RESOLUTION NO. 27-10

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CHIPLEY, FLORIDA EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT THAT THE DESIGNATION OF RURAL AREA OF OPPORTUNITY (RAO), FORMERLY KNOWN AS RURAL AREA OF CRITICAL ECONOMIC CONCERN (RACEC) CONTINUE TO APPLY TO THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA REGION INCORPORATING CALHOUN, FRANKLIN, GADSDEN, GULF, HOLMES, JACKSON, LIBERTY, WAKULLA, WASHINGTON AND WALTON COUNTY NORTH OF THE CHOCTAWHATCHEE BAY AND INTRACOASTAL WATERWAY (INCLUDING THE CITIES, TOWNS, AND COMMUNITIES WITHIN EACH); AND THE CONTINUATION OF ALL STAFFING GRANT FUNDING FOR THE NORTHWEST FLORIDA BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC. D/B/A OPPORTUNITY FLORIDA, THROUGH FUNDS APPROPRIATED BY THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE AND ADMINISTERED THROUGH FLORIDA COMMERCE, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE NO LATER THAN JULY 9, 2025.

WHEREAS, Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes, establishes the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) and provides for the designation of Rural Areas of Opportunity (RAO) to assist rural communities facing economic challenges and promote economic development;

WHEREAS, on July 8, 2025, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order No. 25-141, re-designating the Northwest Florida Rural Area of Opportunity for an additional five-year term, expiring July 8, 2030; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Florida Rural Area of Opportunity includes Washington County and other designated counties and areas within Northwest Florida, as described in Executive Order No. 25-141 and the Memorandum of Agreement; and

WHEREAS, the designation of the Rural Area of Opportunity is contingent upon execution of a Memorandum of Agreement between the Florida Department of Commerce and the City, setting forth the City's responsibilities to support the retention and expansion of existing businesses, recruitment of new businesses, and participation in regional economic development initiatives; and

WHEREAS, the Memorandum of Agreement, Agreement No. F1652, requires the City to designate a City official and a representative from a nonprofit organization engaged in economic development as points of contact and to actively participate in the regional economic development organization; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHIPLEY, FLORIDA, THAT does hereby express its support of the following:

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1. The City of Chipley supports the continued designation of the Northwest Florida region as a Rural Area of Opportunity, as re-designated by Executive Order No. 25-141, through July 8, 2030; and

2. The City Council approves the Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Chipley and the Florida Department of Commerce, Agreement No. F1652, and authorizes the Mayor to execute the agreement on behalf of the City. The City agrees to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council of the City of Chipley, Florida, this 10th day of November, 2026.

CITY OF CHIPLEY

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Tracy L. Andrews, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Sherry Snell, City Clerk

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