

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Recommendation to approve and recommend the expenditure of Tourist Development Tax Fund 195 funding in the amount of \$650,400 for Change Order #2 to the City of Marco Island's contract with Ahtna Marine & Construction for the 2022 Tigertail Lagoon / Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration Project and make a finding that this expenditure promotes tourism.**

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**OBJECTIVE:** To supplement the City of Marco Island project to restore impacts from Hurricane Irma, and improve coastal resiliency, water quality, and stability of Tigertail Lagoon and Sand Dollar Island. This is a FDEP permitted and awarded City project that is currently under construction and due to the impacts of Hurricane Ian additional funds are required to complete the restoration project as designed.

**CONSIDERATIONS:** The City of Marco Island is requesting \$650,400 in Tourist Development Tax funds from Collier County for the Tigertail Lagoon/Sand Dollar Island Project that is currently under construction. The project was permitted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the US Army Corps of Engineers in February and July of 2022, respectively. The project construction contract was funded by the City's Hideaway Beach Tax District and awarded to Ahtna Marine & Construction Company in September 2022 for \$3.3M.

The Tigertail Lagoon/Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration project is a City of Marco Island project designed to restore and protect valuable ecosystem, recreational assets and tourist attractions. The project in its entirety is located on public beach and wetland areas designated as Critical Wildlife Area by the State of Florida and can only be accessed by land through Collier County Tigertail Beach Park at the south part of the system. The project is in the public interest providing environmental, social, and economic benefits and storm protection.

The Tigertail Lagoon and Sand Dollar Island ecosystem is a protected natural preserve and a critical wildlife area that provides valuable habitat for a variety of birds, sea turtles, manatees, and seagrasses. Tigertail Lagoon and Sand Dollar Island are also valuable Collier County recreational resources for residents and tourists for birding, fishing, kayaking, paddle boarding, kitesurfing, walking, shelling and, on the northern half, boating. The ecosystem is accessed by the public via Collier County's Tigertail Beach Park at the southern end of the lagoon and via boat at the northern end of the lagoon. Tigertail Beach is one of 510 points on the Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail and is considered one of the best all-around birding spots in southwest Florida. The County Park is one of only three public beach access points on Marco Island and receives over 200,000 visitors annually. It has a large public parking area, playground, food concession, and watercraft rentals. A shuttle bus runs from some hotels to the park. An increasing number of private, rental, and commercial tourist boats access the lagoon from its northern entrance. The Tigertail Lagoon and Sand Dollar Island system was impacted by Hurricane Irma in 2017 and was evolving toward closure when it was further impacted by Hurricane Ian in September 2022.

Hurricane Ian impacted the project area by reducing the sand available in the permitted dredge template and increasing the sand required to build the protective berm on Sand Dollar Island. The funds requested from Collier County will be used to fund a change order for 60,000 cubic yards of sand from a permitted offshore borrow area at a cost of \$10.84/cu yd and to place the sand on Sand Dollar Island. This sand will address Hurricane Ian's impact on the project area and allow completion of the beach berm on Sand Dollar Island as designed. The beach berm will provide storm protection for the newly reopened lagoon flow channel connecting the southern lagoon by the County's Tigertail Beach Park with the northern lagoon/Gulf entrance that enhances tidal flow and water quality and lagoon recreation for the public. It also protects the FWC Critical Wildlife Area that is one of the main attractions of the County Park. In addition, this beach berm restores a section of Sand Dollar Island shoreline within the County Park providing dry recreational beach for the public and maintaining public access to the 2-mile-long Sand Dollar Island.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPACT:** There is no impact to the Growth Management Plan related to this action.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS:** This item will be presented to the Coastal Advisory Committee (CAC) on January 12, 2023 and the Tourist Development Council (TDC) on January 23, 2023.

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS:** Pursuant to Section 125.0104, Fla. Stat., Lagoon improvement is an authorized use of tourist development tax revenue.

**Section 125.0104(5)(a)5, provides in relevant part:** To finance beach park facilities, or beach, channel, estuary, or lagoon improvement, maintenance, renourishment, restoration, and erosion control, including construction of beach groins and shoreline protection, enhancement, cleanup, or restoration of inland lakes and rivers to which there is public access as those uses relate to the physical preservation of the beach, shoreline, channel, estuary, lagoon, or inland lake or river.

This item is approved as to form and legality and requires majority vote for approval. – CMG

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** Collier County’s Coastal Zone staff has reviewed and supports the request as it pertains to the Tigertail Lagoon as a one-time contribution to the project in the amount requested by the City of Marco Island.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** A budget amendment is required in the amount of \$650,400 to reallocate funding from reserves within the TDC Beach Renourishment Fund (195) to Tigertail Lagoon Project (90007) for a one-time remittance to the City of Marco Island. The source of funding is the Tourist Development Tax.

**RECOMMENDATION:** To approve and recommend the expenditure of Tourist Development Tax Fund 195 funding in the amount of \$650,400 for Change Order #1 to the City of Marco Island's contract with Ahtna Marine & Construction for the 2022 Tigertail Lagoon / Sand Dollar Island Ecosystem Restoration Project and make a finding that this expenditure promotes tourism.