Florida Rural Infrastructure Fund Program

Application for Funding

Applicant: City of Lake City, Florida
(Name of Applicant)

Project Title: Gwen Lake Restoration
(Name of Project)

State Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Application Date: 11/6/2023

Mailing Address: FloridaCommerce
Bureau of Small Cities and Rural Communities
107 East Madison Street – MSC 400
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-6508

Telephone: (850) 717-8405
Web: http://www.FloridaJobs.org/RIF

Contents

Part I – Applicant Profile

Applicant Contact Information:

Entity Name: City of Lake City, Florida		
Street Address: 205 North Marion Avenue		
Mailing Address (if different):		
City: Lake City	Zip Code: 32055	County: Columbia
Main Telephone: (386)752-2031	Main Facsimile: (386) 752-4896	Federal ID Number:

Chief Elected Official: Stephen Witt	Title: Mayor
Telephone: (386) 719-5756	Facsimile: (386) 752-4896
E-mail Address: WittS@lcfla.com	

Chief Financial Officer: Angela Taylor Moore	Title: Finance Director
Telephone: (386) 719-5844	Facsimile: (386) 758-5488
E-mail Address: TaylorA@lcfla.com	

Applicant Project Contact: Demetrius Johnson	Title: Interim City Manager
Street Address: 205 North Marion Avenue	
City: Lake City	Zip Code: 32055
Direct Telephone: (386) 719-5816	Facsimile: (386) 752-4896
E-mail Address: JohnsonD@lcfla.com	

Application Preparer Information		
Preparer's Name: Shannon Williams	Organization Preparing Application: ☐ Local Government ☒ Private Company ☐ Regional Planning Council	
Street Address: 343 East Duval Street, Suite 105		
City: Lake City	State: FL	Zip Code: 32055
Telephone: (386) 292-1410	Facsimile:	
E-mail Address: swilliams@gatewaygrants.net		

Consultant Information (if applicable)		
Consultant's Name: Shannon Williams	☒ Private Company ☐ Regional Planning Council	
Street Address: 343 East Duval Street, Suite 105		
City: Lake City	State: FL	Zip Code: 32055
Telephone: (386) 292-1410	E-mail Address: swilliams@gatewaygrants.net	

Demographics and Area Data		
U.S. Congressional District Number: 3	Florida Senate District Number: 6	Florida House District Number: 10
Total Population: 12,497 Source: United States Census Bureau Source Date: 10/29/2023	Unemployment Rate: 3.5% Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Source Date: 10/29/2023	Poverty Rate: 18.4% Source: United States Census Bureau Source Date: 10/29/2023

Indicate what RIF grant category is being applied for:

☐ Total Project Participation Grant

☒ Project Planning and Preparation Grant

☐ Preclearance Review Grant

Indicate the total amount of RIF funding being requested: $250,000.00

If the proposed project is located in a Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO), indicate which one: (See list of RAOs in application instructions.)

☐ Northwest RAO

☐ South Central RAO

☒ North Central RAO

If applying for Panhandle Specific Appropriation funds, please indicate the County in which the project is located:

☐ Calhoun County ☐ Jackson County

☐ Gadsden County ☐ Liberty County

☐ Holmes County ☐ Washington County

Answer the following questions by clicking on the correct check box.

Historic Preservation Will the project impact a building, public improvement, or planned open space that is 50 or more years old? If yes, include the documentation specified in the application instructions.	☐ Yes	☒ No
Interlocal Agreement Will project activities require an interlocal agreement? If ***yes***, the interlocal agreement(s) must be included.	☐ Yes	☒ No
Regulatory Action Are improvements being made in this project to inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action that prohibits economic or community growth? If ***yes***, include a copy of the letter citing the regulatory action.	☐ Yes	☒ No
Catalyst Site Is the project related to preclearance review and also located within a catalyst site as defined in Section 288.061, Florida Statutes? If ***yes***, include a map showing the boundary of the catalyst site and the project boundary within.	☐ Yes	☒ No
Comprehensive Plan Is the proposed project consistent with the applicant's Comprehensive Plan? The project must be consistent in order for the project to be funded through the RIF program and supporting documentation must be included with the application.	☒ Yes	☐ No

Part II – Project Description and Timeline

Project Description
Describe the proposed project in no more than three sentences: The City intends to rehabilitate or reconstruct the water level control structure (dam), remove accumulated sediments, remove vegetation that has been growing on sediment, stabilize and armor the inflow ditch to significantly reduce future sediment into the lake and restore former open-water conditions to the lake.

Clearly summarize the proposed project as outlined in the application instructions.

The City of Lake City is located in Columbia County, in the state of Florida. Lake City is approximately 12.25 square miles with approximately 12,500 residents inside the city limits. The City of Lake City is like any other small City in that there are wonderful people, a great atmosphere, and inclusive family events. Also, as with most cities this size, Lake City has projects to address issues that are beyond the fiscal restraints of the City. In our case, the project is Gwen Lake Restoration.

Gwen Lake is a body of water approximately 6 acres in size. The lake is surrounded by 1960s-era homes on the west side of the City. Although there are homes around the lake, the lake is accessible to the public and citizens of the city. Over the years, due to the issues adjacent to the lake, the recreation, wildlife, and aesthetic value of the lake have deteriorated to the point of dysfunction due to the issues plaguing the lake.

The City in cooperation with some funding from the Suwannee River Water Management District started addressing the problems in phases. The first phase was the construction of a sediment pond system to reduce the sediment in the lake. After these two phases, the city began armoring the ditch flowing into the lake.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM:
There are two major problems that are impacting the lake which need to be addressed, at the same time.

1) FAILURE OF THE IMPOUNDMENT
Approximately around 2016-2017 the small concrete structure, that is serving as the emergency spillway for the lake, experienced failure. The failure completely drained the lake. The City did the best it could, with the funds available, to repair the structure and reinforce the earthen impoundment on both sides of the structure. The repair has not functioned as well as expected. The water level did not return to pre-failure levels. In addition, large storm events caused erosion in the area where the impoundment and structure meet. Causing the water level to lower even further over time. As the water level lowered, the lake bottom was exposed causing vegetation to grow in on the exposed lakebed. Currently, 75% of the normal lake level is covered with vegetation.

2) SEDIMENTATION OF THE LAKE
The major ditch flowing into the lake has an extremely massive erosion problem. The erosion of the ditch is so bad that residents along the ditch have been losing property over the years. All the erosion is settling in the lake. Although the delta that has developed in the lake has been reduced,

the plum of sediment is growing with every large rain event. The city installed a sediment basin, but it has not stopped the accumulation of sediment in the lake.

As stated in the previous paragraph, the erosion of the impoundment has caused sedimentation in the outflow creek. In addition. The sediment from the inflow creek is making its way to the outflow creek. This sedimentation has been found at the receiving lake downstream of Gwen Lake.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The solution to the issues facing the lake has three parts.

PART 1 – REDESIGN AND RECONSTRUCT THE IMPOUNDMENT AND STRUCTURE

The project consists of hiring a design firm with impoundment design expertise. The firm will survey the existing structure and impoundment. The design of the structure and impoundment will be a complete reconstruction of the area. The permitting of the redesign will require federal, state, and local permits. If the design requires, the impoundment will be listed on the national dam inventory, with an Emergency Action Plan and an evaluation of any changes to the floodplains, completing a Letter of Map Revision (LOMR), if required Although the structure and impoundment will be new, it will be designed to return the lake to the normal water level and restoring the aesthetics and recreation potential of the lake.

PART 2 – RESTORATION OF THE LAKE

While the impoundment is being reconstructed, the vegetation will be removed and the sedimentation on the lake bottom will be removed. The phase will start with a survey of the wetlands and area elevations (banks and lake bottoms). An engineering firm with environmental specialists will be hired to determine the extent of the wetlands and the extent and depth of the sedimentation. The depth of the sedimentation will be determined by boring and/or soil penetration radar. Once determined, a design that restores the lake to historical size and depth will be developed based on data obtained from the investigation and historical aerials. The consultants will obtain all federal, state, and local permits, providing mitigation for any wetland impacts from the impoundment's reconstruction and the lake's restoration. Sediment will be properly disposed of according to the health of the soil. New vegetation will be planted to maximize any onsite mitigation and enhance the recreational use of the lake.

PART 3A– ARMAMENT OF THE INFLOW DITCH

This part of the project will stabilize and armor the inflow ditch. The part will begin with a survey of the entire ditch and at least 50 feet adjacent to the banks. The city will hire an engineering consultant to assess the condition of the ditch and design a system that can be constructed to stabilize the slopes of the ditch and ensure that the system will tie into the existing sediment pond and discharge structure. As the side slopes of the ditch can be steep, the design will take more than typical practices. The consultant will obtain all federal, state, and local permits. If the work is determined to impact wetlands, the consultant will work in conjunction with the other consultants, to assure that all impacts are mitigated. If onsite mitigation can be achieved that will be the first option. Again, due to the side slopes, specialized equipment may need to be used.

PART3B – ARMAMENT OF THE OUTFLOW CREEK

This part of the project will remove sediment from the creek and complete the armament of the creek. Some armament was placed when the structure failed, but more is needed. The part will start with a survey of the area and 50 feet adjacent to the banks. The city will hire an engineering

consultant if one consultant is not hired to design the entire project. The consultant will design a plan to remove the sediment and enhance the existing system. Since this part is not disturbing the creek as much as part 3a, the expectation is that the permitting will not be as intense. However, permits will be required, the consultant will be required to obtain federal, state, and local permits. The design will mimic the design of the inflow ditch but should not require the intense sides slope design.

Proposed Timeline

Task/Activity Description	Task/Activity Duration	Deliverable
Engineering Design	6 months	Civil-engineered design plans
Permitting	6-9 months	Environmental permits
Environmental Consulting	6 months	Environmental planning report
Geotech	3 months	Geotech reports
Surveying	3 months	Project surveys
Construction/Restoration	18 months	Redesign and reconstruct the impoundment and structure; removal of the vegetation and the sedimentation on the lake bottom; armament of the inflow ditch and outflow creek.
Administration	18 months	Grant administration and closeout services

Part III – Economic Narrative

Provide a summary of the project's economic benefit, long-term viability, and potential local or regional economic impact. The summary should include a description of the current and anticipated economic conditions of the area.

Restoring a lake in a neighborhood can have a multitude of economic benefits, contribute to long-term viability, and have positive local or regional economic impacts. Here are some key points to consider:

Economic Benefits:

- **Increased Property Values:** Properties near water bodies are often more valuable. Restored lakes can lead to an increase in the value of surrounding properties, which can be beneficial to homeowners and the local government through increased property tax revenues.
- **Recreation:** The restoration of Gwen Lake will attract locals seeking recreational activities, such as boating, fishing which can boost local business.
- **Temporary Job Creation:** The restoration process itself can create jobs as the City will need to hire engineers and contractors for the restoration.

Long-term Viability:

- **Sustainable Ecosystem Services:** A restored lake can provide long-term benefits such as water filtration, flood control, and habitat for wildlife, which are critical for the sustainability of the local ecosystem.
- **Renewable Resource Management:** Properly managed lakes can serve as renewable resources for activities like fishing and aquaculture, ensuring long-term economic activity.
- **Education and Research Opportunities:** Restoring Gwen Lake to a healthy lake ecosystem can serve as a site for educational programs and scientific research, which can have long-term intellectual and economic benefits.

Local or Regional Economic Impacts:

- **Infrastructure Improvement:** Restoration projects can lead to improvements in local infrastructure such as roads, parks, and public spaces, which can have wider economic impacts.
- **Quality of Life:** Clean and accessible lakes can improve the quality of life for residents, potentially attracting new residents and businesses to the area.
- **Environmental Health:** A restored lake improves the environmental health of the area, which can reduce healthcare costs associated with pollution.
- **Multiplier Effect:** Money spent on restoration and subsequent increased recreation at the lake can be recirculated within the local economy, leading to a multiplier effect that enhances economic growth.

Describe the proposed project's potential for enhanced job creation and/or increased capital investment, including but not limited to the following information:

- The nature of the business activities which will be conducted at the site of, or which relate to the project.
- Description of the capital investment in real and personal property – do not include product inventory.

Restoring Gwen Lake, even without the direct benefit of job creation, holds significant ecological, environmental, and social importance including:

- **Biodiversity Conservation:** Restoring Gwen Lake can support a wide range of flora and fauna, contributing to the conservation of biodiversity. It can serve as a habitat for various species, some of which may be endangered or rare, thus playing a crucial role in maintaining ecological balance.
- **Water Quality Improvement:** Restoration helps in improving the water quality of the lake, which is beneficial for the health of the ecosystem and the communities around it. Clean water is essential for both wildlife and human populations, and it supports recreational activities such as swimming and fishing.
- **Climate Change Mitigation:** Lakes act as carbon sinks, absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. By restoring a lake, its capacity to sequester carbon can be enhanced, thereby contributing to the mitigation of climate change effects.
- **Flood Control:** A healthy lake can serve as a natural flood basin, reducing the impact of heavy rains and protecting surrounding landscapes and habitats from flood damage.
- **Educational Opportunities:** A restored lake can be used as an outdoor laboratory for educational purposes, allowing students and researchers to study ecology, hydrology, and other environmental sciences.
- **Recreational and Aesthetic Value:** The presence of a well-maintained lake can enhance the beauty of an area, providing a peaceful environment for recreational activities such as bird watching, boating, and picnicking, which in turn can improve the quality of life for local residents.
- **Preservation of Cultural Heritage:** Many lakes have historical and cultural significance for local communities. Restoring a lake can help preserve these cultural ties and can be an integral part of maintaining the community's identity.
- **Long-term Economic Benefits:** While the restoration may not generate immediate jobs, it can lead to long-term economic benefits by attracting tourism, enhancing property values, and potentially fostering new recreational businesses in the future.

Capital investment in real and personal property in relation to restoring a lake in a neighborhood refers to the upfront expenditure for long-term assets that will be used in the restoration and ongoing maintenance of the lake. Here's a detailed description:

Real Property Investments:

- Land Acquisition or Easements: If additional land around the lake is required for the restoration project or to create buffer zones, the investment might include purchasing land or obtaining easements for access and use.
- Infrastructure Improvements: This might involve constructing or enhancing stormwater management systems, building retaining walls,

improving surrounding landscapes, and creating pathways or public access areas.

- Water Control Structures: Installation or repair of dams, weirs, culverts, and spillways to manage water levels and flow within the lake and its adjoining waterways.
- Erosion Control: Investment in shoreline stabilization techniques such as riprap, bulkheads, or naturalistic engineering solutions like living shorelines to prevent erosion.
- Dredging Equipment: Capital costs for dredging equipment if sediment removal is necessary to restore the lake to its original depth and water quality.

Personal Property Investments:

- Machinery and Equipment: This could include the purchase of boats, aerators, water pumps, or filtration systems to maintain water quality.
- Monitoring and Testing Instruments: Capital investment in scientific instruments for regular monitoring of water quality, such as pH meters, dissolved oxygen meters, and other testing equipment.
- Habitat Structures: Investment in the creation or installation of artificial habitats like fish cribs or planting of aquatic vegetation to enhance the ecological health of the lake.
- Signage and Informational Displays: The creation of educational signage to inform the public about the lake's flora and fauna, historical significance, and restoration efforts.

Soft Costs:

- Planning and Design Services: Payments for professional services such as environmental consultants, landscape architects, and civil engineers who design and oversee the restoration project.
- Legal and Permitting Fees: Costs associated with obtaining the necessary permits and ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and zoning laws.
- Community Engagement: Investment in community outreach efforts to gain public support and input for the project.
- Capital investments in both real and personal property are essential for the successful restoration and sustainable management of a lake ecosystem. They contribute not only to the environmental goals but also to the aesthetic and recreational enhancements that benefit the neighborhood in the long term.

In summary, the restoration of a lake can have far-reaching benefits that extend beyond immediate economic gains, enriching ecosystems, serving educational purposes, providing recreational spaces, and enhancing the overall health and well-being of the community and the environment.

Describe the level of public and private commitment to the project. Include the extent of local expenditures for construction, use of local firms or resources, or purchase of local equipment or materials that have or will have ripple effects on the area's economy.

The City of Lake City has committed sources to the restoration of Gwen Lake for over 6 years. The City invested funds with a consultant engineering firm, which, over time, did not deliver the services required to move forward with the restoration of the lake. The failure of this firm to deliver the contracted services fostered wide-ranging and significant consequences for both the community and the local economy including:

- **Environmental Impact**: The primary goal of this lake restoration is to address environmental issues such as pollution, eutrophication, and loss of biodiversity. Failure to provide these services means these problems persist or worsen, affecting the local ecosystem.
- **Economic Impact**: Money spent on ineffective services is a waste of taxpayer funds. Additionally, the lake might be a source of economic activity through tourism, fishing, and recreation. If the lake is not restored, this revenue can decrease.
- **Public Health**: Lakes often serve as a water source for nearby populations. If the restoration meant to improve water quality doesn't happen, the community might face health risks due to contaminated water.
- **Legal and Administrative Costs**: The City might need to engage in legal battles to either enforce the contract or seek damages, incurring further expenses and diverting resources from other city projects.
- **Reputational Damage**: Both the City government and the engineering firm might suffer reputational damage. For the government, it can lead to a loss of public trust. For the firm, it could mean a loss of future contracts.
- **Opportunity Cost**: The funds allocated for the lake restoration could have been used for other community projects. The failure to deliver services means these opportunities are missed.
- **Community Well-being**: Public spaces like this lake often contribute to the community's quality of life. If the lake's condition deteriorates, it can lead to a decline in community well-being and satisfaction.
- **Property Values**: Properties near a well-maintained lake are often valued higher. If the lake is neglected, property values in the surrounding area might decrease.
- **Increased Maintenance Costs**: Delaying necessary restoration can lead to higher costs in the future, as problems may become more severe and complicated to address.
- **Loss of Biodiversity**: A failure to restore the lake can lead to the loss of habitat for various species, resulting in a decline in local biodiversity.

Addressing such failures often requires the government to seek alternative service providers or to increase oversight and accountability measures for contracted firms to prevent the recurrence of such issues.

The City, then, entered a contract with Wetlands Solutions, Inc. to evaluate the potential of restoring open water habitat at Gwen Lake. Water levels in Gwen Lake were historically controlled by an outlet spillway structure. Failure of the outlet structure, combined with failure of the inflow pipe under NW Willow Drive and sediment deposition from erosion in the upstream stormwater system has resulted in shallow water levels and the establishment of nuisance aquatic vegetation in approximately half the lake.

WSI has so far, presented a history of lake conditions, described existing watershed and lake conditions, outlined the major elements of a restoration

plan, summarized regulatory considerations relevant to project implementation, enumerated expected costs and benefits, discussed potential funding sources, and provided some additional data and steps to complete the project.

Part IV – Project Budget

Provide a breakdown of the total budget for the proposed project, including both RIF funding and other sources of funding.

ACTIVITY/TASK	RIF FUNDS	OTHER FUNDING SOURCES	TOTAL
Environmental Consulting	$0.00	$25,000.00	$25,000.00
Engineering Design	$175,000.00	$	$175,000.00
Geotech	$5,000.00	$	$5,000.00
Surveying	$7,500.00	$	$7,500.00
Permitting	$10,000.00	$	$10,000.00
Construction/Restoration	$2,450,000.00		$2,450,000.00
Grant Administration	$27,500.00	$	$27,500.00
	$	$	$
	$	$	$
TOTAL	$2,675,000.00	$25,000.00	$2,700,000.00

Provide an explanation of how the total infrastructure costs for the proposed project were estimated.

Estimating the total project costs for this proposed project is a complex process that involves several stages including scope definition, preliminary design and feasibility studies, detailed engineering design, unit cost estimation, labor, equipment and material costs, indirect costs, contingencies and inflation, final estimates, and the bid process. The City has contracted with engineering firms that have provided preliminary estimates. Estimates have been reviewed and adjusted for inflation.

Part V – Sources and Uses of Non-RIF Funds

Source	Amount Contributed	Type (Loan, Grant, Local Government Funds, Donated Land, or Other Funding)
Analysis of Gwen Lake Drainage Basin	$29,200.00	Local Government Funds
Gwen Lake Phase 1	$27,200.00	Local Government Funds
Engineering Services for Gwen Lake Phase 2	$53,720.00	Local Government Funds
Florida Fill & Grading Improvements to Gwen Lake Drainage	$319,955.59	Local Government Funds
Gwen Lake Phase 2 Wetland Mitigation Plan	$5,500.00	Local Government Funds
Environmental Engineering for Gwen Lake	$2,893.29	Local Government Funds
SRWMD Funds (Pending)	$250,000.00	Suwannee River Water Management District
Total Expended	$438,468.88	
Total Funds Pending	$250,000.00	
Total of Sources of Non-RIF Funds	$688,468.88	

Part VI – Participating Party Information (if applicable)

Complete and attach a Participating Party Information Form for each entity creating or retaining jobs as a result of this project.

N/A

Part VII – Application Authorization

I, the undersigned chief elected official or authorized representative of the applicant, certify that to the best of my knowledge:

a. *This application is in all respects fair and submitted in good faith without collusion or fraud;*
b. *If selected through this application process, the recipient will work in good faith and in partnership with the Department of Commerce to manage its grant in a timely and accurate manner;*
c. *The information in this application is accurate; and,*
d. *The undersigned is duly authorized to bind the entity represented in this application.*

Signature of Chief Elected Official or Designee
Signature: _____
Typed Name and Title: Stephen Witt, Mayor
Date: 11/6/2023
If signed by a person other than the chief elected official, a signature authorization must be included.

Signature of Application Preparer if not an employee of the Applicant

Signature: _____
Typed Name and Title: Shannon Williams, Grant Writer and Administrator
Name of Firm or Agency: Gateway Grant Writing & Administration Services, Inc.

Florida Rural Infrastructure Fund Program

Application Instructions

Part I – Applicant Profile

The application profile must reflect the requested information about the applicant, including demographics, area data, and the person who prepared the application.

Application Category
There are three categories of RIF grants that applicants can request funding for. Indicate which category is being applied for:

Total Project Participation Grants
To facilitate access to and maximize the use of state, federal, local, and private resources, grants may be awarded for up to 75 percent (75%) of the total infrastructure project costs, or up to one hundred percent (100%) of the total infrastructure project cost for a project located in a rural community as defined in s. 288.0656(2), F.S., which is also located in a fiscally constrained county as defined in s. 218.67(1), F.S., or a rural area of opportunity as defined in s. 288.0656(2), F.S.

Eligible uses of funds include:

- Improvements to public infrastructure for industrial or commercial sites;
- Upgrades to or development of public tourism infrastructure;
- Improvements to inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action.

Authorized infrastructure may include the following public-private partnership facilities:

- storm water systems;
- telecommunications facilities;
- roads or other remedies to transportation impediments;
- other physical requirements to facilitate economic development activities in the community.

Project Planning and Preparation Grants
Grants may be awarded for up to $300,000 for feasibility studies, design and engineering activities, or other infrastructure planning and preparation activities. Grants awarded under this category may be used in conjunction with Total Project Participation grants.

Preclearance Review Grants
To enable rural communities to access the resources available under the Expedited Permitting – Preclearance Review Process (Section 403.973(18), Florida Statutes), grants may be awarded for surveys, feasibility studies, and other activities related to the identification and preclearance review of land which is suitable for preclearance review. Grant application criteria includes the extent to which administrative and consultant expenses are minimized.

Maximum award amounts and local funds match requirements:

- Projects located outside a RAO - $75,000 with 50 percent local funds match;
- Projects located within a RAO - $300,000 with no local funds match required; and
- Projects located within a catalyst site (as defined in Section 288.0656, Florida Statutes) - maximum amounts same as above, depending on RAO status. However, the local funds match requirement may be waived pursuant to the process in Section 288.06561, Florida Statutes, for projects outside an RAO.

Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO)

If the proposed project is located in a RAO, indicate which one.

- *Northwest Rural Area of Opportunity:* Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Wakulla, and Washington counties, and the area within the city limits of Freeport and Walton County north of the Choctawhatchee Bay and intercoastal waterway. To learn more about the Northwest RAO region, please contact Opportunity Florida.
- *South Central Rural Area of Opportunity:* DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee counties, and the cities of Pahokee, Belle Glade, and South Bay (Palm Beach County), and Immokalee (Collier County). For more information about the South Central RAO region, please contact Florida's Heartland Regional Economic Development Initiative, Inc.
- *North Central Rural Area of Opportunity:* Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union counties. For more information about the North Central RAO region, please contact North Florida Economic Development Partnership.

Historic Preservation

Answer "Yes" if any project activity will result in one of the following:

- Direct physical changes to a structure 50 or more years old, such as demolition (partial or complete), rehabilitation, restoration, remodeling, renovation, expansion, or relocation
- Direct physical changes to public improvements 50 or more years old, such as stone curbs or brick streets
- Direct physical changes to a planned open space 50 or more years old, such as a park or plaza
- Project activities occurring within 100 feet of a structure, public improvement, or planned open space 50 or more years old
- Project activities occurring in a Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

If this question is answered "Yes," proceed as follows:

- Contact the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) during the application planning process. Properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places must be designed in accordance with the recommended approaches in the ***Secretary of the Interior's Standards or Rehabilitation Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*** (U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service). This publication and technical assistance may be obtained from the SHPO, 500 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250.
- Provide original photographs to SHPO that can be used to determine the historical/architectural significance of the property. Photographs must show each side of the structure and general views of the property in its surroundings; they should be identified by street address and keyed to the service area map. If potentially significant historic properties are identified, SHPO will recommend the appropriate approach.

- Provide the following documentation:
  - The location/address;
  - The construction date;
  - The activity affecting the historic property; and
  - The results of any pre-application discussions with SHPO regarding the potential impact of the proposed project on historic properties

Interlocal Agreements

Indicate whether or not activities will require an interlocal agreement. If activities will take place, or services will be extended or provided, outside of the local government applicant's jurisdiction, include an interlocal agreement signed by the chief elected officials, or legally designated individuals of the jurisdictions, that specifies:

- The units of local government (parties involved);
- The purpose of the interlocal agreement;
- A delineation of the cooperation between the parties involved;
- A description of the activities and the service area(s);
- The amount of funds being committed (and associated terms); and
- A statement that the project is not inconsistent with the local comprehensive plans of all involved jurisdictions.

Regulatory Action

If the proposed project will address inadequate infrastructure that has resulted in regulatory action that prohibits economic or community growth, the application must include a copy of the letter citing the relevant regulatory action.

Catalyst Site

If the proposed project is related to preclearance review and is also located within a catalyst site as defined in Section 288.061, Florida Statutes, the application must include a map showing the boundary of the catalyst site and the project boundary within.

Comprehensive Plan

The proposed project must be consistent with the applicant's comprehensive plan and the application must include documentation to support this consistency.

Part II – Project Description and Timeline

Project Description

Provide a narrative description of each proposed activity. Applications proposing more than one activity should include a description for each activity.

Each description should include the following minimum information:

- Quantity of the activity
- If funds from other sources are being used, describe how the funds will be used
- Location of the activity within the applicant's jurisdiction
- Cost of the activity
- A list of any major permits, comprehensive plan amendments, zoning changes, or similar approvals required
- For infrastructure projects, an indication of who will own and maintain the infrastructure once completed

In addition to describing the location of the project, the applicant must provide a project map, which, at a minimum, shows:

- A scale;
- A north arrow;
- The boundaries of the applicant's jurisdiction;
- The specific location of the project activity within the applicant's jurisdiction;
- The applicant's administration building, from which it will be managing the project; and
- Street names and other identifying landmarks within the jurisdiction.

Project Timeline

Outline each step of the project, from grant award to closing out the agreement. Provide an estimate of how long each step of the process will take, in months, and the associated activity/task deliverable.

Part III – Economic Narrative

Describe the proposed project's economic benefit, long-term viability, and potential local or regional economic impact. The summary should include a description of the current and anticipated economic conditions of the area. Describe the project's potential for enhanced job creation or increased capital investment, including but not limited to, the following information:
(1) The nature of business activities which will be conducted at the site of, or which relate to, the project, and
(2) A description of the capital investment in real and personal property, not including product inventory.
(3) Describe the level of public and private commitment to the project. Include the extent of local expenditures for construction, use of local firms or resources, or purchase of local equipment or materials which have or will impact on the area's economy.

Part IV – Project Budget

Complete the budget table included in the application based on the type of activity being applied for. If funds from another source are being used to

assist with a particular activity, those funds should be listed separately from the requested RIF funds.

Applicants must also detail how they determined the total estimated costs associated with the project and upload all documentation used to make the determination. The written explanation should detail how the proposed budget is reasonable and appropriate considering the scope, substance, and duration of the proposed project. There is no specific format for providing budget assumption documentation, but it should clearly correspond with the type of activities and their associated costs entered in the budget table. The documentation should also demonstrate that the applicant has carefully considered the financial aspects of the project and has a solid rationale for the amount of RIF funding being requested.

Part V – Sources and Uses of Non-RIF Funds

Identify any additional sources of funding that will be contributed to the project. Additionally, include documentation that the funds are available for use, such as an award letter, and that they have been contributed to this project, such as a resolution or minutes from a council or commission meeting. If an application has been submitted, but not yet awarded, for other non-RIF funds, include a copy of the application. Please note: all other funds must be available for use prior to award of RIF funding.

Part VI – Participating Party Information (if applicable)

Complete a Participating Party Information Form for each entity creating or retaining jobs as a result of this project and upload them as part of the application. Participating Party Information Form available for download from www.FloridaJobs.org/RIF

Part VII – Application Authorization

The application certification statement must be signed by the applicant's chief elected official. Any other signatory must be accompanied by a letter of signature authority signed by the chief elected official.

Supporting Documentation Summary

- Communications with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), if applicable
- Interlocal Agreements, if applicable
- Letter citing regulatory action, if applicable
- Catalyst Site Map, if applicable
- Comprehensive Plan documentation
- Project Map

- Cost Estimate documentation
- Documentation of other sources of funding
- Participating Party Information Forms for each Participating Party, if applicable
- Letter of signature authority signed by chief elected official, if applicable