

MOVING FREIGHT

public investment makes sense

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Public-private partnerships (P3s) to expand freight capacity are innovative approaches gaining more attention and seeing greater implementation. P3 freight capacity projects should contribute to the effectiveness of the entire transportation system with contracts that protect public interests in private facilities.

In Virginia, legislation in 2005 provided the first dedicated source of rail funding. It requires a 30 percent match from private sources, and all projects are done through public-private partnerships. Moving freight with rail has cut 1.5 days off travel time. Estimations are two to three million more trucks will be off the road by 2025.

CSX reports rail is the safest, most environmentally-friendly ground transportation available and is three times more fuel efficient than over-the-road alternatives. As partners in expanding freight capacity, CSX notes there are opportunities for mutual gains. In central Florida, using rail to move freight would reduce I-4 traffic and deliver economic and environmental benefits. A willing

partner to share in cost where states benefit, CSX has estimated one project will produce \$8 in public benefits for every dollar of public funds invested.

Ports are players, too. In Jacksonville, Florida, the port authority has partnered with FDOT to make intersection improvements nearby and is interested in working with CSX on an intermodal container transfer facility.

The Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) in Florida acknowledges rail's importance to the transportation network. Florida, along with Virginia, continues to lead southeast states in pursuing public-private partnerships and estimates P3s leverage \$367.8 million into \$435 million in actual projects.

In a public-private partnership, rail brings much to the table. Economic stimulus becomes real – jobs increase and tax revenues go up. Based on projects done, benefits exceed cost. More trucks are off the road and the environment becomes "greener" through greater fuel efficiency.

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