

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TO: The Nassau County Board of County Commissioners
FROM: Walter D. Gossett, County Coordinator
DATE: September 18, 1997
RE: Workplans to Address Specific Capital Infrastructure Issues

The Board has directed me, working in conjunction with Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, P.A. ("NG&N"), to develop a strategy, to resolve three specific capital infrastructure related issues. The specific matters that the Board has asked me to address are the:

(1) development of a strategy to extend water and sewer infrastructure (capacity provided by United Water), roads, drainage, and street lighting to an approximately 120 acre commercial/planned unit development located on the north side of A1A in the unincorporated area of Nassau County,

(2) development of a strategy for the County to deliver, or cause to be delivered, water and sewer infrastructure to owners of lands in the unincorporated area of the County on Amelia Island that would otherwise be required to use the services of the City of Fernandina Beach, and

(3) development of a strategy that will allow the County to become actively involved in delivering, or causing to be delivered, water and sewer service and capacity in the unincorporated areas in western Nassau County near and around the Town of Callahan (population 936) and the Town of Hilliard (population 2,452).

Pursuant to the County's ongoing retainer agreement with NG&N, County staff has requested a specific workplan and fee structure from NG&N in order to address each of these matters. The objective of each workplan is appended hereto. To the extent required NG&N will work closely with Government Services Group, Inc. ("GSG") under the retainer agreement. In order to maximize efficiency, each approach essentially involves 2 or 3 phases: (a) evaluation and initial strategy or policy outline, (b) detailed development of the strategy and implementation work plan, and (c) implementation. This approach allows the County Commission to maintain and control the process and provide appropriate policy input. At the end of each phase the County will know the next steps involved, and, the cost and timeframe to continue.

APPROVED

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GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPACT:

Each of these workplans has a positive growth management impact. As well, each promotes important economic development and provides opportunities to coordinate and advance the delivery of central water and sewer service. Work Order 97-1 will avoid piecemeal growth problems and provide a significant A1A access management impact. Work Orders 97-2 and 97-3 are designed to fund innovative and cooperative alternatives to difficult water and sewer delivery issues.

FISCAL IMPACT AND TIMEFRAME:

Essentially, there are 3 workplans attached and I recommend approval and direction to proceed. The expected fiscal impact for the first phase of each is: Work Order 97-1 - \$6,000, Work Order 97-2 - \$5,000, and Work Order 97-3 - \$5,000. In each case all costs and fees to accomplish these work orders will be recoverable from benefitted property owners and the General Fund reimbursed if the project is implemented.

Delivery of a draft report on Work Order 97-1 would be expected within 3-4 weeks and the initial phase work for Work Orders 97-2 and 97-3 is expected to be completed within 60-90 days.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve Work Orders 97-1, 97-2 and 97-3 and direction to proceed.

- (1) DEVELOP A STRATEGY TO EXTEND WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE (CAPACITY PROVIDED BY UNITED WATER), ROADS, DRAINAGE, AND STREET LIGHTING TO AN APPROXIMATELY 120 ACRE COMMERCIAL/PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF A1A IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF NASSAU COUNTY. (NG&N WORK ORDER NO. 97-1)**

OBJECTIVE:

It is the County's objective to avoid a piecemeal approach to the development of this centrally located commercial/industrial property. A successful solution will also favorably impact access management along A1A. The area is served by United Water (which acquired the original developer owned utilities to serve this property). United Water serves the area from Thomas Shave Bridge to I-95 along the A1A corridor (and approximately 1 to 2 miles north and south). Working with NG&N, County staff has developed a 3-phased workplan approach. The objective of Phase 1 would be to develop a strategy to address not only the utility issues, but drainage and street lighting to this development. The phases outlined below are intended to develop a strategy for the creation of a comprehensive scope of work and solution to the revision of utilities and infrastructure improvements to this area.

- Phase 1* Evaluate all relevant information, meet with potential partners in the project, and develop a highly focused scope of work for Phase 2 and 3, thus eliminating any unnecessary tasks and expenditures of funds on the County's part.
- Phase 2* Detailed development of a specific strategy resulting in a specific strategic approach which can be agreed to and acted upon by the County and any potential partners in this project.
- Phase 3* Implementation will involve acting upon the County's direction in concert with any of its partners to accomplish the strategies and put in place the programs and deliver the capital facilities desired. This phase will involve the actual creation of annual assessment programs, interlocal agreements, and other implementation solutions necessary to reach final resolution for the project.

- (2) **DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY FOR THE COUNTY TO DELIVER, OR CAUSE TO BE DELIVERED, WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE OWNERS OF LANDS IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREA OF THE COUNTY ON AMELIA ISLAND THAT WOULD OTHERWISE USE THE SERVICES OF THE CITY OF FERNANDINA BEACH (THE "CITY"). (NG&N WORK ORDER NO. 97-2)**

OBJECTIVE AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Although this challenge is relatively simple to describe, the development of a strategy to effect a resolution satisfactory to the County will be complex and most probably will require the coordination and cooperation with Florida Water (formerly SSU). The City is withholding the availability of water and sewer services unless the owner of undeveloped lands within the unincorporated area agrees to voluntary annexation. Working with Florida Water, the County would like to examine the feasibility of developing a strategy that would provide an alternative to the City's policy of forced annexation.

A factual analysis of current water/sewer commitments, capacity and line and service locations will be crucial to the development of any strategy. An initial phase overview will include a budget for developing this factual information and a budget for interfacing with Florida Water to determine potential alternatives (including, but not limited to, the County's expansion of water and sewer infrastructure using special assessments or bulk service arrangements).

FISCAL IMPACT AND TIMEFRAME:

All fees and costs can be recovered from benefitted property owners and the General Fund reimbursed if the project is implemented. Phase 1 estimated professional fees are \$5,000 and the initial phase will be completed within 60-90 days of direction to proceed.

- (3) **DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGY THAT WILL ALLOW THE COUNTY TO BECOME ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN DELIVERING, OR CAUSING TO BE DELIVERED, WATER AND SEWER SERVICE AND CAPACITY IN THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS IN WESTERN NASSAU COUNTY NEAR AND AROUND THE TOWN OF CALLAHAN (POPULATION 936) AND THE TOWN OF HILLIARD (POPULATION 2,452). (NG&N WORK ORDER NO. 97-3)**

OBJECTIVE:

The County is presently being pressured by the development, engineering and regulatory community to become involved in upgrading and expanding 2 small municipal water and sewer systems in the western part of the County (the towns of Callahan and Hilliard). The systems have been impacted by state regulatory agencies and may not have an ability to serve the unincorporated surrounding areas.

This work order would look for cooperative interlocal government opportunities to upgrade these systems and cause these systems to be expanded in the unincorporated area.

Again, the initial phase would involve fact gathering (i.e., analysis of the areas presently served, analysis of areas that could be served, a review of regulatory reports to determine capacity and system deficiencies, review of current systems' debt structure and budgets) and a budget for interfacing with staff and municipal officials. From a policy and strategy development standpoint, interface with town officials and engineering staff will be very important. This particular issue has the aspects of both developing a governance alternative, development of an assessment program for capital improvements to extend water and sewer infrastructure, and public finance for both the restructuring of existing debt and the issuance of new debt to underwrite the extension of water and sewer facilities within the unincorporated areas of the western portions of Nassau County.

FISCAL IMPACT AND TIMEFRAME:

All fees and costs can be recovered from benefitted property owners and the General Fund reimbursed if the project is implemented. Phase 1 estimated professional fees are \$5,000 and the initial phase will be completed within 60-90 days of direction to proceed.

[NASSAU COUNTY LETTERHEAD]

[DATE]

Mark G. Lawson
Nabors, Giblin & Nickerson, P.A.
Suite 800
315 South Calhoun Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32301

Re: Direction to Proceed

Dear Mark:

On Thursday, September 18th, I discussed with the Board of County Commissioners the workplans contained in your correspondence of September 8, 1997 and September 10, 1997. For ease of reference, I refer to these 3 workplans as Work Orders 97-1, 97-2 and 97-3 (see attached memorandum).

This correspondence is to inform and direct you to proceed on all 3 work orders. If my staff or I can be of assistance, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Walter D. Gossett
County Coordinator

Attachments