



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CRA BOARD MEETING

#17-0503

TO: CRA Chairman & Board of Commissioners
Fort Lauderdale Community Redevelopment Agency

FROM: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, Executive Director

DATE: April 19, 2017

TITLE: Motion to Approve CRA Funds of \$159,000 for the Walker Elementary Safe Routes to School

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Board of Commissioners approve funding from the Northwest Progresso Flagler Heights (NPF) CRA for the Walker Elementary Safe Routes to School project in the amount of \$159,000.

Background

The City's Transportation & Mobility Department has partnered with Walker Elementary and community partners on an application to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for funding, through their Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program, to improve sidewalks and calm traffic to make it safer for students to get to and from school within the Northwest Progresso Flagler Heights Community Redevelopment Area. It was discovered that FDOT District 4, which the city is located within, is the only district in the State that does not fund design through this program. Therefore, there is a funding gap in the amount of \$108,000 for engineering design, \$46,600 towards contingency and \$4,000 for the crosswalk on NW 9th Avenue.

SRTS is a federal program disbursed through FDOT to fund infrastructure and programs to support safer travel for children walking and biking to school. The City has helped facilitate the development of a SRTS Committee that includes Walker Elementary, LA Lee YMCA (YMCA), WalkSafe, Sistrunk Healthy Community Zone, Broward TOUCH Program, and Fort Lauderdale Police. The SRTS Committee worked together to create opportunities to host public input on safety concerns from the neighbors and parents at a variety of public meetings to include two Academic Nights at Walker Elementary which hosted over 200 parents, teachers, and students as well as a public meeting at Dixie Court housing development which hosted a great discussion with residents about the safety concerns for children and seniors to travel safely in the neighborhood adjacent to Walker Elementary.

Walker Elementary is a prime candidate for the SRTS program due to several factors including: there have been crashes involving school age children surrounding the school; the school has been ranked as an underperforming school in Broward County; the neighborhood has the highest rate of unemployment and double the rate of poverty compared with the rest of the County; and it has the highest rate of Type II diabetes, highest suicide rate, and high rates of mental health issues as well. This project will leverage the investment by the Broward County School District internal to the property including the remodeling and restoration of school grounds of Walker Elementary in 2015. There is a critical need to create safe walking routes to and from the Walker Elementary School.

During the public outreach at Walker Elementary, many families shared concerns about the safety of children crossing the street, walking in the dirt, and the dangers of vehicles. In a neighborhood where the median household income is less than \$30,000, many families do not own a vehicle. These families would like to have their children walk or bike, but it has been stated by parents that safety and security of their children along the route is a great concern.

The main concerns included speeding vehicles, lack of crosswalks/crossing guards, and missing sidewalks which have translated into the proposed scope of work to include wider sidewalks, traffic calming elements, and crosswalks that will improve safety of the environment surrounding the school. Also included in the grant application are programs to educate and empower the students of Walker Elementary to be aware, be safe, and be seen while walking and biking through partnerships with the YMCA, WalkSafe, and the Fort Lauderdale Police Department.

The City of Fort Lauderdale has a commitment to providing safe modes of transportation for all residents and visitors. This commitment has been strengthened through the adoption of the Vision Zero Fort Lauderdale initiative in 2015. This application will help to implement much needed improvements in partnership with Walker Elementary School, community partners, and the residents of this neighborhood. Creating a safe environment for children to walk and bike will help to create life-long habits to increase healthy behaviors for the reduction of diabetes and improved mental health. This physical activity prior to school has been proven to help children be more attentive learners throughout the school day.

The FDOT Safe Routes to School Grant Awards have not been announced to date.

Consistency with the NPF CRA Community Redevelopment Plan

Pursuant to the NPF CRA Community Redevelopment Plan, immediate upgrades and improvements to infrastructure are proposed within the NPF CRA area to induce private investment and support development. The Plan recommends use of incentives for quality development. In addition, the CRA Five Year Strategic Plan, which was incorporated as part of the 2016 Redevelopment Plan Modification, recommends that the CRA invest in development projects that improve the quality of life, create job

opportunities for area residents, promote sustainability, promote public/private partnerships, and enhance tax increment revenues for redistribution and investment in the redevelopment area.

Resource Impact

Funds for this project in the amount of \$159,000 are available in the Fiscal Year 2017 Budget in the accounts listed below.

Funds available as of April 7, 2017					
ACCOUNT NUMBER	INDEX NAME (Program)	CHARACTER CODE/ SUBOBJECT NAME	AMENDED BUDGET (Character)	AVAILABLE BALANCE (Character)	PAYMENT AMOUNT
119-CRA091703-4204	Streetscape Enhancement Program FY 17	Other Operating/ Operating Subsidies	\$1,500,000	\$728,922	\$159,000
PURCHASE TOTAL ►					\$159,000

Strategic Connections

This item is a *Commission Annual Action Plan* priority, included within the Policy Agenda, advancing the Northwest Progresso Flagler Heights CRA – Capital Improvements and Housing strategy.

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018* initiative, included within the Neighborhood Enhancement Cylinder of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- Goal 7: Be a well-positioned City within the global economic and tourism markets of the South Florida region, leveraging our airports, ports and rail connections.
- Objective 2: Facilitate a responsive and proactive business climate.
- Initiative 1: Evaluate and expand our existing portfolio of business attraction Incentives.

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

Attachments

Exhibit 1 - Traffic related crashes: School Age Children, Ages 4-18

Exhibit 2 - Proposed SRTS Grant Improvements Map, Walker Elementary

Exhibit 3 - NPF CRA Advisory Board Meeting DRAFT Minutes (March 2017)

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