



CITY OF DUNNELLON

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Michelle Stone, Chair
Marion County Board of County Commissioners
601 SE 25th Avenue
Ocala, FL 34471

March 13, 2024

Dear Chairwoman Stone,

During the February 21, 2024 Dunnellon City Council meeting, the City Council by majority vote moved to notify the Marion County Board of County Commissioners and the Florida Department of Transportation of the desire to terminate continuation of the Dunnellon Trail project (FDOT FPN: 450918-1-34-01 and 450918-1-54-01).

The City Council has determined after reviewing the results from the planning phase, continuation of the project would not produce beneficial results commensurate with the further expenditure of funds due to the risk of unfavorable secondary consequences.

One of the many benefits of project planning results in the analyzation and the weight of pros and cons discovered during the process. Upon reviewing the planning results during the design phase of the project, we have determined that the cons outweigh the pros and we do not believe it is in the best interest of the City for the State to continue expending funds for this project.

Below are some of the factors that brought the City Council to this conclusion.

1. Much of the City's Community Redevelopment Plan focuses on the need for additional and improved parking in the CRA District. The removal of 120 parking spaces along E. Pennsylvania Ave. goes against the City's CRA Plan, particularly the Appendix VI Conceptual Improvements Map, demonstrating the need to retain on street parking on E. Pennsylvania Avenue.
2. FGUA has expressed concerns about the risk of damage to the 60+ year old water piping throughout the planning process. Interrupting utility service due to waterline damage would be detrimental to the City's residents and businesses. FGUA customers would bear the burden financially for costs associated with repairs and/or infrastructure replacement resulting from the continuation of this project.
3. Our City Public Works department has expressed safety concerns with maintaining the proposed islands. Public Works presently experiences safety issues as they relate to maintaining the existing islands on SR 41. We must learn from our experiences and make things safer for our employees rather than creating additional safety issues.
4. CR 484 is a main artery in and out of the City, servicing not only the City of Dunnellon, but also the surrounding communities in Marion, Citrus and Levy Counties. With the increase in development along the SR 200 corridor, traffic on CR 484 will continue to increase and become more congested as a result of narrowing the travel lanes and constructing islands.
5. The proposed plan does not provide for any reasonable and/or safe place for trucks to pull over to make deliveries. This is a present and future businesses concern.

6. Although the City Council recognizes the need to address safe passage over the Rainbow River Bridge, the project will create more congestion at the most problematic and congested area inside of Blue Run Park, sending cyclists into the crowd at the tuber/kayak staging area next to the ramp. This will add to the safety issues the City and Marion County already deal with daily during the busy time of year.
7. Additionally, within the inception notes for this project, an assumption was stated; the city will receive more tax revenue with additional visitor spending. This is no longer valid since the County's fuel tax formula changed in 2013 reducing the tax revenue due to the City from the County. Based on the City's FY 2013 budget prior to the change, the City's projected fuel tax revenue was approximately \$522,000. After the 3-year phased in change, based on the City's FY 2017 budget, the City's projected fuel tax revenue decreased to \$124,652. The City has lost approximately \$397,000 per year in fuel tax revenue and does not receive enough other revenue to pay for increased maintenance and other resource expenditures for future costs associated with this project.


The sum of the above factors should satisfy the termination requirements per Page 2, Paragraph 5, parts b and c of the State-Funded Grant Executed Design Agreement, 450918-1-34-01 between Marion County and the FDOT as follows.

"5. Termination or Suspension of Project:

b. The Parties to this Agreement may also terminate this Agreement when its continuation would not produce beneficial results commensurate with the further expenditure of funds. In this event, the parties shall agree upon the termination conditions through mutual written agreement.

c. If the Agreement is terminated before performance is completed, the Recipient shall be paid only for that work satisfactorily performed for which costs can be substantiated. Such payment, however, may not exceed an amount which is the same percentage of the contract price as the amount of work satisfactorily completed is a percentage of the total work called for by this Agreement. All work in progress on the Department right-of-way will become the property of the Department and will be turned over promptly by the Recipient."

The City Council sincerely thanks all those involved during the planning process for their expertise and due diligence. We genuinely value our partnerships and relationships with our County and State officials, and we appreciate all parties involved taking our concerns into serious consideration.



Walter L. Green, Mayor
City of Dunnellon

cc: Mounir Bouyounes, County Administrator
C. Jack Adkins, FDOT Director of Transportation Development