



# Chapter 4: Marketing & Strategic Plan



avalanche

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**Introduction**

# About the Strategy

In March 2018, JAXUSA Partnership, Northeast Florida Regional Council, CareerSource Northeast Florida, and other partners initiated a Regional Economic Development Strategy to improve regional competitiveness and collaboration throughout Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns counties. Avalanche Consulting, a national economic development consultancy, and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL), a national nonprofit focused on lifelong learning, were selected to facilitate the preparation of the economic development and workforce development strategy.

Once complete, Elevate Northeast Florida will have four chapters:

## **Chapter 1: Economic Assessment & Community Benchmarking**

The first chapter of the Elevate Northeast Florida Strategy includes in-depth analysis of the region's current economic and demographic conditions in comparison to national and statewide trends, as well as selected benchmark regions. The first chapter also includes a SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) based on both quantitative and qualitative information gathered through focus groups, interviews, and an online survey.

## **Chapter 2: Target Industry Validation & Update**

Chapter 2 examines the current status of the region's existing target industries and niche sectors that can be integrated into an updated target list for future economic development efforts. The Target Industry Validation & Update includes written profiles for each target industry, marketing messages, and an industry trend analysis.

## **Chapter 3: Workforce Development Assessment**

The Workforce Development Assessment analyzes the skillsets of the region's workforce and highlights workforce attributes that distinguish the region from the competition or need improvement. Chapter 3 includes an examination of existing educational pathways, current and potential gaps in workforce supply, and recommendations for creating an even more robust regional workforce.

## **Chapter 4: Marketing & Strategic Plan**

This final chapter of Elevate Northeast Florida provides marketing and community investment recommendations to help the region be more competitive globally. This Marketing & Strategic Plan includes recommendations on structuring implementation and measuring progress, equipping regional leaders with the tools needed to successfully move the Strategy forward over the next five years.



# Project Partners

The Elevate Northeast Florida Strategy is being developed by JAXUSA Partnership, CareerSource Northeast Florida, and the Northeast Florida Regional Council in partnership with Avalanche Consulting, CAEL, and local residents, public organizations, and private businesses.

## **JAXUSA Partnership**

JAXUSA Partnership is a private, nonprofit division of the JAX Chamber and is the seven-county region's economic development initiative. Its mission is to be a catalyst for economic growth and maximize the region's unique resources to aggressively recruit jobs and private capital investment to the region. JAXUSA coordinates economic development efforts across a seven-county region that includes Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns Counties.

## **Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC)**

The Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) is the regional planning organization for seven counties (Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Putnam, Nassau and St. Johns) and their 27 municipalities. The mission of the NEFRC is to celebrate the unique assets of the region and to engage its people, businesses, governments, and organizations. In 2009, NEFRC adopted a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). Updated in 2012 and 2015, the CEDS buttresses other economic development efforts in the region through identifying programs and projects essential to the region's economic development objectives.

## **CareerSource Northeast Florida**

CareerSource Northeast Florida is a publicly funded agency that provides extensive workforce-related services to six counties on Florida's First Coast – Baker, Clay, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, and St. Johns counties. CareerSource opens the door to improved employment opportunities through education, training, and career services for workers. CareerSource administers an annual budget of more than \$20 million.

## **Northeast Florida Residents & Businesses**

Development of the Elevate Northeast Florida Strategy involved face-to-face discussions with private business leaders, representatives of philanthropic organizations, economic development professionals, and other civic champions. Additionally, more than 1,300 residents and business owners completed an online survey as part of the economic development strategic planning process.

(continued)



## Project Partners (continued)

### Avalanche Consulting, Inc.

Avalanche Consulting is the nation's premier economic development strategist. Avalanche is deeply driven to make a positive impact and seek clients who are equally inspired to energize their economies. Headquartered in Austin, Avalanche was established in 2005 and its team has a combined 80+ years of experience working with more than 150 cities, counties, and regions across the country.

### Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL)

CAEL is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to put meaningful learning, credentials, and work within reach for every community. CAEL works to remove policy and organizational barriers to learning opportunities, identifies and disseminates effective practices, and delivers value-added services. Since its founding in 1974, CAEL has been providing colleges and universities, companies, economic development organizations, labor organizations and state and local governments with the tools and strategies they need to create practical, effective lifelong learning solutions to address long-term skills needs.



# Steering Committee Members

The Elevate project partners and consulting team sincerely thank the members of Elevate Northeast Florida's Strategy Committee for helping inform and guide the development of this strategic plan. Members include:

Tony Allegretti, *Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville*  
 Katrina Austin, *Flagler County DEO*  
 Dr. Perry Bechtel, *Mayo Clinic*  
 Brian Bergen, *Putnam County EDC*  
 The Honorable Aaron Bowman, *City of Jacksonville*  
 Michelle Braun, *United Way of Northeast Florida*  
 Debbie Buckland, *BB&T*  
 Carolyn Clark, *Urban Land Institute*  
 Josh Cockrell, *Infinity Global Solutions*  
 Rena Coughlin, *Nonprofit Center*  
 Steve Crosby, *InvestJAX*  
 Jay Cunio, *JAA*  
 Dr. Mark Dawkins, *University of North Florida*  
 Laura DiBella, *Nassau County EDB*  
 Lara Diettrich, *Diettrich Planning*  
 Janice Donaldson, *Small Business Development Center*  
 Kevin Doyle, *Wexford Strategies*  
 Heather Duncan, *AT&T*  
 Karen Everett, *St. Johns County Chamber of Commerce*  
 Bruce Ferguson, *CareerSource Northeast Florida*  
 Mike Fleming, *Jacksonville University*

Elizabeth Feustel, *Jacksonville Civic Council*  
 Bill Garrison, *NEFBA*  
 Melissa Glasgow, *St. Johns County*  
 Jake Gordon, *Downtown Vision*  
 Shelley Hirsch, *Nassau County EDB*  
 Elaine Johnson, *Guidewell*  
 Will Ketchum, *Burdette Ketchum*  
 Robin King, *CareerSource Flagler Volusia*  
 Jana Kooi, *Florida State College at Jacksonville*  
 Dr. Anna Lebesch, *Steering Committee Co-Chair, St. Johns River State College*  
 Eric Mann, *First Coast YMCA*  
 Phyllis Martin, *United Way of Northeast Florida*  
 Trina Medarev, *World Affairs Council*  
 Jeanne Miller, *Jacksonville Civic Council*  
 Sherri Mitchell, *Nassau County EDB*  
 Katie Mitura, *Visit Jacksonville*  
 Candace Moody, *CareerSource Northeast Florida*  
 Alan Mosley, *Regional Transportation Commission*  
 The Honorable Don O'Brien, *Flagler County*  
 Mary O'Brien, *Meridian Waste*

Jeff Parsons, *AT&T*  
 Laura Pavlus, *Clay County EDC*  
 Robert Peek, *JAXPORT*  
 Jordan Pope, *JEA*  
 Crawford Powell, *Baker County Chamber of Commerce*  
 Ed Randolph, *City of Jacksonville OED*  
 Lake Ray, *FCMA*  
 Darryl Register, *Baker County Chamber of Commerce*  
 Bob Rhodes, *Attorney-At-Law*  
 Jeff Sheffield, *North Florida TPO*  
 Darnell Smith, *Steering Committee Co-Chair Florida Blue*  
 Kelly Smith, *Wells Fargo*  
 Jim Stallings, *PS27 Ventures*  
 Chereese Stewart, *Clay County*  
 Crystal Stiles, *FPL*  
 Brian Teeple, *Northeast Florida Regional Council*  
 Brad Thoburn, *JTA*  
 Helga van Eckert, *Flagler County DEO*  
 Nina Waters, *Community Foundation for Northeast Florida*  
 Kirk Wendland, *City of Jacksonville OED*



# Stakeholder Input

Over the course of eight months, the Elevate planning process involved more than 1,500 regional stakeholders who contributed more than 1,300 hours of their time to shaping the strategy through workshops, surveys, and interviews. The stakeholder input process encompassed all seven counties in the region and included:

- 4 Steering Committee Workshops (~60 participants)
- 3 Workforce Partners Workshops (~30 participants)
- 1 Regional Forum Workshop (~100 participants)
- 13 Individual Interviews
- 1,341 Community Survey Responses
- 7 Half-Day County Workshops with Leaders and Stakeholders
- 20 Focus Groups (~150 Attendees) on the following topics:
  - Young Professionals
  - Transportation
  - Poverty
  - Earn Up
  - JAXUSA BD Committee
  - Advanced Manufacturing
  - Health & Life Sciences
  - Financial Services
  - Marketing and Branding
  - Entrepreneurship
  - Public Policy
  - Land Use
  - Civic Council (x2)
  - Employers
  - CareerSource
  - Urban Land Institute
  - Information Technology
  - Logistics
  - Aviation
  - Business Development





# About this Report

This Marketing and Strategic Plan provides marketing and community investment recommendations to help the region be more globally competitive. This report also includes recommendations on structuring implementation and measuring progress, and equipping the region's leaders with the tools needed to successfully move the Strategy forward over the next five years.

This report contains six sections:

## **Strategic Framework**

This report begins with an introduction to Elevate Northeast Florida's strategic framework. This should be the touchstone for economic development across the region over the next five years.

## **Goals, Strategies, and Projects**

This section includes a description of strategies and tactical projects to be initiated during Elevate Northeast Florida's implementation. Projects are designed to be discrete in nature, with a focused start and end time.

## **Infrastructure Projects**

This section outlines the significant regional and county-level infrastructure projects that are either currently underway or in the planning stage. Once complete, these projects will support all four Elevate Northeast Florida goals.

## **Implementation**

This section provides guidance on structuring implementation, including recommendations related to establishing a collective impact framework, accountability and leadership, communication, measuring progress, budget, and timing.

## **Funding Opportunities**

This section contains a summary of funding opportunities that could support strategies and tactical projects outlined in this report.

## **Marketing Messages**

This section contains marketing messages for the region as a whole as well as messages specific to each target industry that can be used when developing marketing materials, sales presentations, and talking points.

