

RESOLUTION NO. 2020- 187

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA, ENCOURAGING TESLA, INC., TO
CONSIDER RELOCATION TO ST. JOHNS COUNTY**

WHEREAS, the St. Johns County Board of County Commissioners expressly recognizes that business activity and a strong economy are vital to the public's health, safety and welfare; and

WHEREAS, we recognize that business leaders and decision makers rightly must consider the economic development opportunities, business climate, tax friendliness and quality of life in determining the siting of manufacturing and other commercial facilities; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County was recently ranked (2018) #1 in retail and business investment in Florida by SmartAsset.com; and

WHEREAS, in June 2019, 24/7 Wall Street ranked St. Johns County the best Florida county to live in; and

WHEREAS, in March 2019, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation ranked St. Johns County the healthiest county in Florida for the eighth year in a row; and

WHEREAS, in January 2018, Money ranked St. Augustine as the best place to live in Florida; and

WHEREAS, in January 2018, Business Insider ranked the St. Johns County School District as the best school district in Florida; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County was recently ranked (July, 2019) as the highest per capita income county in Florida; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County has a low overall cost of living, due in part to the lack of a state personal income tax, and the fact that St. Johns County does not charge a local gas tax or utility franchise tax; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County's real estate taxes are among the lowest in Northeast Florida; and

WHEREAS, businesses in St. Johns County are connected to multi-modal transportation networks through Interstate 95, State Road 9B, and U.S. Highway 1, which provide convenient access to regional, national, and international transportation and trade assets, such as the Jacksonville International Airport, JAXPORT, Florida East Coast Railway, CSX, and Norfolk Southern Railway, as well as local assets such as the Northeast Florida Regional Airport in St. Augustine; and

WHEREAS, in its Winter 2019 issue, Southern Business & Development rated St. Johns County among its top small and medium sized markets for foreign direct investment in the American South; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County has demonstrated a commitment to preserving the environment for future generations through initiatives such as its recycling programs, The Amp's

Green Hands Initiative, and its conversion of the County fleet to vehicles powered by compressed natural gas; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County recognizes the economic impact that COVID-19 has created and has expressed its full support for initiatives designed to protect against and mitigate economic losses; and

WHEREAS, Florida’s Governor Ron DeSantis has initiated the Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step. Plan for Florida’s economic recovery from the impact of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the state of Florida was recently ranked #2 nationally for fiscal stability by U.S. News & World Report; and

WHEREAS, the state of Florida has the 4th largest economy in the United States and the 18th largest economy in the world; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County has a number of incentives available to businesses which may wish to relocate to or expand operations in St. Johns County, including the County’s business incentive program, financing through the County’s Industrial Development Authority, and local support for state programs, such as Florida’s Qualified Target Industry program; and

WHEREAS, St. Johns County is home to the corporate headquarters for PGA TOUR, Inc., Ring Power, and Advanced Disposal Services, Inc., and is the location of a large Northrop Grumman facility employing over 1,110 employees; and

WHEREAS, Elon Musk, the Chief Executive Officer of Tesla, Inc. (Tesla), announced via Twitter that he intends to move his headquarters and future programs out of California; and

WHEREAS, the quality of life provided by St. Johns County and the County’s commitment to supporting businesses, especially during the COVID-19 state of emergency make St. Johns County an excellent destination for Tesla’s relocation;

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, that Tesla, Inc., is hereby respectfully and enthusiastically invited to consider St. Johns County, Florida, as a potential destination in the relocation of its headquarters or any future programs.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Board of County Commissioners of St. Johns County, Florida, this 26th day of May, 2020.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: Jeb S. Smith
Jeb S. Smith, Chair

ATTEST: Brandon Patty, Clerk
By: Tom Helterman
Deputy Clerk

