



Memorandum

Memorandum No: 23-085

Date: June 16, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Commissioners

From: Greg Chavarria, City Manager 
Greg Chavarria (Jun 19, 2023 08:07 EDT)

Re: Rail Crossing Elimination Grant Award

The City of Fort Lauderdale was recently notified of a grant award for a Railroad Safety and Congestion Analysis from the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) through their Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Program. The objective of the FRA's grant program is to improve safety and mobility by funding highway-rail and pathway-rail grade crossing improvement projects.

This \$280,000 grant is one of 68 grants awarded nationally totaling more than \$570 million in Railroad Crossing Elimination (RCE) Grant Program funding to projects in 32 states for planning, project development and design, and construction. This inaugural round of funding will address more than 400 at-grade crossings nationwide and is one of the new programs created through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill.

The City's Railroad Safety and Congestion Analysis project will study 15 crossings within the City of Fort Lauderdale along the existing Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway corridor. Freight service and intercity passenger rail service are both expected to expand over the next couple of years, and this project will help identify the means to improve safety at the rail grade crossings. The study will focus on data related to traffic, delays, and interactions at the crossings. The City of Fort Lauderdale is providing a 20 percent local match in the amount of \$70,000, for a total project cost of \$350,000.

This grant will be coupled with the additional \$15.4 million grant received by the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in partnership with the six cities along the FEC Corridor of Hallandale Beach, Hollywood, Dania Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Wilton Manors, and Pompano Beach for construction improvement projects that focus on safety along the FEC railway. The MPO's project will improve safety at 21 grade crossings including constructing 33 new exit gates and 7 raised medians at crossings. As part of this grant, the City of Fort Lauderdale will provide a 20% non-federal match of approximately \$1.02M for the six at-grade crossings under City jurisdiction.

If you have any questions, please contact Ben Rogers, Director of Transportation and Mobility, at brogers@fortlauderdale.gov.

Attachment: October 4, 2022, Letter to Secretary Pete Buttigieg

c: Anthony G. Fajardo, Assistant City Manager
Susan Grant, Assistant City Manager
D'Wayne M. Spence, Interim City Attorney
David R. Soloman, City Clerk
Patrick Reilly, City Auditor
Department Directors
CMO Managers



CITY OF
FORT LAUDERDALE



October 4, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I am writing to express my strong support for the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization's application to the *Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant Program (RCEP)* for Broward County, located in southeast Florida. The RCEP grant funding would support the final design and construction of approximately 40 exit gates and ten medians at 27 highway-railroad grade crossings, to further enhance public safety and "seal" the rail corridor. This project is a \$23.7 million safety investment by Broward County, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), and several local municipalities, wherein Brightline Trains Florida, LLC (Brightline) will lead the project design and construction. **The City of Fort Lauderdale is committed to improving safety at the six locally controlled crossings. The associated cost of the proposed safety improvements are estimated at \$5,012,000 and, if awarded, and in conjunction with City Commission approval, the City of Fort Lauderdale would provide a 20% non-Federal match of approximately \$1,002,400 for the improvements that will be installed at the six grade crossings under City of Fort Lauderdale authority.** The City acknowledges that the relevant maintenance agreements with the Florida East Coast Railway (FECR) for each of the impacted crossings will need to be modified to include these additional improvements.

The crossings proposed to be enhanced through this project run along the existing Florida East Coast railroad corridor. The railway currently accommodates freight service and intercity passenger rail service with both expected to expand over the next couple of years. The safety and efficiency of the rail corridor impacts the residents, businesses, and visitors of our City. This project is part of a comprehensive approach to improve safety along the entire shared corridor with the goal of reducing accidents to zero. FDOT, Brightline, FECR, and the local public authorities have been working closely with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) on recommended crossing enhancements to improve safety. This project is a critical component of this public safety initiative, and we are committed to being a partner.

I appreciate your consideration and respectfully request that you consider this vital project for funding. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Greg Chavarria
City Manager

c: Susan Grant, Assistant City Manager
Anthony G. Fajardo, Assistant City Manager
Ben Rogers, Director of Transportation and Mobility
Laura Reece, Director of Office of Management and Budget

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