



Putnam County *Florida*

PUTNAM COUNTY PORT DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022 PIDP GRANT APPLICATION



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Section I: Project Description

The Putnam County Board of County Commissioners (Putnam County Port Authority) is requesting discretionary USDOT grant funding for Development Phase Activities from the 2022 Port Infrastructure Development (PID) Program, specifically for the preparation of a Port Development Plan (PDP). 61 years ago, a 400' barge berth and some cargo facilities were built by the County in the City of Palatka to provide cargo barge service and access to the St. Johns River Federal Channel, approximately 5,000 feet away. Today, the port facilities are very old, inefficient, and neither safe, nor reliable. Thus, commercial use has diminished significantly.



Putnam County Barge Port Facilities

Putnam County, Florida is rural, agricultural, economically disadvantaged, and fiscally constrained as defined in Florida Statute 288. The County is an Area of Persistent Poverty and is considered a historically disadvantaged community in terms of equity/social, economy, and health indicators. Putnam County has a LMI of 49 percent. LMI is defined by Section 102(a)(20) of the HCDA as a person in a family or an individual with annual income equal to or less than HUD's Section 8 Low Income Limit, generally 80 percent of an area's median family income adjusted for household size. The County's population 65 or older is 24 percent and the median household income is \$40,068. Per capita income is \$22,257, and Putnam County residents living at or below poverty is 24 percent.

In the immediate vicinity of the barge berth there are two County-owned 20,000 square foot cargo warehouses and outdoor cargo laydown area, an active CSX industrial rail spur, excellent roadways providing access to Interstates 75, 10 and 95, available expansion properties, and Port-owned dredge material disposal and reuse facilities. There are local industrial/manufacturing/agricultural businesses, including Veritas Steel, Georgia Pacific, Forest Groves, and Clay Ranch that will use a viable barge port to move their products.

The berth was constructed in 1961; it has been used mostly by cargo barges carrying dry bulks and break-bulk cargoes and recently some hurricane debris for the federal government. During the last fifteen years, use of the barge berth has diminished, because of siltation from abnormally heavy rains and frequent hurricanes. The silt has filled the access channel from the St. Johns River Federal Channel to the berth. Currently this 5,000' channel has a navigable depth of only 6.5 feet. In 2021 the US Army Corps of Engineers initiated a Continuing Authorities Program Section 107 (CAP 107) project to dredge the access channel to a navigable depth of 12' at Mean Low Water. The Jacksonville District of the Corps is currently preparing the project's Feasibility Report. The District is confident that the Feasibility Report will determine that the dredging clearly supports National Economic Development and be justified under CAP 107.

Given the berth's age, its limited, and diminished lateral and vertical load bearing capacities, its rapidly approaching serviceable lifespan as well as its natural deterioration, the County understands that a major retrofit or replacement of the berth is required now. While major retrofit or replacement of the barge berth is quite evident, there is no development plan for the coordinated, efficient, and economic development of the remainder of the port's assets in order to create a new and viable barge port on the St. Johns River in Central Florida.

The County recently decided to pursue the development of a viable barge port by combining the extraordinary transportation assets that they had available, including the port's intermodal connections to all modes of surface transportation (state roads, Interstates 95, 10 and 75 and CSX Rail) and the number of industrial, manufacturing, and agricultural companies in the port's vicinity that would readily ship and receive cargoes through the County's barge port.

The Army Corps of Engineers anticipates the commencement of the access channel dredging in September 2025

with completion in March 2026. Putnam County must have a PDP in place with capital projects preliminarily planned, prioritized and each with a specific funding strategy by March 2026.

The PDP would:

- Examine, inspect, and test the existing barge berth and concrete apron to determine condition of the berth wall and tie back system, remaining service life, load bearing capacity (lateral and vertical), depth of wall embedment, and condition and capacity of the concrete apron behind the berth wall that is used for cargo handling equipment loading and off-loading typical cargoes
- Provide the site planning, preliminary engineering, design and permitting for the replacement or retrofitting of the barge berth as determined in the previous step to accommodate fully loaded jumbo hopper barges (195' x 35' x 12'), two at a time.
- Perform a market/trade lane analysis to identify the Port's probable market (trade lanes), reasonably projected cargoes by type and volume, frequency of facility use and resulting Port use revenues,
- Identify, plan and preliminarily design required behind-the-dock cargo laydown areas, relieving platforms and fixed cargo handling equipment based on projected cargoes,
- Identify requirements for, plan and preliminarily design additional near-dock warehousing or covered cargo storage based on projected cargoes
- Identify, plan, and preliminarily design the development of near-dock freight rail facilities for intermodal freight operations,
- Perform the traffic projection and flow analysis to plan / layout new internal roadway infrastructure to enhance internal cargo movement safety and efficiency,
- Identify, prioritize the use of County-owned properties and acquisition of available properties for port purposes in the vicinity of the berth.
- Perform a preliminary environmental assessment to identify the appropriate NEPA Document and prepare the Section 106 Consultation with the State Historical Preservation Office and the Tribes.
- Develop a comprehensive capital improvement plan in which the Port's projects are identified, prioritized, scheduled and funding sources at local, State and Federal levels for each capital project are identified.

The PDP will plan, permit, and preliminarily design and engineer the essential, interrelated facility and infrastructure projects that will combine to produce an efficient, resilient, and environmentally conscious, emission-reducing barge port and intermodal transportation hub that is strategically positioned between I-95, I-10, and I-75 in Central Florida and on the longest navigable inland waterway in the State. This PDP is the first step in the planning, permitting, and preliminarily engineering and designing a much-needed transportation facility in Putnam County. The nearest Florida ports are Port Canaveral (Cape Canaveral) and JaxPort (Jacksonville). Neither has the available facilities for, nor interest in handling barge-carried cargoes that are predominantly bulks and break-bulk. Putnam County would be performing a niche service that is clearly needed in Central Florida.



Putnam County Barge Port Access Road and Existing Warehouse Buildings

The PDP will ensure the accurate identification of new or enhanced facilities and infrastructure that will efficiently, safely, and reliably address the plan's researched and identified future cargo demands. The capital projects that will support projected port operations, that are identified in the development plan's market/trade lane analysis, will be comprehensively identified, planned, preliminarily engineered, and designed, prioritized, and scheduled to maximize the economic and operational efficiency of port development. Each project will have a funding strategy.

The PDP will serve as a roadmap as Putnam County brings all of its organic transportation assets together to develop a viable barge port in Central Florida. It will address a significantly underserved mode of waterborne

transportation, appropriate to many cargoes originating from or imported to Central Florida. The development plan will evaluate and quantify the positive economic impact of the port's operations on a region that is considered a historically disadvantaged community in terms of equity/social, economy, and health indicators, an Area of Persistent Poverty and Fiscally Constrained.

The development of the Putnam County Port Authority's barge port in Palatka will serve an underserved and neglected segment of the waterborne transportation industry. It will serve to efficiently provide waterborne barge transport and perform intermodal exchanges for locally grown agricultural products, lumber and forest products, fertilizers, car parts, dry bulks, locally fabricated steel bridge sections and other commodities. It will serve as a regional transportation hub and have an enormously positive economic impact on a region of the nation that has been historically underemployed and economically depressed. It will be Putnam County's economic engine.

Section 2: Project Location

The Putnam County Barge Port is situated on the St. Johns River at the barge berth facility in Palatka, FL 32117, as shown in Figure 1. The project is located approximately 40-miles south of Jacksonville, FL, and 80-miles north of Orlando, FL. The project will occur in a rural area at an inland river port. The grant request pertains to a small project at a small port.

Figure 1: Putnam County Barge Port Project Location Map



Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) is defined as the state's high priority network of transportation facilities important to the state's economy and mobility. The Putnam County Barge Port is located nearby to a number of SIS facilities, as shown in Figure 1. I-95, US 301, US 17, SR 100, SR 20, SR 207, and SR 23 are all designated as SIS highways. Two branches of the CSX Mainline as well as the FEC Mainline, all designated as SIS facilities, are also located in close proximity to the project location. Lastly, the Atlantic Ocean, a SIS waterway is approximately 25 miles east of the barge port.

As part of Census Tract 9507, and according to the Interim United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) Disadvantaged Communities Definitions and Mapping Tool¹, the Putnam County Barge Port is located in an area identified as a disadvantaged community in terms of the following indicators: equity/social, economy, and health. The mapping tool is part of the Justice40 Initiative, which aims to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of federal investments in climate and clean energy, including sustainable transportation, to disadvantaged communities². Definitions for each indicator are provided below as reference for the specific disadvantage experienced by the community in the vicinity of the Putnam County Barge Port.

- Equity/Social Indicator - identifies communities with a shared history of discrimination, or other forms of disadvantage that warrant consideration along with each/any of the above measures
- Economy - identifies areas and populations with high poverty, low wealth, lack of local jobs, low homeownership, low educational attainment, and high inequality
- Health - identifies communities based on variables associated with adverse health outcomes, disability, as well as environmental exposures

The Putnam County Barge Port (Census Tract 9507) is also designated as an Area of Persistent Poverty³. These areas include Census Tracts in which the project is located has a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014-2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Bureau of the Census⁴. The Putnam County Barge Port (Census Tract 9507) is bordered on its southern extent by Opportunity Zone 12107950800⁵, which is located in Census Tract 9508.

The Putnam County Barge Port is also located within a US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R) 2022 Qualified Census Tract (QCT) and Difficult Development Area (DDA). Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Census Tracts must have 50 percent of households with incomes below 60 percent of the Area Median Gross Income (AMGI), or have a poverty rate of 25 percent or more. Difficult Development Areas (DDA) are areas with high land, construction, and utility costs relative to the area median income, and are based on Fair Market Rents, income limits, the 2010 census counts, and 5-year American Community Survey (ACS) data⁶.

1 USDOT Disadvantaged Communities Definitions and Mapping Tool. Retrieved from: <https://usdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>

2 USDOT Justice40 Initiative. Retrieved from: <https://www.transportation.gov/equity-justice40>

3 National Cancer Institute Division of Cancer Control and Population Studies. Areas of Persistent Poverty (12/2021). Retrieved from: <https://cancercontrol.cancer.gov/sites/default/files/2021-12/PP%20CT%20data-final.pdf>

4 USDOT RAISE Grant Areas of Persistent Poverty. Retrieved from: <https://www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/raise-app-hdc>

5 Housing and Urban Development Map of Opportunity Zones. Retrieved from: <https://opportunityzones.hud.gov/resources/map>

6 HUD PD&R Qualified Census Tracts and Difficult Development Areas. Retrieved from: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/qct.html>

Section 3: Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Funding

Table 1 provides a description of the ten elements of the project, tailored specifically for the preparation of Putnam County's PDP. Additionally, it shows the total cost of each element and how each element will be funded at 70 percent from Federal funds and 30 percent from Putnam County funds (non-Federal). The table does not show any funding from "Other Federal" sources. The preparation of the PDP, described above, has no other federal funding sources at this time. The table demonstrates that the project satisfies the statutory cost-sharing requirements as described in Section C.2. of the NOFO.

Table 1: Project Elements

Project Element #	Project Element	Federal Funding	Non-Federal Funding	Total Cost
1	Examine, inspect, and test the existing barge berth and concrete apron to determine condition of the berth wall and tie back system, remaining service life, load bearing capacity (lateral and vertical), depth of wall embedment, and condition and capacity of the concrete apron behind the berth wall that is used for cargo handling equipment loading and off-loading typical cargoes	\$140,000	\$60,000	\$200,000
2	Provide the site planning, preliminary engineering, design and permitting for the replacement of the barge berth in order to accommodate fully loaded jumbo hopper barges	\$70,000	\$30,000	\$100,000
3	Perform a market/trade lane analysis to identify the Port's probable market (trade lanes), reasonably projected cargoes by type and volume, and resulting Port use revenues,	\$35,000	\$15,000	\$50,000
4	Identify required behind-the-dock cargo laydown areas, relieving platform requirements and fixed cargo handling equipment based on projected cargoes	\$14,000	\$6,000	\$20,000
5	Identify requirements for additional near-dock warehousing or covered cargo storage based on projected cargoes	\$14,000	\$6,000	\$20,000
6	Identify/plan/preliminarily design the development of near-dock freight rail facilities for probable cargoes	\$17,500	\$7,500	\$25,000
7	Perform the traffic projection and flow analysis to plan new internal roadway infrastructure for enhanced surface transportation capabilities	\$10,500	\$4,500	\$15,000
8	Identify and plan the best uses for other available properties (some are port-owned and others are available for purchase) in the vicinity of the berth	\$10,500	\$4,500	\$15,000
9	Perform a preliminary environmental assessment to identify the appropriate NEPA Document and prepare the Section 106 Consultation with the State Historical Preservation Office and the Tribes	\$21,000	\$9,000	\$30,000
10	Develop a comprehensive capital improvement plan in which the Port's projects are prioritized, scheduled and for which funding sources are properly identified	\$21,000	\$9,000	\$30,000
Total Cost		\$353,500	\$151,500	\$505,000

The total cost of the PDP is \$505,000. Each project element was identified and comprehensively developed specifically for the Port's development given its unique circumstances. Additionally, the cost estimate of each plan element was prepared by TranSystems, a national, multimodal transportation infrastructure planning and engineering firm. TranSystems has voluminous experience over six decades in transportation facility/infrastructure planning, permitting, environmental assessment, NEPA documentation, facility and infrastructure design and engineering.

The County plans to competitively select a consulting firm or team to prepare the Port's Development Plan in full

conformance with the selection requirements in the Brooks Act 1972. Federal funding is critical to the PDP. In late 2021 the County committed to provide \$350,000 as the local share for the preparation of the Corps of Engineer's Feasibility Report to support the dredging of the Port's access channel from the barge berth to the St. Johns River Federal Channel.

Putnam County is "financially constrained" as defined in FS 288 and cannot solely fund the critical development plan without federal assistance; however as stated clearly in the County Administrator's commitment letter, found in Appendix A of this document, the County has the necessary matching funds and is prepared to commit them upon grant award.

A grant to Putnam County for the PDP will leverage non-federal funds from the County. Funding the PDP will enable the County to develop a plan that will be their roadmap into the future. The development plan is the key to building an economically and operationally viable facility that will enable Putnam County to realize their barge port's enormous potential as an intermodal transportation hub and regional economic engine.

The County port facilities are very close to the end of their serviceable lifespan, infrequently used and have seen no commercial cargo movement in several years. At the same time, there is an underserved barge cargo market in Central Florida. Putnam County has an excellent, existing roadway network that connects to Interstates 10, 75, and 95, which surround the County, and there is an active CSX industrial spur that ends only feet from the barge berth. Surrounding the berth are major industries, such as Georgia Pacific and Veritas Steel that will use barge service to import raw materials and export finished products. The Port has access to expansion properties close to the berth, and the County has their own dredged material upland disposal site. Most important, development of the Port has tremendous public and political support at the local and state levels. Putting all of these organic advantages together to develop an economically and operationally viable Port requires a development plan.

If Putnam County's PIDP Grant Application is selected, the County staff, assisted by TranSystems, will begin preparation of the Grant Agreement with MARAD staff. Concurrently, Putnam County will advertise for a consultant to prepare the PDP. Statements of Qualifications will be requested and evaluated by the County. At least three of the most qualified firms will interview, assuming three or more submissions of qualifications are received. The best consultant will be competitively selected by County staff and the County Commission acting in their capacity as Port Commissioners. Assuming that winning grant applicants will be announced by August 2022, a grant agreement should be ready for Port-MARAD execution by March 2023. A consultant firm or team will be selected by July 2023. Development of the PDP will require approximately ten months and if started in August 2023, the PDP should be complete by May 2024.

Section 4: Merit Criteria

A: Achieving Safety, Efficiency or Reliability Improvements:

This grant application is for development phase activities, specifically for the preparation of a PDP, which will include infrastructure and facility planning, operational and economic feasibility analyses, market and trade lane analysis, identification of potential cargoes and revenue forecasting, environmental review, permitting, identification of cyber and port security requirements, and preliminary engineering and design. The plan will also address reduction of carbon emissions and resiliency after natural or human-made disasters and strengthening the supply chain.

(a) Loading and unloading of goods at a port

Please refer to Table 1 and the description of the ten Project Elements in Section 3, Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Funding. The applicant, Putnam County, FL, has a 61-year-old barge port. Over the years, use of the cargo facilities has diminished significantly due to age, reduced load bearing capacity, and serviceability of the port facilities as well as severe siltation of the access channel from the St. Johns River Federal Channel. Fortunately, the US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District, is preparing the feasibility report under the Continuing Authorities Program, Section 107 to justify the dredging of the channel from its current depth of 6.5' to a navigable depth of 12'. The District forecasts that the dredging will be started in September 2025 and completed within six months.

The port facilities are both inadequate and near the end of their serviceable lifespan. Their safety, reliability and efficiency have seriously diminished with time. The Project Elements, described in Section 3, focus on the planning of new port facilities and infrastructure that will provide a viable, safe, and reliable barge port in Central Florida in Putnam County. Safety, efficiency, and reliability of the Port are critical parameters of the PDP – the product of the ten Project Elements.

The first Project Element is a comprehensive engineering evaluation of the existing barge berth. The County has no design information, specifications or as-built drawings that were used or later prepared in the berth's construction in 1961. Therefore, neither the condition nor the design of the berth wall, its depth of embedment, load bearing capacity and the design of the concrete loading/unloading apron behind the berth are known. The first Project Element will determine the berth's physical parameters, load capacities and remaining life, if any. This is the first step in ensuring safety and reliability of cargo and barge operations and the efficiency of future port operations. Based upon the findings of the first Project Element, the second Project Element is the performance of the site planning, preliminary design and engineering, and environmental permitting for the probable replacement of the berth and concrete apron. The focus of the second Project Element is the improvement of operational safety, enhanced efficiency and the reliable movement of cargo.

The next or third Project Element is the market analysis that will identify probable, target cargoes by type, volume, and probable revenues to the Port. Cargo information and projections will be used in the fourth Project Element in which the needed behind-the-berth cargo relieving platforms, concrete aprons, fixed cargo handling equipment and laydown areas will be identified and sited. In the fifth Project Element, the need for additional indoor cargo storage warehousing will be determined based upon projected and target cargoes (Project element 3). Intermodal freight rail is critical to cargo movement efficiency and there is a CSX industrial spur terminating within a few feet of the existing berth. The sixth Project Element will identify, layout and plan and preliminarily



CSX Rail Spur at the Barge Port

design an efficient near-dock intermodal freight rail facility. The capacity of the rail facility will be dictated by the projection of cargoes in the third Project Element.

The efficiency, safety and reliability of internal terminal roadways will be addressed in the seventh Project Element. The result will be the layout and planning for new or realigned internal port roadways that will enhance cargo mobility while ensuring safety and reliability.

The eighth Project Element will identify other County-owned and private, but available, properties in the Port area that would enhance future cargo operations, port capacity and efficiency. The PDP would identify the best and highest value uses of the identified properties to support forecast cargoes. The next or ninth Project Element is the environmental assessment of the improvements identified in the previous project elements. The appropriate NEPA documentation would be identified, and a Section 106 Consultation would be performed to prepare for the development of the Grant Agreement.

The tenth Project Element is the preparation of a comprehensive and buildable capital improvement plan (CIP). The logical progression of the Project Elements will support the preparation of the Port's CIP. The projects will be comprehensively described, sufficiently planned and engineered, cost estimated and environmentally assessed to be prioritized and scheduled. Viable local, state, and federal funding sources will be identified.

The result will be a PDP that maximizes, port resiliency, safety, efficiency and reliability of a new and viable barge port in Putnam County, FL.

(b) Movement of goods into, out of, or within a port

As previously described in (a) Loading and unloading goods at a port, the first, second, sixth, and seventh Project Elements of the PDP will focus on enhancement of the movement of cargo into, out of, and within the Port. The specific facilities and infrastructure that impact cargo movement are:

- The barge berth, designed with the capacity to simultaneously accommodate the loading and unloading of two jumbo hopper barges (the jumbo hopper barge is the design vessel for both the berth structure specifications and the Jacksonville District's dredging project) carrying as much as 1,500 tons of a broad spectrum of cargoes
- A freight rail facility for the intermodal transfer of waterborne cargoes to and from railcars to maximize movement efficacy and reduce truck trips and emissions
- The realignment and new internal roadways that will enhance safety and the efficiency of moving freight within the Port

Each Project Element of the PDP will improve the speed, safety, reliability, and throughput volume of cargo at the Putnam County Barge Port, benefiting daily cargo operations and strengthening the Port's role within the regional and national supply chains.

(c) Operational improvements including projects to improve port resilience

Projects that improve operational resilience and rapid recovery from natural and human-made disruptions and ensure both cyber and port security are focused upon and addressed in several of the Project Elements. The potential of sea level rise and the impacts of storm surge will be incorporated into the second Project Element - site planning, preliminary design and engineering, and environmental permitting for the probable replacement of the berth and concrete apron. In the third Project Element – cargo forecasting, consideration will be given to the potential for increased throughput demands as a result of damage to other Florida ocean ports that may be temporarily incapacitated, especially by hurricanes (wind, flooding and storm surge) and sea level rise. In the recent past, the Port has played a critical role in the disposal of hurricane debris and planning for increasing that capability will be part of the identification of new facilities.

The fourth Project Element – identification and site planning of needed behind-the-berth cargo relieving platforms, concrete aprons, fixed cargo handling equipment and laydown areas will incorporate planning, engineering and preliminary design for probable sea level rise as well as enhanced storm water control and the ability to handle additional volumes of emergency recovery supplies and reconstruction materials. Strategically located in Central Florida between Interstates 95, 10 and 75, a viable barge port in Putnam County will play a critical role in disaster recovery and maintenance of the regional supply chain.

The fifth Project Element will identify, plan and site additional indoor cargo storage and warehousing. This Project Element will incorporate planning and elevating structures for sea level rise or storm surge, increased sustainability in major hurricanes, enhanced storm water control, increases in throughput capacities, resilience to continue the effective movement of goods that may not be able to move through their traditional ports of entry or exit after natural or human-made disasters, and the ability to handle surges of emergency recovery supplies and reconstruction materials. Barge service during and after natural and human-made disasters will be critical to supply chain maintenance since the movement of many cargo types by barge is considerably less vulnerable than large container, break bulk and bulk operations with conventional deep draft vessels.



Truck traffic near the Putnam County Barge Port

The PDP for the Putnam County Barge Port will provide for the durability and resilience of waterborne barge transport with disaster-hardened facilities and expandable cargo storage facilities with intermodal rail and roadway connections that will prove critical to supporting regional disaster recovery and sustainment of regional and national supply chain operations.

(d) Environmental and emissions mitigation measures

The Putnam County Barge Port will be master planned to handle two jumbo hopper barges simultaneously. The jumbo hopper barge is 195' x 35' x 12' and has the capacity to carry 1500 short tons of cargo. That cargo volume transported by truck trailer would require 58 tractor trailers. The carrying capacity of barges far outpaces tractor trailers and railcars. Barge transport has the capability of carrying one ton of cargo 514 miles on one gallon of diesel fuel. Compare this number to rail, which can move one ton of cargo 202 miles on a gallon of diesel, or trucks, which can only carry one ton 59 miles. Not only does this reduction in truck traffic, given a waterborne alternative, equate to a substantial reduction in carbon emissions, it increases the safety and efficiency of the local roadway network as well as improves quality of life for residents and visitors.

B: Supporting Economic Vitality at Regional or National Level:

(b) Small Projects at Small Ports:

The project for which Putnam County is submitting this grant application is for the preparation of a PDP as opposed to final design and construction. The PDP is the first, critical step of the planning, preliminary design/engineering, and permitting that will result in a viable barge Port in Central Florida, serving a currently underserved waterborne barge market for a broad spectrum of barge-appropriate cargoes.

(1) The economic advantages of the Putnam County Barge Port:

The economic advantages of the Putnam County Barge Port are significant and warrant the preparation of a PDP to realize the potential afforded by the following identified economic advantages:

- The strategic location of the port along the St. Johns River Federal Channel, the longest navigable inland waterway in Florida is foremost. The River's navigable depth from Jacksonville south past Palatka is 12' and ideal for cargo-carrying barge traffic.
- The Putnam County Port is efficiently linked by four-lane state roads to Interstates 95, 10 and 75 which surround the County, providing Interstate access to over 50 percent of the US population within 24 hours.
- No air draft restrictions to barge movement of oversized cargoes between the location of the barge berth in Putnam County and Jacksonville's Atlantic entrance. The last impediment is the

Shands Bridge which is being raised in 2025 to allow an air draft of over 60 feet as part of the First Coast Expressway project.

- Most of what would eventually be developed as the County's Barge Port is County property and properly zoned. All of the adjoining properties are zoned Industrial, Heavy. More distant properties, appropriate for eventual port expansion, are zoned Industrial, Commercial or Agricultural. There are other parcels of expansion property near the Port that are reasonably available for future acquisition. Therefore, development and eventual expansion of the Port's footprint do not present a discernable limitation. The ability to develop without ownership and zoning challenges affords the Port considerable economic advantage as does its expansion potential.
- The current port site has more than sufficient truck parking space and area for cargo storage.
- The realignment of existing and the construction of new internal roadways are relatively free of restrictions.
- CSX operates in the area and has an industrial spur that ends at the Port. With the development of a near-dock intermodal freight facility, the Port will have excellent rail service for intermodal cargoes.
- Both the movement of cargo by barge and the intermodal rail connection at the Port will serve to decrease local truck traffic and congestion.
- The County and region have a considerable skilled and semi-skilled, but underemployed, work force which will find beneficial employment performing cargo operations for both shippers and carriers as well as with the County's Port Authority.
- As a member of the Florida Ports Council and the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council (FSTED), the Putnam County Barge Port will be eligible for state grant funds for capital projects and purchases. Funding for FSTED is allocated by the State Legislature in the annual State Transportation budget. New construction is provided funds on a 50/50 cost share and rehabilitation/replacement work is provided funding on a 75 percent state to 25 percent local cost share. Minimum annual funding for FSTED member ports from the State Legislature is \$25 Million. Rollover funds are frequently available making the annual allocation to the ports in Florida greater than \$25 Million per year. Other state grant programs are available to the Florida ports to include the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS Program) and the Strategic Ports Initiative (SPI). In short, Florida provides its public ports with multiple sources of state funding for a host of purposes, each essential to the growth, competitiveness, and vitality of the State's ports.

(2) The contribution to freight transportation at, around and through the port:

One of the primary goals of the PDP is to improve the process of transporting goods and commodities, not only at, around and through the barge port, but within Central and North Florida.

As a Project Element (Project Element 3) of the preparation of the PDP, commodities that are currently, or can be transported into and out of the region, that are more efficiently transported by barge, will be identified as target cargoes for the Putnam County Barge Port. Currently, these commodities that are being imported are carried by larger conventional container, break bulk and bulk vessels for discharge at other Florida ocean ports and then transferred to trucks for delivery. Instead, transferring these cargoes to jumbo hopper barges or smaller barges for transport to the Putnam County Barge Port for intermodal transfer to near-dock freight rail (CSX) or short haul truck provides more efficient movement, significantly reduced carbon emissions, and provides an alternate means of transport that will improve the resilience and durability of the regional supply chain. Export cargoes from Central Florida can be carried barge to other Florida ports for direct transloading to conventional ocean-going vessels, reducing literally hundreds of long-haul truck trips.

Many of the commodities best transported by barge are dry bulks (aggregates, cement, fertilizers etc.), lumber, paper, liner board and large construction materials like the oversize railroad trestles and bridge sections, manufactured by Veritas Steel in Palatka, Putnam County.

Many of these materials will be critical to recovery operations after a natural or human-made disaster. The Putnam County Barge Port, given its location in Central Florida on the St. Johns River, is less vulnerable to sea level surge and the effects of hurricanes.

The PDP will focus on the development of infrastructure and facility durability and the ability of the port to adapt, recover rapidly, and maintain vital port operations after a natural or human-made disaster. As a

barge port, it will be critical to the region's resiliency, recovery, and the maintenance of port operations thus reducing potential points of supply chain failure.

The Port's sustainability will be a major feature of the PDP (Project Elements 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). Sustainability, the resilience to be able to recover quickly from disasters, and the ability to adapt to greater throughput requirements in order to maintain the regional supply chain's flow of goods and supplies when the state's ocean ports are more slowly recovering will be major considerations in the facility/infrastructure planning and preliminary design, preliminary environmental assessment, and development of port operating procedures that are efficient for the port and its users while protecting and sustaining human and natural activities.

(3) Overcoming the competitive disadvantage of the port:

The most significant disadvantage(s) facing the Port are the economic challenges facing the County. Putnam County, Florida is rural, agricultural, economically disadvantaged, and fiscally constrained as defined in Florida Statute 288. The Putnam County Barge Port is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty and is considered a historically disadvantaged community in terms of equity/social, economy, and health indicators. Putnam County has a LMI of 49 percent. LMI is defined by Section 102(a)(20) of the HCDA as a person in a family or an individual with annual income equal to or less than HUD's Section 8 Low Income Limit, generally 80 percent of an area's median family income adjusted for household size. The County's population 65 or older is 24 percent and the median household income is \$40,068. Per capita income is \$22,257 and County residents in poverty is 24 percent.

As previously mentioned, the US Army Corps of Engineers is preparing a feasibility report that is expected to justify the dredging of approximately 250,000 cubic yards of silt that has, over several years of heavy storms, accumulated in the existing barge berth's access channel. This channel connects the berth to the St. Johns River Federal Channel – a distance of 5,000 feet. The project is relatively small and will be covered under the Continuing Authorities Program, Section 107. The dredging is essential. The current depth of the access channel is less than 7 feet and poses an extreme obstacle to viable barge operations. Larger barges that the Port would serve require 10' to 12' of navigable depth. The channel dredging to a depth of 12' is scheduled to begin in September 2025 and be completed in March 2026.

The County has committed \$350,000 as their share for the feasibility report, and it is estimated that the County's share for the dredging will be \$2,000,000. For Putnam County, these commitments to match the Corps' cost share commitments are an enormous financial burden. However, without those financial commitments by the County and the participation of the Corps of Engineers, there would be no access channel dredging, estimated to cost a total of \$10,000,000 (\$8M Corps of Engineers and \$2M Putnam County).

Without the navigable depth of 12', in the access channel, there would be no future for a viable barge port in Putnam County. Therefore, while a local contribution of \$2,350,000 is a tremendous impact on the County's budget and will certainly force postponement of other needed expenditures, the future and economic opportunity for the County to become a multimodal transportation hub in Central Florida and the opportunity to harness the advantages described in Section B I. will disappear.

Given the financial challenges faced by Putnam County and, at the same time, the tremendous opportunity that a viable barge port would present along with its impact on the regional economy as an economic engine, the County will pursue that opportunity with the financial assistance from both the federal government and the state of Florida. Financial assistance from USDOT and the State are essential, because without it, there is no future for the Port.

The PDP will ultimately direct the establishment and operation of an intermodal transportation hub in Central Florida anchored by the barge port. Its beneficial economic impact will be calculated as part of the Development Plan; however, we know beforehand that it will be significant. There will be direct, indirect, and induced employment opportunities with carriers, shippers, associated industries that provide supplies and services, and companies performing construction and maintenance of port facilities. As previously noted, Putnam County Florida is rural, agricultural, economically disadvantaged, and fiscally constrained. The Putnam County Barge Port is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty and meets the federal definition of an area that is considered a historically disadvantaged community in terms of equity/social, economy, and health indicators.

Unemployment and underemployment plague the County's labor force. The availability of employment opportunities, either directly or indirectly supporting waterborne freight movement that will be afforded the region through the development of a viable intermodal transportation hub centered on the Putnam County Barge Port, will certainly promote a robust and diverse employment base with good-paying jobs that will provide free and fair choice to join a union and that supports the regional agricultural and manufacturing industries.

C: Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Justice Impacts.

There could be negative externalities associated with the Port's development if not effectively addressed in the PDP. The fuel and cargo carrying efficiency of barge versus truck transportation will reduce fuel consumption, traffic congestion, wear and tear on the Interstate Highways and state and local roadways. There will be a reduction in truck noise and, most important, carbon emissions. The ability to directly load cargo onto or unload cargo from intermodal freight railcars at or near the dock adds tremendous efficiency and carbon reduction. The plan for barge port development is designed to consider climate change and will align with the President's greenhouse gas reduction goals, and it will promote energy efficiency.



EPA EJScreen Mapping Tool

Image Source: <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>

As important as the considerable economic benefits to the County and region of Central Florida, the PDP addresses environmental justice and incorporates climate change considerations in all aspects of the Plan. To assess existing conditions related to environmental justice indicators nearby to the project area, the results of an EJScreen are provided as part of this grant application. The Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) EJScreen Map is an environmental justice mapping and screening tool. Descriptions of all terms used within the environmental justice screening tool and referenced within this section can be found via the EJScreen Map Descriptions homepage. The EJScreen shows that the project area is designated as part of the 80 – 90 percentiles (nationally) in terms of the following Environmental Justice Indexes: Particulate Matter 2.5, Ozone, 2017 Diesel Particulate Matter, 2017 Air Toxics Cancer Risk, 2017 Air Toxics Respiratory Hazards Index, Traffic Proximity, Risk Management Plan Facility Proximity, and Wastewater Discharge. These indicators reinforce the importance of an operational barge berth facility in the area with the capacity to remove truck trips from local roadways and lowering the target values of the aforementioned Environmental Justice Indexes.

EJScreen Socioeconomic Indicators place the project area in the 95 -100 percentile (nationally) of the Demographic Index (combination of percent low-income and percent minority), and the 80 – 90 percentiles (nationally) for Unemployment Rate and Less Than High School Education. The project area falls within the 95 – 100 percentiles (nationally) for Low Life Expectancy and Heart Disease, and the 80 – 90 percentiles (nationally) for Asthma. The project location and surrounding area is considered a Food Desert (low income and low access at 10-miles for rural areas), Medically Underserved, and ranked in the 90 – 95 percentiles (nationally) for Broadband Gaps.

The objective of the PDP is to guide the County's development, construction and operation of a port facility that produces economic and employment opportunities for all while being better steward of the environment. The port facilities will be planned to take advantage of renewable energy and be sustainable and quickly recoverable after severe storms, flooding, and extreme winds to preclude supply chain interruptions. The Port will provide barge services for the most efficient movement of cargo that is now moving by truck – hundreds of trucks. One jumbo hopper barge carries 58 tractor trailer loads at a fraction of the trucks' fuel consumption. The direct transfer of intermodal cargo from barge to railcar and vice versa reduces cargo handling, transloading to and from trucks, saves time, money and reduces on and off-port traffic congestion.

D: Advancing Equity and Opportunity for All:

The Putnam County Barge Port site is within the boundaries of Census Tract 9507. Residents in this tract fall within the 95 - 100 percentile (nationally) of the EJScreen Demographic Index (combination of percent low-income and percent minority). The community is in the 80 – 90 percentiles (nationally) for unemployment rate and residents with less than a high school education.

The project area falls within the 95 – 100 percentiles (nationally) for low life expectancy and heart disease, and the 80 – 90 percentiles (nationally) for asthma cases. The project location and surrounding area is considered a food desert, is medically underserved, and ranked in the 90 – 95 percentiles (nationally) for broadband gaps. Additionally, this Census Tract carries the following Federal designations:

- Area of Persistent Poverty
- HUD Low Income Housing Tax Credit Qualified Census Tract
- HUD Difficult Development Area
- Disadvantaged community in terms of equity/social, economy, and health indicators

The benefits resulting from the economic growth associated with a viable and operational barge port in Putnam County would help to advance equity and opportunity by addressing the economic and social disparities incurred by resident populations facing system barriers to employment as reflected in the bullet points listed above. The creation of local, good-paying jobs will most certainly reduce disparities in economic opportunities for disadvantaged communities.

The Putnam County Barge Port would also serve the local community with the immediately realized benefit of removing truck trips from the roadway network. This is especially relevant to a community ranked in the 80 – 90 percentiles (nationally) for Environmental Justice Indexes associated with: Particulate Matter 2.5, Ozone, 2017 Diesel Particulate Matter, 2017 Air Toxics Cancer Risk, 2017 Air Toxics Respiratory Hazards Index, and Traffic Proximity.

E: Leveraging Federal Funding to Attract Non-Federal Sources of Infrastructure Investment:

This grant application is for development phase activities, specifically for the preparation of a PDP for the Putnam County Barge Port. The Plan will include infrastructure and facility planning, identification of cyber and port security requirements, feasibility analyses, sustainability and resilience analysis, potential market identification, revenue forecasting, environmental assessment and review, permitting, preliminary engineering and design and the development of a comprehensive, prioritized and scheduled capital improvement program.

The cost of the PDP has been estimated at \$505,000. Putnam County, Florida is rural, agricultural, economically disadvantaged and fiscally constrained. The Putnam County Barge Port is located in an Area of Persistent Poverty and is considered a historically disadvantaged community in terms of equity/social, economy, and health indicators. The County is requesting that USDOT fund 70 percent of the cost of the PDP in the amount of \$353,500 and Putnam County has committed in writing to fund the remaining 30 percent in the amount of \$151,500. As previously described in Overcoming the Competitive Disadvantages of the Port, the County's funds are very limited, especially in consideration of their commitment to the Corps of Engineers to fund \$2,350,000 for the dredging of the barge port's access channel.

The importance of the PDP as a guidance document for the County cannot be overemphasized. It is critical to the efficient development of the barge port and intermodal freight facilities, the positive effects of which will impact: a lagging local economy, widespread underemployment, and low household income. It will diversify the region's employment base creating many direct, indirect and induced, good-paying jobs. It provides an alternate and sustainable means of transporting goods that will protect and secure the region's supply chain and accommodate disaster relief cargoes needed for regional recovery operations after natural and human-made disasters. The water and land side operations of the barge port, as discussed previously, will serve to reduce traffic congestion, accidents, noise and carbon emissions by significantly reducing truck trips.

Absent the funding support from USDOT, the PDP will be indefinitely delayed or, at best, piecemealed placing the Port's development in serious jeopardy. The Federal investment will induce or leverage the County's investment in the PDP which will be competitively awarded to the most qualified consultant immediately following the completion and execution of the grant agreement. This grant application meets the USDOT requirement for leveraging federal funding to attract non-federal sources of project funding, albeit that, at this point in development phase activities, there is only one non-federal source – a committed Putnam County, Florida.

Section 5: Project Readiness

The project for which Putnam County is requesting PIDP support is the preparation of a PDP. This plan, very similar to a port master plan, will guide Putnam County's revitalization, construction and reconstruction of the berth and the port facilities and infrastructure to develop a viable barge cargo port in Central Florida. As previously described, Putnam County is highly rural, agricultural, and economically challenged. The development of a viable barge port in Putnam County is of tremendous economic importance to the County and provides a major enhancement to the region's transportation network and the regional/national supply chain.

The County has a 61-year-old barge berth and aging port facilities (warehouses and cargo laydown areas). The commercial use of the barge berth and adjacent facilities has decreased over the past years due to age and capabilities of the existing facilities and siltation of the channel that provides access to the St. Johns River Federal Channel. The US Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville District is proceeding with the feasibility report to support the dredging of the access channel under the Continuing Authorities program, Section 107.



Existing On-Dock Warehouse at the Barge Port

The Jacksonville District of the Corps anticipates a successful feasibility report based upon strong support for National Economic Development. Further, the District anticipates the dredging of the channel to begin in September 2025 and be complete by September 2026.

The State Legislature passed House Bill 907 and Senate Bill 1038 during the 2022 legislative session that admits Putnam County as a public port to the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development Council (FSTED) pending the preparation and Florida Ports Council acceptance of a feasibility analysis that supports the establishment of the port. The feasibility analysis must be undertaken by July 2024.

The PIDP Grant for the Putnam County PDP, as described in Section 3: Grant Funds, Sources and Uses of Funding, will provide for:

- Engineering inspection and serviceability evaluation of the existing port facilities, especially the barge berth built in 1961,
- Site planning, preliminary engineering, design, and permitting for replacement of the barge berth and development of new facilities,
- Comprehensive market and trade lane analysis to identify highly probable cargoes, shippers and carriers,
- Identification of facility and infrastructure requirements to serve target markets, projected commodities, shippers and carriers,
- Identification and preliminarily design a near-dock intermodal freight rail facility
- Traffic analysis to plan and layout internal terminal roadways
- Performance of an environmental assessment to identify NEPA requirements including the Section 106 Consultation
- Identification of the best use of adjoining County properties for port operations and
- Development of a prioritized and scheduled capital improvement plan with funding strategies for each project.

(I) A: Technical Capacity:

There are two technical capacities to address for the preparation of the Port's Development Plan. First is the technical capacity of the consultant team that will produce the development plan under contract to Putnam County. The second technical capacity is that of the County to successfully award, administer and manage the contract for the plan's preparation.

Consultant's Technical Capacity:

Putnam County will publicly advertise a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from potential consulting firms or consulting teams. Qualified consultants must show in-depth knowledge of all facets of port planning, have available and qualified professionals and support staff, and demonstrate previous successful experience in barge port planning. Submitters of qualifications must demonstrate the capability to successfully address the scope of the PDP's ten elements as described in Section 3 of this application.

Consultant firms, submitting qualifications, must demonstrate the abilities to:

- Perform marine facility planning, design, engineering and permitting
- Perform existing facility/infrastructure condition inspections and serviceability evaluations,
- Analyze and identify potential markets, trade lanes and commodities that the barge port has significant potential to serve,
- Identify the most probable volumes, shippers, and carriers of the identified target cargoes,
- Identify, plan and conceptually layout the additional facilities and infrastructure required to successfully operate as a viable barge port to serve the potential cargoes, volumes, shippers, and carriers most likely to use the barge port,
- Plan and layout a near-dock intermodal freight rail facility to utilize CSX service,
- Perform traffic analysis to plan and layout internal terminal roadways to maximize safety and mobility,
- Identify the best and most practicable uses of proximate County-owned properties for future port expansion,
- Perform a comprehensive environmental assessment to determine NEPA documentation and permitting requirements for the identified improvements and facility expansions, and
- Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for the Port with projects prioritized by need, scheduled and a funding strategy identified for each project.

Consultants, submitting their qualifications, that are evaluated by the County as fully qualified and experienced in performing the tasks previously described, will be further evaluated by a committee of County employees and ranked in order of qualification. The County Commission will review the Statements of Qualifications and the staff's rankings.

The County Commission, which is also the Port-Authority, will, in accordance with the Brook's Act 1972 and Florida's Consultants Competitive Negotiation Act (CCNA), select at least three of the qualified consultants for interview and selection, assuming three or more submittals are received. The selection committee may include County staff or be entirely members of the Port Authority.

Once the most qualified consultant is selected, the County Administrator will be authorized by the Commission to negotiate a contract. That negotiated contract will be brought back to the Port Authority Commission for execution. Then the County Administrator will give the consultant Notice to Proceed.

Putnam County's consultant qualifications-based selection process will absolutely ensure the capability, experience, and availability of consultant to successfully prepare the PDP. The consultant or team of consultants selected to prepare the PDP will be thoroughly vetted, and the most capable consultant will be selected.

Putnam County is well-experienced in the competitive procurement of professional services. They have extensive experience with the call for and evaluation of qualifications, the Request for Proposals and proposal evaluation processes, selection and contract award processes, and the administration and management of professional service contracts.

Schedule:

Putnam County will advertise for consultant qualifications upon notification of grant award or by September 2022. The qualifications evaluation and selection process will be completed by January 2023. The consultant contract for the preparation of the PDP will be negotiated and approved by the County Commission by March 2023. Assuming six months for the development of the Grant Agreement, we project that the Grant Agreement will be executed by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the County by April 2023. A month later, the consultant contract will be executed by the County Administrator and Notice to Proceed will be issued to the consultant immediately. Production of the PDP will require 10 to 12 months and be completed by May 2024, prior to the PIDP 2022 obligation deadline of September 30, 2025. This schedule is presented below in tabular form via Table 2.

Table 2: Project Schedule and Milestones

Project Milestone	Scheduling Target
Advertise for consultant qualifications upon notice of grant award, or by September 2022	September 2022
Complete the consultant qualifications evaluation and selection process	January 2023
Complete the consultant contract negotiation and approval process	March 2023
Execution of the Grant Agreement with MARAD and Putnam County	April 2023
Execution of the consultant contract and issuance of the Notice to Proceed	May 2023
Completion of the PDP	May 2024
2022 PIDP obligation deadline	September 30, 2025

Putnam County's Capability/Capacity to Administer and Manage the Consultant Contract

Currently Putnam County has the following active grants/appropriations:

- FDOT LAP: 2 different programs for \$17.1 thousand
- FDOT SCRAP: 1 program for \$902 thousand
- HUD CDBG Disaster Recovery for \$5.4 million
- FEMA SAFER grant for \$2.36 million
- FEMA EMS recurring grant for \$4 thousand
- FEMA EMPA recurring grant for \$106 thousand
- FEMA EMPG recurring grant for \$57.6 thousand
- FEMA EMPG/ARPA recurring grant for \$14 thousand
- US Treasury ARPA allocation for \$14.4 million

The pertinent Putnam County staff is comprised of financial, administrative, engineering, and planning professionals with multiple years of local and state government service that includes composing and evaluating RFQs and RFPs, developing and managing contracts, overseeing programs funded by state and federal sources, reporting progress on grant-funded projects, controlling project budgets and ensuring project execution to meet completion schedules. The Putnam County Clerk of the Court also serves as grant accountants who double-check all expenses made with local, state, and federal money, and verify that all said expenses were made in accordance with the associated regulations and grant agreements.

(2) B: Environmental Risk:

At this point there are no known or suspected environmental risks. A significant element of the PDP is the performance of a preliminary environmental assessment of the Port area, adjacent County and non-County properties, and projected port cargo operations to identify any environmental risks, develop mitigation strategies, identify NEPA requirements as well as State and local environmental permitting requirements. The selected consultant will review available GIS database layers and other publicly available information. The consultant will identify and document all existing and relevant environmental issues surrounding the Port area and corridors under study, including, but not limited to the following:

- social and cultural features
- land use
- major utilities
- railroads
- stormwater treatment areas and wetlands
- endangered and threatened species and critical habitat
- floodplains and floodways
- storm water management plans and farmlands
- community impacts
- contamination and carbon emissions

(3) C: Risk Mitigation:

The preparation of the PDP includes multiple elements that address the rehabilitation and/or the new construction of port facilities to include: the barge berth, relieving platform(s), concrete cargo handling aprons, cargo laydown areas for outside storage, internal terminal roadways, covered cargo storage facilities, a gate for positive cargo movement control, and a near-dock intermodal freight rail facility. As part of the planning, preliminary engineering and permitting of the expanded, enhanced, and new facilities and infrastructure, the consultant will identify project risks and the recommended mitigation strategies. Before final design, permitting and construction is initiated, the County will require the selected consultant to prepare a risk register that identifies project risks and effective mitigation strategies for each.

Section 6: Domestic Preference

Once implemented, or once under construction, materials and manufactured products used in the project will be produced or manufactured domestically. This provision will be included in all procurement documents used by contractors. Materials used to improve the Port property will not require any exception or waiver of the Buy American provisions described in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. The intent of the Port is to source products locally to enhance local benefit and job creation. The Port will require Buy American provisions to flow down to every task undertaken in the project description and funded with the MARAD Port Development Grant funding.

Section 7: Determinations

Determination 1:

The project improves the safety, efficiency, or reliability of the movement of goods through a port or intermodal connection to the port.

The Board of Putnam County Commissioners (Putnam County, Florida Port Authority) is requesting discretionary USDOT grant funding for Development Phase Activities from the 2022 PID Program, in the amount of \$353,500 specifically for the preparation of a PDP.

61 years ago, a 400' barge berth and some cargo facilities were built by Putnam County in Palatka to provide cargo barge service and access to the St. Johns River Federal Channel, approximately 5,000 feet away. Today the port facilities and the access channel are inadequate, and neither safe nor reliable.

In the immediate vicinity of the barge berth, there are two Port-owned 20,000 SF cargo warehouses and outdoor cargo laydown area. There are an active CSX industrial rail spur ending at the berth, excellent roadways providing access to Interstates 75, 10 and 95, available expansion properties, and Port-owned dredge material disposal and reuse facilities. There

are local industrial/manufacturing/agricultural businesses, to include: Veritas Steel, Georgia Pacific, Forest Groves and Clay Ranch that will use a viable barge port to move their products.

Given the berth's age, its limited, and diminished lateral and vertical load bearing capacities, the barge berth is rapidly approaching the end of its serviceable lifespan. The County understands that a major retrofit or replacement of the berth is required now. While a major retrofit or replacement of the barge berth is quite evident, there is no overall Development Plan for the coordinated, efficient and economical development of the remainder of the port's assets in order to develop a viable barge port that is safe, efficient and reliable.

The County has decided to pursue the development of a viable barge port by combining the extraordinary transportation assets that they have available, including the port's intermodal connections to all modes of surface transportation (State roads, Interstates 95, 10 and 75 and CSX Rail) and the number of industrial, manufacturing, and agricultural companies in the port's vicinity that would readily ship and receive cargoes through the County's barge port. The County also recognizes the need for a development plan for the barge port to use as the guide to combine their transportation advantages with a viable barge port as the centerpiece of a regional intermodal transportation hub.

The PDP will plan, permit, and preliminarily design and engineer the essential and interrelated facility and infrastructure projects that will combine to produce an efficient, resilient, environmentally sound, emission-reducing barge port and intermodal transportation hub that is strategically positioned between I-95, I-10 and I-75 in Central Florida and on the longest navigable inland waterway in the State.

The PDP will serve as a "roadmap" as Putnam County brings all of its organic transportation assets together to develop a viable barge port in Central Florida. It will address a significantly underserved mode of waterborne transportation, appropriate to many cargoes originating from or imported to Central Florida. The development plan will evaluate and quantify the positive economic impact of the port's operations on a region that is Historically Disadvantaged, an Area of Persistent Poverty and Fiscally Constrained.

The development of the Putnam County Port Authority's barge port in Palatka will serve an underserved and neglected segment of the waterborne transportation industry. It will serve to efficiently provide waterborne barge transport and perform intermodal exchanges for locally grown agricultural products, lumber and forest products, fertilizers, car parts, dry bulks, locally fabricated steel bridge sections and other commodities. The barge port,



Port Road at the Putnam County Barge Port

developed with the PDP as its guide, will serve as a regional transportation hub and have an enormously positive economic impact on a region of the nation that has been historically underemployed and economically depressed. It will be Putnam County's economic engine.

Determination 2:

The project is cost effective.

This is a small planning project at a small port. This determination is not applicable to small projects at small ports.

Determination 3:

The eligible applicant has the authority to carry out the project.

The applicant is Putnam County, Florida.

Putnam County is a non-charter county established by the State of Florida in 1849. As such, it benefits from all the privileges and obligations granted to counties and other local governments as a subsidiary entity of the State Government.

Putnam County is governed by a five-member Board of County Commissioners. They are elected from separate Putnam County Districts. They serve 4 -year terms that are staggered.

Determination 4:

The eligible applicant has sufficient funding to meet the matching requirements.

If this grant application is approved, the eligible applicant, Putnam County, is prepared to match the USDOT grant on a 30% eligible applicant to 70% USDOT cost sharing basis. The total cost of the preparation of the PDP is estimated at \$505,000. Therefore, the USDOT share would be \$353,500 and Putnam County's share would be \$151,500. Please see the attached letter from the County Administrator attesting to the immediate availability of County funds to provide the required match in Appendix A of this document.

Determination 5:

The project will be completed without unreasonable delay.

This grant application is for Development Phase Activities, specifically for the preparation of a PDP, which has been explained in detail in Determination 1. Given the nature of this project, essentially as a planning, preliminary engineering/design, and permitting effort with no final design or construction involved, we see no significant threats of delay to the schedule presented below.

The schedule for the preparation of the PDP is as follows:

- Putnam County will advertise for consultant qualifications upon notification of grant award or by September 2022.
- The qualifications evaluation and selection process will be completed by January 2023.
- The consultant contract for the preparation of the PDP will be negotiated and approved by the County Commission by March 2023.
- Assuming six months for the development of the Grant Agreement, we project that the Grant Agreement will be executed by the Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the County by April 2023. A month later, in May 2023, the consultant contract will be executed by the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners and Notice to Proceed will be issued to the consultant immediately.
- Production of the PDP will require 10 to 12 months and be completed by May 2024, well before the PIDP 2022 obligation deadline of September 30, 2025.

Determination 6:

The project cannot be easily and efficiently completed without Federal funding or financial assistance available to the project sponsor.

Putnam County, Florida is rural, agricultural, economically disadvantaged and fiscally constrained as defined in Florida

Statute 288. The County is an Area of Persistent Poverty and meets the definition of an Historically Disadvantaged Community. Putnam County has a LMI of 49 percent. The County's population 65 or older is 24 percent and the median household income is \$40,068. Per capita income is \$22,257 and County residents living at or below poverty is 24 percent.

Putnam County's financial situation is challenging. The County needs federal funding to prepare a PDP. The barge port and its operations will be of benefit to thousands of regional residents who will find good-paying, permanent employment in direct, indirect, and induced jobs. The barge port will make a significant contribution to the reduction of truck trips and carbon emissions, provide an alternative means of safer waterborne transportation, become the centerpiece of an intermodal hub for barge-carried cargoes by taking advantage of Putnam County's surface, air, and water transportation connections, and the barge port will increase the resiliency of the regional transportation network and protect the sustainability of the regional and national supply chains.

The completion of every element of the PDP is critical to the efficient and timely development of the required port facilities (see Determination 1 for a description of each element in the preparation of the PDP). Without a complete, logically laid out, scheduled, and prioritized development plan along with a funding strategy for each new facility, the Putnam County Barge Port will be developed piecemeal, with high priority projects potentially neglected and a funding strategy that will not have been comprehensively developed. A complete, holistic PDP is critical to the success, future, and viability of Putnam County's barge port.

1. If PIDP or other federal funds were not received, project scope would be severely impacted. The County would undertake the engineering inspection and structural evaluation of the barge berth (Element 1 of the Project). If only a substantial retrofit were necessary (replace the tieback system and/or drive new sheet pile for the barge berth wall, the County could potentially divert some funding that has been allocated to the County's Capital Improvement Program to complete Element 2 and proceed with berth retrofit engineering and design. The remainder of the PDP would be Elements 3 – 10, and their completion would be significantly delayed for lack of funding.
2. The project schedule would be negatively affected if PIDP (or other federal) funds were not received. If the County receives funding, we estimate that every element of the preparation of the PDP will be completed by May 2024. If the County receives no PIDP or other federal funds, and depending on the severity of the berth's deterioration, the County's priority would be to rebuild the barge berth. It then would be some time after the retrofit or reconstruction of the barge berth that the County could afford to pursue the preparation of the PDP, now with only project elements 3 – 10, see the Project Elements (Table 1) in Section 3. The completion of a partial PDP, just elements 3-10, would not happen for several years and an enormous opportunity would be postponed or lost.
3. If PIDP or other federal funding were not received, there would be some small price increase, primarily because the preparation of the PDP is a planning project and not a construction project. If no federal funding were received, Putnam County will go forward with Elements 1 and 2, and then either retrofit or reconstruct the barge berth depending upon the level of deterioration. That leaves project elements 3-10 still remaining. These elements would be performed by a team of consultants. Their hourly rates increase from year to year. If we assume 3 – 5% per year and the County waits five years, the price increase could be over 25%. The cost of Elements 3 – 10 is \$205,000. The cost increase would be approximately \$50,000.

Appendix A: Commitment Letter



PUTNAM COUNTY

2509 Crill Avenue, Suite 200
PALATKA, FLORIDA 32177
(386) 329-0205

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

BILL PICKENS
District 1

JEFF RAWLS
District 2

TERRY TURNER
District 3

LARRY HARVEY
District 4

PAUL ADAMCZYK
District 5

May 6, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation
U. S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20509

Secretary Buttigieg,

Putnam County, Florida is applying for a Port Infrastructure Development grant to fund a feasibility study for our local port facility. The application requires certification that the applying party has sufficient funds to meet its obligations as part of the grant process.

Through this letter, I, as County Administrator for Putnam County Florida, hereby certify that Putnam County Florida possesses the funds to cover the required 30% match as a condition of receiving this grant.

If I can be of further assistance in helping this grant application be met with success by your office, please do not hesitate in contacting me,

Respectfully,

Terry Suggs, County Administrator

ATTACHMENTS FORM

Instructions: On this form, you will attach the various files that make up your grant application. Please consult with the appropriate Agency Guidelines for more information about each needed file. Please remember that any files you attach must be in the document format and named as specified in the Guidelines.

Important: Please attach your files in the proper sequence. See the appropriate Agency Guidelines for details.

1) Please attach Attachment 1	<input type="text" value="1234-Putnam County Port Devel"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
2) Please attach Attachment 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
3) Please attach Attachment 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
4) Please attach Attachment 4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
5) Please attach Attachment 5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
6) Please attach Attachment 6	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
7) Please attach Attachment 7	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
8) Please attach Attachment 8	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
9) Please attach Attachment 9	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
10) Please attach Attachment 10	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
11) Please attach Attachment 11	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
12) Please attach Attachment 12	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
13) Please attach Attachment 13	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
14) Please attach Attachment 14	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>
15) Please attach Attachment 15	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 1. Type of Submission:

- ☐ Preapplication
☒ Application
☐ Changed/Corrected Application

* 2. Type of Application:

- ☒ New
☐ Continuation
☐ Revision

* If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):

* Other (Specify):

* 3. Date Received:

05/13/2022

4. Applicant Identifier:

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:

5b. Federal Award Identifier:

State Use Only:

6. Date Received by State:

7. State Application Identifier:

8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

* a. Legal Name:

Putnam County of

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):

(b)(4)

* c. UEI:

(b)(4)

d. Address:

* Street1:

2509 Crill Avenue Suite 200

Street2:

* City:

Palatka

County/Parish:

* State:

FL: Florida

Province:

* Country:

USA: UNITED STATES

* Zip / Postal Code:

32177-4642

e. Organizational Unit:

Department Name:

Division Name:

f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:

Prefix:

Mr.

* First Name:

Sam

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Sullivan

Suffix:

Title:

Project Coordinator

Organizational Affiliation:

* Telephone Number:

386-326-2799

Fax Number:

* Email:

sam.sullivan@putnam-fl.com

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

* 9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:

B: County Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

* Other (specify):

* 10. Name of Federal Agency:

Maritime Administration

11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:

20.823

CFDA Title:

Port Infrastructure Development Program

* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:

MA-PID-22-001

* Title:

2022 Port Infrastructure Development Program Grants

13. Competition Identification Number:

Title:

14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):

Add Attachment

Delete Attachment

View Attachment

* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:

Putnam County Port Development Plan: funding for a thorough plan that will plan, permit and preliminarily design and engineer the essential, interrelated facility and infrastructure projects

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

Add Attachments

Delete Attachments

View Attachments

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**16. Congressional Districts Of:*** a. Applicant * b. Program/Project

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

17. Proposed Project:* a. Start Date: * b. End Date: **18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

* a. Federal	<input type="text" value="353,500.00"/>
* b. Applicant	<input type="text" value="151,500.00"/>
* c. State	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* d. Local	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* e. Other	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* f. Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>
* g. TOTAL	<input type="text" value="505,000.00"/>

*** 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

- ☒ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .
- ☐ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.
- ☐ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

*** 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes," provide explanation in attachment.)**☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", provide explanation and attach

21. *By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances** and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

☒ ** I AGREE

** The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

Authorized Representative:

Prefix: * First Name:

Middle Name:

* Last Name:

Suffix:

* Title: * Telephone Number: Fax Number: * Email: * Signature of Authorized Representative: * Date Signed:

DISCLOSURE OF LOBBYING ACTIVITIES

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C.1352

OMB Number: 4040-0013

Expiration Date: 02/28/2025

1. * Type of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. grant <input type="checkbox"/> c. cooperative agreement <input type="checkbox"/> d. loan <input type="checkbox"/> e. loan guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> f. loan insurance	2. * Status of Federal Action: <input type="checkbox"/> a. bid/offer/application <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> b. initial award <input type="checkbox"/> c. post-award	3. * Report Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> a. initial filing <input type="checkbox"/> b. material change
4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> SubAwardee * Name: Putnam County * Street 1: 2509 Crill Avenue Suite 200 Street 2: * City: Palatka State: FL: Florida Zip: 32177 Congressional District, if known: FL-03		
5. If Reporting Entity in No.4 is Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:		
6. * Federal Department/Agency: US Department of Transportation		7. * Federal Program Name/Description: Port Infrastructure Development Program CFDA Number, if applicable: 20.823
8. Federal Action Number, if known:		9. Award Amount, if known: \$
10. a. Name and Address of Lobbying Registrant: Prefix: Mr. * First Name: Joshua Middle Name: * Last Name: Gaboton Suffix: * Street 1: 601 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Street 2: Suite 900 * City: Washington State: DC: District of Columbia Zip: 20004		
b. Individual Performing Services (including address if different from No. 10a) Prefix: Mr. * First Name: Joshua Middle Name: * Last Name: Gaboton Suffix: * Street 1: Street 2: * City: State: Zip:		
11. Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when the transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure. * Signature: Sam Sullivan * Name: Prefix: Mr. * First Name: Terry Middle Name: * Last Name: Suggs Suffix: Title: County Administrator Telephone No.: 386-329-0207 Date: 05/13/2022		
Federal Use Only:		Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form - LLL (Rev. 7-97)