



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 2860

1. Project Title

2. Senate Sponsor

3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

Fernandina Beach is a 200-year-old city located on Amelia Island between the Atlantic Ocean and the Amelia River. The City's Downtown Historic District consists of a flourishing downtown commercial district bustling with shops, restaurants, breweries, cultural sites, and 60 blocks of expertly preserved Victorian-era homes. In 2023, 78.7% (815,174) of Amelia Island's 1,035,800 visitors ranked the Historic District as a "Top Activity Enjoyed," scoring higher than even the Island's beaches. Fernandina Beach's downtown Historic District has an aging street-scape with deteriorating landscaping, failing lighting, uneven and mismatched sidewalk materials, insufficient ADA components and weather-related damage. The Historic Fernandina Beach Downtown Streetscapes Restoration and Preservation Project will improve pedestrian access and local tourism which generates over 25% of Nassau County jobs, while also beautifying and revitalizing Fernandina Beach going into her next 200 years.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds

State Agency contacted? No

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

| Type of Funding | Amount |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Operating | 0 |
| Fixed Capital Outlay | 1,000,000 |
| Total State Funds Requested | 1,000,000 |

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

| Type of Funding | Amount | Percentage |
|--|------------------|-------------|
| Total State Funds Requested (from question #6) | 1,000,000 | 50% |
| Matching Funds | | |
| Federal | 0 | 0% |
| State (excluding the amount of this request) | 0 | 0% |
| Local | 1,000,000 | 50% |
| Other | 0 | 0% |
| Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 | 2,000,000 | 100% |

8. Has this project previously received state funding? Yes

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

| Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy) | Amount | | Specific Appropriation # | Vetoed |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------|
| | Recurring | Nonrecurring | | |
| 2024-25 | 0 | 1,000,000 | 2347A | Yes |

9. Is future-year funding likely to be requested? No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.



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Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

10. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

No

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

01/01/2026

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12/31/2026

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

City General Revenues

11. List the owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

All properties which will receive construction improvements through the Historic Fernandina Beach Downtown Streetscapes Restoration and Preservation Project are owned fully by the City of Fernandina Beach.

12. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

| Spending Category | Description | Amount |
|--|--|------------------|
| Administrative Costs: | | |
| Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits | | 0 |
| Other Salary and Benefits | | 0 |
| Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other | | 0 |
| Consultants/Contracted Services/Study | | 0 |
| Operational Costs | | |
| Salary and Benefits | | 0 |
| Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other | | 0 |
| Consultants/Contracted Services/Study | | 0 |
| Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation: | | |
| Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering | Permitting and construction improvements in Historic Fernandina Beach to preserve and renew the downtown through installation of historically-accurate sidewalk patterns and materials, landscape and lighting upgrades, and ADA-compliant components. | 1,000,000 |
| Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6) | | 1,000,000 |

13. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?



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Travel publications consistently rank Amelia Island one of best island and beach destinations in the U.S. In 2023, Amelia Island tourism contributed nearly \$1 billion in economic impact, employed over 25% of Nassau County, FL residents, and provided over \$342 million in wages to Amelia Island employees. Historic Downtown Fernandina Beach, a business and residential district populated with Victorian-aged business structures and homes, was ranked a favorite activity by 78.7% of Amelia Island visitors (2023 data.) The City hosts cultural events and festivals that attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. The Downtown is also home to the Port of Fernandina, the CSX railroad, and WestRock and Rayonier Mills, which generate over 1,000 good paying jobs. The Historic Fernandina Beach Downtown Streetscapes Restoration and Preservation Project is needed to preserve Fernandina Beach as a premier Florida tourist, cultural and employment center going into her next 200 years.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

Historic Downtown Fernandina Beach is comprised of over 60 blocks of Victorian-era buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Historic Downtown is bustling with restaurants, shops, cultural activities, churches, and landside and waterside tours. At 200 years old, significant restoration activities have been designed to preserve the City as one of Florida's most desirable residential, business, and tourism economic engines. The Historic Fernandina Beach Downtown Streetscapes Restoration and Preservation Project will replace mismatched, missing and hazardous walking surfaces with safer avenues for pedestrians, including those with mobility challenges. Aged obsolete lighting will be replaced with energy efficient and brighter lighting, and landscaping/streetscapes will be reconstructed to ensure residents and tourists continue to be attracted to and safely enjoy Historic Downtown Fernandina Beach and that the City remains one of the historic gems of Florida.

c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

This project will provide physical protection of persons and property. Additionally, this project will preserve specific immediate job opportunities for local residents. Tourism is Nassau County's largest job creator, creating over 25% of all jobs and paying 38% of all sales taxes. Given that 78.7% of Amelia Island visitors ranked visiting the historic Fernandina Beach downtown as one of their favorite activities when visiting, protection of the Historic District through beautification and improvements to the downtown area will benefit residents and visitors alike.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

Residents, visitors, businesses and workers are the target population. Fernandina Beach has 13,647 residents. Amelia Island, on which Fernandina Beach is located, attracted 1,035,800 visitors in 2024 and of those, 815,174 reported that visiting the Historic Downtown Fernandina Beach was a favorite activity, even more than local beaches. Beyond seasonal tourism, Fernandina Beach hosts recurring cultural events and festivals that bring hundreds of thousands of additional visitors - and tourism revenue. For example, in 2024, visitors who live outside of Nassau County spent \$11.5 million during the City's Shrimp Festival and spent \$4.46 million during Dickens on Centre in 2023. The Downtown is also home to the Port of Fernandina, CSX railroad, and WestRock and Rayonier Mills, which generate over 1,000 local jobs. Protection and preservation of Fernandina Beach's Historic District translates directly into Nassau County economic vitality, benefiting tourists, residents and business.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

The benefit of the Historic Fernandina Beach Downtown Streetscapes Restoration and Preservation Project will be preservation and construction improvements of historic Downtown Fernandina Beach, a business and residential district populated with Victorian-aged business structures and homes which hosts cultural events and festivals that attract hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Additionally, the Downtown is also home to the Port of Fernandina, the CSX railroad, and WestRock and Rayonier Mills, all of which generate over 1,000 local jobs. The outcome of this impact can be measured through pre-and-post comparative data about tourism and citizen satisfaction surveys.

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for in the contract?

Failure to fully-satisfy each deliverable of the Historic Fernandina Beach Downtown Streetscapes Restoration and Preservation Project would make Fernandina Beach ineligible for reimbursement from the State of Florida.

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster? Yes No

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?



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- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

2019-Hurricane Dorian; 2022-Hurricane Nicole; 2024-Hurricane Helene

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

The appropriation was in last year's 24-25 budget but was vetoed by the Governor.

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Lorelei **Last Name** Jacobs

b. Organization City of Fernandina Beach

c. E-mail Address ljacobs@fbfl.org

d. Phone Number (904)310-3104 **Ext.**

18. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization City of Fernandina Beach

b. Municipality and County Nassau



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c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify) municipality

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.