

# 04

## Infrastructure Projects

Many significant regional and county-level infrastructure projects are either currently underway or in the planning stage. Once complete, these projects will support all four Elevate Northeast Florida goals. The following pages list some of the more notable projects as they relate to economic development.

# Key Infrastructure Recommendations to Support Industry Growth

Ongoing, longer-term infrastructure investment in the region must continue to support all Elevate Northeast Florida goals. This is especially important given the region's population and economic growth trends. Prepare for continued growth and enhance existing infrastructure to further improve the region's competitiveness for its target industries and talent. **There are a number of critical infrastructure investments that should be taking place during the next five years of Elevate implementation.** This is not designed to be a comprehensive list, but top projects include:

## REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

- Increase coordinated efforts to **improve transit options, connect transit services**, and provide residents with efficient transit services connecting them from one county to another county.
- Support policies and initiatives that will help the region implement **smart infrastructure** such as autonomous and connected vehicles, and dedicated smart technology corridors connecting communities across the region.
- Increase infrastructure investments that improve access to the region's **waterways** for recreation and commerce. Also, complete beach restoration in counties impacted by Hurricanes Matthew and Irma.
- Complete the **First Coast Expressway** from I-10 to I-95 and proceed with construction of the new Shands Bridge.
- Extend **broadband service** to all homes and businesses in the region.
- Continue to rally resources and complete **JAXPORT's harbor deepening** and preparations to accommodate Neopanamax vessels.
- Continue adding **new non-stop flights** from the region, particularly to West Coast and international destinations.
- Ramp up efforts to address **the region's growing demand for housing, particularly workforce housing**. Develop a set of public policy standards for the region, based on national best practices, to guide city and county governments in updating policies to encourage a variety of quality housing within their communities and allow for mixed-use density and job centers along major transportation corridors and future transit hubs.



## Key Infrastructure Recommendations to Support Industry Growth, continued

### COUNTY AND SITE-SPECIFIC INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

- Improve, expand, and plan for new water and wastewater capacity in **Baker County** in anticipation of future growth. Continue investing in buildings and infrastructure on sites around the county, including the Enterprise East Industrial Park and Woodstock Industrial Park. Start construction of the 2.8-mile Midpoint Parkway planned to connect I-10 and the Walmart site.
- Invest in infrastructure to open up business sites in **Clay County**. For example, build a road at the 740-acre Challenger Center and continue to plan for the long-term development of Reynolds Park. Work with local landowners to acquire new properties for development in partnership with utility providers and developers.
- Continue pursuing the **skyway conversion and regional transportation center** in Downtown Jacksonville.
- Continue investing in infrastructure and site readiness at **Cecil Commerce Center**.
- Continue construction and site readiness improvements at **Flagler County Airport**, as well as preparing other shovel-ready sites in the county (particularly large, rail-served properties).
- Work with Florida Power & Light (FPL) to prepare and promote the 1,814-acre Crawford Diamond megasite in **Nassau County**. Complete current transportation construction projects in Nassau County, and work with developers to increase the supply of office and industrial buildings. Begin planning now to increase the county's wastewater capacity.
- Update zoning to allow for the development of a new industrial park(s) in **Putnam County**, and work with providers to extend internet service across Putnam County.
- Expand investment in sites and buildings in **St. Johns County** (and infrastructure to those sites) to increase the tax base coming from primary industries.



Photo credit: Palm Coast Observer



Photo credit: Nassau County Economic Development Board



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# Priority Projects

- **Project title: Mayo Clinic Life Sciences BioIncubator: Harnessing World-class Expertise, Accelerating Commercial Advances in Healthcare and Driving Local Economic Development**
- **Summary:** Lack of innovation investment is an established factor in Florida's underperforming economy.<sup>1,2</sup> The **Mayo Clinic Life Sciences BioIncubator** will help close that gap, stimulating medical product development and innovation by expanding research, entrepreneurship, and commercialization capacity among startup businesses. In fact, the Florida Economic Development Council identifies life science commercialization as a path to a "high performance economy."<sup>1</sup> In response, Mayo Clinic, a global leader in patient care, research, innovation and education, will establish the Life Sciences BioIncubator on its Jacksonville campus (MCF). The BioIncubator will provide a much-needed regional *catalyst* for entrepreneurial activity, crystalizing expertise and resources from not only NE Florida but reaching as far as central Florida (e.g. University of Central Florida) and Georgia (e.g. Georgia Institute of Technology). The BioIncubator will build a *comprehensive* accelerator prepared to drive ideas into commercial products and services, create new companies, and attract complementary businesses, investors, and corporate sponsors. The MCF BioIncubator will achieve its model based on four key strategies:
  - **Commercializing research and intellectual property** by designing, launching, and growing new companies within a dedicated business incubator.
  - **Leading entrepreneurship** within the community by providing access to the MCF incubator's physical assets, education, experience, and thought leadership.
  - **Developing a culture of innovation** across the region by ideation-based problem solving and sharing resources among network partners.
  - **Connecting our regional assets**, facilitating collaboration, and effectively sharing the benefits of an entrepreneurial ecosystem that builds that ecosystem by attracting new companies and opportunities to Florida from around the world.

# Priority Projects (Cont.)

- **Project title: Food Innovation and Business Incubator**
- **Lead/Partners:** Educational and Research Institutions (UF, UNF, Flagler College, First Coast Technical College, etc.), Florida High Tech Corridor Council, Food Industry (Distributors such as , U. S. Food, Beaver St. Fisheries, Retailers, etc.) and End users (Mayo Clinic and hospitals, military, schools, etc.)
- **Resources:** \$8,000,000. Could be two phases. Hub and Product Development
- **Status:** On-going