



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 3209

1. **Project Title**
2. **Senate Sponsor**
3. **Date of Request**

4. Project/Program Description

The Historic Bank of Everglades Building, completed in 1927, is an iconic structure built by Barron Gift Collier and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Over the years it has survived hurricanes, including Irma and Ian, and is now in disrepair. The Everglades Society for Historic Preservation (ESHPP) has received \$3 million from the federal government (Community Project Funding) to stabilize the structure and its foundation. Also, monies were raised via local fundraising events and donations from individuals/businesses. A capital campaign is planned to raise the remaining amount via a combination of private donors and grant funding. State funds are being requested to assist with the Bank's rehabilitation and adaptive reuse as the Everglades Area Visitor Center, Trail Town Headquarters, Florida Wildlife Corridor resource, and a community asset serving the public. The project will attract more tourism and stimulate the local economy.

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	2,000,000
Total State Funds Requested	2,000,000

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)	2,000,000	35%
Matching Funds		
Federal	3,000,000	53%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	53,000	1%
Local	134,714	2%
Other	483,847	9%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	5,671,561	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	1,559,000	3487	Yes

9. **Is future-year funding likely to be requested?** Yes
- a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**
- b. **Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.**

Source of Funding from a variety of sources: federal and private foundation grants, and public donations from individuals/businesses.



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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)?

Yes

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

02/10/2025

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

06/30/2026

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

Site will not be incurring operations funding until project is complete. Maintenance expenses will come from ESHP's general operating funds.

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.

The Historic Bank of Everglades Building is owned by the Everglades Society for Historic Preservation, Inc. (ESHP)

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	Requested funds will be used to complete the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the historic Bank Building: installation of new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems. Installation of stairways, elevators, etc. to comply with all building, life-safety, and ADA codes. Completion of interior renovations, including restroom facilities, cabinetry, office/conference room.	2,000,000
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		2,000,000

13. Program Performance

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



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ESHP received \$3 million from the federal government (Community Project Funding) to stabilize the Bank Building's structure and its foundation. Funds were raised at the local level from events and donations from individuals/businesses. State funds are being requested to assist with the Bank Building's rehabilitation and adaptive reuse as the Everglades Area Visitor Center, Trail Town Headquarters, Florida Wildlife Corridor resource, and as an asset serving the community. The project will attract more tourism and stimulate the local economy of rural Collier County.

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

Everglades City was designated a Florida State Trail Town in 2019 and is the southernmost terminus of the Florida Wildlife Corridor, attracting visitors from around the world. Currently, in its temporary facility, ESHP welcomes thousands of visitors each year and expects to attract many more tourists when the Bank Building is complete. ESHP collects data on its visitors and provides information to the Collier County Convention & Visitors Bureau. Tourists express how grateful they are to the local volunteers who provide them with extensive information and recommendations for enjoying the opportunities available in the greater Everglades area as well as all parts of Collier County.

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

The Visitor Center refers tourists to local businesses which stimulates the local economy in rural southeast Collier County. The Bank Building will restore pride in the community recognizing Barron Collier's vision and be the focal point in town. In addition to providing information and brochures to tourists, the Everglades Area Visitor Center will also be a central gathering place for locals, residents of Collier County, and others throughout south Florida to enjoy events, and arts and cultural exhibits. ESHP has been in conversation with the area Native Americans, the United Arts Collier, and Opera Naples as well as well-known artists such as Paul Arsenault and Clyde Butcher to coordinate and market programs at the Bank of Everglades Building which will benefit all the Collier County citizens and especially the children of the Everglades area.

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

The target population includes eco-tourists who visit this area's 7 national and state parks and preserves, as well as the elderly, persons with disabilities, students of all ages, tourists from around the world, residents of Collier County and nearby counties of Miami-Dade, Monroe County, Broward, Lee, and Hendry. There are over one million visitors to the greater Everglades area each year, and it is anticipated that approximately 30,000 people will benefit from the services provided in the historic Bank of Everglades Building.

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

Enrichment of cultural experiences, improve quality of local educational opportunities, enhancing and preserving old Florida, increased economic activity, increased tourism, and the creation of specific immediate jobs. Methodology includes the maintenance of daily visitor logs, participant logs, tracking the number of tourists and sharing this information with the Collier Convention & Visitor Bureau, and hiring local professionals for construction needs now and operational needs once completed.

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?

Return funding to the Florida Department of State.

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

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

- 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):



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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):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name **Last Name**

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number **Ext.**

18. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- For Profit Entity
- Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- Non Profit 501(c)(4)



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- Local Entity
- University or College
- Other (please specify)

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.