

1 Introduced by Council Members Johnson, Peluso, Gaffney, Jr., Clark-
2 Murray, Carlucci, and Pittman:

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5 **RESOLUTION 2025-560-A**

6 A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING CITY COUNCIL'S
7 UNWAVERING SUPPORT FOR THE EMERALD TRAIL AS A
8 VISIONARY INFRASTRUCTURE INITIATIVE THAT WILL
9 TRANSFORM JACKSONVILLE'S URBAN CORE, STRENGTHEN
10 COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS, AND ADVANCE EQUITY,
11 MOBILITY, EDUCATION, AND ECONOMIC VITALITY;
12 PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

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14 **WHEREAS,** Jacksonville is a city defined by its rivers, creeks,
15 and neighborhoods, each with its own history, rhythm, and resilience;
16 and the Emerald Trail boldly reimagines how these assets are connected
17 for the benefit of all; and

18 **WHEREAS,** through Resolution 2019-144-A Council adopted the
19 Emerald Trail Master Plan, which identified trail routes, corridors,
20 and design standards to be considered for development adjacent to
21 trail segments, and encouraged community collaboration necessary to
22 implement the Emerald Trail Plan objectives; and

23 **WHEREAS,** the Emerald Trail is a 30-mile network of greenways,
24 side paths, raised cycle tracks, and neighborhood connectors that
25 will unite historic neighborhoods with Downtown Jacksonville, the St.
26 Johns River, McCoys Creek, and Hogans Creek; and

27 **WHEREAS,** this transformative urban mobility corridor will
28 directly link 16 schools, two colleges, three hospitals, 21 public
29 parks, and the Jacksonville Regional Transportation Center, offering
30 safe, multimodal access to education, healthcare, recreation, and
31 economic opportunity; and

1 **WHEREAS,** the Emerald Trail will serve as a vital connection to
2 the forthcoming University of Florida campus in Downtown
3 Jacksonville, integrating higher education into the daily rhythm of
4 urban life while fostering innovation, research, and talent
5 development in direct alignment with the City's future economy; and

6 **WHEREAS,** similar projects across the country have shown
7 dramatic returns on investment: Atlanta's BeltLine has generated over
8 \$8 billion in private investment, New York's High Line catalyzed \$2
9 billion in new development, and Chicago's 606 Trail boosted adjacent
10 property values by as much as 48% within the first five years, while
11 enhancing quality of life, advancing health equity, and fueling
12 tourism and small business growth; and

13 **WHEREAS,** the Emerald Trail is more than concrete and paint, it
14 is a promise, a deliberate investment in public health,
15 transportation, environmental stewardship, and the revitalization of
16 communities long overlooked in infrastructure planning; and

17 **WHEREAS,** the Trail's development through nine distinct
18 segments - including the completed LaVilla Link which pays homage to
19 Jacksonville's cultural legacy with wayfinding, art installations,
20 and historic storytelling - signals not just a physical connection
21 but a spiritual one, linking our past to our future; and

22 **WHEREAS,** this project encourages healthy living, improves
23 public safety, and creates new off-road corridors that reduce
24 dependence on cars and create vibrant, people-first streetscapes that
25 celebrate our city's diversity and geography; and

26 **WHEREAS,** the City Council recognizes that the Emerald Trail
27 represents a generational opportunity to reimagine our built
28 environment, ignite greater economic development, and inspire civic
29 pride for decades to come; now therefore

30 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of the City of Jacksonville:

31 **Section 1.** The City Council hereby affirms its support for

1 the Emerald Trail as a bold and essential undertaking that embodies
2 the values of equity, connectivity, sustainability, educational
3 advancement, and community reinvestment. City Council encourages
4 continued interagency collaboration between the City of Jacksonville,
5 Groundwork Jacksonville, the Jacksonville Transportation Authority,
6 and community partners to complete all segments of the Emerald Trail
7 and ensure its thoughtful integration into the broader urban
8 infrastructure. The Council commits to exploring and supporting
9 diverse avenues of funding and partnership, including opportunities
10 connected to the University of Florida Downtown Campus, to accelerate
11 completion of the Emerald Trail and ensure its success as a national
12 model for trail-based urban transformation. The Emerald Trail shall
13 serve as a cornerstone of Jacksonville's 21st-century identity:
14 dynamic, healthy, innovative, and forward-thinking, reflecting the
15 full potential of our city's natural beauty, interconnected
16 neighborhoods, and limitless promise.

17 **Section 2. Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become
18 effective upon signature by the Mayor or upon becoming effective
19 without the Mayor's signature.

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21 Form Approved:

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23 /s/ MacGillis

24 Office of General Counsel

25 Legislation Prepared By: Colleen Hampsey, City Council Research

26 GC-#1698267-v4-Emeral_Trail_Support_Reso_(Johnson)