

## *The Sumter County Secret – Location, Location, Location*

Sumter County, long cited as Florida's best kept secret, is emerging as Florida's best business opportunity. E5solutions, Inc., the company retained in November 2009 to expose Sumter's ideal business climate, is aggressively unveiling the advantages of Sumter, the heart of Central Florida and the apex of Florida's transportation convenience. Sumter County blends the vibrancy of America's Friendliest Hometown, The Villages, with the down-home, old Florida values of Bushnell, and the rapidly developing, enterprising centerpiece of Wildwood. "It is exciting," said Doug Gilpin, Sumter County Commission Chair on June 15...."In five years or so we'll be so far out front of the equation....this will be the premier spot for a business location." The following is an itemized list of initiatives:

- *County identification package created and applied*
- *Website (www.sumterbusiness.com) created, in place, and maintained*
- *Incentive package developed and approved for new and existing businesses*
- *Commercial property locator, (Site Seeker), designed, approved and available on website august 1*
- *Sumter County Business Summit staged & Resource Directory produced*
- *Survey of county businesses taken and results shared*
- *Bushnell shovel-ready sites brochure created and produced*
- *Top 10 Sumter business advantages developed*
- *Database expanded by over 1000% for wider communication*
- *Newsletter (Tips, Trends & Friends), designed and circulated monthly*
- *Sumter Blog created and available for interaction*
- *Designing and developing a Strategic Economic Plan for the future of Sumter County*
- *1st Quarterly progress reports delivered to County Commission and City Councils*
- *Developed and refined the working relationship with Enterprise Florida*
- *Aiding industrial expansion of existing enterprise – i.e., Central Beef and more to be announced*
- *Assisting in corporate bond applications*
- *Built close working relationship with SCORE representatives*
- *Sumter healthcare system working plan being developed*
- *CEO executive program designed to tap experience of local retired and working talent*
- *Pursuit of new business, industry and jobs expansion begun*
- *New and expanded business education underway: Entrepreneur academy set for coming fall*
- *Analyzing and evaluating the overall economy and demographics of Sumter County*
- *Building an community working relationship with Coleman Correctional Complex*
- *Press/media announcements issued and interactions with Sumter media*

# Incentives

*Produced by*



## Taking Action

We must do more than just adopt these incentives. We must create incentives tailored to our community to create jobs. We recommend incentives for new businesses as well as existing businesses in Sumter County.

### Recommended Sumter County Incentive Programs:

#### Quality Jobs Tax Credit- (QJTC)

The QJTC credit applies to all new full time hires by new or existing companies that make a minimum capital investment of \$300,000. In an effort to encourage living wage jobs and increased pay for workers in Sumter County, this program provides cash payment to offset the business costs of expanding and/or relocating the business. The amount of credit will be directly related to the wages the new full time hire is paid which shall be at least 115% of the average annual wage (AAW) in Sumter County (AAW was \$32,437 for 2008).

New businesses must create at least eleven (11) new full time jobs and existing businesses must create at least eleven (11) net new full time jobs. Per-job credits will be as follows: \$2,250 for new full time jobs paying a minimum of 115% of the AAW, \$3,250 for new full time jobs payment a minimum of 150% of AAW, and \$4,250 for new full time jobs paying a minimum of 200% of AAW. The cash payment will be made in the Sumter County fiscal year the position is filled, for a maximum of three fiscal years once verification from Sumter County is completed.

Process and Limitations: Each new full time job must be retained a minimum of three (3) years. The employer must reapply for the QJTC cash payment each following year, for each new full time job maintained, up to a maximum of three years. The QJTC maximum credit is limited by the funds appropriated each fiscal year as determined with the adoption of the Sumter County budget.

For further information about any of these programs, or to anyone seeking to create or expand their business in Sumter County, please contact:



1576 Bella Cruz Drive  
Suite 409  
The Villages, FL 32159  
352-446-4679  
[www.e5Solutions.biz](http://www.e5Solutions.biz)

## Draft Industrial-Commercial Site Survey Plan

Consultation with businesses and other stakeholders within Sumter County has confirmed what was already suspected by the county and relayed to E5 during our earliest discussions. Review of input from business and governmental officials throughout the county raised concerns that the existing access to commercial property information was insufficient.

The provision of reliable, consistent property information and a searchable, readily available source for communicating, delivering and promoting those properties, are an essential part of the County's economic development activities. Access to this information is key to our success in the management of leads and in achieving the county's long term ED goals. The fact is, over three-quarters of the inquiries received through e5 for Sumter County Economic Development services requested property information.

e5 Solutions has worked with our engineers to plan the development and implementation of an online, searchable commercial property database as an adjunct to the Sumter County Economic Development Website located at [www.SumterBusiness.com](http://www.SumterBusiness.com). It is estimated we could launch the application by early June, 2010. Branded with the fresh look and feel of Sumter County Economic Development and closely linked to the county's property appraiser records and GIS system, this commercial property locator is destined to quickly become a sensation among local businesses and surrounding counties.

This repository of currently available properties will represent one of the quickest, easiest and most complete methods of finding commercial property within the county. Users of the website would be able to select from a variety of criteria, including location, improvements, building size range, acreage, and various amenities they might require. *(See attached screenshots)*

The creation of this commercial property database serves to market available properties to potential developers while at the same time improving the communications and promotions of businesses within the county; a win-win for buyers and sellers that also provides the added bonus of positioning Sumter County as a marketing and technology leader within the business community and to governmental bodies across the region.

This plan not only provides the means to the fulfillment of our milestone requirement of drafting an Industrial Site Survey *Plan*, but goes a step further and achieves the end of implementing the plan as well; another win-win, this time for the County and e5solutions.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <http://www.sumterbusiness.com/>. The page features a navigation menu with links for MAIN, PROPERTIES, RESOURCES, PARTNERS, ABOUT US, and CONTACTS. The main heading is "PROPERTY LOCATOR" under the "SUMTER COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT" logo.

**Resources**

- Sumter Businesses by Industry
- Sumter Businesses by Ownership
- Sumter Population Demographic Data
- Sumter County Land Use Map
- Sumter County Municipalities
- State Incentives Matrix
- Sumter Average Annual Wages

**Location<sup>3</sup>**

Strategically positioned at the apex of Central Florida's economic triangle, Sumter is a potent force for Business Development in Florida and beyond. Find out why Sumter County is feeling [read more](#)

**Newsletter Sign Up**

Enter your E-mail

Toll-Free Phone/Fax: 888.857.5784  
 Email [info@sumterbusiness.com](mailto:info@sumterbusiness.com)  
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**Change Search**

County :   
 Standard Search:   
 City :   
 Subdivision :   
 Zip Code :   
 Bedrooms:   
 Baths :   
 Price Range :  to   
 Square Feet   
 Days on Market   
 Features  
 Central Air  3 Car Garage  
 Den/Office  4+ Car Garage  
 Dining Room  Pool  
 Two Story  Spa  
 Game Room  Laundry room  
 1 Car Garage  Fireplace  
 2 Car Garage  Energy efficient rated home  
 Keyword :

**Search Information**

**Property Type**

- Business Opp/No Real Estate
- Business Opportunity
- Commercial Building
- Hotel/Motel
- Industrial Building
- Other
- Professional Office Bldg
- Rental
- Residential Income
- RV/MH Park

**Acreage**

- .26 - .49 Acre
- .50 - 1.00 Acre
- 1.01 - 2.99 Acres
- 3.00 - 4.99 Acres
- 5.00 - 9.99 Acres
- 10.00 - 19.99 Acres
- 20.00 - 49.99 Acres
- 50.00 - 99.99 Acres
- 100+ Acres

**MLS Search**

To search for multiple MLS listings separate the MLS#s with commas

Internet | Protected Mode: Off | 100%

www.sumterbusiness.com - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.sumterbusiness.com/

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www.sumterbusiness.com

MAIN **PROPERTIES** RESOURCES PARTNERS ABOUT US CONTACTS

**SUMTER COUNTY**  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**PROPERTY LOCATOR**

Resources Change Search Search Information

- Sumter Businesses by Industry
- Sumter Businesses by Ownership
- Sumter Population Demographic Data
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 Central Florida's Economic Triangle

**Location<sup>3</sup>**

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**Newsletter Sign Up**

Enter your E-mail

Toll-Free Phone/Fax: 888.857.5784  
Email: info@sumterbusiness.com  
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**#1 - Not on Subdivision - Sumter - Wildwood, FL 34785**

 Price : \$25,000,000.00 Description : Reduced! Prime Development Site! 153 Acre Mixed Use Site With Electrifying Potential Such As 15 Residential Units To The Acre, Almost 1 Mile Of Road ....

Beds: 0  
Baths: 0  
Square Feet:  
Year Built: 0  
MLS #: R4585908

[View Details, 1 Images](#)  LISTED COURTESY OF Galaxy of Homes Realty, Inc.

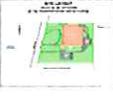
**#2 - Not on Subdivision - Sumter - Wildwood, FL 34785**

 Price : \$17,975,000.00 Description : Endless Commercial Possibilities For This 39 Acre Parcel Located At The Corner Of Sr 44 And Cr 179 Directly Across The Street From The Villages New Br....

Beds: 0  
Baths: 0  
Square Feet:  
Year Built: 0  
MLS #: G4634310

[View Details, 6 Images](#)  LISTED COURTESY OF Galbreath Realty, Inc.

**#3 - Not on Subdivision - Sumter - Wildwood, FL 34785**

 Price : \$5,995,000.00 Description : For Sale Or Lease: industrial-Manufact/Warehouse W/Showroom & Offices. Rail Access W/Dock High Covered Rail Loading Area. 5 Dock High Roll Up Doors. 3 ....

Beds: 0  
Baths: 4  
Square Feet:  
Year Built: 1968  
MLS #: O4870427

[View Details, 1 Images](#)  LISTED COURTESY OF Galaxy of Homes Realty, Inc.

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 www.sumterbusiness.com

MAIN **PROPERTIES** RESOURCES PARTNERS ABOUT US CONTACTS

**SUMTER COUNTY** ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **PROPERTY LOCATOR**

**Resources**

- [Sumter Businesses by Industry](#)
- [Sumter Businesses by Ownership](#)
- [Sumter Population Demographic Data](#)
- [Sumter County Land Use Map](#)
- [Sumter County Municipalities](#)
- [State Incentives Matrix](#)
- [Sumter Average Annual Wages](#)



Central Florida's Economic Triangle

**Location<sup>3</sup>**

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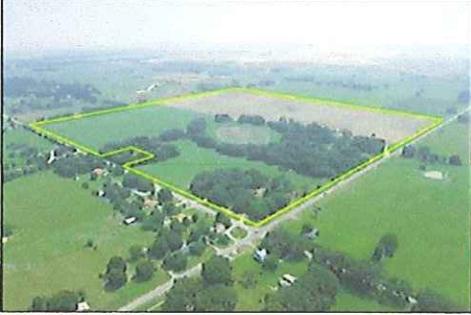


Image 1 of 1

**Estimated Payments** \$126,414.00 Per Month<sup>1</sup>

**Remarks**reduced! prime development site! 153 acre mixed use site with electrifying potential such as 15 residential units to the acre, almost 1 mile of road frontage! professional & commercial office and commercial retail,all in a 1/2 mile by 1/2 mile square at a major intersection near the villages. call today!

**Property Information**

**Asking Price :** \$25,000,000.00

**MLS# :** R4585908

**Subdivision :** 0

**City, State :** Wildwood, FL

**Beds/Baths :** 0 / 0

**Square Feets :**

**Year Built :** 0

**Acres :** 0.00

**Contact Info :**

**Sumter County Economic Development**

**E-mail :** info@sumterbusiness.com

**Office :** 888-857-5784

**Fax :** 888-857-5784

**Toll Free :** 888-857-5784

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Rick Dodge, 352-446-4679

### **SURVEY OF SUMTER COUNTY BUSINESSES UNDERWAY – E5 ASKS FOR YOUR EARLY RESPONSE**

**WILDWOOD, FL – (March 18, 2010)** - A blanket review and analysis of businesses throughout Sumter County will be officially launched by Tuesday, March 23, when the mailed and online survey forms arrive in businesses countywide. E5solutions, Inc. (serving as Sumter County Economic Development), as part of its contract with the county, is surveying all county businesses to obtain a broad and accurate understanding of current business activities, opinions and concerns. Final results of the anonymous survey will provide county leaders a sound, factual basis for implementing service adjustments, creating additional assistance programs and reaching out to develop and attract new enterprise. Online survey forms may be accessed and completed at [www.sumterbusiness.com/survey](http://www.sumterbusiness.com/survey).

The **2010 Sumter County Business Assistance Survey** is eight pages of mostly multiple choice questions, with an **absolute completion and return deadline of Friday, March 26**. It will arrive in businesses by mail with a postage-paid, self-addressed envelope for easy return. **The completed survey may either be returned in the postage-paid, self-addressed envelope, or completed online at [www.sumterbusiness.com/survey](http://www.sumterbusiness.com/survey)**. Thoughtful completion of the survey may take 15-20 minutes, and E5solutions cites the extreme importance of your role in this effort to better understand our local economy. This professionally developed survey will provide a sound basis for generating broad, helpful assistance for current businesses and a firm foundation for creating and attracting new enterprise.

The range of survey questions cover various aspects of each business, including type and length of time in Sumter, number of employees now and possibly in the future, internet use, training needs, opinions of current support services, taxes, experience with various regulatory issues, satisfaction with support services, codes, permits, housing, loans, fees, education and much more. According to Rick Dodge, President of e5solutions, “this survey is absolutely essential, not only in planning for future business development, but in finding and supporting the most effective ways to help our current stakeholders, those who have already invested heavily in our communities.” Dodge thanks all respondents and continues, “Please take this very seriously and do your best to respond quickly either by mail or online, so we may include your reactions in the final results – thank you.”

A summary of the survey’s final results will be posted April 9 on the e5solutions website, [www.sumterbusiness.com](http://www.sumterbusiness.com).

###



**TIME SENSITIVE INFORMATION  
PLEASE REPLY PROMPTLY**

# 2010 Sumter County Business Assistance Survey

Choose either of these two simple ways to complete the survey:

1. Go online to [www.sumterbusiness.com/survey](http://www.sumterbusiness.com/survey), or
2. Complete this printed version and return it in the postage-paid return envelope enclosed.

Absolute deadline for submission is **FRIDAY, MARCH 29**.

Please do not delay. We need your input. Thank you!

(Survey results can be reviewed April 9 at [www.sumterbusiness.com](http://www.sumterbusiness.com))

**Tell us ... we're listening**

# Tell us... we're listening

Dear Business Partner,

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to respond to this important survey. As a key business person in the Sumter County community, your participation, opinions, ideas, and viewpoints will play an important role in guiding Sumter County Economic Development in its efforts to better serve you and all businesses in the county.

We ask for your quick response to this survey, as the results are vital and will help us help you. It will take you only 15-20 minutes to help us improve Sumter's economic position and all submissions are anonymous.

**Choose either of these two simple ways to complete the survey:**

- 1. Go online to [www.sumterbusiness.com/survey](http://www.sumterbusiness.com/survey), or**
- 2. Complete this printed version and return it in the postage-paid return envelope enclosed.**

Absolute deadline for submission is **FRIDAY, MARCH 29**. Please do not delay. We need your input. Thank you!  
(Survey results can be reviewed April 9 at [www.sumterbusiness.com](http://www.sumterbusiness.com))

*Directions: Please answer each question or statement by making the most appropriate response. Special Note: For your opinions to count, please mark only one response per question or statement, unless otherwise directed.*

## Tell us about your business

### 1a. How many workers does your business currently employ in Sumter County?

**Full-Time:**

- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- More than 50

**Part-Time:**

- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- More than 50

### 1b. How many additional workers does your business plan to employ in the next two years?

**Full-Time:**

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- More than 50
- Anticipating Reductions

**Part-Time:**

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-50
- More than 50
- Anticipating Reductions

**2a. How many years has your business been located in Sumter County?**

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 3-5 years
- 5-10
- 10-20
- more than 20 years

**2b. Is your business...**

- Owned and operated solely or predominantly in Sumter County
- Part of a chain or a satellite office of a business with headquarters outside Sumter County

**2c. Please mark the one category that most closely defines your business: (Mark ONE only)**

- Hospitality/lodging
- Food or restaurant services
- Manufacturing
- Agriculture
- Arts, entertainment or recreation
- Communications or information
- Construction/skilled trades
- Employment services
- Finance or insurance
- Visitor attraction
- Health care or social assistance
- Marketing/sales/customer service
- Personal svcs. (Barber, lawn svc, etc.)
- Computers, hardware, software, IT
- Professional, scientific or technical services
- Real estate, rental/leasing/sales
- Retail
- Transportation
- Wholesale trade or distribution
- Education

**3a. Where is your business located?**

- Bushnell
- Center Hill
- Coleman
- Webster
- Wildwood
- The Villages
- Oxford
- Sumterville
- Lake Panasoffkee
- Other Unincorporated Sumter

**3b. What is the zip code of the geographic location (street address) of your business/company in Sumter County?**

## Tell us about your business (continued)

### 4a. Does your company import or export products or services outside the United States

- Import     
  Export     
  Both     
  None     
  Not Sure

### 4b. If yes to question 4a, where? (Mark all that apply)

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canada          | <input type="checkbox"/> Middle East |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mexico          | <input type="checkbox"/> Africa      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central America | <input type="checkbox"/> Asia        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South America   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Rim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Europe          | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

### 5. Which of the following describes your company's internet usage? (Mark all that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Research              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sales of products/services    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing/Advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Purchase of products/supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Training              | <input type="checkbox"/> Business news                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employee recruitment  | <input type="checkbox"/> Business e-mail               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banking               | <input type="checkbox"/> Reservations                  |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bookkeeping/Accounting        |

## Overall quality of business life in Sumter County

### 6. Please mark your rating for each of the following:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
The performance of your business in Sumter County	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Police protection in the county	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Fire protection in the county	<input type="checkbox"/>				
EMS Services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Protection from crime against businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The public secondary school system as preparation for college	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The public vocational school system as preparation for the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The availability of job training programs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of daycare services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
County government's recruitment of new businesses to the area	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of qualified workers/employees	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Overall quality of business life in Sumter County (continued)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Availability of arts and entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of visitor information services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of recreational areas, parks	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of small business education	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of venture capital	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Capacity of road and highway systems	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Condition of road and highway systems	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Water/Sewer services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Gas Services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Electric services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Availability of internet services	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cell phone services	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Doing business in Sumter County

7. Based on your experience or opinions please indicate how easy or difficult it is for a business in Sumter County to:

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	No Opinion
Meet utility service requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Meet building codes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Obtain business permits	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Obtain licenses	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Meet commercial zoning requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Meet fire codes	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Meet landscaping codes	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## General Opinions about the business climate in Sumter County

3. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the business climate in Sumter County.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
County government employees treat businesses as valued customers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
City government employees treat businesses as valued customers	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Business taxes in Sumter County are lower compared to surrounding counties	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Recreation and parks make Sumter County attractive to new businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sumter County is the best area in Central Florida to locate and operate a business	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The lower cost of housing in Sumter County makes it easier to recruit new employees	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The future for businesses in Sumter County is very bright	<input type="checkbox"/>				
More daycare/childcare programs needed	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Current zoning codes negatively impact business growth	<input type="checkbox"/>				
High school graduates are educationally qualified to enter the workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Current environmental regulations are negatively impacting business growth	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Business loans are difficult to get	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There are an adequate number of local suppliers for the products/services my business needs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The internet is an important tool for my business	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The overall quality of life in Sumter County is an important factor in <u>retaining</u> an existing business	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The overall quality of life in Sumter County is an important factor in <u>attracting</u> new businesses to Sumter County	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There will be enough good paying jobs in Sumter County for my children and grandchildren	<input type="checkbox"/>				
The quiet and open space life of Sumter County is very important	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Recruiting new and high paying jobs requires business and government to work closely together	<input type="checkbox"/>				

## Business Taxes and Fees

9. Please indicate the one state or local tax or fee that most hurts your business. (Mark One)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sales taxes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Impact fees                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Property taxes   | <input type="checkbox"/> Service fees                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intangible taxes | <input type="checkbox"/> Toll on local telephone calls within county |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tangible taxes   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fire tax                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities taxes  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bed tax                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Franchise fees   |  |

## Education and job training in Sumter County

### 10. Please rate each of the following educational programs in Sumter County:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Primary school system (grades K-8)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Secondary school system (grades 9-12)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Secondary vocational school system (grades 9-12)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Charter school system	<input type="checkbox"/>				
One and two-year vocational school programs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Technical education	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Community college system	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Four-year college/university systems	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### 11. Now please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about education and job training in Sumter County.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
The school system is responsive to the training needs of my business	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There are an adequate number of job training programs for my employees	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am satisfied with the quality of existing job training programs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am satisfied with the frequency of job training programs	<input type="checkbox"/>				

### 12. What employee skills are necessary for your business now and what additional employee skills do you expect to need in the next two years? Mark all skills you currently need and all additional skills you expect to need.

	Skills Needed Now	Skills Needed In 2 years
Accounting/Bookkeeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Analytical Thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computer Programming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Database Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Graphic Art & Design	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet/Web	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interpersonal Communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leadership Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problem-Solving Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quantitative Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone Etiquette	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Selling Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spreadsheet Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mechanical/Technical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Typing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Verbal Communications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Education and job training in Sumter County (continued)

13. In the 13a columns below, please indicate how familiar you are with each item, then, in the 13b column, indicate your interest in obtaining more information about each listed item.

	Currently Using	13 a Aware of But Not Using	Not Aware Of	13 b Interested in More Information
Sumter County Emergency Management Plan including Preparedness & Disaster Recovery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ways to sell my products to government agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sumter County's school-to-work training programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Enterprise Florida (state economic development agency)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Florida Chamber of Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Florida High Tech Corridor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work Force Central Florida	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sumter County Chamber of Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Daycare (childcare) programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Import/export assistance programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Small Business Development Center (SBDC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Certified Development Corporation (CDC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Abilities of Florida	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NASA Technology Outreach Program (TRDA)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Florida Manufacturing Technology Center (FMTC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic Commerce Resource Center (ECRC)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Entrepreneur assistance programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee health insurance programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lake-Sumter Community College small business training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. What Sumter County feature is most helpful to your business performance?

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15. What Sumter County feature is most frustrating to your business performance?

Your additional comments are appreciated:

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If you think Sumter County Economic Development can help with this problem, please call our Business Assistance Specialists at 888-857-5784 or email us at: [survey@sumterbusiness.com](mailto:survey@sumterbusiness.com)

Survey results can be reviewed April 9 at [www.sumterbusiness.com](http://www.sumterbusiness.com)

1576 Bella Cruz Drive, Suite 409  
The Villages, FL 32159  
Phone/Fax 888.857.5784



## Business Survey Results

Survey Name: 2010 Sumter Business Survey

Response Status: Completed

Filter: None

Apr 09, 2010 12:00:00 AM



### 1a. How many Full-Time workers does your business currently employ within Sumter County?

	Response Ratio
1-10	76.5%
11-20	6.3%
21-50	7.2%
More than 50	3.6%
No Responses	6.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 1a. How many Part-Time workers does your business currently employ within Sumter County?

	Response Ratio
1-10	40.5%
11-20	3.6%
21-50	2.7%
More than 50	3.6%
None	44.1%
No Responses	5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 1b. How many additional Full-Time workers does your business plan to employ in the next two years?

	Response Ratio
0	52.2%
1-10	33.3%
11-20	3.6%
21-50	1.8%
More than 50	0.0%
Anticipating Reductions	1.8%
No Responses	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**1b. How many additional Part-Time workers does your business plan to employ in the next two years?**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
0	69.3%
1-10	18.9%
11-20	<1%
21-50	1.8%
More than 50	0.0%
Anticipating Reductions	1.8%
No Responses	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2a. How many years has your business been located in Sumter County?**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Less than 1 year	1.8%
1-3 years	9.9%
3-5 years	9.9%
5-10 years	23.4%
10-20 years	17.1%
more than 20 years	30.6%
No Responses	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2b. Is your business...**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Owned and operated solely or predominantly in Sumter County	79.2%
Part of a chain or a satellite office of a business with headquarters outside Sumter	13.5%
No Responses	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**2c. Please mark the category that most closely defines your business: (Mark ONE only)**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Hospitality/lodging	5.4%
Food or restaurant services	1.8%
Manufacturing	3.6%
Agriculture	7.2%
Arts, entertainment or recreation	2.7%
Communications or information	<1%
Construction/skilled trades	13.5%
Employment services	0.0%
Finance or insurance	6.3%
Visitor attraction	0.0%
Health care or social assistance	3.6%
Marketing/sales/ customer service	5.4%
Personal svcs. (Barber, lawn svc, etc.)	5.4%
Computers, hardware, software, IT	0.0%
Professional, scientific or technical services	11.7%
Real estate, rental/leasing/sales	5.4%
Retail	12.6%
Transportation	<1%
Wholesale trade or distribution	1.8%
Education	4.5%
No Responses	7.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3a. Where is your business located?**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Bushnell	25.2%
Center Hill	<1%
Coleman	1.9%
Webster	11.6%
Wildwood	31.0%
The Villages	12.6%
Oxford	6.7%
Sumterville	6.7%
Lake Panasoffkee	8.7%
Other Unincorporated Sumter	3.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**3b. What is the zip code of the geographic location (street address) of your business/company in Sumter County?**

101 Response(s)

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**4a. Does your company import or export products or services outside the United States?**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Import	5.4%
Export	1.8%
Both	3.6%
None	76.5%
Not Sure	3.6%
No Responses	9.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**4b. If yes to question 4a, where? (Mark all that apply)**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Canada	75.0%
Mexico	50.0%
Central America	37.5%
South America	37.5%
Europe	37.5%
Middle East	0.0%
Africa	12.5%
Asia	0.0%
Pacific Rim	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**5. Which of the following describes your company's Internet usage? (Mark all that apply)**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Research	66.3%
Marketing/Advertising	46.5%
Training	31.6%
Employee recruitment	17.8%
Banking	52.4%
Sales of products/ services	40.5%
Purchase of products/ supplies	61.3%
Business news	38.6%
Business e-mail	61.3%
Reservations	26.7%
Bookkeeping/ Accounting	33.6%
Do not use Internet	3.9%
Other	1.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**6. Please mark your rating for each of the following:**

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
The performance of your business in Sumter County	19%	46%	24%	6%	4%
Police protection in the county	20%	52%	19%	4%	5%
Fire protection in the county	22%	56%	12%	5%	5%
EMS Services	24%	53%	11%	3%	9%
Protection from crime against businesses	10%	48%	22%	6%	13%
The public secondary school system as preparation for college	5%	31%	27%	9%	27%
The public vocational school system as preparation for the workplace	2%	16%	20%	19%	42%
The availability of job training programs	2%	11%	23%	31%	32%
Availability of daycare services	2%	27%	25%	16%	29%
County government's recruitment of new businesses to the area	3%	10%	29%	27%	30%

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Opinion
Availability of qualified workers/employees	4%	17%	39%	27%	12%
Availability of arts and entertainment	4%	12%	25%	47%	11%
Availability of visitor information services	3%	15%	44%	21%	16%
Availability of recreational areas, parks	6%	42%	32%	13%	6%
Availability of small business education	1%	13%	30%	35%	20%
Availability of venture capital	2%	5%	26%	34%	32%
Capacity of road and highway systems	3%	33%	41%	17%	5%
Condition of road and highway systems	4%	29%	36%	26%	4%
Water/Sewer services	5%	28%	31%	17%	18%
Gas Services	5%	31%	25%	16%	22%
Electric services	20%	48%	21%	8%	2%
Availability of internet services	9%	42%	29%	17%	2%
Cell phone services	3%	34%	40%	22%	0%

**7. Based on your experience or opinions please indicate how easy or difficult it is for a business in Sumter County to:**

	Very Easy	Somewhat Easy	Somewhat Difficult	Very Difficult	No Opinion
Meet utility service requirements	8%	54%	16%	4%	18%
Meet building codes	6%	39%	30%	8%	16%
Obtain business permits	8%	42%	21%	7%	21%
Obtain licenses	10%	45%	20%	7%	17%
Meet commercial zoning requirements	5%	38%	23%	11%	22%
Meet fire codes	7%	48%	20%	8%	16%
Meet landscaping codes	10%	39%	17%	3%	30%

**8. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the business climate in Sumter County.**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
County government employees treat businesses as valued customers	15%	44%	21%	5%	14%
City government employees treat businesses as valued customers	20%	35%	25%	5%	14%
Business taxes in Sumter are lower compared to surrounding counties	11%	54%	7%	4%	24%
Recreation and parks make Sumter attractive to new businesses	6%	41%	25%	9%	18%
Sumter is the best area in Central FL to locate and operate a business	12%	38%	24%	5%	20%
Lower housing costs in Sumter make it easier to recruit new businesses	6%	34%	32%	6%	21%
The future for businesses in Sumter County is very bright	14%	47%	19%	7%	12%
More daycare/childcare programs needed	13%	33%	11%	6%	36%
Current zoning codes negatively impact business growth	6%	22%	34%	9%	28%
High school grads are educationally qualified to enter the workforce	3%	34%	26%	17%	19%

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
Current environmental regulations negatively impacting business growth	10%	34%	26%	5%	24%
Business loans are difficult to get	20%	23%	16%	3%	37%
There are an adequate number of local suppliers	7%	39%	33%	13%	7%
The internet is an important tool for my business	51%	33%	2%	6%	8%
Quality of life is an important factor in retaining businesses	40%	42%	9%	1%	7%
Quality of life is an important factor in attracting new businesses	46%	38%	9%	2%	4%
There will be enough good paying jobs in Sumter County for my children	4%	14%	45%	26%	10%
The quiet and open space (life) of Sumter County is very important	44%	39%	7%	3%	6%
Recruiting new high pay jobs requires bus. and govt to work together	46%	43%	4%	0%	6%

**9. Please indicate the one state or local tax or fee that most hurts your business. (Mark One)**

	Response Ratio
Sales taxes	8.1%
Property taxes	26.1%
Intangible taxes	5.4%
Tangible taxes	7.2%
Utilities taxes	13.5%
Franchise fees	<1%
Impact fees	8.1%
Service fees	1.8%
Toll on local telephone calls within county	8.1%
Fire tax	<1%
Bed tax	1.8%
Other	7.2%
No Responses	10.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. Please rate each of the following educational programs in Sumter County:**

	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
Primary school system (grades K-8)	15%	37%	11%	4%	33%
Secondary school system (grades 9-12)	7%	37%	18%	6%	32%
Secondary vocational school system (gr. 9-12)	5%	20%	22%	7%	45%
Charter school system	18%	21%	5%	3%	52%
One and two-year vocational school programs	3%	10%	20%	12%	54%
Technical education	1%	9%	18%	18%	53%
Community college system	4%	32%	18%	7%	39%
Four-year college/university systems	1%	9%	13%	20%	56%

**11. Now please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about education and job training in Sumter County.**

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Somewhat Agree</b>	<b>Somewhat Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
The school system is responsive to the training needs of my business	4%	16%	18%	19%	42%
There are an adequate number of job training programs for my employees	1%	8%	28%	23%	40%
I am satisfied with the quality of existing job training programs	2%	7%	23%	27%	41%
I am satisfied with the frequency of job training programs	1%	5%	24%	28%	42%

**12. What employee skills are necessary for your business now? Mark all skills you currently need.**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Accounting / Bookkeeping	51.0%
Analytical Thinking	40.8%
Computer Programming	31.6%
Database Management	31.6%
Graphic Art & Design	22.4%
Internet/Web	53.0%
Interpersonal Communications	56.1%
Leadership Skills	60.2%
Problem Solving Skills	64.2%
Quantitative Analysis	25.5%
Telephone Etiquette	59.1%
Selling Skills	47.9%
Spreadsheet Skills	43.8%
Mechanical / Technical	46.9%
Typing	46.9%
Verbal Communications	72.4%
Writing Skills	57.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**12. What employee skills do you expect to need in the next 2 years? Mark all skills that you expect to need.**

	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Accounting / Bookkeeping	46.9%
Analytical Thinking	33.6%
Computer Programming	29.5%
Database Management	30.6%
Graphic Art & Design	28.5%
Internet/Web	47.9%
Interpersonal Communications	44.8%
Leadership Skills	42.8%
Problem Solving Skills	44.8%
Quantitative Analysis	25.5%
Telephone Etiquette	42.8%
Selling Skills	38.7%
Spreadsheet Skills	32.6%
Mechanical / Technical	39.7%
Typing	37.7%
Verbal Communications	54.0%
Writing Skills	41.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

**13a. Please indicate how familiar you are with each item.**

	Currently Using	Aware But Not Using	Not Aware Of
Sumter County Emergency Management Plan including Preparedness & Disas	14%	45%	41%
Ways to sell my products to government agencies	14%	22%	63%
Sumter County's school-to-work training programs	7%	22%	70%
Enterprise Florida (state economic development agency)	8%	26%	66%
Florida Chamber of Commerce	17%	45%	38%
Florida High Tech Corridor	2%	26%	72%
Work Force Central Florida	16%	37%	47%
Sumter County Chamber of Commerce	32%	47%	21%
Daycare (childcare) programs	11%	49%	40%
Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)	3%	33%	64%
Import/ export assistance programs	2%	20%	78%
Small Business Development Center (SBDC)	2%	23%	74%
Certified Development Corporation (CDC)	2%	11%	87%
Abilities of Florida	3%	8%	89%
NASA Technology Outreach Program (TRDA)	1%	10%	89%
The Florida Manufacturing Technology Center (FMTC)	2%	8%	90%
Electronic Commerce Resource Center (ECRC)	1%	9%	90%
Entrepreneur assistance programs	1%	12%	87%
Employee health insurance programs	5%	26%	69%
Lake-Sumter Community College small business training	6%	38%	56%

**13b. List your interest in obtaining more information about each listed item in 13a.**

54 Response(s)

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**14. What Sumter County feature is most helpful to your business performance?**

50 Response(s)

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**15. What Sumter County feature is most frustrating to your business performance?**

48 Response(s)

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May 2010

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Issue No. 5

*Tips, Trends & Friends*



## In This Issue

### Survey Summaries

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## The Survey Says-

Here are significant summaries from the 2010 Sumter County Business Assistance Survey, conducted countywide during the last week of March. Complete survey detail may be seen at [www.sumterbusiness.com/survey](http://www.sumterbusiness.com/survey).

### Kinds of Business

The top five categories of businesses in Sumter are: #1) construction and skilled trades, 13.5%; #2) retail, 12.6%; #3) professional, scientific or technical, 11.7%; #4) agriculture, 7.2%; and #5) finance and insurance, 6.3%.

### How Long in Sumter?

Nearly one quarter (23.4%) of Sumter businesses have been located in the county between 5 and 10 years, while 30.6% have been here more than 20 years. 79.2% are owned and operated primarily in Sumter County.

### How Many Full & Part-Timers?

Three quarters (76.5%) of businesses employ 1-10 full time employees and 3.6% employ more than 50 full-timers. 40.5% have ten or less part-timers, while 44.1% have no part-timers.

### Where are the Businesses?

Top five locations of Sumter businesses: Wildwood, 31%; Bushnell, 25.2%; The Villages, 12.6%; Webster, 11.6%; and Lake Panasoffkee, 8.7%.

### Importing & Exporting

Only 5.4% of businesses import products or services, 1.8% export, and 3.6% import and export. The top five countries in order are: Canada, Mexico, Central America, South America and Europe.

### Use of the Internet

The top five uses of the internet are: #1) research; #2 e-mail; #3 purchasing; #4 banking; and #5 advertising and marketing. Only 3.9% of Sumter businesses indicate they do not use the internet.

### Services Satisfaction

Fire, EMS, and Police protection ranked as the very highest services, followed by satisfaction with electric service, and "performance of your business in Sumter County." The most dissatisfaction was expressed for availability of arts and entertainment, availability of qualified workers & employees, visitor information services and cell phone services.

### Do You Agree?

Respondents most highly agree with the following five statements, in descending order: 1) Business taxes in Sumter are lower compared to surrounding counties; 2) Future for business in Sumter is very bright; 3) County employees treat businesses as valued customers; 4) City employees treat businesses as valued customers; 5) Sumter County is the best area in Central Florida to locate and operate a business.

### **Education & Learning**

Sumter school and education systems ranked in this order: #1) primary K-12; #2) secondary 9-12; #3 charter school system; #4 community college system; #5 secondary vocational system 9-12.

### **Job Training Satisfaction**

Job training in Sumter County showed the least satisfaction and support, with the following statements ranking low in the survey: quality, frequency and number of job training programs; and education system response to the training needs of businesses.

### **Skills You Need**

These are the skills most needed now by employers (in descending order): verbal communications; problem solving; leadership skills; telephone etiquette; writing skills; interpersonal communications; internet/website use; accounting/bookkeeping; sales skills; keyboard and mechanical/technical skills.

### **You Told Us!**

This business survey summary is a highlighted review of the most significant responses. Nearly 2,000 surveys were mailed to businesses throughout the county, and a 6.5% mail and email response was received, a response professionally considered significant and effective and balanced countywide.

### **PRIORITIES FOR THE FUTURE**

Thank you for participating in the Survey. Your participation and input help prepare our community for the future and set priorities for everyone.

### **THANK YOU!**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**TERRY YODER NAMED “ENTERPRISER OF THE YEAR” BY SUMTER COUNTY**

**WILDWOOD, FL (March 11, 2010)** – In recognition of his significant impact, E5solutions, Inc., today honored Terry D. Yoder, a long-time important contributor to the Sumter County economy, as Sumter County’s “Enterpriser of the Year.” E5solutions, which serves as Sumter County Economic Development, selected Terry Yoder of Wildwood, for his long, distinguished and highly successful business leadership and innovation.

In naming Yoder, Rick Dodge, e5’s president, said “Terry stands as a Sumter County corporate giant, employing up to 600 workers in his separate companies. Without a business pillar like Terry, hundreds of families in this economy would be without, and Terry is proud and grateful to make this community contribution and provide hundreds of jobs for great employees.”

Yoder, in responding to the award, said “I’m proud of this honor and the core values our enterprise represents. I hope to help every hard-working business person in Sumter become an “Enterpriser of the Year.”

The Enterpriser-of-the-Year presentation was made during Sumter’s first-ever day-long business summit, which featured nationally noted keynoter, Ken Banks of KAB Marketing, who led off the day’s program with “10 Ways to Improve Your Business in Tough Times.” National and state service providers and problem solvers followed, representing such agencies as Enterprise Florida, the SBA, SCORE, Workforce Central Florida, Small Business Development Center, Lake-Sumter Community College and Sumter Chamber of Commerce.

Doug Gilpin, Sumter County Commission Chairman, said “this kind of services initiative is vitally important and will help lead us out of our economic doldrums. Sumter County is showing the way to a brighter and quicker business recovery.”

###

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Contacts: Rick Dodge, 352-446-4679**

**Rich Hickman, 727-215-6044**

**INTERNET AN IMPORTANT TOOL IN HIGH SUMTER BUSINESS PERFORMANCE**

**WILDWOOD, FL** – (April 15, 2010) – Business performance is excellent or good according to 65% of respondents in the recent Business Assistance Survey conducted county-wide by e5solutions, Inc., (serving as Sumter County Economic Development). Adding to the strong business performance rating was the response of 84% that the internet is an important tool in the performance of their business, with research the top use, at 66.3%; business e-mail at 61.3%; purchasing products and supplies, 61%; banking at 52.4%; and marketing/advertising, 46.5%; sales of products and services, 40.5%. Only 3.9 % of businesses indicated not using the internet. 37.7% of Sumter businesses plan to add more full-time employees in the next two years, while only 1.8% anticipate reductions.

The 2010 Business Assistance Survey was conducted in late March, with respondents returning completed surveys by either postage-paid mail or e-mail. The anonymous questionnaires, containing over 200 mostly multiple choice questions, elicited a strong 6.5% response. Zip codes identified business locations, showing full county participation, with 31% of responses from Wildwood; 25.2% from Bushnell; The Villages, 12.6%; Webster, 11.6%; and Lake Panasoffkee, 8.7%.

Other response highlights: 89% agree that government and businesses must work together to recruit high paying jobs; quality of life and quiet open space are important in attracting business, 82% and 83% respectively. 52% rate the Primary School System (K-8) as excellent/good; the secondary school system (9-12), 44% excellent/good; and the Charter School System, 39% excellent/good.

Availability of qualified workers, 66% fair/poor; availability of visitor information, 65% fair/poor; availability of small business education, 65% fair/poor; availability of cell phone service, 62% fair/poor; and job training availability, 54% fair/poor.

According to 50% of businesses, Sumter is the best area in Central Florida to locate and operate a business, while 61% agree the future for businesses in Sumter County is very bright. Yet, a high of 71% of business operators think there will not be enough good paying jobs for their children.

Please see complete survey results on [www.sumterbusiness.com](http://www.sumterbusiness.com).

###

## **Sumter County CEOs: new business recruitment**

Sumter County is well-positioned in physical location, financial status, available business sites, low taxes, high quality public and charter school systems, a focused and business oriented board of County Commissioners to successfully accomplish selective and significant new business recruitment during the next 24 months. The pace of recruitment will partially be based on macro economic conditions improving to give businesses the faith and desire to expand as we climb out of the worst recession in the century.

How do we best get ready to maximize recruitment possibilities. We have completed a number of the basic foundation tasks for active recruitment including a rigorous review of strengths and weaknesses, a vibrant business summit, a robust business survey, a completion of industrial site availability and soon, fundamental and strong strategic plan for retention, expansion and recruitment of business.

### **What's missing?**

The missing piece is communicating, acquainting and then recruiting potential new business development to move Sumter County. Sumter County is the best kept secret in Florida even with the dynamic Villages making a strong national presence. Like many small counties, Sumter County does not have the ability to buy recognition in the marketplace through an extensive advertising and public relations campaign. We need a new and innovative approach to build our reputation in both the State, Regional and National Markets. We need a focused approach without the high expense and questionable effectiveness of extensive advertising and marketing programs (we do recommend complementary advertising program for consideration in next year's budget). Fortunately, Sumter County may be a great secret, but it also contains a secret weapon to advance the goal.

That secret weapon is the strength, expertise and connections of retired executive leaders from other parts of the country now living among the 75,000 residents of The Villages. These highly successful executives retain special connections to those locations in the country where they owned and operated businesses for long periods of time. The fact that they individually made the decision to retire to this community already demonstrates the esteem they have for Sumter County. If we can recruit them as very important volunteers, equip them with appropriate information to communicate to potential business relocations, support them with expert follow up on their first contacts and motivate them with how important these recruitments will be to the long-term economic health of the area; I believe many will see this effort as highly significant and important to accomplish.

We propose a pilot program with both the cities of Wildwood and Bushnell using sites they've already identified as "shovel ready". We will recruit a group of 8 to 12 retired executives and put in process the information and tools they need to make informed contacts to their business friends throughout the country. We will refine the plan of operation during the month of August, recruit volunteers with help of executives associated with The Villages and commence recruitment activities in early September.



We think it is healthy and appropriate to quietly begin this process and then announce the operation after we've had some initial success. The success of the program is getting them to open the door and then following up in a highly professional and organized manner. They will also be important to showcase the role of Sumter County CEOs to reinforce their interest and to help recruit additional volunteers as we expand the program. We will certainly cover any indirect and direct expenses these talented volunteers will have such as telephone calls and fax information. The fact that many of these potential Sumter County CEOs already love their new hometown only makes this transition to recruitment that much more effective. I understand that 61% of new Villagers relocated to this area as a result of testimonial encouragement from existing residents. If we can translate that same success rate to business recruitment, this approach stands to be a unique, powerful and inexpensive method to begin regional and national recruitment to Sumter County.

It has been said, **"Bushnell is from Cypress to the 21st Century!"** The Seat of Sumter County Government, down-home and family driven, Bushnell is a best-kept secret, shovel ready for your discovery!

The busy Interstate 75 corridor carves directly through the community of Bushnell, Florida, only a 40 minute drive from Tampa Bay, providing easy access and exposing Bushnell's smorgasbord of new business site opportunities.

We say **"shovel-ready,"** which in Sumter County language really means "ready for your business!" You see, in Bushnell we're not all talk, we will answer, assist and help you meet the needs of your business project. We want you to truly know, from Planning, Permitting to Project Completion, you will find that our staff will guide you like nowhere else, to a smooth and easy finale.

Our human caring, accompanied by our down-home charm, creates the Quality of Life that exists here in Bushnell, and in fact, has become our City motto. Our Top Schools are really top, our low tax structure is really low, and our utility services really do serve, delivering top notch customer service with our own attentive personnell

It may be hard to believe that such down-home family-driven conditions exist next door to Florida's High Tech Corridor, Tampa Bay and adjacent to our own I-75 Innovation Corridor. Honestly, you can actually see some of our Top **"Shovel-Ready"** business sites from the interstate highway as you slow to exit #314, SR48, conveniently into Bushnell, the Seat of Sumter County government.

Like an uncut precious stone, it's all here for you to tap. It's waiting for your employees and their families to enjoy and it's ready for your business to become a diamond in our community. Look over these sites, pick one that looks good, and sit down with us for a friendly chat about your business opportunities. We all will enjoy your visit!

**REMEMBER, WE'VE GOT THE SHOVELS,  
AND WE'RE READY!**

For more information contact:

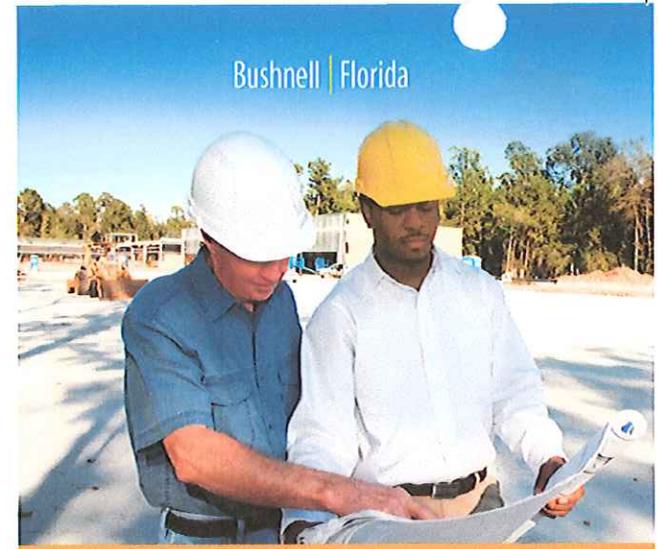
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\*Bushnell Shovel-Ready means: streets, drainage, water, sewer, electricity, fire and police protection, phone & internet, zoning, permitting ease, planning and project completion and assistance from a willing and professional staff!



We're  
**Bushnell!**  
DOWN HOME AND PROGRESS READY

Announcing  
**Smart, Shovel-Ready**  
S O L U T I O N S

developed by   
www.e5solutions.biz



# City of Bushnell

## Shovel Ready Sites

### Commercial & Industrial Properties

