



**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members of the  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Greg Chavarria, City Manager

**DATE:** September 19, 2023

**TITLE:** Resolution Supporting and Authorizing the Submittal of a Grant Application to the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Discretionary Grant Program of the United States Department of Transportation in Partnership with the Cities of Wilton Manors and Oakland Park - **(Commission Districts 1, 2 and 3)**

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**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the City Commission adopt a resolution supporting and authorizing the submittal of a grant application to the United States Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Pilot Discretionary Grant Program. The proposed grant application is in partnership with the cities of Wilton Manors and Oakland Park to complete a transportation planning study to remove barriers of access in relation to the future Broward Commuter Rail (BCR) station in Oakland Park.

**Background**

Under the new Federal Administration, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) was passed, which includes increases to existing transportation grant programs, as well as several new transportation funding programs. These programs have created new funding access to complete transportation projects at the local level with a focus on the priorities of Safety, Equity, Economic Strength, Climate and Sustainability, Transformation, and Organization Excellence. One of those programs is the Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Discretionary Grant Program.

The purpose of the RCP is to reconnect communities by removing, retrofitting, or mitigating transportation facilities such as highways and rail lines that create barriers to community connectivity. The program provides grant funding for planning and capital construction to address infrastructure barriers, restore community connectivity, and improve peoples' lives. The variety of transformative solutions can include such things as trails, roadway redesigns, complete streets conversions, and pedestrian walkways.

In 2022, the City of Fort Lauderdale participated in a tri-city application with Wilton Manors and Oakland Park. The application was well received but did not rank well enough for funding. The project team received feedback from the grantor and has included additional information for the 2023 application. The grant application and project management processes are being led by the City of Oakland Park.

The proposed grant application will be a partnership with the cities of Oakland Park and Wilton Manors to complete a transportation study that centers around multimodal access to the proposed new Broward Commuter Rail Station in Oakland Park. The BCR station location is planned near the intersection of Oakland Park Boulevard and the Florida East Coast Railway with the first and last mile connections to that station includes areas within Fort Lauderdale. The study will identify transportation barriers to multimodal access that have been created and implementation strategies for removing barriers. The study's focus area will be between Interstate 95 to US1/Federal Highway, and from Sunrise Boulevard to Commercial Boulevard with a focus on the main arterials, collectors, and rail lines that have created access barriers to safe connectivity.

The anticipated grant request of \$1,000,000 requires a 25% match that will be provided through state Toll Revenue Credits. The grant application is due on September 28, 2023. Awards are anticipated to be announced in early 2024.

In addition to this grant application, the City of Fort Lauderdale intends to submit a joint RCP application with the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization for railroad crossing grade separation in the downtown core. The related CAM 23-0917 is also requesting a Resolution of Support.

**Resource Impact:**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action to the City. The 25% match will be funded through State Toll Revenue Credits.

**Strategic Connections:**

This item is a Top 2022 Commission Priority, advancing the *Transportation and Traffic initiative*.

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024 Strategic Plan*, specifically *advancing*:

- Infrastructure Focus Area
- Goal 2 - Build a multi-modal and pedestrian friendly community.
- Objective - Improve roads, sidewalks, and trails to prioritize a safer, more walkable and bikeable community

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale Vision Plan 2035: We Are Connected*.

**Related CAM**

23-0917

**Attachments**

Exhibit 1 – Project Area Map

Exhibit 2 – Resolution

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