

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Members of the City Commission

FROM: Commissioner Alex Fernandez

DATE: March 13, 2024

SUBJECT: DUAL REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COMMITTEE AND THE LAND USE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER THE CREATION OF A NEW CAPITAL PROJECT TO INSTALL FLOATING WALKWAYS AND/OR THE ACQUISITION OF THE OUTLOT AT 2811 INDIAN CREEK DRIVE TO COMPLETE THE INDIAN CREEK PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY

Please place on the March 13, 2024 agenda a dual referral to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (“FERC”) and the Land Use and Sustainability Committee (“LUSC,” and together with FERC, the “Committees”) to discuss the possible creation of a new capital project to install floating walkways to complete the Indian Creek Pedestrian Pathway (the “Pathway”).

At its March 18, 2020 meeting, the City Commission adopted Resolution 2020-31210, approving one of two concept plans prepared by landscape architect Craven Thompson & Associates, Inc. (“Craven Thompson”), based on community feedback, to restore landscape removed during the construction of the seawall that extends from 24th Street to 41st Street on the east side of Indian Creek (i.e., on the west side of Indian Creek Drive). The approved concept plan provided for connectivity for pedestrians between three anchor points: (1) 41st Street, (2) the pedestrian bridge at 28th Street and (3) the south end overlooking Lake Pancoast. The plan proposed varied layers of landscaping between the anchor points and the connectivity, to buffer the barrier wall, to screen and open some views, and plant large shade trees at the road intersections with Indian Creek Drive to limit traffic related light pollution into the residential neighborhoods. The Commission further directed the Administration to work with Craven Thompson to increase the pathway and landscaping in as many areas as possible. Construction of the Pathway in its current iteration is expected to be completed in March 2023.

Because the City does not currently own all parcels along the west side of Indian Creek Drive (“ICD”), Craven Thompson necessarily created pedestrian starts/stops at certain pinch points where the Pathway would otherwise end. There are crosswalks at these Pinch Points to enable pedestrians who wish to walk along the west side of ICD to cross over to the east side temporarily, until the next crosswalk that can connect them back to the Pathway. This is less than ideal as pedestrians are forced to cross ICD and cross back several times to get from 26th Street to 41st Street.

The Mid Beach Neighborhood Association (the “MBNA”) has requested that the City consider the installation of floating walkways connecting the Pinch Points along ICD to allow for a continuous Pathway from 26th Street to 41st Street. The installation of floating walkways would not only provide a practical solution for pedestrians traveling north or south along ICD in Mid Beach, but would also allow residents and visitors the ability to experience the City’s natural beauty in a more intimate way.

I would also like to discuss with my colleagues the possibility of acquiring the outlot for the property located at 2811 Indian Creek Drive. To head southbound safely, a pedestrian who crosses the 28th Street pedestrian bridge over Indian Creek must walk north to the crosswalk at 29th Street, then use the sidewalk on the east side of Indian Creek Drive to head south. The acquisition of this outlot could be a better solution than a floating walkway at this particular point.

The appropriate representative(s) from the Public Works Department, the Environment and Sustainability Department and Finance should be prepared to address this matter before the Committees.