

MIAMI BEACH

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee Members

FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager

DATE: April 29, 2022

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION ON THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH COMMITTEE FOR QUALITY EDUCATION'S MOTION REQUESTING THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION MAKE A PRIORITY THAT STUDENTS SAFETY DURING DROP OFF AND PICK UP AT MIAMI BEACH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL BE SECURED BY URGING OUR TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY DEPARTMENT TO COME UP WITH A WORKING PLAN.**

HISTORY:

At the December 8, 2021 City Commission meeting, Commissioner David Richardson sponsored the referral of this item to the Finance and Economic Resilience Committee (FERC) for discussion.

Similar to most schools within Miami-Dade County, Miami Beach Senior High School (MBSH) and the streets in the vicinity experience traffic congestion during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods. The critical period for most high schools in the County is the morning drop-off period. The afternoon pick-up period tends to produce less traffic congestion around the perimeter of a school due to its staggered nature and multiple extracurricular activities requiring many students to remain in school.

MBSH is bounded by Prairie Avenue to the west, Dade Boulevard to the south, the City's Public Works Operation yard to the east, and Bayshore Park to the north. While Prairie Avenue is a local street under the City's jurisdiction, Dade Boulevard is a collector roadway under the jurisdiction of Miami-Dade County.

Over the years, the City's Transportation and Mobility Department has worked closely with the Committee for Quality of Education, MBSH administration, and residents of the area to discuss traffic concerns, review traffic conditions along both roadways during drop-off and pick-up periods, and explore solutions to mitigate the impacts to traffic and improve safety. As a result, the City has implemented various safety improvements to enhance safety and reduce congestion, including installation of a pedestrian crosswalk with rapid rectangular flashing beacons on Prairie Avenue north of 23 Street. In 2018, the City's Transportation and Mobility

Department completed the installation of school zone flashing beacons on Prairie Avenue to replace older static signs. Furthermore, the Department installed new pavement markings and signage along Prairie Avenue including re-stripping school zone markings.

In addition to these improvements, the City applied and was awarded funding through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Transportation Alternatives Grant Program to design and implement various pedestrian safety improvements in the vicinity of MBSH. The project scope includes pedestrian ramp upgrades, new crosswalks, new school zone beacons on Prairie Avenue and Dade Boulevard, signalization improvements, and other pedestrian accessibility improvements. The project is currently in the design development phase and scheduled for construction in Fiscal Year 2024.

On October 26, 2021, the City's Committee for Quality Education passed a motion urging the Transportation and Mobility Department to develop a working plan prioritizing student safety during drop-off and pick-up at Miami Beach Senior High School. The motion was transmitted to the Mayor and City Commission on October 28, 2021 via LTC # 463-2021.

ANALYSIS:

In 2019, Transportation and Mobility Department staff conducted observations during morning drop-off period and discovered that some parents were dropping-off students along eastbound Dade Boulevard forcing students to cross Dade Boulevard at unsignalized mid-block locations (i.e. encouraging jaywalking). As a result, the Department commissioned a study entitled "Miami Beach Senior High School Safety Study" to explore the feasibility of creating a dedicated pick-up/drop-off lane along Dade Boulevard to discourage the illegal drop-offs. The study was completed in 2020 and recommended the implementation of a single one-way westbound pick-up/drop-off lane between the existing bus lane in front of the school and Dade Boulevard (Attachment). Given the proposed pick-up/drop-off lane would be located partially on County right-of-way, the study was submitted to Miami-Dade County for review, approval, and programming of the recommended improvement.

The preliminary cost estimate for the proposed pick-up/drop-off lane is approximately \$525,000 including design, permitting, and construction costs. City staff has met several times with the Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (MDCPS) to discuss the proposed pick-up/drop-off lane. While both agencies found the improvement warranted and feasible, MDCPS advised that funding would need to be identified and included in its work program for design and construction of the improvement. The City is in the process of preparing a detailed construction cost estimate for the proposed pick-up/drop-off lane.

As a temporary mitigation measure, MDCPS proposed the installation of a 4-foot high fence along the back of the north sidewalk on Dade Boulevard to deter students from illegally crossing mid-block. In addition, as an immediate improvement, both MDCPS and the City have requested that DTPW re-stripe the existing crosswalks at the intersections of Dade Boulevard/Washington Avenue and Dade Boulevard/Prairie Avenue to enhance pedestrian safety.

The Administration presented the proposed MBSH pick-up/drop-off lane concept at the March 30, 2022 FERC meeting. At the meeting, the Committee recommended that City staff meet

with DTPW and MDCPS to propose that each agency, including the City, fund one-third of the total cost of the pick-up/drop-off lane in order to fully fund the proposed improvement. Furthermore, FERC requested that the Administration provide an update on these discussions at the April FERC meeting. At this time, City staff has scheduled a meeting with both parties to discuss a potential funding partnership and will provide a verbal update at the April 27 PSNQLC and April 29 FERC meetings.

CONCLUSION:

Given the documented student and pedestrian safety concerns associated with MBSH drop-off and pick-up operations, the Transportation and Mobility Department completed a safety study which recommended the implementation of a pick-up/drop-off lane in front of MBSH between the existing bus lane and Dade Boulevard. The estimated total cost of the improvement is \$525,000. The Administration is working with MDCPS and DTPW to explore a funding partnership consisting of each agency contributing 1/3 of the total cost of the proposed pick-up/drop-off lane. If County funding cannot be secured through a collaboration, then the City may explore the possibility of fully funding the proposed improvement as part of the FY2022/2023 capital budget process.

Applicable Area

South Beach

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-14?

No

Does this item utilize G.O. Bond Funds?

No

Strategic Connection

Mobility - Improve the walking and biking experience.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
<input type="checkbox"/> Attachment - Preferred Alternative for Drop-off on Dade Boulevard	Other



MIAMI BEACH SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TRAFFIC CIRCULATION IMPROVEMENT PLAN AT DADE BLVD.