



April 29, 2020

Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
U.S. Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**Re: Fort Lauderdale Downtown Development Authority's 2020 BUILD Application**

Dear Secretary Chao:

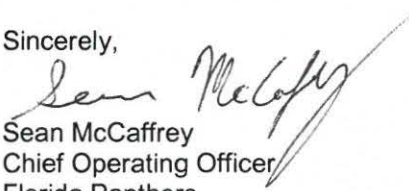
It is with great pleasure that I write to express my strong support of the Fort Lauderdale DDA's BUILD grant application to help fund the design and construction of complete street improvements in the Flagler Village neighborhood of Downtown Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

The Florida Panthers, a National Hockey League (NHL) sports team in the Greater Fort Lauderdale area and operator of youth hockey leagues throughout the State of Florida, is partnering with the City of Fort Lauderdale through a public-private-partnership to restore and revitalize the historic War Memorial Auditorium located at the eastern terminus of NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street. The restoration project will include two indoor ice rinks and a venue to accommodate approximately 3,000 people for concerts, conventions, and other live events. The venue will house NHL-level training facilities and will offer youth hockey programs, public skating and figure skating opportunities to people of all ages.

The Florida Panthers recognizes the importance of reinvesting in the community and will be investing approximately \$45 million through a 50-year land lease with the City to deliver the restoration and revitalization of War Memorial. The DDA's plan to redesign and rebuild NE 8<sup>th</sup> Street is a natural complement to our project making a direct connection to our site. The DDA's plans will encourage alternative modes of travel to/from our facility, to Holiday Park, and other cultural facilities nearby such as the Parker Playhouse.

I hope you will strongly consider approving this application request. It will enhance the quality of life for our community, promote sustainability, and improve connectivity and access for all.

Sincerely,

  
Sean McCaffrey  
Chief Operating Officer  
Florida Panthers

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