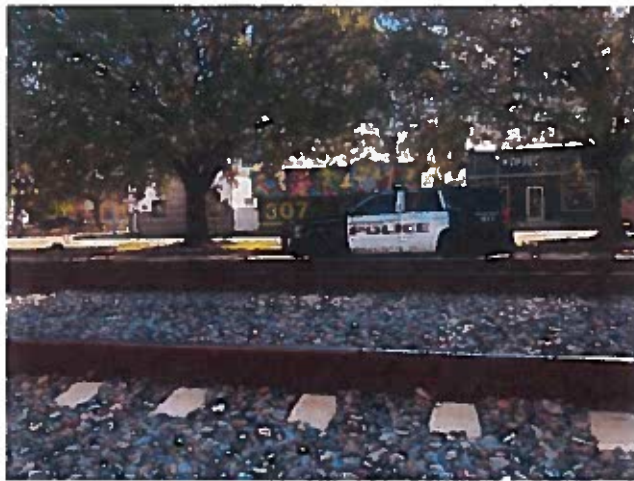


# **Trespassing Grant Program Operation Fast Track 2**

**Hollywood Florida  
Hollywood Police Department  
\$120,000.00**



Point of contact:

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Congressional Districts 23 & 24

## Eligibility Criteria

The City of Hollywood Police Department meets the eligibility criteria for grant application. The City of Hollywood Police Department is a local police department in Broward County, State of Florida. The City of Hollywood has approximately 6.2 combined miles of railroad mainline track within its boundaries. The City of Hollywood has had a demonstrated problem as outlined further in this document.

## Summary

Trespassing on a railroad's private property and along the railroad right of way is the leading cause of rail-related fatalities in America. Broward County has seen a 350% increase in railroad trespassing fatalities rising from a low of two (2) in 2016 to a high of nine (9) in both 2017 and 2018. In 2018, 27% of the State's Trespassing Fatalities took place in Broward County. The trend continued into 2019 as Hollywood Officers responded to the scene of four (4) fatal railroad incidents. Three (3) of the incidents involved pedestrians getting struck by a passing train while the fourth involved a vehicle leaving the roadway and crashing into a railroad safety barrier fatality injuring the driver.

Not only has Broward County led the state in railroad related casualties, the Federal Railroad Administration identified Broward County as a top five (5) county in the nation in regards to railroad trespasser casualties in the "National Strategy to Prevent Trespassing on Railroad Property" report provided to Congress in 2019. As a disproportionate number of these fatalities continue to take place within the City of Hollywood it is imperative a plan of action not only be developed but implemented.

In an effort to reduce these tragic statistics, the Hollywood Police Department is seeking an award of \$120,000 to participate in the Railroad Trespassing education and enforcement program. This will fund directed overtime enforcement and education along the City of Hollywood's two rail corridors.

The goal of this full year enforcement and educational campaign will be: maintain a visible presence; constantly repeat safety messaging; influence the behavior of the community; create a long lasting reduction in the amount of trespassing along the rail-line; and reduce rail-related deaths. As a nationwide hotspot, such an effort in Hollywood could have a disproportionate impact in achieving the Federal Railroad Administration's goal of reducing nationwide railroad fatalities by 50% within the next ten years.

The Hollywood Police Department utilized previous grant funding to help achieve this goal. Fatalities were reduced from 3 in 2019 to zero in 2020. Through the first ten months of 2021, there has been one fatality. The previous grant funded effort produced 876 stops, 135 citations, 4 physical arrests and 2 Notices to Appear. To make it a department wide effort all Sworn Officers received railroad trespassing training. Railroad safety signs were posted at stores and locations near railroad trespassing hot spots. Our efforts were highlighted in our city publications and department social media platforms. Although the

grant funded effort has concluded, our Officers have continued checking the railways during the regular tours of duty. The department also recently took part in National Rail Safety Week activities which were featured on the local news.

However, it would be unwise to rest on our successes. The Brightline high speed commuter line paused service during much of the pandemic but will resume full service shortly, sending 34 trains traveling through the city at over 70 mph. The line travels through an urban area which has no gates or obstructions to prevent pedestrians from trespassing or crossing the tracks at locations which are not designed grade crossings. The line has had the highest number of fatalities in the nation since 2017. Without a sustained effort it is likely fatalities will rise once the line resumes full service. Therefore it is critical a dedicated education and enforcement effort continue to ensure the casualty reduction is sustained. The funds provided by this grant would allow for Officers to be assigned exclusively to this effort and allow us to continue the casualty reduction effort with the knowledge and experience gained from our previous efforts.

#### Project Description

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) is initiating a twelve (12) month "Grant Program" to assist communities at risk for rail trespassing related incidents and fatalities. The funded agencies will perform rail trespassing enforcement related activities and report those activities and associated benefits to the FRA.

The Hollywood Police Department is seeking an award of \$120,000 to participate in the Trespassing program. This award will be used to provide directed overtime enforcement and education along the City of Hollywood's two rail corridors. This money is for enforcement related activities based on an officer's overtime rate. Neither cost sharing nor matching is a requirement for this grant program.

#### A Historical Perspective:

The City of Hollywood is a coastal city in Broward County, Florida, with an approximate population of 154,817 year round residents. (2020 United States Census Bureau) This number swells during the winter months by approximately 500,000 (A November 13, 2011| Sun Sentinel article by Tonya Alanez, reported 500,000 snowbirds visited Broward County).

The City is transected north to south in its Eastern District by the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) line and in the Western District by the Amtrak/Tri Rail lines. (ATK/SFRV)

In a typical year, the Police Department averages over 200,000 calls for service. In 2017, the Police department had a record breaking 237,844 calls for service. (2017 Hollywood Police Department Annual Report)

In 2018, 5,227 calls for service originated along the FEC line, with an additional 1,429 calls for service originating along the ATK/SFRV line. This is a total of 6,656 calls along and adjacent to the City's two rail line corridors.

#### The Eastern District:

The FEC corridor is made up of 2.5 miles of double track, running north and south between Hollywood's 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue to the east and Dixie Highway to the west. Currently, this line is used by the FEC to move freight. This line is also used as a high speed passenger line by the Brightline Commuter Train. There will be an average 34 high speed Brightline commuter trains transiting through the City of Hollywood on a daily basis, all traveling at approximately 70 mph. There have been 40 fatalities involving Brightline trains since they began test runs in July 2017, making the line the deadliest of the nation's 821 railroads. None of the crashes have been a result of train operator error and have been caused by combination of trespassers on the tracks and impatient pedestrians and motorists attempting to beat the speeding train while crossing the tracks.

The railroad property between roadways is an open grass swale area, with no barriers or obstruction to prevent the crossing of the rail line by pedestrians. The rail lines run through this mixed use, residential, and commercial area. Along the corridor, there are several notable businesses or structures. There are four (4) neighborhood convenience stores, five (5) bars, one supermarket, several "strip mall" style store fronts, one elementary school, one university satellite campus, a drug treatment center, a 90 person homeless shelter, a "soup kitchen", and two City parks.

The rail line has 10 crossings. Nine are controlled by traffic lights and one is controlled by stop signs.

The approximate middle of the 2.5 miles of rail creates the western boundary of the City's Downtown area. This is a destination area with shopping, restaurants, bars and night clubs.

To the south of the Downtown area, from Hollywood Blvd to Pembroke Road, the area is bordered by neighborhoods of a lower economic demographic.

The residents in these neighborhoods have historically traveled back and forth across the tracks to access local businesses such as a neighborhood convenience store or a coin operated laundry.

The area north of the Downtown Business District, from Hollywood Blvd to Sheridan Street, contains the Avant Guard Academy and a Barry University satellite campus. The Avant Guard Academy is a K-8 school with a student population of approximately 1,500 children. This area also contains the Broward Outreach, a 75 bed homeless shelter, and the Jubilee Center, a "soup kitchen" which provides lunch to 150 clients, Monday through

Friday. Both of these social service locations cater to a pedestrian homeless population that regularly cross the tracks to access the services.

As children and the homeless population are most at risk for accidental death along the rail line, specific educational outreach will primarily take place at the Broward Outreach, the Jubilee Center, Avant Guard Elementary School, and the drug treatment center (Methadone clinic), all of which directly abut the rail line. Additional education and outreach will be provided to the Broward County Multi Agency Homeless Task Force.

Initial contact with Leanna Vasquez, the Director of the Jubilee Center, was extremely positive and well received.

*Ms. Vasquez stated, "Many of these clients are homeless/transient and whom admit to crossing the tracks on a daily basis."*

Officers patrolling along this line have witnessed pedestrians on the tracks conducting swimsuit photoshoots, juveniles playing games as well as intoxicated persons asleep on the rails. During a previous grant funded enforcement shift on January 29, 2021, Officers located an intoxicated male on the tracks and were able to move him from the track area minutes before a freight train traveled through the city. The line was also the site of the lone fatality in 2021 as a subject apparently committed suicide by lying down in front of a FEC train during the overnight hours.

Broward County accounts for a quarter of all vehicle strikes on Florida FEC line. Officers frequently responded to calls of a vehicle struck on the tracks and have seen two train versus vehicle accidents occur in a single night.

#### The Western District:

The Amtrak/Tri-Rail (ATK/SFRV) line is made up of 3.6 miles of double track, branching into four (4) lines of track along the northern end of the line in Hollywood.

This line is bordered on the east by I-95 and to the west by businesses, residential neighborhoods and City parks. The area along the line is primarily unpaved grass, trees and other vegetation. The semi-concealed nature of this line creates the perfect conditions that allow for trespassing and homeless "camping".

There are two Tri Rail Stations along the line, the Hollywood Station and the Sheridan Street Station. The Hollywood Station is also a stop used by Amtrak.

According to Tri Rail, they have an average weekday ridership of 15,000 accounting for over four million passenger rides annually. Their current weekday schedule has a total of fifty (50) trains traveling through the City of Hollywood. Amtrak statistics show that in 2018, 22,592 persons either boarded or alighted at the Hollywood Station. Due to the pandemic, ridership fell to 13,067 riders in 2020. However, ridership has steadily increased in 2021 as businesses have reopened and people have resumed leisure travel.

There are 6 vehicular/pedestrian crossings/ intersections along the line. The Hollywood Station directly abuts the intersection crossing at Hollywood Blvd. This crossing is used heavily by passengers arriving and departing on foot or bicycle. When tasked with directed enforcement, Officers observed pedestrians frequently ducking under the railroad arms to cross the tracks at this location.

#### Enforcement:

Generally warning, enforcing, and documentation will take place when Officers encounter subjects walking along either of the City's rail lines, loitering along the railroad property right of way, or crossing the rail line at other than controlled crossings. Motorists and pedestrians who attempt to go around the lowering railroad arms or beat oncoming trains placing themselves in danger will be stopped and subject to being either cited or arrested.

All stops will be documented and the subject's information will be captured. Less serious first time offenders, absent other criminal charges (ex. a warrant, drug or alcohol use or possession, camping, etc.), will receive a printed information card (such as provided by Amtrak or Brightline) and be advised of the trespass violation and the safety risks associated with trespassing along the line. Officers will be encouraged to take the appropriate enforcement action for any dangerous or egregious offenses they observe.

Persons with additional infractions or criminal charges will be cited or arrested. Repeat offenders with one or more prior stops and/or warnings will be cited or arrested.

Officers will patrol the ATK/SFRV line by accessing the easement on foot, on Police bicycle, ATV or UTV, or other suitable Police vehicle. If camps are located, the Officers will notify the Department's Neighborhood Services Unit, who will coordinate with Public Works to effect removal and cleanup of the site. This cleanup will not be coordinated or reimbursed by this project, but the data collected will be used in the final performance reporting in accordance with Grant requirements.

#### Education:

Education will occur during every encounter as described above.

Although not funded by the grant, Officers will support the operation with a non-enforcement educational campaign about track safety. Officers will conduct specific targeted educational campaigns at the area homeless shelter, The Broward Outreach, the area "soup kitchen", the Jubilee Center, and work in partnership with the Broward County Multi Agency Homeless Task Force. Rail safety education will also take place at area schools.

Railroad stakeholders like Brightline will be utilized as a resource. Brightline has recently been awarded a Buzzbox vehicle grant. This mobile vehicle provides haircuts to the less fortunate, while also educating them about railroad safety. Many of our casualties have

been found to be homeless subjects and an educational program like this could prove invaluable in reducing fatalities.

The use of available printed materials will aid in bringing forward our safety messaging. Currently, Brightline has partnered with Operation Lifesaver; a nationwide non-profit, dedicated to raising overall awareness around rail safety. They have developed safety materials that emphasize remaining safe through increased awareness and by staying off all railroad tracks.



Examples of available printed materials. These materials are available in English, Spanish, Creole, and Portuguese.

Additional educational opportunities will occur at the pedestrian crossings, such as the one at the Hollywood Station. Officers will be required to make contact with citizens using the crossings during their patrols and provide the safety material and reemphasize the train awareness safety messaging. To prepare our Officers we have worked with our railroad community partners to provide training to Officers at lineups.

In addition the department will utilize our Public Information Officer and Social Media Platforms to highlight our enforcement and education efforts. The department recently took part in National Rail Safety week with our efforts being highlighted on the local Channel 10 News.



### Costs

The Hollywood Police Department will seek an award of \$120,000. This will be used to provide directed overtime with the sole focus of enforcement along the Dixie Highway, 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue FEC rail corridor and the ATK/SFRV corridor.

This educate/warn/enforce strategy will be implemented as follows:

On the FEC line, two (2) officers per day, three (3) days a week, in staggered four (4) hour blocks, for twelve (12) months. \$65.00 per hour average OT rate = \$81,120. This will provide 1,248 man hours to conduct encounters, enforcement, and data collection.

On the ATK/SFRV line, two (2) officers will work in four (4) hour blocks. They will alternate between working either one or two times a week for an average of 50 hours per month and 600 hours for the year. \$65.00 per hour average OT rate = \$39,000.

Instead of a quick headline grabbing blitz in which the area of focus may soon wane, this sustained level of enforcement at varying times and days will give the impression of omnipresence to deter trespassing and reckless behavior. Although not funded by the grant; enforcement will be combined with educational efforts and a public information campaign to inform the public of our efforts and the importance of railroad safety.

### Hollywood CAD calls for service:

Many of the Police calls for service along the rail lines go unreported to the rail authority. A simple key word search through CAD, in an attempt to locate incidents that were called in to the Police Department and were specific to the rail line, produced the following results:

A review of the Hollywood Police Departments Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) calls for service directly related to the FEC line, from January 2017 to December 2020, revealed 441 CAD events.

117 CAD events involved trespassing or a person(s) on the tracks who were not struck.

This includes multiple suicide attempts which were prevented.

*Some CAD examples: "Caller adv that male is laying on train tracks unk if cons or breathing",  
"2x juvs (1x fem & 1x male) near train, lying down on tracks",  
"5-6 subj's living by the train tracks and urinating in the area"  
"Comp adv he is going to throw himself ifo a train"  
"37s (Juveniles) videoing themselves playing chicken w/ passing trains"  
"Brightline train on emergency stop ref a B/M sitting on the tracks"  
"Comp adv fem wrecked her veh and ran, comp adv fem veh is stuck on RR tracks" "7 juvs laying on the railroad track"*

119 CAD events were related to a stuck vehicle(s), car parts, or debris causing a hazard by obstructing the tracks.

*Such as: "Male hit a pole and drove straight onto the train tracks"  
"Ref giant pieces of cement blocks on the train tracks look like it poss fell from a truck"  
"Comp adv fem wrecked her veh and got and ran, comp adv fem veh is stuck on RR tracks"*

205 CAD events involved some malfunction of the rail arms or signals.

A review of the Hollywood Police Departments Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) calls for service along the ATK/SFRV line, from January 2017 to December 2020, revealed 273 dispatched CAD events directly relating to the railroad tracks.

113 CAD events involved trespassing or a person(s) on the tracks.

*Such as: "Fem threatening to jump in front of the train....adv she isa @ the tri-rail station  
"Naked man on the train tracks.almost got hit by a train"  
"Homeless subj's on track 2"  
"Clr adv there are kids on a megaphone going up and down the tracks between Johnson and Taft"*

50 CAD events related to a vehicle(s) on the tracks and/or an accident or incident involving a vehicle and rail equipment.

*Such as: "At the hw tri rail ref her toyt yaris is stuck on the tracks for 10 mins... "  
"Veh flipped is next to the railroad tracks"  
"Train hit comp vehicle. Not inj"*

110 CAD events involved some malfunction of the rail arms or signals.

*"Train looks to be coming ...but arms are not down"*

Officers also responded to a wide range of incidents at the train stations along the line.

In addition, between October 2018 - December 2020 Officers responded to seven (7) fatal incidents, six (6) where a subject was struck by a passing train and a seventh involving a vehicle crashing into railroad safety equipment.

### Headlines

Many of the incidents involving the rail line have been reported in the news. A quick Google search for incidents reveals stories with headlines like:

**“Brightline train kills person in Hollywood in suspected suicide”**

- Sun Sentinel, Nov 24, 2018

**“Pedestrian trying to “beat’ Brightline train was struck and killed authorities say”**

- Miami Herald , March 7, 2019

**“Pedestrian fatally struck by Brightline train in Hollywood”**

- Sun Sentinel, July 29, 2019

**“Woman Crashes into railroad safety barrier, dies”**

- Sun Sentinel, November 18, 2019

**“Train hits car in Hollywood, Shuts down roads, cops say**

- Miami Herald, February 25, 2020





#### Geospatial data

Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) data indicates that Broward County has consistently been among the most dangerous Counties in the United States, as it relates to Railroad related casualties.

**Table 1: U.S. Counties with the Most Railroad Trespasser Casualties, Not Including Suicides  
November 2013 to October 2017**

Rank	County	Casualties	Rank	County	Casualties
1	Los Angeles, California	110	6	Palm Beach, Florida	47
2	Cook (Chicago), Illinois	109	7	Fresno, California	46
3	San Bernardino, California	59	7	Riverside, California	46
4	Harris (Houston), Texas	52	9	Contra Costa, California	44
5	Broward, Florida	51	9	San Diego, California	44

*Source: FRA analysis*

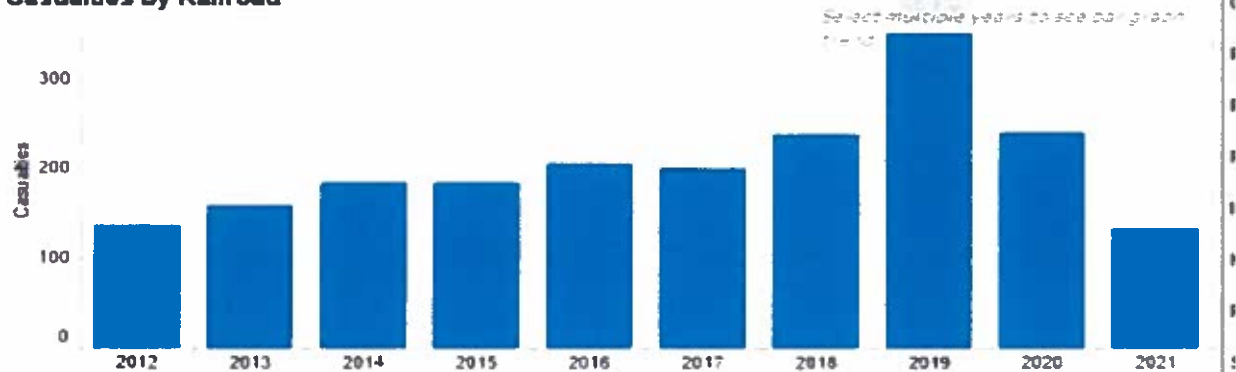
Broward County was ranked in the top 5 in the nation in railroad casualties even before the dramatic increase in fatalities in 2018 and 2019.

It should be noted that all counties ranked ahead of Broward have significantly more population, including Los Angeles which has five times the population. When population

is taken into account, Broward County ranks far higher in the number of casualties per capita.

The below graphs show that although Broward County only contains less than 9% of the state's population it accounts for a disproportionate number of casualties. In some years Broward accounted for over 26% of Florida's casualties.

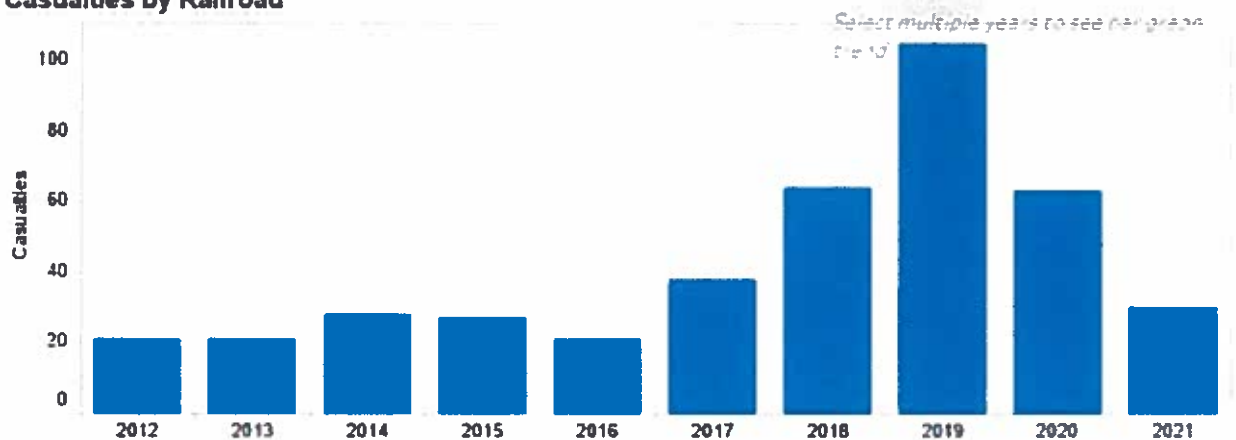
**Casualties by Railroad**



**Casualties Details**

Railroad Na..	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand ..
Grand Total	137	160	184	185	206	200	239	352	240	134	2,037
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

**Casualties by Railroad**



**Casualties Details**

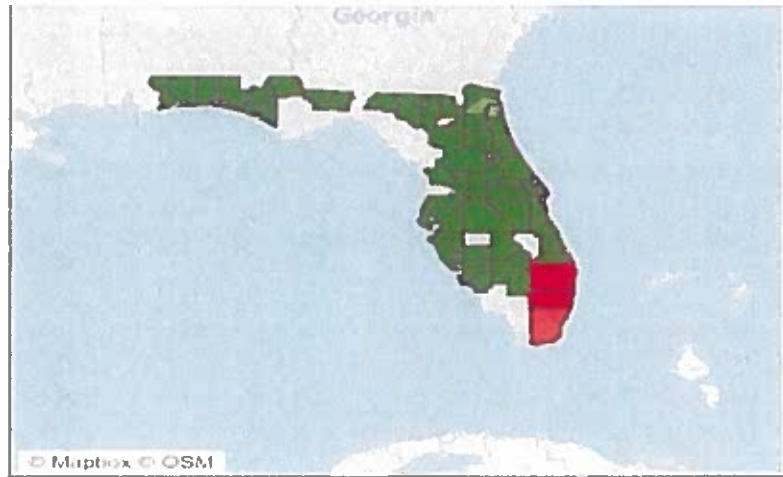
Railroad Na..	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Grand ..
Grand Total	21	21	28	27	21	38	64	105	63	30	418
		0.0	0.3	0.0	-0.2	0.6	0.7	0.6	-0.4	-0.5	

## Casualties by County

Alaska



US

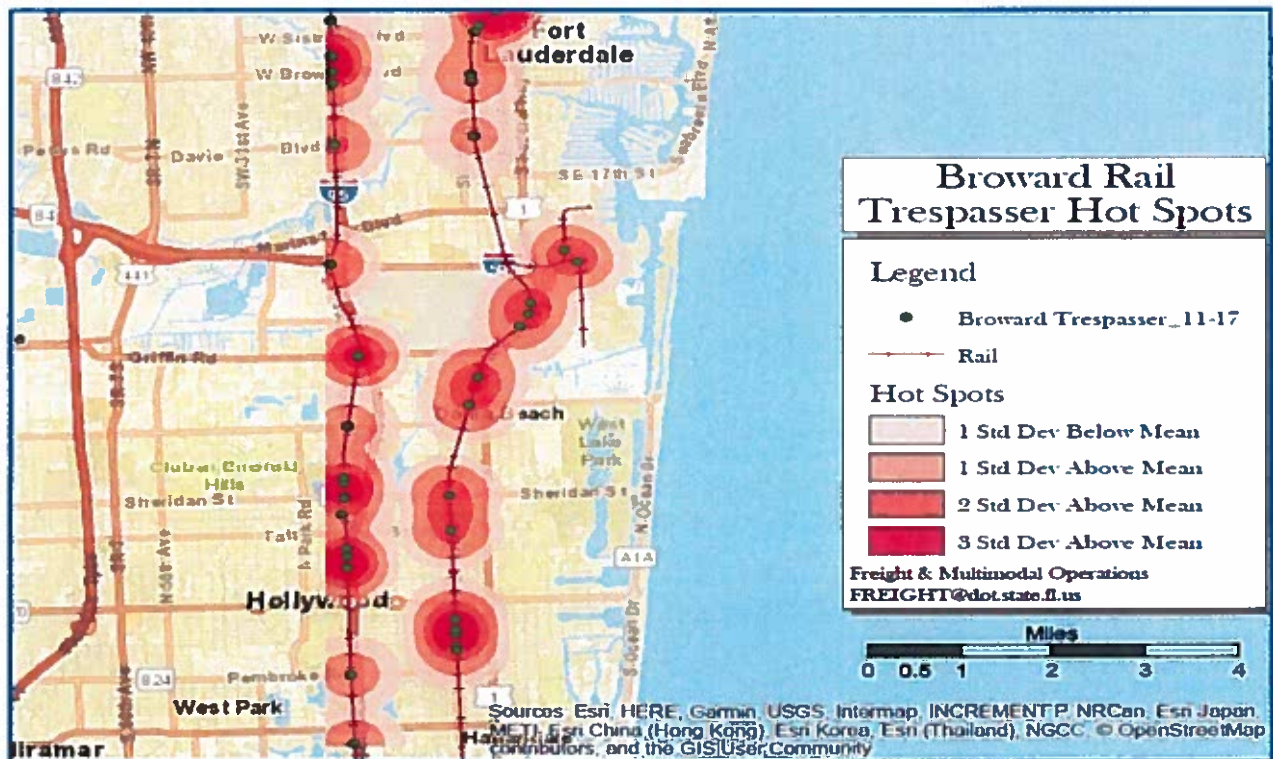


Number of Casualties

0 400

Casualty Map Details

The above map shows that the southern area of Florida, particularly Broward County has a much higher frequency of railroad casualties. The dark red color indicates that between 2012-2021, the county has been a hotspot.



The above map shows that Hollywood figures prominently in Broward Rail Trespassing hotspots, making the City of Hollywood a hotspot within a hotspot.

### Summation

Again, the purpose of this year long, 1,848 man hour enforcement and educational campaign will be: maintain a visible presence; constantly repeat safety messaging, influence the behavior of the community; create a long lasting reduction in the amount of trespassing along the rail-line, as well as to reduce rail-related deaths. As a city with a disproportionately high number of deaths in a county which is nationally ranked in railroad casualties, the grant program being awarded to the City of Hollywood would have a positive influence in reducing future railroad casualties. There are few, if any areas of the nation which have a higher concentration of railroad casualties as the City of Hollywood. With the high speed Brightline commuter line planning to resume full service in the upcoming weeks it is critical that the railroad trespassing enforcement effort continue in 2022. Without such an effort, some of our recent near misses involving slower moving freight trains may become tragedies when swift moving commuter trains become involved.

All data obtained from the activities performed in this Grant Program will be recorded and reported to the FRA as required. We have partnered with those with a vested interest in railway safety and have received letters of support in reference to our grant application.

Herzog Transit Services,  
Inc. 9400 NW 37th Avenue • Miami,  
FL 33147 786-878-5851 •  
www.herzog.com

# HERZOG

November 16, 2021

Office of Policy and Planning  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W38-212  
Washington, DC 20590

Mr. Douglas Gascon,

I am writing this letter in support of Hollywood Police Department for their application to assist with enforcement of trespassing on the Tri-Rail Corridor. I believe that this grant will greatly impact the community and reduce trespassing incidents on the corridor.

HTSI would like to express our full cooperation and will participate in this project. HTSI has information, statistics, and knowledge which we can share, to assist law enforcement in identifying "hot spots" on the corridor. In addition, we would love to be part of a task force or team working together to reduce trespass incidents.

We fully support this noble initiative taken by the Hollywood Police Department. We are ready to work together and make this project successful. Your consideration and support towards this grant proposal will be appreciated.

As HTSI is the current Operator, Dispatch, and Maintenance of Equipment contractor for Tri-Rail, I offer my support to this project as the General Manager of HTSI. If you need my assistance, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Edward Byers  
General Manager



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REGIONAL  
TRANSPORTATION  
AUTHORITY**

801 NW 33rd Street | Pompano Beach, Florida 33064 | P 954-942-7245 | F 954-788-7961 | [www.sfrrta.fl.gov](http://www.sfrrta.fl.gov)

Mr. Douglas Gascon  
Office of Policy and Planning  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W38-212  
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Notice of Funding Opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements

On behalf of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), operator of Tri-Rail commuter rail service, I am writing to express support for the City of Hollywood Police Department's application submission for the recently posted opportunity for Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements grant funding.

SFRTA monitors and coordinates public safety response on the corridor, 24 hours and 365 days, in accordance with Federal Railroad Administration regulations. It is with the cooperation of local law enforcement that we are able to effectively continue to maintain a safe rail corridor, which is why I am completely in favor of the City of Hollywood to be awarded with funds to enhance their trespassing enforcement efforts.

Hollywood, FL houses two Tri-Rail stations and an Amtrak Station with a combined 3.6 miles of railroad tracks within their jurisdiction. With the additional funds, the city can improve upon their railroad safety efforts, including helping with the reduction of railroad-related suicides.

We are very appreciative of the cooperative relationship we have with the Hollywood Police Department and all public safety agencies whose municipalities we traverse, as we continue to work together to reduce the number of incidents along our corridor. We hope that you grant this important partner the funding to help continue this critical work together.

Sincerely yours,

Steven L. Abrams

Executive Director

**GOVERNING BOARD** J.C. de Ona | Commissioner Maria G. Marino | Gerry O'Reilly | Carlos A. Penin | Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado |  
Commissioner Tim Ryan | James A. Scott | Robert B. Sandler | Hal R. Valeche | Robert C. L. Vaughan | **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR** Steven L. Abrams

**RE: Hollywood Police Department FRA Grant Proposal**

**To: Douglas Gascon**  
Office of Policy and Planning  
Federal Railroad Administration  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Room W38-212  
Washington, DC 20590

Brightline Trains Florida LLC is pleased to provide this letter of support for the Hollywood Police Departments application for "Law Enforcement Strategies for Reducing Trespassing Program" through the Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration. We recognize the importance of reducing trespassing violations as we continue to work through possible mitigations to improve upon safety on all facets. This is a necessary endeavor that goes hand in hand with the education and engineering improvements that have been a staple of focus for Brightline.

The Hollywood Police Department, as the lead law enforcement agency, in the city of Hollywood is well positioned to address the issue of trespassing on the rail corridor in the City of Hollywood through this grant opportunity. Specifically, they have a dedicated complement of road patrol, community policing, and dedicated professionals who are familiar with both the trespassing violation and the unique characteristics of the community.

This letter of support is a natural extension of the partnership that already exists between Hollywood Police and Brightline; we fully support the Hollywood Police Department proposed project to reduce railway trespassing in the City of Hollywood.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rob G

Robert Gatchell  
Chief Safety and Security  
Security Officer Brightline  
Trains Florida LLC