



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
OF FLORIDA'S SPACE COAST

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Space Coast Municipalities Awarded EDC S.N.A.P. Designation

Four awards presented at May 18 EDC Investor Update Meeting

Brevard County, Fla. (May 18, 2011) – The Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast (EDC), is pleased to announce that four municipalities that have been awarded the newly created S.N.A.P. designation. Brevard County, City of Cocoa, City of Palm Bay, and City of Rockledge have demonstrated excellence in streamlining the building and site permitting process and received the S.N.A.P. designation on May 18, 2011 at the EDC Investor Update Meeting held at Space Coast Association of REALTORS in Merritt Island.

S.N.A.P., a program of the EDC, is an acronym for Simplified, Nimble, Accelerated Permitting and recognizes municipalities that have adopted permitting best practices as determined by the EDC Development Council and participating municipalities. The EDC Development Council is comprised of industry leaders representing the development, engineering, architectural, building, and contracting fields.

Over 18 months ago, the EDC Development Council began an open dialogue on the permitting process with Space Coast municipalities. As a result of these discussions, the Council saw an opportunity to enhance and streamline the permitting process throughout the county. Efficient, streamlined permitting can enhance a region's ability to attract new business and investment. It also provides a valuable tool to retain existing businesses and encourage expansion in a given region.

Over a series of months, the Council developed a best practices model for both building and site permitting, further refined from input and feedback from the municipalities. The S.N.A.P. designation was developed as a means to recognize excellence in streamlining the permitting process.

In recent months, all of the participating municipalities have made some process enhancements. However, the Council identified, through analyzing weighted criteria, four Space Coast municipalities that clearly made a significant effort to streamline the permitting process.

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These process improvements include the following:

- Brevard County
 - Created the Planning & Development Department, giving contractors the benefit of the entire development process under one department.
 - Enhanced its online permitting features to be more user friendly.
 - Created the Building Construction Advisory Committee that meets monthly to consider and make recommendations on development related matters.
- City of Cocoa
 - Allows minor site plan amendments and small scale site plans to be approved at the staff level.
 - Revised building and site plan processes to be more aligned with other Brevard municipalities and implemented an online customer service feedback survey.
- City of Palm Bay
 - Implemented several options for payment of impact fees to assist business and development in managing project costs.
 - Instituted a minor site plan review process, reducing the requirements for site plan submittal and review.
 - Utilizes a full time staff Ombudsmen to serve as a single point of contact for the applicant.
- City of Rockledge
 - Permits applicants, after an initial review, to submit specific areas of change requested under city staff comments, rather than another full site plan.
 - Established a Development Review Committee to evaluate each application.
 - Instituted free pre-construction meetings with clients to evaluate plans, answer questions, and develop relationships between the contractor and city staff.

Lynda Weatherman, president & CEO of the Economic Development Commission, said, “We applaud the efforts that our participating municipalities have made to streamline their processes and encourage their continued momentum to reinforce our pro-business environment. We look forward to meeting our goal of awarding the S.N.A.P. designation to 90% of our municipalities by year’s end.”

Commissioner Robin Fisher, Chairman, Brevard County Board of County Commissioners, stated, “With the county receiving the S.N.A.P. designation from the EDC’s Development Council, it demonstrates the efforts that have been put forth from our Planning and Development Department to streamline permitting for our applicants. While this certification is indeed a great accomplishment for the county, we will continue to work with the private sector to further improve our processes into the future.”

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Mayor Mike Blake, City of Cocoa, confirmed, “The City of Cocoa is honored to be designated as a S.N.A.P. community by the EDC’s Development Council. This designation reinforces our philosophy that the City of Cocoa is ‘Open for Business.’ While we are committed to protecting the integrity of the public review process, we are equally committed to streamlining and doing what we reasonably can to aid businesses and developers in navigating the City’s process.”

Mayor John Mazziotti, City of Palm Bay, declared, “The SNAP designation is a reflection of the commitment the Palm Bay City Council and staff have made to ensure our permitting process is a positive experience. We appreciate that the EDC Development Council has recognized Palm Bay’s ongoing efforts to create a responsive and predictable permitting process for our customers.”

“The City of Rockledge has worked diligently to provide development review and permitting processes that are consistent, easily understood, and timely. I am proud of our staff for their efforts in achieving this designation of SNAP certification,” said Mayor Larry Schultz, City of Rockledge.

Mike Williams, president of M.H. Williams Construction Group, Inc. and Chair of the EDC Development Council said, “On behalf of the EDC’s Development Council, I am honored to have awarded the S.N.A.P. designation to four of our local municipalities. Their commitment to process improvement will strengthen the Space Coast’s position as a competitive business environment. We look forward to our continued partnership with our municipalities to enhance the permitting process further.”

About the Economic Development Commission of Florida's Space Coast

The Economic Development Commission of Florida’s Space Coast is dedicated to the attraction, relocation, retention and expansion of business. The EDC is a private, not-for-profit coalition whose stakeholders are business leaders committed to the economic growth and stability of Florida’s space Coast. Visit www.SpaceCoastEDC.org.

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