

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: City Manager Eric Carpenter

DATE: November 20, 2024

TITLE: DISCUSS NEW STRATEGIES AND MORE EFFICIENT ALLOCATION OF POLICE RESOURCES FOR TRAFFIC CONTROL DURING PEAK TRAFFIC PERIODS.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends continued efforts to better manage traffic flow throughout all areas of the City while exploring other solutions technologically and in partnership with regional agencies.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

At the February 21, 2024 City Commission meeting, at the request of Mayor Steven Meiner and co-sponsors Commissioners Alex Fernandez and Joseph Magazine, an item (C4 S) was referred to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee ("PSNQLC") to discuss new strategies and more efficient allocation of police resources for traffic control during peak traffic periods.

The referral was pulled from the consent agenda and discussed, with the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) providing an update on the Department's traffic mitigation plan, and the Transportation and Mobility Department providing information on current efforts related to traffic synchronization. The discussion emphasized technological components as an additional means to mitigate traffic, and the item was moved to the PSNQLC with direction to reach out to Google's Project Green Light for additional information on their product.

The City of Miami Beach ("City") continues to explore and test various strategies to manage the increased vehicular demand on 41 Street. Ultimately the issue is that traffic demand exceeds roadway capacity. In addition, there are several factors that contribute to daily recurring congestion along the 41 Street corridor, including increased volumes due to drivers avoiding the major construction and choke points on I-395, closely spaced traffic signals, extensive school zone, and heavy side street traffic which can result in vehicles frequently blocking the intersections. Nonetheless, the City has made traffic control and mitigation a high priority with various ongoing efforts to alleviate the City's traffic difficulties.

To that end, the City has been coordinating with the Florida Department of Transportation ("FDOT") and Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works ("DTPW") to improve signal timing coordination and maximize the green time for 41 Street. Additionally, MBPD implemented a traffic mitigation plan consisting of enhanced police presence along 41 Street, control of the intersections and enforcement of the blocking of the intersection (box).

The item was discussed at the April 17, 2024 PSNQLC and moved to the full City Commission for discussion with a motion to include officers north of 71st Street in traffic mitigation efforts.

ANALYSIS

MBPD continues to deploy police officers, including its Motor Unit, at strategic locations throughout the City during peak traffic hours to streamline the flow of traffic. Police officers are deployed to congested intersections to actively manage traffic, deter vehicles and pedestrians from blocking intersections, and discourage any driving behavior that may directly or indirectly exacerbate congestion.

MBPD conducts rotating traffic mitigation efforts to identify key intersections on major thoroughfares leading up to the causeways and through North Beach (Attachment A). The Police and Transportation Departments agree that traffic volumes within North Beach are higher than ever and will continue to grow as new housing and businesses come online. During rush hours (7:30 A.M. to 9:30 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.), this district experiences heavy volumes of traffic much like other areas of Miami Beach.

During the morning rush hours, higher than normal volumes of traffic are experienced along Abbott Avenue, south along Indian Creek Drive until 63rd Street. One of the reasons for the increase in traffic comes from the convergence of traffic heading south at the intersection of Indian Creek and Harding Avenue, the only way south. At this intersection, block the box issues occur which sometimes impede southbound Indian Creek Drive and Abbott Avenue movement. This also causes block the box issues at 71st Street and Abbott Avenue and impedes east or westbound traffic along 71st Street.

During the afternoon rush hours, heavier than normal traffic volumes are also experienced on Indian Creek Drive from 67th Street north until 71st Street. Once north to westbound traffic clears the intersection of 71st Street and Indian Creek Drive, it flows westbound generally unrestricted outside of a crash, construction or incident along Normandy Drive.

Attachment A identifies locations where police resources can be deployed in North Beach if needed. MBPD will have hired 10 Public Safety Specialists ("PSS") by May 2024 to further guide and control vehicular traffic at streets and intersections, particularly during peak traffic periods and high impact periods. The PSS will be deployed at critical locations throughout the City as needed. The potential updated review of signal timing at the intersection of 71st and Indian Creek may also assist to assure that signalization is allowing enough traffic at peak hours so as not to exacerbate issues further south along Indian Creek Drive. MBPD is also reaching out to partner agencies to collaborate on the practices, technology and strategies being used to address traffic congestion.

Tangentially, the City is exploring different tools to help manage traffic congestion. One of the tools is to employ an innovative traffic signal optimization software to develop comprehensive signal timing plans that will more efficiently and effectively coordinate signalized intersections along major thoroughfares throughout the year and adjust for seasonal variations. This strategic approach aims to optimize traffic signal timing and reduce travel times within the City, thus enhancing mobility and ensuring a more pleasant experience for those navigating the streets of Miami Beach.

Accordingly, at the April 3, 2024 City Commission meeting, the City Commission approved the City Administration ("Administration") to issue Invitation to Negotiate ("ITN") 2024-289-ND for the deployment of an innovative traffic signal optimization system. The ITN was issued on April 5, 2024 and proposals are due on May 20, 2024.

Through this ITN, the City desires to receive proposals from specialized vendors in the field of automated traffic signal optimization systems. The envisioned system aims to integrate road user detections, real-time data collection and analytics, and the generation of signal timing plans. This system will select optimal signal timing plans for specific time periods of the day, days of the week, and seasons, including during the City's high impact season. The selected optimized signal timing plans will be reviewed by the City's Transportation and Mobility Department and DTPW and

compared with the current signal timing plans implemented by DTPW to identify opportunities for signal timing improvements. Depending on DTPW approval, the proposed optimized signal timing plans will then undergo on-site implementation and evaluation to ensure their effectiveness in managing and mitigating traffic congestion.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

TBD

Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate? (FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on . See BIE at:
<https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CONCLUSION

The Administration is committed to exploring different tools to help manage traffic congestion in the City. As such, the Transportation and Mobility and Police Departments have employed parallel mitigation efforts both with on the ground resources and advances of technology. The City will continue its efforts to better manage traffic flow throughout all areas of the City while exploring other solutions technologically and in partnership with regional agencies.

Applicable Area

Citywide

Is this a "Residents Right to Know" item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?

No

Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?

No

Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying? No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

Department

Police

Sponsor(s)

Mayor Steven Meiner

Co-sponsor(s)

Commissioner Alex Fernandez
Commissioner Joseph Magazine
Commissioner David Suarez