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**TO:** Honorable Mayor & Members  
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

**FROM:** Lee Feldman, City Manager

**DATE:** November 20, 2012

**TITLE:** BridgeSide Square Beautification / Revitalization Improvements  
Special Assessment Project 9733 – Construction Completion and  
Confirmation of Assessment Roll

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**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the City Commission adopt a resolution determining that BridgeSide Square Beautification / Revitalization Project 9733 is complete and accepted, and confirming the project's special assessments.

**Background**

In early 1996, the City was contacted by representatives of an area merchants association, BridgeSide Square Association, Inc, to provide assistance in improving the traffic flow, drainage, parking, pedestrian facilities, lighting, signage, and landscaping in their area. The BridgeSide Square commercial community is bounded by Oakland Park Boulevard to the north, the Intracoastal Waterway to the west, A1A to the east, and the adjoining commercial properties south of NE 30 Street and NE 29 Court. The project boundaries also include two residential condominiums, the Berkley South and the Galt Ocean Terrace.

Through numerous meetings with the commercial and residential community, a master plan was developed to achieve an economic revitalization and beautification for the BridgeSide Square area. The master plan was based upon a design that would maximize the space available to accommodate people and traffic. Traffic flow would be improved and drainage systems upgraded. Strategic locations for signage would identify the entrances to the area and reinforce the identity and location of the area. Decorative sidewalks, brick paver inserts, special lighting and new landscaping would transform this area into a "destination" place for residents and tourists, thus realizing the vision of the community.

The total cost of this project was estimated at \$3.4 million, with the community portion being funded through a special assessment. Based upon preliminary calculations, the individual portions of the special assessment allocations would not be practical due to the economic base of the area. Several businesses in the area had recently closed and it appeared that the revitalization of this area would have to be dramatically downscaled or would not be possible at all. Because of the increased competition of the new developments along the beach area, BridgeSide Square needed this revitalization to compete and survive.

As a result of the approval of the BridgeSide Place LTD mixed-use development and the infrastructure needs of this new development, approximately \$1 million in improvements which were originally under the special assessment project would now be absorbed by this development. In addition, this new mixed-use development would contribute their share, estimated to be \$1 million, of the now \$2.4 million special assessment project to revitalize the surrounding area. This left approximately \$1.4 million to be spread among the remaining property owners, making the special assessment project now economically feasible.

On July 6, 2000, the City Commission held a Public Hearing in which the project was outlined and the BridgeSide Square Community expressed their support for this project. At the conclusion of the hearing, the City Commission adopted a resolution declaring their intent to make the public improvements. The resolution included the cost estimate, the method of assessment, the timing of the assessments, and the identification of the properties to be assessed and the value of each assessment.

An assessment roll, including all parcels in the proposed project area with the assessable cost of the project allocated by parcel, was approved at this public hearing. The assessments to individual properties were based on:

- (1) A blend of parcel square foot and lot front footage, with additional weight given to the relationship of the parcels to the improvements, for the commercial properties.
- (2) An equal share unit basis per residential condominium unit.

The individual assessments varied from \$6,159 to \$211,750 for the commercial parcels and were an equal \$150 per condominium unit. Financing would be available for the commercial property assessments only. Due to the relatively small assessment amount (\$150) for the condominium units, financing would not be available and the assessment amount would be due in one payment at the completion of construction of the project.

The final assessment roll contained a total assessment balance of \$2,126,514.00. No changes have been noted to this final assessment roll and the final assessment roll should remain at the original \$2,126,514.00.

#### Confirmation of Final Assessment Roll

Preliminary Assessment Roll	\$ 2,126,514.00
Additions: None required	0
Deletions: None required	0
Confirmed Assessment Roll	\$ 2,126,514.00

Of the \$2,126,514 in total assessments, \$941,923 has been collected to date.

The available budget for this project was \$2,688,967.00 (including City contributions for roadway and drainage) and the final expenditures were \$2,734,059. The \$45,092 difference was due to additional interest during construction charged by the City to the project and will be included in Fund 472 as outlined by Finance staff on August 1, 2012. A more detailed breakdown of the available budget sources and project expenditures is provided under the project expenditure summary.

While several storms and one hurricane destroyed numerous palm plantings and decorative elements under the project, work to restore the landscaping and community signage has been completed. All final and retainage payments were made to the contractor in late 2011.

All project maintenance for the improvements was to become the responsibility of the area merchants association, BridgeSide Square Association, Inc. The original BridgeSide Square Association became inactive and several attempts as late as 2012 to reorganize the merchants association have failed. All project maintenance was transferred to the adjacent property owners.

#### **Resource Impact**

This item confirms the reimbursement of \$2,126,514 in special assessments to the City within the BridgeSide Square area, of which \$941,923 has been collected to date.

#### **Attachments:**

- Exhibit 1 – Final Assessment Roll
- Exhibit 2 – Project Expenditure Summary
- Exhibit 3 – Proposed Resolution

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