



Legislation Text

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Innovation Square Program Update (B)

The purpose of this item is to provide an update to the City Commission on the Innovation Square Program; request authorization to move forward with final construction documents for SW 9th Street, SW 3rd Avenue, and the SW 9th Street park projects as publicly maintained infrastructure; and request authorization for the City Manager to accept the deeds for right-of-way dedication.

The Innovation Square Workgroup is comprised of stakeholders from the University of Florida (UF), Shands Healthcare, University of Florida Development Corporation (UFDC), Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU), Public Works Department (PWD), Planning Department, Parks Recreation and Cultural Affairs (PRCA), Gainesville Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the private sector. The working group meets regularly in order to facilitate on-going coordination of utilities, other infrastructure, and development in the Innovation Square area and in the larger Innovation District (iDistrict). Work in the iDistrict is an important initiative with the goal of removing barriers for redevelopment of this area, increasing economic development opportunities, and creating an environment that is conducive to retaining and attracting businesses to Gainesville's urban core for the stabilization and strengthening of the local economy.

In addition to the CRA's involvement as a redevelopment agency in the iDistrict development, the CRA is acting as an agent for the City in the development of two new public corridors within the iDistrict, SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue. At the December 6th City Commission meeting, acting as an agent for the City, CRA staff will present the progress of the development of these corridors for the City Commission's review and approval.

For reference, it is important to note that property owners and members of the Innovation Square Workgroup have discussed the possibility of establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) for the area, and that this BID may assume some responsibilities for specialty maintenance (and other activities) within the district. However, at this time, plans for a BID remain a future discussion, and the role that such an organization would have in maintenance or other activities is currently unknown. For the foreseeable future, the City will remain the primary maintenance entity for the public ROW within the iDistrict, and it is therefore important to quantify the anticipated impacts that the new roadways will generate to the City's budget.

In addition to the roadway there is a linear stormwater management component and a park. The design approach for these two new public corridors is not typical in that maintenance requirements will be above and beyond what is typically provided for public corridors. As an example the design calls for pressure washing and weed control in hardscape areas which are not typically conducted in the city's annual maintenance program. Irrigation along the roadside is also an element that is included in these designs that are not typically found along city streets. New streets within new subdivisions typically have a homeowners or property owners association that is established to maintain the aesthetic aspects of the roadway corridor. In this case, the Public Works Department is being asked to assume responsibility for operation and maintenance of these design components. The maintenance estimates have looked at the projects holistically and includes all the project components as well as end-of-lifecycle replacement costs that have been annualized and brought to present day value. While this may be considered a conservative approach, this was done in order to provide the best information to the City Commission in order to make a decision that the development of these corridors are in the best interest of the City and for the preparation of future budgets in order to maintain the corridor.

The following is background information of work that has been accomplished by the Innovation Square Working Group that has led to the development of these two new public corridors.

Development Framework for Innovation Square

Innovation District Zoning Initiative - In 2010-2011, CRA worked on an initiative with Planning, Public Works, GRU, Shands, UF, the Chamber of Commerce, property owners, and the development community in order to streamline and simplify development regulations impacting the iDistrict. The resulting UMU-2 zoning standards reflect prioritization of important public realm and urban design criteria, while also allowing flexibility and clarity in the regulatory process in order to accommodate the redevelopment and economic development vision for the area.

Background Information for the Development of SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue:

Innovation District Infrastructure Study - In January 2011, the CRA contracted with Brown and Cullen, Inc. (BCI) to develop an analysis and synthesis of the infrastructure within the iDistrict. The final deliverable compiled information regarding current utility assets and capacity and projected demand based upon the redevelopment projections for the area working in concert with consultants from the University of Florida (Perkins + Will). The report provided guidance as to when infrastructure in the area will reach capacity and what upgrades would be needed to support the growth projected within the iDistrict.

Utility Design Charrette - In June 2011, representatives from GRU, PWD, Planning Department, PRCA, UF, Shands, CRA, and the private sector held a workshop to discuss utility allocations within the iDistrict. During the workshop the participants discussed the vision for the iDistrict and developed consensus for utility allocations in order to meet minimum utility separation requirements as well as provide ample space for the development of streetscapes, including street trees, in order to meet the requirements of the envisioned public realm as laid out in the Innovation Square Development Framework.

Utility Master Plan and Surveying - In December 2011 the CRA and GRU partnered to fund surveying and utility master planning within the iDistrict. The utility master plan and surveys, developed by CHW, were completed in April 2011 and circulated to the Innovation Square Workgroup. The utility master plan has organized phases of utility upgrades and provides a conceptual cross sectional allocation for the horizontal placement of utilities beneath public rights of way. This document serves as a guide for utility upgrades and placement during the development and build-out of the iDistrict.

Green Street Basis of Design - In February of 2012 the CRA embarked on the development of a green street basis of design document (BOD) for SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue, two new proposed roadways bisecting the Innovation Square property. The BOD was completed in May 2012 and has been coordinated with the utility allocation and master plan for the development of the cross sectional requirements, thus the final width of the proposed rights of way. Through coordination with the Innovation Square Workgroup, these documents function as the baseline for further design of and construction document development for the corridors.

SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue Project Update:

On April 10, 2012 the CRA took the lead on project management for design and construction of two new public corridors, SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue. Pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the CRA and the City, the CRA is acting as an agent for the City to develop and construct these planned future rights-of-way. The property and proposed rights-of-way were surveyed in accordance with the Green Street BOD document and CRA staff met individually with project stakeholders in order to develop the scope of work. In tandem, the City Attorney's office has been working to draft an agreement for the construction of public infrastructure and conveyance of land to the City as public rights-of-way-and a park following construction of the projects.

In June 2012, the CRA Board approved design proposals from Brown and Cullen, Inc. (BCI) and Causseaux, Hewett, & Walpole, Inc. (CHW) for the construction document development of SW 9th Street and SW 3rd Avenue, respectively. The design projects are on an accelerated schedule in order to coordinate with utility service deadlines for the Infusion Building. Design commenced in June 2012 and is currently 60% complete. Construction is anticipated to commence during 2013. Design and construction schedules have been structured to coordinate with construction timeframes for the Infusion building, which is the next development scheduled to break ground in the iDistrict.

At the September 2012 CRA Board meeting, CRA staff, along with consultants from the design team, presented the 60% completed design documents for review, discussion, and endorsement for continuation through 100% construction document development. This item is also being brought before the City Commission, as the City of Gainesville will ultimately be responsible for maintenance and management of the new public streets, which impact future operational budgets. Upon receiving approval from the Commission, the CRA is prepared to finalize designs and engage Construction Management teams for the development of a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) for construction of the corridors. It is important to note that while the CRA will fund corridor construction, funding for the installation of utilities is outside the scope of the CRA's fiscal responsibilities for the project; this funding is being coordinated with and provided by partnerships with GRU and the PWD.

For reference, should the City Commission move forward with the roadway designs presented at the December 6, 2012 meeting, additional approvals by both the CRA and the City Commission will be necessary for the project to move forward to construction. City Commission action items include: entering into an agreement with the property owner for the conveyance of the land, and approval of funding for project elements outside the scope of the CRA's budget for the project. CRA approvals include: approval of final funding/GMP for corridor construction.

The estimated ranges for the annual maintenance costs associated with SW 9th Street, SW 3rd Avenue, and the SW 9th Street park are approximately \$15,000-\$37,450, \$7,000-\$11,300, and \$5,000-\$8,200, respectively (includes end of life-cycle replacement costs).

The City Commission: 1) receive information from staff; and 2) authorize staff to move forward with final construction documents for SW 9th Street, SW 3rd Avenue, and the SW 9th Street park projects as publicly maintained infrastructure.