

MIAMI BEACH

TO: Members of the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee
FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager 
DATE: July 27, 2022

SUBJECT: **DISCUSSION REGARDING THE VIABILITY OF A POTENTIAL EXPRESS LANE ON I-95 TO AND FROM MIAMI BEACH.**

HISTORY

This item, sponsored by Commissioner Steven Meiner, was referred at the April 6, 2022 City Commission meeting to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee (PSNQLC) for discussion.

Given a connection from the existing I-95 Express Lanes to/from the MacArthur Causeway already exists, this item will focus on a potential future direct connection to/from the I-95 express lanes and the Julia Tuttle Causeway.

I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway is a vital limited access facility in Miami-Dade County providing a direct connection between Miami International Airport (via State Road (SR) 112), I-95, and Miami Beach. One of only two limited access facilities in Miami-Dade County connecting the mainland to Miami Beach, SR 112/I-195 carries approximately 130,000 vehicles daily. The corridor provides interchange access to Alton Road and Arthur Godfrey Road/41 Street in the City of Miami Beach as well as to several neighborhoods recently experiencing significant growth including the Design District, Midtown, and Wynwood in the City of Miami. Travel demand in this corridor is expected to increase significantly over the next 30 years due to continued growth that is being planned within both cities of Miami and Miami Beach. Opportunities for geometric expansion along the corridor to address anticipated growth are constrained due to limited right-of-way.

In September 2017, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) initiated the Interstate 195 (I-195) Corridor Planning Study from NW 12 Avenue to SR 907/Alton Road (Attachment A depicts the project limits). The FDOT Planning Corridor Study was completed in September 2020 and evaluated the existing interchanges and corridor deficiencies in order to identify improvements that will accommodate the future needs of all transport modes. Of importance to the City of Miami Beach, the study evaluated the feasibility of providing a direct ramp connection between the existing I-95 Express Lanes and I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway as well as the feasibility of providing protected bicycle/pedestrian connections between the cities of Miami Beach and Miami via the causeway.

At the onset of the study, FDOT formed a Project Advisory Committee comprised of stakeholders and representatives from various affected agencies, including City of Miami Beach Transportation and Mobility Department. Several alternatives identified in the I-195 Corridor Planning Study are being further refined and developed as part of a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study currently being undertaken by FDOT.

ANALYSIS

The FDOT I-195 Corridor Planning Study evaluated various concept alternatives and their respective impacts in order to identify a preferred alternative comprising three main elements described below to address the study objectives and stakeholder interests.

- **Base Improvements** - Eight (8) base improvements identified to address mainline operational deficiencies as well as specific local issues raised by stakeholders during the public outreach.

- **System Improvements** - These improvements are intended to address key study objectives relative to improving access (i.e., better I-95 Express Lanes connectivity and interchange access) as well as systemwide performance. The preferred alternative identified in the study includes a new viaduct that would be implemented in the center of I-195 east of I-95 to allow traffic between I-95 (general purpose and express lanes) and Miami Beach to bypass local interchanges at N. Miami Avenue and at Biscayne Boulevard along the I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway (Attachment B).

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements** - The bicycle and pedestrian improvements are intended to address a key study objective of improving the non-motorized connections between the City of Miami Beach and the City of Miami. The preferred alternative in the study proposes a 14' wide shared-use path running parallel to the Julia Tuttle Causeway on the southside that will cross open water areas within Biscayne Bay via separate bridge structures. The shared use path would allow for two-way non-motorized traffic within the path (Attachment C).

FDOT has advanced the recommendations from the I-195 Corridor Planning Study to the PD&E phase of the project to further refine the alternatives and identify a locally preferred alternative. The PD&E Study commenced in July 2022 and is expected to be completed in July 2024. Design is expected to begin in early 2027 and finish in late 2031. Construction is expected to begin in early 2032 but is unfunded in the FDOT Five-Year Work Program at this time.

CONCLUSION

FDOT recently completed a corridor planning study for the I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway that evaluated various alternatives to improve capacity, accessibility, and safety for all modes. The preferred alternative identified in the planning study includes a proposed viaduct connecting the I-95 Express Lanes and I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway as well as a proposed bicycle/pedestrian viaduct along the Julia Tuttle Causeway. The proposed improvements would improve connectivity, safety, and multimodal mobility to and from the existing I-95 Express Lanes and Miami Beach, thus serving residents, visitors, and workforce.

FDOT is currently in the PD&E Study phase of this future project. The Transportation and Mobility Department staff will continue to remain actively involved in this important regional project as it moves forward through the FDOT project development process.

The above information is being presented to the PSNQLC for discussion and input.

Applicable Area

Middle Beach

Is this a Resident Right to Know item?

No

Does this item utilize G.O. Bond Funds?

No

Strategic Connection

Mobility – Address Traffic Congestion

Attachments:

A: Project Location Map

B: Preferred Alternative Concept – I-95 Express Lane Viaduct to/from I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway

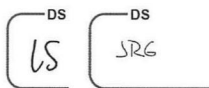
C: Preferred Alternative Concept – Pedestrian/Bicycle Viaduct along Julia Tuttle Causeway

Legislative Tracking

Referral C4R from April 6, 2022 Commission Meeting

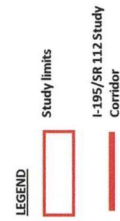
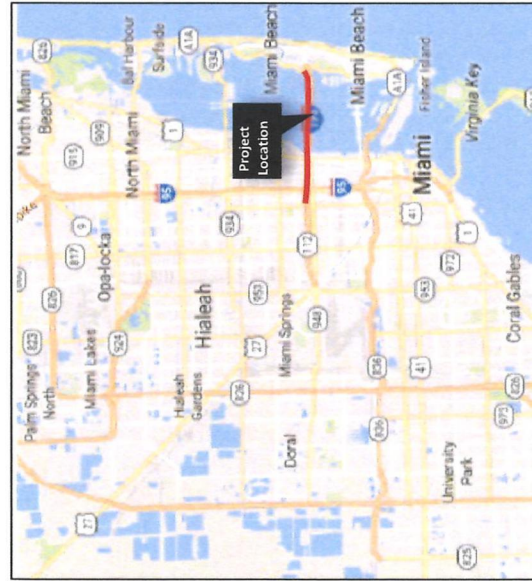
Sponsored (If Applicable)

Commissioner Steven Meiner



ATH/LS/JRG

ATTACHMENT A



Project Name:

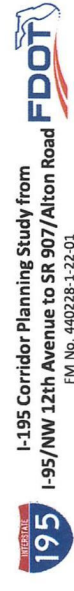


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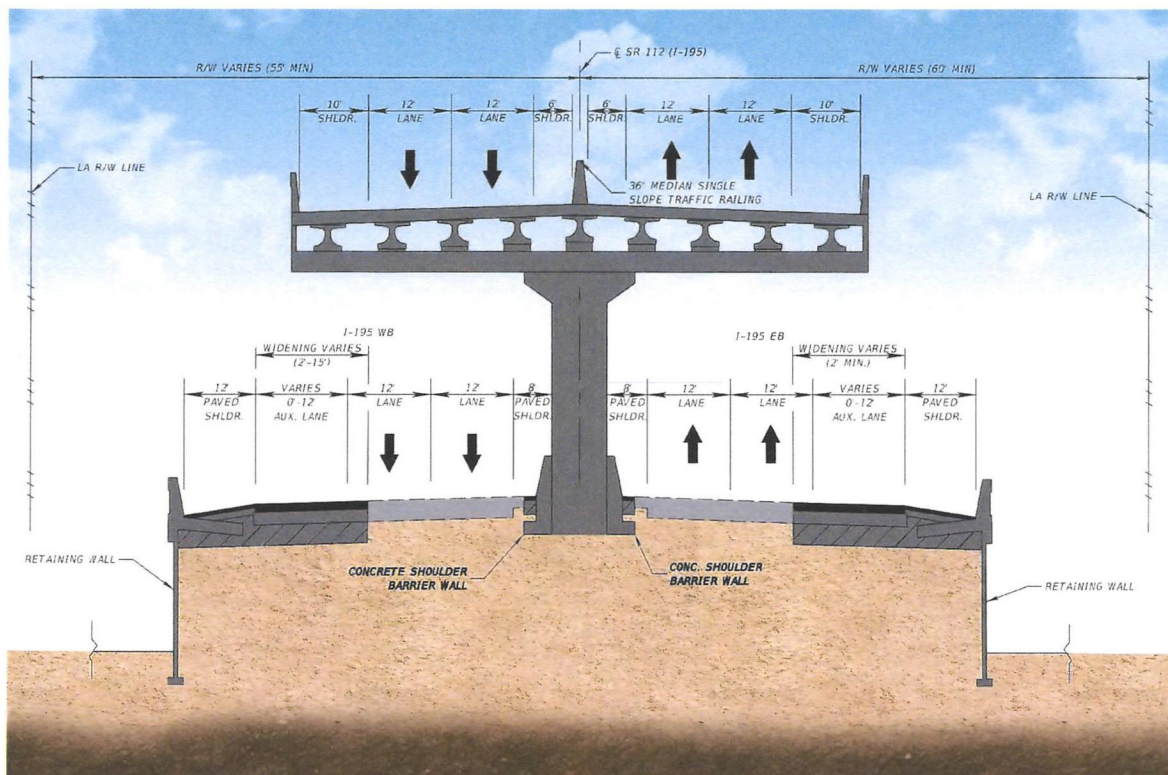
Project Location Map

Report Title:

Overall Corridor Report

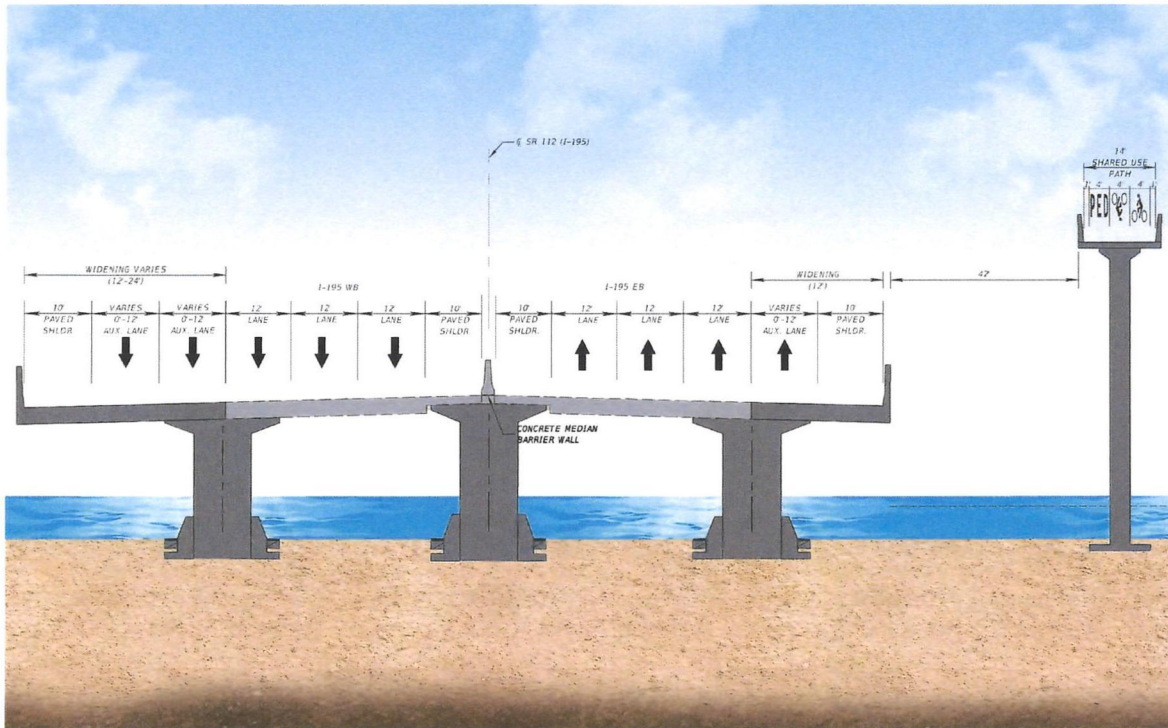
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ATTACHMENT B



Locally Preferred Alternative - Proposed Viaduct Connecting I-95 Express Lanes and I-195/Julia Tuttle Causeway

ATTACHMENT C



Proposed Bicycle/Pedestrian Viaduct along Julia Tuttle Causeway Looking East

Committee Assignments - C4 R

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Commissioner Steven Meiner
DATE: April 6, 2022

SUBJECT: REFERRAL TO THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE VIABILITY OF A POTENTIAL EXPRESS LANE ON I-95 TO AND FROM MIAMI BEACH.

ANALYSIS

Please place on the April 6, 2022 agenda a referral to the Public Safety and Quality of Life Committee to discuss the feasibility of a potential express lane on I-95 North and Southbound to provide entry and exit to and from Miami Beach.

As part of the referral, I would request that the City Administration be prepared to address at the committee meeting the feasibility of a potential express lane on I-95, North and Southbound to and from Miami Beach via the Julia Tuttle.

SUPPORTING SURVEY DATA

N/A

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

N/A

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

Yes

Does this item utilize G.O. Bond Funds?

No

Legislative Tracking

Commissioner Steven Meiner