



MEMORANDUM

City of Venice

Engineering Department

TO: Mayor and City Council

THRU: Edward Lavalley, City Manager

FROM: James R. Clinch, PE, Asst. City Manager

DATE: April 29, 2022

COUNCIL APPROVAL: Yes

MEETING DATE: May 10, 2022

STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL: Preserve the Venice Quality of Life through Proper Planning

SUBJECT: Laurel Road Final Design Local Funding Agreement and County Future Funding Projections

Background: On September 28, 2021, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 2021-28 that requested the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) designate the segment of Laurel Road as a priority road project and endorsed the use of unencumbered and uncommitted Venice Road and Mobility Impact Fees for Laurel Road. Additionally on October 26, 2021, City Council adopted the annual 5-year Capital Improvement Schedule (CIS) and this Ordinance was transmitted to Sarasota County. The City Adopted CIS listed priority project number one as the Pinebrook Rd. and E. Venice Ave. Intersection and priority project number two as the Laurel Rd. from Knights Trail to Jacaranda project.

On April 22, 2022, the County formally responded to the City's transportation priority requests. This County proposal includes a Local Funding Agreement (LFA) for Final Design of Laurel road and a recommended funding plan to complete the City Priority Projects in the CIS while also addressing overall regional transportation issues. This County proposal was submitted to the City in an effort to recognize and accomplish the City priorities as well as addressing several other important regional transportation priorities.

A. Locally Funded Agreement for Final Design of Laurel Road - \$1 million

The proposed LFA will provide the \$1 million funding toward the Final Design and Permitting of the Laurel Road Expansion Project. Terms of the agreement include a not to exceed allocation. Construction must initiated within 7 years from the date of execution of the LFA for Preliminary Design in October 2020. This reduces the remaining time to initiate construction to 5 ½ years or October 2027. In the Whereas Clauses, the LFA includes the Linear Park, but does not include or prohibit the future approval for Park Impact Funding. Park Impact Fee Funding in the amount of \$700,000 for construction is under consideration through the County Parks and Recreation Department.

To expedite completion of the design, the recommended option is to complete an intergovernmental agreement with the Laurel Road Community Development District (CDD) for final design services. Otherwise, the City will need to pursue the standard Request for Qualifications (RFQ) followed by selection process and contract negotiation.

The LFA and budget amendment for the Laurel Rd. design phase is planned for consideration by the Sarasota County Commission at their May 24th meeting, which would allow this funding to be available this fiscal year. A budget amendment has also been included on the City Council Agenda for 5/10/22 dependent on approval to execute the LFA by City Council.

B. Recommended Mobility Fee Project Allocation Letter dated 4/22/2022:

1. East Venice Avenue and Pinebrook Road Intersection Improvement Project. \$5.6 Million

This project has been the #1 CIS Priority for City Council for the past several years. By advancing this project, this important public safety improvement will get completed sooner and the overall cost will be decreased significantly by removing federal funding and restrictions. A comprehensive design analysis will be completed by the County during the design phase, however the current budget has been based on the necessary expansion of the existing signalized intersection (Option 4.3), lane connections to the existing roadways, ROW acquisition and improvements to the Ridgewood intersection. Under the current funding Plan, the only approved funding by FDOT is \$1 million in FY2024 by FDOT (FY July 2023 – June 2024) for a Preliminary Design & Engineering Study (PD&E). This expensive study would not be required if federal funding is not utilized. Additionally, FDOT funds may become available to reimburse a portion of these construction costs back to the mobility fee fund.

2. Laurel Road Widening Project (Knights Trail to Jacaranda): \$8.4 Million

Fortunately, the mobility fee revenue projections from Sarasota County include sufficient funding for the estimated construction costs for the Laurel Road Extension Project when \$700,000 in Park Impact Fees for the Linear Park are combined. Request for Right-of-Way donations will be transmitted in a joint letter to adjacent developers to obtain remaining land to complete the Laurel Road project. With the current proposal to begin and complete the Final Design of Laurel road, the project will become “shovel ready” and therefore may be eligible for additional state and federal funding sources.

3. Allocate \$500,000 in Mobility Fees for the County and City Staffs to cooperatively work together to resolve minor projects on the City’s CIS priority list.

The County Staff has already initiated work on the signal timing adjustment and traffic counts in conjunction with FDOT to improve intersection performance with the available equipment. This additional funding will allow completion of several minor CIS projects to provide city-wide transportation improvement. There are multiple CIS projects which would be considered “low hanging fruit” and it would be beneficial to complete and subsequently remove them from the CIS list. These minor CIS projects would be evaluated and completed collaboratively with the County.

4. Allocation \$1.5 M of Mobility Fees to the Design of Lorraine Road from Knights Trail to SR681.

This is a significant project which will add regional capacity, connectivity and safety to the northeast Venice area. Although the entire corridor is not within Venice City Limits, the portion of Knights Trail from Laurel Rd. to Laurel Oaks Rd. located just south of the Landfill entrance is within the City's jurisdictional boundary. This section of the City is expanding rapidly with several large scale development underway on Rustic Road and Knights Trail. Providing this secondary access from the north to the Landfill, industrial uses on Gene Green Road and Knights Trail will greatly decrease the traffic impacts on Knights Trail and the Laurel Road intersection. Not only will this project divert significant traffic away from the Laurel Rd. corridor, benefitting the residential developments, the traffic diverted will include a large amount of heavy construction and solid waste vehicles.

This proposal package from Sarasota County, including the Laurel Road LFA and Mobility Fee Project Allocation Letter, is in response to the City's request to address transportation priorities and presents a viable funding solution for the City's top two priorities. The proposal also supports the completion of additional minor City CIS projects and starting design on the new Lorraine Rd. connector, which will directly benefit the Northeast Venice area. City staff will need to continue a close collaboration with Sarasota County on these important projects to ensure they continue to progress on schedule and budget.

Requested Action: Authorize the Mayor to Execute the Locally Funded Agreement Between Sarasota County, Florida, and the City of Venice, Florida, for the Final Design of Improvements on Laurel Road, Approve City Council Endorsement of the April 22, 2022, Correspondence from Sarasota County Letter with Mobility and Road Impact Fee Project Allocations and Authorize Staff to Draft a Joint Letter with Sarasota County to request Right-of-Way Donation by Adjacent Developers.

If for an agenda item, this document and any associated backup created by City of Venice staff has been reviewed for ADA compliance: Yes

City Attorney Review/Approved: Yes

Risk Management Review: N/A

Finance Department Review/Approved: Yes

Funds Availability (account number): N/A – Road Impact and Mobility Fee Funded.

ORIGINAL(S) ATTACHED: Three Originals (3) of LFA provided to the City Clerk