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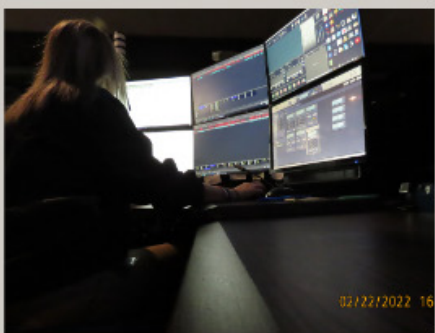
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*North Florida  
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**2025**





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## North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce

### Mission Statement:

*"Our mission is to give tourists a reason to visit, businesses a reason to locate, and citizens a reason to reside, work and participate in our region of Florida."*

### Board of Governors 2024

Chairman – Brad Smith  
Chair Elect - Grace Johns  
Past Chair – Jeff Oody  
Treasurer – Justis Smith

### Board Members

Steve Futch  
Harry Gunsallas  
Rhonda Hamilton  
Scott Kornegay  
Amber Shepherd  
Denny Thompson  
Dale Woodruff

NFRCC Board of Governors meetings  
are held the 2nd Thursday of the month

### Staff

President / CEO - Pam Whittle, IOM  
Business Service - Susan (Becky) Norman

### Contact Us:

100 East Call Street • Starke, FL 32091  
[www.northfloridachamber.com](http://www.northfloridachamber.com)  
Like us on facebook NFRRegionalChamber  
904-964-5278 (M – F)

# Welcome to the North Florida Region!

## Pam Whittle, Chamber President

Welcome to the North Florida Region, we at NFRCC work closely with multiple agencies to serve and support our local business community in Bradford, Union and SW Clay counties. Our mission is to give tourists a reason to visit, businesses a reason to locate, and citizens a reason to reside work and participate in our region of Florida. We welcome many new residents that relocate into our area. There has been an insurgence of folks moving from the northwest recently who now call the North Florida Region home. This rural region of Florida still has affordable land that is very attractive to new residents and businesses.

The Chamber of Commerce has the opportunity to partner with the Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation. This is very exciting as there has been many changes over the past few years, in that businesses have joined our community and new residential areas are being planned as well. The NEFEDC along with the Chamber, will work with our city and county government to bring about structured

growth, that will allow our region to grow in planned fashion. Infrastructure has long been a deterrent to business relocation and expansion. This deficit is now being addressed by several agencies working together to acquire appropriations from the state to supplement the cost to our region.

The Chamber and the Downtown Merchants work in tandem on several activities and events for the community such as the Great Pumpkin Escape and Christmas on Call Street. Those are the major events currently and with the completion of the new overpass and roads being repaired the Chamber and DTM are looking to the future for new and entertaining things for our community in this area while we increase foot traffic and interest in the Historic Downtown area.

A major attraction to our region is the Annual Bradford Strawberry Festival and the Chamber staff work on this event all year long, in hopes of making it a major attraction of outside visitors to our community. This is a



major undertaking for the Chamber and our community which brings in many visitors from areas like Daytona, Jacksonville, Gainesville and Southern Georgia. We couldn't do it without the support of our Chamber board, BCSO Explorers, Fair Association, wonderful sponsors, and a multitude of volunteers.

We continue to support our businesses with Ribbon Cuttings, After Hour events, and Grand Openings. These are the highlight of our work, when a new business allows us to share in the excitement and enthusiasm of joining our business community.

We hope you will come and visit our neck of the woods in beautiful North Florida.



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Starke, FL 32091  
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# Welcome to Bradford County

Bradford County is a rural community located in Northeast Florida. Bradford was founded as New River County in 1858 but was renamed Bradford County in 1861. The county has a population of 27,000 people and covers 294 square miles. Bradford County is home to the City of Starke, City of Lawtey, City of Hampton and the Town of Brooker with Starke being the county seat.

## Parks & Recreation

Welcome to the Bradford County Parks and Recreation page. Bradford County is home to five publicly accessible lakes and two wildlife management areas, with many opportunities for recreation on land and water.

## Lakes And Boat Ramp Locations

- Hampton Lake - West End of Southwest 101st Street, Hampton, FL 32044
- Sampson and Rowell Lakes - 14300 Southwest 75th Ave, Starke, FL 32091
- Little Lake Santa Fe - 3858 Southeast 20th Ave, Keystone Heights, FL 32656
- Santa Fe Lake - 42500 Northeast State Road 26, Melrose, FL 32666

## Parks

- Pleasant Grove Park - At the corner of Northwest County Road 229 and Northwest 177th Street, Starke, FL 32091
- Speedville Park- 879 Southeast 35th Street, Melrose, FL 32666
- Lincoln City Park - At the corner of Southeast 143rd Terrace and Southeast 44th Avenue, Starke, FL 32091

## Wildlife Management Areas

- Santa Fe Swamp Wildlife Management Area  
Southeast 11th Avenue, Starke, FL 32091  
(Approximately 1/2 Mile off State Road 100)

The Santa Fe Swamp Wildlife Management Area (WMA) consist of 7,272 acres and is open for fishing, wildlife viewing, horseback riding, hiking, and bicycling throughout the year. Children under the age of 16 are required to wear a helmet when horseback riding on public lands. Hunting of white-tailed deer, feral hog, turkey, gray squirrel, and eastern cottontail rabbit is allowed in this WMA during specified seasons with primitive weapons only (bow and arrow and muzzleloader).

- Raiford Wildlife Management Area  
Northwest County Road 125, Lawtey, FL 32058

Raiford WMA consists of 9,141 acres and is located along the New River in northwest Bradford County. The New River flows through the center of the WMA, and Olustee Creek (which branches off of the New River) flows through the eastern portion of the WMA. Much of the area is closed or in private ownership but the remaining portion of the area is open for hunting during specified seasons. Wild turkey, white-tailed deer, gray squirrel, eastern cottontail rabbit, gopher tortoise, raccoon, and red-tailed hawk are some of the wildlife species that can be found in the area.



The North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce is a vital part of the ongoing growth that is taking place here in the Bradford County area. Your membership in the Chamber provides unparalleled opportunities to connect with peers, current and prospective clients, and partners up and down the supply chain, to keep communication lines open.

Further, the programs and events the Chamber supports, promotes, and is involved in provide extraordinary opportunities to grow needed networks and gain new insights to address the ever-changing challenges facing all of us in business today. By working together as Chamber members, we have a much stronger voice with our elected leaders as they contemplate policy revisions and new rules and regulations that create greater certainty and an improved environment for business in Bradford County.

The Chamber's involvement in promoting the Rural County Days Event in Tallahassee over the last few years, has helped the Chambers and Local Business connect and provide Legislators with the uniqueness of local Businesses, their talent influence in the local community, promoting e-commerce, developing trends and patterns that are unique to Rural communities.

We support the North Florida Regional Chamber, membership and residents in Bradford County and encourage you all to shop locally and support your community. We represent you in Tallahassee from both the House of Representatives and Florida Senate and your concerns, ideas and opportunities are something we greatly value.



### Robert Charles "Chuck" Brannan III

Member of the Florida House  
of Representatives  
Republican  
Representing District 10  
222 The Capitol  
402 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300  
Office Phone: 850-717-5010



### Jennifer Bradley

Member of the Florida Senate  
Republican  
Representing District 5  
Tallahassee Office  
324 Senate Building  
404 South Monroe Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100  
Office Phone: 850-487-5005



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# • Community Events •

## January

MLK Day

## February

1st Saturday of the month – North Florida Regional Chamber of Commerce Annual Meeting • Miss Bradford Fest Pageant  
The Florida Challenge at Bradford Sportsmens Farm  
Bradford-Union Strawberry Pageant

## March

Bradford Agricultural Fair • North Florida Outdoor Expo  
Lake Butler Rotary Annual Luau Fundraiser • Bradford Strawberry Festival

## April

Rotary Beast Feast • Union Co. Livestock Assoc. Agricultural Fair  
Starke Kiwanis Annual Golf Tournament  
Florida State Sporting Clays Championships • Easter

## May

05 Cinco De Mayo • Mother's Day • Memorial Day

## June

14th Flag Day • Father's Day • 19th Juneteenth

## July

4th Starke Splash n Bash • Lake Butler Celebration on the Lake  
Keystone Heights Our Country Day

## August

Barnyard Fantasy Football League Annual BBQ Cook-off

## September

Labor Day

## October

Columbus Day • Altrusa Gala • Great Pumpkin Escape

## November

Veteran's Day • Krawl'n for the Fallen • Thanksgiving  
Shop Small Saturday  
Miss Winterfest Pageant

## December

Christmas on Call Street • Christmas Parades • Shop With A Cop

# Welcome to the Bradford Agricultural Center

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**2300 North Temple Ave • Starke, FL 32091 • 904-964-5252**

**[Manager@BradfordCountyFair.com](mailto:Manager@BradfordCountyFair.com)**





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**Patricia Evans**  
Bradford/Clay  
Community President  
904.452.2050



**Becky Barrs**  
Community Banking  
Administrative Assistant  
904.452.2051



**Penny Pearson**  
Community Banker  
904.452.2056

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# Relocation

**North Florida Chamber**  
*Pam Whittle*  
100 East Call Street, Starke, FL  
32091  
Phone: 904-964-5278  
Fax: 904-964-2863  
[www.northfloridachamber.com](http://www.northfloridachamber.com)

**Utility Companies  
Information  
Electric Companies**  
City of Starke  
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Florida Power & Light  
(800) 851-9402  
Clay Electric  
(352) 473-8000

**Gas Companies**  
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Sawyer Gas - (352) 468-1500

**Phone Companies**  
Century Link - (888) 723-8010

**Water & Sewer Companies**  
Suwannee River Water  
Management District - (800)  
226-1066 or  
(386) 362-1001  
City of Starke - (904) 964-7776

**Cable Companies**  
Comcast - (800) 266-2278 or  
(877) 530-1213 Customer  
Service  
Satellite Companies  
Directv - (877) 356-2135 or  
[www.directv.com](http://www.directv.com)  
Dish Network - (888) 656-2872  
or [www.dish.com](http://www.dish.com)

**Waste Disposal**  
Waste Management - (904) 964-  
4184

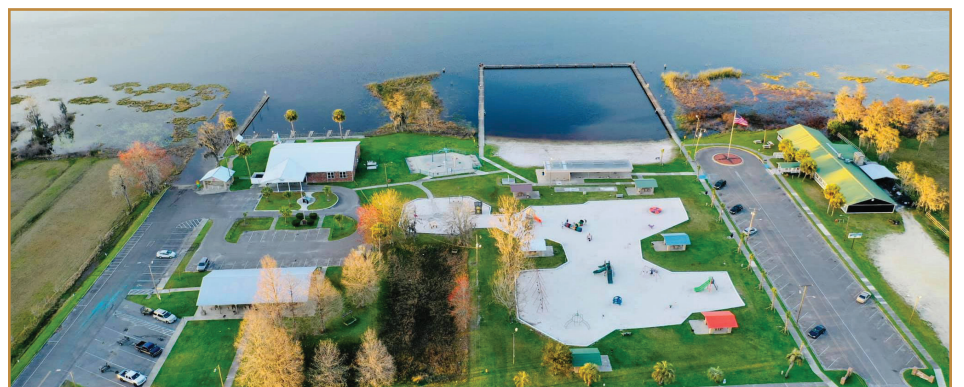
**Internet Services**  
Century Link - (888) 723-8010  
Comcast (855) 525-2512

**Educational Information  
Bradford County School  
Board**  
501 W Washington St., Starke,  
FL 32091  
904-966-6800

**North Florida Technical  
College**  
609 N Orange St, Starke, FL  
32091  
(904) 966-6764

**Sante Fe College**  
Andrews Center  
Director, LaToya Chandler  
209 W. Call St. , Starke, FL  
32091  
904-964-5382

**Employment Information  
CareerSource**  
**North Central Florida**  
904-964-8092 Job Seekers  
904-964 WORK Employers  
925 N. Temple Ave., Suite C.,  
Starke, FL 32091





# Bradford County Manager Scott Kornegay Commissioners and Staff



**County Manager- Scott Kornegay**  
**Executive Assistant – Amanda Brown**  
**County Attorney - Rob Bradley**

The Bradford County Manager is the administrative head of the county and is responsible for the administration of all departments of the county government over which the Board of County Commissioners has authority pursuant to Florida law. The County Manager is appointed by and is directly accountable to the Board of County Commissioners.

The County Manager is responsible for implementing and executing the policies, ordinances and budget adopted by the Board; and directly oversees the management and operations of numerous departments of county government to ensure the county operates efficiently and effectively.

Scott Kornegay is a lifelong public servant and a veteran of the US Air Force and Florida Air National Guard. He retired from the Jacksonville Fire and Rescue Department with nearly 24 years of service. Scott is the former city manager of the City of Keystone Heights and most recently served as the Executive Director of the Lake Region Development Corporation. He holds a Master of Public Administration degree from the University of North Florida and earned a bachelor's degree in public administration from Flagler College. Scott lives on Lake Santa Fe with his wife of 38 years, Diane and his bird dog, Lincoln.



## **District 1, Carolyn Spooner**

District 1, Carolyn Spooner  
P.O. Drawer B, Starke, FL 32091  
Office: (904) 966-6327  
Cell: (904) 966-1307  
Email:  
carolyn\_spooner@bradfordcountyfl.gov

## **District 2, Kenny Thompson**

P.O. Drawer B, Starke, FL 32091  
Office: (904) 966-6327  
Cell: (904) 796-2261  
Email: bocc@bradfordcountyfl.gov

## **District 3, Chris Dougherty**

P.O. Drawer B, Starke, FL 32091  
Office: (904) 966-6327  
Cell: (904) 796-7095  
Email:  
chris\_dougherty@bradfordcountyfl.gov

## **District 4, Danny Riddick**

P.O. Drawer B, Starke, FL 32091  
Office: (904) 966-6327  
Cell: (352) 318-4950  
Email: bocc@bradfordcountyfl.gov

## **District 5, Diane Andrews**

P.O. Drawer B, Starke, FL 32091  
Office: (904) 966-6327  
Cell: (904) 796-0782  
Email:  
diane\_andrews@bradfordcountyfl.gov







**Bradford County Building, Zoning and Fire Prevention**

Building Official- Rod Crawford II  
Executive Assistant – Aleshia Wilsey  
Zoning Director – Randy Andrews  
Fire Marshal – Chris Cooksey

Our goal is to serve the residents of Bradford County with professionalism and efficiency through licensing, permitting and inspections to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of our community. Our staff has over 14 years of experience and not to mention we all live in this wonderful county.



The Building Department can help customers with permits needed for their home renovation, additions, or new construction, installing a mobile or modular home. We issue roof, AC, electrical and plumbing permits. We also help customers with fraud or unlicensed activity. Our Zoning Department will also help answer any questions you have about land use, zoning or rezoning, setbacks, flood zones, land development and much more. The departments wouldn't be complete without the Fire Marshal which offers life safety inspections for assisted living, daycares, new or existing commercial buildings, and change of occupancy. We love visitors and want to keep YOU on task during your next project!  
*Please visit our website to receive more info or call 904-966-6223 [www.bradfordcountyfl.gov/building](http://www.bradfordcountyfl.gov/building)*



**Community Development**

Community Development Director- Kelly Canady

Our mission is to improve our housing stock in Bradford County. We strive daily to improve the quality of life for all qualified residents. We assist in home repairs and purchase assistance for affordable homes. We take pride in helping make our community a better place every day.



**Department of Health**

Department of Health Administrator- Amie Oody

The Department of Health provides excellent work by focusing on healthy lifestyles and behaviors, public safety, maternal and child health. These goals are accomplished through staff that are empowered and trained to perform their job duties to the best of their ability with professionalism and dedication to improving the health of our Bradford community. The health department believes establishing partnerships and community commitments are key to improving the health status of residents and working closely with the Board of County Commissioners, local health advisory boards, and outside organizations vested in advancing health care issues in the community.



**Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Service Officer- Barbara Fischer

Our goal is to assist veterans and family members with their claims with the Veterans Affairs department. In addition, we also help them get military documentation of the veteran's military service. We enjoy helping the veterans and their family members navigate the VA claims process. Barbara is retired from the Air Force after more than 23 years of service.





**Fire Rescue**

Chief of Fire Rescue- Ben Carter

he Fire Rescue team is comprised of highly trained and skilled professionals who are in-credibly passionate about protecting this community. We believe it is our duty to be at our best when you are at your worst. We take great pride in our commitment to training and continuing education, which ensures that our team is always up to date with the latest tech-niques and best practices in emergency medicine and firefighting. Regardless of whatever challenges we may be facing, the bottom line is “we’ve got you covered”.



**County Library**

Library Director- Kim Crawford

he library’s mission is to provide materials, and programs that provide information and in-spiration to the citizens of Bradford County. he library has a story time room, Genealogy/Florida room, Conference room, large meeting room, and two study rooms as well as office and workspace for the staff within it 19,266 sq. ft. of space. here are 30 public computers for different age groups available to the public. he library provides fiction and non-fiction materials in print and electronic formats for all ages to read and listen to. We also have a substantial DVD Collection that will appeal to all ages. he library has copiers, printing, and scanning available and we currently have two staff members available to provide no-tary services. he library currently provides programming for all ages from babies to more mature residents.

he library also provides ESE programs for middle school and high school students, and we are planning programs to begin programs for County residents with spe-cial needs. he library regularly partners with the University of Florida extension office to provide programming designed to enhance the lives of Bradford County residents.



Solid Waste



Director



Housekeeping

**Public Works**

Public Works Director- Jason Dodds

- preserve the County’s investment in roadways, bridges, facilities, and environment by planning, implementing and administrating maintenance, inspection, and reconstruction.
- provide an effective, efficient, safe environmentally sensitive mosquito control service.
- preserve, protect, and improve the environment by promoting recycling and proper solid waste handling and management practices.
- provide all public roads with signs and signals.
- provide support services during natural disasters or other emergencies.



Fleet Maintenance



Road Department



**UF/ IFAS Extension Bradford County**

Extension Director- Dr. Cynthia Sanders

he Bradford Extension provides research-based solutions to the community. We are dedicated to developing knowledge in agriculture, human and natural resources, and the life sciences and to making that knowledge accessible to sustain and enhance the quality of human life.



# UF/IFAS Bradford County Extension Offers a Variety of Educational Programs for Citizens of All Ages

The UF/IFAS Bradford County Extension Office provides educational programming in a variety of areas including Agriculture, Natural Resources, Horticulture, Small Farms and 4-H Youth Development. From providing training to home gardeners to working with farmers on pasture management to embryology education in schools, these and many other programs are available to all citizens in Bradford County.

The Extension Office is a partnership between the United States Department of Agriculture, the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, and the Bradford County Board of County Commissioners.

There are many success stories to tell about how Extension is making a difference in Bradford County. For example, in 2024:

- Thirty-four producers managing around 3,200 acres of pastureland in the county learned how to take a soil sample and properly identify pasture weeds for proper herbicide application rates resulting in money saved for their farming operations.
- After consulting with Extension staff, the City of Starke began an implementation of Florida Friendly Landscaping practices within the city limits. This results

not only in economic savings, but lower maintenance costs and greater aesthetics in the downtown area.

- The 4-H Youth Development Program served Bradford County youth through community clubs and school enrichment activities. Youth developed life skills through a variety of projects including livestock, public speaking, creative arts, shooting sports, gardening, and food & nutrition. Additionally, the 10th Annual Bradford 4-H Beef Bash Cattle Prospect Show took place at the beginning of 2025 hosting over 100 youth and 158 head of cattle. This learning experience for youth in preparation for the county fair was also a fundraising event for the 4-H program with 33 local sponsors and vendors supporting local youth.

Along with faculty and staff, there is a community of volunteers that support Extension in Bradford County. Master Gardeners and 4-H volunteers gave back 3,463 hours of service to the community equaling a value of \$109,465.

The UF/IFAS Bradford County Extension Office is located at 2266 N. Temple Avenue in Starke. For more information, visit <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/bradford/> or call (904) 966-6224.





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— STARKE, FLORIDA —

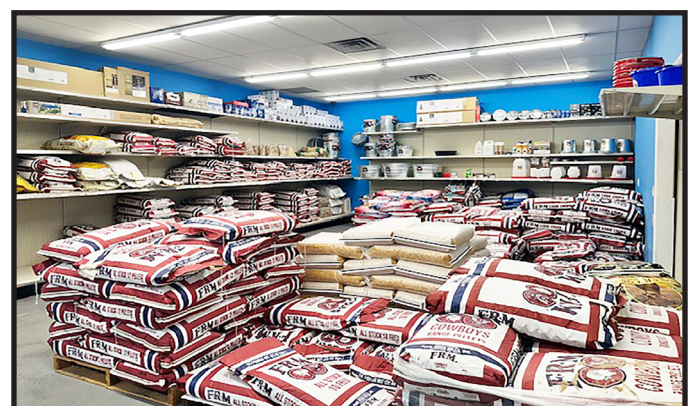
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# CITY OF STARKE AND COMMISSIONERS

*The City of Starke is in the midst of a new revitalization from the ground up. The City Commission and City leadership have secured millions of dollars in grants for projects from “City-Walk” that reimagines the downtown entertainment square, to upgrading and rehabilitating underground infrastructure throughout the City to provide for current and future needs. The City continues to grow with new businesses and new residents while still maintaining its local charm.*



**Mayor, District 5**  
**Andy Redding**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** aredding@cityofstarke.org



**Vice-Mayor, District 2**  
**Janice D. Mortimer**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** jmortimer@cityofstarke.org



**Commissioner, District 1**  
**Danny Nugent**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** dnugent@cityofstarke.org



**Commissioner, District 3**  
**Bob Milner**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** bmilner@cityofstarke.org



**Commissioner, District 4**  
**Scott Roberts**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** sroberts@cityofstarke.org



**Chief Administrative Officer**  
**Jimmy Crosby**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** JCrosby@cityofstarke.org



**General Manager Starke Utilities**  
**Drew Mullins**  
209 North Thompson Street  
Starke, FL 32091  
**Phone:** (904) 964-5027  
**Email:** CBradley@cityofstarke.org



## NEW PROJECTS



### Splash Pad

Grant funded by FRDAP  
grant to provide more  
equipment



### Pickleball Courts

Grant funded by FRDAP  
grant and Starke Rotary  
Club to convert tennis  
courts to pickleball



**Wastewater  
Treatment Facility**  
\$26 million upgrade  
for more efficient and  
cleaner treatment



## CITY OF STARKE DEPARMENTS



### Electric -

- Supervisor David Sparks & Steven Warren
- Florida's oldest municipal power provider
- Work being done to improve reliability
- Modernizing system and reporting data



### Public Works -

- Supervisor Danny Griffis
- Responsible for water distribution, sewer collections, and streets
- Work ongoing to replace aging infrastructure
- New \$26 million wastewater treatment plant



## CITY OF STARKE DEPARMENTS



### **Meter Department -**

- Supervisor Raymond Jones
- Responsible for reading all water, natural gas, and electric meters
- Beginning an AMI meter replacement project



### **Gas/Brush & Right of Way -**

- Supervisor Jay Hodge
- Responsible for all natural gas distribution and install
- Provides natural gas to residential and commercial customers
- Brush and Right of way responsible for inmate work squads, mowing, and general maintenance





# Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation: Growing Business, Strengthening Communities

**T**he Northeast Florida Economic Development Corporation (NEFEDC) is dedicated to fostering economic growth, attracting new businesses, and supporting the success of existing businesses throughout the region. As the economic driver in our region, we work closely with businesses, government leaders, and community organizations to create opportunities that lead to job creation, infrastructure improvements, and long-term prosperity.

For businesses considering expansion or relocation, NEFEDC serves as a vital resource, providing expert guidance on strategy, available sites, workforce development programs, and financial incentives. We help companies navigate local, state, and federal programs that provide funding, tax incentives, and infrastructure grants to make their transition to Northeast Florida as smooth and cost-effective as possible.

One of NEFEDC's 2024 successes was helping Bradford County secure funding through the Community Partnership Technical Assistance (CPTA) Grant, a crucial step in advancing the county's economic development strategy. This grant, awarded through Florida Commerce, supported the development of marketing materials, digital outreach efforts, and the creation of a comprehensive economic development strategic plan. With this funding, Bradford County is now actively promoting its business-friendly environment, showcasing available sites, and highlighting its workforce capabilities to attract investment and job growth.

In addition to securing funding, NEFEDC actively engages with businesses and site selectors to position Northeast Florida as a prime location for industries such

as aviation, manufacturing, logistics, agribusiness, and renewable energy. Our team works to ensure that businesses have access to the

infrastructure and workforce they need to thrive. We also assist local municipalities in identifying funding opportunities to enhance water, sewer, broadband, and road infrastructure—critical components for sustainable growth.

Beyond economic growth, NEFEDC is committed to strengthening communities. We collaborate with local partners to enhance quality of life, support small businesses, and improve access to workforce training. By working hand-in-hand with organizations such as CareerSource, Santa Fe College, and North Florida Technical College, we help develop programs that prepare residents for high-demand careers and equip businesses with a skilled workforce.

As we look ahead to 2025 and beyond, NEFEDC will continue to champion economic opportunities that benefit both businesses and residents. Whether you're an entrepreneur, a growing company, or a community leader, we're here to help you succeed. Together, we can build a stronger, more prosperous Bradford County and Northeast Florida.

## **Our Team:**

Amber Shepherd, Strategic Alliances Business Partner  
Dawn Strickland, Chair & CEO  
Derick Thomas, Vice President  
Patricia Evans, Treasurer  
Marty Shaw, Secretary  
Sandra Kahle, Immediate Past Chair  
Dean Weaver, Director  
Evan Douglas, Director  
Anthony Graves, Director  
David Kirkland, Director  
Dr. Gina Greenidge, Director  
Soo Gilvarry, Director

Visit [www.nefedc.com](http://www.nefedc.com) to learn more or contact us at [info@nefedc.com](mailto:info@nefedc.com) / 352-721-1209. You can also find us on LinkedIn and Facebook.





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# Things to do in Bradford County

## The Florida International Rally & Motorsport Park

7266 Airport Rd • Starke, FL 32091

(352) 473-2999

The FIRM is home to RallyPro Performance Driving School and the International Security Academy (ISA). ISA, relies upon the RallyPro Performance Driving School to teach units how to safely extract assets, at high-speeds and across varying terrain. All RallyPro instructors are highly skilled and the most diverse technical drivers in the world; uniquely experienced in vehicle dynamics, for high-speed, and high-risk drivertraining. The FIRM provides mission critical scenarios across surface changes at high-speeds. The weight transfer that occurs from surface transitions when going off-road, then back onto the tarmac, is the number one cause of fatalities for untrained drivers. RallyPro instructors teach advanced vehicle management skills that protect assets and saves lives.

## Public Boat Ramps

Various locations • Bradford County, FL 32091

(904) 964-5278

If you like to fish or ski, there's public boat ramps located in and around Bradford County where you can put in your boat and go fishing or skiing. There's Lake Sampson, Hampton Lake, Lake Santa Fe, Lake Alto and more.

## Gold Head State Park

6239 State Rd 21 • Keystone Heights, FL 32656

(352) 473-4701

One of Florida's first state parks since 1935. The initial property was donated by Martin J. "Mike" Roess and developed by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The CCC was launched in 1933 to combat unemployment during the Depression. In 1935, 25 craftsmen from Company 2444 were sent to the Gold Head site where they were joined by hundreds of CCC youth and established Camp SP-5. Together they planted trees, cleared areas for campsites, built roads and constructed many of the buildings.

## Bradford County Fair Grounds

2300 North Temple Avenue • Starke, FL 32091

(904) 964-5252

The annual Bradford County Fair. There is Cattle and Swine, their respective shows and sales. The Goat and Poultry exhibitions will be back this year as well. Lots of great food will be returning including The Kiwanis Club, featuring their great Bar-B-Que and other delicacies, The Rotary Club, featuring their funnel cakes!, along with Shands Hospital Auxiliary serving their famous Strawberry Shortcake!

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The FIRM



Public Boat Ramp



Fair





### Bradford Sportsmen's Farm

11394 SW 106th Ave. • Graham, FL 32042  
(352) 485-2302

The Bradford Sportsmen's Farm shooting range is located in Graham, FL and offers some of the best and most diverse shooting facilities available to the public in one site. These facilities include two fully automated, 14 station sporting clay courses with two machines at each station. We also have two fully automated 5-stands controlled by portable long-range controllers as well as a 25-yard pistol range, a 50-yard rifle and pistol range, a 300-yard rifle range, and an 850-yard rifle range. Our sporting clays courses are designed to accommodate all shooter skill levels with one course for novice to intermediate skilled shooters and another for tournament level shooters. New to our facility is our covered and air conditioned banquet facility.



### Kingsley Lake

Kingsley Lake is an almost circular lake of about 2,000 acres in North Central Florida, about six miles east of Starke, Florida. According to some sources, it is the oldest and highest lake in Florida, located on the edge of the Trail Ridge formation. The lake is a very stable lake with a sandy bottom. Its deepest part is about 90 feet.

### Edwards Road Complex

417B West Edwards Road • Starke, FL 32091  
(904) 964-8334  
City of Starke Baseball Complex

### Biking

Just west of Starke you will find: Lake Sampson, Lake Rowell, and Lake Crosby. Fish these waters for bluegill, sunfish, crappie, and both sunshine and largemouth bass. Lake Sampson, in particular, is a fishermen's paradise. Lake Sampson and Rowell are connected by a canal, which is passable by small boat. Canoeing, swimming, picnicking, and hiking trails are also available. If you enjoy biking, you'll enjoy riding the Starke – Lake Butler Loop. This 61-mile bicycle route passes through Starke, as well as Hampton and Brooker, on its way around to Lake Butler.



### Camp Blanding Museum

5629 FL-16 #3040 • Starke, FL 32091  
(904) 682-3196

The Museum houses a colorful collection of weapons (U.S. and foreign). a refurbished World War II barracks, houses a colorful collection of weapons, photo exhibits, mannequins in uniform, and other artifacts. These exhibits tell the story of Camp Blanding, the units that trained there, and the surrounding area during World War II.  
<http://www.bradfordcountyfloridatourism.com>  
if you need more pictures or more information





As Bradford County grows, its dining options expand as well. In the past year, residents throughout the region have been able to expand their culinary experience with the addition of homegrown restaurants that feature Jamaican fare, Texas craft barbecue, a traditional homestyle menu and southern barbecue.

Let's sample all four. All you need to do is to bring your appetite.

### Blueline Q

15070 U.S. Highway 301, Starke.

The first hint you get about their barbecue is their hours. The sign on the door says they open at 11 a.m. Wednesday through Saturday, and close when they run out of meat.

They don't serve leftovers from the previous day, so their pits are stocked with 200 pounds of brisket, 180 pounds of pork, 23 slabs of ribs, 21 pounds of jalapeno cheese sausage, 40 pounds of beef ribs and 40 pounds of beef tri-tip every morning at 3:30 a.m.

"The earliest we've sold out was 1:20 in the afternoon," said retired Lee County Sheriff's Office deputy and owner/pitmaster Matthew Davis

For those who aren't familiar with Starke, finding Blueline Q can be a chore. Just look for the welding store on the westside of U.S. Highway 301. The search is worth it.

Davis arrives at 3:30 a.m. every Wednesday through Saturday and his grills don't stop smoking. And he's insistent on one thing: he never serves leftovers.

"If we don't sell out, we send it home with our servers,"

Davis said. "We start fresh every day. We're always cooking. Our pits run the whole time; everything stays running between the offsets and rotisseries."

When Davis retired from the Lee County Sheriff's Office, he knew he couldn't transition to a leisurely routine in a rocking chair.

"I had to find something to do," he said. "I couldn't sit around. I set up a tent at North Florida Hospital and sold \$700 in tacos in one day. So I went back. A couple of weeks later, I did \$1,200. In the third week, I did \$1,400.

"So I bought my first food truck. It was a repo food truck. I put in new fryers, refrigerators, and everything and started the Texas barbecue that grew into Blueline Q. I never would have thought we would have gotten to the size we are. We have truly been blessed. I can tell you that because I went from putting people in jail to being blessed."



### Sky-D's Place

1706 NW County Road 225, Lawtey

The last thing Skylar Davis wanted was a second restaurant. He already owned Dalton's Sports Bar and Grill in Middleburg that had exceeded all financial and customer expectations, so he didn't necessarily have to take on a new project.



"The opportunity presented just itself," Davis said. "I've always said for years I would not ever deal with two restaurants because of the stress of

one is enough. But the opportunity was right and too good to pass up. We are just going to take it and run with it."

Davis admitted there was another underlying reason for turning the former Barnyard Diner into his family restaurant.

"Business skyrocketed and took off at Dalton's, which is great," Davis said. "It's been crazy busy, and I'm blessed to have that. But it got away from the slight town feel of being able to have fun and have random daily specials, and to keep the gears turning to keep it afloat.

"Something like a smaller location can be more of a creative kitchen for me, than just the same thing every single day, just pumping the food out to keep the masses happy. Hopefully,

continued on page 25



we'll have lots of business there, but it won't be as crazy overwhelming as Dalton's is."

Davis said the menu at Sky-D's Place will feature the same chicken wings served at Dalton's—which was named after his brother—but he will also offer more homestyle offerings like chicken and dumplings, beef tips and rice, chicken and rice, country fried steak, fried catfish, fried venison and gizzards.

## G's BBQ

915 N. Temple Ave, Starke

Gary Park stood ankle-deep in soot-stained water on Jan. 9, 2024, a few hours after his G's Slow Smoked BBQ was destroyed by a fast-moving fire in Orange Park.

The roof had holes, and portions of the back wall were charred. He knew it wasn't salvable, but his immediate concern was for the employees suddenly without a job.

One month later he bought the old Pizza Hut in Starke after receiving a telephone call from Wiggins Construction about the building. Park initially thought it was a chance to get his former employees back to work quicker than expected.

Renovations took longer than expected, but it was worth the wait. A busy restaurant lobby is a testament to G's BBQ's traditional award-winning southern barbecue.

"I didn't know what to expect, to be honest, but I was quite

"I'm returning to the roots to reignite my creativity," he said. "People say I'm crazy because I've got Dalton's, Sky-D's, by podcast "Woodshed Confessions" and new baby girl, but the new restaurant will bring me back to my roots. It will let me be creative again."

Sky-D's Place's grand opening is planned for May.

surprised," Park said. "I tell you; they've been very receptive. The community has been great for us. It's turned out to be something quite surprising."

So good that Park is already expanding the restaurant to add grills for steaks. He's also pushing additional space at the rear of the restaurant to add walk-in coolers and smokers.

"We got great reviews on the food. It's taking a little bit to tweak it for the community," Park said. "It's our base recipes. It's just getting everybody, our new people, everybody working together in the kitchen and making certain the end product is consistent."

Park plans to rebuild Clay County on U.S. Highway 17 in Green Cove Springs. The plans call for a three-story building near Garber AutoMall, with the first two floors encompassing a barbecue restaurant and the third floor occupied by a cigar bar. Park said the ground-breaking will take place in late spring.

## Caribbean Soul

200 Call St., Starke

Caribbean Soul offers items you won't find anywhere else in Bradford County, such as oxtails, jerk chicken, curry goat, peas and rice and curry chicken.

The one thing you won't find, however, are recipes.

"The recipes are all made by my grandmother," said manager Christopher Shackelford. "I mean, she and my granddad are the ones who cook the food. They have their style of how they make it. They have a certain way they make it. They're the only two that cook the food. The recipes have been her recipes that she's used all her life, she's been cooking since she was little, when she used to watch her parents cook. The meals just come from the heart.

"She doesn't write anything down. There is no recipe book. Every time she cooks, it's from her heart."

The grandmother, Vercille Hightower, has created a following. Caribbean Soul has continually received outstanding reviews from customers who wanted to venture outside their customary gastronomic boundaries.

"Everybody's been looking for a Caribbean restaurant," Hightower said. "They really say that they're glad the restaurant opened in that spot because they usually have to drive to Jacksonville to find that type of food."

Shackelford said the family knew it was risky to open a business, especially one that served a diverse menu. However, they knew that the same menu gave them an edge.

"It was a big leap of faith. We all invested," he said. "We went all into the restaurant once the opportunity was presented. We pushed forward and we revamped everything inside.

"We didn't know how it was going to go. But, you know, business has been good. That has been steady. People have been coming in and spreading the word about the restaurant, so we continue to get business."

Just don't ask what's in a recipe. The only one who knows is Vercille, and she doesn't have it written down.





# Bradford Sportsmen's Farm aims to be best, diverse shooting facility

Customers have been having a blast – literally – at the Bradford Sportsmen's Farm since 1990.

The 183-acre shooting range in Graham continues to flourish for a basic reason, co-owner Danny Stefanelli said: "Everything we make, we put back into it."

The range's calendar is filled with local, state and national events. Still, there are plenty of opportunities for local shooters to hone their skills, attend classes with a National Sporting Clay Association certified shotgun instructor, or a National Rifle Association and U.S. Concealed Carry Association instructor's conceal or safety course.

The facility is so highly regarded, it has been selected to host the state championships every four years.

"Guns have been popular for a long time, but it's really just taken off probably since COVID-19, because shooting was one of the outdoor sports during that time," Stefanelli said. "That's what people turned to. Golf picked up. It was just something that they could go outside and get away from each other."

Stefanelli's grandfather, Al, and Pat Welch were part of an investment group that purchased the land and created Bradford Sportsmen's Farm 35 years ago. Al Stefanelli and Welch eventually became the only owners, and when Al



died, Danny bought his half of the business.

Stefanelli also owns Bradford Gun on North Temple Avenue in Starke, but he said the shop will move to the Sportsmen's Farm.

While some shooters use the farm to sharpen their skills for protection, Stefanelli said the majority are there for entertainment.

"You've always got your crowd out there for their security," he said. "This is a very much a recreational sport, no different than golf. The only difference is you're shooting for a high score, not a low score."

Bradford Sportsmen's Farm is located at 11394 SW 106th Ave. in Graham.

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# Rails to Trails: Take a hike on the Palatka-Lake Butler State Trail

**T**he paved, multi-use recreational Palatka-Lake Butler State Trail is situated in one of the state's most picturesque areas. This Northeast Florida region warmly welcomes the Florida State Park's trail for the enhanced quality of life and economic benefits it offers to many small towns and communities.

The trail corridor stretches nearly 47 miles from west of U.S. 17 in Palatka to State Road 238 in Lake Butler. It runs along the former Norfolk-Southern Railroad right-of-way through Putnam, Clay, Bradford and Union counties.

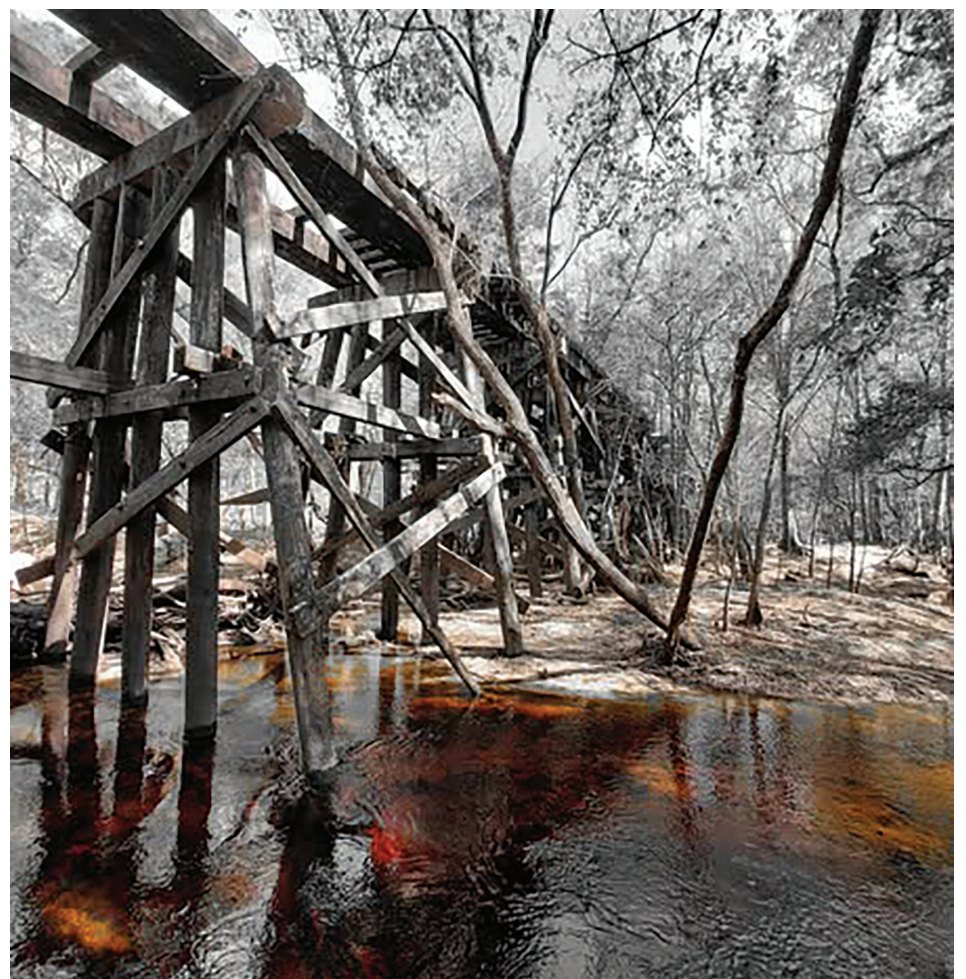
Purchased with Preservation 2000 funds through the Florida Greenways and Trails Acquisition Program, the Rails to Trails Conservancy played a key role in preserving the corridor for conversion to a rail-trail. It was designated as part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System in 2007, and the Florida Department of Transportation is constructing it in segments as funding becomes available.

Bradford County's portion runs 10.25 miles along the county's southern portion from Park of the Palms, through Theresa to Hampton to less than 2 miles south of State Road 100 to Lake Butler.

It includes the old railroad trestle crossing the New River on the Union/Bradford County line near Lake Butler.

This Northeast Florida region welcomes this state trail for the enhanced quality of life and economic benefits it offers to many small towns and communities.

The trail accommodates hiking, horseback riding, walking and running, water fountains, equestrian trails, and pets on leashes that are less than six feet.



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## Chamber of Commerce Annual Community Recognition

### NFRCC Business of the Year: Exact Spray Foam Solutions, Clint Welding

Exact Spray Foam Solutions was started March 2022 with one spray foam rig and 2 employees. They purchased a second rig in May of 2024 and now have 7 employees. They have completed over 300 jobs with over half being in Bradford, Union & Clay Counties. While Florida does not currently require certification in order to own or operate a spray foam business, Clint has taken the initiative to become certified. While at the spray foam convention Vegas this past March, he passed the first two tests and became SPFA Certified. Unlike other certifying organizations, PCP Certifications are not awarded based on course completion. All candidates must demonstrate a level of knowledge, skills and abilities that only comes with validation through testing and experience. He will be taking

the final tests to become Certified SPF Insulation Master Installer and Certified SPF Insulation Project Manager at the February Convention in Daytona this year. Again while these are not current requirements, this will set the business apart from competitors in the SPF industry. While creating a sustainable business was the goal, Exact Spray Foam Solutions felt a great responsibility to give back to the local community that has been so supportive. In their short existence, they have sponsored several athletic school programs including the UCHS Softball, Volleyball, Baseball & Basketball teams and Babe Ruth baseball teams in 2023 & 2024. They have contributed to buying pigs and cows at both the Bradford County and the Union County Livestock Show & Sale. They also



supported other community organizations including the Union County Club, United for a Cure, UC Back to School Bash and the LB Rotary Club annual Independence fundraiser. They provided spray insulation at cost to two local non-profit organizations that utilize their services. Lastly, they have completed the required steps and are both FPL & Clay Electric "Participating Independent Contractors" in the Residential Ceiling Insulation program. FPL's program offers a maximum of \$1,200 and Clay Electric offers \$600 on retro spray foam insulations upgrades.



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## Chamber of Commerce Annual Community Recognition

### J. E. Tomlinson Business Person of the Year: Lorie Riley

Lorie Riley, the visionary owner of Nicky's Beauty Bar, is a powerhouse in the beauty industry and a passionate advocate for excellence and community. With over 35 years of experience, Lorie has not only built a thriving business but has also shaped the careers of countless individuals through her leadership and mentorship. At the helm of Nicky's Beauty Bar, she leads a dynamic team of more than 25 employees, fostering innovation and culture of empowerment.

Lorie's dedication to our small-town shines through her roles with the Florida Gateway College Cosmetology Board, the Downtown Merchants Association, and the Woman's Club of Starke, where she champions growth, collaboration and community upliftment.

Most recently, Lorie expanded her skills as the Production Manager for a local theatrical production, showcasing her talent for fostering teamwork and creativity. Her willingness to embrace new challenges with confidence and determination highlights her steadfast commitment to making a positive impact.

Looking ahead, Lorie is expanding her entrepreneurial vision with Oli and Vinny, a unique food store offering tasting experiences and indoor picnics, set to become a welcoming space for the community to gather and connect.

Lorie Riley is more than a business leader – she is a cornerstone of our community, a mentor and an inspiration



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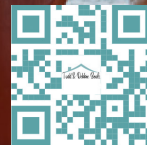
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## Chamber of Commerce Annual Community Recognition

### *Judy Becker Volunteer of the Year: Edrick Hamilton*

Edrick Hamilton has been volunteering most of his life, in the community in various capacities. As a young man, he was always very respectful, mannerly, and a hard worker as a student and an excellent role model for other students. As an adult, he chose education as his profession, which was a gift and a calling for him not just a job. Many years ago, he began, as a volunteer, the non-profit titled 12 Guys in Ties and 12 Girls in Pearls. He has worked tirelessly to provide mentoring, community service opportunities, and fundraising opportunities for young people. He includes students with diverse abilities, from many different races and backgrounds. He donates countless hours to his participants, including nights and weekends, providing them with activities that they would not otherwise be able to experience. He is very dedicated to his members and their families. He also provides a Summer Stem Camp for Elementary aged students, giving a safe, educational workweek option to parents. Students are not only provided engaging opportunities but also meals and snacks. All of this occurs in our community, serving our local student while he works in a different county. He is married and has two children who adore him. He attends True Vine Ministries and is an active member. Having a heart for young people and continuing to work in our community, there are many evident fruits from his labors. Many of his mentees are recipients of scholarships upon graduation, with exemplary grades, attendance, and behavior.





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