

Putnam County Economic Development Activity Report

April 1, 2026-June 30, 2026

Pursuant to the provisions of the Economic Development Agreement made and entered into between the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners and the Putnam County Chamber of Commerce.

New Leads	Active Projects	Jobs	Capital Expenditure
13	5	260	\$530 M

Project Pipeline & Development Activity

Putnam County's project pipeline continues to strengthen, with strong manufacturing prospects. This quarter's activity reflects growing interest in our strategic location and available sites.

Active Projects

Economic Development staff continued supporting active projects through coordination with local governments, utility providers, state agencies, and private sector partners.

- We have five (5) active projects in pipeline. Projects represent the manufacturing and hospitality sectors:

PROJECT	Pavers	Poly	Overdrive	Buckeye	Popeye
JOBS	30	80	100	Retention	Retention + 50
CAP X	\$13 M	\$39 M	\$300 M	\$177 M	\$1.3 M
SECTOR(S)	Manufacturing	Manufacturing	Hospitality Manufacturing Recreation	Manufacturing	Manufacturing

- Total jobs in active pipeline: 260
- Total estimated Cap X in pipeline: \$530M

Lead/Prospective Projects

During the quarter, significant effort was dedicated to prospect development and lead generation through participation in state, regional, and national economic development programs.

- Thirteen (13) leads this quarter with a high level of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) interest. A strong interest from the IT and manufacturing sectors, sub sectors in marine, chemical, med tech, aerospace/aviation, automotive, and energy.
- We responded to four (4) leads and submitted completed RFIs to the Florida Department of Commerce, JAX USA Partnership, and FPL.
- The four (4) leads we are competing for reflect:
 - Total jobs - 325
 - Total estimated - \$353M Cap X

Capital investment continues to expand the county's tax base, supporting long-term fiscal stability. Investment in pipeline (performance provided by County Development Services Q2)

- Commercial square footage – 19,206 Sq Ft.
- Four (4) commercial building permits were issued with a total estimated value of \$1,748,023
- Estimated county general fund tax impact - \$15,281.36

Projects Under Construction

- Georgia Pacific – 20 New Jobs/\$83M Cap X
- FPL Battery Storage – 5 New Jobs/\$200M Cap X

Our Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program remains a cornerstone of economic stability and remains one of the county's most effective economic development tools. Through direct engagement with existing employers, we identify opportunities, address challenges, facilitate connections, and support business growth.

- BRE visits completed - 11
- Nineteen (19) issues identified/resolved

- One (1) Expansion opportunity identified
- Eleven (11) businesses supported, sixteen (16) connections made

Putnam County's industrial assets continue to gain competitiveness. Ongoing site readiness work positions us to respond quickly to prospects seeking speed-to-market solutions.

- Available industrial/commercial square footage – 8.3 M
- New listings added to regional websites - 2
- Absorption rate - (9K) 12 MO Net
- Four (4) RFIs responses

During the quarter, significant effort was dedicated to prospect development and lead generation through participation in state, regional, and national economic development programs.

- Economic Development staff represented Putnam County at the 2026 Select USA Investment Summit, the nation's premier foreign direct investment conference hosted by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The summit brought together international companies seeking U.S. expansion opportunities, economic development organizations, investors, site selectors, and industry leaders from across the globe. Participation provided an opportunity to promote Putnam County's available sites, workforce assets, infrastructure, and business climate while building relationships with companies and consultants involved in location decisions. Outcomes and benefits include:
 - Promoted Putnam County's industrial sites, workforce strengths, and business advantages to domestic and international investors.
 - Established new connections with site selectors, corporate decision-makers, and economic development partners.
 - Conducted outreach to companies in targeted industries, including manufacturing, logistics, aerospace, and technology.
 - Gathered intelligence on emerging site selection trends, workforce needs, and infrastructure requirements.

- Increased awareness of federal resources and programs that can support future business recruitment efforts.
- Identified potential prospects and contacts for future follow-up and investment opportunities.
- We attended the FEDC Annual Conference, Florida's premier gathering of economic development professionals, state agencies, utility partners, consultants, and business leaders. The conference provided opportunities to strengthen statewide relationships, learn about emerging economic development trends, and identify resources that can support Putnam County's growth initiatives. Outcomes and Benefits include:
 - Strengthened relationships with state, regional, and industry partners.
 - Identified potential project and partnership opportunities.
 - Gained insights on workforce development, site readiness, infrastructure, and business recruitment strategies.
 - Learned about new programs and resources that may support future economic development efforts.
 - Shared Putnam County's ongoing projects and priorities with key stakeholders across the state.
- Staff maintained engagement with several confidential prospects evaluating Putnam County for future investment opportunities. Activities included responding to information requests, providing site and workforce data, coordinating with utility and infrastructure partners, and facilitating discussions with local and regional stakeholders. Project support included:
 - Supported active site selection and investment evaluations.
 - Provided project-specific information and community data to prospective companies.
 - Coordinated with partners to address infrastructure, workforce, and site readiness questions.
 - Increased awareness of Putnam County's available properties and business advantages.

- Advanced relationships that may lead to future capital investment and job creation opportunities.

While confidential in nature, these efforts help position Putnam County competitively as companies evaluate potential locations for expansion and new investment.

Quarterly Partner Engagement Summary

Local Government Alignment

Strengthening coordination with municipal and county partners to support development, infrastructure planning, and project readiness.

- Participated in stakeholder meetings for the Palatka CRA Redevelopment Plan to help identify redevelopment priorities and support long-term economic growth initiatives, infrastructure upgrades, and opportunities for business support.
- Economic Development staff worked with Putnam County to develop and submit a Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) Grant application on the County's behalf while also evaluating additional technical assistance funding opportunities available through the Florida Department of Commerce. These efforts are intended to secure planning resources, strengthen site readiness initiatives, and support future economic development and infrastructure planning activities.
- Attended Annexation Workshops to better understand proposed growth areas and their potential impacts on future development opportunities.
- Participated in Palatka Planning Board meetings to stay informed on land use decisions, zoning matters, and development activities affecting economic development efforts.
- Attended Palatka Airport Advisory Board meetings to remain informed and advise on airport operations, capital improvement projects, and aviation-related development opportunities.
- Coordinated with County and municipal leadership to align strategic priorities, address development-related challenges, and advance economic development opportunities throughout Putnam County.

- Met with the Palatka Wastewater Department to tour facilities, review current operational capacities, discuss planned capital investments, and evaluate infrastructure needs that may impact future economic development and business growth opportunities.
- Supported the City of Palatka's EDA grant initiatives through coordination, project planning discussions, and ongoing collaboration with project partners.

Opportunity Zones 2.0 Coordination

Significant progress was made toward Putnam County's Opportunity Zones 2.0 nominations during the quarter. Economic Development staff worked with NFEDP and its consultants to review preliminary census tract scoring and evaluate the competitiveness of eligible areas throughout the county.

Multiple planning sessions were conducted with community stakeholders, local governments, and partner organizations to build consensus around nomination priorities and redevelopment objectives. Staff also coordinated the development and collection of letters of support from community partners, completed a comprehensive review of all nomination materials, and finalized the submission package.

As a result of these collaborative efforts, Putnam County successfully submitted its Opportunity Zones 2.0 census tract nominations through the Florida Department of Commerce portal, ensuring the applications were coordinated, data-supported, and aligned with local redevelopment and economic development goals.

These efforts culminated in the successful submission of data-driven and strategically coordinated Opportunity Zones 2.0 nominations for Putnam County.

Regional & State Agency Engagement

Advancing Putnam County's interests through active participation in regional and statewide economic development networks.

- Traveled to meetings to maintain engagement with Select USA, the Florida Department of Commerce, JAXUSA, and other regional economic development partners to strengthen partnerships and pursue business attraction and expansion opportunities.
- Participated in Florida Department of Commerce planning meetings and discussions regarding grant opportunities to identify potential resources that support local economic development projects.
- Joined the Florida League of Cities legislative update call to stay informed on proposed legislation and policy issues affecting local governments and economic development initiatives.
- Attended the Florida Economic Development Council Annual Conference to network with industry professionals and learn about emerging trends, programs, and best practices in economic development.
- Participated in the FEDC Board and Annual Membership Meeting to contribute to organizational governance and stay informed on statewide economic development efforts.
- Engaged in NFEDP planning meetings and hosted the quarterly NFEDP Board Meeting in Putnam County to advance statewide economic development priorities and foster regional collaboration.

Business & Industry Support

Providing hands-on assistance to employers, prospects, and industry partners to advance projects and address operational needs.

- Coordinated with Georgia-Pacific regarding ongoing expansion activities and opportunities to support the company's continued growth in Putnam County.
- Participated in industry-focused webinars on New Markets Tax Credits and other economic development financing tools to identify resources that can support future investment and redevelopment projects.
- Hosted industry-specific workforce roundtables to identify shared challenges and surface actionable solutions.

- Met with construction industry leaders to discuss development opportunities and potential projects that support economic growth and community investment.
- Coordinated with ETM to enhance GIS mapping resources and improve the accuracy and availability of site and property data.

Workforce & Education Partnerships

Aligning talent pipelines with employer needs and strengthening collaboration across education and training partners.

- Conducted two industry-specific Roundtables to gather input from healthcare, construction and manufacturing employers and identify workforce needs and training opportunities.
- Held meetings with the Putnam County School District and workforce partners to identify collaborative opportunities that strengthen workforce development and career pathways for students.
- Participated in the PCSD Strategic Planning focus group stakeholder meetings.
- Hosted the Putnam County Workforce Development Task Force to bring together key stakeholders and discuss workforce priorities, challenges, and opportunities within the county.
- Held discussions with the Palatka Airport, Jacksonville Airport Authority, and the Putnam County School District to explore aviation education opportunities and potential pathways for student career development in the aviation industry.
- Conducted school visits to gain a better understanding of career and technical education priorities, assess program needs, and support efforts to expand workforce training opportunities for students.

Investor, Community & Public Engagement

Building understanding, transparency, and support for economic development across the community.

- Hosted the Elevate Advisory Board Breakfast to engage investors and community leaders in discussions about economic development initiatives and organizational priorities.

- Presented the Quarterly Economic Development Report to the Putnam County Board of County Commissioners, providing updates on projects, initiatives, and key economic indicators.
- Hosted the 2nd Quarter Elevate Investor Luncheon featuring a presentation on future housing trends and their potential impacts on community growth and economic development.
- Participated in Chamber rebranding and website development efforts to enhance the organization's identity, visibility, and stakeholder engagement.
- Participated in the Florida Community Assessment process to evaluate community assets, identify opportunities for improvement, and support long-term economic development planning.
- Attended and supported Business After Hours networking events to foster business relationships and strengthen connections within the local business community.
- Engaged community stakeholders through planning, redevelopment, workforce, and economic development initiatives to encourage collaboration and advance community goals.

Key Outcomes This Quarter

- ✓ Submitted Putnam County's Opportunity Zones 2.0 census tract nominations to the Florida Department of Commerce.
- ✓ Conducted eleven (11) Business Retention & Expansion visits with major employers and business partners.
- ✓ Continued advancement of EDA infrastructure grant efforts supporting future job creation opportunities.
- ✓ Successfully submitted a Community Planning Technical Assistance (CPTA) grant application on behalf of the County.
- ✓ Represented Putnam County nationally at the Select USA Investment Summit in Washington, D.C.

- ✓ Hosted the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) Board Meeting in Putnam County.
- ✓ Convened workforce-focused roundtables for healthcare, manufacturing, and construction industries.
- ✓ Expanded engagement with educational institutions to strengthen workforce alignment.
- ✓ Strengthened regional partnerships through JAXUSA, NFEDP, FEDC, FPL, CareerSource, and Florida Department of Commerce collaboration.
- ✓ Continued supporting employer expansion, infrastructure development, workforce initiatives, and business growth throughout Putnam County.