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Building a Better Santa Rosa County:

A Five-Year Strategic Blueprint for
Economic Development

Prepared for

Santa Rosa Economic Development

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The Santa Rosa Economic Development Office (Santa Rosa EDO) retained Garner Economics, LLC to develop an Economic Development Strategy that assessed the area's existing plans, assets, and opportunities and create a roadmap for the County to generate economic opportunities for its citizens. The resulting plan, *Building a Better Santa Rosa County: A Five-Year Strategic Blueprint for Economic Development*, details the product improvement, marketing, and organizational changes the Santa Rosa EDO, Santa Rosa County, and their economic development partners must make to ensure that Santa Rosa County strengthens its competitive position and is able to attract and retain businesses that will create jobs and opportunities.

Santa Rosa County, Florida

Specifically, the process to build the economic development strategy included the following:

- A comprehensive and holistic assessment of key forces driving the economy and its shifting dynamics;

- An ASSETS AND CHALLENGES ASSESSMENT (A&C) of Santa Rosa County from the perspective of a site-location consultant that facilitates investment decisions; and

- A set of implementable recommendations that the Santa Rosa EDO and leadership in the County can take to make the area a more desirable business location for the identified business targets and to market the area to them and other high-quality investment targets.

Figure 1 illustrates the process to build the strategy.

FIGURE 1: PROJECT PROCESS

PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3
Discovery	**Strategy**	**Recommendations**
• Reviewed past studies • Conducted site visits, focus groups, and survey • Evaluated workforce, demographic, and existing cluster status/conditions • Assessed current perceptions and the Santa Rosa "brand" • Undertook an Assets and Challenges Assessment	• Business retention • Product planning and development to support clusters • Business recruitment and marketing to identified clusters • Workforce needs to support and grow clusters • Quality of place enhancements	Implementation plan with actionable items • Product improvement • Effective economic development service delivery • Marketing

Analysis and Assessments

The economic development strategy is a compilation of local and regional facts and data points. Combined with the A&C (and the background analysis and research that validates it), this "Discovery" process informed the work to identify target business sectors for Santa Rosa County. These "building blocks" are also the basis upon which the strategic recommendations were built. The assessments and key findings were presented to the Santa Rosa EDO in January 2018 through a COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT and are summarized in Chapter 1.

Target Business Sectors

The Optimal Business Sector Targets analysis presented in Chapter 2 provides the rationale for five core targets for the area that will help diversify its economic base as well as build on current areas of strength. An additional community development target is recommended, aimed at leveraging the area's strong quality of place to attract and retain skilled workers. These targets are best fits for Santa Rosa County based on the current economic and business climate conditions and are recommended given the area's attributes and assets. Two of the targets within the aviation sector are recommended with the caveat that the County will need to make investments to strengthen its "product" and infrastructure to support them. The optimal business sector targets are:

CORE TARGETS	
Aviation & Support Services	Business Services
Distribution & Logistics	Agriculture & Marine Research
Health Services/ Research & Medical Technology	

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TARGET
Quality of Place & Asset Development

Recommendations

In conducting this analysis, the Garner Economics and DCI team found that Santa Rosa is well poised to increase its overall competitive position and set itself apart as a strong business location for the targets. However, the County must be proactive in leveraging the area's assets and workforce to capitalize on this. Chapter 3 offers a set of implementable recommendations to help the Santa Rosa EDO better focus its economic development service delivery to attract the types of high-quality companies that make up the identified targets and strengthen the overall business climate of the area for the targets and other economic activity.

The recommendations reflect items that the Santa Rosa EDO, the County, and economic development partners in the area should undertake to mitigate negative perceptions of the area by site-location advisors or companies looking to invest in Santa Rosa County, as well as specific tactics the Santa Rosa EDO can use to leverage strengths and effectively market the area to the recommended targets.

The strategic recommendations are broken into three categories:
1. Policy changes and investments that should be made to strengthen the area's product,
2. Tactics to better market Santa Rosa County, and
3. Improved economic development service delivery.

The recommendations proposed in *Building a Better Santa Rosa County: A Five-Year Strategic Blueprint for Economic Development* call on the Santa Rosa EDO to reconfigure its economic development activities for a stronger focus on marketing and attraction. It also calls on the Santa Rosa EDO to act as a catalyst and advocate for County-led initiatives that will build upon and improve product development. Figure 2 summarizes the recommendations and implementable action plan for the blueprint. Chapter 3 and the appendices provide more detail on the rationale behind the recommendation and the steps to be taken.

Enhance the Product

1. Continue to develop a real estate portfolio and develop a speculative building.
   a. Consider constructing a multi-purpose speculative building in the County's I-10 Industrial Park.
   b. Develop a campus-like office park in the more commercial areas of Santa Rosa County.
2. Invest in necessary infrastructure at Peter Prince and/or the proposed Whiting Air Park to enhance the viability of recruiting aviation-related companies.
   a. Acquire the funds to create infrastructure for true development of Whiting Air Park (WAP).
   b. Fund and install an ILS system at Peter Prince.
   c. Develop a virtual spec hangar to use as a promotional tool for an MRO facility of smaller, general aviation aircraft and rotor (helicopters) aircraft at Peter Prince.
3. Create a plan to improve gateways into the County.
4. Plan and Strategize for a "Better Santa Rosa County" by conducting a county-wide land use amenities plan.
5. Enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem.
6. Look long-term for sustainable funding for economic development and product improvement.
7. Support plans for increased water and wastewater capacity in Santa Rosa County.
8. Update the County's Incentive Policy.

Tell the Story

1. Craft Santa Rosa County's story by defining key messages & themelines.
2. Launch a Digital Ambassadors campaign: Turn to Santa Rosa County residents to amplify key messages.
3. Advance Santa Rosa EDO's Online Presence: Take the website to the next level.
4. Go Social: Rethink the approach to digital media.
5. Influence the Influencers: Cultivate relationships with national site selection consultants and area real estate brokers.
6. Smart Collateral: Test a new approach.
7. Leverage Trade Shows: Focus on "owning" rather than attending the show.
8. Partner Marketing: Strengthen relationships with the "Big Dogs."
9. Out-of-the-Box: Create dimensional direct mail for best-bet companies.

Execute Effectively

1. Reorganize the Santa Rosa EDO to effectively seize on current and future economic opportunities and create an advisory board of directors.
2. Engage a firm to analyze the County's best effort to attract retail in order to enhance the area's quality of place assets.
3. Conduct annual economic development briefing workshops (ED 101) for the community at large for a better understanding of the local economic development process.

Chapter 1: Where Santa Rosa County Stands as a Place for Business

A Summary of the Competitive Realities Report

Chapter 1 serves as a summary of the Discovery phase. A more detailed discussion of the following information was presented to the Santa Rosa EDO as a COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT in January 2018.

The COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT is an objective and subjective evaluation of where Santa Rosa County stands as a place for business. To build the report, the team collected data, conducted on-site visits, and solicited opinions and feedback from the area's stakeholders from a site-selection perspective. The team used the same criteria and measures that potential companies looking to invest or expand in Santa Rosa County would employ. Additionally, Santa Rosa County was compared against the benchmark communities of Baldwin County, Alabama and Beaufort County, South Carolina, where possible and applicable. The County's economic performance was also compared to the state of Florida and the United States. Three primary vehicles were used to make the assessment: an Asset and Challenges Assessment (A&C); a Labor, Demographics and Economic Analysis; and research comprised of a series of focus groups, individual interviews, and an electronic survey.

In addition to informing the targeting and recommendations phases of the project, having a solid sense of where the County stands allows the Santa Rosa EDO to identify both gaps in the area's product as well as the County's strengths, so it can take steps to mitigate those gaps and better message the value of the Santa Rosa business climate.

What Stakeholders Think

As a complement to the assessment of the physical and regulatory structure of Santa Rosa County, Garner Economics and DCI conducted four focus groups with key community stakeholders and conducted an online survey to solicit a variety of perceptions of the area's business climate. Questions posed addressed the area's attractiveness to companies, how external/non-local audiences perceive Santa Rosa County, the types of companies that would be a good fit for the region, and areas the community could or should work to improve. Fifty-five people participated in the four groups. The focus groups were organized into the following categories: *Employers* (two groups), *Government/Academia/Nonprofits*, and *Real Estate and Developers*. Participants were invited by the Santa Rosa EDO. The focus groups were held November 8, 2017.

An electronic survey was built based on feedback garnered from the focus groups. It was distributed by the Santa Rosa EDO and shared to a broader audience by local partners. The survey was open November 27-December 8, 2017 and was completed by 281 people.

Lastly, one on one interviews were conducted with each county commissioner, the county administrator, and the deputy county administrator.

The high-level themes emerging from the stakeholder engagement are summarized below. Garner Economics and DCI recognize that the comments (and their summation) may not necessarily be statements of fact, but represent opinions or perceptions. A more detailed summary of the feedback was included in the COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT.

Key Themes

- **Santa Rosa County is "Just Above Average."** Participants in both the focus groups and the electronic survey have an overall favorable opinion of the area's business climate, but wonder if more can be done to build the type of economy and community desired. While the feedback pointed to the strong K-12 education system and strong customer service of the Santa Rosa EDO, there was also a sentiment that the County is being left behind in attracting and nurturing the types of companies that will strengthen the County's economy—especially when compared to surrounding communities (see Figure 1.1).
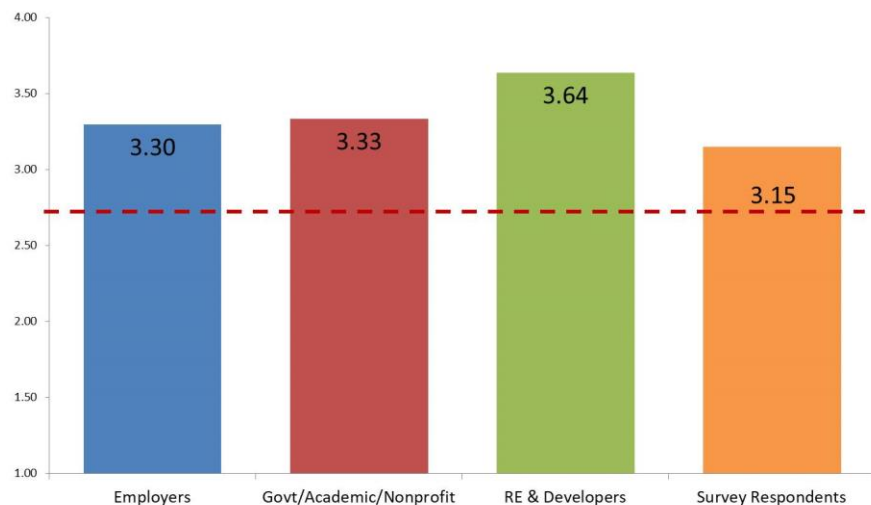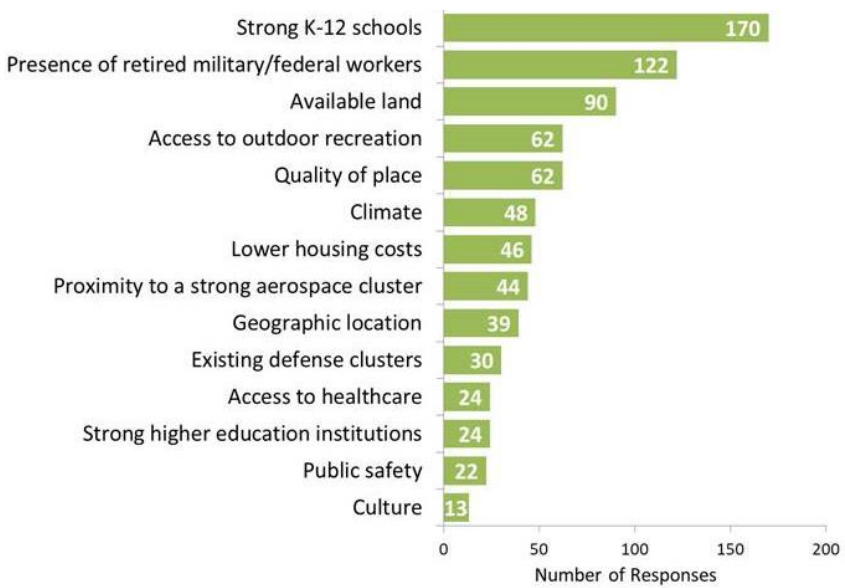
- **Santa Rosa County should capitalize on adjacent defense assets and surrounding natural resources.** Many of the focus group respondents noted that defense- and aviation-related industries would be a good fit for the County given the proximity to the Navy's Whiting Field. Additionally, participants suggested ag-bio/agriculture-related industries and cyber security. As Chapter 2 details, in addition to being desirable sectors for the County, these sectors are also feasible given the County's assets.

- **Santa Rosa County needs a vision and brand.** A third overriding message gleaned from the stakeholder input (and independent assessments) is that the County needs to decide on what it wants to be and build a cohesive message around that brand. Both streams of feedback noted that Santa Rosa County is a bedroom community for Pensacola and surrounding counties that provides an excellent quality of life, good schools, low crime, and an extremely affordable cost of living. The focus group pointed to recent relocations of financial services and information technology-focused companies as major "wins" for the community. However, the region seems relatively unknown to outsiders and lacks a cohesive identity.
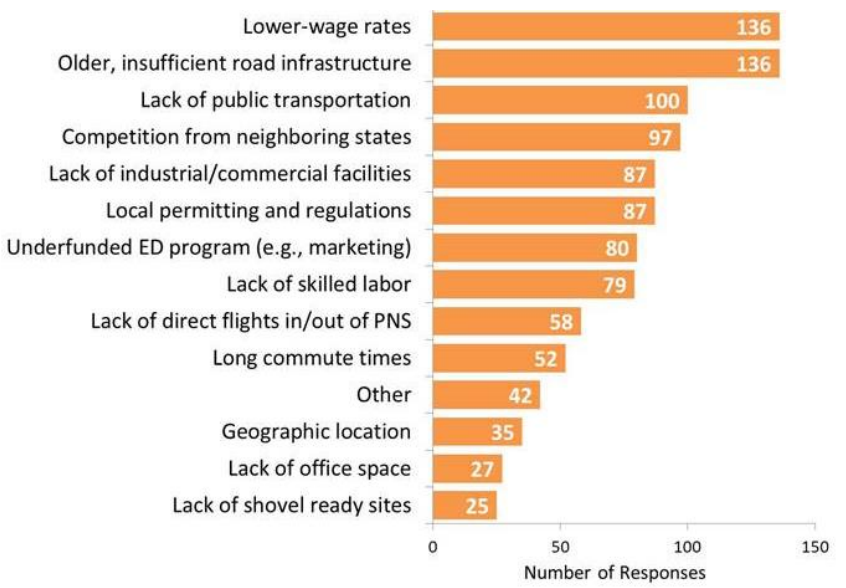
Figure 1.2 highlights the stakeholder feedback provided on the competitive position of Santa Rosa County. These figures and a detailed summary of the community engagement input were provided in the COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT.
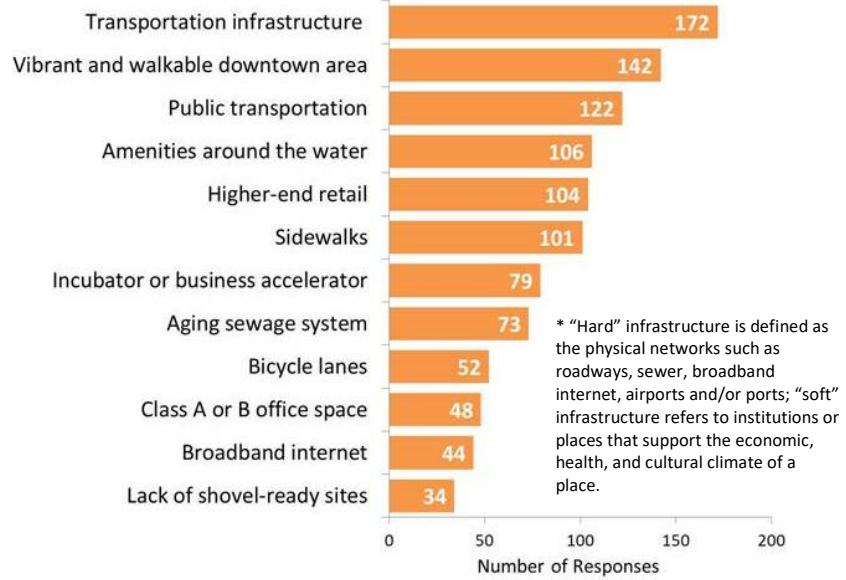
Top Assets to Market to Potential Businesses

	Number of Responses
Strong K-12 schools	170
Presence of retired military/federal workers	122
Available land	90
Access to outdoor recreation	62
Quality of place	62
Climate	48
Lower housing costs	46
Proximity to a strong aerospace cluster	44
Geographic location	39
Existing defense clusters	30
Access to healthcare	24
Strong higher education institutions	24
Public safety	22
Culture	13

Key Inhibitors to Recruiting Business

	Number of Responses
Lower-wage rates	136
Older, insufficient road infrastructure	136
Lack of public transportation	100
Competition from neighboring states	97
Lack of industrial/commercial facilities	87
Local permitting and regulations	87
Underfunded ED program (e.g., marketing)	80
Lack of skilled labor	79
Lack of direct flights in/out of PNS	58
Long commute times	52
Other	42
Geographic location	35
Lack of office space	27
Lack of shovel ready sites	25

Missing or Weak Infrastructure

	Number of Responses
Transportation infrastructure	172
Vibrant and walkable downtown area	142
Public transportation	122
Amenities around the water	106
Higher-end retail	104
Sidewalks	101
Incubator or business accelerator	79
Aging sewage system	73
Bicycle lanes	52
Class A or B office space	48
Broadband internet	44
Lack of shovel-ready sites	34

* "Hard" infrastructure is defined as the physical networks such as roadways, sewer, broadband internet, airports and/or ports; "soft" infrastructure refers to institutions or places that support the economic, health, and cultural climate of a place.

Potential Industries for Santa Rosa County

	Number of Responses
Defense-related	147
Aviation	141
Agriculture or agriculture-biotechnology	129
Marine science	94
Outdoor recreation	90
Information Technology	88
Cybersecurity	82
Distribution and logistics	79
Advanced manufacturing	77
Renewable energy	70
Professional services	63
Medical technology	59
Sports medicine/services	41
Biotech	34
Beverage manufacturing	27
Financial services	17
Power generation	12

Assets and Challenges Assessment

Concurrent to soliciting stakeholder perspectives, Garner Economics undertook primary and web-based research to assess where Santa Rosa County stands. The team used a rigorous set of techniques based on fully-sourced and reliable datasets to completely understand the County's current economic state. This assessment was undertaken from the perspective of businesses looking at Santa Rosa County as a possible location for an investment and was grounded in decades of economic development, site-location analysis, and business sector targeting experience.

A key component of the Discovery phase was the ASSETS AND CHALLENGES ASSESSMENT, which is a compilation of local facts and data points with quantitative analysis and some subjective opinions. These are the same variables typically employed when undertaking a locational assessment for a corporate client.

Garner Economics analyzed 61 community factors as part of the assessment. Ratings were identified by evaluating the region's position for each of the factors against the state of Florida, the United States, and, in many instances, the benchmarked communities (counties) of Baldwin County, Alabama and Beaufort County, South Carolina.

Of the 61 variables analyzed, 21 are considered an asset and 13 a challenge (27 rated as neutral). A "neutral" rating is normal in the realm of economic development opportunity and competitiveness. An "asset" rating indicates a positive feature of the county that would be evaluated and rated as a competitive strength versus the benchmark locations. A "challenge" rating identifies a factor that is considered a relative deficiency compared to other locations and may be an impediment to economic development requiring remediation.

With 27 variables rated as a neutral or average, any or all of these rankings, taken either individually or as a whole, could be an impediment to attracting or retaining private investment within the county. The objective in the future will be for those policymakers engaged in local economic development to move the bar from a challenge to a neutral or asset ranking, move the neutral rankings to an asset, and to sustain or prevent a slippage of the current asset rankings that you have today.

Figure 1.3 summarizes the key findings of the COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT, using the symbols and definitions below.

> **REPORT DASHBOARD**
>
> ⬆ Indicates the area is better (more positive) compared to a majority of the benchmark geographies or points to a positive trend or asset within the area.
>
> ⬌ Indicates the area is neutral or normal, neither positive nor negative. Indicator may represent an observation or be in the middle of the benchmark geographies.
>
> ⬇ Indicates the area is worse compared to a majority of the benchmark geographies or points to a negative trend or challenge within the area.

FIGURE 1.3: SANTA ROSA COUNTY'S ASSETS AND CHALLENGES

Detailed data and rationale for the ratings can be found in the COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT.

	⬆ Assets	⬇ Challenges	⬌ Neutral
Access to Markets	• Interstate highways • Rail service • Port facilities (inland and/or water) • Within one hour of commercial air passenger service	• Not centrally located for national market	• Centrally located for major regional market • Well-positioned to serve international markets • General aviation airport capable of handling corporate aircraft • Broadband availability and speeds
Labor	• Cost of labor • Availability of post-secondary vocational training • Within half-hour of major university/college • Availability of degreed engineering program	• Lack of skilled industrial workers • Lack of managerial personnel	• Availability of administrative personnel • Availability of technicians, scientists • Availability of on-the-job training assistance
Access to Resources	• Availability of agricultural products for food processing	• Cost of electricity for industrial use	• Availability of manufacturing processes • Availability of business and professional services • Cost of natural gas for industrial use

	⬆ Assets	⬇ Challenges	⬌ Neutral
Economic Development Program	• User comments about the local EDO	• Inadequate level of professional staff • Lack Involvement of both public and private sectors • Lack of strategic plan for local economic development organization	• Level of leadership support of economic development program • Level of cooperation between various organizations involved in economic development activity • Level of awareness of community regarding economic development • Level of funding for local economic development program
Access to Space	• Availability of fully-served and attractive industrial sites	• Lack of fully-served and attractive office sites • Lack of suitable industrial space (buildings) • Lack of suitable office space (Class A or B space)	No neutral ratings
Access to Capital	No relative Strengths (see Challenges)	• Lack of venture capital from local sources for business startups or early-stage funding	• Availability of tax-exempt financing for new industrial facilities • Availability of low-interest loans for small business
Government Impact on Business	• Availability of adequate water and sewer lines to industrial sites • Quality of local elementary and secondary education • Quality of post-secondary education	• Lack of labor training incentives	• Availability/capacity of water and wastewater treatment • Condition and maintenance of local streets • Availability and type of local incentives • Business permitting procedures and costs • Local property taxes

	⬆ Assets	⬇ Challenges	⬌ Neutral
Quality of Place	• Availability of executive-level housing • Availability of moderate-cost housing • Availability of apartments • Cost of living index • Level of crime • Availability of outdoor recreational opportunities • Availability of adequate medical facilities	• Climate and natural disaster risk	• Level of cultural activity • General appearance of the community • Availability of major shopping facilities • Availability of first-class hotels, motels, and resorts • Quality of local restaurants • Appearance of the Central Business District(s)

Demographic, Labor, Economic Trends, and Retail Analysis

As a complement to the asset benchmarking work above, the team examined Santa Rosa County's economic position relative to the same benchmark counties, the state of Florida, and the national average.

This analysis relies heavily on raw objective data collected by governmental or impartial third-party agencies. Garner Economics used data that can be verified and for which comparisons with other counties or areas can be made at the level of detail preferred by most site-selection professionals. In all cases, the original and most current available data as of October 2017 are used.

The scorecards presented in Figures 1.4–1.5 below were included in the COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT.

Measurements

• Population Trends	• Commuting Patterns
• Age Distribution	• Military Impact
• Diversity	• Degrees & Enrollment
• New Residents	• Major Industry Sector Composition
• Educational Attainment	• Estimated Average Annual Wage
• Secondary School Performance	• New Firms Startups
• Household & Individual Income	• Self-Employment
• Per Capita Income	• Agriculture
• Poverty	• Retail Demand & Leakage
• Crime Rate	• Major Industry Sector Change
• Cost of Living	• Industry Earnings
• Air Service	• Occupational Change
• Broadband Access	• Occupational Earnings
• Labor Force Draw	• Local Specialization, Competitiveness & Growth
• Labor Force Participation	

Demographic & Community Trends		
Population Change	⬆	Santa Rosa County, Florida has a current population of 170,497, a net increase of 27,514 persons or 19 percent over the past decade (Table 4.1, Figure 4.1). This growth is more than double the Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent, FL Metro Area.
Age Distribution	⬆	Santa Rosa County shows growth from 2011 to 2016 in most age groups with the highest growth occurring in the 30-39-year-old and 60-69-year-old groups. The County has the highest percentage of those ages 30 through 59 among all geographies, a positive trend for workforce-age population.
New Residents	⬆	Santa Rosa County attracted 17,688 persons, or 10.5 percent of the total population in 2016. Sixty-three percent of these residents have some college or a post-secondary degree.
Educational Attainment	⬆	Santa Rosa County had 63.5 percent of the adult population with Some College or Post-Secondary Degree. Santa Rosa County and the Pensacola Metro area had the highest percentages of those with an Associate Degree compared to all other benchmark communities. Both the County and the Pensacola Metro lagged in population with Graduate or Professional Degrees, however this sector, along with Associate degree holders, has increased in 2011.
Secondary School Performance	⬆	The four-year graduation rate for Santa Rosa County's class of 2016 was 85.7 percent, the highest among all geographies.
Household Income	⬆	Median Household Income in 2016 was $63,619, second in the benchmarks. This figure has grown by more than $10,000 since 2011.
Individual Income	⬍	Individual income ranked in the middle of the benchmarks and the County had the highest share of those earning $50,000-$99,000 annually. Individual income has grown only $2,000 since 2011, much less than Median Household Income.
Per Capita Income	⬍	Santa Rosa County's Per Capita Income was in the middle of benchmarks and grew modestly from 2011 to 2016.
Poverty	⬆	Santa Rosa County was second lowest among benchmarks for those below the poverty level and lowest for children under 18 below the poverty level.
Crime Rate	⬆	Overall, Santa Rosa County's crime rate is very low. Although it is second to the Baldwin County benchmark rates, it is significantly below metro, state, and national levels. Property crime rates increased slightly as in all other geographies.

Demographic & Community Trends, *continued*		
Cost of Living	⬆	Cost of Living in Santa Rosa County is relatively low compared to benchmarks and the national average. The only item on the index above 100—the national average—was the Groceries category.
Air Service	⬆	Santa Rosa County is served by the Pensacola International Airport (PNS) with 68 daily flights, 17 nonstop destinations, and service by six major airlines.

Labor Market Analysis & Employment Trends		
Labor Force Participation	⬇	As of 2016, among residents ages 16 and over in Santa Rosa County, 57.4 percent participate in the labor force, a figure below the metro, state, and national participation rates. The County had participation rates higher than Baldwin County and tied with Beaufort County. The participation rate fell over 3 percent in the past five years.
Labor Draw	⬆	Santa Rosa County has a labor force of 75,638, up 8 percent in the past decade. A 45-minute drive time labor draw area results in an active estimated labor force of 224,841.
College Enrollment & Degrees Granted	⬆	The area surrounding Santa Rosa County has 13 colleges offering degrees and certificates up to the Doctorate level. Programs offer a variety of training with more than 49,000 students enrolled as of the 2015-16 school year. Degrees and certificates in the amount of 8,474 were conferred in 2016.

Labor Market Analysis & Employment Trends, *continued*

Commuting Patterns	⬇	Santa Rosa County has a net outflow of commuters to neighboring counties for work. The jobs located within the county were filled by a growing number of Santa Rosa County residents (9%). In-commuters have dropped 16 percent.
Major Industry Composition	⬆	Santa Rosa County has a diverse employment base with no one industry over 20 percent of the total makeup.
Average Wage	⬍	Santa Rosa County's average annual wage has grown 12.8 percent since 2006, less than all other benchmarks. Adjusted for inflation, the trend of average wages for Santa Rosa County was one of general decline until 2014 when wages began to increase.
Startups	⬇	Santa Rosa County, as part of the Pensacola Metro area, had fewer startups per 100,000 population than the state and the nation in the last five years measured. Employment by young firms is also below that of the Pensacola Metro and the other benchmarks.
Self-Employment	⬍	Santa Rosa County had a total of 12.4 percent of workers self-employed which was higher than the nation, same as the state and higher than the metro area. This level is below the benchmark counties. The County had a higher percent of those who were not incorporated or were unpaid family workers (6.8 percent), which also grew over the past decade.
Agriculture	⬆	Total value of products sold in the County has increased 202 percent between 2007 and 2012. The number of farms, acreage, and value of products sold have also increased while the amount of government payments has decreased.
Broadband	⬍	Santa Rosa County has good access to broadband internet with service available with speeds up to 1 gigabit. Average download speed of 33.51 mbps ranked below all but one of the geographies.

Local Specialization, Competitiveness & Growth	
Below are general observations from an in-depth analysis of industry sectors and occupational groups in Santa Rosa County. This information is not benchmarked.	
Major Industry Sector Change	✓ The largest absolute industry job gains in Santa Rosa County between 2011 and 2016 came from *Accommodation & Food Services,* increasing 1,095 jobs, followed closely by *Health Care & Social Assistance*, adding 1,057 jobs (Figure 7.1, Table 7.1)*.* The highest percent growth occurred in *Wholesale Trade*, growing 68 percent by adding 343 jobs over the same five-year period. ✓ Other gains were made in *Retail Trade* (707 jobs), *Other Services* (358 jobs), *Construction* (298 jobs), *Finance & Insurance* (287 jobs), and *Manufacturing* (273 jobs). Seventeen sectors grew employment, with job gains ranging from three to over one-thousand. ✓ Three sectors in the County lost jobs: *Information* (-397 jobs); *Administrative & Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services* (-309 jobs)*;* and *Arts, Entertainment, & Recreation* (-9 jobs).
Industry Earnings	✓ Overall, the average earnings per job in Santa Rosa County of $37,029 is 38 percent below the national average of $51,064. Earnings in the County are below national averages for all but one of the major employment sectors (Table 7.2 and Figure 7.2). ✓ The industry earnings for *Transportation & Warehousing* were $56,462 in 2016, 11 percent above the national average of $50,453. ✓ Five industry categories were significantly lower (75 percent or lower) than national averages for the same categories. Several of these categories were *Information* (with a local average of $40,044, falling at 137 percent under), *Management of Companies & Enterprises* (local average of $51,280 which is 124 percent below), *Utilities* (with a local average of $54,542 or 87% under), and *Wholesale Trade* (with a local average of $41,372 or 76% below national levels).
Major Occupational Change	✓ Over the last five years, all but three major occupational categories in Santa Rosa County added jobs. The strongest job gains were in *Food Preparation & Serving Related,* gaining 953 jobs*; Office & Administrative Support,* growing 618 jobs*;* and *Healthcare Practitioners & Technical,* up 557 jobs (Figure 7.3, Table 7.3). ✓ Each of these occupational groups added at least 500 jobs over the past five years. *Healthcare Practitioners & Technical* is among the highest paying occupational groups in the County at $29.55 an hour or $61,464 annually. ✓ The three occupational categories which declined in the past five years are *Architecture & Engineering*; *Computer & Mathematical*; and *Installation, Maintenance & Repair occupations.* These categories lost approximately 75 jobs combined.

Local Specialization, Competitiveness & Growth, *continued*

Occupational Earnings	✓ A comparison of the same-occupation average hourly earnings for Santa Rosa County to the national median wage revealed only two occupations that were higher than the national average: *Military* and *Farming, Fishing & Forestry*. ✓ *Military* occupations in Santa Rosa County paid an average wage of $22.57 an hour, 20 percent higher than the national average wage of $18.02 an hour. The *Farming* average hourly wage was seven percent higher than the United States. ✓ The average wage for all occupations in Santa Rosa County was $17.84 compared to $23.19 for the national average hourly wage. This is 30 percent lower than the United States.
Major Industry Sector Specialization & Growth	✓ There are six industry sectors in the *Competitive* category, having both a level of local specialization above 1.0 (LQ for Santa Rosa County) as well as showing growth in the last five years: 　• *Utilities (2.21)* 　　　　　　　　　　• *Construction (1.51)* 　• *Accommodation & Food Services (1.43)*　• *Real Estate, Rental & Leasing 1.4)* 　• *Retail Trade (1.4)* 　　　　　　　　　• *Other Services (1.11)* ✓ There are eleven industry sectors in Santa Rosa County with a level of local specialization below 1.0. However, due to job growth, these industry sectors are classified as *Emerging* (Table 7.5, Figure 7.5). ✓ One sector—*Administrative & Support, Waste Management & Remediation Services*—has an LQ higher than 1.0. However, due to recent job losses, it is categorized *At-Risk*. ✓ Two sectors are classified as declining with a low LQ and recent local job loss: *Arts, Entertainment & Recreation* and *Information*.
Major Occupational Sector Specialization and Growth	✓ Eight occupational groups are Competitive (LQ for Santa Rosa County): 　• *Military (2.89)* 　　　　　　　　　　　• *Food Preparation & Serving Related (1.46)* 　• *Construction & Extraction (1.37)*　　　• *Building & Grounds Cleaning, Maintenance (1.34)* 　• *Protective Service (1.33)*　　　　　　　• *Sales & Related (1.25)* 　• *Healthcare Practitioners & Technical (1.11)*　• *Education, Training & Library (1.06)* ✓ Most of the remaining occupational groups (12) are classified as Emerging or having job growth with local specialization under 1. Three of these groups had job growth over 200—*Transportation & Material Moving*, *Healthcare Support*, and *Office & Administrative Support*. ✓ One occupation is At-Risk and two groups are Declining with job loss and low local specialization. *Architecture & Engineering* and *Computer & Mathematics* are both declining.

CHAPTER 2: OPTIMAL BUSINESS TARGETS FOR SANTA ROSA COUNTY

The optimal business sectors selection is based on the specific characteristics of the economy and assets of Santa Rosa County with consideration of the Pensacola metro area's economy and assets (Santa Rosa County is within the Pensacola MSA). These recommended targets are designed to assist the County and its economic development organization in prioritizing resources and focusing on sectors in which the County holds a competitive advantage and/or has significant growth potential. This approach will help policymakers prioritize the County's community and economic development strategy.

Garner Economics uses a desirability and feasibility screening matrix to determine the optimal targets. Desirability begins with considering the types of business sectors that stakeholders of Santa Rosa County would like to see in the community (Figure 2.1). Feasibility includes what the area can reasonably achieve in the short- to mid-term based on current or planned locational assets and on an analytical review of the regional economy.

Using results from the previously completed *COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT*, the Assets and Challenges Assessment, focus groups, a community survey, and field visits, five core business and industry groups were chosen that best match Santa Rosa County's unique competitive advantages to the needs of particular industry sectors. These targets are: **Aviation & Support Services; Distribution & Logistics; Health Services / Research & Medical Technology; Business Services;** and **Agriculture & Marine Research** (also listed on the right).

In addition to these primary targets, a sixth Community Development goal is presented to improve the ability to attract and retain people, cultivate retail options, and invest in the quality of life for current and future residents. As stated in the Assets and Challenges Assessment, a community's quality of place is a key consideration when trying to recruit or retain investment.

For each targeted business sector, the community's competitive advantages are presented, along with national trends and projections of the targets. In some cases, target sectors are actually losing jobs nationally, but the particular set of economic development assets in Santa Rosa County position it to capture any growing demand. Under each target, a list of individual subsectors is provided with accompanying NAICS classifications.

For each target, a bulleted list of rationales is presented and identified as appealing to the needs of **prospects (P)** or the **community (C)**. This material can be used in marketing and community support efforts or to help economic development personnel prioritize targeting efforts.

Figure 2.1:
Optimal Target
Screening Process

Optimal Targets

1. Aviation & Support Services
2. Distribution & Logistics
3. Health Services/Research & Medical Technology
4. Business Services
5. Agriculture & Marine Research

Community Development

6. Quality of Place & Asset Development

FIGURE 2.2 OPTIMAL TARGETS FOR SANTA ROSA COUNTY

CORE INDUSTRY TARGET GROUPS					COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
Aviation & Support Services	**Distribution & Logistics**	**Health Services / Research & Medical Technology**	**Business Services****	**Agriculture & Marine Research**	**Quality of Place & Asset Development**
VALIDATED TARGET	VALIDATED TARGET		VALIDATED SUBTARGETS		
• Navigation and Aeronautical System Mfg • Aircraft Engine and Parts Mfg • Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Mfg • Transportation Equipment and Supplies Distribution • Nonscheduled Air Transportation • Support Activities for Air Transportation • Electronic and Precision Equipment Repair and Maintenance • Flight Training Schools • Aircraft Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (aspirational)* • Aircraft Mfg (aspirational)*	• Logistics Services • Trucking, Local & Long-Distance • 3rd Party Logistics Services • Wholesale Trade Agents/Brokers • Warehousing & Storage • Transportation Equipment and Supplies Distribution • Farm Product Distribution • Cold Storage Facilities	• Offices of Physicians & Health Care Providers • Research & Development - Biotechnology & Life Sciences • Medical Laboratories & Diagnostic Centers • Electromedical and Electrotherapeutic Apparatus Mfg • Surgical and Medical Instrument Mfg	• Shared Services • Advertising Material Distribution Services • Finance & Insurance Support Centers • Facilities Support Services • Management Consulting Services • Corporate, Subsidiary and Regional Management Offices • Office Administrative Services • Engineering Services • Cyber Security Services	• Agricultural Research • Marine Science • Fishing/Marine Attractions • Fish and Seafood Processing • Water Supply & Irrigation Technology	• Specialty Retail • Destinations & Tourist Attractions • Recreational Equip. Rental • Outdoor Recreation Operators • Marinas • Eating and Drinking Places • Traveler Accommodations • Spectator Sports • Performing Arts Facilities and Events • Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events

* Need for sufficient facilities to accommodate both MRO and Aircraft Manufacturing before targets can be realized: proper runway, instrument landing system (ILS), and hangar facilities.

** Need for Class A office or campus building/site to accommodate before some subsectors can be fully realized.

TARGET 1: AVIATION & SUPPORT SERVICES

Santa Rosa County is well situated in a strong aviation region featuring military aviation installations, existing aerospace companies, and proximity to aircraft final assembly operations. Northwest Florida has more than 500 aviation-related companies, many in the Pensacola metro. The proximity to the Airbus final assembly operation in Mobile is particularly notable, especially as the facility continues growing. In 2017, Airbus announced a majority stake in a partnership with Bombardier and will likely be adding an additional assembly line in Mobile. Additional aircraft manufacturing facilities in reasonable distance include Embraer in Jacksonville and Melbourne, Gulfstream in Savannah, and Boeing in Charleston.

The essential component that makes the case for attracting Aviation & Support Service business is the talent that exists in the area and the pipeline for continued workforce development. With Naval Air Station Whiting Airfield located in Santa Rosa County, Naval Air Station Pensacola, and Eglin Air Force Base in the region, the number of service men and women in the area with applicable skills is outstanding. Additional military installations in the area add to the greater talent pool. Although it was noted by focus groups that many military personnel are in training and transitioning to their next assignment, there are 66,000 veterans residing in the Pensacola metro area of which 63 percent are ages 17 years to 64 years. Of these, 24,444 veterans live in Santa Rosa County.

Civilian employment illustrates several favorable industry and occupational concentrations for aviation. Location Quotient (LQ) is the number of workers in a field or industry as a portion of the entire employment compared to the same ratio nationally. Santa Rosa County has a 9.9 LQ in the *Other Support Activities for Air Transportation* industry. Several occupations have a relatively high LQ: *Avionics Technicians* (5.04 LQ), *Commercial Pilots* (4.86 LQ), and *Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians* (4.1 LQ). Employment in *Other Support Activities for Air Transportation* rose significantly between 2006 and 2016 from 73 to 290 workers or 297 percent.

Rationales

- Existence of major military aviation installations in the area (P)

- Strong Northwest Florida and Pensacola Metro profile of existing aviation companies (P)

- Proximity to large aircraft assembly operations of global brands (P)

- High number of military veterans in area with aviation & technical skills (P) (C)

- High concentrations of employment in several aviation fields (P)

- George Stone Technical Center offers A&P FAA certified training (P)

- Embry Riddle has two programs in the region – NAS Pensacola and Milton High School (P)

- More than 800 degrees and certificates granted for in majors related to aviation & support services (P)(C)

- Positioned to serve regional market (P)

- Low cost of labor (P)

- Availability of aviation-oriented workforce (P) (C)

- Post-secondary vocational training options (P)

- Within half-hour of major university/college (P)

- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)

- Availability of executive and moderate-cost housing (P)

- Low cost of living (P)

- Strong job growth for Aviation Support Activities (P)

- Average target national earnings of $89,564 (C)

- Average target 10-year growth projection of 2.1% (P)

- An existing pool of high-demand occupations and occupations with skills transferability (P)

Educational institutions in the County and region also offer positive workforce pipeline assets. George Stone Technical Center in Pensacola offers A&P certification—FAA-approved courses in Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics. Embry Riddle, the largest and oldest aviation-focused university in the world, has a campus on Naval Air Station Pensacola which is open to military, veterans, service member families, and civilians employed on base. Embry Riddle is also associated with the Aviation Academy at Milton High School offering a foundation in aviation education. Leveraging additional partnerships with Embry Riddle in the region can significantly enhance aviation training for Santa Rosa County.

Table 2.1: Regional Degree Completions in Majors Related to Aviation & Support Services, 2016

Degrees by Area of Study	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Number of Degrees 2016
Computer & Information Sciences	63	77	102	28	270
Engineering		53			53
Engineering Technologies & Related	85	41	25		151
Mathematics & Statistics			19	40	59
Mechanic & Repair Technologies	191				191
Precision Production	113				113
Grand Total	**452**	**171**	**146**	**68**	**837**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Garner Economics

Graduates from Embry Riddle Pensacola campus are not captured in this table. Table reflects reported degrees/certificates granted at: Fortis Institute, George Stone Technical Center, Jefferson Davis Community College, Northwest Florida State College, Okaloosa Technical College, Pensacola State College, Locklin Tech, University of West Florida, and Virginia College.

Aviation is an existing target for the Santa Rosa County EDO. Garner Economics' research confirms aviation is indeed a good audience for recruitment with some caveats. To realize the fullest potential of some of the specific sub sectors within the target family, additional infrastructure is needed. Aircraft Maintenance, Repair & Overhaul (MRO) and Aircraft Manufacturing are aspirational targets that can be achieved with the workforce and other assets. There is not currently sufficient runway length, runway access, instrument landing systems (ILS), or hanger facilities to be successful for these aspirational targets. The development of site-based assets such as the Whiting Aviation Park will address this concern.

Initial focus on companies that can fit current assets such as avionics (electrical devices and systems on aircraft), engine and parts manufacturing, logistics planning, and business aviation services could be more successful in the short term. Expanding or attracting flight schools may help address the forecasted global commercial pilot shortage. Peter Prince Aviation Center is home to two—AMS Flight School and Trident.

Table 2.2: Aviation & Support Services Subsectors

NAICS	Description	National Wages 2016	2006-2016 National Job Growth	2016-2026 National Job Growth Forecast	2016 National Job Count
334511	Search, Detection, Navigation, Guidance, Aeronautical, and Nautical System and Instrument Manufacturing	$113,799	-23%	-12.8%	120,662
336412	Aircraft Engine and Engine Parts Manufacturing	$91,959	-6%	-0.7%	78,743
336413	Other Aircraft Parts and Auxiliary Equipment Manufacturing	$72,028	18%	7.9%	108,331
423860	Transportation Equipment and Supplies Merchant Wholesalers	$79,134	-4%	3.1%	32,718
4812	Nonscheduled Air Transportation	$86,309	-4%	19.5%	44,518
488190	Other Support Activities for Air Transportation	$59,948	20%	12.6%	110,293
811219	Other Electronic and Precision Equipment Repair and Maintenance	$63,564	14%	9.4%	39,668
611512	Flight Training	$63,145	6%	14.4%	17,692
336411	Aircraft Manufacturing	$107,464	4%	-2.7%	230,168
	Weighted Average/Total	**$89,564**	**1%**	**2.1%**	**782,794**

NAICS 488190 Other Support Activities for Air Transportation also includes MRO operations.
Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Table 2.3: Supply Chain for Aviation & Support Services

Key Economic Drivers

- o Demand from air transportation, airlines, MRO facilities, and aircraft, engine & parts mfg
- o Corporate profit
- o Price of crude oil
- o Private investment in industrial equipment/machinery
- o Research & development expenditures
- o Federal funding for defense
- o Government consumption and investment
- o Non-NATO defense spending
- o Regulation for MRO Industry
- o Disposable income
- o Domestic & international travel by residents

Supply Industries

Aircraft Equipment Wholesale
Aircraft MRO
Aircraft, Engine & Parts Mfg
Airport Operations
Circuit Board & Electronic Component Mfg
Computer & Peripheral Mfg
Electrical Equipment Mfg
Engine & Turbine Mfg
Gas & Petroleum Wholesale
Glass Product Mfg
Heavy Equipment Rental
Hose & Belt Mfg
Iron & Steel Mfg
Navigational Instrument Mfg
Plastic Pipe & Parts Mfg
Semiconductor & Circuit Mfg.

Aviation & Support Services

Demand Industries

Aircraft, Engine & Parts Mfg
Aircraft, Marine & Railroad Transportation
Airlines & Charter Flights
National Security & International Affairs Consumers
Couriers & Delivery Services
Diagnostic & Medical Laboratories
Electronic Part & Equipment Wholesale
Equipment Wholesale
Finance & Insurance
Freight Forwarding Brokerages & Agencies
Laboratory Supply Distribution
Postal Service
Public Administration

Source: IBIS World, Garner Economics

Table 2.4: Aviation & Support Services Pensacola Metro Existing Pool of High-Demand Occupations, 2016

Description	Employed in Pensacola Metro
General and Operations Managers	1,439
Team Assemblers	913
Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	702
Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians (LQ 3.3)	545
Supervisors of Production Workers	447
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	377
Industrial Machinery Mechanics	358
Machinists	323
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	247
Commercial Pilots (LQ 3.85)	208
Industrial Engineers	204
Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	177
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	158
Mechanical Engineers	106
Engineering Technicians	88
Avionics Technicians (LQ 3.95)	88
Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks	86
Electronics Engineers	73
Airline Pilots, Copilots, and Flight Engineers	37
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	35
Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers	34
Air Traffic Controllers	23
Transportation Inspectors	20
Mechanical Engineering Technicians	18
Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers	18
Aircraft Cargo Handling Supervisors	17
Aerospace Engineers	14
Engine and Other Machine Assemblers	13
Electrical and Electronics Drafters	13
Airfield Operations Specialists	12

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Skills Transferability for Sample Aviation & Support Services Occupations

Avionics Technician

Est. 8,067 workers with transferable skills

More than 50 occupations including:
- Automotive Technicians & Mechanics
- Broadcast Technicians
- Bus, Truck & Diesel Engine Mechanics
- Camera/Photographic Equipment Repair
- Computer, ATM & Office Machine Repair
- Electrical & Electronics Install/Repair
- Machinists
- Medical Equipment Repair
- Refrigeration Mechanics & Install
- Telecommunications Line Install/Repair

Aircraft Mechanics & Service Technicians

Est. 10,432 workers with transferable skills

More than 60 occupations including:
- Automotive Technicians & Mechanics
- Heavy Equipment Mechanics
- Electric Motor & Power Tool Repair
- Mechanical Engineering Technicians
- Motorboat Mechanics & Service Tech
- Maintenance & Repair Workers
- Plumbers & Electricians
- Machinists
- Bus, Truck & Diesel Engine Mechanics
- Heating/Air Conditioning Mechanics & Install

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Occupations with compatible index of 90 or above earning less than target occupation.

TARGET 2: DISTRIBUTION & LOGISTICS

Wholesale Trade ranked fifth in Santa Rosa County for industry sectors experiencing growth between 2011 and 2016. That sector gained 368 jobs in Santa Rosa County during that time reflecting a 68 percent increase. *Transportation and Warehousing* industry jobs increased as well. The compelling story, however, is that the average industry wage in Santa Rosa County is 11 percent higher than the national average for that industry sector. *Transportation and Material Moving* occupations increased employment by 211 (13 percent) between 2011 and 2016 in the County.

The modern transportation and distribution industry is geared toward the Interstate Highway system and the ability to shift modes efficiently. Santa Rosa County is well served by I-10 (east/west) connecting Jacksonville to Mobile, New Orleans, and points westward along the southern United States. In addition to road networks, the County is fortunate to have a CSX rail line serving the area and be near both the Pensacola and Mobile ports.

Santa Rosa County is positioned to serve the greater region with its location and transportation assets. Mobile can be easily reached within 90 minutes drivetime. Within three hours drivetime the cities of Tallahassee, Montgomery, and Biloxi are accessible; within five hours drivetime New Orleans can be served and the suburbs of Jacksonville are in sight. Building a regional hub for distribution makes sense for Santa Rosa County's reach.

There is an existing regional pool of workers engaged in *Material Moving* occupations including loading, shipping, receiving, logisticians, and distribution managers. Truck Driver Institute (TDI) has an established truck driving school located in Milton, which can help position the County for addressing the system-wide driver shortage. In 2016, Santa Rosa County had nearly 400 truck drivers while the Pensacola metro as a whole employed 1,716.

Rationales
- Excellent interstate access (P)
- Rail service via CSX (P)
- Proximity to Pensacola & Mobile Ports (P)
- Positioned to serve regional market (P)
- High number of military veterans in area with logistics & related skills (P) (C)
- *Wholesale Trade* gained 368 jobs between 2011 and 2016 (P)(C)
- Average wage for *Transportation & Warehousing* industry is 11 percent higher than US (C)
- 1,227 degrees and certificates granted in majors related to logistics & distribution operations (P)(C)
- Availability of distribution-oriented workforce (P) (C)

Rationales
continued

- Low cost of labor (P)

- Post-secondary vocational training options (P)

- Within half-hour of major university or college (P)

- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)

- Availability of executive and moderate-cost housing (P)

- Low cost of living (P)

- Average target national earnings of $60,469 (C)

- Total growth of target industry family over past decade is 16.1% (P) (C)

- Target 10-year growth projection of 14.8% (P)

- Existing pool of high-demand occupations and occupations with skills transferability (P)

- Shovel-ready sites to accommodate distribution facilities (P)

While TDI provides a direct pipeline for the Distribution & Logistics industry family, other educational institutions in the area grant degrees that provide some support occupation skills. More than 1,200 degrees were granted in business, management, information systems, and mechanical programs in 2016. As supply chain management becomes more sophisticated, the addition of training programs focused on logistics, distribution, and related skills would add to the existing marketability of Santa Rosa County as a viable distribution location.

Table 2.5: Regional Degree Completions in Majors Related to Distribution & Logistics, 2016

Degrees by Area of Study	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Number of Degrees 2016
Business, Management, Marketing, & Related Support Services	51	119	465	131	766
Computer & Information Sciences	63	77	102	28	270
Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians	191				191
Grand Total	**305**	**196**	**567**	**159**	**1,227**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Garner Economics

Graduates from Truck Driving Institute - Milton are not captured in this table. Table reflects reported degrees/certificates granted at: Fortis Institute, George Stone Technical Center, Jefferson Davis Community College, Northwest Florida State College, Okaloosa Technical College, Pensacola State College, Locklin Tech, University of West Florida, and Virginia College.

The existing labor pool is boosted by the continual stream of military separations and the large number of veterans living in the area. The *2014 Military Transitioning Study* by the Haas Center listed several distribution-friendly occupations which separated veterans are qualified to perform—*Logistician* ranked 14th by numbers of qualified veterans. *Transportation, Storage and Distribution Managers* ranked 16th on this same table. In addition to military separations, many existing occupations have skills that can transfer to distribution occupations with higher average wages.

The County has three shovel-ready sites that can accommodate distribution. However, the lack of larger industrial buildings readily available will be challenging for recruitment efforts.

Table 2.6: Distribution & Logistics Subsectors

NAICS	Description	National Wages 2016	2006-2016 National Job Growth	2016-2026 National Job Growth Forecast	2016 National Job Count
541614	Process, Physical Distribution, and Logistics Consulting Services	$68,344	42.4%	26.0%	129,292
4841	General Freight Trucking, Local & Long Distance	$46,882	-3.1%	5.3%	1,189,668
48851	Freight Transportation Arrangement & 3rd Party Logistics	$58,599	17.3%	13.8%	231,947
42512	Wholesale Trade Agents and Brokers	$96,419	18.5%	21.4%	874,580
49311	General Warehousing and Storage	$41,474	52.4%	20.7%	816,504
42386	Transportation Equipment and Supplies Distribution	$77,274	-4.0%	3.1%	32,718
493130	Farm Product Warehousing and Storage	$46,124	17.7%	18.2%	11,056
49312	Refrigerated Warehousing and Storage	$47,533	23.8%	10.4%	57,533
	WEIGHTED AVERAGES/TOTALS	**$60,469**	**16.1%**	**14.8%**	**3,343,299**

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Table 2.7: Supply Chain for Distribution & Logistics

Key Economic Drivers

- o Industrial production
- o Agricultural production
- o Price of crude oil & diesel
- o Consumer Spending & Consumption
- o E-commerce sales
- o Federal funding for defense
- o Demand from air transportation, airlines,
- o MRO facilities, and aircraft, engine & parts mfg
- o Demand from ship building

Supply Industries

Aircraft, Engine & Parts Mfg
Auto Parts Stores & Wholesale
Automobile Wholesaling
Forklift & Conveyor Mfg
Fuel Dealers; Gas & Petroleum Wholesaling
Industrial Building Construction
Local & Long-Distance Freight Trucking
Management Consulting
Manufacturing
Metal Tank Mfg & Steel Framing
Pesticide Mfg
Printing
Refrigeration Equipment Wholesaling
Tank & Refrigeration Trucking
Tire Dealers
Tractors & Agricultural Machinery Mfg
Truck & Trailer Mfg
Wood Pallets & Skids Production

Distribution & Logistics

Demand Industries

Aircraft, Engine & Parts Manufacturing
Airlines & Charter Flights
Construction
Crop Services
Farming
Fishing
Freight Forwarding Brokerages & Agencies
Manufacturing
Ocean & Coastal Transportation
Rail Transportation
Retail Trade
Ship Building
Transportation and Warehousing
Wholesale Trade

Source: IBIS World, Garner Economics

Table 2.8: Distribution & Logistics Pensacola Metro Existing Pool of High-Demand Occupations, 2016

Description	Employed in Pensacola Metro
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	2,646
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,969
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	1,816
Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,735
General and Operations Managers	1,439
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	1,011
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	659
Cleaners of Vehicles and Equipment	377
Packers and Packagers, Hand	343
Shipping, Receiving, and Traffic Clerks	311
Driver/Sales Workers	283
Dispatchers, Except Police, Fire, and Ambulance	203
Industrial Truck and Tractor Operators	202
Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists	183
Supervisors of Transportation and Material-Moving Machine and Vehicle Operators	160
Packaging and Filling Machine Operators and Tenders	142
Supervisors of Helpers, Laborers, and Material Movers, Hand	126
Logisticians	120
Wholesale and Retail Buyers, Except Farm Products	88
Transportation, Storage, and Distribution Managers	60
Cargo and Freight Agents	54
Maintenance Workers, Machinery	35
Transportation Inspectors	20

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Skills Transferability for
Sample Distribution & Logistics Occupations

Logistician

Est. 17,623 workers with transferable skills

More than 40 occupations including:

- Transportation Managers
- Auditors
- Business Continuity Planners
- Compliance Managers
- Customs Brokers
- Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists
- Purchasing Agents
- Energy Brokers
- Management Analysts
- Online Merchants

Bus & Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists

Est. 23,005 workers with transferable skills

More than 140 occupations including:

- Automotive Master Mechanics/ Technicians
- Construction Carpenters
- Electric Motor & Power Tool Repair
- Maintenance and Repair Workers, General
- Maintenance Workers, Machinery
- Motorboat Mechanics & Service Technicians
- Outdoor Power Equipment & Other Small Engine Mechanics
- Septic Tank Servicers & Sewer Pipe Cleaners
- Service Unit Operators, Oil, Gas, and Mining
- Electronic Equipment Install/ Repair

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Occupations with compatible index of 90 or above earning less than target occupation.

TARGET 3: HEALTH SERVICES / RESEARCH & MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY

The existence of Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine in Santa Rosa County is an asset to the local economy and provides an opportunity to grow an industry family around Health Services/Research & Medical Technology. Florida State University College of Medicine provides third- and fourth-year clinical training at the Regional Medical School Campus-Pensacola in community medical practices. A collaborative approach to linking the local medical community, the innovation at Andrews Institute, and the possible resource of the FSU Regional Medical School to accommodate medical and orthopaedic research can be transformative to health care in the region and beyond—attracting both patients and companies.

Firms within the supply chain that would benefit from the existing medical cluster include: medical devices, biomedical research labs, and additional health care practices. Health services has several sides—serving the local populace with innovative, specialized care, and providing the prospect of drawing patients from a wider audience.

The military presence with base assets such as the NAS Hospital and the large number of veterans in the area create an opportunity to build advanced health care collaboration and top-rate health care. A continual process of military separations from area bases also provides a technical expertise that can be utilized for medical device manufacturing.

Labor force synergies from existing medical occupations is affected positively from the additional higher education programs at area colleges and universities. More than 3,000 degrees and post-secondary certificates were granted in 2016. Of that number, 2,024 were directly in the Health Professions field. These graduates do not include students at the FSU Regional Medical School. The area is also home to the Florida Institute of Ultrasound which graduated 40 in 2016

Rationales

- Excellent health care infrastructure (P) (C)
- Positioned to serve regional market (P)
- More than 3,000 degrees and certificates granted for in majors related to health professions and related programs (P)(C)
- FSU Regional Medical School located in Pensacola (P) (C)
- High number of military veterans in area with technical skills (P)
- Low cost of labor (P)
- Availability of distribution-oriented workforce (P) (C)
- Post-secondary vocational training options (P)
- Within half-hour of major university or college (P)
- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)

Table 2.9: Regional Degree Completions in Majors Related to Health Services/Research, & Medical Technology, 2016

Degrees by Area of Study	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Number of Degrees 2016
Biological and Biomedical Sciences			96	19	115
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	63	77	102	28	270
Engineering			53		53
Engineering Technologies and Engineering-related Fields	85	41	25		151
Family and Consumer Sciences/ Human Sciences	41				41
Health Professions and Related Programs	857	576	540	51	2,024
Mathematics and Statistics			19	40	59
Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians	191				191
Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies		7	125	16	148
Precision Production	113				113
Grand Total	**1,350**	**701**	**960**	**154**	**3,165**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Garner Economics

Table reflects reported degrees/certificates granted at: Fortis Institute, George Stone Technical Center, Jefferson Davis Community College, Northwest Florida State College, Okaloosa Technical College, Pensacola State College, Locklin Tech, University of West Florida, and Virginia College.

Rationales
continued

- Availability of executive and moderate-cost housing (P)
- Low cost of living (P)
- Average target national earnings of $90,113 (C)
- Total growth of target industry family over past decade is 17.7% (P)
- Target 10-year growth projection of 17.3% (P)
- Existing pool of high-demand occupations and occupations with skills transferability (P)

Table 2.10: Health Services/Research & Medical Technology Subsectors

NAICS	Description	National Wages 2016	2006-2016 National Job Growth	2016-2026 National Job Growth Forecast	2016 National Job Count
621111	Offices of Physicians	$88,077	16.2%	18.1%	2,167,884
621399	Offices of All Other Miscellaneous Health Practitioners	$42,910	72.1%	44.3%	88,740
541714	Research & Development in Biotechnology	$150,466	25.8%	21.6%	138,140
541715	Research & Development in the Physical, Engineering, & Life Sciences	$118,333	11.6%	5.7%	390,223
621511	Medical Laboratories	$59,919	38.0%	29.0%	146,879
541380	Testing Laboratories	$73,022	13.9%	7.8%	147,126
334510	Electromedical and Electrotherapeutic Apparatus Manufacturing	$106,336	7.6%	11.1%	59,057
339112	Surgical and Medical Instrument Manufacturing	$81,810	11.2%	8.5%	108,819
339113	Surgical Appliance and Supplies Manufacturing	$75,461	2.5%	5.8%	98,612
	WEIGHTED AVERAGES/TOTALS	**$90,113**	**17.7%**	**17.3%**	**3,345,480**

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Table 2.11: Supply Chain for Health Services/Research, & Medical Technology

Key Economic Drivers

- o Disposable income
- o Demand from biotechnology
- o Demand from healthcare & social assistance
- o Federal funding for Medicare and Medicaid
- o Investor uncertainty
- o National unemployment rate
- o Number of adults aged 50 and older
- o Population growth & median age
- o Number of people with private health insurance
- o Number of physician visits
- o Per capita disposable income
- o Price of corn
- o Research and development expenditure
- o Technological change for the Diagnostic and Medical Laboratories industry

Supply Industries

Pharmaceutical Manufacturing
Cotton Farming
Diagnostic & Medical Laboratories
Electrical Equipment Manufacturing
Glass Product Manufacturing
Glasses & Contact Lens Manufacturing
Hose & Belt Manufacturing
Hospitals
Primary Care & Specialist Doctors
Chemical Manufacturing & Wholesaling
Manufacturing
Medical Device Manufacturing
Medical Supplies Wholesaling
Plastic Pipe & Parts Manufacturing

Health Services/Research & Medical Technology

Demand Industries

Pharmaceutical Manufacturing
Health care providers
Fertilizer Manufacturing
Health & Medical Insurance
Health & Welfare Funds
Hospitals & Outpatient Care Centers
Life Insurance & Annuities
Manufacturing
Computer Manufacturing
Medical Supplies Wholesaling
Natural Disaster & Emergency Relief Services
Petroleum Refining
Food Production

Source: IBIS World, Garner Economics

Table 2.12: Health Services/Research & Medical Technology
Pensacola Metro Existing Pool of High-Demand Occupations, 2016

Description	Employed in Pensacola Metro
Registered Nurses	4,643
Nursing, Psychiatric, and Home Health Aides	3,132
Miscellaneous Healthcare Support Occupations	2,222
General and Operations Managers	1,439
Health Practitioner Support Technologists and Technicians	1,408
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,172
Miscellaneous Assemblers and Fabricators	1,082
Therapists	1,038
Diagnostic Related Technologists and Technicians	740
Physicians and Surgeons	657
Data Entry and Information Processing Workers	469
Nurse Practitioners (LQ 2.25)	432
Engineering Technicians	389
Clinical Laboratory Technologists and Technicians	366
Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Workers	291
Medical and Health Services Managers	251
Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers	247
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	229
Compliance Officers	227
Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks	177
Physician Assistants	173
Dentists	117
Miscellaneous Health Practitioners and Technical Workers	107
Occupational Health and Safety Specialists and Technicians	93
Dietitians and Nutritionists	87
Occupational Therapy Assistants and Aides	57
Chemical Engineers	40
Optometrists	36
Purchasing Managers	25
Nurse Anesthetists	23
Medical Scientists	17

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Skills Transferability for Sample Health Services/Research & Medical Technology Occupations

Physical Therapist
Est. 40,140 workers with transferable skills

More than 50 occupations including:
- Acupuncturists
- Nurses
- Adapted Physical Education Specialists
- Athletic Trainers
- Chiropractors
- Clinical Nurse Specialists
- Exercise Physiologists
- Medical Assistants
- Occupational Therapy Assistants
- Recreation Workers

Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Workers
Est. 23,005 workers with transferable skills

More than 140 occupations including:
- Construction Laborers
- Cutting, Punching, & Press Machine Setters, Operators & Tenders
- Extruding, Forming, Pressing & Compacting
- Machine Setters, Operators & Tenders
- Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers
- Machine Feeders and Offbearers
- Molding, Coremaking, & Casting Machine Setters, Operators & Tenders
- Sawing Machine Setters, Operators & Tenders
- Stock Clerks
- Team Assemblers
- Woodworking Machine Setters, Operators & Tenders, Except Sawing

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Occupations with compatible index of 90 or above earning less than target occupation

TARGET 4: BUSINESS SERVICES

Business Services covers a myriad of industries that could thrive in Santa Rosa County. The County is in a position to attract and grow several subsectors that focus on providing value to business, military, and other institutional operations. With good interstate access, commercial air service offered via Pensacola International Airport, and quality of life assets such as the Gulf beaches, Santa Rosa County fares well for the ability to engage in commerce on a regional, national, and global level.

Shared services is a category that encompasses customer service and back office operations that offer consolidated support functions for businesses. Global companies can achieve efficiencies and cost savings by consolidating support functions such as accounting, customer service, information technology, legal, logistics, sales and marketing, or other support functions in one location. Customer service operations desired within this target are inbound call oriented that typically provide higher pay levels.

Financial and Insurance support centers offer financial services, insurance sales and claims, and other functions requiring higher levels of skill from the talent pool. Santa Rosa County has a high LQ for Credit Unions at 6.89, and the Pensacola metro has a very high LQ at 17.59. With better work environments, higher wages, and more complex functions, these types of operations may entice a greater number of military spouses who tend to be college educated and stationed in the area for a median of five years.[1] Some insurance or financial companies may find Santa Rosa County an ideal spot because they serve military and veteran customers.

Rationales

- Positioned to serve regional market (P)

- Nearly 4,500 degrees and certificates granted for in majors related to Business Services (P)

- Military spouse workforce that may be engaged in business services with managerial and business skills (P)

- *Facilities Support Services* industry has an LQ of 21.77 (P)

- *Credit Unions* have an industry LQ of 17.59 of the Pensacola Metro and 6.89 for Santa Rosa County (P)

- Low cost of labor (P)

- Post-secondary vocational training options (P)

- Within half-hour of major university or college (P)

- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)

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[1] Military Spouse Survey, Haas Center, 2015

Rationales

- Average target national earnings of $94,238 (C)

- Total growth of target industry family over past decade is 19.7% (P)

- Target 10-year growth projection of 15.8% (P)

- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)

- Existing pool of high-demand occupations and occupations with skills transferability (P)

Another business services sector that may find its place in Santa Rosa County is Facilities Operations. This is a specialty in maintaining facilities and combines with business management and services. Prisons, military bases, and health care facilities are common clients that utilize these types of services. Many of these businesses can benefit from veteran workforce for security-conscience personnel to manage facilities and perform tasks such as purchasing, cleaning, security, and logistics.

Cyber Security Services can also build on the military presence and skills in the area. The workforce pipeline would rely on importing labor or military transitions for current recruitment needs. In the *2014 Military Transitioning* study, a key finding was that many veterans are well-qualified for occupations in computers, networks, and support and communications technologies that could support Cyber Security.

Table 2.13: Regional Degree Completions in Majors Related to Business Services, 2016

Degrees by Area of Study	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Number of Degrees 2016
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	51	119	465	131	766
Communication, Journalism, and Related Programs	5		127	8	140
Computer and Information Sciences and Support Services	63	77	102	28	270
Engineering			53		53
Engineering Technologies and Engineering-related Fields	85	41	25		151
Homeland Security, Law Enforcement, Firefighting, and Related Protective Service	263	11	106	8	388
Legal Professions and Studies	3	33	22		58
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities		2,278	10		2,288
Mathematics and Statistics			19	40	59
Public Administration and Social Service Professions			71	46	117
Social Sciences			193	14	207
Grand Total	**470**	**2,559**	**1,193**	**275**	**4,497**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Garner Economics

Table reflects reported degrees/certificates granted at: Fortis Institute, George Stone Technical Center, Jefferson Davis Community College, Northwest Florida State College, Okaloosa Technical College, Pensacola State College, Locklin Tech, University of West Florida, and Virginia College.

Table 2.14: Business Services Subsectors

NAICS	Description	National Wages 2016	2006-2016 National Job Growth	2016-2026 National Job Growth Forecast	2016 National Job Count
561422	Telemarketing Bureaus and Other Contact Centers	$34,043	46.5%	25.8%	498,031
541870	Advertising Material Distribution Services	$45,094	-37.2%	-0.5%	11,894
522130	Credit Unions	$50,260	15.9%	14.7%	254,962
5239	Other Financial Investment Activities	$186,605	29.7%	27.9%	532,187
5241	Insurance Carriers	$88,870	-6.1%	4.7%	1,199,910
5412	Accounting, Tax Preparation, Bookkeeping, and Payroll Services	$65,962	9.4%	8.3%	1,163,578
561210	Facilities Support Services	$48,231	15.5%	24.2%	145,584
5416	Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services	$82,155	44.3%	25.9%	1,663,217
551114	Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Managing Offices	$113,716	26.8%	10.0%	2,143,336
561110	Office Administrative Services	$81,334	34.7%	19.2%	511,399
541330	Engineering Services	$91,169	5.9%	10.8%	972,552
511210	Software Publishers	$147,780	45.4%	26.7%	354,885
541512	Computer Systems Design Services	$103,451	62.9%	26.0%	995,881
541513	Computer Facilities Management Services	$87,496	20.0%	24.9%	71,384
		$94,238	19.7%	15.8%	11,139,681

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Table Notes: Shared Services does not have a NAICS code and can contain a multitude of functions. Cybersecurity does not have a NAICS code, however the final three—Software Publishers, Computer Systems Design Services, and Computer Facilities Management Services—make up most functions of the subsector.

Table 2.15: Supply Chain for Business Services

Key Economic Drivers

- Aggregate household debt & private investment
- Crime rate
- Demand from data processing/ hosting services
- Demand from finance and insurance
- Demand from postal service
- Demand from professional, scientific, and technical services
- Demand from retail trade
- E-commerce sales
- External competition for Credit Unions industry
- Government consumption and investment
- Age of population
- National unemployment rate
- New car sales
- Per capita disposable income
- % of households with at least one computer
- Percentage of services conducted online
- Prime rate
- Consumer spending

Supply Industries

Business Analytics & Software Publishing
Commercial Leasing
Communication Equipment Mfg
Computer & Packaged Software Dist
Computer & Peripheral Equipment Mfg
Computer Stores
Custody, Asset, & Securities Services
Data Processing & Hosting Services
Database & Directory Publishing
Finance &Insurance
Furniture Stores
Intellectual Property Licensing
Internet Service Providers
IT Consulting
Office Stationery Wholesaling
Office Supply Stores
Operating Systems & Productivity Software Publishing
Paper Wholesaling
Portfolio Management
Postal Service
Power Conversion Equipment Mfg
Professional Employer Organizations
Satellite Telecommunications Providers
Security Software Publishing
Software Publishing
Stock & Commodity Exchanges
VoIP
Wired Telecommunications Carriers

Business Services

Demand Industries

Advertising Agencies
Computer Stores
Construction
Consumers
Credit Card Issuing
Data Processing & Hosting Services
Finance and Insurance
Health & Medical Insurance
Health & Welfare Funds
Healthcare and Social Assistance
Home Builders
Information
Life Insurance & Annuities
Manufacturing
New Car Dealers
Open-End Investment Funds
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services
Public Administration
Public Relations Firms
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing
Reinsurance Carriers
Retail Trade
Retirement & Pension Plans
Utilities
Wholesale Trade

Source: IBIS World, Garner Economics

Table 2.16: Business Services
Pensacola Metro Existing Pool of High-Demand Occupations, 2016

Description	Employed in Pensacola Metro
Customer Service Representatives	6,111
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,910
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,184
Office Clerks, General	3,167
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	2,148
First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	2,085
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,969
Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,677
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	1,636
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	1,514
Security Guards	1,459
General and Operations Managers	1,439
Management Analysts	920
Lawyers	797
Computer User Support Specialists	747
Executive Secretaries and Executive Administrative Assistants	618
Paralegals and Legal Assistants	542
Human Resources Specialists	497
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, Except Line Installers	430
Software Developers, Applications	380
Cost Estimators	357
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	330
Network and Computer Systems Administrators	321
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	295
Graphic Designers	288
Financial Managers	287
Administrative Services Managers	263
Computer Network Architects	202
Financial Analysts	194
Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators	181
Computer Programmers	163

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Skills Transferability for Sample Business Services Occupations

Paralegal
Est. 26,878 workers with transferable skills

More than 50 occupations including:
- Legal Secretaries
- Receptionists and Information Clerks
- Insurance Claims Clerks
- Executive Secretaries/ Executive Administrative Assistants
- Court Clerks
- Compliance Managers
- Bill and Account Collectors
- Credit Checkers
- Eligibility Interviewers, Government Programs
- Customer Service Representatives

Financial Analyst
Est. 16,362 workers with transferable skills

More than 140 occupations including:
- Risk Management Specialists
- Sales Agents, Securities, and Commodities
- Investment Fund Managers
- Credit & Budget Analysts
- Energy Brokers
- Auditors
- Loan Interviewers and Clerks
- Mathematical Science Teachers, Postsecondary
- Insurance Sales Agents
- Tax Examiners and Collectors, and Revenue Agents

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics
Occupations with compatible index of 90 or above earning less than target occupation

TARGET 5: AGRICULTURE & MARINE RESEARCH

Santa Rosa County has an agricultural and marine heritage that can provide building blocks for agriculture and marine research. With facilities in Milton and Jay, the University of Florida - West Florida Research & Educational Center gives students earning degrees in National Resource Conservation or Plant Science an opportunity for hands-on learning in the County and region. Outreach to local agricultural production provides a basis for creating an innovative atmosphere surrounding research that supports strong cotton and peanut production.

On the marine side, the fishing industry is a strong economic engine in the County with an extremely high LQ of 51.1 (*Other Marine Fishing*). In general, with Santa Rosa County's location on the coast and natural areas for freshwater fish, marine research would be a good fit. Blackwater Fisheries Research and Development Center in the eastern part of the County provides expertise on Florida freshwater fish. One way to further leverage these assets could be to grow an attraction around marine research for experiential learning.

Support industries in this category include fish and seafood processing as well as water supply and irrigation technology.

There is an existing labor pool to provide workers this sector. However, the employment for research and companies related to this industry family will likely not be large employers.

Rationales

- Leveraging natural assets of Santa Rosa County
- 360 degrees and certificates granted for in majors related to Agricultural and Marine Research (P)
- Low cost of labor (P)
- Post-secondary vocational training options (P)
- Within half-hour of major university or college (P)
- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)
- Average target national earnings of $87,154 (C)
- Total growth of target industry family over past decade is 25.2% (P)
- Target 10-year growth projection of 15% (P)
- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)

Table 2.17: Regional Degree Completions in Majors Related to Agriculture & Marine Research, 2016

Degrees by Area of Study	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Number of Degrees 2016
Agriculture, Agriculture Operations and Related Sciences	2	2			4
Biological and Biomedical Sciences			96	19	115
Mathematics and Statistics			19	40	59
Natural Resources and Conservation			27	7	34
Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies		7	125	16	148
Grand Total	**2**	**9**	**267**	**82**	**360**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Garner Economics

Table reflects reported degrees/certificates granted at: Fortis Institute, George Stone Technical Center, Jefferson Davis Community College, Northwest Florida State College, Okaloosa Technical College, Pensacola State College, Locklin Tech, University of West Florida, and Virginia College.

Table 2.18: Agriculture & Marine Research Subsectors

NAICS	Description	National Wages 2016	2006-2016 National Job Growth	2016-2026 National Job Growth Forecast	2016 National Job Count
54171	Research & Development in the Physical, Engineering & Life Sciences	$127,079	15.1%	10.6%	633,191
54199	All Other Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	$53,784	82.9%	32.3%	233,933
11411	Fishing	$41,091	-7.8%	0.1%	30,869
71393	Marinas	$31,840	13.4%	13.5%	41,085
71311	Amusement and Theme Parks	$28,389	34.3%	13.6%	184,747
31171	Seafood Product Preparation and Packaging	$44,523	-10.6%	-4.0%	36,699
		$87,154	25.2%	15.0%	1,204,325

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Table 2.19: Supply Chain for Agricultural & Marine Research

Key Economic Drivers

- o   Demand from biotechnology
- o   Demand from boat building
- o   Demand from fish and seafood wholesaling
- o   Demand from seafood preparation
- o   Households earning more than $100,000
- o   Per capita disposable income
- o   Per capita seafood consumption
- o   Price of feed
- o   Price of seafood
- o   Research and development expenditure
- o   Time spent on leisure and sports

Supply Industries

Animal Food Production
Boat Building
Boat Dealership and Repair
Chemical Mfg & Wholesaling
Computer & Packaged Software Wholesaling
Construction
Electrical Equipment Manufacturing
Electronic & Computer Repair Services
Electronic Part & Equipment Wholesaling
Fish & Seafood Wholesaling
Fishing
Glass Product Manufacturing
Machinery Maintenance & Heavy Equipment Repair Services
Pump & Compressor Manufacturing
Ship Building
Sporting Goods Wholesaling
Tugboat & Shipping Navigational Services

Agriculture & Marine Research

Demand Industries

Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
Food Production
Printing, Paper, Food, Textile & Other Machinery Manufacturing
Animal Food Production
Seafood Preparation
Fish & Seafood Wholesaling
Fish & Seafood Markets
Supermarkets & Grocery Stores
Sightseeing Transportation
Grocery Wholesaling
Chain Restaurants
Single Location Full -Service Restaurants
Caterers

Source: IBIS World, Garner Economics

Table 2.20: Agricultural & Marine Research

Pensacola Metro Existing Pool of High-Demand Occupations, 2016

Description	Employed in Pensacola Metro
Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers	1,011
Amusement and Recreation Attendants	192
Environmental Scientists and Specialists, Including Health	139
Photographers	134
Operations Research Analysts	101
Fishers and Related Fishing Workers (LQ 2.96)	90
Forensic Science Technicians	89
Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	88
Chemical Technicians	68
Surveying and Mapping Technicians	65
Life, Physical, and Social Science Technicians, All Other	60
Farmers, Ranchers, and Other Agricultural Managers	52
Meat, Poultry, and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	42
Zoologists and Wildlife Biologists	34
Food Processing Workers, All Other	30
Industrial Engineering Technicians	28
Biological Technicians	27
Biological Scientists, All Other	23
Motorboat Mechanics and Service Technicians	20
Biochemists and Biophysicists	16
Environmental Engineering Technicians	14
Statisticians	12
Ship Engineers	11
Captains, Mates, and Pilots of Water Vessels	11
Environmental Science and Protection Technicians, Including Health	11
Physical Scientists, All Other	10

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Skills Transferability for Sample Agricultural & Marine Research Occupations

Chemical Technician
Est. 812 workers with transferable skills

More than 15 occupations including:
- Quality Control Analysts
- Photographic Process Workers and Processing Machine Operators
- Printing Press Operators
- Semiconductor Processors
- Geological Sample Test Technicians
- Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers
- Food Science Technicians
- Computer, Automated Teller, and Office Machine Repairers
- Furniture Finishers
- Mixing and Blending Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders

Environmental Engineering Tech
Est. 2,190 workers with transferable skills

More than 25 occupations including:
- Environmental Science and Protection Technicians, Including Health
- Geological Sample Test Technicians
- Industrial Engineering Technicians
- Quality Control Analysts
- Precision Agriculture Technicians
- Chemical Technicians
- Forensic Science Technicians
- Forest and Conservation Technicians
- Geodetic Surveyors

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics
Occupations with compatible index of 90 or above earning less than target occupation

TARGET 6: QUALITY OF PLACE & ASSET DEVELOPMENT

Recurring themes in focus groups and from an electronic survey include the desire to create a quality of place that would stop the "brain drain" of residents and change the perception Santa Rosa County as a bedroom community. It was agreed that the County has good schools, low crime, great recreational assets, and an extremely affordable cost of living. However, several negative perceptions exist that may impact economic development (business investment) efforts.

The Quality of Place & Asset Development "target" is focused on enhancing community (product) development and improving the quality of life for Santa Rosa County citizens and future residents. Subsectors include the creation of more specialty retail options, traveler accommodations, outdoor recreation destinations, and local amenities.

The existing retail target for Santa Rosa County is validated and expanded. There is a need to grow options for restaurants, hotels, and retail offering higher end or unique choices. This will help address retail leakage and grow sales tax revenue as more residents and visitors spend in the County.

Capitalizing on the outdoor experience in Santa Rosa County, the development of marinas, marine research attractions, spectator sports, and related projects will add to the quality of place. Recreation is already a strong industry with Recreational Goods Rental sporting an LQ of 33.45. To support this and other travelers, attracting AAA-rated hotels and developing unique accommodations would help balance the quality offerings in the area. Creating the "experience economy" for both resident and visitor alike will reap dividends for the community.

Rationales

- Improving quality of life for residents and future residents (P) (C)
- More than 3,600 graduates with related skills for community development target
- Post-secondary vocational training options (P)
- Within half-hour of major university/college (P)
- Quality of education K-20+ (P) (C)
- Availability of executive and moderate-cost housing (P)
- Low cost of living (P)
- Average target national earnings of $23, 221(C)
- Total growth of target industry family over past decade is 17.6% (P)
- Average target 10-year growth projection of 10.6% (P)
- An existing pool of high-demand occupations and occupations with skills transferability (P)

Table 2.21: Regional Degree Completions in Majors Related to Quality of Place & Asset Development, 2016

Degrees by Area of Study	Certificate	Associate	Bachelor	Graduate	Number of Degrees 2016
Business, Management, Marketing, and Related Support Services	51	119	465	131	766
Natural Resources and Conservation			27	7	34
Parks, Recreation, Leisure and Fitness Studies		7	125	16	148
Liberal Arts and Sciences, General Studies and Humanities		2,278	10		2,288
Family and Consumer Sciences/Human Sciences	41				41
Personal and Culinary Services	253	14			267
Visual and Performing Arts	6	13	81		100
Grand Total	**351**	**2,431**	**708**	**154**	**3,644**

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, Garner Economics

Table reflects reported degrees/certificates granted at: Fortis Institute, George Stone Technical Center, Jefferson Davis Community College, Northwest Florida State College, Okaloosa Technical College, Pensacola State College, Locklin Tech, University of West Florida, and Virginia College.

Table 2.22: Quality of Place & Asset Development Subsectors

NAICS	Description	National Wages 2016	2006-2016 National Job Growth	2016-2026 National Job Growth Forecast	2016 National Job Count
453998	All Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers (except Tobacco Stores)	$32,296	-4.0%	5.9%	164,055
532284	Recreational Goods Rental	$26,482	39.6%	22.2%	15,013
711219	Other Spectator Sports	$30,287	9.0%	4.7%	53,953
711310	Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities	$34,826	58.6%	17.5%	104,905
711320	Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events without Facilities	$52,346	37.6%	18.9%	43,202
712190	Nature Parks and Other Similar Institutions	$31,047	52.8%	28.4%	10,661
713110	Amusement and Theme Parks	$28,389	34.3%	13.6%	184,747
713930	Marinas	$31,840	13.4%	13.5%	41,085
721110	Hotels (except Casino Hotels) and Motels	$29,441	7.6%	9.6%	1,582,933
721199	All Other Traveler Accommodation	$26,366	46.9%	37.8%	15,294
722511	Full-Service Restaurants	$20,292	20.4%	9.8%	5,354,690
		$23,221	17.6%	10.0%	7,570,536

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Table 2.23: Quality of Place & Asset Development

Pensacola Metro Existing Pool of High-Demand Occupations, 2016

Description	Employed in Pensacola Metro
Retail Salespersons	7,125
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	6,201
Customer Service Representatives	6,111
Cashiers	5,761
Waiters and Waitresses	4,571
Cooks, Restaurant	2,689
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	2,198
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	2,121
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	1,861
Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,677
Food Preparation Workers	904
Bartenders	784
Counter and Rental Clerks	645
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	542
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	485
Dishwashers	429
Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks	405
First-Line Supervisors of Housekeeping and Janitorial Workers	238
First-Line Supervisors of Landscaping, Lawn Service, and Groundskeeping Workers	222
Food Preparation and Serving Related Workers, All Other	215
Food Servers, Nonrestaurant	115
Reservation and Transportation Ticket Agents and Travel Clerks	86
Chefs and Head Cooks	79
Fine Artists, Including Painters, Sculptors, and Illustrators	52
Lifeguards, Ski Patrol, and Other Recreational Protective Service Workers	41
Craft Artists	29
Advertising and Promotions Managers	10

Source: EMSI, Garner Economics

Chapter 3: Where Santa Rosa County Should Go from Here—A Site Selector's Perspective

To ensure that Santa Rosa County can leverage its many assets and strengthen its business climate to retain the companies it has, as well as attract its business targets and leverage its fullest potential, the EDO and the County must be proactive in driving and shaping Santa Rosa County's economic future and setting it apart from other peer jurisdictions.

The following observations, conclusions, and recommendations are based on data and feedback collected during Phase 1 and noted in the previously cited COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT. They also build upon the assessments made to prioritize the business targets identified in Chapter 2.

As noted in the introductory chapters, this assessment—and the observations herein—were developed from a site selector's perspective. The recommendations are built with an eye toward those areas that will differentiate Santa Rosa County. The goal of this strategy is to provide a framework for the County to consider its economic development service delivery and activities to support and augment the work of the EDO and other County departments and organizations involved in economic development. Therefore, these recommendations are designed to go beyond traditional recruitment, expansion, and retention activities. The recommendations look at Santa Rosa County and its economic future holistically and explore ways to better connect and leverage the County's talent and workforce, entrepreneurship, infrastructure, and business climate.

As with any strategy, there will be some elements that the County—and the Santa Rosa EDO in particular—can take on independently. There will be other initiatives that will need to be taken in collaboration with others or in support of others. The Santa Rosa EDO will be a champion for the initiatives to improve the County's competitiveness as a place to do business and one that can attract the types of talent that will drive the economy for years to come. The recommendations were written to calibrate the County's actions to its specific role.

Garner Economics, and its partner related to marketing, DCI, developed the conclusions and recommendations with the following principles for Santa Rosa County in mind:

- **Undertake economic development activities holistically.** The EDO's economic development activity must be developed in the context of work being done to strengthen not only the County, but also the entire region. As noted frequently in the COMPETITIVE REALITIES REPORT, Santa Rosa County is part of a dynamic and changing region. It has the opportunity to better collaborate with and leverage the strengths of its neighbors.

- **Be a leader.** The success of the economic development strategy will depend not only on the changes the EDO makes regarding how it serves its clients and drives the economic development program, but also on its ability to be a leader within the County that makes the case for such collaboration and change. Going forward, the economic development leaders in the County should make the case for how these new initiatives or changes in policies will improve the County's business climate and quality of place and, in turn, its ability to provide world-class economic development service delivery and opportunities for those it serves.

Recommendations for action are categorized under three areas of opportunity: **Enhance the Product (Product Improvement), Tell the Story (Marketing), and Execute Effectively (Organizational)** (Figure 3.1). In some instances, and where relevant and possible, a cost estimate to implement the noted recommendation has been offered.

An estimated timeline for the optimal application of the recommendations is included in the Recommendations Summary table on pages 70-71.

FIGURE 3.1: RECOMMENDATION CATEGORIES

Enhance the Product
Product improvement initiatives to ensure Santa Rosa County is in a competitive position to attract, retain, and grow the types of companies and industries it desires

Tell the Story	Execute Effectively
Product marketing actions for Santa Rosa County to share the economic dynamism of the County with target prospects and talent	Organizational adjustments that allow the County or the EDO to align its mission and focus on those areas that will directly impact the economic growth the community desires

I. Enhance the Product
Product Improvement

Strategy:

Strengthen the County's assets in key areas that support the Santa Rosa EDO's goal of attracting and growing more high-quality economic activities in the area, while protecting the quality of the community.

The County's "product" is defined as the infrastructure—including a favorable business climate—needed to attract investment to Santa Rosa County. Local marketing efforts will only be successful if the County has a community "product" to sell. This includes sites and buildings; product to attract targeted business sectors, which pay higher wages; utility infrastructure; workforce development; entrepreneurship; and incentives.

1. **Continue to develop a real estate portfolio of additional sites and develop a speculative building for the targeted business sectors.**

Observation: As noted in the Competitive Realities Report, an adage in the economic development profession is "no product-no project." Santa Rosa County is fortunate to have three sites (two public and one private) that have been certified by a third party as shovel ready. The Achilles' heel for Santa Rosa County is the limited availability of sites prepared for high-end office construction—Class A or B office space—and suitable industrial or distribution space (spec or available existing buildings). With speed to market being of extreme importance, the lack of these space options will cause Santa Rosa County to be passed over for a community that has these product options.

Recommendation:

a. Santa Rosa County should consider constructing a multi-purpose speculative building in the County's I-10 Industrial Park that will meet the initial requirements of many of those targeted business sectors identified in Chapter 2. These would include options in all five of the core industry target groups.

Garner Economics recommends an industrial shell building of no less than 50,000 sq. ft., expandable to 100,000 sq. ft., with a ceiling height of no less than 32 ft., which will allow for distribution/logistics firms to stack pallets. The building, if designed appropriately, would be a multi-functional building that can crossover to different industry sectors and not have a singular use.

b. Santa Rosa County is severely limited with Class A and Class B office space in the County. Yet, its economy is structured to attract those types of facilities effectively, e.g., Navy Federal Credit Union and AppRiver, LLC. Santa Rosa County should take the same approach as they did with the creation of an industrial park (I-10) and utilize resources to develop a campus like office park in the more commercial areas of Santa Rosa County, e.g., Gulf Breeze, Navarre, and Milton. Santa Rosa Economic Development should engage an independent real estate broker or land use planning firm to do a market analysis of the best location for this office park.

However, the above (b.) may not be necessary based on the City of Gulf Breeze pursuing this type of initiative proactively. As reported in the *South Santa Rosa News* on 11/21/17, "Gulf Breeze City Manager Samantha Abell in a Triumph Gulf Coast funding application is seeking $15.8 million to redevelopment the U.S. 98 corridor area, relocating Gulf Breeze High School stadium and baseball/softball fields to accommodate around 300,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space and up to one million square feet of office space." Should the city succeed in its quest for this development to occur, this will be a significant transformational project in allowing Santa Rosa County to attract companies in the office and technology market as noted in the Industry Targets chapter.

2. **Invest in necessary infrastructure at Peter Prince and/or the proposed Whiting Air Park to enhance the viability of recruiting aviation related companies.**

Observation: Santa Rosa County has a long history of naval aviation. Naval Air Station Whiting Field occupies approximately 12,000 acres, including 13 outlying fields with three separate and fully operational airfields in Santa Rosa County. Eglin Air Force Base, primarily housed in Okaloosa County, FL, owns property in Santa Rosa County. The Santa Rosa County Commission hopes to develop the Whiting Aviation Park (WAP), which is approximately a 267-acre planned commercial/industrial park adjacent to South Field, Naval Air Station Whiting Field. The Park is five miles north of the City of Milton and ten miles north of Interstate 10. The County has executed a Limited-Access Use Agreement with the United States Navy which enables future civilian tenants of the Aviation Park to utilize airfield facilities. Santa Rosa County hopes to develop the WAP to attract a mixture of aviation related commercial and industrial development as well as some non-aviation development.

Peter Prince Field (PP) is the County-owned airport that serves general aviation users in Santa Rosa County. Peter Prince has runway dimensions of 3701 x 75 ft. It has no instrument landing system (ILS).

Recommendation: Santa Rosa County has long pursued the aviation sector as a targeted business. As we note in the industry targets chapter, there are certain sub-sector targets that will not need the use of a runway or hangar facilities. Other subs-sector targets—such as aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO facilities) and aircraft assembly—we note as aspirational for several reasons: no large hangar space, no instrument landing system, and a short runway at Peter Prince (except for rotor aircraft). To move Santa Rosa County from the column of the County being an aspirational location for higher end, higher wage aviation related companies to being a formidable competitor, Santa Rosa County should accomplish the following:

a. Acquire the funds to create the infrastructure for the true development of Whiting Air Park (WAP). In review of the cooperative agreement between the US Navy and Santa Rosa County, there are certain restrictions that will cause some commercial users to be hesitant of that location versus others that have far fewer restrictions on their operations. The best option for WAP is for MRO work on military aircraft at that location, which typically runs as a 5-year DOD contract.

b. Fund and install an ILS system at Peter Prince.

c. Develop a virtual spec hangar to use as a promotional tool for an MRO facility of smaller, general aviation aircraft and rotor (helicopters) aircraft at Peter Prince.

3. Create a plan to improve gateways into the County—including new signage, landscaping, and beautification initiatives.

Observation: As reiterated by focus group participants and survey respondents, the gateways into Santa Rosa County (i.e., I-10 and Highways 98, 87, and 4) are either nondescript or are not aesthetically pleasing. To welcome both visitors and potential businesses, the County should work to improve major gateways by enhancing landscaping and creating signage that clearly indicates entrance into Santa Rosa County's boundaries.

Recommendation: A community beautification initiative, Keep Santa Rosa Beautiful, for example, would be a way to make an immediate impact on the brand of the County. Model programs such as Keep America Beautiful would be a relatively easy way to mitigate any negative perceptions. The County could recruit another organization(s) such as the various county chambers of commerce to be the lead on the campaign and create its own 501(c)(3) status as a not-for-profit, tax-exempt organization. Existing businesses would also be engaged and see the positive impact of the County's action.

Lead organization for implementation: County; the three local Chambers.

Best practice examples: Keep America Beautiful is the nation's leading nonprofit that brings people together to build and sustain vibrant communities. The network of more than 1,200 affiliate and participating organizations works with volunteers to help act in their communities through tested programs that improve the cleanliness and aesthetic appeal of those communities.

http://www.kab.org/site/PageServer?pagename=grants_home

4. Conduct a county-wide land use amenities plan for creating a "Better Santa Rosa County" and prioritize the multitude of quality of place assets needed to enhance the County's quality of life.

Observation: Santa Rosa County attracts visitors from all over the globe, from transient military personnel to tourists from all over the world, to enjoy the County's beautiful beaches. But from community engagement feedback received, there are some quality of place assets lacking in the County which many in the community deem as a shortcoming, e.g. higher end restaurants, a larger variety of quality visitor accommodations, more night life options, and certain cultural and arts venues. With significant population growth, retail growth usually follows, and quality of place assets are typically built. In the opinion of Santa Rosa County citizens and the public/private leadership of the County, there is a desire for more high-end retail and other quality of place amenities that are lacking. Having the appropriate county-sponsored quality of place assets such as recreational venues, arts and entertainment options, and enhancing the community's aesthetics is the responsibility of public leadership which, in turn, can promote private investment.

Recommendation: The County should issue an RFP to select a land-use planning firm that will conduct a community vison effort for mid- to long-term quality of place assets, by geographic region of the County, and then create a plan with a cost component of how to implement. Funding can be provided through tactics such as a ½ cent sales tax, currently being used now for public safety initiatives and which will expire in five years.

Lead organization: County Commission

Estimated cost for the plan: $200,000
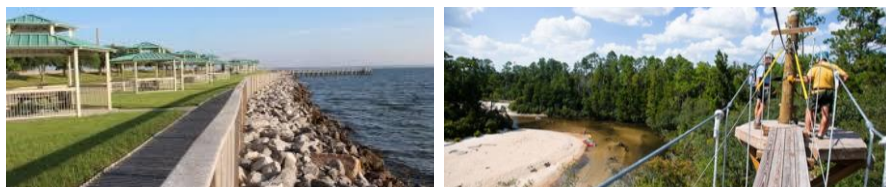
5. Enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Santa Rosa County.

Observation: The Kauffman Foundation suggests that, nationally, new firms and young businesses disproportionately contribute to net job creation throughout the economy and account for more than two-thirds of gross job creation. Tracking the rate of startup firms is another good measure of the entrepreneurial ecosystem of an area. The ability to create a new company, which establishes new jobs, bolsters the local economy.

Pensacola Metro startup activity, available at the metro level and which SRC is part of the two-county metro, has followed the national and state trend of dropping significantly during the national recession from 2007 to 2009 (Figure 3.2). Measuring this activity relative to population—number of new firms per 100,000 people—Pensacola metro peaked in 2004, has underperformed in recent years, and has yet to regain pre-recession levels.

FIGURE 3.2: NUMBER OF STARTUPS PER 100,000 POPULATION
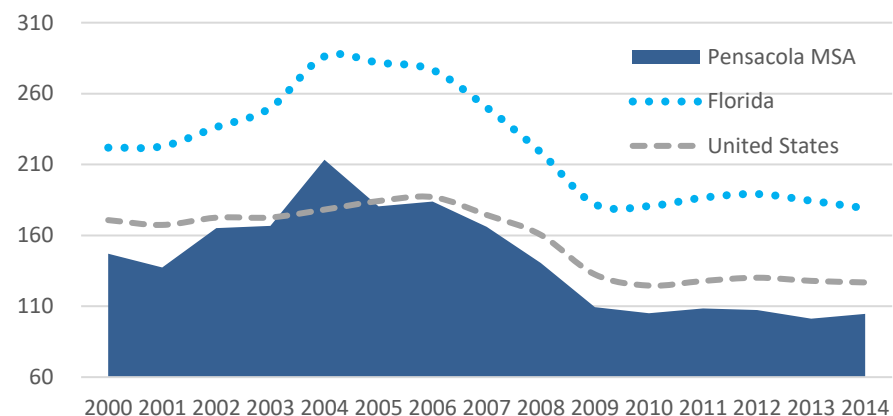
Source: US Census Bureau, Business Dynamics Statistics, Garner Economics

Another indicator to consider is the employment created by new firms. At the local and metro levels, the number of people employed at firms which were newly established (0-1 year-old) illustrate how startups add to the economy. Santa Rosa County ranks under the other benchmark counties and the Pensacola metro for job creation at young firms.

FIGURE 3.3: EMPLOYMENT AT NEW FIRMS
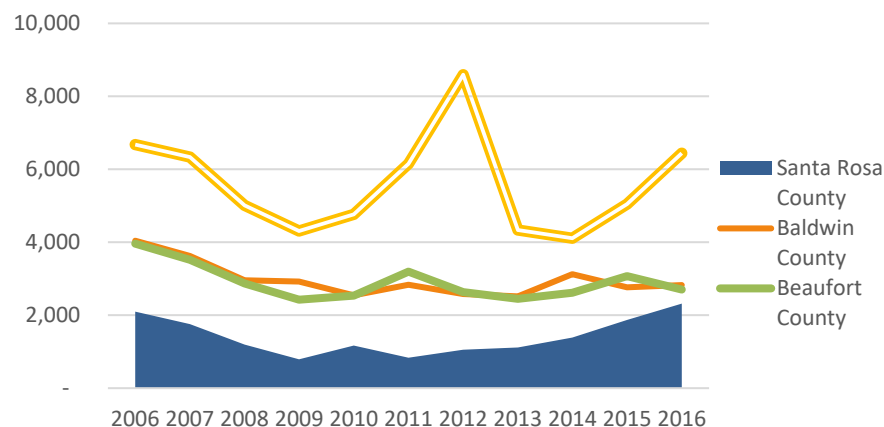
Source: US Census Bureau, LEHD (Employment at beginning of Quarter), Garner Economics

Recommendation: In focus groups, discussion ensued about the need for an incubator or accelerator space to help startup companies beat the odds of failure. Santa Rosa schools, and Pace High School specifically, are building on the entrepreneurial demand with Yea!—the Young Entrepreneurs Academy! Demand for participation is high and student success is evident. The County government should partner with one of the existing higher education academic institutions to create a small-business incubator and related programs to grow entrepreneurship in the County and to help entrepreneurs overcome the odds of startup failure. **As such, the County should engage an incubator expert to do a feasibility analysis first on the viability of an incubator/accelerator.**

The International Business Innovation Association defines business incubators as "facilities and programs that nurture the development of entrepreneurial companies, helping them survive and grow during the startup period, when they are most vulnerable. These programs provide their client companies with business support services and resources tailored to young firms. The most common goals of incubation programs are creating jobs in a community, enhancing a community's entrepreneurial climate, retaining businesses in a community, building or accelerating growth in a local industry, and diversifying local economies."

According to the *State of the Business Incubation Industry*, as of 2012, there are about 1,200 incubators in the United States, up from 12 in 1980.

About 32 percent of North American business incubators are sponsored by academic institutions.

- 25 percent are sponsored by economic development organizations.
- 16 percent are sponsored by government entities.
- 4 percent are sponsored by other types of organizations.
- 4 percent of business incubators are "hybrids" with more than one sponsor.
- 4 percent are sponsored by for-profit entities.
- 15 percent of incubators have no sponsor or host organization.

Based on our own observations of successful incubation programs and facilities (which are validated by the statistics noted above), we believe that the best chance for success is a **collaboration between an academic institution and the County**. Ideally, the incubator would be managed by an academic institution, and the representatives from that institution would serve as a resource to the entrepreneurs that are housed at the facility.

Typically, incubators offer the following business consulting to help entrepreneurs and small-business second stage companies:

- Accounting
- Finances
- Human resources
- Web design
- Life strategy coaching
- Federal acquisition
- Patents
- Business management
- Marketing and branding
- Process improvement
- Infrastructure development

6. Look for long-term for sustainable funding for economic development and product improvement.

Observation: Santa Rosa County is in the envious position of having a funding mechanism for economic development, the Electric Franchise Fee Fund (EFFF). It is primarily used to fund the Santa Rosa EDO and related infrastructure projects, like the I-10 Industrial Park. The EFFF is a special revenue fund to account for fees charged to major local utility companies for use of public rights of way. These funds are currently committed by the BOCC for Economic Development (10% of revenues received—budgeted $6.7M in total revenues); Road & Bridge Department ($1,859,950); The General Fund ($3,276,620); and the five (5) Commissioner's Districts (For FY18—$118,386 each). Any funds received more than budgeted amount are split between the five districts and the Economic Development Office. For example, if actual revenues were $200,000 over the budgeted amount, 10% ($20,000) would go to economic development and the remaining $180,000 would be split evenly among the 5 districts with each receiving $36,000. The current fund balance for economic development is approximately $1.5 million.

In addition, the county passed a half-cent local option sales tax (LOST) by approximately two-thirds of Santa Rosa County voters on August 30, 2016 and that went into effect January 1, 2017 Over the next five years, the half-cent sales tax will generate an estimated $35 million to fund improvement projects such as:

- transportation and drainage improvements,
- infrastructure projects and public facilities,
- recreation/natural resources,
- capital equipment, as well as
- law enforcement, fire, and public safety facilities and equipment.

Recommendation: After this current LOST funding expires in 2021, the County should work to evolve to a funding source that would help implement plans for the County and district that are identified if recommendation #4 is implemented. The 10% portion of the EFFF is good, but not nearly enough to implement product development initiatives for economic development county-wide, which could include quality of place projects. A sustainable funding source for the County would show the area's commitment and would serve as a catalyst for local initiatives that are needed but would otherwise be difficult to implement.

One example of the return and impact of such foresight is the State of Texas' economic development funding model. In 1979, the Texas Legislature decentralized economic development by giving cities and counties more control over their destinies. It allowed each entity to vote on an up to ½-cent sales tax for tools and investments needed to better sell themselves as a location for business (e.g., deal closing funds, entrepreneurial development, venture capital or early stage investment funding, and product improvement such as infrastructure or increased air service). As a result, site-selection industry leaders consistently rank

Texas as having one of the strongest economic development programs and as a best practice example of sustainable funding for economic development on the local level, with 680 local economic development corporations (EDCs) using some form of this funding mechanism. Texas has also ranked as the highest performing state in net new job growth for the last 18 years.

7. Support plans for increased water and wastewater capacity in Santa Rosa County.

Observation: The City of Milton wastewater treatment plant is permitted to 2.5 MGD and discharges effluent into the Blackwater River. Current average daily flows of 1.98 MGD, inclusive of flows from Naval Air Station Whiting Field, the Santa Rosa Industrial Parks and East Milton, place the plant at 79.20% capacity. Approved developments and remaining capacity allocated to the Santa Rosa Industrial Park place the plant at approximately 88.80% capacity. Historical growth rates and the accompanying capacity utilization are projected to place the plant at capacity by 2023.

Capacity projections do not include three Santa Rosa County commerce parks, two with certified developable land, which endeavor to attract aviation, logistics, warehousing, and technology industries to establish and sustain a base of well-paying jobs in one of the ten fastest growing counties in Florida. Five proposed projects in the three commerce parks are projected to provide a combined 9-year economic impact of $861.69M to Santa Rosa County.

Recommendation: A prerequisite to this broader economic development vision is the East Milton Water Reclamation Facility (EMWRF). Construction of the facility moves the vision forward by providing required wastewater capacity demonstrating to industry that the area is truly open for business. Without the project, growth will be limited as development slows from insufficient wastewater capacity. Public support and funding should be finalized towards the construction of this much needed community and economic development project.

8. Update the County's Incentive Policy.

Observation: Santa Rosa County has an effective incentive ordinance that was passed in January 2012. Based on the company and the parameters of the investment qualifying companies may avail themselves of land discounts on county-owned industrial land, cash rebates based on payroll and ad valorem tax exemptions.

Recommendation: As with any policy, a review should occur every few years to make sure that the ordinance is still effective and valid based on changes to global and local economic conditions. In the case of Santa Rosa County, considering the addition of a deal-closing fund, and the development of a revolving loan/grant fund based on an influx of new monies (e.g. Triumph Funds or a dedicated sales tax for economic development), would warrant serious consideration.

II. Telling Santa Rosa County's Opportunity Story

Marketing the County globally

Strategy (authored by DCI):

Share Santa Rosa County's business opportunity story with targeted internal and external audiences.

The goal of this economic development marketing strategy is to provide Santa Rosa County with an integrated plan for communications, marketing, and public relations that aims to advance the County's position as a location for potential investors and help "sell" Santa Rosa County.

DCI led the effort to create the recommendations outlined in the pages that follow. The recommendations are geared toward internal and external target audiences, including area businesses, residents, and marketing partners as well as corporate executives, site selection consultants, and prospective talent/skilled professionals.

The recommended tactics are based on thorough qualitative and quantitative research of Santa Rosa County, DCI's extensive knowledge and experiences in place-marketing, as well as best practices gleaned from our *"Winning Strategies in Economic Development Marketing"* report, a survey of corporate executives and site selection consultants conducted every three years since 1996. The Santa Rosa County marketing plan has been built through an in-depth review, including: in-market focus groups, review of existing research, media audit (see Appendix C on page 82), a marketing audit that reviewed how Santa Rosa County portrays itself in marketing materials, and audits of web presence and social media channels.

By building greater awareness and strengthening perceptions of Santa Rosa County, the Santa Rosa EDO will elevate the community's profile among top decision makers and ultimately generate investment inquiries and leads that spur job creation and economic development.

In the pages that follow, DCI has outlined nine core marketing recommendations that will place Santa Rosa EDO well on its way to further success, and serve as a comprehensive roadmap for the future.

1. **Craft Santa Rosa County's story by defining key messages & themelines.**

Santa Rosa County faces a challenge related to negative perceptions and misperceptions; but even more, it suffers from a lack of perception, being a place that is relatively unknown to outsiders. It lacks a true identity.

DCI developed the below key messages for Santa Rosa County based on research, in-person focus groups, and Garner Economics' optimal target industries. These key messages aim to differentiate Santa Rosa County from other places in the U.S. and aide in raising awareness about what makes the County a prime location for investors, business, and talent.

When talking about Santa Rosa County through key messages and themelines, Santa Rosa EDO should be sure to reference that the County is located in Florida. This will ensure Santa Rosa County is not lost on the target audience, particularly when sharing news and information with people located outside of the area who might not know that Santa Rosa County is located Florida, or where in the state it is located.

1. *An Ideal Location for Aviation & Support Services*

Smack dab in the middle of three counties boasting six aviation-focused military bases lies Santa Rosa County, Florida: An ideal location for aviation and aerospace.

The County is centrally-located among five Southeast U.S. aircraft manufacturers, including Airbus in Mobile, Alabama.; Embraer in Jacksonville and Melbourne, Florida; Gulfstream in Savannah, Georgia.; and Boeing in Charleston, South Carolina.

Santa Rosa County's Naval Air Station Whiting Field is the busiest air station in the world and is responsible for the bulk of U.S. naval air training. Here you'll find one of the nation's largest concentrations of military retirees and an abundance of civilian Department of Defense contractors, creating a key workforce for aerospace, defense, and information technology.

2. *Distribution & Logistics Advantages*

Santa Rosa County's central Gulf Coast location on Florida's western tip ensures fast access to top markets in the southeastern United States and enables you to reach the rest of the U.S. within a day.

The County offers geographic proximity to everywhere via I-10, U.S. 98 and U.S 90—three major east-west highways that run right through Santa Rosa County. We offer access to rail and three deep-water ports, including the Port of Pensacola, Port of Mobile, and Port of Panama City. Pensacola International Airport is 25 miles to the west and Peter Prince Field is available as Santa Rosa County's general aviation airport.

Companies including beverage distributor Goldring Gulf Distributing and lumber and building materials distributor Boise Cascade already call Santa Rosa County home, with sites at Santa Rosa County Industrial Park. Designed specifically for distribution, the Northwest Florida Industrial Park @I-10 also offers 88 acres well-suited for transportation and logistics/distribution facilities.

3. *Quality of Place*

Santa Rosa County is a tourists' paradise that offers top-notch amenities for real life, including crime rates significantly below state and national averages and a school district that consistently maintains an "A" grade from the Florida Department of Education, stacking it up as one of the best districts in the state.

It is one of the fastest-growing counties in the U.S., with a net population increase of 19 percent over the past decade. The ongoing population boom is evidence of a strong economy.

This is a place where you can live and work and turn vacation mode into reality. Recreational activities abound, with plenty of options for outdoor adventure enthusiasts ranging from fishing to kayaking to boating, bike trails, rivers, and top-ranked beaches. This high standard of life comes at a cost of living that's 4 percent below the national average.

Easy interstate accessibility combined with nearby Pensacola International Airport put global destinations within reach.

4. Santa Rosa County: Primed for Growth

Santa Rosa County is outpacing the nation in terms of growth, with a population slated to grow by 2 percent each year.

A diverse range of industries including military, aviation and defense, agriculture and marine research, and cybersecurity thrive in Santa Rosa County on Florida's Gulf Coast, in a state that's consistently ranked one of the nation's best for business.

Here is where you'll find white sand beaches and a community-oriented quality of life for a cost of living that's 4 percent below than the national average, along with an "A"-ranked school district that comes in at the top of nearly every performance category on statewide assessments, plus easy access to 13 colleges.

Santa Rosa County Themelines

In addition, while the Santa Rosa County story is not yet ripe for the national media, we do recommend communicating the following themelines to internal and external audiences. These themelines aim to provide context and recommendations for how the Santa Rosa EDO should talk about the organization and county and how to advance key messages.

This is an important step, because, according to DCI's 2017 *Winning Strategies in Economic Development Marketing* report, corporate executives with site selection responsibilities reported that "articles in newspapers and magazines" were the third-leading source influencing executives' perceptions of a community's business climate, ranking only behind "business travel."

We encourage the Santa Rosa EDO to disseminate the following themelines locally and regionally, in an effort to boost exposure for Santa Rosa County's positive attributes.

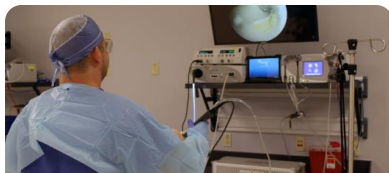| Innovation in Action: Highlighting Santa Rosa County's Top Companies | A Growing Military Mecca | Record-Breaking Population Growth That's Not Slowing Down |

Themeline 1

Innovation in Action: Highlighting Santa Rosa County's Top Companies

Santa Rosa County is home to several companies that are truly leaders in innovation.

The Andrews Institute in Gulf Breeze is pioneering research in sports medicine, including the use of stem cells to treat injuries and treating famous athletes and military. *Sports Illustrated* recently featured the Andrews Institute, indicating this is a story that quite possibly goes beyond local prominence. As a testament to what kind of work is being done at the Andrews Institute, Dr. James Andrews has been pegged as "the Michael Jordan of ligament repair" and is said to have "saved the arms and careers of some of the greatest pitchers in major league baseball history."

As an additional spinoff here, the Andrews Institute has a unique program that it provides sports medicine coverage for all public high schools in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, and Walton counties, which includes having a full-time certified athletic trainer assigned to each public high school. The caliber of this type of program very likely sets it apart from most other high schools, and it's worth telling this story, including how the Andrews Institute is responsible for providing care to Northwest Florida high school football programs—and has treated nearly 2,000 players for after-game injury needs. Additionally, the Andrews Institute offers a continuum for concussion care to 19 area public high schools.

What's more, the growth stories of companies such as Gulf Breeze-headquartered AppRiver can differentiate Santa Rosa County. A cloud-based cybersecurity company, AppRiver was founded in 2002 with two employees and has since grown to more than 250. Accolades include making the Inc. 5000 List of Fastest-Growing Private Companies in America for 11 years running—the only company in Florida to be named to the list for so many years in a row. The company has also achieved 15 consecutive years in row of upward corporate momentum while serving more than 60,000 customers across the globe. This company is one to watch, and share news as expansions/announcements occur, particularly with the company's new partnership with private investment firm Marlin Equity Partners and early talks about further international expansion in places such as Asia or Latin America.

Another major company to profile is Avalex, an innovator in the design and manufacturing of surveillance equipment, and a leading supplier of flat panel displays, digital mapping systems, digital video recorders, and sensor pointing systems. Avalex is another positive growth story for Santa Rosa County, having grown from 2 employees to more than 50.

Themeline 2

A Growing Military Mecca

Santa Rosa County, FL, is surrounded by military aviation installations, amid one of the world's most active air traffic zones, with prime access to aircraft manufactures in four states, including big names like Airbus in Alabama, Embraer in Florida, Gulfstream in Georgia, and Boeing in South Carolina.

Few other places can claim this strong level of military presence, and Santa Rosa County should continue embracing the military—and all of its advantages and spinoff industries—as a major asset.

The region boasts nearly 30,000 military retirees, ranking second in the U.S. for military retiree concentration. These veterans possess strong aviation and technical skills, and the number of retirees is only anticipated to grow, thereby creating a continued pipeline for workforce and additional innovative companies.

Whiting Field is one of the Navy's two primary pilot training bases, responsible for the training of 1,200 students annually.

Military- & Defense-related industries are Santa Rosa County's top business sector and, additionally, is one of the state's top sectors, coming in at $52 billion.

Themeline 3

Record-Breaking Population Growth That's Not Slowing Down

Santa Rosa County is experiencing massive growth—with a 19 percent increase during the past decade. That's a net increase of 27,514 people, and that growth rate is more than double the rate at which the nearby Pensacola metro area is growing. In terms of growth, Santa Rosa County is also outpacing the state of Florida, which had a growth rate of 13.5 percent, and the nation, which experienced a growth rate of 8 percent during that same time frame.

These upward population trends set Santa Rosa County apart, putting it amongst the fastest-growing counties in the state of Florida. That growth is only expected to continue, with some indicators predicting the County could see another 18 percent population increase by 2025. The University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research also predicts that the County's population could reach a record 180,000 residents by 2020.

Additionally, this population boom translates to an influx of commercial real estate projects and more retail developments. Be sure to share information on major development projects as news becomes available.

2. Launch a Digital Ambassadors campaign: Turn to Santa Rosa County residents to amplify key messages.

Word-of-mouth continues to serve as a top tactic for influencing perceptions. "Cutting through the noise" is particularly important as digital news consumption has exploded, and user-generated content is more important than ever as a way to reach target audiences such as top talent and business executives.

DCI recommends launching a grassroots program called "Digital Ambassadors" as a way to take word-of-mouth to the digital level. This program creates local cheerleaders who are passionate about Santa Rosa County. They share positive stories and key messages via social channels. Digital Ambassadors can include professionals, entrepreneurs, and other influencers with ties to Santa Rosa County.

This strategy is a cost-effective way to mobilize the community to communicate positive key messages to both internal and external audiences, thereby building interest in Santa Rosa County.

Once launched, the Santa Rosa County Digital Ambassadors program allows the Santa Rosa EDO to email content to ambassadors who sign up.

Create engaging content for your ambassadors to share—a positive Santa Rosa County or Florida ranking, economic development or business news story, or positive community-generated content. Once content is selected, develop a short description and draft social posts for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn, then link to the content to share. The ambassadors can then choose to share content with one easy "share now" button, which posts content to their social media networks of choice.

DCI recommends identifying and recruiting ambassadors with a significant social following who have a tie to Santa Rosa County—whether it be a former resident who now lives elsewhere or a local company doing innovative work. It often works well to recruit ambassadors in-person at events.

Below we've shared an example of what a Digital Ambassadors email would look like, encouraging them to share the news about Navarre Beach being ranked as a top tiny town by *Southern Living* magazine.


Hi James,

Southern Living unveiled its list of the South's most beautiful tiny towns to visit, and Santa Rosa County, Florida's very own Navarre Beach leads the list with the No. 4 spot!

Southern Living highlights Navarre Beach's "snow white sand," stunning fall sunset, prime real estate and great culinary scene, featuring Juana's Pagodas and Sailors' Grill.

Click the link below to read more, and share with your networks to showcase why Santa Rosa County, Florida is a great place to live, work and play!

SHARE NOW ➜

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL BE SHARING:
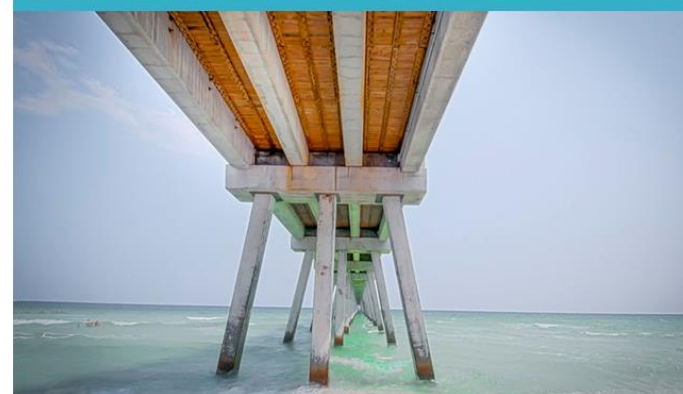
#NavarreBeach, FL among the South's best tiny towns, says @Southern_Living!

Work-life balance is important. That's why we're excited that Navarre Beach, FL was ranked among the South's best tiny towns to visit by Southern Living!

There's plenty to explore in Santa Rosa County, FL
Southern Living names Navarre Beach as one of the best tiny towns to visit.

SHARE NOW ➜

Read More

3. Advance Santa Rosa EDO's Online Presence: Take the website to the next level.

DCI reviews many organizations' websites, and it is clear that the Santa Rosa EDO website is well-done. It is clean, user-friendly, and contains some of the top features site selectors look for, including workforce statistics, incentives information, demographic information, and a link to properties and sites. It is also designed with a thoughtful structure that allows users to easily navigate through information about the County.

That said, there are several improvements that can be made to enhance how well *santrarosaedo.com* performs as a lead-generating tool.

Site selectors and corporate executives are increasingly turning to the internet for valuable information during the site-selection process—thereby making an EDO's website a vital tool in the lead generation process.

According to DCI's 2017 *Winning Strategies in Economic Development Marketing* study, corporate executives noted that having a website presence is rated the most effective marketing technique used by locations, and 66 percent of site selectors surveyed responded that they were highly likely to visit an economic development organization's website during their next site search.

Because an organization's website is often the first introduction during a location search, the importance of a strategically-built website cannot be overstated, especially as more C-level executives and site selection consultants rely on a location's website as an initial screening tool.

With so many local, regional, state, and county EDOs conducting cold-calling lead generation campaigns, the economic development profession has witnessed diminishing returns in recent years of traditional executive outreach methods

With the right website foundation strategically in place, *santarosaedo.com* can serve as the hub of Santa Rosa County's sales and marketing activity. Additionally, tracking prospects' engagement will allow the Santa Rosa EDO to see who is "raising their hand" with interest in Santa Rosa County.

As mentioned, the Santa Rosa EDO already has a strong website foundation. Therefore, by tapping into 2018 website best practices and DCI's in-depth industry knowledge, Santa Rosa EDO can bring this online presence to the next level.

Specifically, we suggest that Santa Rosa EDO make changes to optimize the current website for lead generation and to make it easier for potential investors to understand the County's business advantages. The website would also be enhanced by using more visuals and adding more keywords for easier search engine optimization. More details and tactics to accomplish this goal are included in Appendix A on page 70.

4. Go Social: Rethink the approach to digital media.

While the Santa Rosa EDO website is well-done, and will be made even stronger with the recommendations outlined above and in Appendix B, there is tremendous opportunity to raise Santa Rosa EDO's social media profile. Having a social media presence is a vital component of an economic development organization's overall marketing strategy. Using social media to share Santa Rosa County's news, events and thought leadership, the Santa Rosa EDO can more effectively promote the County, and engage with the community and prospective businesses interested in locating in Santa Rosa County.

Currently, there is a significant opportunity to improve Santa Rosa County EDO's social media presence. During the audit process, we found that Santa Rosa County has a Twitter account that has been inactive for two years and no presence on other important platforms such as LinkedIn and Facebook. According to Google Analytics for *santarosaedo.com*, less than 1 percent of website traffic came in through social media in 2017. Becoming more active on social media will help increase website traffic substantially.

Focus time and resources on the platforms where the audience best matches Santa Rosa County's goals. Each social media platform has a unique audience, tone, and purpose. LinkedIn is the top recommended platform, as industry professionals are a vital audience. Facebook and Twitter are also effective in allowing you to engage with diverse audiences. Instagram is ideal for showcasing a community's quality of life and attracting talent, but is a lower priority than the three previously mentioned platforms. We've omitted Instagram from this audit to allow Santa Rosa EDO to concentrate on the most effective platforms of LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.

In Appendix B on page 75, best practices and recommendations are provided to help Santa Rosa EDO establish an engaging social media presence that drives traffic to your website.

5. **Influence the Influencers: Cultivate relationships with national site selection consultants and area real estate brokers.**

Site selection consultants are known to play a role in up to 40 percent of corporate relocation and expansion projects involving more than 100 jobs, making them an incredibly important target audience to reach. In particular, telling your story to site selectors and real estate brokers is a valuable lead generation tactic. Given Santa Rosa County's smaller size and lack of national visibility, these influencers play a vital role in serving as third-party validation for doing business in the County.

DCI is impressed with the steps already being taken to build relationships with site selectors through regional partnerships with organizations like Florida's Great Northwest, participation in conferences, and meetings with site selectors.

DCI recommends the Santa Rosa EDO continue the efforts and supplement them with the following activities to target both site selectors and regional real estate brokers:

- **In-Market Missions**

    Meeting face-to-face with site selection consultants is one of the most effective methods to raise awareness about Santa Rosa County as a potential business location. DCI recommends conducting in-market missions and scheduling in-person meetings with site selectors in target markets such as Dallas, Atlanta, Chicago, and the New York/New Jersey region—the latter of which has the highest concentration of site selection consultants.

    These missions allow Santa Rosa County representatives the opportunity to set up meetings with site selection consultants from firms such as Cushman & Wakefield, Ernst & Young, KPMG, and Deloitte. The goal of the missions is to raise your business profile, make Santa Rosa County top-of-mind and establish you as a resource for future site selection projects.

    These in-person meetings are often best done in conjunction with a regional partner, such as Florida's Great Northwest. Given the size of Santa Rosa County, greater impact can be had when these visits are done on a regional basis rather than individually.

- **Host regional real estate brokers for a familiarization tour**

  Allowing this important group to experience Santa Rosa County first-hand is a key opportunity to promote your business and location assets.

  DCI recommends recruiting 5-10 regional real estate brokers to visit Santa Rosa County for a half-day visit, including a driving tour of the County; 1-2 tours of available sites; meetings with 1-2 company executives who can speak to why they chose to locate in Santa Rosa County; as well as meetings with Santa Rosa County leaders, such as County Commissioners or Chamber of Commerce executives. The latter could be done through a luncheon roundtable that aims to bridge the gap between the County and the real estate community.

  Think of this as an "open house"— an opportunity to showcase sites that are available and highlight exactly what makes Santa Rosa County a prime location for business.

- **Host a special event with regional real estate brokers**

  Another opportunity for reaching regional real estate brokers is to invite them to a special event that allows for face-to-face time and gives Santa Rosa County representatives the opportunity to directly communicate key business and lifestyle assets.

  Such an event could take place at a Pensacola Blue Wahoo's baseball game, where Santa Rosa County rents a party deck and invites regional real estate brokers to attend. Alternatively, an event could take place in conjunction with the annual Pensacola Beach Air Show. These events should combine business and play, serving the dual-purpose of allowing County leaders to showcase all the community offers while giving attendees the opportunity to watch a baseball game or see the Blue Angels in action. The overall goal is to ensure Santa Rosa County is top-of-mind when it comes to a broker's next location decision.

Lastly, while we are not recommending an inbound site selector familiarization tour for Santa Rosa County to do alone, we would recommend exploring options for partnering with regional organizations to become part of a broader site selection tour. At this point in time, it would be tough to attract site selectors to Santa Rosa County alone, but doing something in conjunction with a neighboring partner could provide the opportunity to give this important group a peek into the County's offerings. Combining with another entity would give you a stronger chance of success.

6. **Smart Collateral: Test a new approach**

Santa Rosa EDO places a strong emphasis on print collateral, particularly direct mail postcards. In reviewing Santa Rosa EDO's collateral, the aerospace hub tri-fold brochure stands out as a best-in-class example. Several of the postcards are conceptually strong and do a great job of using graphic elements to tell the story, rather than relying primarily on text. Moreover, the collateral does an excellent job of sharing positive messages about Santa Rosa County.

However, some collateral, including the "Look No Further" general brochure, inundates the reader with text and makes inadequate use of graphic elements.

Because few economic development groups utilize direct mail, doing so differentiates Santa Rosa County. However, direct mail provides few opportunities for obtaining feedback or tracking metrics.

It is with the above in mind that we recommend the following:

- **Scale back direct mail and test a digital e-blast template**

  According to DCI's 2017 *Winning Strategies in Economic Development Marketing* report, direct mail ranks last by corporate executives when asked about leading sources of information. Additionally, direct mail ranks second-to-last (behind only telemarketing) when it comes to the most effective marketing techniques. One major downfall with direct mail is that there is no way to track results. Based on this research and our experience, DCI recommends reducing the number of direct mailers (postcards) distributed. Find a middle ground here, perhaps continuing to send direct mail to site selectors who have indicated that postcards are their prime choice of communication, but switching formats for other groups like corporate executives. We recommend transitioning to a digital e-marketing campaign geared specifically toward corporate executives. In addition to reduced cost, what sets email marketing apart is the ability to be nimble in your strategy, to track who opens it, for example, and to alter your strategy as needed based on open rates.

The Santa Rosa EDO should only send e-newsletters as news warrants, avoiding regular monthly or quarterly correspondence. We recommend sharing news such as:

- Employer vacates a prime building locally, meaning it's an available site/office ready for quick-moving projects.

- New employer enters market or expands, adding new jobs.

- Change in policies/incentives at local or state level affecting potential new employers.

- New spec building is built, or an industrial site earns shovel-ready status.

- Introduction of a new workforce/university program that ties directly into one of the County's target industries.

Overall, set the bar high for sending e-newsletters. The more the EDO can customize which companies get the communication based on the target industry, the better. Finally, about a week after sending out the newsletter (HTML) email, follow up with the corporate executives with a more personalized text email using a program such as ToutApp, which enables the sending of personalized emails to a bulk, master list of contacts while also tracking results.

Additionally, utilize a firm to build out a target list (or refresh your existing lists) of corporate executives that should be receiving the email correspondence.

Below, we've included an example of an e-newsletter template that could be sent to corporate executives or site selectors.

STRAIGHT FROM SANTA ROSA COUNTY, FL

FEBRUARY 2018
CAPE HORN BOATS EXPANDS IN SANTA ROSA COUNTY

Construction is well underway at Cape Horn's new 78,000-square-foot facility in Santa Rosa County, Florida, at Santa Rosa Industrial Park East in Milton. The world-renowned boat manufacturer is the first company to build on the Santa Rosa certified site through Florida First Sites, a program that provides project-ready industrial sites throughout the region. The new facility will allow Cape Horn to double the size of its previous facility and expand operations by 33 percent, and it will also serve as an anchor for future economic and industrial development at the certified site.

NORTHWEST FLORIDA'S SANTA ROSA COUNTY IS CENTRALLY-LOCATED ON THE GULF COAST, PROVIDING PRIME OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIVERSE INDUSTRIES INCLUDING AVIATION, AEROSPACE, DEFENSE, AND CYBERSECURITY. THE COUNTY IS AMONG THE FASTEST-GROWING IN THE U.S., IN A STATE THAT CONSISTENTLY RANKS BEST FOR BUSINESS.

Site selection questions?
Contact Shannon Ogletree, Executive Director
shannon@santarosa.fl.gov or 860.623.0174

SantaRosa Economic Development

www.santarosaedo.com
Santa Rosa County EDO
6491 Caroline Street, Suite 4 | Milton, Florida 32570-4592

- **Refresh and upgrade existing collateral to create a profile piece**

Santa Rosa County has no shortage of collateral, but the EDO needs one overarching piece that can be distributed to anyone looking for general information on the County, such as corporate executives looking to invest in Santa Rosa County.

Such a piece could serve multiple uses, including being printed and distributed to prospects and site selectors or handed out at tradeshows and other events. Additionally, this County profile piece could be digitized and turned into an iPad presentation that can easily be shared at conferences, trade shows, and in-person meetings. Last, if created in an editable format, the piece could serve as a lead generation response toolkit that would serve as a starting point for direct or state-routed RFP responses.

- This document should be designed in a simple yet elegant way that best represents the community.

- We suggest it cover key details such as:
  - A general overview of the County
  - Map
  - Target industries (and percentage of economy)
  - Educational attainment of workforce
  - Top employers
  - Occupational skill sets
  - Wages for key industries
  - Major employers in key industries
  - Recent investments in the community
  - Community demographics
  - Community assets
  - Key assets including cost of doing business and accessibility, labor costs, tax policy, and/or incentives.

Much of this information could be repurposed from website content as well as "Retail Marketing Profile" pieces and the "Look No Further" collateral piece that current serves as Santa Rosa County's general brochure. As stated above, the "Look No Further" collateral piece is text heavy and should be revamped to become an overall profile of the County. Consider reducing text substantially and adding more graphic icons. Also, avoid going into too much detail on incentives. Consider this an introduction to the County, so provide snippets and general information, as suggested above. The main goal of the community profile is to showcase why Santa Rosa County is a great place to do business and invest.

If the EDO opts to create an editable template that serves as *both* a profile of the County and a lead generation toolkit, the template should be structured to emphasize the information most frequently requested in the majority of company RFPs while leaving room for flexibility to include additional information unique to every RFP or prospect meeting. This allows greater focus of time and energy on the portions of RFPs that are specific to each request.

For example, the editable format would allow the EDO to include information for each individual target industry and simply "plug and play" for the appropriate inquiry (where there is crossover between industries, data sets for each relevant sector could be included). Data should be updated monthly where possible—and no less than quarterly—to maintain its relevance.

Below is an example of content from a Lee County, Florida, county profile collateral piece:

- **Ensure cohesive branding among all marketing materials, making sure always to refer to the County as "Santa Rosa County, Florida"**

DCI's marketing collateral audit found that there is no set standard in how the County or the EDO refers to the community. Some collateral uses "Santa Rosa" while other pieces say "Santa Rosa County." Still others use "Santa Rosa County, Florida." In order to provide location context, we recommend including a reference to the state of Florida consistently throughout collateral. This provides location context by referencing the state of Florida.

This is a crucial step because people may not know that Santa Rosa County is located in the state of Florida, risking confusion. with places like Santa Rosa, CA.

7. Leverage Trade Shows: Focus on "owning" rather than attending the show

Differentiate yourself from the rest of the trade show attendees. Do this by truly "owning" the show.

Santa Rosa County does a great job of partnering with Florida's Great Northwest to attend various tradeshows and using these events to your advantage by setting up worthwhile appointments on the trade show floor.

Perhaps Santa Rosa County could go beyond what Florida's Great Northwest is doing, and attend a tradeshow solo. A County representative could attend with a Santa Rosa County company executive and aim to really shine the spotlight on the individual County. This will allow you to bolster your profile within the economic development industry and within target industries.

It is crucial to "do your homework" in advance of the trade show in order to best maximize time on the ground. We suggest the EDO continue setting appointments prior to attending trade shows.

DCI recommends leveraging each trade show through the following tactics:

- Secure one-on-one meetings with other participants (companies) from the tradeshow

- Schedule one-on-one meetings with site selection consultants

- Reach out to targeted media for interviews or background meetings in addition to trade media attending the shows

- If you can pre-determine companies are headquartered or located in the place where the tradeshow is being held, set up meetings with them while in town

- Create a social media strategy to help boost the County's key messages and presence at the show.

8. Partner Marketing: Strengthen relationships with the "Big Dogs."

Corporate executives and site selection consultants develop their location selection shortlists primarily by looking at states and major metro areas. Therefore, it is important to educate regional and state representatives on recent events in Santa Rosa County.

Santa Rosa County is doing an exceptional job of leveraging its relationship with Florida's Great Northwest and ensuring the EDO's involvement in various missions.

Moreover, the EDO should engage with Enterprise Florida. The state organization is a "first stop" for many companies exploring a business location in the state. The EDO should do everything possible to advance a positive, working relationship with representatives at Enterprise Florida.

Identify other organizations that have additional marketing dollars and share in a common mission to bring more business and talent to the community.

Beyond Enterprise Florida and Florida's Great Northwest, the EDO should look to enhance or create working partnerships with other organizations marketing the area, including:

- Destination marketing organizations in the region

- Pensacola International Airport

- Military organizations such as the Naval Air Station Whiting Field and Locklin Technical Center in Milton

- Area universities, especially the University of West Florida in Pensacola

Finally, invite staff from these organizations to visit Santa Rosa County at least once a year to ensure they're informed on what's happening.

9. Out-of-the-Box: Create dimensional direct mail for best-bet companies.

Set yourself apart with a unique piece of dimensional direct mail.

DCI recommends identifying a "best-bet" list of companies that are a strong fit for Santa Rosa County and developing a drone mailer that would go out to a top decision-maker at the selected companies. Include the drone in a box, ship it out, and then encourage them to book a meeting with Santa Rosa County EDO by offering to give them the drone's controller at the meeting. This could include securing face-to-face meetings or phone/video conferences.

While this is a costly recommendation, we recommend this as a way of "getting your foot in the door" with a very small number of high-profile companies.

DCI recommends partnering with a firm to identify a strong and concise target list of companies going through predictive events that suggest a site location need, then mailing the drone to those top choice companies.

III. Execute Effectively

Effective Economic Development Service Delivery

Strategy:

Build a focused economic development service delivery mechanism for existing and potential businesses in Santa Rosa County that is aligned with the future vision for the community and the needs of the target business sectors.

If the Santa Rosa County and its EDO are to enhance their roles as leaders in economic development for the County, County government and the EDO must align their mission and focus on those areas that will directly impact economic growth and create positive results.

Organizational

1. **Reorganize the Santa Rosa County department of economic development to effectively seize on current and future economic opportunities and create an Advisory Board of Directors.**

Observation: In communities such as SRC, responsibility for implementing a strategic plan, serving as chief recruiter, and working with existing employers typically falls to a publicly, privately funded or public/private partnership economic development program. In SRC, that responsibility falls to the publicly-funded county economic development office. The ability to carry out these responsibilities is therefore an important consideration when analyzing the community's economic development service delivery program. With three full-time staff members and a total operating budget of $485,000, the EDO does exemplary work given its constraints. It is mostly reactive based on its staff size and some limitations with budget. It is as proactive as they can possibly be with the resource constraints they have. But competition in South Alabama and along other parts of the Florida Panhandle can put Santa Rosa County at a competitive disadvantage.

Recommendation: The Santa Rosa EDO should undertake a slight reorganization that better aligns its work with its revised economic development goals. The reorganization should reflect two key objectives: (1) enhance the EDO's organizational efficiency and (2) position the EDO to effectively implement the Commissioners' goals and objectives for the County and the County's Comprehensive Plan. The office should also have the resources to implement this economic development strategy to attract business sectors targets and grow entrepreneurship in the County. The suggested organization chart is illustrated in Figure 3.4. This proposed organizational recommendation is a net increase of one person.

FIGURE 3.4: PROPOSED EDO STRUCTURE
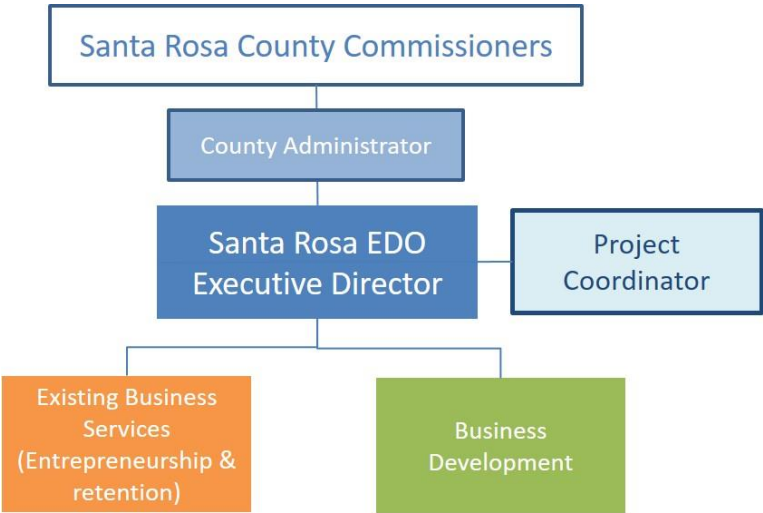
Additionally, so that the County Commission can consider various sides of an economic development issue, the Commission should appoint representatives from the business community representing large and small businesses and sole proprietors. Individuals who have a knowledge of the economic development process is important. Santa Rosa County residents who comprise the regional group, First Place Partners, is a good example of such and would be good candidates for an appointment. The Advisory Board further extends the outreach on policies and issues from a diverse set of engaged constituents and would serve as additional feedback to the Board of Commissioners.

Additional ex-officio members of the Advisory Board should include academia, certain not-for-profits engaged in economic development, and military (NAS Whiting Field and Eglin) representatives that have a stake in the economic prosperity of the County. The proposed relationship among the County Commission, the EDO staff, and the Advisory Board is shown in Figure 3.5.

FIGURE 3.5: BOARD OF ADVISORY
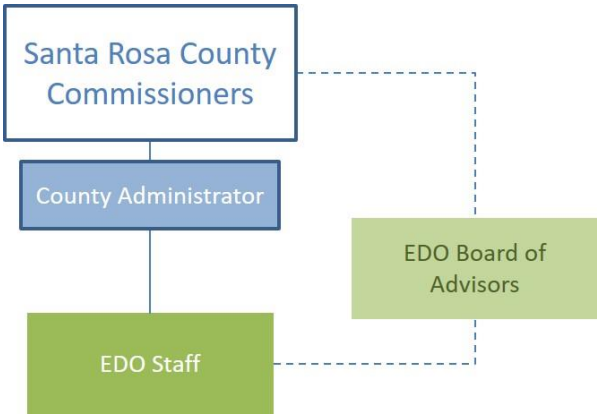
The executive director serves as the chief economic development officer (CEDO) and will be engaged in all facets of the department. That individual will also lead any product improvement/community development initiatives as it relates to economic development and Santa Rosa EDO's goals and missions. The CEDO will also work in tandem with the director of business development so that there are two people on staff proactively marketing and selling Santa Rosa County every day.

The new position of director of business services assists as the lead person for existing business retention and entrepreneurship.

2. **Engage a firm to analyze the County's best effort to attract retail to enhance the area's quality of place assets.**

Observation: The face of retail nationally continues to go through a significant change. Boutique businesses currently have a market niche while some chain retailers, large and small, continue to suffer. Thousands of store closings and employee layoffs continue to dominate the retail market.

Santa Rosa County's 2016 retail sales were estimated to be $1.3 billion for retail trades, food, and drink sales. Pensacola Metro's retail sales were nearly $6.5 billion covering the same period.

Santa Rosa County has a Retail Gap of nearly one billion dollars (Figure 3.6). This is the difference between retail demand, or the "Retail Potential," of approximately $2.3 billion and actual retail sales. This means that Santa Rosa County leaks retail sales more than it attracts to its establishments.

A review of 13 major retail categories reveals that all had leakage except for General Merchandise Stores, which had more sales that was estimated from residents.

> "Change the mindset of elected officials, staff, and citizens to place a greater priority on economic development. Policy and resource allocation decisions should meet a simple test: will this decision move us closer to our desired economic development outcomes or farther away?"
>
> —Survey Respondent
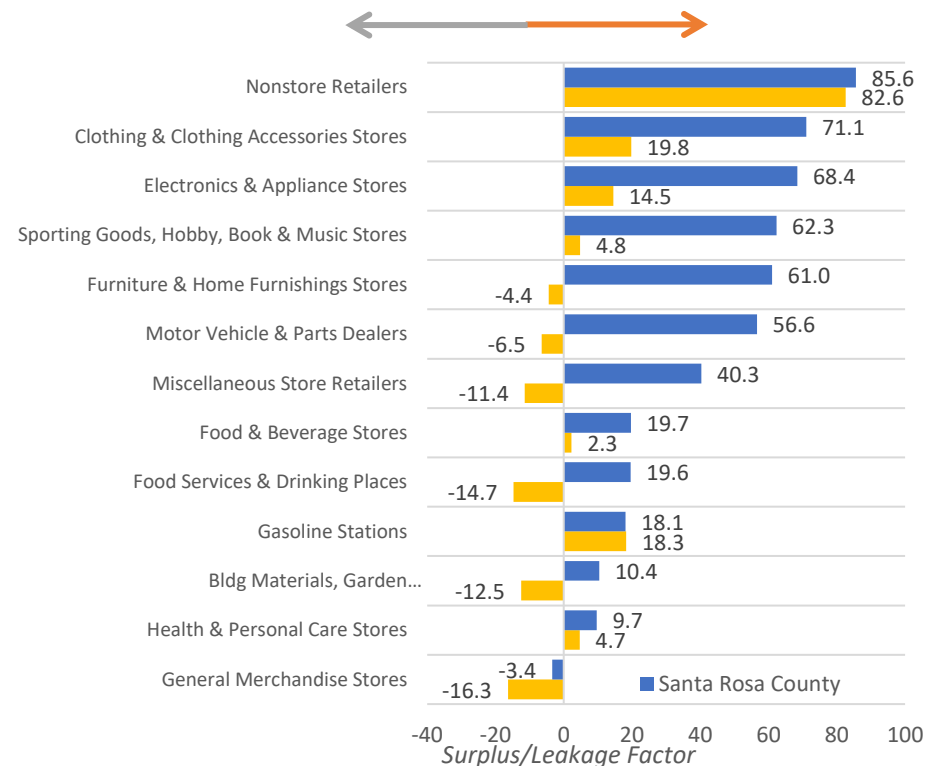
Source: ESRI Retail MarketPlace Profile, Garner Economics

Note: Food Services and Drinking Places have been included as a convenience and are not technically retail industries.

As noted by both survey respondents and our own **Assets and Challenges Assessment** of the County, shopping, dining, and accommodations assets are a challenge or a neutral ranking in SRC. Quality of Place ranks high on a company's review of communities related to investment decisions because companies want to ensure that the talent they attract or bring to the area will want to remain there.

Recommendation: Santa Rosa County must approach retail opportunities the same way they did in conducting this economic development action plan—professionally and with dedicated resources. The County, or a municipality that is focused on growing retail, should engage a specialized retail consulting firm to help create a structured, targeted plan that will identify the area's best opportunity for retail attraction.

Lead: Chambers of Commerce, Santa Rosa EDO, or any of the local municipalities.

Cost: $35,000–50,000

3. Create a better understanding of economic development locally by conducting annual briefings/workshops for the community at large.

Observation: During our focus groups, Garner Economics observed from several participants, a lack of understanding of what was occurring in Santa Rosa County related to economic development activity. There was also a lack of comprehension on the economic development process, how the economic development ecosystem functions, and how can the County leverage its assets to be the most effective in achieving wealth creating activities for its citizens.

Recommendation: The Santa Rosa EDO should offer annually a leadership session, *Economic Development 101,* open to the public, on economic development activity in the county and what it takes to win in a globally competitive environment. Speakers should include both local and external experts that would help set the stage on how Santa Rosa County competes in a global environment, then discuss what Santa Rosa County can and is doing to enhance its local economy. This initiative also has the benefit of creating a larger cadre of economic development ambassadors for Santa Rosa County.

Lead: Santa Rosa EDO

Cost: $10,000 annually

Chapter 4: Call to Action

With its strong sense of commerce and community, Santa Rosa County has much potential to position itself as a competitive place for business on the global stage.

Building a Better Santa Rosa County: *A Five-Year Strategic Blueprint for Economic Development* provides a roadmap for County leaders to raise the bar in its economic development efforts. It provides recommendations for long-term structural investments to ensure that Santa Rosa County can better leverage its assets along the Gulf Coast and its proximity to numerous military installations. The blueprint also calls on the County leadership to take on catalytic initiatives to strengthen the community's product inventory and the development of quality of place assets. Such strategic steps will help Santa Rosa County differentiate itself and attract the target business sectors and potentially grow its much-wanted aviation sector growth opportunities.

To better accommodate and support the County's trajectory for continued growth, the County's economic development leadership will need to be proactive and execute its economic development efforts differently. It will need to be a champion for long-term investments that will add to the County's product and quality of place and ensure that sufficient resources are available to fund such goals.

Coupled with this change, the Santa Rosa EDO and County government will need to be more outward-facing in its marketing and attraction effort. In addition to targeting the optimal business sectors noted earlier in this report, the County must continue to work with other economic development partners, the private sector, and stakeholders to create and encourage the development of the spaces and places where such activity will occur.

The status quo is not an option. By taking on actionable and measurable plans to focus its entrepreneurial, retention, and attraction efforts, the Santa Rosa EDO can help Santa Rosa County become more competitive. With added focus, the County can make huge strides in its economic development efforts and build the community it desires.

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Garner Economics and DCI would like to thank the Santa Rosa EDO staff, the Santa Rosa Board of Commissioners, the focus group participants, and the residents who took the time to complete the electronic survey. The staff's feedback, compilation of data, information, and openness and willingness to explore various opportunities to strengthen operations have contributed to the richness and rigor of this enhancement strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS SUMMARY

The results of this project create a strategic blueprint for Santa Rosa County to inform the County's economic development, marketing, and product development work for years to come. By taking proactive action to strengthen its assets and tell its story, Santa Rosa County will be more successful in its targeting efforts. The following is a summary of the recommendations offered in *Building a Better Santa Rosa County: A Five-Year Strategic Blueprint for Economic Development*. These were developed given the analysis and assessments of the first two phases of the project.

Strategy	Actions	Timing

Enhance the Product
Product Improvement
 	
Strengthen the County's resources and develop transformational, game-changing assets and initiatives in key areas that support the region's desire to attract and grow more high-quality economic activities locally.
	1. Continue to develop a real estate portfolio of additional sites and develop a speculative building for the targeted business sectors.
	   a. Consider constructing a multi-purpose speculative building in the County's I-10 Industrial Park.
	   b. Develop a campus-like office park in the more commercial areas of Santa Rosa County.
		2019-2023

	2. Enhance the viability of recruiting aviation related companies by investing in the necessary infrastructure at Peter Prince and/or the proposed Whiting Air Park.
	   a. Acquire the funds to create infrastructure for true development of Whiting Air Park (WAP).
	   b. Fund and install an ILS system at Peter Prince.
	   c. Develop a virtual spec hangar to use as a promotional tool for an MRO facility of smaller, general aviation aircraft and rotor (helicopters) aircraft at Peter Prince.
		2019-2023

	3. Create a plan to improve gateways into the County—including new signage, landscaping, and beautification initiatives.	2019-2020
	4. Plan and Strategize for a "Better Santa Rosa County" by conducting a county wide land use amenities plan that prioritize a multitude of quality of place assets needed to enhance the County's quality of life.	2020-2021
	5. Enhance the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Santa Rosa County.	2019-2023
	6. Look long term for sustainable funding for economic development and product improvement.	2022-2023
	7. Support plans for increased water and wastewater capacity in Santa Rosa County.	2019
	8. Update the County's Incentive Policy.	2019

Strategy	Actions	Timing
Tell the Story *Marketing* Share Santa Rosa County's business opportunity story with targeted internal and external audiences.	1. Craft Santa Rosa County's story by defining key messages & themelines	2019
	2. Launch a Digital Ambassadors Campaign: Turn to Santa Rosa County residents to amplify key messages	2019-2023
	3. Advance the Santa Rosa EDO's Online Presence: Take the website to the next level	2019-2023
	4. Get Social: Rethink the approach to digital media	2019
	5. Influence the Influencers:Cultivate relationships with national site-selection consultants and area real estate brokers	2019-2023
	6. Smart Collateral: Test a new approach	2020
	7. Leveraging Trade Shows: Focus on "owning" rather than attending the show	2019-2023
	8. Partner Marketing: Strengthen relationships with the "Big Dogs"	2019
	9. Out-of-the-Box: Create creative, dimensional direct mail to best-bet companies	2019
Execute Effectively *Economic Development Service Delivery* Build a focused economic development service delivery mechanism for existing and potential businesses in Santa Rosa County that is aligned with the future vision for the community and the needs of the target business sectors.	1. Reorganize the Santa Rosa County department of economic development to effectively seize on current and future economic opportunities and create an advisory board of directors.	2019
	2. Engage a firm to analyze the County's best effort to attract retail to enhance the area's quality of place assets.	2019
	3. Conduct annual economic development briefing workshops (ED 101) for the community at large for a better understanding of the local economic development process.	2019-2023

Appendix A: Raise Your Website: Advance the EDO's Online Presence

As noted in Chapter 3, Santa Rosa EDO has a strong website upon which to build. The following is meant to provide specific tactics and recommendations for Santa Rosa EDO to do so.

Optimize santarosaedo.com for Lead Generation and Awareness of Santa Rosa County's Business Advantages

- **Leave no question about Santa Rosa County, Florida's location**

  To strengthen the County's brand identity and give the website's content a boost for search engine optimization (SEO), we recommend updating all mentions of "Santa Rosa" and "Santa Rosa County" to "Santa Rosa County, FL". It's important to let users know you're located in Florida. You will want to make this name update in SEO-rich areas of the website such as the homepage H1 header, meta titles and descriptions, "Why Santa Rosa" navigation header and relevant sub-page headings.

- **Make Sought-After Content Easy to Find**

  Although the navigation menu is simple and easy to use, making several on-page updates will help users find sought-after resources and information.

  Here's a peek into the top pages visited on santarosaedo.com compared to the top most useful features on an EDO website, according to DCI's Winning Strategies report:
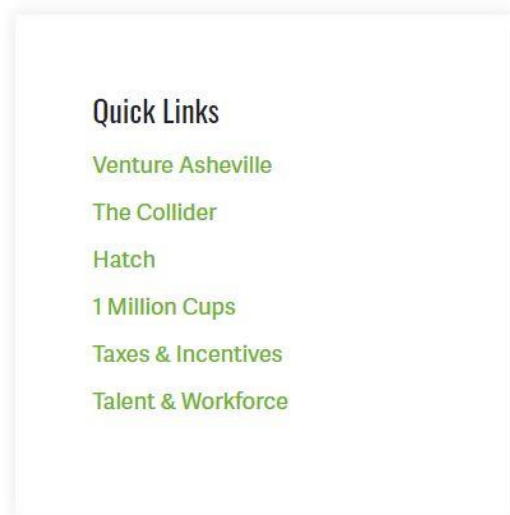
Top Five Pages Visited on santrarosaedo.com (2017)	Top Five Most Useful Features on an EDO Website
Homepage	Incentives information
News	Demographic information
Staff	Property search
About Us	Workforce statistics
Demographics	Comparisons to competitor locations

Shift your website's user behavior performance to be more in line with the functions that site selectors and corporate executives identified as the most important to making a location decision.

While incentive information is reported as the most useful feature on an economic development website, the incentives webpage on santarosaedo.com received only 1.62 percent of the total page views on your entire website in 2017. To increase visits to the incentives page, we recommend highlighting a link to this information on your homepage (your most visited page) in the "Research Tools" section or with a separate call-out box. Consider moving the "Research Tools" section higher on the page, so users can access tools easily, and then review workforce and demographic statistics next. As the third-most important functionality, your link to available properties and sites should also be displayed prominently on your homepage. Here's an example of an EDO displaying the most important site selection features in a prominent Tools & Resources content module:
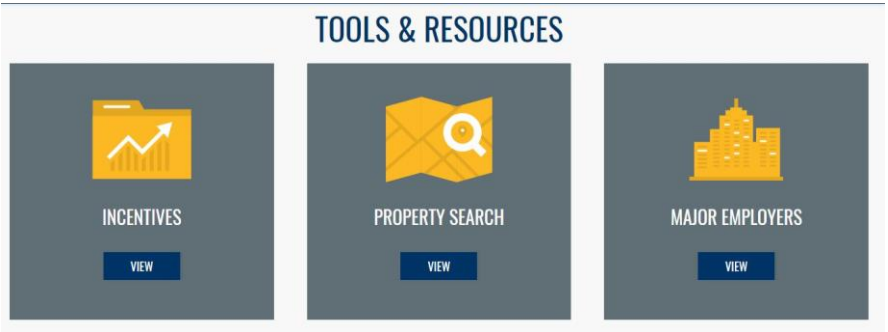
Once users navigate off of the homepage, you can add internal quick links to these important resource features on content subpages throughout the website. These internal links will improve both the utility of the website and its SEO. Here's an example of how these can be designed for a subpage:

Quick Links

Venture Asheville

The Collider

Hatch

1 Million Cups

Taxes & Incentives

Talent & Workforce

- **Add Missing Content**

  We recommend adding the following information and data points:

  a. Major Employers

  According to DCI's 2017 Winning Strategies report, a list of major employers is identified as one of the most-useful features on an economic development organization's website. We recommend omitting prisons and hospitals from the current "top employers" list, focusing instead on private sector companies that speak to the County's diverse industries.

b. Use of Staff Headshot

Clear contact information is vital; as it ultimately converts users to leads by making outreach easy. Make your "Contact Us" call to action stronger by adding team member headshots so that potential prospects can put a face to a name.

c. Quality of Life Information

Quality of life information is becoming more important to a location decision as the need to retain talent—and their families—long-term becomes a more strategic approach to corporate relocation and expansion. In fact, 40 percent of location advisors reported quality of life content as the most useful feature on a location's website. We recommend adding a "Living in Santa Rosa County" section to your sitemap with webpages dedicated to housing, culture, activities, and health and wellness, among others. Include strong visuals to help paint a positive picture of everyday life in the community.

d. Dates for News Stories

An up-to-date news section is an important part of EDO websites. To further improve functionality, add dates to news stories to provide context and let the user know that Santa Rosa County EDO is active, current, and engaged with its business community.

- **Provide Downloadable Resources**
  Create dedicated PDF download documents that highlight the resources the County's audience is likely to request when making a location decision (information about industry sectors, for example, as well as taxes, incentives, top employers, workforce and demographic data, and industry-specific facts and figures). Each document should feature relevant contact information, including a headshot. These should not be gated PDFs, which typically reduce the overall number of prospects gained. Instead, the focus is on connecting an inquiring company with the information they need.

  Optimize on-page data, facts and figures so the information is downloadable. Imagine a site selector wants to include Santa Rosa County in a location pitch: having downloadable resources ensures they have key information at their fingertips.

- **Eliminate Microsites and Revamp Industry Pages**
  While a location advisor or corporate executive needs information on Santa Rosa County's overall business environment, they also need detailed information about target industries. While having two microsites dedicated specifically to aerospace and call centers, industry-specific microsites only perform well if you have the capacity to focus on implementing dedicated campaigns to drive traffic to these microsites. Microsites also drive traffic *off* of santarosaedo.com.

  Instead of having microsites, we recommend rolling the Aerospace and Call Center microsite content back onto your main website. The content and layout of these microsites is exceptional—so use it as a model for all other industry pages.

  With all of your industry content in a dedicated section of your sitemap, you can focus on driving traffic to santrarosaedo.com with lead-generating and SEO-friendly information and design elements. Additionally, the consistency of having all of your industry pages follow the same layout and URL structure will improve the user experience and navigation of the site.

Create downloadable industry profiles with key facts and figures about each industry. Make calls to action for any download prominent with a button near the top of the webpage to drive engagement. Here's what a well-designed button with a strong call-to-action looks like:

In terms of content on all industry pages, we recommend:

DOWNLOAD INDUSTRY PROFILE

- Key statistics about the industries featured
- A map that shows Santa Rosa County's location
- A list of top companies for each cluster
- Testimonials from your key companies about doing business in Santa Rosa County
- Key rankings on Santa Rosa County's business climate
- Unique facts about Santa Rosa County
- Strong photography
- Contact details, including a headshot
- Social media logos for Santa Rosa EDO's social media channels

- **Greater Use of Visuals to tell Santa Rosa County's Story**

  High-resolution, compelling images are important. They help break-up text, making information easily digestible for a user, while also showing what it looks like to live and work in your community. Many of the images on your website could be "anywhere." Strive to source images that are unique to Santa Rosa County and the companies that operate there. Reaching out to local partners, communities, and major employers is a great way to source local photos as well as build-out those relationships. Hiring a local photographer to capture company operations, key points of interest, and even some drone shots of community hubs and property sites is a worthy investment for quality image assets usable throughout the website and across other marketing collateral.

- **Refresh Keywords for Outside the County to Drive New Users**

  It's important to note that 56 percent of santarosaedo.com's traffic is local to the state of Florida. Therefore, the question of "how do we get more out-of-state visitors to our website" is a natural one. One way to do this is through search engine optimization (SEO) to catch organic traffic on keywords relevant to the County. In addition to having all of your on-page meta-information in place, a smart keyword strategy should result in increased traffic from the search terms that matter.

  – Conduct keyword research for your County, business assets, and target industries for all North American locations, excluding the state of Florida. You will often receive vastly different types of terms for which users in your location and users outside of your location are searching. Update the meta-information for any relevant pages that you would like to drive more out-of-state users to such as incentives, industry pages and demographics. For example, a search about the Santa Rosa County workforce from within the state will most likely be related to finding jobs and workforce support centers in the community, while the same search from outside of the state would be more in line with workforce information and data.

- **Make Technical Improvements that Affect Your SEO**

  Keywords and meta-data are not the only elements that have an impact on a website's SEO. Website functionalities are also graded by search engines because of their impact on the user experience and security of your website. Two elements that need to be addressed on santarosaedo.com are:

  1. How quickly a webpage loads is imperative to a smooth user experience and receiving points that help boost the website's appearance in search engine results. There is render-blocking JavaScript on the above-the-fold homepage marquee graphic animation that is interfering with how quickly the homepage is loading. We recommend having the web team move this JavaScript elsewhere or make improvements to its render-speed.

  2. Santarosaedo.com is missing a SSL certificate. This is designated by an "s" on the end of the "https://" web address prefix. An SSL certificate is essential for keeping your website secure from attacks and lets visitors know they can trust your website. Google very clearly gives a bump to websites that have an SSL certificate and penalizes those that do not. In fact, starting in October 2017, Google now automatically labels any website that doesn't have an SSL as "Not Secure." Have your IT team address this for both peace of mind and SEO strategy.

Once your website is optimized for lead generation, we suggest adding on at least a couple of layers of digital advertising to drive traffic to the updated site, then setting up analytics to track how visitors are performing from these channels. The goal is to encourage downloads and direct outreach to Santa Rosa County staff inquiring about investment opportunities.

One of the best performing digital advertising platforms right now is LinkedIn Sponsored Content: paid posts that appear in target audience feeds when they log into LinkedIn. You can narrow your audience by specific locations, companies, job titles, and industries, taking advantage of the number one social network used for business by corporate executives, according to DCI's Winning Strategies report.

Additionally, we suggest engaging in a small paid search engine campaign revolving around keywords and phrases that are relevant to what Santa Rosa County offers. Volume in effective paid search campaigns is not very high, but conversion rates do tend to be better performing than any other platform. The key is to strategically think through which terms are likely to be used by an inquiring company and also relate to community assets within the Santa Rosa County area.

One final option is display ads on target industry websites. The cost of these goes up considerably and will require design work, but we encourage testing different campaigns on different platforms every few months, perhaps alternating between LinkedIn and various target industry sites, to reach people across channels (with the exception of paid search, which we think is appropriate to run consistently given the minimal costs). An agency with expertise in paid media may be appropriate to execute such a strategy and, ultimately, drive results for Santa Rosa County.

Appendix B: Go Social: Rethink the Approach to Digital Media

As noted in Chapter 3, building a social media presence is crucial in today's linked world. Below, we provided best practices and recommendations to help Santa Rosa EDO establish a social media presence that drives traffic to santarosaedo.com. We've split our recommendations for doing so into two sections, the first outlines overall best practices across all social media channels, the second delves into specifics for each platform.

Overall Social Media Best Practices

- **Set up profiles on LinkedIn and Facebook, and revive your Twitter account**

  – Ensure that account names and branding are consistent across all platforms so users can easily find and identify the Santa Rosa County accounts.

  – Choose high-resolution photos for cover and profile pictures. These images are important as they are the first impression users receive upon visiting your page. For your profile picture, a hi-res version of your logo works well. For cover photos, choose an engaging and dynamic photo (or video) that represents the Santa Rosa County business community.

  – Create a style for header photos that is consistent, can be used across multiple platforms, and is easily updated as photo headers are changed.

  – Resize photos to fit into each platform's required sizes (see table to the right).

- **Utilize community partnerships and in-house marketing to help build awareness and drive traffic to the social media pages**

  – Add social media icons to the santarosaedo.com footer to drive website users to the social accounts.

  – Partner with community organizations that already have a relationship with Santa Rosa County EDO and ask them to promote the Santa Rosa County pages on their own social accounts, share Santa Rosa posts, and ask questions in posts to encourage their community members to post.

  – Utilize Santa Rosa County marketing such as e-newsletters and other collateral to spread the word about the social accounts. Consider creating a hashtag to use on all of your collateral to promote online conversation.

  – Let users know what benefits they can expect on the Santa Rosa County EDO pages, such as economic development news, small business profiles, etc.

SOCIAL MEDIA PHOTO SIZING
dimensions in pixels

Platform	Profile Photo Size	Cover Photo Size	Shared Photo Size
LinkedIn	400x400	1850x200	350 (wide)
Facebook	At least 180x180	828x315	1200x900
Twitter	400x400	1500x500	506x253

- **Make Social Media Part of Your DNA**

First and foremost, social media platforms are a place for people to connect with one another and share stories. When creating content for social feeds, put effort into connecting with other organizations and users to spur conversation.

  – Ask questions to encourage comments and relationship building.

  – "Mention" organizations and individuals in posts to increase the reach and engagement of the post. To mention an individual or organization in the post, simply type the @ symbol and then name on the account you wish to mention.

- F**ollow the 80/20 rule to avoid becoming too "salesy"**

The 80/20 rule recommends that 80 percent of your social media should be content that is interesting to your audience and intended to engage them in conversation, even if it doesn't directly relate to the brand. Good examples of this are news articles and thought leadership pieces related to Santa Rosa County and relevant industries. The other 20 percent of your social media can be dedicated to promoting the brand and County.

- **Incorporate photos, graphics and videos whenever possible**

Data shows that posts with photos, videos, and infographics receive over double the engagement compared to posts with just text. Some examples of curating visual content include:

  – Take photos and video at community events, award receptions, and ribbon cuttings.

  – Use videos to showcase successful local businesses and interview business owners about why they chose Santa Rosa County.

  – Create infographics of data to make information easier for users to digest.

  – Share photos of Santa Rosa County to showcase the beauty and vitality of the community.

- **Remember that content is king**

Posting useful content that your audience and community is genuinely interested in is the best way to build a following and engage users.

  – Provide content your target audience finds valuable and interesting. Share news about key industries, provide interesting statistics, show behind-the-scenes content of Santa Rosa County EDO and interesting events happening in the community.

  – Look at the analytics provided by each platform to understand what types of posts your audience engages with best and continue to share similar content.

- **Join the conversation with hashtags**

  – Using hashtags is a great way to extend a post's reach to users not currently following your organization, especially on Twitter.

  – Use official hashtags at conference and events to join the larger conversation around the event and connect with other users also in attendance.

  – Use widespread and trending hashtags such as #Florida or #business to spread your messaging to a larger user base.

  – Create a branded hashtag to use on appropriate platforms and posts. A branded hashtag is a useful way for users to search or contribute to content about Santa Rosa County. Some ideas for a hashtag could be #SantaRosaCountyFL, #SantaRosaCounty #BizinSantaRosaCounty. Whatever the hashtag, be sure to keep it consistent.

Research and use hashtags related to the audience you are targeting. Below are some examples of key industry and economic development hashtags that may be relevant to Santa Rosa County's target audience:

#econdev	#FL	#supplychain
#siteselection	#realestate	#cybersecurity
#business	#investment	#tech
#jobs	#aviation	#IT
#economy	#logistics	#retail
#Florida		

- **Create a content calendar and posting schedule to make creating a strategy and sharing content easier for your team**

  – Utilize tools such as Hootsuite that allow you to schedule content in advance across multiple platforms and save time by automating your posts.

  – Create a calendar of upcoming promotions, events, and timely topics to create content ahead of time, then schedule the posts to go out automatically on the appropriate day.

  – Watch for and share timely local and industry news articles as they are published, even if some content is being pre-scheduled. Setting Google Alerts can be helpful for staying on top of relevant news.

  – Curate content designed to drive traffic back to your website. By highlighting content and pages on your website, and then linking to them, more users will visit santarosaedo.com for an in-depth look at the offerings in Santa Rosa County such as your aviation industry or a recent project announcement on your News page. Use calls-to-action like "learn more" or "sign-up for the e-newsletter" in the post when applicable so users know what action to take next.

- **Post consistently**

Posting consistently encourages engagement and acclimates users to seeing Santa Rosa County's content.

The following are best practices for each social platform for insight on when and how often to post on each platform.

Platform Specific Best Practices

While many best practices apply to social media as a whole, various social platforms differ in their algorithms and purposes, so understanding the differences ensures you can utilize each most effectively. Below are some platform-specific best practices to optimize the Santa Rosa EDO social accounts.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the most important platform for B2B and professional engagement. In fact, according to DCI's 2017 Winning Strategies report, c-suite executives and site selectors voted LinkedIn the top-used social platform for the third year in a row, with 77 percent of respondents using the platform. Because business executives and site selectors make up an important part of Santa Rosa County EDO's target audience, it is recommended that the most attention and resources be given to LinkedIn.

Share business-driven content. Since LinkedIn is a professional social platform, as opposed to a more personal platform like Facebook, sharing professional content typically receives the best engagement. Topics for Santa Rosa County's LinkedIn content could include:

- Project announcements

- Company expansions and ground breakings

- New available real estate

- Company success stories

- Awards received by Santa Rosa County

- National news articles and rankings about Santa Rosa County

- Promoting business-related events

Engage in LinkedIn groups. LinkedIn has a variety of groups dedicated to specific topics. Posting and commenting in these groups can be a strategic way to increase brand awareness and attract new followers. Some groups that may be beneficial for Santa Rosa to join include:

- Site Selection Network

- Site Selection and Corporate Real Estate Pros

- International Economic Development Council (IEDC)

- Economic Development 2.0 (This group is managed by DCI).

- Florida Economic Development Council

- FDI Forum

When to post on LinkedIn:

Since LinkedIn is used by professionals, the best times to post typically correspond with working hours. It is a best practice to schedule posts according to your target audience's time zone. If your audience is spread across multiple time zones, it is best to use Eastern Time. According to research done by LinkedIn, the best times to post on the platform are:

Days: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

Times: 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.; Noon; and 5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Frequency: Minimum: 3 posts per week; Maximum: 3 posts per day

Facebook

Facebook is a great place to connect with community partners and local businesses, as well as individuals who are interested in or passionate about Santa Rosa County. However, the platform's new algorithm is changing the way that a user's news feed is structured.

As the new algorithm is rolled out, Facebook will begin prioritizing posts from users' personal connections over posts from organizations and media outlets. The purpose of this algorithm update is to promote more "meaningful interaction" on the platform. Due to this change in algorithm, users will begin seeing fewer posts from organizations. Facebook stated that organizations creating content that spurs users to comment and share will be prioritized over organizations that do not. Below are some best practices to keep in mind while creating content aimed at engaging users and extending the reach of posts:

Focus on creating "meaningful interaction." Facebook's new algorithm is focused on boosting interaction between users, meaning pages/posts that spark comments and conversation between users are prioritized. When crafting Facebook posts, try to spark conversation by asking questions. Continue to monitor the post to stay engaged and responsive once the conversation has started.

Share a mixture of professional and fun content. The tone and audience of Facebook tends to be less formal than LinkedIn. Sharing some business-related posts is recommended, but it is also beneficial to share lighter content. Some examples of the type of Facebook content Santa Rosa County could post is:

- Photos of Santa Rosa County in the past or present

- Showcase local businesses and their owners

- Promote business-related and non-business community events

- Share rankings or national news featuring Santa Rosa County

- Pictures or information about what's happening at the EDO and its staff

- Interesting, positive local news stories

- Company expansions or announcements

Go live. Facebook Live videos get on average six times as many interactions as regular videos. Go live during events such as ground breakings, site tours, award ceremonies, and any other special event that may interest your target audience.

Encourage users to get updates from the Santa Rosa County EDO page. Although the Facebook algorithm is changing, users can still select which pages they want to see content from. By encouraging users to select the "See First" option for the Santa Rosa County EDO Facebook page, those users will still be exposed to all of the content shared by the page. Below is an example of The Economist encouraging users to select "See First" for their page:

When to post on Facebook:

According to DCI's "Superstar States of Social Media," an EDO-focused social media research report, the best time to post on Facebook for the best engagement is:

Days: Every day of the week performs about equally

Times: Between 8 a.m. and 11 a.m., with a sharp drop in engagement around 9 a.m. (*If your audience is spread over multiple time zones, use Eastern Time)

Frequency: Minimum: 3 posts per week; Maximum: 10 posts per week

Twitter

This platform is known for real time updates and engaging directly with higher profile users such as members of the media, organizations, government officials, and industry leaders. Twitter organizes content based on hashtags that are trending or that individual users have shown interest in, so utilizing hashtags on this platform is key.

Create and monitor Twitter lists. Populate these lists with users and organizations that Santa Rosa County is interested in following and engaging. When creating a list, choosing to keep the list "public" will allow anyone to view the lists and will notify the user that they have been added to the list. If either of these things are not desired, select "private" as the list setting.

Creating these lists will allow Santa Rosa County to easily see and engage with relevant content posted by these users and organizations. Types of lists could include:

- Community leaders
- Site Selectors and Real Estate Brokers
- Santa Rosa County EDO staff and shareholders
- Leaders and organizations in Santa Rosa County's key industries
- Businesses in Santa Rosa County
- Partner organizations

When to Tweet

Because of Twitter's algorithm, tweets have a shorter lifespan than posts on other platforms. Data shows that a tweet reaches 75 percent of its engagement after just 3 hours. To increase reach on Twitter, do not hesitate to post frequently, even promoting the same topic.

Days: Monday – Friday

Time: Noon – 3:00 p.m. (*If your audience is spread over multiple time zones, use Eastern Time)

Frequency: The best practice average is 1 to 5 tweets per day.

Use tools to manage content and conversations. Hootsuite can help you keep up with the frequency of tweets, track engagement on posts and monitor conversations for opportunities to respond and engage. It can also monitor hashtags and Twitter lists to help you stay up-to-date on the latest content around important subject areas.

Appendix C: Santa Rosa County Media and Rankings Audit

Note: This media and rankings audit was conducted from November 2017 - January 2018, and looked at the previous 12-18 months of coverage.

The media can serve as a credible third-party endorsement for your key messages and also drive decision makers' and skilled professionals' perceptions of your city. Tellingly, in DCI's 2017 installment of "Winning Strategies in Economic Development Marketing," a survey of corporate executives with site selection responsibilities reported that, **"articles in newspapers and magazines" was the third-leading source influencing executives' perceptions of a community's business climate**, ranking only behind "business travel."

With this in mind, DCI reviewed articles written in the past 12-18 months that mentioned Santa Rosa County prominently in top-tier national news outlets. The goal of this audit is to uncover the major themes being written about the County, along with the tone of the coverage, given that news media is such a critical factor driving decision makers' perceptions.

DCI's media audit, conducted for the time period beginning July 1, 2016, and ending January 31, 2018, found that Santa Rosa County has not been frequently or prominently featured in national, top-tier publications. In the few instances where Santa Rosa County received coverage in national media, the tone was positive.

For example, ***Sports Illustrated* wrote an in-depth piece about Andrews Institute**, published Sept. 27, 2017, which discusses the institute's pioneering research in sports medicine, mentions Gulf Breeze, and prominently quotes Dr. James Andrews.

Sports Illustrated
At the Andrews Institute, Stem Cells Are Seen As the Next Stage in Sports Medicine

What's more, a piece published in *Quartz* on April 5, 2017 briefly mentions Dr. James Andrews as "the Michael Jordan of ligament repair," during part of a broader story on stem-cell therapy for baseball injuries. Additionally, a *HuffPost* article published April 6, 2017, positively featured AppRiver's unique startup program for veterans.

AppRiver Salutes Veterans with Entrepreneurial Start-Up Program
— HUFFPOST

The audit found a small handful positive rankings and accolades in the national media, and this coverage is generally positive. *USA Today* **highlighted Whiting Field Naval Air Station in a story about the nation's busiest airports**, and also covered a study by Florida Kids Count, which ranked Santa Rosa County children among the top 10 for overall well-being according to data from state and federal agencies. *Southern Living* **in 2017 ranked Navarre Beach as one of the South's best tiny towns to visit.**

Southern Living
The South's Best Tiny Towns

4 of 19   Dan Reynolds/Getty Images
Navarre Beach, Florida

Outside of the positive coverage outlined above, Santa Rosa County has little-to-no perception in national media, as several other stories that appeared throughout the audit were neutral. Negative coverage included an article in *USA Today* covering how tough state budget cuts may cause Santa Rosa and Escambia counties to struggle, and another negative story in *USA Today* detailed how low-income families in Santa Rosa County struggle to feed their families outside of the school year. Additionally, *POLITICO* **in June 2017 published a large, in-depth story on the growing**

POLITICO

In September 2015, SRPE's board voted to disaffiliate. | AP Photo

National, local politics infuse union fight over panhandle county's teachers

political divide between two teachers unions within the Santa Rosa County School District.

What's more, the audit found several instances where national, top-tier publications such as *Business Insider* and *Newsweek* used photos from Santa Rosa County-based military and defense sites, but these sites—or their Santa Rosa County locations—were not specifically mentioned in the full stories.

DCI expanded the audit to take a closer look at regional and local coverage to shed light on how Santa Rosa County is portrayed within the state. Much of that coverage varies between negative and neutral. Examples here include regional state news stories surrounding education, politics, and the BP Oil Spill.

Eglin gets first Air Force cybersecurity group

Lastly, some articles in Florida-area media do shine a positive light on all the innovation happening within Santa Rosa County industries such as aerospace, healthcare, and technology. For example, *Panama City News Herald* and *The Northwest Florida Daily News* highlighted new, innovative projects and training programs at Whiting Field Naval Air Station and Elgin Air Force Base.

Jobs/Economy Articles:

1. "Santa Rosa wants focus on education, BP Money," *USA Today*, Anne Delaney, January 18, 2017 (neutral).

Company Features:

1. "Stem-cell therapy is poised to disrupt the Tommy John epidemic in baseball," *Quartz*, Elijah Wolfson, April 5, 2017 (positive).
2. "AppRiver Salutes Veterans with Entrepreneurial Start-Up Program," *HuffPost*, Dwayne D. Paro, April 6, 2017 (positive).
3. "Beware these Hurricane Harvey phishing and spam attacks," *TechRepublic*, Alison DeNisco Rayome, September 1, 2017 (positive).
4. "At the Andrews Institute, Stem Cells Are Seen As the Next Stage in Sports Medicine," *Sports Illustrated,* Greg Bishop, September 27, 2017 (positive).

Education Articles:

1. "National, local politics infuse union fight over panhandle county's teachers," *POLITICO,* Jessica Bakeman, June 6, 2017 (neutral).
2. "Florida school district picks abstinence-only center to provide sex education," *Chicago Tribune*, Valeria Strauss, October 10, 2017 (neutral).
3. "Escambia, Santa Rosa schools face tough budget year, superintendents say," *USA Today*, Jim Little, June 25, 2017 (negative).

Quality of Life Articles:

1. "Florida Panhandle is home to hundreds of old houses," *Associated Press*, Kelly Humphrey, March 12, 2017 (positive).
2. "Summer food programs essential to thousands of Escambia, Santa Rosa families," *USA Today*, Kevin Robinson, July 7, 2017 (negative).
3. "'We're getting overpopulated by bears,' Florida animal contractor says," *USA Today*, Anne Delaney, November 7, 2017 (negative).

Aerospace and Defense Articles:

1. "No Injuries after explosion at Elgin Air Force Base," *Fox News U.S.,* July 5, 2017 (neutral).
2. "Largest Portfolio of Solar Installations on Department of Defense Property Is Completed," *EC&M*, October 9, 2017 (positive).
3. "America's military doesn't have enough money to do its job," *Business Insider,* Max Boot, November 25, 2017 (photo only).
4. "U.S. Military Practices Strikes on North Korean Nuclear Sites in Biggest-Ever Join Air Drill with South Kora," *Newsweek*, December 4, 2017 (photo only).

Political Features:

1. "At town hall, conservative lawmaker calls on Trump to release tax returns," *The Washington Post,* February 24, 2017 (neutral).

Local/Regional Coverage:

1. "Aerospace Pitch," *850 Business Magazine*, David Tortorano, April/May 2017 (positive).
2. "New Elgin Air Force Base Clinic Pioneers Invisible Wounds Care," *The Pulse,* J.M. Eddins Jr, May 3, 2017 (positive).
3. "BP oil hit Pensacola Beach, but BP money is headed elsewhere, beach leaders say," *Florida Today*, Melissa Nelson Gabriel, July 13, 2017 (neutral).
4. "Military marks completion of Panhandle solar fields," *Panama City News Herald*, Staff Reporters, August 24, 2017 (positive).
5. "The Forgotten History of Milton's German Prisoner of War Camp," *The Pulse,* Jay Cope and Drew Buchanan, October 11, 2017 (neutral).
6. "Santa Rosa County School District implements STEAM initiative," *The Northwest Florida Daily News,* Alicia Adams, October 28, 2017 (positive).
7. "Economic Development Grant Program Remains In Limbo," *WUWF*, Dave Dunwoody, October 31, 2017 (neutral).
8. "New Florida law expected to increase conflict over textbooks," *Tampa Bay Times*, November 26, 2017 (neutral).
9. "Eglin gets first Air Force cybersecurity group," *The Northwest Florida Daily News*, Jim Thompson, December 4, 2017 (positive).

Rankings:

1. "Whiting air space tops nation's busiest airports," *USA Today*, Melissa Nelson Gabriel, February 16, 2017 (positive).
2. "Santa Rosa ranks No. 8 in child well-being, Escambia is No. 42, according to new report," *USA Today*, Kevin Robinson, July 30, 2017 (positive).
3. "Great Aviation Museums – Southeastern US," *AOPA,* Crista Videriksen Worthy, November 8, 2017 (positive).
4. "The South's Best Tiny Towns," *Southern Living*, James T. Black, December 2017 (positive).

Appendix D: Marketing Budget

DCI has outlined estimated costs for the proposed marketing initiatives in the chart on the right.

Please note that the budget is broken into two sections: the first encompasses "hard costs" for variable expenses; and the second provides preliminary estimated costs for the hiring of an outside marketing agency to assist Santa Rosa Economic Development with the implementation of the proposed marketing tactics.

This budget is a 12-month all-inclusive estimate.

Year One (12 months)	Ample	Optimal
PROGRAM EXPENSES		
Website		
Refresh Industry Pages/Add Infographics	$15,000	$25,000
Digital Advertising		
Options include LinkedIn Sponsored Content; paid search engine campaign; display ads on target industry websites	$5,000	$8,000
Digital Ambassadors Program		
One-time Set-up Fee	$1,000	$1,000
Monthly Fee of $100/Month X 8 months *Spend first 4 months of Year 1 getting program launched; pay monthly fee for remaining 8 months*	$1,200	$1,200
Engagement with SSCs & Real Estate Brokers		
Out-of-Market Missions *Price varies based travel expenses/number of missions*	$14,000	$16,000
Inbound Familiarization Tour	$4,000	$8,000
Special Event	$5,000	$7,500
Marketing Collateral		
Design and Printing of County Profile	$20,000	$25,000
E-Newsletters		
Design of E-Newsletter Template	$1,200	$1,200
Trade Shows		
Registration Fees and Attendance *This is an estimate for travel & registration costs.*	$32,000	$45,000
Dimensional Mailer		
Developing/Sending Drone Mailer	$0	$35,000
SUBTOTAL	**$98,400**	**$172,900**
MARKETING AGENCY PROFESSIONAL FEES		
Hiring outside agency for implementation of marketing recommendations	$90,000	$120,000
SUBTOTAL	**$90,000**	**$120,000**
TOTAL BUDGET	**$188,400**	**$292,900**
Contingency for Special Opportunities 10% of Total Budget	$18,840	$29,290
TOTAL BUDGET WITH CONTINGENCY	**$207,240**	**$322,190**