February 12, 2015

The Honorable John F. Sorey III
Mayor City of Naples
735 8th Street South
Naples, FL 34102

Dear Mayor Sorey:

On February 10, 2015, under item 11B, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously adopted a resolution supporting the Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP) initiative.

As you know, the purpose of the Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP) is to develop and implement projects and recommendations that have the highest potential for overarching impact to Collier County in accordance with the adopted Watershed Management Plans. The City of Naples has a shared interest with the County to protect our watersheds and recognizes that it is our most valuable resource.

On December 30, 2014, Commissioner Tim Nance met with you, along with Big Cypress Basin staff and County staff. The parties acknowledged that there is regional consensus supporting the development of a unified program that advances water quality, improves flood control, recharges aquifers, and supports ecosystem restoration. GGWIP will be used as the vehicle to advance projects and recommendations that are developed and tested for benefit by a regional Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), supported by the NGOs, and vetted to the citizens of Collier County. We understand that the City Manager has identified Greg Strakaluse as the City’s representative on the TAC.

As part of the Board’s approval, they directed me to request that the City of Naples also adopts a similar resolution in support of GGWIP. I have attached the item and the resolution for reference. We look forward to the City’s endorsement and participation.

Respectfully,

Leo E. Ochs, Jr.
County Manager

CC: Nick Casalanguida, Administrator, Growth Management Division
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendation to adopt a Resolution supporting a regional initiative aimed at implementing the Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP).

OBJECTIVE: To adopt a resolution, in conjunction with the City of Naples, to support the Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP) initiative.

CONSIDERATIONS: Collier County has conducted several studies, including the Belle Meade Area Stormwater Management Master Plan (2006), and the Horsepen Strand Conservation Area Feasibility Study Phase 1 (2008). These studies served as the groundwork for Collier County's Watershed Management Plan (WMP), adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2011. The WMP is the County's guiding document that describes strategies to restore historical water quantity and estuarine discharges, improve water quality within the watersheds and estuaries, and address flood control and water supply issues (WMP, 2011).

The WMP prioritizes capital improvements projects (structural projects) for each of the County's main watersheds based on a methodology that evaluated potential projects on their viability to be permitted and constructed; the benefits yielded through performance measures; estimated cost; and calculated benefit versus cost (B/C) ratio. Additionally, the WMP proposes complementing the recommended structural projects with non-structural initiatives in order to achieve the plan's restoration goals.

The purpose of the Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP) is to develop and implement projects and recommendations that have the highest potential for overarching impact to Collier County in accordance with the WMP. The GGWIP initiative focuses on the watersheds that are generally within the boundaries of the County's WMP's recommended capital improvement projects: Golden Gate-Naples Bay; Rookery Bay; Cocohatchee-Corkscrew; and Faka Union. The estuaries impacted by these watersheds are: Naples Bay; Rookery Bay; Wiggins Pass; and the Ten Thousand Islands.

The GGWIP initiative proposes to develop projects and devise recommendations based on environmentally sustainable management system strategies aimed at protecting, preserving, and restoring the resource in areas, within the watersheds mentioned above, that have experienced the highest impact due to human activity, while encouraging efficient urban development in areas with the highest existing and potential urban development in the County.

In order to develop and implement GGWIP, it is necessary that the County works in concert with other government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and citizen groups that will be directly impacted by the implementation of the program. The GGWIP concept was presented during an inter-agency workshop held on September 25, 2014. A technical advisory committee was suggested to be created to advise County staff on the development and implementation of the GGWIP initiative.

On December 30, 2014, Commissioner Tim Nance met with the City of Naples Mayor, John F. Sorey, along with Big Cypress Basin staff and County staff. The parties agreed that there is
regional consensus supporting the development of a unified program that advances water quality, improves flood control, recharges aquifers, and supports the ecosystem. GGWIP will be used as the vehicle to advance projects and recommendations that are developed and tested for benefit by a regional technical advisory committee, supported by the NGOs, and vetted to the citizens of Collier County. The attached resolution will serve as the guiding document for the initiative.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The GGWIP initiative proposes to use existing staff resources, annually budgeted funds, and grants where applicable.

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPACT:** This item is in accordance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Conservation and Coastal Management Element and the Drainage Sub-element of the Growth Management Plan.

**LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS:** This item is approved as to form and legality. A majority vote of the Board is needed for approval.-HFAC

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board adopts the resolution and authorizes the Chairman to execute the attached resolution; and directs the County Manager or his designee to request a similar resolution from the City of Naples.

Prepared by: Nick Casalanguida, Administrator, Growth Management Division
Carolina Valera, Principle Planner, Stormwater Planning

Attachments: 1) Resolution; and 2) Presentation
RESOLUTION NO. 2015 -  

A RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE INITIATIVE TO DEVELOP THE GOLDEN GATE WATERSHED IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (GGWIP)

WHEREAS, The coastal communities of Southwest Florida are consistently impacted by freshwater discharges from associated watersheds impacting the ecology of our waters, the quality of life of our citizens, area businesses, and having a lasting effect on our local economy. Discharges occur as a result of our man-altered landscape of flood control projects, channelization, and other land use changes that have occurred throughout the region over the past century. The current condition is much different from the original undeveloped state. The system we have today delivers water to the coast very quickly with little to no water treatment. This has resulted in our estuaries receiving too much water during the wet season and not enough water during the dry season. Untreated surface water runoff is laden with excessive nutrients that can stimulate harmful algal blooms.

WHEREAS, Tourism and real estate tax revenue in Collier County generates billions of dollars annually. Local water quality can have a tremendous influence on consumer confidence and can greatly impact tourism and our local economy. In addition to impacts on our local economy, too much or too little freshwater delivered to the coast can effect critical estuarine resources such as seagrasses, oysters and fishes. The combined impacts on the local economy and the ecology of our waters can greatly influence the quality of life of Collier County residents.

WHEREAS, Collier County has conducted several studies, including the Belle Meade Area Stormwater Management Master Plan (2006) and the Horsepen Strand Conservation Area Feasibility Study Phase 1 (2008), that served as the groundwork for the Collier County Watershed Management Plan (WMP), adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2011. The WMP is the County’s guiding document that describes strategies to restore historical water quantity and estuarine discharges, improve water quality within the watersheds and estuaries, and address flood control and water supply issues (WMP, 2011).

WHEREAS, The WMP prioritizes capital improvements projects (structural projects) for each of the County’s main watersheds based on a methodology that evaluated potential projects on their viability to be permitted and constructed; the benefits yielded though performance measures; estimated cost; and calculated benefit versus cost (B/C) ratio. Additionally, the WMP proposes complementing the recommended structural projects with non-structural initiatives in order to achieve the plan’s restoration goals.

WHEREAS, The purpose of this initiative, Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP), is to develop and implement actions to manage water management system
strategies with high potential for overarching impact to Collier County in accordance with the WMP.

WHEREAS, This initiative, GGWIP, focuses on the watersheds that are generally within the boundaries of the County’s WMP’s recommended list of capital improvement projects: Golden Gate-Naples Bay; Rookery Bay; Cocohatchee-Corkscrew; and Faka Union. The estuaries impacted by these watersheds are: Naples Bay; Rookery Bay; Wiggins Pass; and the Ten Thousand Islands.

WHEREAS, This initiative, GGWIP, also proposes to devise recommendations based on environmentally sustainable management system strategies aimed at protecting, preserving, and restoring the resource in areas, within the watersheds mentioned above, that have experienced the highest impact due to human activity, while encouraging efficient urban development in areas with the highest existing and potential urban development in the County.

WHEREAS, To develop and implement this initiative, GGWIP, it is necessary that the County works in concert with government agencies and/or non-governmental organizations that will be directly impacted by the implementation of the program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA, THAT:

The Board of County Commissioners hereby endorses the initiative to develop the Golden Gate Watershed Improvement Program (GGWIP).

THIS RESOLUTION ADOPTED after motion, second and majority vote favoring same, this ___ day of _________________, 2015.

ATTEST:                    BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
DWIGHT E. BROCK, CLERK
COLLIER COUNTY, FLORIDA

By: __________________________  By: __________________________
    Deputy Clerk               Tim Nance, Chairman

Approved as to form and legality:

Heidi Ashton-Cicko
Managing Assistant County Attorney