

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Board of County Commissioners

Through: John A. Titkanich, Jr.
County Administrator

Prepared By: Brian Freeman, AICP
MPO Staff Director

Date: May 25, 2023

Subject: FY 2023 Grant Application for Capital and Operating Assistance (Section 5307) and Bus Replacement (Section 5339) from the Federal Transit Administration

It is requested that the information presented herein be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting of June 6, 2023.

DESCRIPTION & CONDITIONS

The Federal Transit Administration’s Section 5307 (Urban Area Formula Grant) program provides funding assistance for capital and operating costs associated with Indian River County public transportation system. The GoLine (fixed route) and the Community Coach (demand response) transit services are operated by the Senior Resource Association (SRA). Indian River County also receives capital funding assistance through FTA’s Section 5339 (Bus and Bus Facilities) program, which is used for the purchase of replacement buses.

Together, the Section 5307 and 5339 programs cover most of the capital expenses associated with the GoLine and Community Coach. In addition, the Section 5307 program covers approximately half of the operating costs of the public transportation system, with the remainder covered by Florida Department of Transportation grants and local funds.

ANALYSIS

According to federal regulations, Section 5307 program grants may be used for the planning, acquisition, construction, improvement, and operating costs of facilities, equipment, and associated capital maintenance items used in public transportation. Operating expenses require a 50% nonfederal match, which is provided through a combination of local funds and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) public transportation grant funds.

For capital expenses, FDOT toll revenue credits are used as a 20% nonfederal soft match (which effectively provides for 100% federal funding of capital expenses). The use of a soft match eliminates the need for the County to provide a cash outlay for capital expenses. According to applicable regulations, toll revenue credits may be used as soft match only for capital expenses. For operating expenses, however, the nonfederal share is provided through a combination of local funds and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) public transportation grant funds.

Attached to this report are copies of the County's proposed grant application for the Section 5307 and Section 5339 programs. As required by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations, the grant application was prepared using FTA's Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) software. As it has in the past, FTA requires grantees to utilize its TrAMS software in the development, submittal, modification, and management of grants.

For the combined FTA Section 5307/5339 application for FY 2023 (Attachment #1), the total proposed budget amount is \$4,553,879. Of that amount, the federal portion is \$3,053,879 which consists of \$1,553,879 in capital expenditures and \$1,500,000 in operating expenditures. For the nonfederal share of capital expenditures (\$388,470), the County will use toll revenue credits as a soft match. For the nonfederal share of operating expenditures (50%), the match will consist of \$750,000 in FDOT grants and \$750,000 from Indian River County. In this case, the County's contribution consists of previously approved general fund monies budgeted specifically for this purpose.

According to federal grant requirements, the designated recipient (Indian River County) must hold a public hearing to obtain the views of citizens on the proposed grant application. In keeping with that requirement, staff has published a notice of the public hearing.

As a necessary prerequisite for submittal of the application, the MPO has included the proposed Section 5307/5339 funding in its FY 2023-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The proposed grant application is also consistent with the MPO's adopted ten-year Transit Development Plan and 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan.

To apply for the FTA funds, the Board of County Commissioners must adopt the attached resolution (Attachment #2), authorizing staff to submit the attached grant application. The resolution has been reviewed and approved by the County Attorney's Office.

FUNDING

For the local share of the nonfederal match, funding in the amount of \$750,000 will be budgeted and available in the General Fund / Community Transportation Coordinator account (Account Number 00111041-088230). These funds are part of an allocation given to the Senior Resource Association to provide transit service in the county. A portion of these funds will be used in FY 2023, with the remainder being used in FY 2024.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of County Commissioners adopt the resolution authorizing the filing of the FY 2023 grant application for the Section 5307 and Section 5339 programs.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Application for Section 5307/ 5339 Public Transportation Capital and Operating Assistance
2. Resolution Authorizing the Filing of Application for Grant Funding Assistance from the Federal Transit Administration
3. Grant Budget Form