



Legislation Text

File #: RES 22-1500, **Version:** 2

Authorizing the Mayor and Public Works to submit a joint application with Reconnect Rondo to the US DOT's Reconnecting Communities Program.

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul supports the efforts of Reconnect Rondo to further and flesh out a community-led vision for an African-American Cultural Enterprise District (the District), which may include a future Land Bridge, in order to help repair some of the damage done by the original construction of I-94 through Saint Paul, which impacted communities along the entire route but none as acutely as the historic African-American community of Rondo; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul and Reconnect Rondo want to work together to analyze how the District will relate to the future scenarios that MNDOT and the community will be weighing for the future of I-94 between downtown Saint Paul and downtown Minneapolis, known as the Rethinking I-94 project, which MNDOT has signaled will include options that range from No Build (no change) to freeway removal and replacement by a boulevard, and all options in between; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul and Reconnect Rondo want to jointly pursue analysis of the impacts of local air pollution from motor vehicles that the current and future scenarios for I-94 may entail in the District, recognizing that for the past 60 years communities adjacent to I-94 have experienced greater exposure to particulate matter, nitrous oxides, and other harmful tailpipe emissions as a result of their proximity to the freeway, and that these exposures are known to increase rates of asthmas and other cardiovascular diseases; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul has already secured a USDOT RAISE Planning Grant to engage the Rondo community in determining the best options for the future of the City street network in Rondo, bounded by Hamline Avenue on West, University Avenue on the north, Selby Avenue on the south, and Marion Street on the East, but that the scope of that previously funded work does not include any analysis of the impacts and repercussions of the options that will be considered for I-94; and

WHEREAS, a substantial portion of the funds sought will be used for deeper engagement with the residents of the Rondo community in both the planning for the African-American Cultural Enterprise District and the options that will be considered for Interstate 94; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul and Reconnect Rondo believe that, based on the Reconnecting Communities Program scoring criteria, a joint application improves our chances of a successful application; and

WHEREAS, if the City and Reconnect Rondo are awarded the grant funds, the City of Saint Paul will have a local match contribution of \$100,000; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council authorizes Saint Paul Public Works to submit a joint application with Reconnect Rondo, on behalf of the City of Saint Paul, to the US Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Program for ~~\$2,500,000~~ \$2,000,000 for the purposes outlined herein; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that if the grant funds are awarded, the City Council authorizes Saint Paul Public Works to enter into a joint grant agreement with the Reconnect Rondo and the U.S. Department of Transportation.

