

Resolution 2024-058

Resolution Approving the Application for Grants From the Community Project Funding Impacting Ohio's 15th Congressional District

The Board of Trustee of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio met in person in a Special Meeting at 10:00am on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. The trustee marked below made a motion for the adoption of the following Resolution:

The following trustees made a motion for the adoption of the following resolution:

Leezer

Fleshman

Blevins

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Franklin Township, Franklin County, Ohio, that the Board approves and authorizes the application for grant funding from the Community Project Funding for projects having a direct impact on Ohio's 15th Congressional District for the construction of a boulevard on the Westland Mall property extending from West Broad Street to Georgesville Road. (See exhibit)

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all formal actions of this Board concerning and relating to the adoption of this Resolution were passed in an open meeting of the Board and that all deliberations of this Board and any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in a meeting open to the public, in compliance with all legal requirements including Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall be declared an emergency and shall be in full force and effect immediately upon its adoption.

The following trustee marked below seconded the motion:

Leezer

Fleshman

Blevins

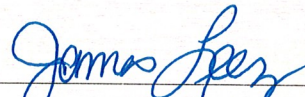
Roll was called for the adoption of the Resolution, and the vote was as follows:

Leezer: YES/ NO

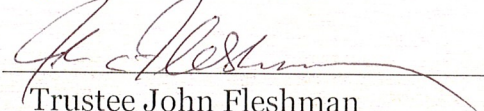
Fleshman: YES/ NO

Blevins: YES/ NO

Adopted on May 1, 2024



Trustee James Leezer

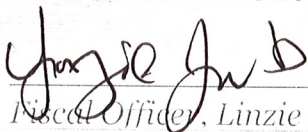


Trustee John Fleshman



Trustee Mike Blevins

Attested to on this 1st day of May 2024



Trustee Officer, Linzie Justus

US Representative Mike Carey

Transportation, HUD, & Related Agencies

Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Requests for Fiscal Year 2025

Project Name: **Westland Mall Redevelopment-Essential Multimodal Infrastructure**

Applicant: Franklin Township 2193 Frank Road Columbus Ohio, 43223 EIN 316400480

Project Address: 414- 4411 W. Broad St Columbus, OH

Primary Contact

Frances Kern Mennone

Managing Director

Frost Brown Todd

513-910-7017

fmennone@fbtlaw.com

Secondary Contact

Steve Mazer

Township Administrator

Franklin Township, Franklin County OH

614-279-9411

2193 Frank Road

Columbus Ohio, 43223

Ohio Congressional Districts

15th District and 3rd Districts

Project Impact

General

The Westland Mall Redevelopment-Essential Multimodal Infrastructure project is an opportunity to reconnect a community through the redevelopment of a large parcel that has been blighted for over twenty years. There are 11,502 people in Franklin Township according to the 2020 US Census but the small Township is one of 17 Townships in the metro County of Franklin. The County has an estimated 1.3M people and is home to the state capital and the largest city in Ohio, the City of Columbus.

Success for this infrastructure project will be measured in the economic impact of the redevelopment of the former mall site.

County

Franklin County is the primary county at the project site. Madison County, Union County, Delaware County, Licking County, Pickaway County and Fairfield County are nearby any impacted counties.

Socioeconomic Status

In January of 2021, President Biden issued Executive Order 14008. The order directed the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to develop a new tool. This tool is called the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST). The tool has an interactive map and uses datasets that are indicators of burdens in eight categories: climate change, energy, health, housing, legacy pollution, transportation, water and wastewater, and workforce development. This community is historically disadvantaged because it is overburdened and underserved and does help advance the Justice40 Initiative.

As stated previously in this application the project and project area meet HUD's CDBG standards as a low to moderate income community. According to President Biden's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, the site falls within the 95th percentile of households where income is less than or equal to twice the federal poverty level, not including students enrolled in higher education. The health data of the community is also stark with the screening tool ranking the area in the 90th percentile for respiratory issues such as asthma. 96% of households are impacted by linguistic isolation where no one over age 14 speaks English very well.

Specific Groups

Communities across the United States are transforming exurban landscapes once divided by fast moving multilane roads, rebuilding communities with innovative revitalization projects and fostering new connections through new areas of development.

That is the case for this project site and the Westland Mall Redevelopment-Essential Multimodal Infrastructure project.

In the mid-20th century, the building of roads came at a cost—their construction divided and cut off vibrant neighborhoods. Communities lost housing, green spaces, businesses, and places of worship. Families moved away and these neighborhoods faced a lack of public and private investment for decades. Yet, in more recent years we have seen local leaders building plans to reimagine, reconnect and revitalize the public spaces and transportation infrastructure adjacent to these highways and freeways in communities.

Urban renewal efforts and the development of the Interstate Highway System contributed to the decline of neighborhoods in many American communities like Franklin Township, particularly Black neighborhoods. Neighborhoods targeted for urban renewal experienced concentrated poverty and became disconnected from jobs and services in the urban core. These processes also exacerbated issues of environmental racism, as race maps closely with elevated environmental health threats such as pollution.

In recent years, Franklin Township has recognized the harm caused by exurban renewal and has begun exploring the removal of barriers and the reconnecting of neighborhoods divided by them. That impact will be felt the most by the distressed and at-risk population of this historically disadvantaged community.

Job Creation for Project

The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that civil projects produced 18 employee-hours for every \$1,000 spent on construction. With a construction cost of approximately \$16.8 million, this would result in an equivalent of 420 full-time positions. That would contribute over 350 indirect supplier jobs to the economy. Based on past Franklin Township projects, most of these positions would belong to skilled laborers, operators, and others.

Longer-Term Job Creation

The Westland Mall Redevelopment-Essential Multimodal Infrastructure project is part of the larger Phase 1 of the site's redevelopment. An estimated 166M of development will be spurred by this key road project. It will facilitate the creation of over 400 construction jobs during the development and 90 full-time jobs upon completion. 25 of which are estimated to be created by the entertainment venues alone.

Project Budget and Timeline

What is the total amount of funding you are requesting for this project?

\$15,000,000

Project Funding Justification

Other sources of funding are not sufficient for this key road project because the entire project area is just now returning to the market for reactivation. To be able capture this opportunity the community needs to move quickly. The local planning authorities were not prepared to consider

a new life for this site till recently. Local and regional plans are being updated as soon as possible but meanwhile the road is crucial to spur development.

\$5,000,000 FY25 Congressionally Directed Spending

\$4,500,000 Tax Increment Financing Bonds

\$2,312,476 Community Development Block Grant Funding

\$5,000,000 State of Ohio OTSCIF

Project Budget

Engineering Design Fees: (2024-2025): \$1,496,043

Right-of-Way (2024-2025): \$356,000

Construction (2026-2027): \$14,960,433

Project Timeline

Consultant Authorization: 4/15/2024

Submittal of Alternative Evaluation Report or Feasibility Study: 5/31/2024

Preferred alternative approval: 7/31/2024

Stage 1 design plan submittal: 9/30/2024

Preliminary ROW plan submittal: 10/31/2024

Stage 2 design plan submittal: 3/31/2025

Environmental document approval (NEPA): 4/30/2025

Final ROW plan submittal: 5/31/2025

ROW authorization: 8/31/2025

Stage 3 design plan submittal: 10/31/2025

ROW acquisition complete: 11/30/2025

Final plans and bid package submittal to ODOT: 3/5/2026

Award contract: 7/1/2026

Construction (in the field begins): 9/1/2026

Construction complete: 11/30/2027

Project Sustainability

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), central Ohio's MPO will add this project (ID 2193) to the MTP is adopted in May 2024. Furthermore, once full funding is secured for the project, it will be included in the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

A traffic engineer has been hired to perform a Traffic Impact Study that is currently 75% complete. The early data from that study, indicate a high need for this new road infrastructure to alleviate existing issues in the surrounding area.

Ongoing maintenance will be funded by Franklin County generally using local funding such as motor vehicle registration and gas user fees.

Project Readiness and Success- Project Capital Development

The project site is already one the largest recipients in the State for the Ohio Department of Developments Building Demolition and Site Revitalization program. Valued at nearly \$10,000,000 that investment from the State has enabled Franklin Township to reimagine this large blighted location. It will enable the first phase of the development that will bring over \$166M of new investment to the area. The capital stack for the commercial development of phase one will be developed into a public private partnership.

Has the project received state, local, or private funds? No.

List the name(s) of the U.S. Representative and/or U.S. Senator to whom you have submitted the request.

US Senator Sherrod Brown

Are local elected officials, community leaders, and/or local organizations supportive of the project?

- Ohio Department of Development
- Franklin Township Board of Trustees and Administrator
- Franklin County Board of Commissioners and Administrator
- Columbus Partnership
- Central Ohio Transit Authority and LinkUS
- Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
- Westland Area Commission
- Ohio Senator Hearcel Craig (Ohio Senate District 15)
- Hilltop Rise
- Skip Weiler, Columbus Music Commission Board Director
- US Representative Mike Carey (Ohio's 15th Congressional District)
- Central Ohio Community Improvement Corporation

Transportation, HUD, & Related Agencies- Questions

- 1. Are you applying for funds from the Community Development Fund within the line item "Economic Development Initiatives" (EDI) account? Yes.**
- 2. Is your economic development project eligible under section 5305 of chapter 69 of title 42 of the United States Code or for affordable housing construction? Yes.**
- 3. Please describe the status of the planning and environmental review work for your requested project.**

The Westland Mall Redevelopment-Essential Multimodal Infrastructure project is in the preliminary design phase. Currently, asbestos and lead paint abatement are taking place during

the former mall's demolition. That demolition and site preparation work is being done through a program of the Ohio Department of Development's Building Demolition and Site Revitalization Program. The project site has been required to meet or exceed the State's environmental standards. At the next phase of redevelopment, the Franklin Township Board of Trustees will require Categorical Exclusion 2 when Stage 1 is complete.

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC), central Ohio's MPO will add this project (ID 2193) to the MTP is adopted in May 2024. Furthermore, once full funding is secured for the project, it will be included in the next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Ongoing maintenance will be funded by Franklin County generally using local funding such as motor vehicle registration and gas user fees.

4. EDI projects must meet one of the three National Objectives of the broader Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. Please include detailed and precise information on how the project will meet one or more of the following criteria.

The project falls within census district 390490082301001 and is adjacent to census district 390490082301000. Per the ACS 5-Year 2011-2015 Low and Moderate Income Summary Data Main provided through HUD, the project sits in Block Group 1, Census Tract 82.30, Franklin County Ohio. 72.73% of population is Low- and Moderate-income (LMI) persons in the block group. This well exceeds the 'at least 51%' CDBG eligibility standard. Furthermore, it represents a much greater percentage of LMI households Franklin County households which is an average 47.05% Over 12 block groups represent the surrounding CDBG service area. The average LMI percentage for the service area is 70.67%.

5. Please provide EITHER a web link to the project website (if available) OR if the project is included in an existing CDBG grantee's Consolidated Plan or Annual Action Plan, a link to that plan.

The site falls within the area of the Franklin County CDBG Annual Action Plan.

6. The requesting organization understands that Economic Development Initiatives (EDI) grants are provided through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and subject to the below requirements. Yes

Organization

The applicant, Franklin Township is one of the seventeen townships of Franklin County, Ohio, United States. Located in west-central Franklin County, Ohio, Franklin Township consists of many small, incorporated islands separated by municipal annexations. With few exceptions, these islands are surrounded by the city of Columbus. Jackson Township is at the southern border, while Prairie Township, a large island, is on the western side. The 2020 census lists the Township with a population of 11,502 people. Franklin County has an estimated 1.3M people and is home to the state capital and the largest city in Ohio, the City of Columbus.

The Township is home to the project site the redevelopment of the Westland Mall, known as the Weston Town Centre. It is one the largest development sites inside the Columbus metro area. The project aims to transform the 86-acre site from a derelict and abandoned mall into a vibrant mixed-use entertainment destination. Situated on the west side of Columbus at I 270 and US 40, the former Westland Mall is currently undergoing demolition to make way for this ambitious project. This application focuses on the much-needed road infrastructure for the redevelopment site.

Phase one of the project, estimated at over \$166,000,000 vision for Weston Town Centre revolves around creating a dynamic space that prioritizes entertainment, community engagement, and economic revitalization through a public-private partnership. Central to the redevelopment plan is the emphasis on entertainment, anchored by an outdoor 12,000-person amphitheater alongside an indoor music venue. These entertainment offerings will serve as focal points, drawing visitors from across the region and fostering a vibrant cultural scene heightening the need for road infrastructure.

Project Description

The proposed construction of a public boulevard bifurcating the property is an imperative that holds the key to unlocking the full potential of this ambitious redevelopment project. As the foundation of connectivity and progress, the Boulevard, connecting US 40 (W. Broad Street) to Georgesville Road, represents a "one-time, shot-in-the-arm" community investment that promises a multitude of benefits crucial for the success and sustainability of the development. The project will build over 3,250 linear feet of asphalt roadway with ADA accessible sidewalks as well as integrated bike lanes.

Catalyst for Development and Economic Growth: Beyond its functional role, the Boulevard serves as a catalyst for the revitalization and transformation of the former Westland Mall. By providing enhanced accessibility and connectivity, it creates an environment conducive to investment, job creation, and economic prosperity. The presence of a well-designed boulevard not only attracts businesses and developers but also adds value to the surrounding community, fostering a vibrant ecosystem of commerce, housing, and entertainment.

Multimodal Transportation Infrastructure: The Boulevard isn't limited to vehicular traffic; it's a multifaceted transportation corridor designed to accommodate the diverse needs of modern urban mobility. With dedicated pedestrian paths, bike lanes that connect to the nearby Camp Chase Trail, bus stops, and provisions for motorists, it fosters a culture of sustainable transportation and inclusivity.

Alleviating Congestion and Enhancing Safety: The Boulevard isn't merely a road; it's a solution to the pressing issue of congestion plaguing the nearby Broad St. & Georgesville Rd. intersection. By diverting traffic and providing an alternative route, it effectively reduces gridlock and improves traffic flow, enhancing safety and operational efficiency.

Sustainable Maintenance and Long-Term Viability: While the initial construction of the Boulevard represents a significant investment, it is a "one-time" expenditure with long-lasting

benefits. Once integrated into the Franklin County Engineer's Road Maintenance Program, the Boulevard will benefit from regular, predictable funding derived from motor vehicle registration fees and gas taxes. This ensures its ongoing maintenance and upkeep, preserving its functionality and aesthetic appeal for generations to come.

The construction of the Boulevard isn't just a necessity; it's a strategic investment in laying the foundation for the future prosperity and vitality of the former Westland Mall site and the broader community.

The project integrates a visionary pedestrian and bike-friendly bridge spanning over Georgesville Road, serving as a vital link between the redevelopment site via the new proposed Boulevard and the Hollywood Casino. This strategic connection fosters synergy between the two locations, stimulating foot traffic and enhancing accessibility. Not only does the pedestrian bridge ensure safe passage for pedestrians across the bustling thoroughfare, but it also provides a secure route for cyclists to access the eastern side of Georgesville Road, facilitating seamless connectivity to the nearby Camp Chase Trail.

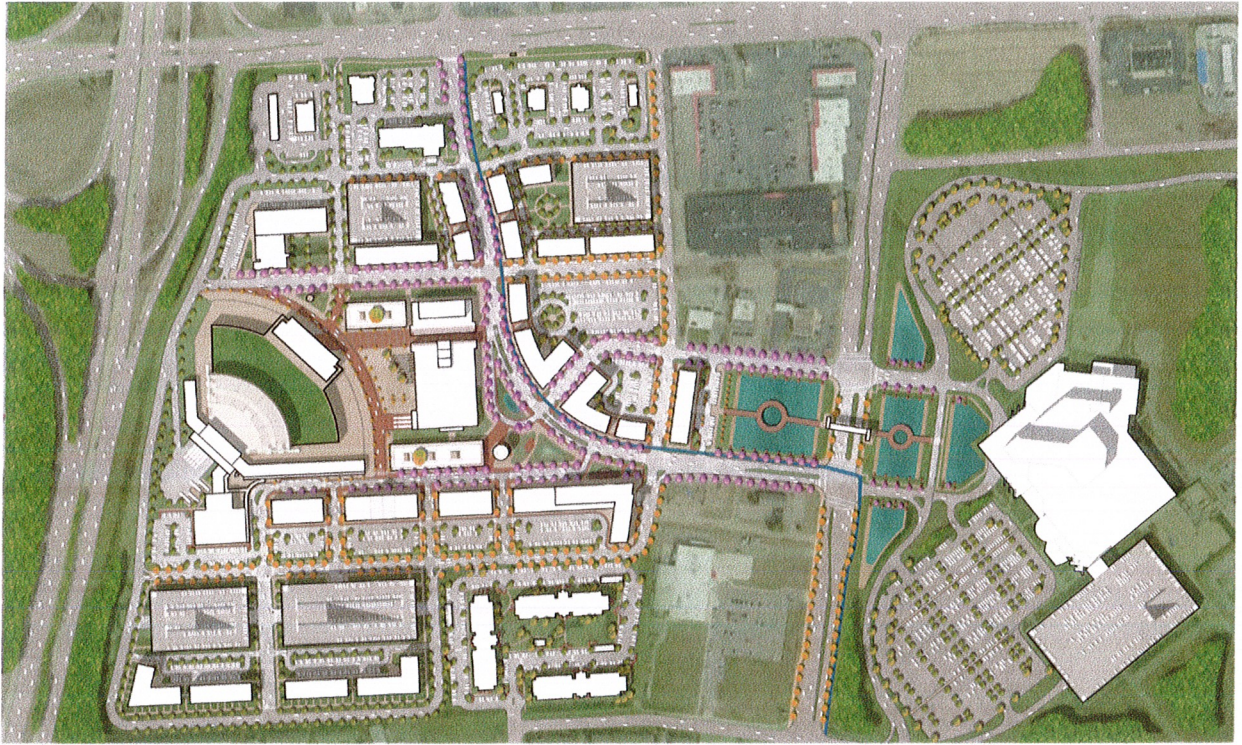
For a project covering multiple addresses, please provide general description such as neighborhood or section of town.

The West Side of Columbus is made up of mostly blue-collar communities. The area is home to the Southwestern School District, the second largest school district in Ohio, and employs approximately 3,600 teachers. The West Side has a large concentration of generational home ownership and two of Columbus' best hospitals.

What was a once bustling commercial corridor now resembles a struggling west side under the weight of neglect. Comprising several smaller neighborhoods like Westgate, Westland, and Holly Hill, the Greater Hilltop area presents a mix of housing styles ranging from modest single-family homes to apartments and townhouses. However, the surrounding neighborhoods also faces socioeconomic challenges, including poverty, crime, and infrastructure issues. Vacant properties and abandoned buildings dot many streets, reflecting a history of disinvestment and economic decline.

Despite its challenges, the Greater Hilltop area retains a strong sense of community pride and resilience. Local businesses, churches, and community centers serve as focal points for social interaction and support networks. The area's cultural diversity is celebrated through events, festivals, and local cuisine, enriching the fabric of neighborhood life.

Plans for the redevelopment of Westland Mall and the new road project offer hope for revitalization, envisioning a mixed-use space that combines residential, commercial, and recreational amenities to reinvigorate the area and create new opportunities for residents.



WESTON AMPHITHEATER | COLUMBUS, OH | SITE PLAN



PRIME
SOCIAL



RDL
ARCHITECTS