



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CONFERENCE MEETING

#25-0074

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

FROM: Susan Grant, Acting City Manager *Susan Grant*

DATE: January 22, 2025

TITLE: **REVISED BUS – 4** - Discussion - "I AM SISTRUNK" Campaign -
(Commission Districts 2 and 3)

Background

On December 17, 2024, the City Commission Approved a Memorandum of Understanding with International Economic Development Council, Inc. for the Economic Recovery Corps. Fellow Program. The Economic Recovery Fellow will focus on ensuring economic development programs are designed and implemented to measurably benefit the local community. The Fellow will inventory community assets and conduct a listening tour to identify community strengths and barriers to economic prosperity. Using research findings, the Fellow will consult on the design of economic development strategies and evaluate programmatic outcomes using mixed quantitative and qualitative methods. Economic development strategies include workforce development training, small business incubator and potential family strengthening programs. At the conclusion of the program, the Fellow will be asked to share policy recommendations to scale the city's efforts.

One of the recommendations is to unify the community through a branding campaign that will foster stakeholder collaboration. The "I AM SISTRUNK" initiative is a visionary project aimed at revitalizing the historic Sistrunk Corridor in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This transformative effort seeks to honor the area's rich African American heritage while fostering economic growth, community pride, and increased homeownership. Central to this initiative is the creation of a unifying symbol that represents the cultural significance of the corridor and serves as a catalyst for sustainable development. By amplifying the importance of the Sistrunk Corridor, the initiative aspires to create a shared vision for its future that unites residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

A key objective of the "I AM SISTRUNK" initiative is to transform the corridor into a thriving hub of economic opportunities. This aligns with ongoing efforts to attract investment and development to the area, which have already begun to take shape through projects like the Victory Building and The Arcadian. The initiative also emphasizes empowering residents to achieve homeownership, recognizing it as a vital step toward building generational wealth and fostering community stability. This goal complements existing Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) efforts to provide affordable housing options and mitigate gentrification. Furthermore, the project highlights the importance of amplifying

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Sistrunk's stories and legacy, ensuring that its contributions to Fort Lauderdale's history are recognized and celebrated. By fostering collaboration among stakeholders and leveraging the area's rich heritage, the "I AM SISTRUNK" initiative aims to create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable community that honors its past while shaping a promising future for all who call Sistrunk home.

Resource Impact

No fiscal impact.

Strategic Connections

This item is a FY 2025 Commission Priority, advancing the Infrastructure and Resiliency initiative.

This item supports the *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2029* Strategic Plan, specifically advancing:

- The Business Growth and Support Area, Goal 6: Build a diverse and attractive economy.

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

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Business Development Area
- The Economic Development Element
- Goal 2: Enhance the economic competitiveness of Fort Lauderdale through policies that encourage retention and recruitment of business and industry which provide living-wage employment and increased training and competitiveness of the local workforce.

Attachment

Exhibit 1 – "I AM SISTRUNK" Presentation

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