



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

City Manager

City Council Regular Meeting Date: January 13, 2026

To: City Council
From: Dana A. Souza, City Manager
Date: January 9, 2025 - Updated

SUBJECT: East Periwinkle Way Bridge Replacement – Vertical Profile Design report from TYLin, Engineers.

BACKGROUND:

The East Periwinkle Way Bridge approaches were washed out by Hurricane Ian, rendering the roadway inaccessible for several months. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) completed temporary repairs to the bridge at the beginning of the City's Fiscal Year 2023. FDOT and the City's engineer subsequently advised that the bridge approaches and utility lines should be replaced with a new bridge designed to be resilient to future storms and storm surge.

The City requested funding from the State Legislature during the 2023 Legislative Session to support this project. During that session, \$750,000 was approved and appropriated for bridge design. On April 2, 2024, the City accepted the grant funds by approving a grant agreement with FDOT. The City continued to pursue additional State and Federal grant funding to support bridge construction.

On June 4, 2024, the City Council approved an agreement with TYLin to complete the engineering design for a resilient bridge. As noted in the agenda memorandum, the design was to consider options to increase the width and height of the boat channel and evaluate widening the bridge span to improve pedestrian access. TYLin was directed to explore increasing vertical clearance for boat traffic without impacting the nearby intersections at Pen Shell Drive, Limpet Drive, and Tulip Lane.

On February 4, 2025, the City Council received a presentation from TYLin at the 30 percent design stage. TYLin advised that the bridge's vertical clearance for boat traffic could be increased by one foot without affecting adjacent intersections, provided the bridge roadway speed limit was reduced to 25 miles per hour. The City Council agreed with the reduced speed limit and directed staff to study reducing the speed limit along the entire length of East Periwinkle Way from Causeway Boulevard to Lighthouse Beach. TYLin also explained that the shared-use path (SUP) on the bridge could be widened from eight feet to ten feet by reducing the travel lane widths from twelve feet to eleven feet.

On October 21, 2025, the City Council received a presentation from TYLin at the 90 percent design stage. The engineer confirmed the proposed bridge dimensions previously presented at the February 4, 2025, meeting and discussed the proposed construction sequence.

Following the presentation and City Council discussion, Kevin McLellan, a resident of Anchor Drive, who stated he was representing approximately 30 residents, advocated for increasing the bridge height beyond the one-foot increase proposed by TYLin. Mr. McLellan referenced letters submitted by himself and another resident, Chris Peterson. Both letters were included in the October 21, 2025, agenda packet as public comment and outlined their perspective on how the bridge elevation could be further increased.

Following discussion, the City Council directed staff to obtain a cost estimate from TYLin to increase the bridge's vertical clearance by two to three feet and to determine whether a design change and associated delay could jeopardize State or Federal grant funding already awarded to the City.

Staff requested that TYLin provide the requested cost estimates and also evaluate the ideas presented by Mr. McLellan to determine whether they could be implemented without impacting adjacent intersections. The City Council and Mr. McLellan were provided copies of TYLin's report. In late December, TYLin issued an updated memorandum to correct a mathematical error identified in the original report.

Staff reports that if the City Council wishes to explore alternative bridge designs beyond those evaluated in the TYLin memorandum, delaying construction would not place the City's existing State or Federal grant funding at risk.

The following City Council meetings included discussion of the East Periwinkle Way Bridge during 2024 and 2025:

[January 16, 2024](#) – Legislative Priorities

[February 6, 2024](#) – Legislative Priorities

[April 2, 2024](#) – Acceptance of FDOT Grant to design the bridge - \$750,000

[June 4, 2024](#) – Award of bridge design contract to TYLin

[February 4, 2025](#) – 30% Design Review

[June 3, 2025](#) – Acceptance of FDOT Grant for bridge construction \$2.5 million

[July 15, 2025](#) – Award of utilities design for bridge to Weston & Sampson

[October 21, 2025](#) – 90% Design Review

On December 19, 2025, Mr. McLellan requested a 90-day public comment period to obtain additional feedback from residents regarding the TYLin report. Mr. McLellan's email is included in the agenda packet for this item. I informed Mr. McLellan that the TYLin report will be presented to the City Council at its January 13, 2026 meeting, at which time he and other interested parties will have the opportunity to provide public comment. I also suggested that he may request additional meetings with City Councilmembers and staff prior to the City Council meeting. Additionally, I informed him that I will be recommending that the City proceed with the project as designed.

Sanibel is and shall remain a barrier island sanctuary

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council authorize staff to finalize the design for the E. Periwinkle Way bridge as developed by TYLin as, in staff's view, the design:

- Meets the communities needs by providing a resilient bridge.
- Increases the vertical clearance for boat traffic by one-foot above the existing bridge.
- Increases the width of the boat channel which removes a vulnerability from storm surge (which is what caused the bridge approaches to fail during Hurricane Ian)
- Does not impact the adjacent intersection elevations.
- Increases the width of the SUP on the bridge.
- Can be constructed utilizing State and Federal grants.

Public comment provided at the October 21, 2025, City Council meeting, and public comment received between October 21, 2025, and the date of the City Council meeting, is included in the agenda packet for this item.

FUNDING SOURCE: N/A

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Discussion and direction.