

MEMORANDUM

Date: December 6, 2021

To: Max Royle, City Manager

From: William Tredik, P.E., Public Works Director

Subject: A Street Drainage / Safety Improvements

DISCUSSION

On November 1, 2021 staff presented a St. Johns County (SJC) proposed plan for drainage improvements and sidewalk construction along A Street (a SJC roadway) east of A1A Beach Boulevard. The proposed plan included a new drainage inlet approximately 200' east and connecting to the stormwater system on A1A Beach Boulevard. This new inlet would alleviate north side roadway flooding in this location. The proposed plan also included a 3' wide valley gutter and a 6' wide concrete sidewalk, placing the back of sidewalk very close to existing properties to the north.

Prior to the November 1st meeting the City had requested that SJC reduce the sidewalk width to 5' and the curb width to either 1.5' or 2' in width to reduce the impact to adjacent properties. At the time of the November 1, 2021 meeting, the City did not have a response to this request. Some topics discussed at the November 1st City Commission meeting included:

- Reduction of sidewalk and curb width
- Placing sidewalk on the south side of A Street.
- Potential undergrounding of electric utilities

Following the November 1, 2021 meeting, staff investigated the feasibility of placing the sidewalk on the south side of A Street and uncovered significant challenges, including:

- Insufficient room for sidewalk and ramp approaches at A1A Beach Boulevard. (Figure 1)
- Impact to existing driveways and potential for vehicles to extend into the sidewalk. Properties on the north side of A Street typically have garages set back further or access from 1st Lane to the north (Figure 2).
- Conflict with beach toll booth and non-alignment with pedestrian beach access (Figure 3)



Figure 1 - Street View image of A1A Beach Boulevard and A Street



Figure 2 - Potential for Obstructed Sidewalk on South side



Figure 3 - Conflict with Beach Toll and Alignment with Beach Pedestrian Pathway

The geometry required for pedestrian access at the west end – in conjunction with the conflicts at the east end – make sidewalk on the south side of A Street extremely challenging. The challenges associated with placing sidewalk along the north side of A Street are far less, and do not require modification of the existing roadway nor changes to roadside use.

Regardless of the determination of sidewalk location, the City will continue to investigate the feasibility of undergrounding electric power lines along this stretch of A Street. Placing the sidewalk along the north side of A Street does not adversely impact the proposition of future undergrounding of power lines currently located on the south side of the roadway.

Adjustments to County Plans

Subsequent to the November 1st meeting, SJC notified the City that they are willing to reduce the curb width to 2'. They have also agreed to reduce the sidewalk width to 5', as requested, provided the City takes on future maintenance responsibility for the sidewalk. Their position relating to the City's maintenance is due to the County's Land Development Code (LDC) which states:

Sidewalks should be placed as far as possible from the Roadway travel lane as practical. If Right-of-Way constraints require the sidewalk to abut curb and gutter, the minimum sidewalk width shall be six (6) feet. Utility strips should be considered in determining the location of the sidewalk to better serve the needs of the pedestrian traffic as well as the Utility companies and to increase Roadway safety. Location of Roadway Signs and signal poles should also be a consideration in establishing sidewalk location.

SJC's has taken the position that transferring future sidewalk maintenance responsibility to St. Augustine Beach – in conjunction with the facility being located within the City – allows them to reduce the design parameters to meet City sidewalk requirements.

Anticipated annual costs associated with the sidewalk maintenance are not expected to be excessive and would be absorbed within the City Public Works Departments annual budget. The sidewalk will be 6" thick, providing significant resistance to cracking and breaking, and reducing future repair costs. An interlocal agreement will be required between the City and the County to formalize future maintenance of the sidewalk.

If the City opts to take future maintenance responsibility for the sidewalk, it presents an opportunity to request from the County aesthetic upgrades to the standard concrete sidewalk and incorporate such aesthetic parameters into the final plans and interlocal agreement.

ACTIONS REQUESTED

1. Approve St. Johns County concept showing a 2' curb and 5' sidewalk along the north side of A Street from A1A Beach Boulevard to the beach access.
2. Determine what level of aesthetic upgrades to request the County incorporate into the final sidewalk plans
3. Authorize staff to work with the Couth to prepare an interlocal agreement relating to future maintenance of the sidewalk