

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager
DATE: October 17, 2018

SUBJECT: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, ACCEPTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD/COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REGARDING THE BEACH EXPRESS NORTH BUS EXPRESS RAPID TRANSIT (BERT) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT; APPROVING THE RECOMMENDED ROUTE ALIGNMENT ALONG 41ST STREET AND COLLINS AVENUE; APPROVING THE DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN OUTLINE; AND RECOMMENDING ADDITIONAL TERMS IN THE BERT BUSINESS PLAN TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

RECOMMENDATION

While the Administration continues to work with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to expedite the infrastructure work needed for the proposed Beach Express North Bus Express Rapid Transit (BERT) service, and with Miami-Dade County to finalize the route and Business Plan for the BERT service, it is recommended that the City Commission adopt a Resolution accepting the following recommendations of the Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee (NCAC) approved by acclamation at the June 20, 2018 NCAC meeting to allow the negotiation of the interlocal agreement to proceed in parallel with the programming of the infrastructure improvements::

1. Recommended route along 41st Street and Collins Avenue;
2. The draft BERT Business Plan outline.
3. Include in the BERT Business Plan:
 - Annual evaluations of the Beach Express North BERT Demonstration Service with an exit strategy for underperformance;
 - Input from the hotel industry;
 - Standard (non-premium) fare for the BERT Demonstration Service; and
 - Ample opportunities for customer feedback.

BACKGROUND

The Miami-Dade County Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) Plan contains six (6) Rapid Transit Corridors and nine (9) Bus Express Rapid Transit (BERT) routes for Miami-Dade County.

BERT service consists of enhanced branded buses operating limited stop service on shoulders or dedicated transit lanes, where feasible, to reduce travel time and help ensure service schedule reliability.

On April 26, 2018, the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) unanimously approved Resolution #14-18 endorsing the identification and implementation of demonstration projects that advance elements of the SMART Plan. On May 2, 2018, the TPO announced the SMART Demonstration Projects Cycle for Fiscal Year 2019. The demonstration projects are intended to be in service for a three (3) year duration. If the demonstration project is deemed successful by the TPO, it would be implemented on a permanent basis.

Pursuant to City Commission Resolution No. 2018-30317 adopted on May 16, 2018, Miami Beach and Miami-Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works have applied jointly to the Miami-Dade TPO's SMART Demonstration Program for the proposed Beach Express North BERT Demonstration Service connecting the Golden Glades Multimodal facility, Earlington Heights Metrorail Station, and Miami Beach, while operating on the shoulder of SR 112/Julia Tuttle Causeway.

The City's application was submitted to the TPO on May 21, 2018.

On June 11, 2018, the Transportation, Parking, Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Committee (TPBPFC) discussed the Beach Express North BERT Demonstration Project. At the meeting, City staff presented the results of a market demand analysis that evaluated employment data for various areas of the City. The TPBPFC passed a motion recommending that the Beach Express North BERT Demonstration Project serve Mount Sinai Medical Center, then operate along 41st Street to Collins

Express North BERT Demonstration Project serve Mount Sinai Medical Center, then operate along 41st Street to Collins Avenue, and continue north along Collins Avenue to 44th Street, then south along Indian Creek Drive to 23rd Street, in order to serve major hotels and entertainment destinations along the Collins Avenue corridor.

At the June 20, 2018 NCAC meeting, the Administration presented the results of a market demand analysis that evaluated employment data for various areas of the City and recommended potential stops and terminus locations in the City as well as a draft Business Plan for the Demonstration Service.

At its June 21, 2018 TPO Governing Board meeting, the TPO adopted Resolution No. 29-18 which approved eleven (11) SMART Demonstration Projects, including the Beach Express North BERT project, for funding through its SMART Demonstration Project grants program.

At its June 29, 2018 meeting, the Finance and Citywide Projects Committee (FCWPC) also discussed this item. The Committee recommended that staff: 1) engage with Miami-Dade County administration quickly to finalize the Interlocal Agreement and Business Plan; 2) explore the possibility of providing a subsidy to City of Miami Beach Employees that use the BERT service; and 3) request quarterly presentations to FCWPC regarding the performance of the BERT Demonstration Service.

ANALYSIS

In advance of the TPO adoption of the TPO SMART Demonstration Project grants and pursuant to direction from the City Commission, the City's Transportation Department staff has 1) evaluated market-demand and made recommendations for the potential route on Miami Beach, including terminus locations and 2) prepared a draft Business Plan outline for the Beach Express North BERT Demonstration service and

Business Plan

The goal of the Beach Express North BERT Demonstration Service is to provide a one seat ride from the Golden Glades Multimodal Center to Miami Beach, connecting to the Earlington Heights Metrorail Station, Mount Sinai Medical Center, and a terminus location (to be determined) in Miami Beach. The service is targeted to serve people working on Miami Beach, particularly those living in north and northwest Miami-Dade County.

Note: The proposed Beach Express North BERT route on Miami Beach stops at Mount Sinai Medical Center, then continues south along Alton Road to a terminus at the Miami Beach Convention Center. The City's Transportation Department is working with Miami-Dade County to modify the route in order to more effectively serve major employment and activity centers along Collins Avenue and Indian Creek Drive between 44th Street and 17th Street.

Components of the Business Plan will include the following:

I. Objectives

- Implement the BERT service envisioned in Miami-Dade County's SMART Plan;
- Connect to major Miami Beach major employment centers with their workforce through convenient, reliable, and comfortable transit service, including the many employees of Miami Beach residing in Miami-Dade County north of I-395 and east of I-95; and
- Connect to local Miami Beach Trolley service and regional Metrorail and Tri-Rail service.

II. Timeline

Pre-Implementation

- Conduct community and stakeholder outreach to obtain input.
- Execute Interlocal Agreement with Miami-Dade County, including a Business Plan.
- Promote the service.

Year One

- Initiate demonstration service.
- Monitor effectiveness of service (see metrics below).
- Monitor effectiveness of connections to Miami Beach Trolley routes.
- Market services, as a system, effectively to a number of targeted market segments.
- Charge fares consistent with Miami-Dade Transit standard fares, not premium fares, for the life of the demonstration project.
- Update connections to Miami Beach Trolley routes, if required.

Year Two

- Determine if the demonstration route should be continued.
- Continue to update connections to Miami Beach Trolley routes, if required.
- Continue to market services, as a system, effectively to a number of targeted market segments.

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Year Three

- Determine if the demonstration route is to be continued on a permanent basis.
- Continue to update connections to Miami Beach Trolley routes, if required.
- Secure public (federal, state, county) and/or private partner funding in order to continue the Beach Express North BERT service on a permanent basis, if desired.

III. Keys to Success

- Comfortable, reliable vehicles with unique branding and technology amenities.
- Easily accessible information about the service route and schedule changes/problems.
- Drivers trained to provide courteous customer service.
- Convenient and comfortable stop locations.
- An experienced service provider.
- Exclusive lanes of travel to avoid traffic congestion.

IV. Market Feasibility Analysis (see information below)

V. Proposed Route and Stops (In Development)

VI. Sources and Uses of Funds

- Operating:
 - Annual Operating Cost: \$3,440,000
 - Three-Year Demonstration Program Cost: \$10,320,000
- Capital: \$9.5 million capital for buses for Beach Express North BERT service.
- Sources:
 - City of Miami Beach : 50% of Annual Operating Cost
 - TPO Grant: 50% of Annual Operating Cost
 - Miami-Dade County : \$9.5 million equivalent capital contribution of buses

Annual Operating Cost		
Total	Miami Beach	TPO
\$3,440,000.00	\$1,720,000.00	\$1,720,000.00

Three Year Operating Cost		
Total	Miami Beach	TPO
\$10,320,000.00	\$5,160,000.00	\$5,160,000.00

VII. Marketing Strategy (In Development)

VIII. Implementation Strategy (In Development)

IX. Performance Metrics

- Mode shift (i.e. number of new transit riders)
- Total ridership on route
- On-time performance
- Mystery rider evaluations of customer service, comfort, convenience, cleanliness, etc.

Miami Beach Terminus Locations

Staff has also evaluated potential terminus locations within the City. The number of employees in target areas of Miami Beach was evaluated with the goal of serving areas of the City with high concentrations of employees. The potential market of choice riders surrounding the Golden Glades (GG) Multimodal facility and the Earlington Heights (EH) Metrorail Station was also evaluated with the goal of attracting riders who live in those areas and work in Miami Beach but may not have convenient transit connections at the present time.

Criteria	Miami Beach	Mt. Sinai	Collins Ave. 30th to 50th	Collins Ave. 17th to 30th	South Beach	Entertainment District	RDA	Convention Center
High Number of Employees	52,734	3,321	6,064	8,496	33,464	6,444	4,868	2,016
High Employees/Sq. Mile	7,533	36,900	24,256	33,984	17,249	28,388	11,321	2,016
Potential Choice Riders- GG	M	M	M	L	M	M	M	M
Potential Choice Riders- EH	M	M	M	H	M	M	H	H
Square Miles	7	0.09	0.25	0.25	1.94	0.227	0.43	1

Based on staff's analysis, a potential route that serves Mount Sinai Medical Center and major employment destinations and activity centers along Collins Avenue between 50th Street and 17th Street could serve a large number of workers and areas with a large concentration of employees per square mile. The route proposed by Miami-Dade County once on Miami Beach is via Alton Road to the Convention Center. This would require trolley transfers to the Mount Sinai Medical Center and Collins Avenue 17th Street to 50th Street employment centers. A revised route on Miami Beach to minimize transfers to these employment centers would need to be further negotiated with Miami-Dade County, including exact stop locations on Miami Beach. It is important to note that the route outlined in the County's Adopted SMART Plan includes 41st Street and Washington Avenue rather than Alton Road.

Dedicated Lane

Critical to the success of a BERT project is the ability to travel in an exclusive lane, thereby avoiding traffic congestion. The north/south portion of the route from Golden Glades intermodal facility to the Earlington Heights Metrorail station will operate in the dedicated I-95 Express lanes. The concept of the BERT demonstration route anticipated the use of shoulders as has been used on other Express routes in Miami-Dade County.

In an August 8, 2018 meeting between the Administration staff, Miami-Dade Transit staff, and FDOT D6 leadership to discuss the use of the shoulders of the Julia Tuttle Causeway for the Beach Express North BERT demonstration service (as per a July 25, 2018 City Commission resolution), FDOT expressed a strong opposition to the temporary use of the outside shoulders due to the anticipated low effectiveness that it would have on the service in light of current state guidelines governing the conditional use of shoulders for transit service. Further, FDOT expressed concerns with the impacts that the use of the outside shoulders would have on the existing bike lanes which were implemented as part of a USDOT/Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) pilot program. Instead, FDOT recommended using the inside shoulders of the Julia Tuttle Causeway for the BERT service, but only after reinforcement and widening of the inside shoulders and restriping of the entire causeway. Further, FDOT recommended that no service begin until this work is done. At the meeting, FDOT advised that this work may take up to three (3) years.

In the meanwhile, the City's Transportation Department staff will continue to work with FDOT to expedite the necessary improvements to the inside shoulders of the Julia Tuttle Causeway and with the County to finalize the Interlocal Agreement and Business Plan for the proposed Beach Express North BERT service, including finalizing the route and developing a marketing/outreach plan and implementation strategy.

In an effort to implement a BERT-like service in Miami Beach in the near term (six (6) months to one (1) year), the Administration and Miami-Dade County are discussing potential modifications to existing County bus routes, such as the Airport Express (Route 150), to serve Mount Sinai Medical Campus and the hotel and economic activity centers along Collins Avenue and in City Center. Similarly, existing County bus routes currently serving Golden Glades Multimodal Facility and operating along the 95 Express Lanes could potentially be extended east to serve Miami Beach employment centers.

It is worth noting that the October 17, 2018 City Commission meeting agenda includes a discussion item (R9F) with more details on the recent meeting with FDOT officials regarding the use of the Julia Tuttle Causeway shoulders for the proposed Beach Express North BERT service.

CONCLUSION

The adopted 2016 Miami Beach Transportation Master Plan was premised on a mode share goal and modal prioritization strategy adopted by Resolution 2015-29083 on July 8, 2015, which places pedestrians first; transit, bicycles, and freight second; and private automobiles third. Projects in the Transportation Master Plan are intended to move Miami Beach towards this mode share vision by increasing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit travel. The County's proposed network of BERT projects, including the Beach Express North BERT project, promotes the City's mode share vision and modal prioritization.

The potential new BERT demonstration service also has the potential to shift the use of vehicles to transit, particularly for workers commuting to and from Miami Beach. The environmental benefits of the proposed transit service will reduce regional greenhouse gas emissions, and align with Miami Beach's resiliency program and the goals of the 100 Resilient Cities partnership.

KEY INTENDED OUTCOMES SUPPORTED

Ensure Comprehensive Mobility Addressing All Modes Throughout The City

Legislative Tracking

Transportation

Sponsor

Vice-Mayor Mark Samuelian and Commissioner John Elizabeth Aleman

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

- Resolution