

# SARASOTA COUNTY GOVERNMENT

## *Public Works*

**TO:** Sarasota County Commission  
**THROUGH:** Thomas A. Harmer, County Administrator  
**FROM:** Isaac R. Brownman, P.E., Director  
Carolyn M. Eastwood, P.E., MBA, Interim County Engineer  
**DATE:** November 3, 2015  
**SUBJECT:** **River Road Regional Interstate Connector**

### **RECOMMENDED MOTION(S) OR ACTION(S):**

Update on the River Road Regional Interstate Connector.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The River Road Regional Interstate Connector (formerly known as the Englewood Interstate Connector or EIC) is an approximately 11-mile road reconstruction project along River Road from I-75 to Winchester Boulevard, and an approximately 4-mile segment of Winchester Boulevard from River Road to SR 776 in Charlotte County. The project will correct existing road deficiencies, provide additional capacity, and serve as a hurricane evacuation route. The project is currently divided into the segments shown in Table 1 below.

The design for Segments 1 and 2 are 100 percent complete. These segments have been issued permits from Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) and the Army Corps of Engineers. Construction costs are estimated to be \$35 million and \$15 million, respectively.

Both Segments 1 and 2 require additional right-of-way (ROW). Staff estimates ROW costs to be \$2.85 million (30 parcels) for Segment 1 and \$2.45 million (19 parcels) for Segment 2. Additional ROW is needed for Segment 3, and the construction cost estimate for this segment is estimated at \$25 million.

Construction of the U.S. 41/River Road intersection improvements began in Fiscal Year 2012 and was completed in January 2014. This intersection is part of Segment 1 and there was an opportunity to construct the intersection improvements through a three party intergovernmental partnership.

Segment 4, Winchester Boulevard, was completed in 2002 as a two-lane roadway in a joint effort between Sarasota and Charlotte Counties. The two-lanes of the future four-lanes of Winchester were constructed from River Road to SR 776 in Charlotte County with stormwater facilities designed to handle the future four-lane roadway. The divided four-lane roadway has not yet been designed. Charlotte County also recently completed a four-lane extension of Winchester from the current terminus of the jointly constructed portion to 3-miles further south.

As noted in the table below, Segment 1 has been conceptually divided into two segments to provide a more cost-feasible and shovel ready option: Segment 1A (north of the US 41 intersection to West Villages Parkway) was submitted for Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Grant on June 5, 2015 and Segment 1B (West Villages Parkway to Center Road) consists of

the remainder. The construction cost estimates for each of these segments are approximately \$20 million and \$15 million, respectively.

**Table 1: River Road Regional Interstate Connector Segments**

River Road	Estimated Cost Breakdown	Improvements
Segment 1A – US 41 to West Villages Parkway	Construction: \$20 million ROW: \$200 K	Six-lane divided roadway including drainage, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, street lighting and traffic signal upgrades
Segment 1B – West Villages Parkway to Center Road	Construction: \$15 million ROW: \$2.85 million	Six-lane divided roadway including drainage, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, street lighting, and traffic signal upgrades
Segment 2 – Center Road to I-75	Construction: \$15 million ROW: \$2.45 million	Four-lane divided roadway including drainage, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, street lighting and traffic signal upgrades
Segment 3 – Winchester Boulevard to US 41	Soft Costs: TBD Construction: \$25 million ROW: TBD	Four-lane divided roadway including drainage, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and street lighting
Segment 4 (Winchester Boulevard) – SR 776 to S. River Road	Soft Costs: TBD Construction: TBD ROW: \$ 0.00	Four-lane divided roadway including drainage, sidewalks, bicycle lanes and street lighting

**RELEVANT PRIOR BOARD ACTION:**

March 20, 2015 Budget Workshop – Sarasota County Commission concurred with applying for TIGER Grant funds towards the River Road Regional Interstate Connector sub-phase 1A (5-0 vote).

**PROCUREMENT ACTION:**

N/A

**ANALYSIS/NEXT STEPS:**

*Analysis:*

The River Road Regional Interstate Connector is included in the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization’s (MPO) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The project is the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) ranked project in the Major Improvement Program priorities. Based on the current LRTP, 80 percent of the funding for River Road is programmed to come from local funds and/or developer contributions and 20 percent through the MPO. The MPO is in the process of updating the LRTP from 2035 to 2040 and it is expected to be adopted in December 2015. As part of this update, the funding allocation will be modified to fund the project with state and federal funds.

A designated hurricane evacuation route and regional road, the River Road connector project remains a priority for the Sarasota-Manatee MPO and the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, as expressed at their joint meetings on January 26, 2015 and April 17, 2015.

The TIGER grant application was submitted on June 5, 2015. A final decision as to whether the River Road project will receive TIGER grant funding is expected sometime in October 2015.

Next Steps:

1. Staff will implement the River Road Regional Interstate Connector Segment 1A once funds become available.
2. Staff will also seek funds through the MPO for the design of the River Road south of U.S. 41 to Winchester Boulevard; and
3. Staff recommends that the programmed funding for the River Road project's MPO funding be amended to allow a majority or all of the funding to come from State and Federal funds.

**FUNDING:**

Funding for this project could include Federal Grants, South County Road Impact Fee District funds, City of North Port Road Impact Fee District funds, Transportation Ad Valorem Taxes, Environmental Land Management Study (ELMS) Gas Taxes, Infrastructure Continuation funds (00-09), Contributions from West Villages, Commercial Paper Fund Balances and short term borrows to be repaid by South County Road Impact Fee District funds and Telecommunication Taxes.

Staff is pursuing funding for the construction of River Road through the Sarasota-Manatee MPO and the TIGER Grant program.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION(S):**

N/A

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Presentation