the County. The SJC Chamber voiced our strong opposition to the House provision and after discussing the issue with Rep. Cyndi Stevenson, she spoke against the measure during a pivotal Ways and Means Committee hearing.

Why does this matter? Unlike Orlando and Miami, St. Johns County, St. Augustine and Ponte Vedra Beach rely upon the TD Taxes to bring in more tourists who in turn spend millions each year supporting our County’s largest single industry. These taxes are collected from predominantly out of County/out of state tourists, not SJC residents.

Visit Florida funded at \$80 million annually After many years of fighting this yearly funding battle, the Florida House and Senate have agreed to fund Visit Florida at \$80 million for the next few years. Visit Florida co-op funding with our local SJC tourism efforts helps bring targeted visitors to St. Augustine, Ponte Vedra and the Beaches to spend their money and enjoy their vacations.

Why does this matter? The Tourism industry is the largest single component of St. Johns County’s economy employing thousands of people and contributing millions in tax dollars annually. Visit Florida’s assistance during and after Hurricanes Matthew and Irma and the COVID crisis haled our St. Johns County tourism sector survive and thrive. Your Chamber has been an active and vocal supporter of Visit Florida for many years.

Live Local Act-related bills: SB 328 and HB 1239 prohibit cities and counties from restricting the floor area ratio as well as density for Live Local proposed developments. They both authorize cities and counties to restrict the height of proposed developments under certain circumstances; make remedial and clarifying changes to property tax exemptions granted by the Live Local Act and appropriate \$100 million to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for the Hometown Heroes Program.

Recent Actions: SB 328 was unanimously passed by the Senate and reconciled with HB 1239 and approved by the House by a vote of 112-1 and sent to the Governor for his signature.

Why does this matter? Providing attainable housing in SJC is a major Chamber initiative as it keeps our local businesses and workforce growing and thriving.

For more information, please contact:

Robert W. Porter, Vice President, Public Policy

E: bob.porter@sjcchamber.com

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS

ST. JOHNS AND DUVAL COUNTY EMPLOYERS PRESENT AT NATIONAL CONFERENCE



Tim Hinson, Miller Electric, Scott Maynard, St. Johns County Chamber, Donna Wagner, UF Health St. Johns & Doreen Lund, CareerSource Northeast Florida

The Cooperative Education and Internship Association recently held their 61st annual conference in Tampa, Florida. St. Johns County and Duval County were well represented at the event. Doreen Lund, Apprenticeship Manager with CareerSource Northeast Florida moderated the panel of local employers featured at the keynote luncheon. The panel discussed apprenticeship programs

at Miller Electric, UF Health St. Johns, and Northrop Grumman sharing their challenges and successes.

UF Health St. Johns operates a successful apprenticeship program for surgical technicians. The hospital-based training program includes classroom and practical clinical instruction designed to prepare participants for a career as a Surgical Technologist with U.F. Health St. Johns upon completion. Donna Wagner, Chief Nursing Officer, said, “By establishing an apprenticeship program, participants can earn money while they are in training, learn a new skill, and help us fill this need in the future.”

Miller Electric has operated a successful apprenticeship program for years. Recently they have expanded their traditional program to now include cybersecurity. The Electrical Training Alliance is a state registered apprenticeship program – meaning accepted applicants will receive a combination of formal training and on-the-job experience. Students attend classes two evenings a week which focus on electrical theory, how to use tools, safety and hands-on practice in a lab environment. Upon graduation, these students are well-rounded, qualified electricians, eligible to work anywhere in the country. The best part is, they are generally earning the same amount as a college graduate, with no college debts or student loans to repay, because the program is completely free.

Northrop Grumman’s St. Augustine, Florida, site determined that the best way to meet the increasing demand for E-2D technicians was to turn to the talent in their communities, specifically to local school districts. Collaborating with Human Resources, Legal, and Global Corporate Responsibility, they designed a year-long, half-day internship program targeted to high school seniors. The program was designed to teach aircraft fabrication skills in a step-by-step format. Each week, an instructor from Northrop Grumman’s Aeronautics Systems Training for Advanced Refinement program, known as ASTAR, teaches the students a new skill, typically related to aircraft structure work. Later in the week, students practiced the skill, first in the lab

then on the shop floor. They have support from a cadre of mentors with a combined 238 years of experience.

Doreen Lund, CareerSource Northeast Florida Manager of Apprenticeship, said, “The program that funds the apprenticeships is open to other employers in Florida. The customized training program is designed to help companies introduce new technologies or upgrade workers to new jobs.” This is another way employers can encourage and support new talent coming into their companies while at the same time offering an ‘earn-as-you-learn’ opportunity for job seekers.” For more information on apprenticeships contact CareerSource Northeast Florida.

NORTHEAST FLORIDA MONTHLY EMPLOYMENT REPORT MAY 2024

FloridaCommerce has announced that the unemployment rate for the Jacksonville region was 3.0 in May 2024 – down slightly from 3.2 percent in April 2024 and 3.4 percent in March.

Of the 875,018 people counted as part of the area’s workforce in May, there were 26,241 unemployed residents in the region – down 28,453 unemployed residents in April.

Source: FloridaCommerce (not seasonally adjusted)

| NORTHEAST FLORIDA MAY 2024 UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS BY COUNTY | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| | MAY-23 | APR-24 | MAY-24 |
| CareerSource Northeast Florida | 2.8% | 3.2% | 3.0% |
| Baker County | 2.8% | 3.2% | 3.0% |
| Clay County | 2.7% | 3.2% | 2.9% |
| Duval County | 2.9% | 3.3% | 3.1% |
| Nassau County | 2.6% | 3.0% | 2.8% |
| Putnam County | 3.7% | 4.1% | 3.7% |
| St. Johns County | 2.5% | 2.9% | 2.7% |
| Jacksonville MSA | 2.8% | 3.2% | 3.0% |
| Florida | 2.7% | 3.1% | 3.0% |
| United States | 3.4% | 3.5% | 3.7% |

REGIONAL EMPLOYMENT UPDATE

“Although it was slight, the unemployment rate fell in all counties in Northeast Florida from April to May,” said CareerSource Northeast Florida President Bruce Ferguson. “Also, over the last 12 months our region has outpaced the statewide figures for adding jobs in education and health services (up 4.7 percent), the mining, logging, and construction sector (up 4.4 percent) and in the government sector (up 4.0 percent).

In May, St. John’s County continued to have the lowest unemployment rate in the region (2.7 percent), followed by Nassau County (2.8 percent), Clay County (2.9 percent), Baker County (3.0 percent), Duval County (3.1 percent) and Putnam County (3.7 percent).

WIRED2PERFORM LAUNCHES ITS NEW OFFERING HIRELOCAL TO EMPOWER LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO MEET EMPLOYMENT NEEDS WITH LOCAL TALENT.



Wired2Perform is thrilled to announce its official launch of [HireLocal.org](https://hirelocal.org). This state-of-the-art software is set to revolutionize local employment opportunities by connecting community talent with local companies.

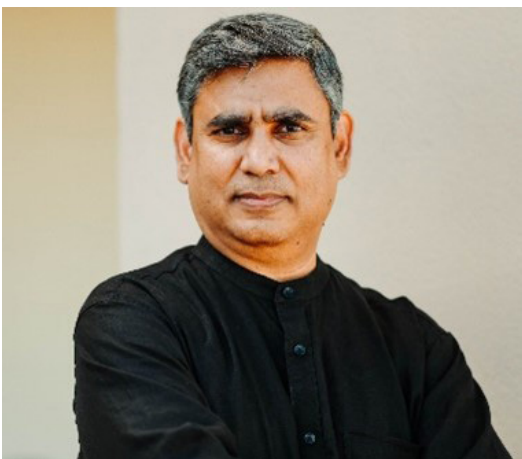
Catalyzing Community Transformation

[HireLocal.org](https://hirelocal.org) is dedicated to transforming communities by bridging the gap between local talent and businesses. By leveraging behavioral science and advanced analytics, HireLocal.org's patented platform aligns the Skills, Interests, Talents, and Aspirations of students, veterans, and the unemployed with the needs of local small businesses. This innovative approach not only fosters economic growth but also strengthens community ties.

Program Highlights

The software will provide unprecedented benefits for residents and businesses:

- **Job Seekers:** Local residents, including students, veterans, underemployed and unemployed individuals, will have access to a wealth of job opportunities with companies and other organizations in the region.
- **Employers:** Local employers will gain a streamlined platform to post job openings and find suitable candidates from the local talent pool that lives in the community.
- **Economic Development Teams:** The economic development teams at the chamber and local government officials will receive macro analytics and trends emerging in the community to plan their initiatives accordingly.
- **CTE Teams / Colleges / Educational Institutions:** The Career and Technical Education teams of the school district, local colleges, and educational Institutions can see analytics of what employers seek regarding talent and structure their curriculum to meet the local demands.



Raghu Misra, Founder of Wired2Perform, expressed his enthusiasm for the launch, stating, "Our mission at [HireLocal.org](https://hirelocal.org) is to empower communities by connecting local talent with businesses. We are excited to see the positive impact this will have on both job seekers and local businesses."

Scott Maynard, VP of Economic Development at the St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce, echoed this sentiment, saying, "The Chamber is committed to supporting local economic growth. We feel Wired2Perform launching [HireLocal.org](https://hirelocal.org) allows local employers access to a valuable resource to find skilled, motivated employees within our community."

About Wired2Perform / HireLocal.org

Wired2Perform's [HireLocal.org](https://www.hirelocal.org) is a patented innovative platform designed to catalyze community transformation by synergizing the Skills, Interests, Talents, and Aspirations of local talent with the needs of local small businesses. By empowering communities and fostering economic growth, [HireLocal.org](https://www.hirelocal.org) is set to make a lasting impact in the communities.

For more information, visit www.hirelocal.org or contact:

Media Contact:

Keeli Stewart
Storyteller
keeli@thelink.zone

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

FLAGLER COLLEGE STUDENT WINS SALES AWARD



Luke Larkin was recently recognized as the Southwestern Advantage “Rookie” Sales Award winner. This award goes to the top first year sales intern within the organization. Southwestern Family of Companies was established in 1855 and the sales and leadership program, now known as Southwestern Advantage, was founded in 1868. It is the oldest entrepreneurial and direct selling program for college and university students in the world. They hire over 1,100 students each summer to participate in their sales program.

Amy Groom, District Sales Leader with Southwestern Advantage said, “Luke was our #1 First Year Intern this past year where he profited over \$46,000. He utilized his sales training and natural ability to help make a difference in the lives of many students.

We are excited for him to return this summer.” Luke said, “The opportunities and training Southwestern Advantage provided set me up for success. It starts with the sales school, but the training and support continued throughout the summer. I am looking forward to this summer in Wisconsin and continuing the leadership training offered by Southwestern.”

Luke is currently studying Economics with a minor in Finance and Business Administration at Flagler College and plans to graduate in the Spring of 2025. He also participates on the cross-country team.

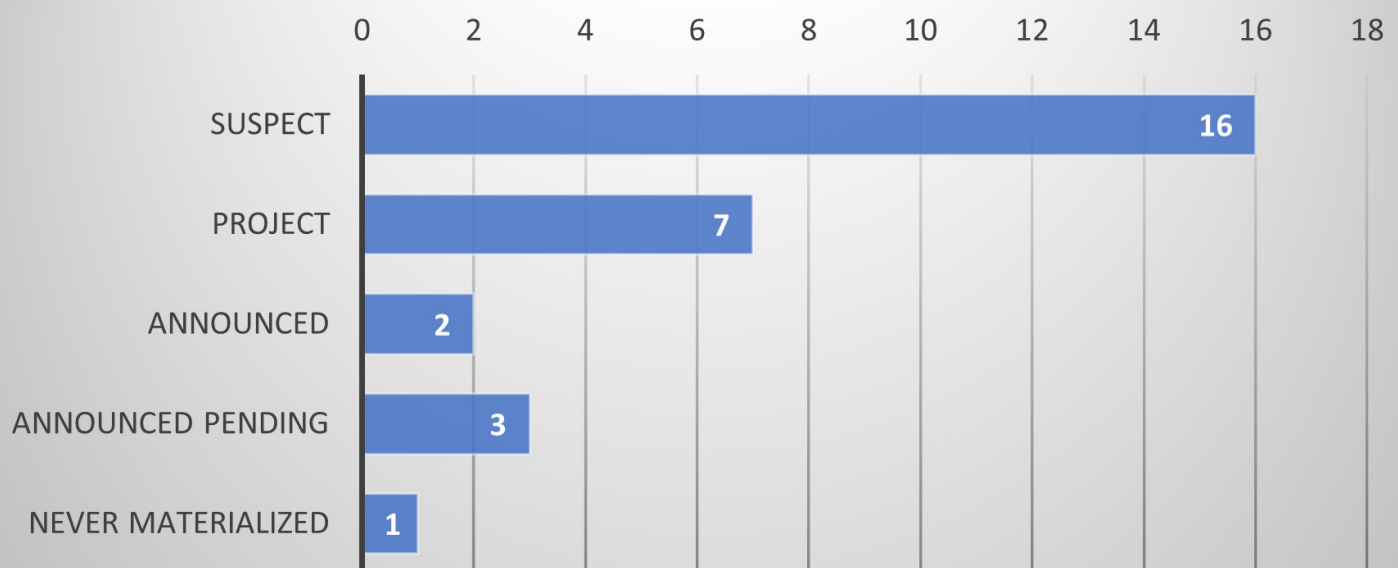
ST. JOHNS COUNTY PROJECT PIPELINE

Q3 – ALL PROJECTS IN THE PIPELINE FOR ST. JOHNS COUNTY

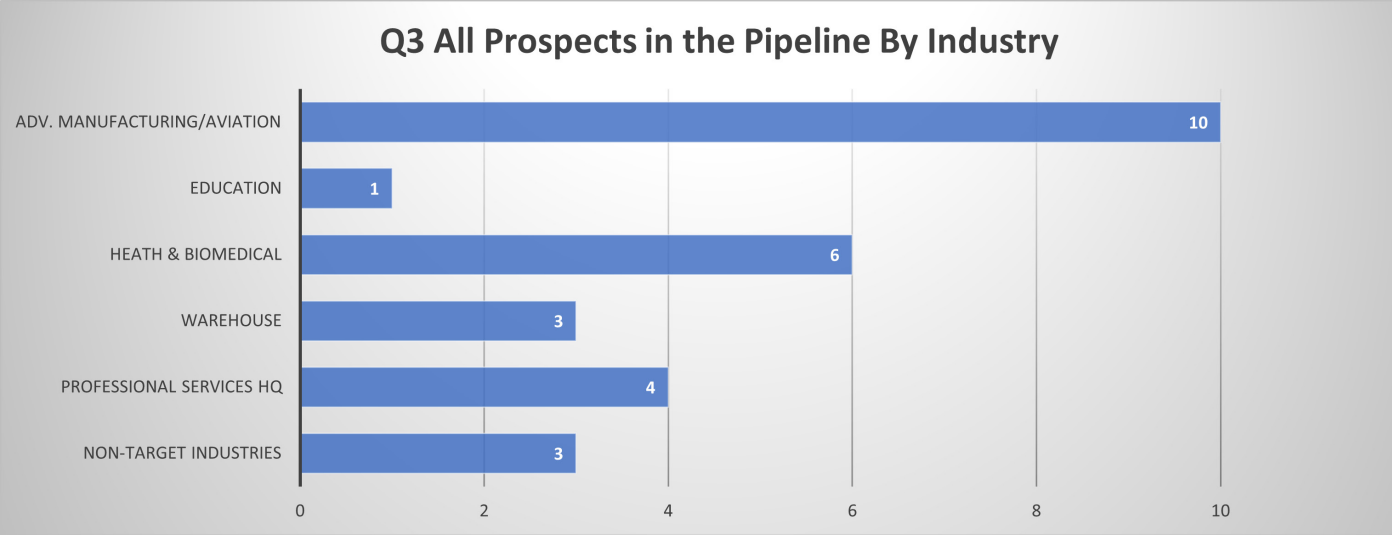
STAGES OF A PROJECT IN THE PIPELINE

| STAGE | DESCRIPTION |
|-------------------|--|
| Suspect | EFI referrals, JAXUSA referrals, Chamber Member/Local Referrals, and Direct Inquiries with at least a 10% potential of moving forward. |
| Project | The project has real potential to select St. Johns County for new business, relocation, or expansion. The representative either has an existing business, has visited, or plans to visit St. Johns County. |
| Imminent | St. Johns County has been shortlisted among other potential locations. |
| Announced Pending | The project has selected St. Johns County and awaiting final approvals from County and other agencies to move forward. |
| Announced | The project has selected St. Johns County, and all final approvals are complete. |

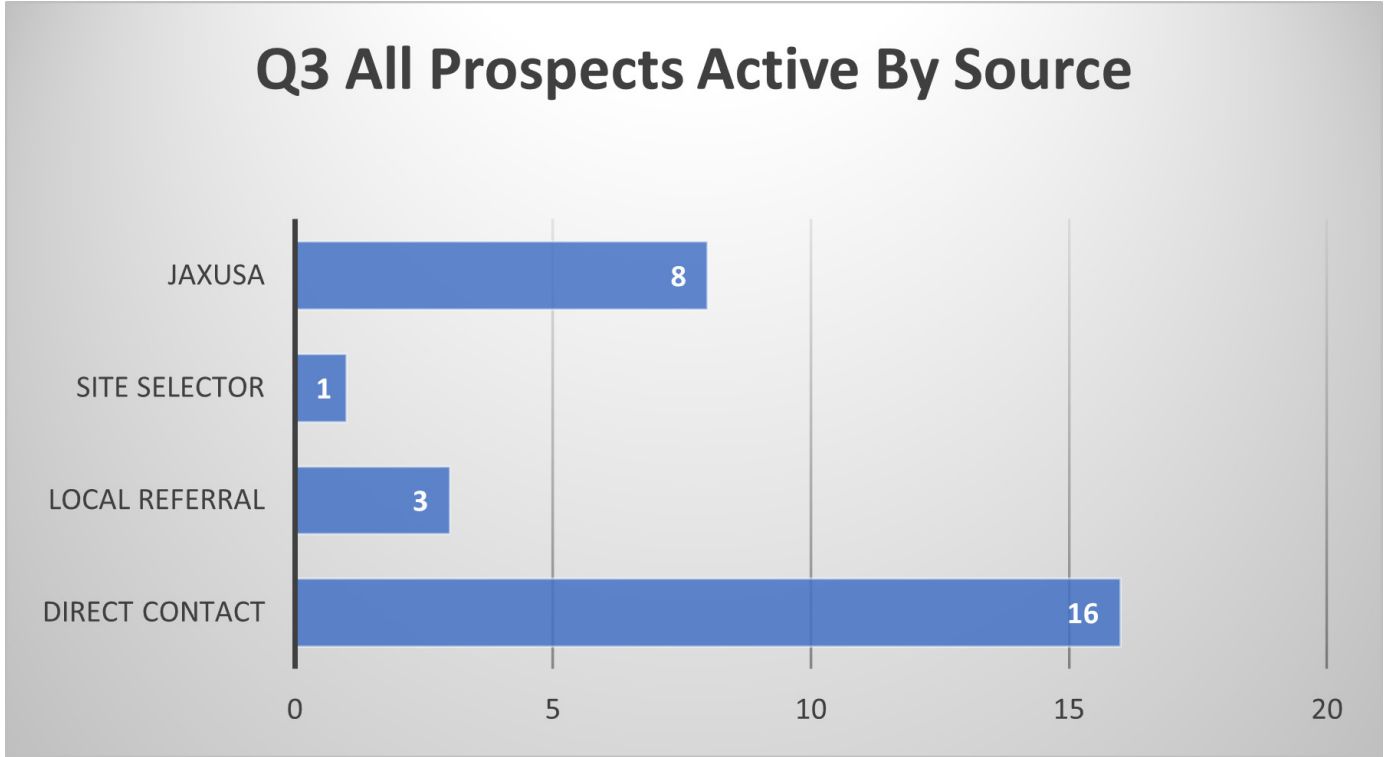
Q3 All Prospects in the Pipeline By Stage



- At the end of Q3, there were a total of 28 active businesses in the pipeline. The two announced pending projects should be revealed in quarter four.
- These projects represented a wide variety of industrial types.

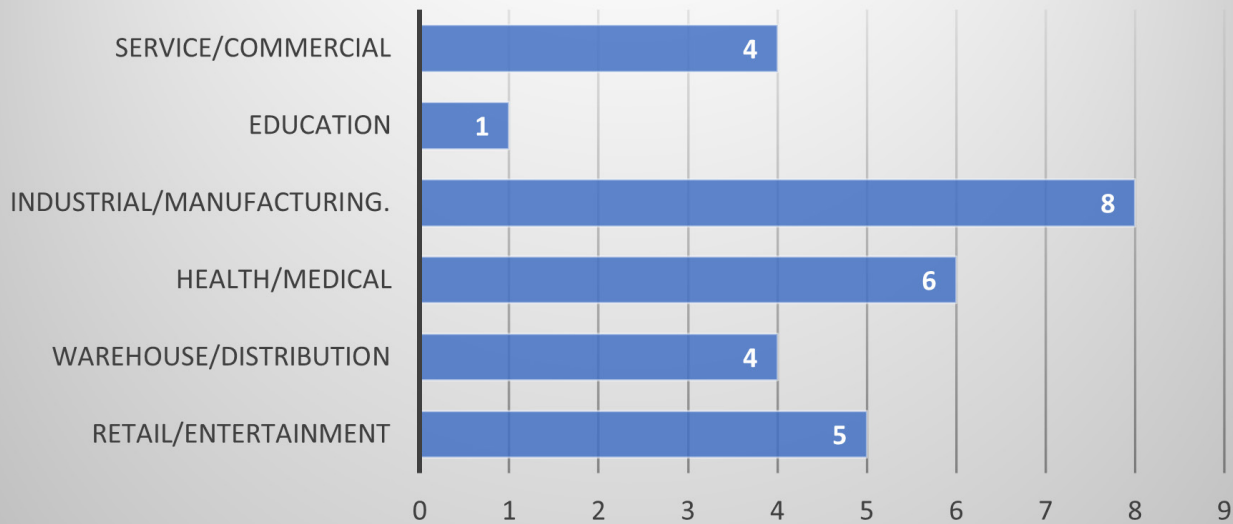


- There are a total of sixteen businesses in the pipeline for the other targeted industries of Advanced Manufacturing/Aviation (10 projects), Health and Biomedical (6 projects).
- The Education prospect is also directly related to manufacturing/aviation.



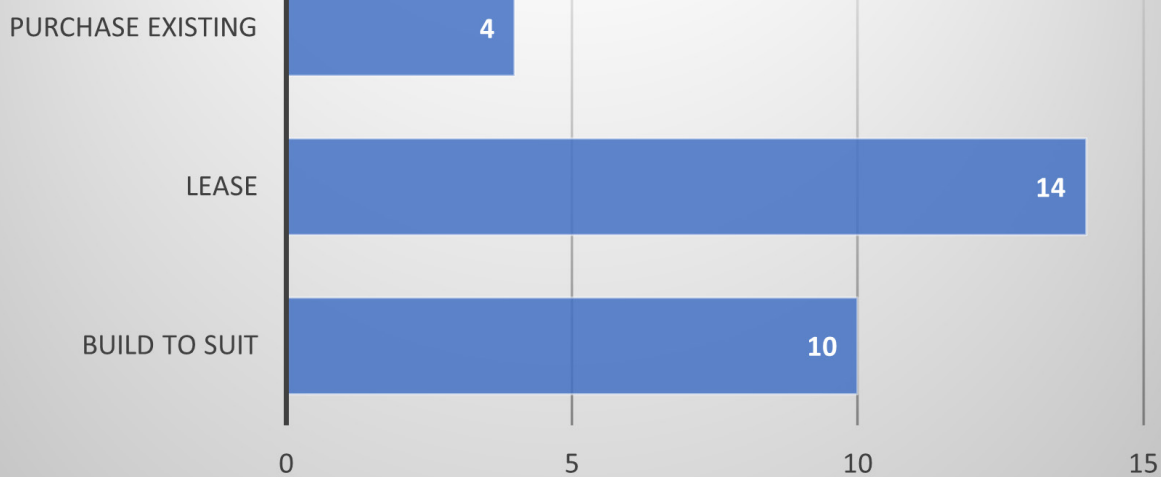
- JaxUSA referred 5 new projects during quarter three.
- Twenty-eight (28) total projects remained in the pipeline.

Q3 All Prospects in the Pipeline By Facility Function



- Current projects in the pipeline seek service or commercial space (4 projects), industrial or manufacturing space (8 projects), health or medical facilities (6 projects), warehouse/distribution (4 projects), retail/entertainment space (5 projects) and training space (1 project).
- The Foundry Project on World Golf Parkway will add 500,000 square feet of warehouse/light industrial space by quarter one of 2025.

Q3 All Prospects in Pipeline By Occupancy Needs



- The majority of the current projects in the pipeline seek to lease (14 projects) or build-to-suit space (10 projects).
- Four projects indicated an interest in purchasing an existing building in St. Johns County.

