

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendation to approve an out-of-cycle Collier County Tourist Development Council Category “A” grant application for Beach Park Facilities in the amount of \$7,200 from the State of Florida State Parks to provide mobile toll booths in order to expedite traffic into Delnor-Wiggins State Park and to make the finding that the project promotes tourism.

OBJECTIVE: To obtain Collier County Tourist Development Council grant funding for purchasing of mobile toll booths to assist Delnor-Wiggins State Park to expedite guests entering the park during high traffic times.

CONSIDERATIONS: For many years, the intersection of Gulf Shore Drive and Bluebill Avenue has been congested during the height of tourist season, i.e., January thru May. During these times during the hours of 9AM and 11AM, the intersection becomes clogged due to traffic into Delnor-Wiggins State Park. Recent construction of a circle driveway and bathroom facility by Collier County Government have improved conditions; however, during these peak times, entering the Park has caused traffic to stack from the entrance to the State Park on Bluebill past the bridge that connects from Connor Park to Delnor Wiggins State Park.

Recently, a workgroup was established by the Collier County Deputy County Manager to address this issue. The Collier County Sheriff’s Office, Florida Wildlife Commission, Florida State Park personnel, County Transportation staff and County Parks and Recreation staff met to conceptualize solutions to this issue.

The workgroup has determined that there is traffic safety issues created on Bluebill Bridge by patrons attempting to enter Delnor-Wiggins State Park when the Park opens and after the Park reaches capacity. This proposal seeks to address the problem of patrons entering the Park at opening and the workgroup will continue to work on when the Park reaches capacity.

The work group is recommending an idea proposed by the State Park staff to purchase two (2) Mobile Toll Booths that would be placed at the northern end of the median where the current ranger station currently sits to allow two lanes of queuing space (see application). This will result in an increased queuing space of 16 additional vehicles. These booths would be manned by park staff during the morning “rush” to get vehicles into the park faster.

The State Park would also open the park a half-hour to an hour earlier than currently but no earlier than sunrise.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funds in the amount of \$7,200 are available for appropriation in TDC Beach Park Facilities Fund (183) Project #80143. A budget amendment will be required moving funds from reserves into a project budget established for the Naples Pier Restroom project.

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

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS: This item has been approved as to form and legality and requires majority vote for approval. – CMG

ADVISORY BOARD RECOMMENDATION: The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PARAB) will vote on this recommendation on October 21, 2015 after this item has been sent to Tourist Development Council (TDC) as part of their October 26, 2015 packet. PARAB's recommendation will be placed on the record at the October 26, 2015 TDC meeting.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Collier County Tourist Development Council approve the out-of-cycle Category "A" grant application in the amount of \$7,200 for the purchase of (2) mobile toll booths and make a finding that the expenditure promotes tourism.

Prepared by: Barry Williams, Director, Collier County Parks and Recreation

Attachments 1) TDC Category "A" grant application for Beach Park Facilities;

COLLIER COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

CATEGORY "A" GRANT APPLICATION

Beach Renourishment and Pass Maintenance

Mobile Toll Booths (2) _____
(Project Title)

1. Name and Address of Project Sponsor Organization:

Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park
11135 Gulfshore Dr.
Naples, Fl. 34108

2. Contact Person, Title and Phone Number:

Name: Robert M. Steiger
Address: 11135 Gulfshore Dr.
City Naples **ST FL.** ZIP 34108
Phone: 239-597-6196 **FAX:** 239-597-8223
Other: _____

3. Organization's Chief Official and Title: Valinda Subic,
Chief – Bureau of Parks, District 4

4. Details of Project- Description and Location: Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park, 11135 Gulfshore Dr., Naples, Florida 34108 entrance road by existing Ranger Station

For many years, the intersection of Gulfshore Drive and Bluebill Avenue has been congested during the height of tourist season, i.e., January thru May. During these times during the hours of 10AM and 2PM, the intersection becomes clogged due to traffic into Delnor Wiggins State Park. Recent construction of a circle driveway and bathroom facility by Collier County Government have improved conditions; however, during these peak times, entering the Park has caused traffic to stack from the entrance to the State Park on Bluebill Ave. past the bridge that connects from Connor Park to Delnor Wiggins Pass State Park (see Google Earth image below)



Recently, a workgroup was established by the Collier County Deputy County Manager to address this issue. The Collier County Sheriff's Office, State Park personnel, County Transportation staff and County Parks and Recreation staff met to conceptualize solutions to this issue. Ideas that were created from this workgroup included:

Traffic Safety issue created on Bluebill bridge by patrons attempting to enter Wiggins State Park at Park opening and after Park reaches capacity. This proposal seeks to address the problem of patrons entering the Park at opening and the workgroup will continue to work on when the Park reaches capacity.

Utilizing two (2) Mobile Toll Booths that would be placed at the northern end of the median where the current ranger station currently sits to allow two lanes of queuing space. This would potentially result in an increased queuing space of 16 additional vehicles. These booths would be manned by park staff during the morning "rush" to get vehicles into the park faster.

The State Park would open the park a half hour to an hour earlier than currently but no earlier than sunrise.

Construction of 2 mobile toll booths. These toll booths will be 4'x6' on the same size trailer with 2 windows a door, electric outlets inside for a cash register and 6,000 Btu air-conditioner.

These toll booths will be part of a project to increase speed at which we will service visitors entering Delnor Wiggins Pass State Park. They will be moved behind the existing Ranger Station approximately 175' into the Park to allow for more vehicles to get off of Bluebill Avenue and into the park. This will increase visitor accessibility to the Park and be used during its peak visitation days during Tourist Season and busy weekends and holidays.

Delnor-Wiggins Pass State Park is a tourist destination in Collier County, Florida. We support the county's tourism in many ways. We have been listed in Dr. Beach 10 best beaches in the United States three times and 2 times in last couple years.

Our visitation in FY 13/14 was 566,947 helping to produce an economic value to Collier County of \$42,613,602.00. This helped produce a collection of sales tax worth \$2,934,142.00 and helped support the creation of 597 jobs.

5. **Estimated project start date:** December 1, 2015

6. **Estimated project duration:** 4 to 8 weeks

7. **Total TDC Tax Funds Requested:** \$ 7,200.00

8. **If the full amount requested cannot be awarded, can the program/project be restructured to accommodate a smaller award?**

Yes () No (x)

EXHIBIT A

Option #1 Maximize current operation by adding Annual Pass lane.

Open the park one half hour to 1 hour earlier. No earlier than sunrise so visitors can see where they are going. That should help alleviate any back up outside of the front gate occurring currently by 8:00am.

Remove wooden barrier posts. Put up cones instead (traffic cones for trial). Remove current parking on east side of entry lane north of Ranger Station and turn that into an Annual Pass / cash only lane with signage and temporary traffic cones to show lanes. Extra OPS would staff 2 mobile toll booths. One additional staff would be posted at the point where the one lane splits into 2 to tell drivers which lane to move to and help reduce confusion due to changes taking place. The 2 lanes will create a queuing area for approximately 16 + vehicles. The regular lane would be for cash/credit cards and motor homes, boats and trailers, regular vehicles. The second lane to the east would be for annual passes/ cash and cars, pickup trucks/ and vans only to move them through quickly.

The toll booths will be situated near the end of the existing island. (North approximately 175 feet north from where the one lane splits into 2). See diagram.

There will need to be 2: 4'x4' signs made. One on the left lane that says," Credit Cards or Cash, Boats & Trailers, Large trucks, regular vehicles". The right lane will say," Annual Pass or Cash, regular vehicles & Pick up trucks".

The Ranger Station door used for regular business will be closed and covered with the hurricane roll down. A sign stating to "proceed to the toll booth" will be mounted here.

If annual passes want to be renewed ask them to purchase upon exiting or make a U-turn at the end of the island and park in the exit parking area on the west side of the Ranger Station.

The goal to get early morning traffic into the park so it can reach capacity quicker and help eliminate the backup of vehicles trying to enter the park all at once. Once capacity is reached then it is back to normal operation. C.C. S.O. will turn traffic outside of gate on the intersection of Bluebill and Gulfshore Dr. until approximately 10% of the parking spaces are empty to allow more to enter.

Since no permanent toll booth would be allowed per county review, a small mobile air conditioned toll booth set up for a cash register and credit card machine would suffice.



