



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
ALVIN BROWN  
MAYOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## NEW METRO JACKSONVILLE/NORTHEAST FLORIDA EXPORT PLAN WILL HELP REGION'S GLOBAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

Plan Outlines Four Key Strategies to Boost Exporting

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla., April 14, 2015** – Mayor Alvin Brown and the Northeast Florida Global Cities team released a regional export plan outlining specific steps local business, civic and government leaders will take to promote Jacksonville's economic development. It assesses Jacksonville's current export climate, sets market-based goals for increasing exports and lays out an implementation plan to support local businesses in increasing exports.



The plan is the culmination of a year-long process conducted under the region's participation in the Global Cities Initiative, a five-year joint project of the Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase. Launched in 2012, the Global Cities Initiative helps business and civic leaders grow their metropolitan economies by strengthening international connections and competitiveness. GCI activities include producing data and research to guide decisions, fostering practice and policy innovations, and facilitating its Exchange, a peer learning network. As part of the Exchange, Metro JAX/Northeast

Florida is developing a metropolitan global trade and investment plan.

"After the Great Recession, smart economic development leaders are reorienting their efforts from a one-dimensional focus on domestic business attraction toward a broader array of strategic growth initiatives that include global opportunities," said Marek Gootman, Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program director of strategic partnerships and global initiatives. "With this export plan, Metro JAX/Northeast Florida is developing an economic strategy focused on long-term growth and competitiveness for the region and its firms."

JAXPORT is a key partner in the Global Cities Initiative. Cargo activity through Jacksonville's seaport positively impacts tens of thousands of jobs and supports nearly \$27 billion in annual economic output for the region and state and is currently evenly balanced between imports and exports. JAXPORT is the top

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container port in the state of Florida and the No. 1 vehicle export port in the U.S., moving more than 600,000 vehicles last year.

The port has introduced the most comprehensive capital improvement plan in its history and continues working hand-in-hand with regional private and public entities to ensure prioritization of the investments, such as a critical project to deepen the Jacksonville Harbor to accommodate today's larger cargo vessels.

"Exports can be a vital tool in helping Jacksonville companies grow and expand," said Mayor Brown during an announcement at Saft America, a global export success story and company that has increased Jacksonville's stature on the international stage. "Our city is uniquely positioned as a logistics center,

with our strong port, railways and highway systems, to help businesses capitalize on opportunities to drive growth in a global economy. This export plan will help us build on these opportunities to bring even more benefits to Jacksonville and Northeast Florida."

Exports are an under-used economic development tool and only five percent of U.S. firms currently export. Jacksonville's market assessment study determined that currently, two-thirds of area companies are not exporting, and most expressed little interest. This export strategy will help Jacksonville businesses capitalize on the growing consumer class outside the United States to strengthen the local economy and grow jobs at home.

The market assessment, completed in December, identified many areas with great potential for growth when it comes to exporting from the Northeast Florida region. The export plan capitalizes on that potential, focusing on specific implementation strategies such as teaming exporting companies up with non-exporting companies to share knowledge and information.

The export plan also encourages local communities to create an international trade incentive program for local companies.

Core strategies from the plan include:

- Build export awareness throughout the region
- Support export activity with enhanced access to resources
- Motivate more companies to export
- Boost international awareness and global reputation

"JPMorgan Chase is proud to be a part of Metro JAX/Northeast Florida's export plan development – this effort will help our local economy create jobs, attract capital and grow through realizing our trade opportunity globally and domestically," said Michael Butler, Jacksonville Market President, JPMorgan Chase.

To view the full export plan please visit [www.neflglobalcities.org](http://www.neflglobalcities.org).

For more information on the Global Cities Initiative please visit [www.brookings.edu/projects/global-cities.aspx](http://www.brookings.edu/projects/global-cities.aspx) or [www.jpmorganchase.com/globalcities](http://www.jpmorganchase.com/globalcities).

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