

Florida Industrial Sites Join Duke Energy's Site Readiness Program

Duke Energy has just completed the evaluation of industrial sites in Florida's Pasco, Polk and Sumter counties through the company's Site Readiness Program, which helps advance prime parcels for industrial development opportunities. Duke Energy brought the program to Florida after successfully attracting businesses to other states where it operates.

During recent public meetings with the counties' commissioners, city council members and other community leaders, Duke Energy provided a detailed report about the level of readiness of the select site in each county.

"Duke Energy is committed to the economic growth of the communities we serve," said Alex Glenn, Duke Energy state president – Florida. "As their electric utility partner, we are dedicated to not only reliably serving the area but to working with the community to ensure it is in a position to attract new industry and jobs."

Duke Energy, in conjunction with each county's economic development council, arranged for McCallum Sweeney Consulting, a nationally recognized site selection consultant, to conduct a thorough analysis of each of the three sites. The process began with an RFP that collected key information on each site, followed by an in-depth meeting and site visit with local economic development officials. A separate engineering firm, HRP Associates, completed a buildable study and conceptual plan for each site.

The detailed report presented to local officials included a technical review outlining strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for next steps.

"Attracting investments and jobs is more competitive than ever," remarked Mark Sweeney, principal of McCallum Sweeney Consulting. "It's not an easy process and takes a community-wide effort."

The report also featured a marketing evaluation and recommendations for target industries.

In Pasco County, the Zephyrhills Airport Industrial Park, located just north of the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport at County Road 54 and County Road 535, was selected to go through the program. Recommended industries for the 442-acre site include aerospace, light industrial/assembly and plastics.

"We are grateful for our partnership with Duke Energy and excited to have been selected for this program," said John Walsh, vice president of the Pasco Economic Development Council. "It's an excellent opportunity for us to promote Zephyrhills and Pasco County to the rest of the world that we're a leading contender for investments and jobs."

In Polk County, the 472-acre Pebble Ridge Site is located at the northwest corner of U.S. Highway 27 and U.S. Highway 98 in Frostproof, FL. Recommended industries include aerospace, distribution, general manufacturing and plastics.

“Participating in the Duke Energy Site Readiness Program elevated one of the many development opportunities in Polk County,” said David Petr, president and CEO of the Central Florida Development Council. “Our vision for Pebble Ridge Industrial Park mirrored the results determined by the McCallum Sweeney team. I would encourage other property owners to exercise this marketable level of real estate preparedness for any serious consideration from site selectors.”

In Sumter County, Monarch Ranch, located between I-75 and the Florida Turnpike in Wildwood, was also selected for the program. Recommended industries for the 3,345-acre site include food processing, logistics/distribution and plastics.

“The site readiness program provided by Duke Energy not only invigorated the land owners to move forward with further investments in their property but also provided a template of readiness for other industrial-zoned properties in Sumter County,” said Bradley Arnold, Sumter County Administrator.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Duke Energy’s Economic Development initiatives, including the Site Readiness Program.