

RESOLUTION NO 2025 – 012

CITY OF LAKE CITY, FLORIDA

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CITY, FLORIDA, AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO EXTEND AND RENEW A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RURAL AREA OF OPPORTUNITY DESIGNATION; MAKING CERTAIN FINDINGS OF FACT IN SUPPORT OF THE CITY ENTERING INTO SAID AGREEMENT; RECOGNIZING THE AUTHORITY OF THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AND BIND TO SAID AGREEMENT; DIRECTING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AND BIND THE CITY TO SAID AGREEMENT; REPEALING ALL PRIOR RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the State of Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (the “Agency”) administers the Rural Area of Opportunity designation program (the “Program”), formerly the Rural Area of Critical Economic Concern program in the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lake City, Florida (the “City”) has previously been designated as a Rural Area of Opportunity (“RAO”) via Executive Orders 03-74, 08-132 and 13-151; and

WHEREAS, by Executive Order 23-132, the Governor of Florida, pursuant to Article IV, Section 1(a), Florida Constitution, and Section 288.0656(7), Florida Statutes, has renewed the City’s designation as an RAO; and

WHEREAS, the Agency has presented the City with a Memorandum of Agreement (the “Agreement”) to document the terms and conditions of the implementation of the Program; and

WHEREAS, the City Council finds extending and renewing the Agreement is in the public or community interest and for public welfare pursuant to and in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Agreement in the form of the Exhibit attached hereto; now therefore

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Lake City, Florida:

1. Extending and renewing the Agreement in order to continue its terms and conditions is in the public or community interest and for public welfare; and
2. In furtherance thereof, the Agreement in the form of the Exhibit attached hereto should be and is approved by the City Council of the City of Lake City; and
3. The Mayor of the City of Lake City is authorized and directed to execute on behalf of and bind

the City to the terms of the Agreement; and

4. All prior resolutions of the City Council of the City of Lake City in conflict with this resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict; and
5. This resolution shall become effective and enforceable upon final passage by the City Council of the City of Lake City.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED, by an affirmative vote of a majority of a quorum present of the City Council of the City of Lake City, Florida, at a regular meeting, this ____ day of January, 2025.

BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF LAKE CITY,
FLORIDA

Noah E. Walker, Mayor

ATTEST, BY THE CLERK OF THE CITY COUNCIL
OF THE CITY OF LAKE CITY, FLORIDA:

Audrey Sikes, City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Clay Martin, City Attorney

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

THIS MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (“MOA”) is made and entered into by and between the State of Florida, Department of Commerce (“Commerce”), and the City of Lake City (“City”). Commerce and the City are sometimes referred to herein individually as a “Party” and collectively as “the Parties.”

I. Background and Purpose of MOA

- A. The purpose of this MOA is to document the terms and conditions of the implementation of the Rural Area of Opportunity (RAO).
- B. The Governor of Florida recognizes that successful rural communities are essential to the overall success of the State of Florida’s economy and quality of life, yet many rural communities struggle to maintain, support or enhance job creation activities and to generate revenues for critical government services.
- C. Florida’s Legislature also recognizes that rural communities continue to face extraordinary challenges in their efforts to significantly improve their economies, and as such, section 288.0656, Florida Statutes (F.S.), establishes the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) within Commerce and authorizes the participation of State and regional organizations in this initiative. Section 288.0656 (7)(a), F.S., provides for the designation of up to three RAOs (formerly Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern (RACECs) under F.S., 1999-2013). RAOs include rural communities, or a region composed of rural communities, including rural counties as identified in section 288.06(2)(d)(e), F.S., that have been adversely affected by extraordinary economic events, severe or chronic distress, a natural disaster or an event that presents a unique economic development opportunity of regional impact.
- D. Pursuant to subsection 288.0656 (7), F.S., representatives of the State and regional agencies and organizations comprising the REDI met on **April 21, 2023**, and recommended the re-designation of the North Central region composed of the counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor, and Union as a RAO. On **June 16, 2023**, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order Number **23-132**, which re-designated the North-Central RAO for another five-year term with an expiration date of **June 11, 2028**.

**EXHIBIT TO
RESOLUTION**

**NOT FOR
EXECUTION**

II. The Participating Community

- A. Pursuant to section 288.0656(7)(b), F.S., and Executive Order Number **23-132**, RAO designation shall be contingent upon the execution of a MOA between the Parties. Section 288.0656(7)(b), F.S., requires this MOA to specify the terms and conditions of the designation, including, but not limited to, the duties and responsibilities of the City to take actions designed to facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the area, as well as the recruitment of new businesses to the area.
- B. The City agrees that fulfillment of the following duties and responsibilities, as reasonably determined by REDI, are required for recommendation by REDI for continued designation as a RAO.
- C. The City shall:
 - 1. Designate a specific contact person from among City elected or appointed officials to serve as a point of contact in all matters and activities relating to the North Central RAO;
 - 2. Designate a specific person from a non-profit organization actively engaged in economic development within the City, to serve as the single point of contact to represent and provide input on all economic development matters and activities relating to the North Central RAO; and
 - 3. Include contact information for designees on Exhibit A, attached hereto, (these designees may be the same designee to serve as the representative to other similar organizations); the City shall inform Commerce in writing by either mail or email of any changes to the specified persons within ten (10) business days of the change.

III. Implementation and Duration

- A. Pursuant to Executive Order **23-132**, the designation of the North Central RAO affecting the counties of Baker, Bradford, Columbia, Dixie, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Putnam, Suwannee, Taylor and Union, shall be in effect for five years and will expire on **June 11, 2028**.
- B. REDI may recommend the RAO designation and this MOA be terminated or continued based on performance under this MOA.
- C. This MOA shall take effect immediately upon full and proper execution by all Parties and supersedes and replaces any and all previous such RACEC and RAO agreement(s) between the Parties.

- D. This MOA shall expire on **June 11, 2028**, unless terminated earlier.
- E. Both Parties shall review this MOA annually. If revisions are needed, notification shall be given to both Parties in writing of the specific changes desired with the proposed amendment language and the reasons for the revisions. With the mutual consent of both Parties, the proposed changes shall become effective when both Parties have duly executed an amendment to this MOA.
- F. The City may terminate this MOA at any time upon written notice to Commerce.
- G. Designation as a RAO is, by statute and Executive Order, contingent upon execution of a MOA between the Parties. REDI shall recommend the RAO designation be terminated if this MOA is not duly executed or if this MOA is terminated and another MOA is not timely and duly executed in its place.

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IV. EXECUTION

By affixing her or his signature herein below, each undersigned official represents and warrants that she or he has read the above MOA and the Exhibit A attached hereto and understands each section and paragraph.

IN WITNESS THEREOF, and in consideration of the mutual covenants set forth above and, in the Attachments and Exhibits hereto, the Parties have caused to be executed this MOA by their undersigned officials duly authorized.

CITY OF LAKE CITY

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

By EXHIBIT-NOT FOR EXECUTION
Signature

Title Noah Walker
Mayor

Date _____

By EXHIBIT-NOT FOR EXECUTION
Signature

Title J. Alex Kelly
Secretary

Date _____

Approved as to form and legal sufficiency, subject only to full and proper execution by the Parties.

**OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

By: EXHIBIT-NOT FOR EXECUTION

Approved Date: _____

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EXECUTION**

**EXHIBIT A – DESIGNATED CONTACTS
City of Lake City**

Contact Information for an Elected or Appointed Official

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

**Contact Information for One Person from
a Non-Profit Organization Engaged in Economic Development**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

**EXHIBIT TO
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Please complete this page and return with the signed MOA. The City is required to inform Commerce of any changes to this information within ten business days of a change.