



**RESOLUTION No. 2016-9**  
**SUPPORTING THE NORTH FLORIDA FREIGHT RAIL ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM**  
**FASTLANE GRANT APPLICATION**

**WHEREAS**, On October 28, 2016, the United States Department of Transportation (U.S.DOT) announced the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects (FASTLANE Grants) program with approximately \$850 million in available funds for FY2017; and

**WHEREAS**, The FASTLANE program was established under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act to provide Federal financial assistance to projects of national or regional significance. The application deadline is December 15, 2016; and

**WHEREAS**, For over two and a half decades Northeast Florida has wrestled with fixing a transportation bottleneck spanning both sides of the St. Johns River in Downtown Jacksonville. The convergence of two Class 1 railroads (CSX and Norfolk Southern), and FEC Railroad have created a multitude of problems that have grown by an "order of magnitude" as freight traffic, highway traffic and the Northeast Florida community has grown; and

**WHEREAS**, In early 2016, JTA, COJ, North Florida TPO, FDOT and freight carriers worked together to submit an application for the first round of the FASTLANE Grant, specifically requesting \$21,973,563 in funding, for the \$36,622,605 project, which called for improvements to the rail interchange include four (4) primary components:

- (1) Modernize rail switches and connective track primarily used for FEC traffic;
- (2) Installation of a 7,000 feet staging track to eliminate congestion and hospital blockages;
- (3) Upgrade signal and track at joint CSX/FEC Beaver Street Interlocking; and
- (4) Installation of CTC improvements over 5.35 miles of FEC track.

**WHEREAS**, Phase II of the North Florida Freight Rail Enhancement Program, also known locally as the FEC Signal Modernization and Interchange Upgrade, is a component of a larger multi-phased freight improvement plan to enhance Jacksonville's standing as "America's Logistics Center". Phase II of the North Florida Freight Rail Enhancement Program will improve rail fluidity for the Class II Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) and enhance freight interchanges with both East Coast Class I railroads.

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**WHEREAS**, The North Florida Freight Rail Enhancement Program (PHASE II) would improve freight and mobility in the area adjacent to the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center and the Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center on the Northbank, and to the multiple crossings on the Southbank next to Baptist Hospital and other businesses and residential locations; and

**WHEREAS**, The North Florida TPO recognizes that an effective transportation system that moves people and goods safely, economically and efficiently, is critical to enhancing our economic competitiveness and quality of life.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the North Florida TPO supports the North Florida Fastlane Grant Application to improve and enhance freight movement through the North Florida region.

Adopted by the North Florida Transportation Planning Organization in regular meeting assembled in the City of Jacksonville the 10th day of November 2016.

Attest:



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The Honorable Doyle Carter, Chairman



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Jeff Sheffield, Executive Director