



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

**#18-1000**

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

**FROM:** Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

**DATE:** October 23, 2018

**TITLE:** Motion to Approve Acceptance of Grant #2015-DC-NY-K002 from the Center for Court Innovation, Inc., the Fund for the City of New York, and the Department of Justice to Implement a Community Court Pilot Program in the Amount of \$200,000, and to Authorize the City Manager to Negotiate and Execute the Grant Agreement, Subject to Review by the City Attorney

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Commission approve a motion authorizing the City Manager to accept a Grant #2015-DC-NY-K002 from the Center of Court Innovation, Inc., the Fund for the City of New York and the Department of Justice and to negotiate and execute the grant agreement, and any documents associated with the Community of Court Pilot Program, subject to review by the City Attorney, that expands Fort Lauderdale's efforts to provide a comprehensive homeless strategy that leverages resources and unifies a collaborative effort to ending homelessness in Fort Lauderdale in the amount of \$200,000 effective October 1, 2018 through June 30, 2020.

**Background**

Due to lack of appropriate resources, quality of life or municipal ordinance violations are often unenforceable. When an offender is taken to jail, he or she is released and/or charges are dismissed without sanctions or accountability. Supporting evidence suggests that mandating defendants to complete social service programs reduces the rate of recidivism.

The Community Court will directly address the City's strategic goals of reducing non-violent crimes, supporting public safety, and reducing homelessness, as an innovative pilot program. The overall purpose of the court is to address the quality of life issues of our neighbors in downtown and the entertainment district of Fort Lauderdale with a swift, more constructive sentencing approach for public order offenders.

The Community Court will hold people responsible for their offenses—while also offering help to promote behavioral change in them and to increase their successful integration in

the community. It combines conventional sentencing with alternative sanctions, on-site treatment, and training in an effort to break the “revolving door” cycle of quality of life crimes. The process promotes responsibility in defendants through a combination of supervised community service and direct connections to social service providers. The primary benefit of a Community Court, as opposed to the traditional court system approach, is the linking of offenders to services to help them establish structure in their lives by offering a support system.

The foundation of the court is a team of justice system and social service professionals dedicated to collaborating on cases to reach practical solutions. Under the supervision of Chief Judge Jack Tuter of the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court, a judge will be assigned to preside over the process and to take a problem-solving and community-focused approach to balance penalties with community assistance. It requires offenders to pay back the community by participating in restorative community service projects, while participating in individualized social service sanctions—such as drug or alcohol treatment and mental health counseling.

The Court will tailor a mix of community service and social service mandates to the circumstances of each case; some defendants might be required to perform only community service, others only social service or a combination. Representatives of several local social service agencies will work with the Court onsite to problem-solve with community members in need of assistance. The magistrate may order regular follow up appointments to ensure compliance with the court order. The City Manager’s Neighbor Support Homeless Section, with these two support positions, will record the orders, monitor compliance and provide monthly status reports to the Court.

The Center for Court Innovation reports many cities throughout the United States such as Eugene, Oregon, Seattle, Washington, New York, New York, have successfully developed Community Courts that bridge the gap between law enforcement, the court system, and the communities they serve. There are 37 Community Court programs that are improving the visibility and transparency of the work of the justice system, and are responding creatively to community needs.

According to the Center for Court Innovation, the Midtown Community Court in New York, New York reported in 2009, 87% of the defendants completed community service mandates, compared to 50% of the defendants who were processed in a traditional criminal court. Further, supervised defendant completed approximately 18,000 hours of community service in a year or roughly equivalent of \$130,000 of labor, including painting over graffiti, stuffing envelopes for local non-profit organizations, and cleaning the streets of Times Square and surrounding areas. The Red Hook Community Justice Center in Brooklyn, New York contributed to approximately 70,000 hours of community service with \$500,000 worth of labor. In addition, the percentage of residents who say they feel safe in local parks rose from 45.6 % in 2004 to 73.5% in 2010 an increase from 40.8 % to 54.5% feeling safe in the streets of Brooklyn.

### **Resource Impact**

There is a positive fiscal impact to the City in the amount of \$200,000 which will allow for project implementation in FY2018. Matching funds are not required for this program. Funds were appropriated through consolidated budget amendment CAM #18-0530.

#### **Appropriate To**

<b>Funds available as of October 1, 2018</b>					
<b>ACCOUNT NUMBER</b>	<b>INDEX NAME (Program)</b>	<b>CHARACTER CODE/ SUB-OBJECT NAME</b>	<b>AMENDED BUDGET (Character)</b>	<b>AVAILABLE BALANCE (Character)</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
129-COMMCT18A-C205	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Intergovt Revenue/BJA pass thru Center for Court Innovation	\$0	\$0	\$200,000.00
<b>Appropriation Total →</b>					<b>\$200,000.00</b>

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<b>ACCOUNT NUMBER</b>	<b>INDEX NAME (Program)</b>	<b>CHARACTER CODE/ SUB-OBJECT NAME</b>	<b>AMENDED BUDGET (Character)</b>	<b>AVAILABLE BALANCE (Character)</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
129-GCOMMCT18A-1107	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Salaries & Wages/Part Tim Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$83,395.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-2301	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Fringe Benefits/Soc Sec/ Medicare	\$0	\$0	\$24,164.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-4104	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Meetings/Conferences	\$0	\$0	\$15,254.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-3299	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Other Services/Professional Services	\$0	\$0	\$25,200.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-3925	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Supplies/Office Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$4,216.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-3925	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Supplies/Office Furniture			\$1,346.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-3928	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Supplies/Office Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$5,250.00
129-GCOMMCT18A-3999	Community Court Grant BJA -CCI	Supplies/Other Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$41,175.00
<b>Appropriation Total→</b>					<b>\$200,000.00</b>

### **Strategic Connections**

This item is a *Commission Annual Action Plan* priority, included within the Policy Agenda, advancing the Comprehensive Homeless Strategy.

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

- Goal 3: Be a community that finds opportunities and leverages partnerships to create unique, inviting and connected gathering places that highlight our beaches, waterways, urban areas, and parks.
- Objective 5: Work with partners to reduce homelessness by promoting independence and self-worth through advocacy, housing, and comprehensive services.
- Initiative 2: Implement a comprehensive short and long-term strategy with community partners to address Homelessness

This item also furthers the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Community*.

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