

For Immediate Release

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**COMMISSIONERS VOTE UNANIMOUSLY TO ACCEPT NC RAILROAD GRANT**  
***Selma's Eastfield Crossing Project Set to Benefit from Rail Access***

*Johnston County, N.C. – March 22, 2022.* The Johnston County Board of Commissioners voted unanimously last night to formally accept a \$750,000 infrastructure grant as part of the North Carolina Railroad Company's Build Ready Sites initiative. The award will be applied to upgrades and improvements in Selma that will support the county's Eastfield Crossing project.

"Johnston County is proud to be one of six North Carolina counties to be selected to participate in this important statewide product development initiative," said R.S. "Butch" Lawter Jr., chairman of the Johnston County Board of Commissioners. "There's no part of Johnston County that isn't seeing progress right now, with new communities like Eastfield Crossing offering a major boost to Selma and the central part of our county."

Eastfield Crossing is one of the largest developments currently underway in Johnston County. The mixed-use property spans more than 400 acres and is within easy reach of I-95 and US Highway 70. It is also located in one of four federally designated Opportunity Zones in the county. In addition to hotels, retail spaces, and residential neighborhoods and amenities, Eastfield Crossing will feature a million-square-foot business park.

AdVenture Development, a multi-faceted commercial real estate company with holdings in six eastern U.S. states, is leading the project. Selma's location at the heart of Johnston County, eastern North Carolina and the U.S. east coast all position Eastfield Crossing for success as a mixed-use destination, according to Kevin Dougherty, founder and president

of AdVenture Development, which has offices in Selma and Pittsburgh, Pa. "Eastfield has economic development potential as a generator of both jobs and tax-base," Dougherty said. Johnston County Commissioners voted in February 2019 to offer performance-based economic incentives in support of the project. "A community like Eastfield Crossing doesn't happen without local government partners," he said. "It's reassuring to see a statewide organization like the NC Railroad Company joining our municipal and county government partners in moving this ambitious vision closer to reality."

Once complete, Eastfield will be home to 3,100 jobs and will boost Johnston County's annual GDP by \$169 million, according to an economic impact analysis by Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting, LLC.

"The Town of Selma is thrilled to welcome the North Carolina Railroad Company into our collaboration with AdVenture Development and the Johnston County Economic Development Corporation," said Selma Mayor Byron McAllister. "As we thrive in a new and exciting stage of growth, Selma continues to benefit from its strong heritage as a Railroad Town. We thank the Board of Commissioners for accepting this grant on our behalf and on behalf of the residents here who will have well-paying job opportunities close to home."

Build Ready Sites funds can be used for land preparation such as clearing and grading, critical water and wastewater extensions, and certain types of speculative buildings. In addition to Johnston County and the Eastfield Business Park, sites in Alexander, Burke, Montgomery, Moore and Pitt counties also are receiving Build Ready Site funding. NCRR officials announced the awardees of the \$2.92 million program earlier this month.

"Each of these recipients underwent a rigorous application and site-review process overseen by Global Location Strategies, a consultant based in Greenville, S.C.," explained NCRR President and CEO Carl Warren. "We're honored to launch an innovative program



that not only fosters growth in our local communities, but also creates opportunities for meaningful partnerships that expand our state’s competitive advantage.”

The Johnston County Economic Development Office (JCEDO) facilitates value-added interaction between government, education and the private sector in encouraging and promoting job creation and economic investment in Johnston County. A unit of county government, JCEDO collaborates with local, regional and statewide partners and allies in providing confidential location assistance to businesses and technical support to the county’s 11 municipalities. Its menu of services includes customized digital mapping, labor and wage analysis, site readiness assistance and incentive packaging.

For additional information, visit [www.GrowWithJoCo.com](http://www.GrowWithJoCo.com)

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