

## City of Fort Pierce receives \$2.7 million state infrastructure grant



From left – Shyanne Harnage, City of Fort Pierce; Port St. Lucie Vice Mayor Jolien Caraballo; Sen. Gayle Harrell; Rep. Toby Overdorf; Rep. Dana Trabulsi; Port St. Lucie Council Member Stephanie Morgan; Fort Pierce Mayor Linda Hudson; Rep. Erin Grall; Port St. Lucie Council Member Anthony Bonna; St. Lucie County Commissioner Cathy Townsend; St. Lucie County Commissioner Linda Bartz; St. Lucie County Commission Vice Chair Frannie Hutchinson; Pete Tesch, Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County. Photo credit: Marisol's Photography

Fort Pierce, FL/Sept. 1 – Governor Ron DeSantis presented the City of Fort Pierce with a \$2.7 million Florida Job Growth Grant on Aug. 30. The grant will help fund infrastructure improvements in the city's historic downtown.

The improvements to critical infrastructure include water, wastewater, electric, fiber, natural gas, roadway and sidewalk improvements. The infrastructure upgrades will stimulate more than

\$72.7 million of private investment on 10 brownfield acres along Indian River Drive, where the city's power plant was once sited.

"We're very bullish on St. Lucie County as a whole. We think Fort Pierce really is a great spot and think this is really going to help the area continue to blossom," said DeSantis during a press conference and check presentation in Fort Pierce.

"It has been an absolute honor to work with the Governor's Office, the DEO (Department of Economic Opportunity), the City of Fort Pierce and the EDC to help secure this transformative grant to help revitalize our historic downtown corridor," said State Rep. Dana Trabulsy. "This funding assistance is going to provide a much-needed boost to help spur economic growth, small business, entrepreneurship and tourism in our waterfront community."

The grant will be matched with an additional \$2 million from the City of Fort Pierce. The \$4,746,000 investment will fund replacement of 80-year-old water mains, relocation of an electrical transformer, pedestrian safety enhancements on A.E. Backus Avenue, improvements to Indian River Drive between Seaway Drive and Marina Way, and preliminary work on replacement of the Moore's Creek Bridge.

"We know we're a beautiful city. With these improvements, everyone is going to know we are a beautiful city," said Fort Pierce Mayor Linda Hudson.

Communities receiving Job Growth Grants must demonstrate how the funding will help create private sector jobs. According to an economic impact report by Downs & St. Germain Research, just the hotel alone in the King's Landing mixed-use development on the downtown site will create 221 jobs, generate more than \$2 million a year in state and local tax revenues and \$6-7 million annually in wages. Also planned at King's Landing are restaurants, retail shops, offices, condominiums, townhomes and a parking garage.

"The state's job growth grants are awarded after a very competitive process. We had a great team working together to bring this grant home to Fort Pierce," said Pete Tesch, president of

the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC). “I’d especially like to thank Representative Trabulsky for her tireless efforts in support of economic opportunities for the citizens of Fort Pierce, as well as the DEO for ably guiding us through the grant process.”

The City of Port St. Lucie received two Job Growth Grants in recent years to fund infrastructure improvements in Southern Grove, the city’s jobs corridor along I-95.



Fort Pierce Mayor Linda Hudson.

Photo credit: Marisol’s Photography



Rendering of King’s Landing.

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**About the Florida Job Growth Grant Fund**

The Florida Job Growth Grant Fund is an economic development program designed to promote public infrastructure and workforce training across the state. Proposals are reviewed by the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and Enterprise Florida, Inc. (EFI) and chosen by the governor to meet the demand for workforce or infrastructure needs in the community they are awarded to.

**About the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County**

The EDC is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting economic vitality in St. Lucie County through the attraction, retention and expansion of businesses in the community. The EDC works in partnership with local governments and the private sector to advance its goals of creating more and better-paying jobs for residents, broadening the tax base and improving St. Lucie County's economic quality of life. Contact the EDC at 772.336.6250 or [www.youredc.com](http://www.youredc.com).