



## City of Gainesville Agenda Item Report

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**File Number: 2023-748**

**Agenda Date:** August 17, 2023

**Department:** Transportation

**Title: 2023-748 Authorization to Accept the FHWA Safe Streets and Roads for All Grant Award (B)**

**Department:** Transportation

**Description:** Request for City Commission authorization to accept a grant award by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for funding of the University Avenue Complete Streets project.

**Fiscal Note:** The \$8 million grant requires a \$2 million local match which is available from Campus Development Agreement and Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency funds.

**Explanation:** The City of Gainesville is committed to enhancing safety in areas of high pedestrian volume. Between 2021 and 2022 the City approved design concepts for the transformation of University Avenue (W 34<sup>th</sup> St to E 31<sup>st</sup> St) and W 13<sup>th</sup> Street (SW 16<sup>th</sup> Ave to NW 8<sup>th</sup> Ave) into complete streets in response to significant safety concerns along both corridors. The design concepts were prepared by HDR Inc. and included lane reduction, implementation of protected bicycle facilities, medians and mid-block crossings, and speed reduction as strategies to reduce the incidence and severity of crashes along both corridors (see Legislative Items #210418 and #210986). The concepts were developed in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the University of Florida (UF), building upon measures implemented by FDOT and receiving support from local advocacy organizations.

The City applied for the Safe Streets and Roads for All implementation grant for the University Avenue corridor, seeking to advance the project via resurfacing and restriping as an initial phase given funding constraints. University Avenue has an average crash rate nearly 3.5 times as high as the statewide average and 2 times higher than similar corridors in Alachua County. Between 2015 and 2022 there were 16 deadly crashes along the corridor, 4 of which occurred in disadvantaged areas. These deaths

galvanized the Gainesville community to action. The City's application was one of three successful applications in Florida. The award amount is \$8,000,000 requiring a local match of \$2,000,000.

The project is currently in the Preliminary Design and Environmental study phase which is expected to be completed by Spring of 2024 (Legislative Item #211069 documents the consultant selection process for the study). Final design is expected to be completed in 2025, and construction expected to commence in 2026. Project information is available at [www.transformu13.com](http://www.transformu13.com); public input opportunities are forthcoming and will be widely advertised to maximize community engagement.

**Strategic Connection:**

- Goal 1: Equitable Community
- Goal 2: More Sustainable Community
- Goal 3: A Great Place to Live and Experience
- Goal 4: Resilient Local Economy
- Goal 5: "Best in Class" Neighbor Services

**Recommendation:** The City Commission: 1) authorize the City Manager to accept the FHWA Safe Streets and Roads for All grant award; 2) authorize the City Manager or designee to execute all necessary contract documents, subject to approval by the City Attorney as to form and legality; and 3) authorize approval of related appropriations, procurement and expenditures, to include design, land acquisition, construction, and any other associated activities required for the completion of the project in the grant.