

TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 7

From: Staff

Date: July 19, 2013 Council Meeting

Subject: Resolution to Support Installation of Fiber Optic Cable for Public Use in the Florida East Coast Rail Corridor

Introduction

Fiber optic technology is a method of transmitting digital information from one place to another by sending pulses of light through an optical fiber. First developed in the 1970s, fiber optic communication systems have revolutionized the telecommunications industry and have played a major role in the advent of the Information Age. Today, fiber optic technology is a vital infrastructure component that is a catalyst to enhance job creation, economic development, healthcare, and education. It is a tool that not only connects regions, but also prepares them to compete in a global, changing economy. However, Southeast Florida does not have fiber optic infrastructure available for public use throughout the region. This report presents a resolution supporting the installation of fiber optic cable for public use through the length of the region.

Background

Consistent with a widespread desire for connectivity throughout the region, representatives from Martin County have led the effort to expand broadband connectivity throughout Southeast Florida, the seven county region of the Seven50 Southeast Florida Prosperity Plan project, which includes Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River counties. This effort to expand broadband connectivity throughout the Southeast Florida Region has been embraced by the Seven50 project, which proposes to create an investment plan to identify critical projects, programs, and infrastructure to improve the region's economy and environment.

The initiative to expand broadband connectivity seeks to provide an expansive, competitive, high capacity network that becomes available to all local governments, hospitals, schools, colleges, universities, and non-profit biomedical institutions. The goal of this effort is to provide 288-strand fiber optic cable at the time work is performed on major regional infrastructure systems. This will allow for a complex network, fundamental to ensure reliability, speed, and strength in communications.

The first and most significant opportunity to expand broadband connectivity in the region is with the All Aboard Florida project, which is a proposal by Florida East Coast Industries to introduce express passenger rail service between Miami and Orlando. This project spans much of the

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**Subject to Modifications**

Southeast Florida Region through the Florida East Coast rail corridor. The Florida East Coast rail corridor is an ideal location for the colocation of fiber technology infrastructure because it links most of the urban areas in Southeast Florida. Fiber optic cable could be installed in the Florida East Coast rail corridor in conjunction with construction of the All Aboard Florida project. The All Aboard Florida project is currently in the planning and environmental permitting stages of development, and engineering work is expected to begin later this year. This is an appropriate time to plan for the installation of fiber optic cable in the Florida East Coast rail corridor. Council encourages all organizations involved in the All Aboard Florida project to support the effort to install fiber optic cable for public use in the Florida East Coast rail corridor.

Recommendation

Council should adopt the attached resolution to support installation of fiber optic cable for public use in the Florida East Coast rail corridor and authorize its transmittal to Florida East Coast Industries, the Florida Department of Transportation, and all organizations involved in permitting and use of the Florida East Coast rail corridor.

Attachment

**RESOLUTION #13-01**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL REPRESENTING THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS OF INDIAN RIVER, MARTIN, PALM BEACH, AND ST. LUCIE COUNTIES, FLORIDA SUPPORTING THE INSTALLATION OF FIBER OPTIC CABLE FOR PUBLIC USE IN THE FLORIDA EAST COAST RAIL CORRIDOR**

**WHEREAS**, Fiber optic technology provides a high speed broadband communication system that is a catalyst to enhance job creation, economic development, healthcare, and education; and

**WHEREAS**, Southeast Florida does not have fiber optic infrastructure available for public use throughout the region; and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed All Aboard Florida project in the Florida East Coast rail corridor provides significant opportunity to expand fiber optic infrastructure in the region; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida East Coast rail corridor is an ideal location for the colocation of fiber optic infrastructure because it links most of the urban areas in Southeast Florida; and

**WHEREAS**, fiber optic technology infrastructure could be installed in the Florida East Coast rail corridor in conjunction with planning and construction of the All Aboard Florida project; and

**WHEREAS**, high-speed fiber optic infrastructure and connectivity is: vital to maintain competitive schools, colleges, and universities; an important factor to attract and retain the research and biotech industry; is critical to significant job growth in the region; and

**WHEREAS**, Martin County has led the effort to secure installation of fiber optic cable for public use in the Florida East Coast rail corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, the Seven50 Southeast Florida Prosperity Plan planning process is considering the installation of fiber optic cable as a critical project to improve the economy and communications capacity in Southeast Florida.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE INSTALLATION OF FIBER OPTIC CABLE FOR PUBLIC USE IN THE FLORIDA EAST COAST RAIL CORRIDOR**

**DULY ADOPTED** by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council this 19th day of July 2013.

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Peter O'Bryan  
TCRPC Chairman

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Michael J. Busha  
Executive Director