

MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION

FROM: CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

DATE: February 21, 2022

RE: **Task Authorization with Ayres Associates, Inc. for Professional Services Associated with the South Florida Avenue Master Plan**

The City of Lakeland, in collaboration with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), has implemented a lane reduction study on a portion of South Florida Avenue between Ariana Street and Lime Street. The project is currently in the test phase, having been established and initiated in October of 2020. At an August 2, 2021 workshop, the City Commission extended the data collection period to better inform decision-making.

To leverage this public investment and to inform decisions regarding the future of the South Florida Avenue Corridor and Dixieland CRA, CRA staff is proposing a strategic master plan that will provide a vision and roadmap for success along the corridor upon completion of the data collection period. Accordingly, staff solicited a proposal from Ayres and Associates, Inc. (Ayers) pursuant to the City's Continuing Services Contract for Professional Planning, Design or Development Services. Ayers' scope of services under the attached Task Authorization will include the following:

- ◆ Research and assess the opportunities and challenges for the area based on data and field study.
- ◆ Develop strategies regarding land use, development, use of parklets and open spaces, transportation and infrastructure, as well as housing and economic development.
- ◆ Develop an implementation plan, including scenario planning and consideration of available funding via grants or private-sector partnerships.
- ◆ Final presentation to the City Commission.

Total project costs under this Task Authorization are in the not-to-exceed amount of \$57,700. The project will be funded by the Dixieland CRA Trust Fund (\$28,850) and the Downtown CRA Trust Fund (\$28,850). Ayres will commence work upon receipt of a Notice to Proceed, with a fourteen-week project timeline.

It is recommended that the City Commission approve and authorize the appropriate City officials to execute the attached Task Authorization with Ayres Associates, Inc. for Professional Planning, Design and Development Services for the South Florida Avenue Strategic Master Plan in an amount not to exceed \$57,700.

Attachments

TASK AUTHORIZATION FORM

In accordance with the **Ayres Associates, Inc / City of Lakeland** Continuing Contract for Professional Services dated *October 18, 2021* the City hereby authorizes the Consultant to proceed with the services as set forth in the attached work order by the City and/or attached proposal by Consultant and the following:

Task: AA-22-01

Account: 405.106.7500.017741.649.00.000 (\$28,850)
407.106.7509.017741.649.00.000 (\$28,850)

Project Title: Professional Services for South Florida Avenue Master Plan
Billing: As set forth in the above referenced Agreement.

Not-To-Exceed Cost: \$57,700

Start: March 1, 2022
Complete: June 30, 2022

Scope of Work: **Ayres Associates, Inc** Proposal, dated January 27, 2022, is attached herein as **Exhibit "A"**. Consultant's reimbursable costs shall be in conformance with the City's Consultant Expense Reimbursement Policy, attached herein as **Exhibit "B"**. Exhibits "A" and "B" are made a part of this Task Authorization.

AUTHORIZATION:

AYRES ASSOCIATES, INC

Accepted and Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Binoy Panicker, Principal Urban Planner

CITY OF LAKELAND, FLORIDA

Reviewed By: _____ Date: _____
Name: Alis Drumgo
Title: Assistant Director of Economic Development

Accepted By: _____ Date: _____
Name: Shawn Sherrouse
Title: City Manager

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Name: William H. Mutz
Title: Mayor

Approved as to Form and Correctness: _____

Palmer C. Davis, City Attorney

Attest: _____
Kelly S. Koos, City Clerk

Exhibit "A"

Consultant Proposal

(Insert Proposal Behind this sheet)

City of Lakeland

South Florida Avenue (SR 37) Strategic Master Plan

Revised Jan 27, 2022

Introduction

The City of Lakeland in collaboration with the FDOT has implemented a road diet on a portion of Florida Avenue in downtown Lakeland between Ariana Street and Lime Street. The project is currently under the “Test” phase until July 2022. To leverage this public investment and infrastructure, the City wishes to undertake a strategic planning exercise to optimize the development opportunities and community benefit from this project. The Corridor has been featured in various plans and studies, and through this strategic plan, the hope is to build on these studies and past efforts.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the project is to prepare a strategic plan that will provide a vision and roadmap for parcels along South Florida Avenue between Ariana Street and Lime Street. Specific objectives include:

- Assess the impact of the roadway restructuring along the corridor and adjacent neighborhoods and leverage its benefits.
- Positively propose and promote development to enhance resilience and quality of life along the corridor.
- Outline a clear roadmap of what needs to happen to ensure the corridor is a success in years to come while providing certainty to those living around and investing in the area.

The City has a great foundation in the Dixieland Redevelopment Plan and the Corridor Study & Master Plan that ultimately led to the road diet test. However, the goal of this plan is to take it a step further and propose some creative, tactically urban approaches of what the corridor could realistically be over the short, medium, and long term.

Scope of Work

The strategic plan effort is proposed to be executed in 3 phases over a period of 14 weeks. Public and stakeholder engagement for project buy-in is a key component and will be executed in close collaboration with the Community and Economic Development Department.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement

The project process will employ a collaborative public and stakeholder engagement process. The process will include the following:

- CRA/City Commission presentation.
- Virtual or in-person stakeholder meetings with various internal City Departments collectively, and other external agencies such as the FDOT as needed.
- In collaboration with the City staff, the plan process and progress are to be made available on the City’s website for feedback and comment.

Phase 1: Assessment - Opportunities and Challenges – 4 weeks

The purpose of this phase is to study and understand the objectives the previous plans for the corridor and adjacent neighborhood including the Dixieland Community Redevelopment Plan, City Comprehensive Plan, FDOT Corridor Study & Master Plan, and other relevant planning exercises undertaken by the City with the main purpose of identifying opportunities and challenges. The idea is not to re-invent the wheel, rather build on the previous plans, and take what has succeeded and study from what has failed.

The outcomes of this phase will be a detailed assessment by topical areas such as land use and development, parks and open spaces, transportation and infrastructure, housing, and economic development. The form, context, urban environment will be a prime consideration in this assessment. Based on the assessment, a vision considering the previous studies and key strategic plan principles based on lessons learnt here and best practices will be defined in the next phase, which will guide the further development of the plan.

Phase 2: Roadmap - Vision and Strategic Plan – 6 weeks

In this phase, first, a robust, resilient vision will be outlined, supported by sound planning principles to guide the strategic plan proposals. The Plan will include recommendations and proposals by topic.

Land Use and Development

- Identify key opportunity sites for development and redevelopment areas in conjunction with the South Florida Roadway improvements and corridor context.
- Study planning policy changes and land development codes and propose changes to accommodate the vision and development objectives
- Formulate developments intent, concepts and architectural themes opportunity sites and nodes. Transit Oriented Development will be a key driver and development focused to support alternative modes and public transit. Illustrative sketches outlining the development program and intent will be includes for each opportunity area to communicate the vision and solicit developer interest. The proposals will include a consideration of best practices and other successful examples tailored to the S Florida Avenue Corridor and context.
- Other public improvement opportunities and measures such as design overlays will also be assessed and recommended.

Parklets and Open Spaces

- Suggest landscape improvements to improve the urban design quality of the corridor.
- Supporting the corridor improvements, identify activity areas and parklet sites for community gathering.
- Prepare concept parklet plans and sketches for specific areas, supporting the land development objectives and corridor activities. The focus will be on native and urban appropriate ecosystems to minimize operations and management but have the desired visual impact.
- Identify urban trail connections linking key assets along the corridor with the larger city-wide networks.
- Propose further enhancement of key areas and gateways and nodes to create a “sense of place”.

Transportation and Infrastructure

- High level assessment of further transportation access management in conjunction with the road diet plans. Pedestrian and non-vehicular modes of traffic and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods will be prioritized.
- High-level assessment of infrastructure requirements needed to support the development opportunity areas and redevelopment proposals.
- High-level green infrastructure assessment of the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods to identify stormwater management and mitigation measures.
- and corridor infrastructure exists.

Housing

- Outline housing objective for the S Florida Ave corridor and adjacent neighborhood in conjunction with City's Comprehensive Plan and objectives.
- At a planning level, assess contextual housing trends and private development activities to establish market preferences and prototypes.
- Integrate findings in the development and redevelopment opportunity areas proposals.

Economic Development

- In conjunction with the above topics, outline short and long-term economic development strategies relevant to the South Florida Avenue corridor and neighborhood context.
- In line with the Dixieland CRA Plan, identify key development and redevelopment partners, and strategies for further engagement.
- Identify corridor promotion strategies to spur economic development and investments. This could also be tagged with tactical urbanism solutions for more short-term wins.

Phase 3: Deep Dive – Implementation Plan – 4 weeks

Once the development opportunities and strategies are identified and defined, a prioritized program for implementation will be assembled. The program will key into several aspects:

- Define most important development projects and public improvements including amenities.
- Identify partners and the time frame to deliver projects in an economically sound manner.
- On the public side, cross-reference projects to be aligned with other capital improvement projects, flag funded projects, projects currently being undertaken by FDOT and others such as utility work or roadway improvement.
- Identify projects to be staged or phased in anticipation of future funding or improvements.

We will consolidate this into a Strategic Implementation Plan which identifies key partners and collaborators. The implementation plan will be outlined and presented through scenario planning. A 3-year plan scenario incorporating short term wins, a 7-year scenario plan showing medium term actions, and a 15-year scenario plan showing the long-term context will be presented.

The outcomes of all the project phases will be consolidated and finalized into the South Florida Avenue Strategic Plan Report in this phase.

Deliverables

The following deliverables will be presented and submitted commensurate with each project stage:

- 1) Kick-off meeting
- 2) Phase 1 Assessment - Opportunities and Challenges Presentation/Report
- 3) Phase 2 Roadmap - Vision and Strategic Plan Presentation/Report
- 4) Phase 3 South Florida Avenue Strategic Plan Report (Final Report)
- 5) Final Presentation to City Commission
- 6) Meeting Minutes and Notes as required

Exhibit "B"
City of Lakeland
Consultant Expense Reimbursement Policy
Revised 6/18/2018

General

This policy governs all eligible reimbursement expenses paid to consultants hired by City Departments under professional service contracts. All reimbursable expenses must adhere to the following provisions and be verified and approved by the appropriate department head, or their designated representative administering the professional contract. An exhibit to each contract or agreement must be accepted by each professional services consultant prior to the agreement being considered fully executed. All proposed reimbursable consultant expenses must be submitted to the managing designee with matching receipts and specific documentation outlining the nature of the business conducted in association with the expenditure prior to approval by the City.

Consultant Contract Provisions

1. Reasonable expenses will be reimbursed for customary business activities deemed integral to the completion of the consulting assignment (i.e. phone calls, copies, printing, facsimile services, etc.) 2. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed at a rate not-to-exceed the following:

- Car Rental – Limited to mid-size vehicles or smaller.
- Airline Travel – Limited to tourist or coach class fare, all efforts will be made to identify the most economical flight options available at time of scheduling.
- Use of private automobile for administration of project related requirements may be reimbursed at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate. (www.irs.gov)
- Local hotel accommodations will be reimbursed at a rate not-to-exceed the GSA lodging rate for Tampa, Florida per night plus sales tax. (www.gsa.gov) Incidentals related to the hotel stay will not be reimbursed.
- Meal expenses will be reimbursed at a rate not-to-exceed the GSA M&IE rate for Tampa, Florida. A maximum of 15% gratuity on meals will be allowed.
- No entertainment expenses will be reimbursed, including, but not limited to, alcoholic beverages, in-room entertainment, registrations, tickets to sporting events or entertainment events, banquet and or client entertainment.
- No reimbursement will be provided for personal expenses of any nature.
- When representing the interest of the City outside of the Lakeland area, reimbursement of reasonable hotel accommodation costs will be provided as determined by the responsible Department Head.

Collection of Back-up Documentation

All consultant expenditures submitted for reimbursement shall be properly documented and approved by the appropriate department head or designated representative managing the agreement. Original receipts must be provided for payment, along with documentation on purpose. The department head or designated representative will be responsible for the collection of this documentation and for communicating with the consultant on issues related to reimbursable costs or backup documentation. It will be the responsibility of the department head or designated representative to obtain the necessary approvals from the City Managers' Office for variances to the policy.

Prior to payment of invoices, the following will be required:

1. Verification that invoice references the correct professional service contract.
2. Verification that the specific contract deliverables have been met and scope of work has been satisfactorily completed.
3. Verification that all consultant reimbursable expenses were incurred in conjunction with specified services rendered and billed at cost.
4. All reimbursable expenses must be submitted with receipts documenting expenses.
5. Verify all expense calculations are correct.

Variance Approval

All variances or modifications to the provisions in this policy must be approved by the City Manager or authorized designee.