

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Jason E. Brown; County Administrator

THROUGH: Stan Boling, AICP; Community Development Director
Phillip J. Matson, AICP; MPO Staff Director

FROM: Brian Freeman, AICP; Senior Transportation Planner

DATE: November 7, 2018

SUBJECT: Approval of a Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA) with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for a Public Transportation Block Grant

It is requested that the information herein presented be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting of November 20, 2018.

DESCRIPTION & CONDITIONS

For the past several years, Indian River County has applied for and received mass transit operating assistance through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Public Transportation Block Grant program. Each year, the County combines Block Grant funds with local funds as a match towards federal transit operating assistance received under 49 USC Ch. 53, Section 5307 (also known as the Urbanized Area Formula Grant program) and Section 5311 (also known as the Rural Area Formula Grant program). These state and federal grant funds are passed through to the Senior Resource Association (SRA), Indian River County's designated transit service provider. SRA operates the GoLine (fixed-route) and the Community Coach (demand response) transit services.

For FY 2018/19, \$531,885 has been allocated through the state Block Grant program to the county. Because the Block Grant has a 50% match requirement, the county is required to provide a local match of \$531,885. As was the case in previous years, matching funds will come from the County's normal transit allocation. Together, the Block Grant funds and local funds will be applied as a local/state match towards \$1,063,770 in federal operating assistance through the Section 5307 program (\$993,994) and the Section 5311 program (\$69,776). As a result, the county will receive \$1,595,655 in combined federal and state transit operating assistance.

In terms of transit, the County receives most of its funding through the federal Section 5307 grant program. To obtain those federal Section 5307 funds, the County must complete an application and follow a process that includes several steps. For FY 2018/19, the first step is to apply for state

Block Grant funds. Subsequent steps include applying for federal capital and operating assistance and applying for Florida toll revenue credits for use as a soft match for federal capital assistance.

According to state regulations, Block Grant funds may be used for both eligible capital and operating costs of public transit providers. Because the local match requirement for the capital portion of the County's FY 2018/19 Section 5307 grant may be met by soft-match rather than cash-match funds (which effectively provides for 100% federal funding of capital expenses), the entire FY 2018/19 Block Grant is proposed as a partial match for Section 5307 operating funds.

Pursuant to state regulations, Block Grant funds may not exceed 50% of the nonfederal share of total eligible operating expenses of transit service provision. Also, activities funded with Block Grant funds must be consistent with applicable approved local government comprehensive and transit plans. To receive the Block Grant funds, the County must enter into a Public Transportation Grant Agreement with FDOT, a copy of which is attached to this staff report (Attachment #2).

ANALYSIS

As with the FTA Section 5307 grant program, only public agencies may be designated recipients of Block Grant funds, although the funds may be passed through to a nonprofit provider. Under these restrictions, SRA has requested that the Board of County Commissioners apply for state Block Grant funds on its behalf.

The attached Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA) is an agreement between FDOT and Indian River County specifying the requirements which the County must meet in order to receive Block Grant funds. One of the most important of these requirements is that the County prepare and approve an annual update to its Transit Development Plan (TDP).

The attached resolution (Attachment #1) authorizes the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners to execute the PTGA for Public Transportation Block Grant funds. Upon the Board's adoption of the resolution and the Chairman's execution of the PTGA, County staff will transmit the PTGA to FDOT. Once the PTGA has been executed by FDOT, the funds will be transmitted to the County and passed along to the Senior Resource Association (SRA), the County's public transportation provider, so that the SRA can continue providing fixed route and demand-response transit service. The provision of such service is consistent with the findings of the MPO's adopted 10-year Transit Development Plan and 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan.

FUNDING

Funding in the amount of \$531,885 is budgeted and available in the General Fund/Community Transportation Coordinator account (Account Number 00111041-088230). These funds are part of the allocation given to the Senior Resource Association to provide transit service in the county.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners approve the Public Transportation Grant Agreement and adopt the resolution authorizing the Chairman to sign the agreement.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Authorizing Resolution for the Execution of a Public Transportation Grant Agreement
2. FDOT Public Transportation Grant Agreement
3. Grant Budget Form