

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Increase on-street parking fees immediately to encourage cars to park in the garages.
- Bring proposal for the budgeted City position to work with the County overseeing traffic lights.
- Obtain public input.
- Look into possibility of making avenues going in one direction.
- Look at strategic areas for crosswalks to promote walking around the City.
- Install plug-ins for electric cars at parking garages.
- Move forward with the ferries or water taxis.
- Consider Terminal Island as a ferry point location and work with Fisher Island to have a coordinated ferry service.

Jose Gonzalez and Saul Frances to handle.

Jose Gonzalez, Transportation Director, thanked the City Commission and the Administration for elevating transportation as a paramount issue in the City. He explained that 11 months ago this City Commission approved the designation of a new Transportation Department. He reported that since then, they have launched two trolley loops and are in the process of launching two additional trolley loops in the next Fiscal Year; they have deployed traffic management and monitoring services during Special Events and during high impact period, and are moving this initiative forward to the next level to intelligent transportation systems, parking management system, a traffic monitoring center and adaptive traffic signal control. They have completed two Master Plans, a bike and a transportation Master Plan, both due for completion this Fiscal Year, and continue to work with partners to implement short-term and long-term solutions to transit activity including a short-term express bus services to connect Downtown Miami and Miami Beach. He recognized from his team who made the above accomplishments possible; Josiel Ferrer, Transportation Coordinator, Julian Guevara, Transportation Supervisor, Xavier Falconi, Transportation Senior Planner and Milo Smajstorovic, Transportation Analyst and expert at intelligent transportation systems. He announced that Jose Abreu, Senior Vice-President of Gennet Fleming and City's consultant, is not able to be here today but Jose Clavel, and Nelson Mora who are here as representatives. The issues that led them to this workshop is the fact that the City has a stable resident population of approximately 90,000, but on an average day there are over 200,000 people here; Special Events, seasonal traffic, development and construction impact mobility, and traffic congestion, if it is not managed properly will impact that affect the City's economic competitiveness.

Josiel Ferrer, Transportation Coordinator, showed a PowerPoint presentation displaying among other things the proposed mode prioritization depending on the type of corridor, and in summary, the recommendation was to change the prioritization to 1) pedestrian 2) transit bicycles and freight and 3) vehicles.

Commissioner Malakoff stated that she has been working on the Washington Avenue streetscape plan, and suggested that in any bicycle path in the City needs to be protected. It is dangerous having bicycles riding next to parked cars, so she urged that they be protected.

Commissioner Grieco agreed with Commissioner Malakoff regarding protecting bike lanes, and he was advised that the protected bicycle lanes will be done in the West Avenue project, and once implemented, these will be the first in the County. He does not think Washington Avenue is an ideal place for bike lanes though.

Mayor Levine, as the City's designated representative in the MPO, explained that at this organization there are many people pulling in many different ways and is hard to get everyone

to focus regional areas; he has been pushing connecting Miami with Miami Beach. Environmental studies have not been made, so they are starting from ground zero. They are working to have a connection with the City. They need to move forward with identifying funding to create a dedicated potential light rail route or street car, from 5th and Alton, up 5th to Washington, north from Washington, connecting to the Convention Center and maybe having a loop, having an enhanced bus rapid transit system, and in the meantime, have a potential street car that connects Downtown Miami with the City of Miami Beach. If they want to begin the process of having a streetcar, they need to look for funding immediately, and it is incumbent upon them to give direction to the Transportation Department to seek funding and push this forward to get this rolling.

Commissioner Malakoff suggested moving forward with the streetcars, but without the “wires.”

Commissioner Grieco asked if they would be able to do a streetcar where there are actually taxis also using the same lane, as done in other cities.

Mr. Ferrer stated that in Europe those lanes have dual purposes with buses, and becomes nearly all transit lanes.

Commissioner Steinberg asked that if they are going to have a rapid transit system, would that eliminate other buses?

Mr. Gonzalez explained that they still would want the regional service. They need both services and they need to work together. In answering Commissioner Grieco, he stated it is more of a policy decision on how to use those lanes.

Discussion held regarding motivating people not to use their cars but to use rapid transportation.

Mayor Levine believes that the initiative and the mandate to the Transportation Department is to push for streetcars that can run parallel tracks, similar to what the City of Miami is doing, to have an enhanced bus transit program connecting, and not allow that to stop them from creating a streetcar. They need to give direction to Transportation to seek funding.

Commissioner Grieco stated that there is an intercity transportation, and there is an intracity transportation, which they can seek funding for. He made a motion to direct the City Manager's Office and the Transportation Department to seek funding through grants, federal funding, State, or come up with creative ways in the local or regional taxation on fees; seconded by Commissioner Malakoff; Voice-vote: 4-0; Absent: Vice-Mayor Wolfson and Commissioners Tobin and Weithorn. **Jose Gonzalez to handle.**

Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager, explained that with respect to the bicycle plan, they received comments that is not only the bike path, but places to park the bikes, and so they have installed approximately 100 additional bike racks across the City, and are looking to do several hundred more before the end of the year to try to incentivize and make it more convenient for people to put the bikes in the racks.

Commissioner Malakoff reviewed the plan with Jose and Josiel and she asked again about the status of the attractive bicycle racks request she had made, and as she understands, they have located some.

Mr. Gonzalez will be bringing the bike racks item at the next Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee for discussion. **Jose Gonzalez to handle.**

Discussion continued regarding bike racks.

Mayor Levine asked what else they need as direction and policy from the City Commission.

Mr. Gonzalez requested an endorsement for mode prioritization, which is the hot topic now, and they would like some direction from this body and vision, and any concerns that they may have.

Commissioner Malakoff has a concern, because they are in a semi-tropical climate most of the year, it is either hot or rainy, and although she understands the priorities, having pedestrians as priority No. 1 and mass transit as No. 2, they cannot put cars at the bottom of the list, because people are not going to give up their cars. There are certain places in the City where they will need more parking garages; they must have them in order for businesses to thrive. Mass transit is fun to ride and easy to get on and off, but she still thinks they have to look for more garages in strategic areas of the City.

Commissioner Grieco agreed with Commissioner Malakoff, since cars cannot be ignored and people will always want to drive in them. A parking garage is being built on 23rd Street and another one is being built in the north Collins area, so they are not trying to eliminate parking, but looking into increasing it in areas; even with this directive, this will not be motivating people to get rid of their cars, but perhaps use them less.

City Manager Morales added that in terms of priorities, everyone they spoke to, from consultants to the County and City's team, the issue of on street parking on arterials is a critical issue, because the amount of traffic and delay created by the people riding around looking for a spot on the streets could impact 20 to 30% in terms of the time frame, so the prioritization issue is to look at some of those arterials dedicated lanes for transit versus parking.

Commissioner Grieco requested to have a slight net increase in parking, and in the same way do the same increase in parking garages. He gave examples of creating a parking garage on Washington Avenue, eliminating 200 spots on the street and in turn having more dedicated lanes, widening sidewalks and eliminating parallel parking on the streets. The idea of having parallel parking on these roads should also be considered going forward, to take parking off the street if there is parking available in the parking garages. Personally, he would turn the current City parking garages into metered parking, which would probably bring a net increase in revenue and speed up the process of getting people off the roads.

Commissioner Malakoff suggested making on street parking more expensive immediately to encourage cars to park in the garages instead of circling around looking for a parking spot. **Saul Frances to handle.**

Discussion held.

City Manager Morales stated that County staff met with the Administration to begin discussing traffic signal projects, how the City can take more control of that, the cost or how the City can play a greater role, so it was a positive meeting. They recognized their resource limitations and the County spoke highly of the projects that our team is doing on 41st Street, which is a pilot program with intelligent traffic. The County even offered to have a dedicated employee from the City in their Center to focus only on the City's signals. They are open to that concept.

Jose Gonzalez, Transportation Director, stated that the County operates 2,500 signals Countywide, and in the City of Miami Beach, we have close to 300 signal lights. Miami Beach is a barrier island with unique traffic issues, and the County recognized that Miami Beach gives them a great deal of complaints and concerns; however, they are limited as far as their resources and time to dedicate to the City alone. Today they talked about partnering with the County, by either having a City staff member at the County proactively looking at Miami Beach, and through ITS (Intelligent Transportation System), once they have the cameras and travel time and devices installed throughout the City, they will be able to see where problems occur in real-time, and then will be able to proactively address the issues and be more effective.

Mayor Levine reinstated that the County controls the City's traffic lights, and the City will have an expert in that area from the City staff in the County building, overseeing our traffic lights, so we can take more effective control of traffic lights. He thinks this is a great idea. Secondly, the camera system and sensors will make the City's system better informational and provide input to the dedicated City staff to solve.

City Manager Morales added that they will come back with a proposal for the budgeted City position to work with the County. **Jose Gonzalez to handle.**

Mayor Levine stated he wants to get this done and asked if there was any input from the public.

Discussion held.

Commissioner Steinberg thinks this was a great first conversation.

Scott Diffenderfer, member of the Transportation Parking Committee for many years, thanked everyone for getting a fast start on this project and stated that this will cost a great deal of money. When the City was in a budget crisis years ago, the parking surplus was diverted into the general fund, and he asked that they consider finding funding for these important issues.

Ray Breslin, member of the Transportation Parking Committee, added that the new cars to go share program is going to integrate and improve things. As far as pedestrian friendliness, the City needs to work hard with the State on the condition of Indian Creek Drive and Collins Avenue. The bus stops are dangerous. He suggested eliminating parking and maybe taking some streets and make them one-way streets, and make one dedicated transit lane and a dedicated bike lane.

Mayor Levine stated that in Manhattan the avenues go in one direction, and he asked if there was consensus to look into this.

Mr. Gonzalez stated that they can look into it; however, in general, one-way streets are good for capacity and improve traffic flow, but one-way streets also tend to have higher speeds than two-way streets, for the most part. They will have to take a close look at the issue. **Jose Gonzalez to review.**

Discussion continued.

Ray Breslin spoke.

Mr. Gonzalez added that the City's consultant Genet Fleming is gathering data in the City and this will be part of the Master Plan.

Barbara Cowen is involved with buses and pedestrian traffic and is happy to hear that pedestrians are a priority. She thanked the City Commission. She pointed out that in terms of getting across the street, some places are virtually impossible to cross from one side to the other in order to get a bus, because there are no lights. She has not heard about bus stops. Bus stops shelters here are terrible, they either produce heat or are or too wet when raining. She asked the City Commission to consider bus stops shelters and their design when considering rapid transit.

Mayor Levine asked if all bus stops are built and designed by the County and if there were enhancements that they can do.

Mr. Gonzalez explained that the current design has been approved by City boards.

Discussion held regarding enhancement to bus stops. **Jose Gonzalez to handle.**

Commissioner Steinberg suggested looking at strategic areas for crosswalks if they want to promote walking around the City.

Commissioner Grieco informed that he will be discussing the LED lights at crosswalks at Neighborhood/Community Affairs Committee, and they are talking about putting an LED light crosswalk at West Avenue and perhaps another one at Alton Road.

Nancy Liebman is delighted to hear on some of the progress that is happening; she spoke on behalf of Miami Beach United, and stated that they met on a mobility workshop to try to get people to understand what is being discussed today. She suggested that the City does visuals so people can understand modes, sharing and protected bike lanes. MBU put together a list of priorities. One of them is adopting a vision, which they now have. They feel they should prioritize pedestrians, bicycles and transit above the private orders, but stated that this City Commission is moving in the right direction. She asked that the City continue to develop mode share goals by a professional demographic survey, so each neighborhood has their fair share of what is necessary. She suggested that the transportation and parking funds be put back to enhance transportation in the City instead of adding parking garages. She also suggested taking the streets back from FDOT, creating a commission committee for transportation issues, and urged not to destroy the neighborhoods by making the streets into one-way streets, because this just causes more confusion.

Mark Samuelian explained that as he talks to residents, the issue of parking and transportation congestion is the number one issue, and he congratulated the City Commission for the progress being made. He stated that the City should look at the demand side of the equation, whether it is workforce housing, the demand for trucks coming in, and certain types of shows and conventions that bring traffic, and looking at whether these are all necessary. He stated that the development projects have a big impact on what the City is doing, and he congratulated the City Administration in opposing the Watson Island development, as this would have been a major problem. He added that for residents of the Venetian Islands, they have one car, and because of the use of alternative services, such as Lift or Uber, which they are using, they are not getting a second car. They are talking about changing the way people move. It takes an integrated change program, bold vision, metrics and people in charge, and recognizes the interdisciplinary nature of the problem.

Sheryl Gold, representing Green Space Tree Advocacy Group, congratulated the Transportation Department and Kathy G. Brooks, Assistant City Manager, for doing their research and basing

their recommendations on fact, not opinion. She congratulated the City Commission for embracing their recommendation. She stated that to continue spending taxpayer money building new garages is not progressive thinking, and she asked that they reconsider that option. She added that weather is not a reason to make cars a priority and added that they need to get off the addiction to cars, not to eliminate them, but to minimize it.

Mayor Levine stated that there is consensus on the dais that they want to transition away from garages and cars, but they have to provide for both until there are alternate modes of public transportation.

Monica Entin, Esq., representing Bercow, Radell & Fernandez, stated that while the City is making amazing strides in approaching the issue, the reality is that they have a historic City, and they value that historic nature of the City. They provide incentives to those people that develop those historic properties, and as a result, there is a deficit in parking. While the programs and goals are excellent, the reality is that there is a transition period, and to freeze anything does not do a service to the City. What is being discussed is the issue to increase street parking and force people into the garages. If they are allowed to come back to the City Commission, maybe they can present options to the City. As the City builds garages, whether private or City garages, why not have shuttle systems from garages, and why not have trolleys to garages, that way people can park in the garage and take the alternative transit mode available. She is here today to ask the City Commission again, to entertain the ability to proceed with parking garages because the City still needs them.

Commissioner Malakoff stated that one of the problems with parking garages is that they ask for the garages for the first floors to be activated. However, the uses within the garages are important. Certain retail and certain types of retail uses bring many trips per day or evening, and that is something they need to look at when improving garages, to avoid adding so many cars needed that they are not fulfilling adding the additional parking spaces to fulfill the needs of the neighborhood around.

Jose Gonzalez, Transportation Director, explained that the Master Plan is looking at strategic and appropriate locations for parking garages, and as part of the project, there will be specific recommendations as far as parking garages.

Mayor Levine asked if there are any new ideas with garages that make it more beneficial to the community and serve a dual purpose, for example with the car-sharing program.

Mr. Gonzalez stated that the intermodal facilities serve both as hubs as well as parking garages, so that people can switch modes, and they are looking at strategic places where to build them.

Commissioner Malakoff suggested adding plug-ins for electric cars.

Larry Colin suggested adding more parking capacity and perhaps consider expanding the new Convention Center to have additional parking spaces to create a hub to take City employees to and from on trolleys.

Mayor Levine asked for an update on the ferries or water taxis and asked how they can push this aggressively.

Mr. Gonzalez stated that they selected a water taxi service between Bayfront Park and a few locations on the west side of Miami Beach, including the Miami Beach Marina. There is an issue

with new dock construction, which requires permits from the Army Corps of Engineers and DEP. The issue is that the size of the dock is important, as it determines the size of the vessel. They are working these details with the contractor. If the dock is existent, it is much easier to operate a ferry out of that than one that needs to be constructed. The size of the dock is very important because the size of the dock determines the size of the vessel. The size of the dock and what can be permitted and what cannot is crucial. The contractor is working through those details now.

Mayor Levine wants to see the water taxi services or ferryboats move forward fast. **Jose Gonzalez to handle.**

City Manager Morales explained that the Marina is not the issue; that location is less attractive as it is far removed from Lincoln Road; there are environmental issues that they are working through.

Discussion continued.

Mayor Levine asked about Terminal Island and can they consider that location as a ferry point and work with Fisher Island to have a coordinated ferry service.

City Manager Morales stated that they could look at that but on the current site; there is only room for Fleet Maintenance.

Commissioner Steinberg asked when they can expect an update on the discussions held today and the final statistics.

Jose Gonzalez, Transportation Director, stated that the Transportation Master Plan is due for completion in the summer and that will be a public hearing. The plan needs to be adopted by the City Commission and is expected to be brought back before the August recess.

Handouts or Reference Materials:

1. Ad in The Miami Herald No. 994

End of Agenda

Transportation/Planning Workshop adjourned at 2:34:40 p.m.