

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: March 26, 2025

TITLE: DISCUSS NEXT STEPS AND FUNDING FOR THE PINE TREE DRIVE AND 46 STREET TRAFFIC CIRCLE PROJECT

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Administration recommends that City staff continue to coordinate with Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) to determine a viable alternative in light of the comments received from the residents, during the meeting held on January 29, 2025 and comeback to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (FERC) with a proposed design and estimated cost.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

At the June 26, 2024, meeting of the Mayor and City Commission (City Commission), at the request of the Administration, the City Commission referred item C4 AF to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee (PSNQLC) and the FERC to discuss next steps and funding for the Pine Tree Drive and 46 Street Traffic Circle project (Attachment A).

On October 14, 2020, the City Commission adopted Resolution No. 2020-31464, approving a Joint Participation Agreement (JPA) between the City of Miami Beach (City) and Miami-Dade County (County), for geometric improvements on Pine Tree Drive between 45th and 47th Street, including a new traffic circle at the intersection of Pine Tree Drive, Sheridan Avenue and 46th Street. The JPA was necessary to allow the City to perform the improvements, while sharing the cost, as Pine Tree Drive is a County road. The total project cost at the time was estimated to be \$1.1 million, and the County's contribution was in the amount of \$500,000.

On January 19, 2021, representatives from the Office of County Commissioner Higgins, the Office of the Mayor and City Commission, and staff from the City of Miami Beach Police Department, Transportation and Capital Improvements, met on site with neighboring residents, who expressed concerns over the safety of the road and frequent motor vehicle accidents. Commissioner Higgins informed the residents that the County and the City were in the process of completing a JPA to fund improvements to the intersection and the City's Transportation Department presented the conceptual traffic circle design. The residents in attendance were very supportive.

On April 9, 2021, the JPA between the City and the County was fully executed.

On May 25, 2021, the City engaged Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc. (Kimley-Horn) to provide professional engineering consulting services to design a traffic circle located at the intersection of Pine Tree Drive and 46 Street (Project), as part of a traffic calming strategy. Kimley-Horn developed a concept for a multi-lane, single traffic circle (Attachment B), reducing traffic conflicts while maintaining projected traffic flows.

On September 9, 2021, City staff met with neighboring residents directly impacted by the Project and presented them with the 60% design plans based on the multi-lane, single traffic circle.

By October 11, 2021, four (4) of the residents adjacent to the Project voiced opposition to the proposed multi-lane design. These residents raised concerns about the large footprint of the traffic circle, potential increased traffic, and confusion for motorists transitioning within a multi-lane traffic circle. Based on the stakeholder concerns, the design was paused while Kimley-Horn evaluated the input and conducted further analysis. Kimley-Horn advised that the layout could be modified to address the concerns raised by residents by developing a single lane traffic circle geometry, even though the multi-lane design was developed in compliance with traffic engineering standards and best practices.

On March 14, 2022, a meeting was held at the Project site with the impacted residents and representatives from the Mayor's Office, the City Manager's Office, and other City departments including Marketing and Communications, Transportation and Mobility, Police, and the Office of Capital Improvement Projects (CIP). At that meeting, the stakeholders continued to express concerns about the multi-lane design. The consensus from the residents was that the City needed to proceed with a modification of the existing design from a multi-lane to a single-lane geometry. This modification required a new traffic study which had to be approved by the County.

In order to accommodate traffic flows and resolve minimum merge distances, the project footprint would need to be expanded and would require a second traffic circle at Pine Tree Drive and 47th Street.

On May 26, 2022, Kimley-Horn began the re-evaluation and preliminary design for the single lane, dual traffic circle design (Attachment C).

On July 9, 2022, Kimley-Horn submitted the revised layout to the DTPW for review. After several review cycles and meetings, DTPW approved the proposed revised layout. The revised design significantly increases the projected cost and resulted in the City staff's request for additional funding from the DTPW, since the Project scope is within the County's public right-of-way and jurisdiction, and as such, the responsibility for traffic improvements and related costs lie with the County. The total Project cost for the dual traffic circle design was estimated at \$6.5 million.

On May 8, 2023, the DTPW advised that the County, as a result of proposed roadway improvements, had identified funding for an additional contribution to the Project in the amount of \$2,825,000 for a total County contribution of \$3,325,000. The City's current budget appropriation is \$603,603. A budget request was submitted through the Fiscal Year 2025 Capital Budget process in the amount of \$2,578,095 for a total City contribution of \$3,181,698. The funding has been programmed in Fiscal Year 2026.

The Project's design development has not progressed since the Project estimate for the revised geometry far exceeded the appropriated budget. Once funding is appropriated, should the City Commission elect to do so, Kimley-Horn will resume design development, and the amendment to the JPA will be finalized.

At the July 10, 2024, PSNQLC meeting, the item was discussed but no recommendation was provided.

At the July 26, 2024, FERC meeting, the item was discussed regarding next steps and to determine the City's funding participation, given that this is a County right-of-way. The committee asked the Administration work with the County and stakeholders to review the scope of the project within the current budget and return to the October 18, 2024 FERC Meeting.

## **ANALYSIS**

As requested during the July 26, 2024, FERC meeting, the City of Miami Beach Marketing and Communications Department reached out to approximately 29 properties impacted by the proposed dual traffic circle project, along Pine Tree Drive at 46th and 47th Streets, to discuss the proposed design. Some stakeholders were invited via email and meeting invites were delivered

door to door. On August 23, 2024, a virtual meeting was conducted between residents and City staff, where some support for the proposed dual traffic circle was expressed, but residents were primarily concerned about the reduction of on-street parking that could impact vehicles, such as delivery and service trucks & increased congestion caused by the reduced number of lanes.

On August 28, 2024, an in-person meeting was held with the residents and City staff at the P46 City Surface Parking Lot, located in the neighborhood, to further discuss the proposed dual traffic circle project. The meeting was attended by eleven (11) residents with additional comments received after the meeting from stakeholders who were not able to attend. The majority of the comments received indicate a desire to pursue an alternate solution that preserves on-street parking.

Based on comments received, residents do not support the proposed dual traffic circle nor narrowing of Pine Tree Drive to a single lane in both directions. Other comments provided by residents include:

- Adding a traffic light south of 46 Street
- Incorporating speed bumps
- Installation of flashing warning lights at the curve south of 46 Street
- Installation of temporary signage to address safety concern, while the final design is determined.

On October 1, 2024, City staff met with the DTPW staff to discuss the residents' comments and suggestions for the proposed roadway improvement project. During the meeting, the DTPW advised that speed bumps are not permitted in the segment of Pine Tree Drive between 41 Street and 51 Street, due to its functional classification of major collector roadway. Additionally, the consensus was that flashing lights would not address the safety concern. The DTPW also advised that should the City elect to abandon the implementation of the proposed traffic circle roadway improvement, the project may become ineligible for Road Impact Fees (RIF) funding and the County may remove the funding appropriation.

Additionally, the County has identified a safety concern along this segment of Pine Tree Drive. In the absence of this project, the DTPW may program a capital project to, at a minimum, re-align the curve and potentially install the traffic circles without City participation to address the safety concerns. The re-alignment of Pine Tree Drive will impact the on-street parking and may impact the existing trees and/or medians. The County also clarified that on-street parking in this area is a safety concern, is not compliant with best practices, and should be removed under any solution.

Finally, in 2022, the DTPW conducted a safety study along Pine Tree Drive between 41 Street and 46 Street. The safety study recommended the installation of speed feedback signs at four (4) locations within the studied segment. Based on a 2022 estimate, the cost to install these signs is approximately \$323,000. Miami-Dade County has not funded these improvements.

This item was included on the October 18, 2024 FERC meeting agenda, as item OB 5, but was not heard. A follow-up meeting with City and the DTPW staff, to discuss potential alternatives, was held on October 29, 2024. During that meeting, the DTPW staff discussed the potential impacts to the area resulting from a curve realignment project and reiterated that improvements at this intersection, should they be performed by the County, would fall into their prioritization plan with all other County needs, which would determine the timeline for the implementation.

At the November 8, 2024, meeting of the FERC, City staff provided an update, including a summary of feedback received from the community, and several residents also spoke on the item. Ultimately, the FERC directed staff to coordinate a community meeting advertised with mailed notices and to invite the County Commissioner and County staff for further discussion. This item was requested to return to the FERC with an update following that community meeting, and to include accident data in that area.

A hybrid community meeting, with extensive outreach, was held on January 29, 2025, and garnered the participation of approximately 53 residents, including approximately ten (10) residents who attended in person. Also in attendance were representatives from Miami-Dade County, including Commissioner Steinburg's office, City Commissioners and City Staff.

During the meeting and throughout the discussion, the City and County received feedback from residents that indicated a preference for speed tables, which historically are not allowed in this classification of roadway. Although residents referenced the use of speed tables on north bound Pine Tree Drive and south bound La Gorce Drive between 52nd Street and 63rd Street, the County clarified that the use of speed tables were approved for those sections of roadway because of the roadway classification and lower volumes of traffic.

The County strongly opposes the use of speed tables at the proposed project location, as doing so would not comply with roadway design standards or best practices and could increase the number of rear end collisions. Ultimately, installation of speed tables on this section of road could negatively impact safety.

The DTPW staff clarified that the proposed traffic circle solutions, in the single or dual configuration, are the most effective solution. As a more cost-effective option to the roundabout design, the DTPW staff developed a conceptual plan showing a curve realignment (Attachment D) commencing south of 46th Street which would improve roadway safety.

As a result of the community meeting and resident feedback, the DTPW staff agreed to evaluate other solutions including curve realignment and the feasibility of proposing chicanes to reduce speeding along Pine Tree Drive. In order to properly evaluate options, the County advised that additional information provided by a traffic study would be useful.

The City of Miami Beach Transportation Department has advised the County that a Transportation Consultant has been retained to perform a traffic study along the Pine Tree Corridor. The draft report is anticipated to be received in March 2025 with Final traffic study targeted for Summer 2025.

City staff will coordinate with the DTPW to determine any other options and provide a recommendation. As this is a County road, final design approval will rest with the County.

The City's Transportation Department has provided crash data reports (Attachment E) for incidents from January 2021- January 2025 for Pine Tree Drive between 45th and 47th Street, and for Pine Tree Drive and La Gorce Drive between 51st and 63rd Street, where the speed tables are currently installed. The reports showed forty-four (44) incidents with one (1) fatality between 45th and 47th Street and forty-one (41) crashes with one (1) fatality, eleven (11) of which were rear end collision, between 51st and 63rd Street.

## **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**

This project is the subject of a JPA between the County and the City, with a total estimated cost of \$6,500,000. The County has committed to funding a total of \$3,325,000 and the City will need to fund a total of \$3,181,698.

## **CONCLUSION**

This information is provided to the FERC to discuss next steps and funding for the Pine Tree Drive and 46 Street Traffic Circle Project

## **Applicable Area**

Middle Beach

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

Yes

**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**

Capital Improvement Projects

## **Sponsor(s)**

## **Co-sponsor(s)**

## **Condensed Title**

Discuss next steps and funding for the Pine Tree Drive and 46 Street traffic circle project.