

## Application Score Sheet

Proposed Project: Florida's Great Northwest, FGNW: United Forward (#355)  
Proposed Project/Program County: ALL  
Board of County Commission Support:  
Rural County: N/A  
Opportunity Zone: N/A

Total Projected Project Cost: \$6,640,000  
Match Provided: \$1,863,040  
Triumph Funds Requested: \$4,777,000 (72%)  
Triumph Funds Recommended by Staff: \$4,777,000

Score: A

ROI: \$24.7 dollars in net new personal income for every dollar of Triumph spend

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### **Project Economic Analysis, Impact and ROI (based on information provided by the applicant)**

This proposal outlines the creation of FGNW: United FORWARD, a comprehensive two-pronged approach to accelerate Northwest Florida's economic transformation. This initiative is intended to strategically promote and advance the Triumph region through Economic Development Strategy and Marketing Plan Development (Phase 1) and Market Activation (Phase 2). This is intended to create a powerful framework to drive diversification and economic growth across Northwest Florida. The proposal requests an award of up to \$4,777,000 to implement this agenda. With match proposed at \$1,863,040, the requested Triumph award would represent 72 percent of the total project expenditure of \$6,640,000.

Once the market research and market action plans are developed, appropriate adjustments to the marketing budget can be made. At that time the information needed to make the most effective long term spending decisions will be available based on research and development of the marketing plan in correlation with the updated Strategic Plan identifying target sector industries. This recommendation addresses immediate needs with a baseline foundation for increasing ongoing marketing expenses.

The project would provide a needed refresh to the existing Northwest Florida FORWARD effort completed in 2016 and drive a robust marketing effort targeted at economic expansion, diversification, and enhancement of the region. Florida's Great Northwest is a 13-county organization whose members include the eight Triumph counties, as well as Calhoun, Jackson, Holmes, Washington, and Liberty counties.

FGNW management assures Triumph staff that Triumph's statutory restriction to funding only programs benefiting the eight counties, both for Triumph dollars and match dollars, can be

managed via staff timesheets for personnel expenditures and via restriction of project- or geography-specific promotions to the eight-county Triumph area.

Triumph dollars will be spent in several ways. \$75,000 would be used to update the technical data for the eight-county region, \$53,000 to develop a dashboard of indicators that will be refreshed as data series are updated, and \$219,500 for producing, and then updating three years later, the Northwest Florida FORWARD strategic plan. As this work is being performed, FGNW will use \$400,500 in Triumph funds to work with a strategic marketing consulting firm to create the market action development plan to guide the marketing campaign. FGNW then proposes to implement a multi-channel marketing strategy at \$3,030,000 over the 2025 – 2030 period. Over this time, \$865,000 would be spent to support the new FORWARD Facilitator and new Marketing Coordinator. Triumph grant compliance would be \$123,000. All of the expenditures enumerated above would be funded by TGC dollars.

Match expenditures are proposed in several areas. Very substantial amounts of time are proposed for the three existing FGNW staff, with 50%, 80%, 30% of the CEO, analyst, and programs manager, respectively. Total FGNW staff match over the life of the grant would be \$1,246,176. FGNW would also spend \$180,000 on site selector missions (FGNW will host “Go Beyond Our Beaches” site selectors inbound mission of the Triumph region), \$186,864 on business development tools (subscriptions and analysis tools such as Gazelle.AI, and GIS WebTech), \$200,000 in FloridaCommerce Defense Reinvestment Grant funds (to analyze and document veteran workforce in the eight TGC counties), and \$50,000 in Duke Energy grant funding (to support marketing Bay, Gulf, Franklin, and Wakulla Counties). The match dollars sum to \$1,863,040.

In terms of comparison to existing activities, total marketing program expense in CY2024 was \$183,409 for FGNW, of which \$64,633 was provided under their current Triumph grant. FGNW members paid \$615,375 into FGNW in CY 2024. To ensure the long-term vitality of the organization, it may be wise for Triumph to incentivize and leverage continued contributions by reducing any Triumph award amount in the event members were to reduce their support of FGNW. Otherwise there may be a risk that the Triumph award dollars might simply be supplanting the participation of the FGNW private and public sector partners, thereby weakening the voice of the Northwest Florida business community in the operation of the organization, and perhaps thereby threatening the post-Triumph survival of FGNW.

The performance metrics suggested in the proposal are for generation of 250 to 300 leads annually, 150 meetings annually with target audiences, and 20% annual increases in website visitors. Ideally, we would connect performance to the number of net new jobs generated by FGNW efforts, but this specific ROI cannot be directly observed and thus proxies must be used.

As with the previous FGNW award score, we rely on the ROI calculated by the Florida Legislative Office of Economic and Demographic Research (EDR), which has conducted studies of the effectiveness of various state economic development incentives. Certain of these numbers are then translated to Triumph preferred increment to personal income measure. The ROI is calculated using these assumptions to be \$24.7 dollars in net new personal income for every dollar of Triumph spending on this project. However, it should be recognized that the ROI used

here is best interpreted as an average and not an ROI on the incremental dollar, and as such is perhaps not applicable to every dollar of TGC spend. If the Board were to find that optimal outreach and engagement of site selectors would best be achieved via either a smaller advertising spend, or, conversely, via a higher advertising spend, then a smaller or larger award might be appropriate. For these reasons, staff score this project as an “A.”

### **Budget and Funding**

See Attached

### **Letter of Support**

Florida Department of Commerce  
The University of West Florida  
Chesapeake Utilities Corporation  
Space Florida  
Central Moloney  
Hancock Whitney Bank  
ASTRO America  
Bay Economic Development Alliance  
CBRE, Inc.  
City of Lynn Haven  
CareerSource Okaloosa Walton  
The St. Joe Company  
Culpepper Construction Company  
PowerSouth  
Florida Blue  
Franklin County Board of County  
Commissioners  
Florida State University  
Gulf County Economic Development  
Coalition  
The Moore Agency  
The Highland Group  
Holmes County Development Commission  
HPM  
Jackson County Economic Development  
Committee  
Northwest Florida State College  
Opportunity Florida  
Pan Care of Florida, Inc.  
PowerSouth Energy  
Regions Bank  
Baskerville Donovan, Inc.  
Warren Averett  
White Construction Company  
Baptist Healthcare  
David H. Melvin, Inc.

Fort Walton Machining  
PenAir Credit Union  
Community Bank  
Wakulla Economic Development Council  
One Okaloosa EDC  
Trustmark Bank

**Project #355, FGNW: United FORWARD**

n/a

n/a

		Research & Strategy	Marketing	Personnel	Grant Compliance & Administration	Total
<b>Project Total</b>						
2025		235,500.00	486,644.00	282,696.00	9,000.00	1,013,840.00
2026		181,000.00	662,144.00	357,696.00	18,000.00	1,218,840.00
2027		6,000.00	687,144.00	362,696.00	24,000.00	1,079,840.00
2028		47,000.00	712,144.00	367,696.00	24,000.00	1,150,840.00
2029		82,000.00	662,144.00	367,696.00	24,000.00	1,135,840.00
2030		7,000.00	637,144.00	372,696.00	24,000.00	1,040,840.00
<b>Project Total</b>		<b>558,500.00</b>	<b>3,847,364.00</b>	<b>2,111,176.00</b>	<b>123,000.00</b>	<b>6,640,040.00</b>
<b>Triumph</b>						
2025		35,500.00	400,500.00	75,000.00	9,000.00	520,000.00
2026		181,000.00	601,000.00	150,000.00	18,000.00	950,000.00
2027		6,000.00	601,000.00	155,000.00	24,000.00	786,000.00
2028		47,000.00	651,000.00	160,000.00	24,000.00	882,000.00
2029		82,000.00	601,000.00	160,000.00	24,000.00	867,000.00
2030		7,000.00	576,000.00	165,000.00	24,000.00	772,000.00
<b>Triumph Total</b>		<b>358,500.00</b>	<b>3,430,500.00</b>	<b>865,000.00</b>	<b>123,000.00</b>	<b>4,777,000.00</b>
<b>Grantee</b>						
2025	200,000.00		61,144.00	207,696.00		468,840.00
2026			61,144.00	207,696.00		268,840.00
2027			61,144.00	207,696.00		268,840.00
2028			61,144.00	207,696.00		268,840.00
2029			61,144.00	207,696.00		268,840.00
2030			61,144.00	207,696.00		268,840.00
<b>Grantee Total</b>	<b>200,000.00</b>		<b>366,864.00</b>	<b>1,246,176.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,813,040.00</b>
<b>FGNW Foundation</b>						
2025			25,000.00			25,000.00
2026						-
2027			25,000.00			25,000.00
2028						-
2029						-
2030						-
<b>Match Source 1 Total</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>50,000.00</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>50,000.00</b>