

UWF Haas Center chooses TIP Strategies to assist in developing regional economic plan

Pensacola, Fla. – Oct. 6, 2016 – The University of West Florida Haas Center and partner Florida’s Great Northwest have chosen Austin, Texas-based TIP Strategies to assist in developing a comprehensive regional economic transformation plan for the 13 counties of Northwest Florida.

“TIP has a long history of developing actionable plans for expansive and diverse regions like Northwest Florida,” said Zach Jenkins, director of the Haas Center. “We are thrilled at the opportunity to work alongside such a talented team on such an important project.”

TIP’s work is funded by a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Adjustment Assistance grant that was awarded to the Haas Center last summer.

“TIP is excited and honored to have been selected to assist in the development of this important strategy,” said TIP Strategies Senior Consultant Alex Cooke. “We look forward to working closely with the regional economic development partners to design a truly forward-looking blueprint for reshaping the economy of Northwest Florida.”

Florida’s Great Northwest is the regional economic development organization working to diversify and grow Northwest Florida’s economy and is the entity driving the strategic process. The strategy development process will include stakeholders in the 13 counties of Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Bay, Washington, Holmes, Jackson, Liberty, Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf and Wakulla.

“We are pleased to have TIP Strategies on board to guide us through the process of developing a regional economic transformation strategy,” said Kim Wilmes, president and CEO of Florida’s Great Northwest. “Having done numerous strategies with communities all across the U.S. and actively engaging stakeholders for input, TIP will bring the expertise and an objective eye to identifying the initiatives that will have a significant, long-term economic impact on the region.”

The first phase of engagement for the regional strategy kicked off Oct. 2-4 at the annual Gulf Power Economic Symposium in Panama City. Wilmes hosted panelists in an interactive session on regional transformation called “Strategy for Northwest Florida’s Future” on the first day of the event. During the session, attendees heard from regional experts about several key components of the regional strategy. Attendees also had a chance to provide input for the regional plan.

TIP’s role in the planning process began in September and is scheduled to conclude with completion of a final strategy in January.

“We look forward to getting on the ground and building on the considerable work the regional partners have already performed. Our initial activities are focused on meeting with stakeholders throughout the region and learning about their economic development priorities

and successes,” Cooke said. “We will also be assisting the Haas Center with a comprehensive economic report that will serve as the quantitative foundation for strategic recommendations proposed in the plan.”

For more information about the UWF Haas Center, visit haas.uwf.edu.

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