

March 18, 2026

To: Mayor and Members of City Council

202601091

From: Sheryl M. M. Long, City Manager

Subject: Emergency Ordinance – DOTE: Western Hills Viaduct BUILD Grant Application

Attached is an Emergency Ordinance captioned:

AUTHORIZING the City Manager to apply for grant resources of up to \$25,000,000 awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation (ALN 20.933) through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development transportation discretionary grant program to provide resources for demolition and construction of portions of the Western Hills Viaduct.

Approval of this Emergency Ordinance authorizes the City Manager to apply for grant resources of up to \$25,000,000 awarded by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) (ALN 20.933) through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development (BUILD) transportation discretionary grant program to provide resources for demolition and construction of portions of the Western Hills Viaduct (WHV).

The estimated cost of replacing the Western Hills Viaduct is significant and is expected to take approximately eight years to complete, over a minimum of three construction phases, alongside ongoing maintenance as funding becomes available. There are grant funds available from the U.S. Department of Transportation through the Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development transportation discretionary grant program to provide resources for demolition and construction of portions of the Western Hills Viaduct, including construction of the eastern and western approaches to the replacement viaduct.

The grant application deadline was February 24, 2026, and the City has already applied for the grant, but no grant funds will be accepted without approval by the City Council.

Specific local matching funds are not required for this grant since the project's location in an identified Area of Persistent Poverty and a Historically Disadvantaged Community qualifies it for up to a 100 percent federal cost share; however, previously committed local funds from the City, County, and the Southwest Ohio Regional Transit Authority (SORTA) will be used in combination with the BUILD grant as part of the overall funding necessary to advance the project. There are no new FTE/full time equivalents associated with the acceptance of these grant resources.

The replacement of the Western Hills Viaduct is in accordance with the “Connect” goal to “[d]evelop an efficient multi-modal transportation system that supports neighborhood livability” and the strategy to “[p]lan, design and implement a safe sustainable transportation system” as described on pages 129-137 of Plan Cincinnati (2012).

The reason for the emergency is the immediate need to authorize the grant application at the earliest possible time.

The Administration recommends passage of this Emergency Ordinance.

cc: Andrew Dudas, Budget Director
Steve Webb, Finance Director



Attachments