Insert Letter from Chair and Background/Intro

Goal

Make Northeast Florida the region in Florida most conducive to small business startup, expanded employment and long term success.

Measuring Success

The committee recognized that defining success is required before we can measure it. Every time an unemployed person starts a business, that is a job created. Every time a poorly paid person starts a business, that can mean additional wealth. Small businesses that are thriving but not growing are as important to the region as those that are growing. We look for progress in a variety of sectors and expansion in the following data points from year to year:

1. Regional Self Employment (www.youreconomy.org, Edward Lowe Foundation)
    a. 2012 baseline: 45,515
2. Startups (net new micro firms/fewer than 10 employees)(source post Innovate?)
    a. 2009 baseline: 1,696
3. Business Stage Data (www.youreconomy.org, Edward Lowe Foundation)
    a. 2012 baseline 2-9 employees: 110,401 businesses, $25,168,227,692 total sales
    b. 2012 baseline 10-99 employees: 11,807 businesses, $27,137,206,908 total sales
    c. 2012 baseline 100-499 employees: 1,119 businesses, $22,279,690,725 total sales
    d. 2012 baseline 500+ employees: 101 businesses, $10,813,115,705 total sales

NEFRC and Jax USA Partnership will update these measures annually, as new data becomes available. These data points will be added to NEFRC's annual State of the Region report of regional indicators.

NEFRC will delve deep into the 5 year agricultural census and formulate indicators that are more reflective of the health of the agricultural sector than the high level county numbers included in the census. Once these are proposed and vetted by agricultural and economic experts, these data points will be added to NEFRC's annual State of the Region report of regional indicators.

Once these indicators are available, SBDC at UNF and UCF will add them as measures of regional small business success to North Florida Small Business Help.

Sharing Information

NEFRC will provide all its local governments with the link to North Florida Small Business Help, and will encourage them to post the link on their websites.

SBDC at UNF and UCF will encourage all nonprofit and government providers of access to small or micro business capital to list their resources on North Florida Small Business Help and the Small Business Resource Network. For profit providers will be encouraged to join the SBRN.

NEFRC will create a website that will be a clearinghouse for information for those who want to support local agriculture. This will be informed by current efforts to market the products of the First Coast Fresh Family Farms Group through the R2 Challenge.

NEFRC will work with its local governments to produce a matrix infographic of a summary of regulatory requirements and links to details to be posted at Northeast Florida Small Business Help. The NEFRC will work with its local governments to place the infographic at key entry points for small businesses, such as at payment for local business tax and/or permitting.

NEFRC will work with agricultural representatives to produce a matrix of a summary of regulatory requirements that may impact plans for agro-tourism. The NEFRC will work with its local governments to place the infographic at key entry points for agriculture.

NEFRC will work with its local governments to produce a matrix of a summary of small business preference programs with links to details to be posted at Northeast Florida Small Business Help. The NEFRC will work with its local governments to place the infographic at key entry points for small businesses, such as at payment for local business tax and/or permitting.

NEFRC will convene representatives of small towns and rural areas quarterly to allow for sharing of ideas on marketing, small business programs, "Main Street" initiatives, and anything the representatives would like to discuss. The NEFRC will work with its regional partners to create the 'Visit Downtown' campaign in each county, creating a comprehensive approach to regional vitality.

NEFRC will convene representatives of the agricultural sector with rural representatives to allow for sharing of ideas on agro-tourism and related marketing, and for consideration of partnerships that would strengthen the attraction of the region for tourism.

Business Development

NEFRC has a goal of submitting at least one grant application to the Economic Development Administration each year. The selection of grant topic(s) will be informed by three factors:

1. Current conditions
2. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
3. The recommendations of a small business group to be convened by NEFRC quarterly

The small business group shall be comprised of all who have participated in committee meetings, and their guests. This group will be notified of meetings. Their recommendations will be considered by the NEFRC Chief Executive Officer. Some of the projects that the committee has discussed, or that are identified as "areas of need" in Innovate Northeast Florida, are:

1. Creating and administering a small business preference program for consideration by all local governments that would allow a small business to register once and be registered in multiple jurisdictions, such as creating a registration portal, consolidating the certification application procedures through one site. The on line portal will provide a single point of entry for small

business to become certified for procurement while maintaining the individual requirements of each local government.

2. A multi-jurisdictional tourism strategy marketing agriculture, small towns and rural areas.
3. A "Main Street" strategy for the region, focusing on all downtowns that present opportunities for small business. (Committee) Facilitate the renovation of vacant buildings into startup space. (INEF)
4. A project to foster "startup connectors", exploring match making events with business incubators (INEF)
5. Create an educational pathway for entrepreneurs in Northeast Florida. (INEF)

Insert Conclusion, Committee List