

RESOLUTION NO. 23-

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA, RESCINDING AND REPLACING RESOLUTION NO. 22-20, URGING THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO RECOMMEND CONSTRUCTION OF A TUNNEL AS THE LOCALLY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE FOR THE COMMUTER RAIL TRAIN CROSSING THE NEW RIVER IN THE CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA, AND PROVIDING FOR DISTRIBUTION, DIRECTION TO THE CITY'S STATE LOBBYISTS, RESCISSION OF CONFLICTING RESOLUTION PROVISIONS, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Lauderdale is supportive of the regional initiative to develop commuter rail service along the FEC railroad tracks through Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties in an effort to reduce congestion on South Florida roadways and improve mass transit; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Lauderdale recognizes the challenges that commuter rail service would create at the crossing of the New River if the additional trains used the current bascule bridge to traverse the waterway, particularly the inordinate burden that would befall the marine industries located upriver in that the bridge would be down so frequently as to impose a severe economic hardship on those companies and their customers; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Lauderdale is aware that the Florida Department of Transportation ("FDOT") is working on a preliminary design and engineering study of commuter rail service and is in the process of selecting a local preferred alternative for a New River crossing; and

WHEREAS, three of the four options under consideration would build a bridge a mile or more in length through the center of Fort Lauderdale's downtown and as high as eighty feet above ground level at maximum clearance; and

WHEREAS, downtown Fort Lauderdale is the center of an ongoing renaissance that needs to be nurtured, with 13,000 new residential units, 600,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, 1.1 million square feet of office space, and 1,000 new hotel rooms to be developed over the next 10 years — on top of the phenomenal growth that has already occurred; and

WHEREAS, downtown Fort Lauderdale has seen an explosive increase in population, growing forty-one percent between 2010 and 2020, and is expected to grow an

additional forty-five percent by 2025, thus placing the city center in the top two percent of fastest growing places in the State of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Lauderdale is pleased that the Florida Department of Transportation has determined that a tunnel could be built for substantially less than originally projected and is technically feasible to construct; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Lauderdale believes that the price of a tunnel could still be further reduced by continuing to engage with world-renowned tunneling experts regarding their prior experience; and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Lauderdale believes that it can work cooperatively with partner agencies to find financial support for a tunnel beyond traditional transit financing routes; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of City of Fort Lauderdale adopted Resolution No. 22-20 at its regular meeting of January 18, 2022; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 22-20 urges the Broward County Board of County Commissioners and the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization to adopt construction of a tunnel as the Locally Preferred Alternative to the exclusion of a bridge; and

WHEREAS, after adoption of Resolution No. 22-20, the City Commission of the City of Fort Lauderdale considered additional data and information that prompted the reconsideration of the anticipated impact of a bridge; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission of the City of Fort Lauderdale remains supportive of a tunnel as the Locally Preferred Alternative, but will support a bridge as the Locally Preferred Alternative if the data supports it as the best financial alternative;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA:

SECTION 1. The City Commission of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, urges the Florida Department of Transportation to recommend construction of a tunnel as the Locally Preferred Alternative for the commuter rail train crossing the New River in the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, or a bridge as the Locally Preferred Alternative if the data supports it as the best financial alternative and transmit that recommendation to the Broward County Board of County Commissioners and the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization while continuing to work to reduce the project's construction costs and find the necessary financing.

SECTION 2. The City Commission of the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, urges the Broward County Board of County Commissioners and the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization to adopt construction of a tunnel as the Locally Preferred Alternative or a bridge as the Locally Preferred Alternative if the data supports it as the best financial alternative once a recommendation has been transmitted.

SECTION 3. The City Commission directs the City Clerk to transmit copies of this Resolution to the City's state lobbyists, Governor Ron DeSantis, Senate President Kathleen Passidomo, Speaker of the House Paul Renner, the Broward League of Cities, the Florida League of Cities, the Broward County Legislative Delegation, the Broward County Board of County Commissioners, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners, the Palm Beach County League of Cities, the Miami-Dade County League of Cities, and any other interested parties.

SECTION 4. The City Commission directs the City's state lobbyists to advocate for construction of a tunnel as the Locally Preferred Alternative for the commuter rail train crossing the New River in the City of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, or a bridge as Locally Preferred Alternative if the data supports it as the best financial alternative and to offer their assistance to the Florida Department of Transportation, Broward County, and the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization to reduce project costs and find financing.

SECTION 5. That all resolutions or parts of resolutions in conflict herewith, be and the same are hereby rescinded to the extent of such conflict.

SECTION 6. That this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this ____ day of December, 2023.

Mayor
DEAN J. TRANTALIS

ATTEST:

City Clerk
DAVID R. SOLOMAN

Dean J. Trantalis

John C. Herbst

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
CORRECTNESS:

City Attorney
THOMAS J. ANSBRO

Steven Glassman _____

Pamela Beasley-Pittman _____

Warren Sturman _____