



OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Governmental Center Annex

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 18, 2025

TO: Monica Cepero, County Administrator

FROM: Maribel Feliciano, Director
Office of Economic and Small Business Development

SUBJECT: The Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance
FY 2025 Third Quarter Performance Report

The Office of Economic and Small Business Development (hereinafter referred to as "OESBD") reviewed the Fiscal Year 2025 Alliance Third Quarter Performance Report (Exhibit 1). The quarterly report has been summarized to highlight the Alliance's achievements for the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2025. The quarterly report demonstrates the achievement of the Alliance's overall quarterly goals. In the third quarter, notable achievements were accomplished in Number of Projects in the Pipeline, Number of Announced Projects, Dollars of Domestic Direct Capital Investment, Advertising & Social Impressions, Private Sector Dollars Investing in Economic Development, and Public/Private Mix. For the goals that were missed regarding new Domestic and International Leads, New Value-Added Jobs, Dollars of International Direct Capital Investment, Corporate Visits, Retained Jobs, Number and Dollar Value of CareerSource Partnerships, Media Value Generated, and Total Visits to the Website, a detailed explanation is provided below.

Business Attraction

The Alliance annual goal for new domestic and international leads is to develop 225 leads (175 domestic and 50 international), or 56 leads per quarter for FY 2025. The Alliance developed 34 domestic and 2 international leads during the third quarter with a total of 36 leads. This represents 77% goal attainment for domestic leads and 16% goal attainment for international leads. The Alliance has additional in-person meetings and advertising outreach scheduled for the remainder of the year and anticipates meeting this objective for the year.

The Alliance goal for the number of projects in the pipeline is 20. There are currently 21 projects in the pipeline which is 105% goal attainment. The Alliance annual goal for the number of announced projects is 12, or 3 completed projects per quarter for FY 2025. There were 4 completed projects in the third quarter, resulting in 133% goal attainment.

The Alliance annual goal for new value-added jobs is 1,400, or 350 new jobs per quarter for FY 2025. The Alliance helped companies create a total of 315 new value-added jobs during the third quarter, resulting in 90% goal attainment. This was missed primarily due to companies postponing expansion and relocation decisions due to the continued high cost of money, macro uncertainty around the global economy, the elimination of statewide incentives including the Qualified Target Industry funds and state closing funds, and the overall higher cost of living in South Florida being a concern to companies. The Alliance has additional in-person meetings and advertising outreach scheduled for the remainder of the year and anticipates meeting this objective for the year.

The Alliance annual goal for capital investment is \$100 million in domestic and \$4 million in international investment or \$26 million in total capital investment per quarter for FY 2025. The Alliance helped companies create a total of \$100 million in domestic investment in the third quarter, resulting in 400% goal attainment in domestic investment and \$0 dollar in international investment. International was missed primarily due to companies postponing expansion and relocation decisions due to the continued high cost of money, macro uncertainty around the global economy, the elimination of statewide incentives including the Qualified Target Industry funds and state closing funds, and the overall higher cost of living in South Florida being a concern to companies.

Business Retention

The Alliance annual goal for business retention and expansion is to conduct 120 corporate visits in FY 2025 or 30 per quarter. The Alliance conducted a total of 14 visits during the third quarter, which represents 47% goal attainment. This goal is below objective in part due to losing an executive on loan from CareerSource Broward, who was focused on corporate visits for twenty years. We have now shifted responsibilities within the Alliance to continue to address the BRAVO visitation effort.

The Alliance annual goal for the number of retained jobs is 500, or 125 retained jobs per quarter for FY 2025. There are 5 actual retained jobs in the third quarter, resulting in 4% goal attainment for the third quarter. This was a reflection of the fact that Florida and Broward County are being perceived as being more welcoming to businesses than many states, resulting in most companies continuing to remain in Florida/Broward County and not choosing to look at locations outside the area.

The Alliance annual goal for CareerSource Broward partnerships was 12 company partnerships for FY 2025, or 3 companies per quarter, and \$1,000,000 in dollar value for FY 2025, or \$250,000 per quarter. During the quarter, there was 1 company partnership completed, with total CareerSource Broward Partnerships valued at \$164,000 for the period. This represents 66% attainment in the partnerships value for the quarter. This was missed primarily due to companies postponing expansion and relocation decisions due to the continued high cost of money, macro uncertainty around the global economy, the elimination of statewide incentives including the Qualified Target Industry funds and state closing funds, and the overall higher cost of living in South Florida being a concern to companies. The Alliance has additional in-person meetings and advertising outreach

scheduled for the remainder of the year and anticipates meeting this objective for the year.

Marketing and Communications

The Alliance annual goal for advertising and social impressions generated is 10,000,000 or 2,500,000 per quarter for FY 2025. In the third quarter, advertising and social impressions generated totaled 16,119,097, which represents 645% goal attainment.

The Alliance annual goal for the total number of website visits is 165,000 or 41,250 per quarter. In the third quarter, the total number of visits was 29,476, which represents 71% goal attainment. This was missed, due to a significant portion of the Alliance's advertising campaign being placed on hold. It is anticipated that as the year progresses and additional advertising rolls out, this will lead to additional visits to the website, and this objective will be met.

The Alliance annual goal for media value generated is \$400,000 or \$100,000 per quarter for FY 2025. In the third quarter, the media value generated was \$79,413, which represents 79% goal attainment for the quarter. This was missed, due to a significant portion of the Alliance's advertising campaign being placed on hold. It is anticipated that as the year progresses and additional advertising rolls out, this will lead to additional visits to the website, and this objective will be met.

Financial Support

The Alliance annual goal for private sector dollars investing in economic development is \$2,924,061 or \$731,015 per quarter. In the third quarter, private sector dollars invested in economic development was \$1,101,504 which represents 151% goal attainment for the quarter. The Alliance annual goal for Public/private mix is \$1.00: \$1.50 for the year and the quarter. In the third quarter, the public/private mix was \$1: \$2.03, which represents 135% goal attainment.

Administrative Objectives as reported by the Alliance

A. Finalize, research, and embark on the Alliance biennial Leadership Trip to Boston, MA, a competitive region for our business leaders with which to review best practices and enhance Broward's business climate. In 2016, 2018, 2020 and 2023 business and elected leaders traveled to Austin, Nashville, Charlotte and San Diego, respectively.

The trip took place April 6-9, 2025. The nine teams met for many months in preparation for this trip and scheduled all their meetings within their perspective focus in advance in order to meet with the top leaders in Boston. Attendees included executives from all major County divisions as well as industry experts from around Broward County.

Once we returned, we met for a debrief in May and prepared a preliminary report we presented at the Six Pillars Broward 2024 meeting on June 18, 7:30 a.m. at the Pompano

Beach Cultural Center. Teams focused on what we (Broward) does well, what Boston does well, short term and long-term goals. Examples include:

- **Arts / Culture**

- **Short Term Goals:**

- Coordinate and unite arts funders for our county & then eventually for region or state, forming an advocacy infrastructure & strategy
 - Recognize the value of arts & culture to economic development by incorporating it more prominently into Alliance priorities, materials, etc.
 - Develop metrics on the value of art & culture

- **Business & Technology**

- **What Broward Does Well:**

- Broward does economic development better, working with leaders of major institutions across the County and State
 - Broward has a better tax climate for both personal and business

- **Commercial Real Estate**

- **Short Term Goals:**

- Stay in touch with the developers and urban planners
 - Identify parcels in the County that could potentially be master planned
 - Encourage existing developers & owners to look for a way to further activate their spaces

- **Education, Talent & Workforce**

- **Short Term Goals:**

- Refine GetMyIntern.org: Use employer feedback to improve skill matching & job readiness including updating internship placement process, incorporating certifications, soft skills, and applied learning experiences.
 - Improve event timing: Align school career events with recruitment windows to help businesses connect with students
 - Expand WIN's role: Grow FAU's Workforce Innovations Network to support more sectors & credential-to-career pathways.

- **Healthcare / Life Sciences**

- **What Broward Does Well:**

- Urgent care centers -Broward is home to many standalone emergency rooms & urgent care centers, compared to Boston's centralized hospital-based model.
 - Florida's regulatory environment allows healthcare providers & biotech companies to expand facilities more efficiently
 - The cost-of-living index for Boston is roughly 36% higher than Fort Lauderdale

- **Housing Affordability & Homelessness**

- **Short Term Goals:**

- Initiate cross-municipal repurposing of commercial parcels
 - Advocate for resilient & transit-aligned housing
 - Continue to build political will for affordable housing prioritization

- **Resilience**

Long Term Goals:

- This is the 2nd leadership visit where we have been exposed to a successful, well organized climate tech hub
- Explore the financial partnership needed to attract the right kind of capital
- Foster community-centric waterfront-based planning activities

- **Small Business**

What Broward Does Well:

- Stronger regional collaboration
- Strong local procurement & construction policies
- Community engagement teams & paid mentors help support Broward's small businesses.

- **Sports / Entertainment / Recreation**

What Broward Does Well:

- Better utilization of climate & outdoor spaces
- Emphasis on community improvement & geographic/cultural/industry participation
- Economic & tax advantages increase investment & participation

- **Transportation & Infrastructure**

What Broward Does Well:

- Port operations. Whether it is cruise (3rd in the world) or cargo, Port E. outperforms Boston due to our geography & multiple lines of business
- FLL has a greater economic impact (\$37B vs \$20B) due to year-round domestic and international tourism.
- Traffic congestion is far less, and commute times are shorter

Leadership:

- Trip Chairs: **Doug Cohen**, president of client development at Kelley Kronenberg **Maria Hernandez**, chief program officer at the United Way of Broward County
- Arts / Culture Chairs: **Phillip Dunlap**, Broward Cultural Division **Jennifer O'Flannery Anderson**, Community Foundation of Broward
- Business & Technology Chairs: **Sam Blatt**, Amazon **David Coddington**, Alliance
- Commercial Real Estate Chairs: **Jenni Morejon**, DDA **Laurel Oswald**, TCRE **Olga Torres**, Alliance
- Education, Talent & Workforce Chairs: **Randee Deich**, Alliance **Dr. Colin Polsky**, FAU
- Healthcare / Life Sciences Chairs: **Ashley Boxer**, The Beck Group **Todd Holt**, Alliance
- Housing Affordability & Homelessness Chairs: **Sandra Veszi Einhorn**, Coordinating Council **Barry Somerstein**, Greenspoon Marder
- Resilience Chairs: **Ron Drew**, Alliance **Dr. Jennifer Jurado**, Broward County
- Small Business Chairs: **Sandy Michael McDonald**, OESBD **Luciano Todeschini**, Alliance
- Sports / Entertainment / Recreation Chairs: **Marzi Daoust**, Bay PR **Bryce Hollweg**, Florida Panthers **Derek Koger**, Seminole Tribe of Florida

- Transportation & Infrastructure Chairs: **Carol Henderson**, Broward MPO **Rufus James**, FXE

Highlights of the trip:

Kickoff speaker **Tiffany Chan**, CBS Boston got us started as we began our familiarization tour of the City, ending with a working lunch at Fenway Park with speakers **Sam Kennedy**, President / CEO, Boston Red Sox, **Glen Thornborough**, President, TD Garden, COO, Boston Bruins and **Jack Fleming**, President / CEO, Boston Athletic Association / Boston Marathon. That evening we hosted Meet Boston CEO **Martha Sheridan** at the JFK Presidential Library in a discussion moderated by Alliance CEO, **Bob Swindell**. **Boston Mayor Michelle Wu** spoke to the group at the Copley Square Boston Public Library dinner on Tuesday followed by a panel of three generations of successful entrepreneurs / VCs: **Richard D'Amore**, co-founder / general partner, North Bridge Venture, **Jamie Goldstein**, founding / managing partner, Pillar VC and **Chris Wolfel**, founder, Mavrick, Helpful and board member of Startup Maine. Our final full group program of the trip was held at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in the Seaport District with a welcome by **Bianca Beltrán**, bilingual reporter for NBC10 Boston, NECN and Telemundo Boston. The keynote panel centered on urban planning and the development of arts & culture and was moderated by **Phillip Dunlap**, Broward Cultural Division. Panelists included **Michael Rosenberg** of the Somerville Arts Council; **Annis Sengupta** of the Metropolitan Area Planning Council; and **Joseph Henry**, Director of Cultural Planning for the City of Boston.

B. Continue to promote and support the Port Everglades Master Plan through the Port Everglades Action Team with the emphasis on safety, while at the same time, replacing and growing corals in the harbor entrance channel in what will be the largest coral restoration project in the history of the United States. PEAT has successfully partnered with Port administration and Broward County to advocate for Federal and State funds for capital projects such as the ICTF, Turning Notch and the Widening & Deepening of the Port channel.

On March 28, the **Port Everglades Action Team (PEAT)** met at the Broward County Convention Center for an update from the Port executive team including Port Director Joe Morris, Dep. Port Director Glenn Wiltshire, Asst. Director David Anderton and Broward County Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, Marty Cassini.

Members of PEAT will travel to DC for the Fort Lauderdale Chamber's Fly-In scheduled for October, 2025 in which we will meet with key policy makers -staff and elected officials -to continue to show support for the Widening and Deepening project.

C. Continue to implement the focus areas of the Six Pillars Partnership: Community Branding, Economic Mobility, Homelessness, Housing Affordability, Resilience, Social Justice and Racial Equity and Transportation. Convene community leaders and residents to develop an updated 20-year Six Pillars Partnership visioning plan beginning in 2025.

Examples of Project Updates include:

The Prosperity Broward Lauderdale Lakes Pilot Project Report to the Community continued to be rolled out and implemented. The report includes 51 recommendations in 6 focus areas: Improving Residents' and Providers' System Experiences, Leveling the Benefits Cliff, Creating Career Pathways to a Living Wage, Rethinking HR to Achieve Optimal Hiring Results, Spotlighting Community Certified Providers, and Reaching Prosperity by Ensuring Fundamental Needs Are Met.

During the third quarter, community and private sector partners continued to invest resources and opportunities that have led to the dismantling of barriers to economic mobility in our Prosperity Zip Codes.

Homelessness – The Alliance, working in partnership with Broward County, United Way and others has **re-engaged the Broward Business Council on Homelessness**. Some of the goals are to educate the business community on the status and issues of homelessness, identify resources to help prevent and address homelessness, be a strategic partner to help amplify the community's strategic effort to reduce homelessness, and foster collaboration between businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies.

Resilience – Under the Resilience focus area, the Partnership is helping to inform the business community and local residents about the Broward County Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) and the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Action Plan. The Broward CCAP was published in 2020 and consists of nearly 100 strategic actions for addressing the economic, environmental, and social impacts of climate change. The Southeast Florida Regional CCAP 3.0 was released in December 2022. This plan provides a voluntary framework designed to align, guide, and support the acceleration of local and regional climate action in Southeast Florida to realize a healthy, prosperous, more equitable and resilient, low-carbon region. Plans are underway to conduct a Resilience Summit in early 2026 to continue to educate the business community on issues around improving resilience infrastructure in Broward County. The first Summit was held in February, 2025.

Information about other Pillars and projects can be found at
www.SixPillarsPartnership.org