

## EDC of Okaloosa Case Study:

# PROPS CRAFT BREWERY



Props Craft Brewery was established in Fort Walton Beach in 2011 by two US Air Force pilots. Since their humble beginnings as a small brewpub, the company has ridden a wave of growth as American consumers have embraced locally made craft beverages. In order to accommodate growing demand and the need for regional distribution, the company needed a larger facility that could house commercial brewery operations. Props ownership considered several locations before ultimately deciding to establish their newest venture in a 9,445 square foot building in the Fort Walton Beach Commerce & Technology Park. This expansion will result in \$1.3 million in capital expenditures and allow Props to create 11 new jobs while attracting industry specialists in brewing, cellaring, distribution and chemical engineering.

The new facility opened in December 2016 and allows Props to produce ten times the amount of beverage than at present. In addition, the facility features a state-of-the-art taproom where customers may sample product and view the brewery operation.

To ensure that this investment and the resulting jobs occurred in Okaloosa County, the EDC coordinated an attractive incentive package including a 100% impact fee reduction from the City of Fort Walton Beach, economic development ad valorem tax exemptions from both Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa County, and a grant from the University of West Florida's Office of Economic Development & Engagement. In addition, EDC investor First Partners Bank was a key player in the project, first connecting Props owners to the EDC.

Michael Kee, company co-founder said, "The professionals at the EDC guided us through processes that we did not even know existed. I would encourage any business, no matter their experience, to consult the EDC."



Left: Owners Michael Kee, Travis Peterson, Brian O'Neill and Nathan Vannatter at the Props Craft Brewery Distribution Center Grand Opening.