



Dear Secretary LaHood:

The Nevada Department of Transportation and the city of Las Vegas respectfully request your consideration for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant program for the Las Vegas F Street connection, a project that we feel epitomizes the intent of the TIGER program.

This project will establish a gateway to access, progress and opportunity to one of our state's most disadvantaged communities. It is anticipated to generate economic opportunities and clearly meets each of the selection criteria specified in the Recovery Act.

The F Street connection has galvanized strong community support and serves as a symbol for opportunity and a bright, green, sustainable, economic future for the Las Vegas Westside community, the state and the nation. It is a project that the community has truly poured their heart and soul into.

Once completed, The F Street connection project will stand as a strong symbol of community pride. The project is the culmination of unprecedented community outreach and partnership in our state and reflects the best of what can be accomplished when true partnership works between a community and the governments that serve them.

Thank you for your consideration,





TIGER III Grant Application

October 31, 2011

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Attachments:

Letter of Support from the City of Las Vegas

Referenced Authorizing Legislation - Assembly Bill 304

Commitment of Construction Funds from NDOT

Benefit-Cost Analysis Report

Signed Categorical Exclusion

I. Project Description

The re-establishment of F Street under I-15 is a highway and bridge project that will improve access and for a disadvantaged community to a new walkable, master-planned community that will offer jobs and opportunity.

a. Background

Rarely does the opening of a street galvanize a community to rally repeatedly in numbers of more than 200, dedicating their valuable time and energy to show their support. That is the case with the F Street connection project in Las Vegas. To community members, opening F Street symbolizes an end to a community cutoff from progress and opportunity. Opening F Street opens the doors to a bright economic future.

F Street is within the Historic Westside of Las Vegas. Since the 1930's, the area has been home to a large African American population. The community has a rich history including the first integrated casino, Moulin Rouge, in Las Vegas and after World War II, the place where returning African American veterans could buy homes and build a life for themselves and their families.

Prior to the 1960's, the Historic West Las Vegas community had a thriving economy. The end of segregation contributed to a decline of the local economy. The area has struggled with urban decay, a high rate of absentee property owners and poverty.



Figure 1 - Original Moulin Rouge

Currently, unemployment in the Westside stands is over 20%, more than twice the national average. More than 50 percent of the Westside population is African American, a demographic particularly hard-hit by the recent economic downturn.

Despite significant challenges, the residents, many of whom are families of those veterans who fought bravely in World War II, remain passionately committed to their community. They are resolved to see their community thrive. The F Street connection project opens the door to that opportunity by opening the artery to the city's most promising new development, jobs and access for a community that truly needs it. Using F Street as a gateway to the community and opportunity was a centerpiece of a planning charrette done together with the city and community stakeholders in 2008.



Figure 2 - F Street Connection Design Workshop 1

Once it is connected, F Street will lead into City Parkway the freeway access to Symphony Park, a high-density, walkable, mixed-use, sustainable, urban community. Elements of the project will include a broad mix of residential, commercial, hospitality and retail development, as well as two major civic projects, The Smith Center for the Performing Arts and the Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health. Opening F Street will open a gateway to jobs, opportunity and a lifestyle that Westside residents envision for their own community.

After months of community meetings and lots of feedback from community stakeholders, a design workshop was held with NDOT, the city of Las Vegas and Westside community stakeholders. More than 50 community stakeholders participated in design workshops to share their ideas and vision for the F Street connection project and how it will benefit the community in general with aesthetic architects and design engineers. The result is a project that will open a new beginning for a community and a project that meets each of the selection criteria specified in the Recovery Act.

b. F Street Connection Project

This project is located in an urban area in the City of Las Vegas, Clark County, Nevada, Congressional District 1. It is adjacent to Symphony Park, a new 61-acre development that will be a center for cultural and business activity that will bring a variety of new jobs.

i. Description, Map, and Connections

In 2005, The City of Las Vegas examined options for improving freeway connectivity for planned downtown development along F Street. They developed a project to realign F Street and provide freeway access. The proposed realignment no longer had F Street passing underneath the freeway and into the west side of downtown Las Vegas, a historically minority and disadvantaged community.

NDOT's adoption of the City project into the larger project to improve I-15 allowed NDOT to eliminate obsolete, 40-year-old freeway bridges including F Street, effectively eliminating through-traffic access along F Street. The local community subsequently formed a group with the support of local politicians to request that NDOT re-open F Street. This project includes re-opening the F Street access under I-15. The project scope includes structural and roadway design to remove retaining walls and embankment, remove existing roadway, and construct new bridges and roadway. The project location is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. Project Location

ii. Addressing Area Needs

For West Las Vegas, a predominantly African-American community, F Street is a neighborhood gateway to the downtown Las Vegas, including City Hall and the Clark County Government Center. Recent construction resulting from the I-15 North Design-Build project has eliminated the F Street undercrossing near Bonanza Road. Reopening F Street will restore additional access to the downtown area and allow for revitalization from current and planned development in downtown Las Vegas. F Street will connect to City Parkway, providing direct access to the promising new Symphony Park development opening up new opportunities for jobs and support business and improving access and walkability.

iii. Addressing Transportation Challenges

The F Street closure impacted a low income neighborhood where a high percentage of residents walk or rely on transit. The F Street connection ties directly into City Parkway and will open direct access to a new community that is master planned to have a cultural

center, medical facilities a hotel, restaurants and other businesses that will provide opportunities through jobs and support businesses. According to 2000 Census Data, 25 percent of West Las Vegas households do not have a vehicle and 39 percent have only one vehicle.

Re-Opening F Street would carry 8,500 vehicles per day, one year after construction completion. In 2030, the traffic volume is expected to be 10,600.

iv. Project Benefits

Qualitative Project Benefits include:

- Direct and additional access for the minority and low-income community into downtown Las Vegas and the new Symphony Park development that offers new job opportunities.
- The F Street connection will offer a convenient and attractive gateway to the Westside community that will improve the economic viability of the area.
- The F Street connection will improve the walkability of the area by connecting the Westside that includes the Pioneer Trail to the new walkable Symphony Park community.
- Opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses
- Community-based organizations involvement in project planning and development.

Quantitative Benefits include:

- Approximately \$400 of emission savings in the first year
- Approximately \$300 of safety savings in the first year
- Approximately 300 hours of savings in the first year

II. **Project Parties**

The TIGER Discretionary Grant recipient for this project is the Nevada Department of Transportation. The project includes partnership between NDOT and the City of Las Vegas, and will be completed in cooperation with Federal Highways Administration. A letter of support from the City of Las Vegas is attached to this application.

- **NDOT.** Established in 1917 with the State Highway Law, which started the active roadway program, now consisting of approximately \$500,000,000/per year of capital outlays to maintain and improve Nevada's highways. NDOT is responsible for the planning, construction, operation, and maintenance of the 5,400 miles of highway and over 1,000 bridges which make up the state highway system. The department is divided into three districts, with a district engineer and assistant engineers in each. The districts are responsible for supervising all state transportation activities within their local areas. NDOT's headquarters building is located in Carson City, with the three main district offices located in Las Vegas, Reno, and Elko. Major maintenance stations are in Ely, Tonopah, and Winnemucca. NDOT is overseen by a seven-member Board of Directors and directed by senior staff. Website: www.nevadadot.com
- **City of Las Vegas.** The city of Las Vegas was founded on May 15, 1905 and incorporated on March 16, 1911. Website: <http://www.lasvegasnevada.gov/>. Las Vegas has been hard hit by the economic downturn and has among the highest foreclosure and unemployment

rates in the nation. At more than 25 percent unemployment, the Las Vegas Westside, the area in which F Street is located, has an unemployment rate that far exceeds the national average. Las Vegas is presently classified as an economically depressed area experiencing 14.5 percent unemployment¹. In 2010, the state of Nevada had a 14.3 percent unemployment rate, the highest in the nation². Las Vegas has the largest number of foreclosures in the country, with 1 in every 17 housing units in the foreclosure process³, a trend that has continued for 42 consecutive months. Additionally, the Standard & Poor's Case-Schiller Home Prices Indices from May 25, 2010 stated that, "The 10-City and 20-City Composites did continue to show improvement in their annual rates of return. Las Vegas was the only city to still post a double digit annual rate of decline at the end of March 2010." These are additional reasons this project is extremely important to the region.

- **The City of Las Vegas Redevelopment Agency (RDA)** was created in 1986 to turn around the urban decay in downtown Las Vegas. The RDA promotes the redevelopment of downtown Las Vegas and surrounding older commercial districts by working with developers, property owners and community associations to accomplish beneficial revitalization efforts. The Las Vegas Redevelopment Area encompasses 3,948 acres. The area roughly includes the greater downtown Las Vegas area east of I-15, south of Washington Avenue, north of Sahara Avenue and west of Maryland Parkway. It also includes the Charleston Boulevard, Martin L. King Boulevard and Eastern Avenue corridors. Although the RDA legally is a separate entity from the city of Las Vegas, city council members sit on its board and provide input on projects.

III. Grant Funds and Sources/Uses of Project Funds

Nevada Assembly Bill 304 (attached), passed in June 2009, calls for the city of Las Vegas to use redevelopment funds of up to \$2.5 million for the design phase. The bill further spells out that the city leverage its share of the county special 5-cent ad valorem capital project tax to provide funding to reopen F Street of up to \$20 million. The city will bond against the potential revenue generated from the ad valorem capital project tax. At this time, the amount available from bonding this tax is estimated to be less than half of the anticipated \$20 million. The Nevada Department of Transportation is to work with the city to seek other sources for any remaining construction costs, should there be any.

Since the passage for AB 304, the Nevada Department of Transportation has committed to \$1,240,000 of SB 5 funds (see attached), along with seeking additional funds from other sources (such as TIGER grants). The funds available through City of Las Vegas Ad Valorem tax will not be as high as expected by summer 2012.

¹ The Center for Business and Economic Research, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (2010)

² Bureau of Labor Statistics

³ <http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/2010/jul/14/foreclosure-rate-eases-nevada-still-ranks-no-1/>

Source	PE ¹	Constr.	Spent	Remaining	Match ²
Total Project Cost	\$4,000,000	\$19,000,000	\$1,372,000	\$21,628,000	
Las Vegas Redevelopment	\$2,500,000		\$1,200,000	\$1,300,000	6%
City of Las Vegas		\$8,000,000	\$0	\$8,000,000	37%
State - SB 5		\$1,240,000	\$0	\$1,240,000	6%
NDOT	\$372,000		\$172,000	\$200,000	1%
Total Non-Federal	\$2,872,000	\$9,240,000	\$1,372,000	\$10,740,000	50%
Funds Requested		\$10,888,888			50%
1. Including all pre-construction activities: Preliminary engineering, outreach, etc.					
2. As a percentage of remaining (unspent) project costs.					
All project costs are estimates and current as of 10/01/2011					

IV. Selection Criteria

a. Long Term Outcomes

The long-term outcomes of F Street connection project include opening opportunities to new business and jobs as a result of the direct tie-in to City Parkway the main roadway into Symphony Park, the 61-acre mixed-use urban community located in the heart of downtown Las Vegas and most promising new development in Southern Nevada. The close proximity will not only open a gateway to opportunity for those who want to establish new businesses and seek jobs but it will improve connectivity for walkability, bike use and direct traffic routes. Plans are in the works for an I515 connector that will further improve accessibility in and out of the area.

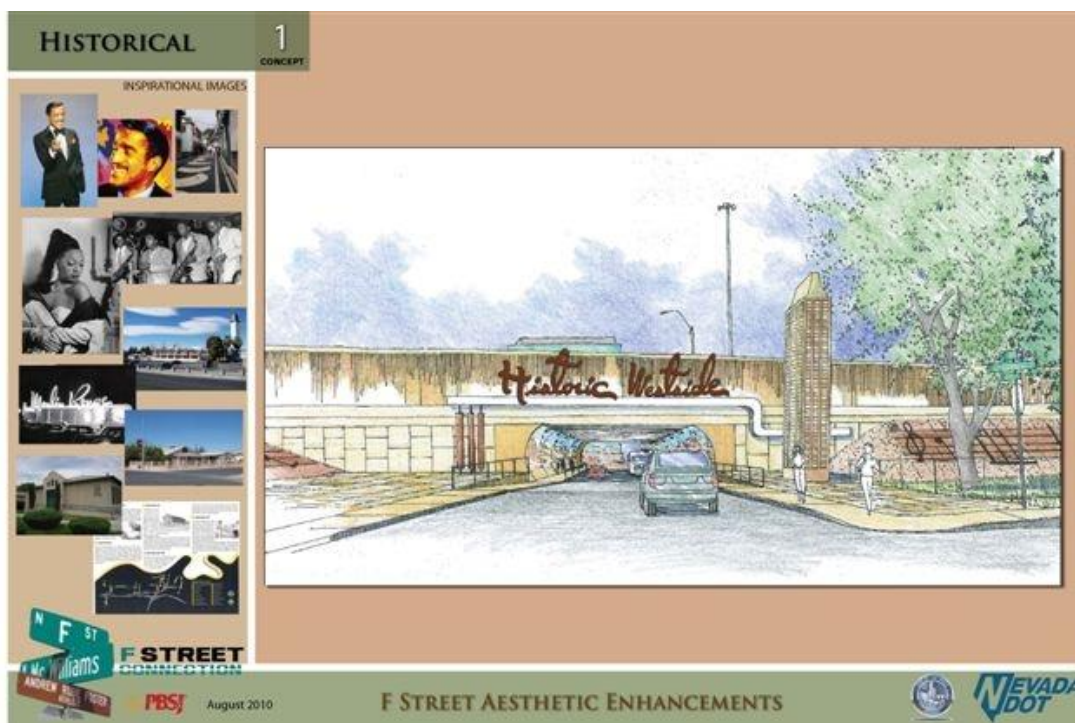


Figure 4. Conceptual F Street Design

The F Street connection project will have a significant impact on desirable long-term outcomes to the city of Las Vegas metropolitan area and the region as a whole because it will open opportunities for businesses in the area to reap the benefits of the new development in Symphony Park and offer access to jobs improving the state of the region and ultimately the state of the nation as we struggle to rise from the weight of the economic downturn.

The business, tourism and construction industries of Southern Nevada are expected to make slow economic recoveries within the next two years, according to data compiled by economists at the Center for Business and Economic Research (CBER) at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

This project meets United States Department of Transportation (U.S. DOT) criteria requirements of state of good repair, economic competitiveness, livability, sustainability, and safety, as detailed in the following paragraphs.

i. State of Good Repair

The F Street Connection project will reopen a central connection to join the Westside to a new community that is master-planned for walkability. In the design phase for the F Street connection, strong consideration has been given to improving walkability, alternate transportation accessibility and safety and the use of sustainable materials. The Westside community will be included in the city's new Walkable Community Plan. The F Street connection will improve access to the Pioneer Trail that winds through the Historic Westside highlighting historic properties and eventually arriving at the Las Vegas Springs Preserve

ii. Economic Competitiveness

Las Vegas has served the nation as a strong economic center, providing good paying jobs that drive the economy. The Las Vegas Westside is an area of the city with untapped potential in terms of new businesses, new ideas and people willing to roll up their sleeves to achieve success. The community is looking to develop a bright, green sustainable economy. Establishing connectivity to the city's newest most sustainable project Symphony Park via the F Street connection is the first step.

Based on the designs for the F Street Connection, the opening will include a gateway that offers a rich, aesthetic, cultural experience that will highlight the history, accomplishments and promise of the Las Vegas Westside community. It is anticipated that this will improve the look and brand of the area, establish pride in the community and generate interest and serve as an attraction that will ultimately improve the economic viability.

In short, this area is in need of funding that will bolster the economy, provide opportunity and access to local jobs and improve mobility for revenue-producing commuters and tourists

iii. Livability

The F Street connection plan is to improve access; make parks, work and other opportunities more accessible with the result of improved livability. Opening the gateway to a vibrant new development and the opportunities that brings for supporting business and

jobs will reinvigorate the Las Vegas Westside, bring new revenues and improve quality of life.

According to 2000 Census Data, 25 percent of West Las Vegas households do not have a vehicle and 39 percent have only one vehicle. Having direct access to walkable jobs and opportunity will have a huge impact on the livability of the area surrounding F Street.

The re-opening of F Street will enhance user mobility through the creation of more convenient transportation options for travelers; improve modal connectivity; and reduce congestion by implementing the following improvements:

Provide a more direct access to government agencies and vital services.

Reduce travel time to downtown and other locations.

Provide better links area residents with economic centers.

Improve walkability and bikability to a community that relies on these methods of mobility.

Improve accessibility and service for economically disadvantaged populations, non-drivers, senior citizens, and persons with disabilities or make goods, commodities and services more readily available to those groups. The location of this project, West Las Vegas is a predominantly minority populated neighborhood. Residents include: low income workers, seniors, and families; many rely on public transportation. Re-establishing F Street will provide better accessibility to downtown; a planned Symphony Park Development; government services and agencies; healthcare facilities; and emergency services.

iv. Sustainability

The plan for the F Street connection will open access, cut commute time, improve walkability, bikability and access to alternate transportation, ultimately promoting sustainability. F Street will also open a direct, walkable route to jobs for a community that has been disproportionately hit by economic hardship.

The Re-opening of F Street Corridor will promote a more environmentally sustainable transportation system by:

- **Improving energy efficiency, reducing dependence on oil and/or reducing CO2.** The project will improve operations and includes direct positive effects on energy consumption by decreasing emissions-creating situations. Detailed estimates on emission reductions are available in the benefit-cost report attached to this application.
- **Avoiding adverse environmental impacts or providing benefits (e.g., wetlands, improved air quality, habitat connectivity, access to forests and parks).** The environmental document will be reevaluated to ensure the project does not have any adverse environmental impacts.

v. Safety

At planning workshops held with community stakeholders, the community considered safety issues in the area. Those issues are addressed in the design of the F Street connection to maximize access and promote a viable economic climate while maintaining

safety. Those who live in and around the area weighed in on safety issues that they face. Traffic and pedestrian safety along with the livability of the surrounding community were crucial considerations for the design process. The design will be to the most recent safety standards and will provide a safe and desirable walkway, bikeway and roadway for community use.

b. Job Creation & Near-Term Economic Activity

The F Street connection project will quickly create and stimulate rapid increases in economic activity to benefit the economically distressed Las Vegas Westside area, not only by creating opportunities for support business for the Symphony Park development but to fill positions in the development itself to work in the hotel, restaurants, medical centers and other businesses.

c. Innovation

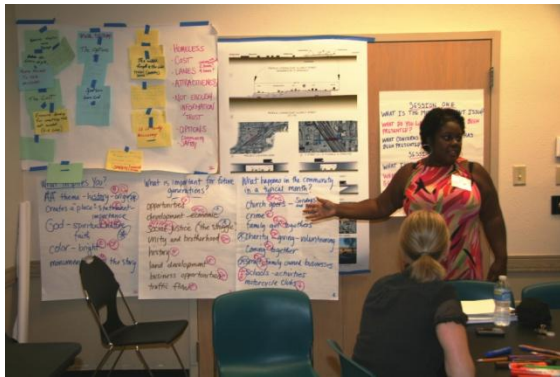


Figure 5 – Design Workshops

An innovative and extensive community outreach effort went into ensuring that the F street Connection project met the community stakeholders’ wants and needs. Two town hall meetings and three design workshops gave stakeholders the opportunity to have an active role in the design of the project, get information and give feedback, not only on the project but on redevelopment and other issues. Special electronic polling equipment was used to ensure that community stakeholders could vote on options and issues. Facebook, Twitter, a Web page, e-mail blasts and one-on-one communication offered

community stakeholders multiple opportunities to get information and provide input on the project. The three design workshops teamed stakeholders with aesthetic designers and design engineers to brainstorm ideas and then electronically poll those collective ideas to reach options that meet broad appeal, tapped the originality and innovation of the stakeholders and promoted strong community buy-in. The project will include a historic aesthetic element that will serve to promote community pride and improve the economic viability of the area.

In addition to innovated outreach strategies, the project team is evaluating the potential to use Advanced Bridge Construction (ABC) as a delivery method for this project.



Figure 6 – Design Workshop

d. Partnership

The Nevada Department of Transportation, the city of Las Vegas and the community collectively participated in many meetings over a period of months. The Regional Transportation Commission was also part of the collaboration to ensure that the project considered a visionary transportation approach. A strong team that was built from all those partners came together

including business owners, residents, non-profit organizations, faith-based organization and state and local governments in the design process to make the F Street Connection project in Las Vegas a strong partnership that will serve as a road to opportunity.

e. Results of Benefit-Cost Analysis

The benefit-cost analysis is a tool in determining the viability of transportation projects; consequently, such an analysis was conducted for this project ([Benefit-Cost Analysis](#) - BCA). Using the Surface Transportation Efficiency Analysis Model (STEAM) procedures and appropriate project data, the benefit-cost ratio was determined in September 2009. With a 7% discount rate, the benefit-cost ratio is approximately 0.002. Since that calculation, the estimated project cost has been reduced by over \$3,000,000. However, the change to BCA is minimal given the result of the analysis. Previous sections in this application summarize the specific benefits in terms of the stipulated long-term outcomes: state of good repair, economic competitiveness, livability, sustainability, and safety.

Although the benefit-cost analysis serves as a tool, it does not fully reflect the benefits that will come from the F Street connection project including: the improved livability and access for a significantly disadvantaged community and the improved economic competitiveness of the area. The direct line to a new sustainable development will provide yet unmeasured benefits. The new gateway and community pride generated is expected to serve a catalyst for more improvements that are also yet to be quantified. This is not only a new project for a new era of sustainability, walkability and bike-ability, but it is an important gateway to opportunity that cannot be thoroughly quantified.

Additional benefits include:

- It satisfies the collaboration requirement in recent Assembly Bill (AB) 304 Section 32.
 - It is identified as a high-priority project for funding by the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) as dictated in AB 304 Section 32.
 - It demonstrates a collaborative partnership between governmental agencies and the community.
 - The project can be constructed with no additional right-of-way acquisition.
 - Funding has not been identified.
 - It produces approximately \$400 of emission savings in the first year.
 - It produces approximately \$300 of safety savings in the first year.
 - It produces approximately 300 hours of savings in the first year.
 - The project's major components can be constructed by the stipulated date of February 17, 2012.
 - It will create 1,540 short-term jobs, based on Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) expenditure-total employment calculations.
 - It will serve as a road to success by via a direct connection with City Parkway and the new jobs at Symphony Park.
-
- Nevada's economy would greatly benefit from this program:
 - Nevada's personal income decreased more than any other state over the past year

- (Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis)
- Nevada's unemployment is the highest in the nation at 14.3 percent
- (Source: U.S. Department of Labor)
- Las Vegas' unemployment rate is 14.5 percent which is the highest in the nation for Large Metropolitan Areas (Source: U.S. Department of Labor)
- Nevada's gross product dropped by the 6th most in the nation over the past year
- (Source: US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis)
- 33 states have higher funding levels than Nevada (Source: 2007 FHWA Highway Statistics and the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis)
- Las Vegas has experienced the worst decline in home values in the U.S (Source: S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Index)
- This project includes financial and other commitments including stakeholder support from the City of Las Vegas, The Las Vegas Redevelopment Agency and NDOT. The stakeholder commitment of this project is evident by the varied participation of local and state agencies; the use of local funds and financial commitments from the state and local governments.

V. Project Readiness and NEPA

A Categorical Exclusion was signed by FHWA on December 15, 2010 and is attached to this application for reference.

VI. Federal Wage Rate Certification

The Nevada Department of Transportation complies with the requirements of subchapter IV of chapter 31 of title 40, United States Code (federal wage requirements) for federally funded projects

VII. Changes to Pre-Application

Further review of project updates has resulted in changes to the information submitted in the pre-application. The updated information is shown below:

Amount of TIGER funds requested: \$10,888,000

Amount of non-Federal Funds committed to this project:\$10,740,000

The project IS in the Nevada STIP and Clark County TIP for 2012 Construction.