



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE**  
**City Commission Agenda Memo**  
**REGULAR MEETING**

**#24-0228**

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

**FROM:** Greg Chavarria, City Manager

**DATE:** February 20, 2024

**TITLE:** Resolution Supporting the Submission of a Grant Application to the United States Department of Transportation for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program for the New River Crossing - **(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)**

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**Recommendation**

Staff recommends the City Commission approve a resolution supporting the submission of a grant application to the United States Department of Transportation for the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant Program for New River Crossing.

**Background**

In 2019, Legislative Specific Appropriation Bill 1939 directed the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to develop a proposal to provide a crossing solution that meets the reasonable needs of navigational traffic, freight trains and passenger transit for the New River. The FDOT feasibility study identified four crossing alternatives which included three bridge alternatives and one tunnel alternative.

As a future New River crossing will have impacts on downtown Fort Lauderdale, the City Commission approved Resolution 22-20 on January 5, 2022, which urged the Florida Department of Transportation to consider the tunnel as the future of commuter rail service in the City of Fort Lauderdale. In addition, the City of Fort Lauderdale and Broward County agreed to conduct a joint study for the rail infrastructure alternatives of the New River. On February 7, 2023, the City Commission approved an Interlocal Agreement with Broward County for the joint study.

On October 18, 2023, the City procured the services of BDO USA, LLP. (BDO) to advance the tunnel consideration. Specifically, BDO was tasked with defining the project, identifying federal funding opportunities, and developing an action plan for the project. The associated scope delivers the baseline for project development but requires additional resources to meet federal funding application minimum requirements.

On December 19, 2023, the City Commission approved an agreement with BDO to continue and expand their efforts on the New River Crossing evaluation. As part of those efforts, there is a need to determine local impact, planning for the New River Crossing project at the local level and support community engagement. To support these efforts, a recommendation is being made for the City of Fort Lauderdale apply to the RAISE program for planning phase funding. The RAISE program has a \$25,000,000 maximum grant threshold for the planning phase and requires a 20% local match.

City staff recommends submitting a grant application in the amount of \$2,500,000 (\$2,500,000 Federal / \$500,000 local) for a total project cost of \$3,000,000. Grant funding will be used to further understand the impacts of the New River crossing on the local community, determine how to mitigate any known or unknown risks, and gain community input.

### **Resource Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with this action, however, if the grant is awarded, there will be a fiscal impact of \$500,000 for the required 20% match.

### **Strategic Connections**

This item is a *2024 Commission Priority*, advancing the Transportation and Traffic initiative.

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

- The 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*

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

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Urban Design Element
- Goal 4: Enhance the existing built environment and elements unique to Fort Lauderdale, including waterways, bridges, tunnels and other traversable features

### **Attachment**

Exhibit 1 - Resolution

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Prepared by: Ben Rogers, Director, Transportation and Mobility

Department Director: Ben Rogers, Transportation and Mobility

02/20/2024

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