

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item I-5
April 12, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Assistant City Attorney, Naomi Levi-Garcia

Finance Director, Diana Gomez

Public Speaker(s)

Maria Cruz

Jessica Keller

Agenda Item I-5 are related [2:10 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission authorizing a change order in the amount of \$640,000.00 (six hundred forty thousand dollars) to M. Arthur Gensler Jr. & Associates, Inc., to allow the continuation of design consultant services for the Mobility Hub project and authorizing an amendment to the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget to appropriate such funds to put toward the cost of the change order.

Mayor Lago: Moving on, should we take I-6 or I-5 first?

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Agenda Item I-5 - Resolution of the City Commission authorizing a change order in the amount of \$640,000 to M. Arthur Gensler Jr. & Associates, Inc., to allow the continuation of design consultant services for the Mobility Hub project and authorizing an amendment to the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget to appropriate such funds to put toward the cost of the change order.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, can we please take I-5?

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Attorney Ramos: I-5 is a resolution of the City Commission authorizing a change order in the amount of \$640,000.00 to M. Arthur Gensler Jr. & Associates, Inc., to allow the continuation of design consultant services for the Mobility Hub project and authorizing an amendment to the fiscal year 2022-2023 budget to appropriate such funds to put toward the cost of the change order.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor...

Mayor Lago: Mr. Manager.

Mayor Lago: Yes, thank you, Mayor. This is for the mobility hub project that we brought to the Commission that includes elements of adaptive reuse, micro mobility, EV, actuated first floor, actuated roof, flat floors, cast in place construction, and a very -- especially for that adaptive reuse, a very easy building to change the use on. The project that was brought to the Commission was initially at that time a \$40 million project. This fee is based on that original price, \$40 million. We feel it's appropriate for the mobility hub, and it's based on the Florida -- State of Florida architectural and engineering services calculator based on \$40 million and based on a project slightly more complex than a parking garage. So, we feel that this is appropriate. It will finalize the actual project. It will get us shovel ready in our bid to obtain some federal financing. This project really checks off all the federal financing -- all the federal procurement issues as far as micro mobility, EV vehicles, adaptive reuse, solar panels, et cetera. And it would provide for finishing the drawings and providing a shovel-ready project by September.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, one of the things that we discussed when we were in Tallahassee as a Commission, the speaker, Brian Avila, got us a meeting with FDOT to have a conversation about the mobility hub. And I think that Naomi can give a little further background on that. They were very impressed by the mobility hub, not only by the technological advancements, but the direction of the mobility hub and how it was a game changer in regards to transportation, quality of life, and really pushing the downtown forward. That meeting was very fruitful. They wanted to hear a little bit more. And obviously, like you mentioned, we have opportunities at the federal level now with infrastructure money that hopefully is -- potentially will be considered and approved. And this is the type of project that if it's shovel ready could be unlike anything in the United States and could give us a real leg up to get real federal funding in regards to the completion this project.

City Manager Iglesias: It's a very unique project also, Mayor. It is from many perspectives. We're also looking at the fact that 80 feet away we have a trolley system that is free that transported 1.25 million people in 2019. And what we're looking at is in Andalusia and Ponce, providing an enhanced drop-off and loading area. And so this project really has a regional impact because through that trolley system, we connect to the Metrorail. Through the trolley system, we connect to the City of Miami trolley. So, not only do we have a parking garage that works for us, but it's also really can be looked at as a regional facility.

Mayor Lago: Naomi, do you want to talk a little bit about -- just for the public -- a little bit about the meeting that we had with FDOT that Speaker Avila put together for us, on the fly, on one moment's notice?

Assistant City Attorney Levi-Garcia: We were actually able to meet with the director of FDOT at the time, Secretary Thibault, who has since resigned, but we've made good headway with his replacement. So, yeah, we spoke about the mobility hub. They were thoroughly impressed. They encouraged us to apply for FDOT grant funding, which we are about to do. The deadline is actually tomorrow for the RAISE Grant, so we'll be seeking, I believe, \$6 million from that grant, and

hopefully we'll be successful. So, it ticks off all the boxes in terms of being a multimodal facility, bringing the trolley into play, and just creating lots of opportunity for people to get around outside of their cars.

Mayor Lago: Perfect. Mr. Manager, you want to talk a little bit about -- obviously, people are inquired about the increase in the design fee.

City Manager Iglesias: The increase in the design fee is due to the changes in the project as we brought it to the City Commission at that time. We have an increased activated roof. We have solar panels in that activated roof. We have a very highly activated ground floor. We have, as I said, 12 foot heights on our parking garage, flat floors, speed ramps, EV charging. So, it's a much more comprehensive facility. It also -- it was also based on our funding, which was \$40 million, and so this fee is based on that original funding.

Mayor Lago: And we had originally how much budgeted for design?

City Manager Iglesias: Slightly above 30 million, about...

Mayor Lago: Slightly above 3 million.

City Manager Iglesias: I'm sorry?

Mayor Lago: We had 3 million?

City Manager Iglesias: No, no. For design, we have 2 million.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Based on 31 million. This is 2.64 million to finish the project complete as we have it now.

Mayor Lago: So, full construction documents.

City Manager Iglesias: Full construction documents, which will be ready, and we should be shovel ready by September of this year.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, like Naomi mentioned, besides the FDOT grant money that we're going forth, we've already -- have we identified any other monies at the federal level to try to make up some of that...?

City Manager Iglesias: We are currently working with our federal lobbyist, which I spoke with a couple of weeks ago, and a project like this really checks all the boxes as far as federal funding, and that's what we're trying to do. We're trying to accomplish that. We also -- let me say that we also have demolition plans ready to go, can be permitted immediately, so that we could start this project tomorrow if we chose to.

Mayor Lago: So, like I mentioned to Naomi -- and thank you for your efforts.

Assistant City Attorney Levi-Garcia: And I can mention one other avenue of federal funding we're pursuing. We're going after a federal earmark. We'll be trying to get Representative Salazar to sponsor the request. It is in her district, and we've been meeting with her staff to make sure she's well-versed on the project. So, again, that's another potential funding source at the federal level. And as more discretionary grants get released -- they're released on a rolling basis -- we pretty much evaluate every single opportunity to see where there's a good fit. And it's not like if we get one grant, it prevents us from applying for another because they typically come out of different silos. So, we are just scouring for whatever federal money we can get on this project. And then,

you know, we got the 975 from the State as well, you know, pending the veto period, but -- so we're evaluating all our options.

Mayor Lago: So, brief request. If you'd like, I have a good relationship with the congresswoman. I can meet with her, and I'm willing to meet with her in Washington if she'd like. It's a very short flight. And it would give me an opportunity to meet with other elected officials over there, especially for example, I'm close with the New Jersey congressman. I have relationships not only here locally but throughout the state, and obviously, in other states. So, I think this is an opportunity -- I know you've got to get a sponsor -- a local sponsor, but I think that if we -- we have an opportunity to showcase a project that is unlike anything else that's being offered. I think we have a good chance. We've done it at the state. Now, we're chasing that FDOT grant money. I'd love to get a chance to see if we can bring some federal money here, just like we did in regards to the State. It just takes a lot of legwork, like this Commission has already done, and like you have done. And the proof is that we went to Tallahassee four times and we're going to bring back more money -- unless we get a veto the Governor, hopefully not -- more money than we've ever brought down to the City. So, I'm willing to go to Washington. I'm willing to schedule a meeting with the congresswoman here if I have to. Just please help me.

Assistant City Attorney Levi-Garcia: For sure. No, we will take you up on that offer, Mayor. We're going to lean on you for whatever support you can lend to this project, and we'll look into to traveling to D.C. as well to advocate for the City's priorities. I'm actually beginning those conversations now in terms of timing and figuring out, you know, who we'd be meeting with and what we'd be advocating for, et cetera.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: And let me be clear, Mayor. We have -- we had a prior resolution on the demolition. Our demolition plans are ready. The reason why we do not proceed is because in our

meetings with the -- with FDOT, federal procurement cannot be -- we cannot bid out the actual project and then make it federal -- and then go through federal procurement. We have to go through federal procurement initially with the bidding of this project. They weren't clear where we could go with the guaranteed maximum price contract. They were still looking at that. However, we cannot big out the contract and then go back and try to make it federal procurement. We must...

Assistant City Attorney Levi-Garcia: Right. You can't federalize the project.

City Manager Iglesias: Initiate the project through federal procurement. So, it's very important that we have the time to make sure that we have the proper bidding or the proper GMP procedures to make sure that we qualify for that federal funding.

Mayor Lago: Okay. I just want to make sure that if we approve this today, that there is no other change orders for the plans. You know, this is a...

City Manager Iglesias: I've been assured by Gensler that this will finish the plans.

Mayor Lago: Pretty significant amount of money. I know that there's been a change in the design and there's been additional scope, but we're very tight and...

City Manager Iglesias: The scope changed from 31 million to 40 million because...

Mayor Lago: No, I understand.

City Manager Iglesias: Of all these issues, and that is the fee that we -- that we're using, again, based on the state calculator. And Gensler has assured me that the project will be finished.

Mayor Lago: And I understand that, and I respect that. I'm in the industry. But we, as a City -- and I have my Finance Director here in the room. If I can't find money to do sidewalks and I can't find money to do certain projects that I think are critically important here in the City, I don't want to hear later that we don't have money when we start approving certain things like this. Because there are certain projects that need to be taken care of. This is a big change. I support it because I think that we need to get to shovel ready, and we have basically our hands tied behind our back, and we've got to move forward. But I want to make sure there's enough money to go around for certain things that we want to take care of later. And this is a critically important project for our downtown, and it's an investment in our future, but it's a big ask.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, we could cut back the project.

Mayor Lago: I don't want to cut back.

City Manager Iglesias: But cutting back the project such as, let's say, adaptive reuse. We've been preaching environmental, environmental.

Mayor Lago: I understand.

City Manager Iglesias: And now we have a chance of having a building that can...

Mayor Lago: Listen, I don't want to...

City Manager Iglesias: Easily be adapted.

Mayor Lago: I don't want to cut back. I don't want to cut back. And we've talked about this. We've scoured the project. I don't want to cut back on the rooftop amenities. I don't want to cut back on the solar. I don't want to cut back on the overall look. We could save money, significant

money if we went -- if we cut back on a few different things. I think this is an opportunity to do things the right way. And I'm willing to try to see how we can fund most of the project -- or a portion of the project, better said -- through FDOT money and federal dollars.

City Manager Iglesias: It's a very unique project, and I'm not sure if anybody's doing something like this as far as all the issue that we are looking at.

Mayor Lago: Any other comments? Any other questions?

Commissioner Fors: You know, I know this was a tough negotiation for all parties involved, so I commend you and Gensler for finding common ground, given the change or the developing circumstances everywhere really.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Anything else before we open it up to public comment? Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: We do have one speaker. It's Ms. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz, the floor is yours.

Maria Cruz: Okay. Remember, it's Mrs. Cruz. Can you hear me?

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Ms. Cruz: Hello? Okay. I am -- I'm sorry, but something is -- you know I'm old and I get confused, but you know what? I listened to all the presentations before, and there was never a doubt in my mind that what the City Manager said today were changes, those were presented by the original group that designed it. When they explained the design, the same things that are now change orders were included in the original design, so how could they be change orders now if they were

presented? They were included in the examples that we had in front of the Manager's office. I'm sure that they're in the minutes, and I'm going to take the time to look for them. This -- the roof was included, the height of the floors was included, the flat floors was included, the ramps were included, so what changes have been made that we now have to pay 640,000 more for things that were included in the original design? That's question number one. Also -- and this is doubletalk again -- the original...

Mayor Lago: Why don't we -- why don't we -- Mrs. Cruz, why don't we answer question number one.

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

Mayor Lago: So, why don't we answer question number one and then move on to number two.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, the original concept that was proposed and with all that graphics was these additional things that we were -- that we are doing. We -- it really was -- the project was incentivized and all the issues that I've mentioned, the adaptive reuse, micro mobility, electric vehicles, activated first floor, activated roof, flat floors, et cetera, shovel -- and it will be shovel ready, by the way -- again, I emphasize that -- by September of this year. So, these are issues that evolved through the project. It's a very unique project. We are -- we have a building that has to be a box because people -- I think people don't realize that a parking garage has to have circulation all the way to the top so you cannot have articulation. You cannot have all those issues that people want to have as far as Mediterranean concept. So, in addition to that, we wanted to make sure that we had the adaptive reuse component at a very affordable cost, not at some of the costs at 30, 40 percent of the actual project. So, this project did evolve into \$40 million. The project has evolved into much more now because I don't have to tell you what construction costs are now. There's no inflation rate right now, it's speculation. And these current costs are something that we did not consider, and I don't think anybody considered at that -- when we started this project.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: I understand. I understand that the construction prices have increased very clearly. But let me tell you, I have read the minutes, and nothing has been said today that's different than what that group that came in and presented presented at the lower price. I'm sorry. These are not change orders. This is changes after the fact, after you were sold the project. That's okay. I remember very clearly Mr. Leen saying that we expect the employees to be as honest as the residents. I'm going to take the time to look at the minutes, read what we were presented, and I will show you that there's nothing new today to justify the 640,000 that we were not told then. Okay, that's number one. Number two, the regional estimate was not said. It was 28 million. The document says estimate 28 million, okay, and I have the document so I can tell you. And by the way, as I've always said, I never open my mouth unless I can back up what I'm saying, okay. The original document said 28 million. This changes now were in the original proposal, or at least the proposal that the design team showed to the rest of us, number two. Number three, how can we take money from the next fiscal year? We're proposing to take this money from next year's budget. How can we do that?

Mayor Lago: So, let's clarify your points. First off, the 28 million, Mr. Manager, how would you like to address the budget being 28 million versus...?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I think there were a number of budgets that were initially looked at. If you look at the current garage that we're doing, it's 420 cars. It's about 18, \$19 million. If you project over 626 cars for a precast garage, which is a sloped precast garage, it is about 28, 29 million, but that's -- but that would be a teardown garage. That would be a -- the garages that we're doing, Garage 7, a much simpler garage, precast garage, it is part of the Public Safety Building, and it's a totally different concept than what we have here. So, it was originally the...

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Original contract negotiation was for 31 million, and what we brought to the Commission for approval was a mobility hub that included a lot of additional items that we felt were a major improvement and not just a common parking garage. And I think that that was accomplished. What we -- what the cost that we're looking at now are the costs involved in the project that we presented, which has -- which was -- which had the current skin, the 12-foot height, cast in place garage, a very, very activated roof deck, very, very high EV, deal with micro mobility, and certainly, a major issue was the adaptive reuse. So, I think we're consistent with what we initially brought to the City Commission.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. You want to discuss -- the first part was about 28 million. What was the second part of her question? I think it had to deal with finance. Ms. Cruz.

Commissioner Fors: I think it was, how are we using next year's fiscal year...

Mayor Lago: Yes, please. Can we address that question, please? Madam Director.

Finance Director Gomez: It would be amending the current year's budget. I believe that's a typo. It should say the fiscal '22 budget, the current budget that we're in. Because if we're going to pay it -- if the change order is for now and it's going to be paid this fiscal year, it would be for the current fiscal year, so that's a typo on the agenda item that needs to be corrected.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: One follow-up question. If it's in this budget year, is anything being subtracted from another project?

Ms. Cruz: Am I...?

Finance Director Gomez: No. So, this project -- if you remember back last year, we did an intense resolution for this project that says that we intend to reimburse ourselves with bond funds when the bonds are taken out. So, the intent resolution has allowed us to borrow against available cash in order to pay the expenses of design and things in advance of taking out the bond so that we don't have to start incurring bond costs until we absolutely need to take out the bonds when we're ready to write the whole contract for the construction. So, we've been -- we're using available cash per the intent resolution that was passed last -- I think it was in July. So, it's not taking from any other project. It's already been contemplated when we take the bonds out.

Commissioner Anderson: Thank you.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, we do have one more speaker. It's Ms. Jessica Keller.

Mayor Lago: Before we hear from Ms. Keller, I just wanted to make sure Ms. Cruz was completed because she tried to say something, and I don't know if she got to finish. Ms. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: I'm not finished. I told him I was not finished.

Mayor Lago: That's why...

Ms. Cruz: Okay, thank you.

Mayor Lago: That's why...

Ms. Cruz: I would like -- thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you. I am surprised that the Commissioners that heard the same presentation we all heard have accepted the fact that the

changes were not there when we heard them. I must have guessed the future that day, but I have more stuff. I have more stuff. Do you -- should we believe that this is a guaranteed maximum price, 40 million, period, the end, not a penny more, or do we expect to be the hit with whatever the roof is going to need, whatever the build-outs are going to need, whatever the bicycle racks are going to need, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera?

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't...

City Manager Iglesias: Let me be clear.

Vice Mayor Mena: I could be wrong. I don't think it is the price, Mrs. Cruz. I think the fees are based on that price. So, to the -- let's say...

Ms. Cruz: Then what is the price?

Vice Mayor Mena: So, let -- I'm sorry?

Ms. Cruz: I'm sorry, but then what is the price?

Vice Mayor Mena: It depends on when we build it.

Ms. Cruz: He said this was the price.

Vice Mayor Mena: It depends on when we build it. The fees are based on that number, but let's say that, hypothetically, it ends up costing \$50 million to build, then the fees would have been based on 40, but it would still cost 50. Is that right, Mr. Manager?

City Manager Iglesias: That is correct, Vice Mayor.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, so what we're being told is not the actual price even though I was told -- because I spoke to the Finance monitor -- Finance Director yesterday, and she told me that this was a guaranteed maximum price. I talked to other people. So...

Vice Mayor Mena: It's the -- Mrs. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: The bottom line is...

Vice Mayor Mena: Mrs. Cruz, it's -- what we're voting on are the fees for the plan so -- just so we're clear.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: I wasn't present for your conversation with the Finance Director, but if I had to bet, what she was saying was that this was the amount that the fees will be.

City Manager Iglesias: To finish design of the...

Ms. Cruz: Alright, my...

City Manager Iglesias: Project. The guaranteed...

Vice Mayor Mena: And the point is, as I mentioned a minute ago, if the project ends up being more than the \$40 million, these fees will still be what they are. Is that correct?

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: That is correct.

Ms. Cruz: That makes sense to me today because it was not the last time we spoke, but that's okay. So, this means -- since we're voting for this only -- that we still do not know how much this magnificent, futuristic mobility hub is going to cost. It could be 50, it could be 45, it could be 60. We're embarking on a project that we really do not know how much it's going to cost. And I know that we're going to try to get money from other places, but what if the money doesn't materialize? Where is the money coming from?

Commissioner Fors: A bond, right?

City Manager Iglesias: A bond. However...

Commissioner Fors: And we are -- we're not going to know the price -- the exact final price.

City Manager Iglesias: We -- the reason that -- our construction manager, we are going through a guaranteed maximum price for construction. Right now, construction costs are -- have nothing to do with inflation. They're quite speculative, and they're way above any inflation rate. This is really unprecedented for probably the past 40 years. So, what we're trying to do is finish the project. This is the price based for Gensler to finish the drawings for the project, get these plans shovel ready by September. And then we cannot negotiate any costs until we find out what happens with federal procurement because we cannot negotiate a contract -- sign the contract and then try to make it federal -- make the federal procurement. It has to be done through federal procurement. And we still don't even know if the guaranteed maximum price procedure would be applicable. It's possible, but we don't know for sure. So, we do not want to go into procurement until we know whether we have that federal money or not, and that won't be until the end of the year.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, so -- alright, so my last comment is, I -- if I were to decide on building a home, I will put everything in place, sight unseen, and then if the money doesn't come in, I've already committed so I have to build it and go find the money someplace. Is that what we're being told?

Vice Mayor Mena: I didn't follow...

Mayor Lago: I think you broke up. Can you explain? Can you...

Ms. Cruz: Yes. My...

Mayor Lago: Can you reiterate your comment?

City Manager Iglesias: I think -- Mayor, I think the issue...

Ms. Cruz: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: Is that we cannot control what's happened in the last year in construction. I don't have to tell you that.

Mayor Lago: I know. Trust me, I'm dealing with it right now.

City Manager Iglesias: I know what...

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: I know what you're going through. Pricing is way -- is speculative right now. It has nothing to do with 8 percent inflation when your costs are going 50, 100 percent more. And now is just simply not a good time to build, and now is the time to finish what we're doing,

go look for federal funding, and then wait a little bit of time until this speculation -- and we have the same problem in Firehouse 4. The costs have gone...

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: Sky high.

Ms. Cruz: My last comment.

Mayor Lago: Ms...

Ms. Cruz: When we dealt with Parks and Recreation, we put everything on hold because we couldn't figure out how much because the timing was not good. But the timing is good for this even though we don't know how much it's going to cost. Really, I'm amazed. I'm amazed that we have people that are financially very -- what's the word that we use? -- conservative, but we're going to start a project without knowing how much it's going to cost. That's ridiculous.

Mayor Lago: Well...

Ms. Cruz: Okay. And after looking at one (INAUDIBLE), we have time. There's no rush.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz.

Ms. Cruz: So, why are we...?

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz, I think what we're looking at...

Ms. Cruz: Yes, sir.

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Mayor Lago: What we're looking at right now is a project which funds itself as a result of parking...

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

Mayor Lago: As a result of parking revenue, which is very different than the bond that we were talking about before that was going to be funded by the residents through a general obligation bond. So, this is funded by people who come to visit and use our downtown. The question is now where do we...

Ms. Cruz: Okay.

Mayor Lago: The question is where do we see the market in the next six months. Do we see the market coming back to reality hopefully? You know, nobody has the crystal ball. But at the end of the day, we have come to the conclusion that we need to do something in regards to our parking garage, and that is something that we're going to address and go after State -- we've already done that -- federal and FDOT dollars to alleviate the upswing in the costs associated with the construction of this mobility hub. So, I can't tell you if the price...

Ms. Cruz: Okay, if you...

Mayor Lago: I can't tell you if the prices are going to go back, 30 percent down like they were a year ago, a year and half ago. But right now, across the board, we're feeling it in the construction industry, and it's very painful. But I'd rather have something shovel ready and ready to go and go after federal dollars, and hopefully, hopefully, showcase a project that meets a lot of sustainability criteria, parking criteria, has bike and pedestrian accessibility where we can hopefully get significant dollars at the federal level so that they can showcase that people are actually building

projects that have future viability and are really focused on the environment and pedestrian accessibility and bicycle accessibility.

City Manager Iglesias: And Mayor, we can also look at the supply chain.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. I...

City Manager Iglesias: And we're looking through major supply chain issues right now...

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: That we hope that...

Mayor Lago: That we have -- but we have to move on.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay. I think -- don't we have another speaker waiting?

Ms. Cruz: Okay, one last comment. One last comment, one last comment, please.

Mayor Lago: Yes, go ahead.

Ms. Cruz: One last comment.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Ms. Cruz: I know that we can move money from one place to another. The money from parking usually helps because we can use it for other things. So, now we're going to commit the money from parking to pay whatever it has to be there. You all are crazy. That's the end. Bye-bye.

Vice Mayor Mena: Mrs. Cruz, you're very fond of reminding us about the civility code, so I would just ask that if we call you Mrs. Cruz, you refrain from calling everybody crazy, and maybe we can have a civil discussion.

Ms. Cruz: This is not about...

Vice Mayor Mena: We just gave you...

Ms. Cruz: No, crazy is not an insult.

Vice Mayor Mena: Mrs. Cruz, Mrs. Cruz, Mrs. Cruz, the Mayor has been clear that he tries to give speakers three minutes, that he's very liberal about how he applies it. I think you've been asking questions for over 10 minutes, maybe 15 minutes now on this one issue. We really need to move on to the next speaker. We're trying to not only respect you but respect everybody else's time who's waiting for other items.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, Vice Mayor.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, but crazy is not an insult.

Vice Mayor Mena: I guess it depends who the recipient of the comment is. But I guess what's an insult in 2022 is kind of a moving target, but let's just agree not to call each other crazy, and I think we'll be in a good place.

Mayor Lago: Well said. Okay, Commissioner Menendez.

Commissioner Menendez: Real quick, just for the purpose of maybe clarifying any confusion that might be out there as I'm listening to the discussion. What was presented to us were conceptual renderings for the mobility hub if I recall correctly, more or less, the conceptual drawings. What they're actually going to deliver at the end of the day...

City Manager Iglesias: Based on that criteria that I just mentioned.

Commissioner Menendez: Right. But at the end of the day, what they're going to be delivering aren't conceptual renderings but...

City Manager Iglesias: Construction documents.

Commissioner Menendez: Construction documents. I think that's not clear to a lot of our residents. They saw the presentation. They saw the conceptual renderings. They don't perhaps know the detail that goes into what is actually going to be delivered so that we can move forward.

Mayor Lago: We're taking it to the final step. Once we're done with the con -- you know, from conceptual to actual construction documents, you're going to be able to take these, submit them for a permit and build. Now, the key is to be able to -- like Naomi mentioned before and the Manager -- to be able to go and put yourself in a position where you're serious about getting certain funding, you know, being able to address certain funding opportunities that are available, you have to be construction ready. You have to be shovel ready. And we've got to take it to the final step so that we can tell the federal government, the State, FDOT, and say, We're ready to move forward. The plans are ready. All we've got to do is pull the permit. We need you to help us get to the finish line and build a world-class project. Put your money where your mouth is. You talk about sustainability, you talk about mobility, you talking about re-adaptive use. Here you have a project that meets all those needs. Help us out, help us out so that we can showcase to everybody that

we're doing the right thing. We're not just building something that could become a dinosaur in ten years.

Commissioner Menendez: And have...

City Manager Iglesias: And we plan on continuing through the permitting process so that we do have it literally shovel ready.

Commissioner Menendez: And having worked in that field in terms of -- in my prior life at the City of Miami, with federal and state dollars, it's a requirement that you be ready to hit the ground running. It's not do you have a concept, do you have a vision, and we'll give you money and then you figure it out. If you go to the Federal Government, as you mentioned, Mayor, without the documents, without everything ready to go, you're not in the ballgame. So, I just wanted -- and you did a great job explaining it, clearing it up to the community, to the residents, why these construction documents are so important. Otherwise, we're -- you know, we can't move forward at the very least with federal dollars.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, Commissioner. Ms. Keller, I think, is the next and final -- is she the final person to speak publicly?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Mayor Lago: Okay, we'll close the comment after her. Ms. Keller, the floor is yours.

Jessica Keller: Hi, good afternoon. I'm going to surprise you all, and I'm going to agree with Maria Cruz. But what I do have a question about that Commissioner Mena just brought up, the initial purchase order for design was only to get it through concept and present it to community. Is that what I just heard?

City Manager Iglesias: No. We -- Gensler -- our consultant, Gensler, is -- was -- their proposal was through construction documents and through construction.

Ms. Keller: Okay. Okay, I thought I just heard Commissioner Menendez say that it was to get it through concept to present something to the community. I attended the...

City Manager Iglesias: No, it was full CDs.

Ms. Keller: Sunshine meeting.

City Manager Iglesias: Through construction documents.

Ms. Keller: Oh, okay. I attended the sunshine meeting and I spoke in support of the mobility hub, and I supported it based on what was presented. And what was presented was adaptive reuse, EV infrastructure, and a park on the roof. And I had suggested that bike infrastructure be included in the design to make it a true mobility hub. So, I am -- that's where I agree with Maria Cruz. It was my understanding this was already presented and already part of the project, so I'm not clear on what the 640,000 extra dollars is needed for. You don't have to answer that question. I just want to put it on the record. The second thing I'd like some clarification on is I just heard the Mayor mention bike accessibility at the mobility hub. Has that been added to the project?

Mayor Lago: I'll answer for you very simply. I've been very, very clear, and I've said that on Andalusia, I want to make sure that once we develop the Publix site and we develop our site at the mobility hub, that there is bike accessibility and that there is an opportunity for people to traverse our downtown. I will continue to say that at every opportunity, and I will require that from the Publix developers, which I've already met with them two separate occasions, and I've told them very clearly what I'm looking for. I'm looking for an open green space on the property, and I'm

looking for bicycle accessibility, and I'm not looking for a box that's just a Publix. I'm looking for something that complements the downtown. That's one discussion. The second discussion is very simply, if I am moving in a direction of having Publix have that in their project, I want it also put forth in regards to the City. The issue is -- and I've mentioned it before and we've talked about it here -- is finding the balance between parking, and it's something that Commissioner Anderson and I had talked about, I think, two or three Commission meetings ago. And we need to find -- and we had requested that we speak with the businesses, and I think Commissioner Menendez made it a very -- made it a good point and said that we needed to speak to the businesses to make sure that if we remove certain parking that we wouldn't have an uproar on our hands. Like it's happened in the past, if we want to be able to achieve this, like what I'm trying to do with Alhambra and Blue Road in regards to the sidewalks that we're trying to put from one bridge to another, you've got to speak to the homeowners. You can't catch them off-guard. So, what Commissioner Menendez said, we're going to speak to the businesses. We're going to ask Publix to do the following on their entire block. We want to do something similar. I'm all in favor of the mobility hub having bike accessibility, having a bike area where people can store their bikes, their scooters, my goal. But it needs to be done holistically. We cannot do it in the block to the east, correct? The block to the east?

City Manager Iglesias: East.

Mayor Lago: The block to the east.

Commissioner Anderson: The block east.

City Manager Iglesias: Well, a block to the west (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: To the west, excuse me. It has to also follow suit. It has to be contiguous, and it has to be something, which again, like we were talking on the other side of Le Jeune, everything

has to be interconnected, and that's what I've been saying for some time. And that's what I mean by bicycle accessibility. You're not going to...

Ms. Keller: Okay.

Mayor Lago: A building cannot be bike friendly if you can't get there at the end of the day. So, my goal is to get people...

Ms. Keller: I agree with you 100 percent on that but -- absolutely. It is not bike friendly if you can't get to it. But the bike infrastructure is not included as part of this project and part of this \$640,000 change order.

Vice Mayor Mena: What do you mean by the bike infrastructure I guess is the question.

Mayor Lago: The design.

Vice Mayor Mena: Within...

Ms. Keller: Yes, the design.

City Manager Iglesias: The design is for the mobility hub itself if we look at bike infrastructure. And Mayor, what you're looking at and what you're discussing as far as Publix is something that we can look at. Because if we have connectivity -- it would be great to have connectivity from Le Jeune to Douglas. And on the mobility hub side, we have a lot of things happening there. We have drop-off, pickup and so forth.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

City Manager Iglesias: So, if we do have bike infrastructure, it will be on the south side. And that's something that we need to develop, as you mentioned, Mayor, by discussing it with those businesses. And by the way, getting Publix is a great first step, and it's something that we can look at that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Ms. Keller, if your question is whether the \$640,000 covers whatever bike infrastructure on the rest of the block of Andalusia, I think the answer's no. If your question is about the actual mobility hub itself, then I'm not understanding your question. So, I just want to make sure that we're answering your question.

Ms. Keller: Thank you, Commissioner Mean. No, I had no expectation prior to this discussion that bike infrastructure was part of the \$640,000, the change order. I just heard the Mayor mention it in his discussion. That's why I asked the question. I understand it's not included.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, I'm going to reiterate it like I've said it before. This is not the first time I say it. You know, please feel free. The Clerk is available. You can make a public records request. I support there being a way to traverse the downtown. I've said it for months. I've said it for over a year now. While I am not a bicyclist, I think everybody deserves the right to be able to drive in the middle of our downtown from Point A to Point B in a safe manner. So, with that being said, I'm already working with Publix, we're all working with Publix. We need to do what Commissioner Menendez says. I have no issues putting it on the next agenda and requesting that our staff go and have a real conversation with the businesses. There has to be probably maybe a handful of businesses in that area, and we need to have a conversation with them to discuss how are we going to -- when we do finish the mobility hub -- how are people going to get there in a safe manner. And I think that is a critical conversation that we need to have. Publix, we're going to be able to do it because that entire block is going to be redeveloped, so that's a great thing. And then when we cross Le Jeune, we're already talking about Valencia and all that infrastructure that

we're going to find a way to deliver it on, along with Biltmore Way hopefully. The question is, how do we deal with the block where the mobility hub is.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, and continuing east.

Mayor Lago: Yes, I understand. But I'm just trying to take small bites of the apple.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Mayor Lago: And I don't know what type of resolution we need to do as a Commission. Do I need to ask you through the Manager to go and speak to all the businesses and start having some sort of...

Commissioner Anderson: Well...

Mayor Lago: Symposium to discuss...

Commissioner Anderson: I would suggest that we do it...

Mayor Lago: How would you want to do it?

Commissioner Anderson: A block at a time. I mean, I can tell you from the couple of businesses I patronized in December that are across from the mobility hub, there was no pushback on the bike lane, but I didn't talk to every single business. But having cars parked out there, they preferred to have the bike lane for those two businesses. But they're more concerned with construction staging than they were about the bike lane. How we continue east, you know, does it hold -- you know, you're talking about a different type of makeup of businesses at that point.

City Manager Iglesias: And we're looking at having the bike lane on the south side of Andalusia.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. No, I understand. And that -- those were the businesses I was patronizing. You know, once the mobility hub is built, it's going to be a different picture for them from before because right now it's going to require them losing parking. But if you have 600 some odd spaces available in a mobility hub that is nice to park in because you can find the space quickly and it's modern, et cetera, the answer to the question's going to be more positive than it would be right now when we have limited parking.

City Manager Iglesias: And we're looking at that in the future as far as the mobility hub is concerned. That's really the separate project. That truly is a separate project. That truly is a separate project looking at the bike lane going...

Commissioner Anderson: Correct.

City Manager Iglesias: Hopefully all the way through our downtown area going to Douglas Road.

Mayor Lago: So, let me ask you a question. Let me ask you a question. I know Commissioner Menendez wanted to say something, but I have a feeling where he's going. I know where he's going to go. Does the Commission want --? What is the will of the Commission? What I think that we need to do -- and I'm requesting -- and that is that we request staff, just like I ask staff to put together a plan for those three blocks in Blue Road to connect the bridges to Riviera Country Club and finally deliver on a sidewalk, which is going to be about four or five blocks, the same thing we're doing in Alhambra, and the design is forthcoming. Would you like -- is the will of the Commission for something very limited in scope to put together a design or conceptual design of what could be a proposed bike route in the downtown area, maybe starting at Biltmore Way, maybe starting on Valencia. I'll leave that up -- and bringing it back to the Commission and presenting it to the Commission so that we could start working with these businesses and start talking to these

businesses about how we're going to address if you lose a parking space if you lose two parking spaces. What is the City planning on doing? Because if we're going to build this parking garage in the near future when prices stabilized and inflation hopefully goes down, we're going to have to have a plan of action to show those businesses that if we're going to remove certain parking spaces, we're committed to building this parking structure, this mobility hub. So, we've got to have a plan of action. And I'd like to see that we're all on the same page on saying these are options that we present to the business community because we need to have all our ducks in a row as Publix comes forward in regards to a redevelopment of that entire block. Do you guys feel comfortable with that?

Commissioner Anderson: I agree. And I also think...

City Manager Iglesias: But let's say -- but that is a...

Commissioner Anderson: We need to do...

City Manager Iglesias: It's a large project. That's not a small project.

Commissioner Anderson: I know that, but we also need to do some visioning.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: Because if we don't do the visioning, the projects are approved, the space is not available for a bike lane, and that's typically what happens. Do we need to add four or five more parking spaces to a project in order to make sure that we have room for that bike lane? Well, we don't know if we don't start thinking about it. You know, we do get complaints in on Ponce, bicycles on the sidewalk. Where is it that we want to route that north-south traffic? At

least we need to think about it so we can start planning in advance. So, yes, I would like to see some visioning and some planning out on these corridors that we want to try to achieve.

City Manager Iglesias: And that is -- let me say that is a separate project. That's a large project, something that we can start and maybe we can use certain of our continuing services consultants on. The mobility hub is looking at the future of that -- of Andalusia and planning for that future. And we -- what we envision and what we discussed is a bike lane that would be on that south side. And certainly, it would be a big start would be Publix because they're an entire block. So, we can certainly look at that and -- but I don't know if talking to the property owners might cause a problem. It might be a little premature, but I do think that we can -- if the Commission's will, we could start looking at that future project holistically instead of just where the mobility hub is, which we have to deal with now.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, I mean, the messaging is important. You're not going to say that you're going to do this today. You're going to do it after the mobility hub is built. You're not going to take away their parking today. So, you know, you could message it correctly, you know, circulate drafts to us so that we can provide some input. Recirculate to us the bicycle master plan so we can refresh ourselves on it. I think we can have a better conversation because in planning future projects coming forward, we need to keep this plan in mind.

Commissioner Fors: That's what I was looking at right now. Don't we already have a bicycle master plan and maybe other comprehensive plans that probably add on to it in terms of biking?

City Manager Iglesias: We had a bike plan that dealt with Riviera and Alhambra, so I think we need to relook at that a little bit. But I do think that we can look at -- I think the Commission has mentioned to look at it in the commercial area, and that's -- and so we can connect, Mayor, as you mentioned, the commercial area. And we can certainly look at that -- reestablish that and take a look at that now.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, it included Valencia, so that wasn't just Riviera. So, if you could recirculate it, I think it's an important thing for us to look at.

City Manager Iglesias: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah. I think the point -- to be fair, I think the point the Manager is making is there have been several conversations over the years about different parts of the bike plan...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: That have been shut down.

Commissioner Anderson: Correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: And so, you know, we're now saying we're -- we're now -- we are now giving them a very clear direction that for this corridor, we're committed to getting something done. And I think to the -- Commissioner Fors' question, he's saying don't we have a bike plan. And they're saying, yeah, but we were told -- we being staff -- to put the bike plan over on a shelf and take it...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Sort of piecemeal as we go forward.

Mayor Lago: So, I'm going to make...

Vice Mayor Mena: So, that's...

Mayor Lago: So, I'm going to make it easy on you, Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Sure.

Mayor Lago: In the next Commission meeting, in May -- the end of May, I would like a discussion item for staff to provide me a price to provide a very simple study guidance to connect to downtown to see what is the most feasible route taking into consideration -- let's be honest with ourselves -- the developers that are considering doing projects in the City and potentially having them help us, like we have other developers with traffic calming, maybe they can pick up some of the tab as they have to redesign their entire project and destroy sidewalks and parking. And we could do something very interesting in those areas. Give us the best design option, something simple so that we can consider how we tackle this objective. That's what I'd like to see. What do you think, Mr. Manager?

City Manager Iglesias: We can bring in, in the last meeting in May, some -- we can reach out to our consultants...

Mayor Lago: We have a consultant already on...

City Manager Iglesias: To get some preliminary pricing on plans to look at that.

Mayor Lago: Taking into consideration our Bicycle Master Plan and understanding it, like the Vice Mayor said, this corridor -- I'm not talking about anything else. I'm talking about this corridor.

City Manager Iglesias: Understood.

Mayor Lago: I want to understand -- talking about Valencia, talking about Biltmore Way, talking about crossing Le Jeune, Andalusia, all the way to 37th Avenue. How -- that's the route. That's the corridor I'm looking at, taking into consideration the Publix project that's forthcoming, you know, the Valencia project which is being completed now.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, there are a number of projects that are coming through that we can take a look at.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, let's take a look at that if we can please.

City Manager Iglesias: We can. Mayor, we'll bring that back in the meeting -- the second meeting in May.

Mayor Lago: Yes, please.

City Manager Iglesias: Perfect.

Commissioner Menendez: I want to comment. And considering that I've, you know, been a Commissioner for now what, a year?

Commissioner Anderson: Almost.

Commissioner Menendez: Almost a year. It seems -- in dog years, it's like 80, I think, right? But considering everything that was being suggested not that long ago about the bike paths through our urban core, I think was -- what we're talking about today is a very reasonable approach that I think is doable. And I'm fully supportive of going further as far as we can get to see if we can get there. But again, I still go back -- once we have a better idea of where we're headed with this, I still want the Administration to make sure that, you know, property owners have their storefronts...

Mayor Lago: Yep.

Commissioner Menendez: On board because I don't want to go down that path too far then find out later, we have to deal with issues that are just going to bog us down.

Commissioner Anderson: Absolutely.

City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner Menendez...

Commissioner Anderson: (INAUDIBLE).

City Manager Iglesias: I assure you all that we will be touching bases with all the stakeholders.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah. I mean, that's part of...

City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: The reason why I mentioned bonds because we have so many people, pedestrians there. We got to figure out where we're going to put the bikes. So, if we have projects coming in in the North Ponce corridor, perhaps we need to think about where we would like the bike lane to go, whether it's on Galiano or some other street, Salzedo, to be able to plan for that and incorporate it into the projects.

Commissioner Menendez: And by the way, I -- since I mentioned earlier I was in Boston, Boston had a whole different types of bike lanes and some were actually, as let's say, where Ponce is, median.

Mayor Lago: Dedicated.

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah, but more towards the median in the middle than on the outskirts.

Commissioner Anderson: Correct.

Commissioner Menendez: And it worked for certain streets. It actually worked in the Massachusetts -- state of Massachusetts.

Mayor Lago: Okay, with that being said, we need to take action in regards to I-5.

Commissioner Fors: Move it.

Mayor Lago: Is there any other questions? Are we moving it?

Vice Mayor Mena: Second.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: I'm sorry. Who made the motion?

Mayor Lago: Mr. -- Commissioner Fors.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Fors: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)

DRAFT