

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: Hermes Diaz, P.E.

DATE: July 24, 2019

FROM: Jessica A. Keller, ENV SP
Assistant Public Works Director

SUBJECT: Alhambra Traffic Calming and
Multimodal Infrastructure Update

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update regarding the history and status of Alhambra Traffic Calming and Multimodal Infrastructure.

History

- May 2012, the Miami-Dade County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) approved an award of a grant to the City to develop a “Citywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan”
- August 2012, the City Commission authorized the execution of the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Coral Gables and the TPO for the purpose of funding the plan
- October 2012, the Department of Public Works selected Stantec, an existing continuing services consultant, who partnered with Street Plans Collaborative, an urban planning, design, and research-advocacy firm, to develop the plan
- June 2014, Commission adopted the City of Coral Gables Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- November 2014, City staff presented an update and implementation strategy for the plan
- November 2015, The City was awarded a transportation alternatives grant for \$597,670 for the construction of bike lanes along Alhambra Circle from Coral Way to San Amaro Drive
- January 2017, the City awarded a citywide bicycle infrastructure design contract to Toole Design, Inc, one of the best bicycle infrastructure design firms in the Country
- June 2017, Staff presented an update and implementation strategy, including discussion of grant funding for Alhambra bicycle infrastructure
- May 2019, Staff kicked off a coordination meeting with the consultant (Kimley-Horn), selected to design the project

Description of the Project

The overall project includes reducing automobile lane widths to ten feet to calm traffic, construction of adjacent bicycle lanes, as identified in the adopted Coral Gables Bicycle Master Plan, repaving of the entire roadway surface and providing ADA compliant sidewalk connections on Alhambra Circle from Coral Way to San Amaro Drive.

Purpose and Need of the Project

Safety

Narrowing travel lanes for automobiles provides a traffic calming effect, increasing safety for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists alike. By adding designated bicycle lanes, 5-feet in width, and narrowing the adjacent automobile travel lanes, the City of Coral Gables will provide people who ride bikes an increased level of safety by defining the separation between automobiles and bicycles. In 2012, [The American Journal of Public Health](#), identified that dedicated bike lanes cut injury risk by 90%. A 2006 University of Texas study shows improved safety for motorists when bike lanes exist, because drivers passing cyclists on roads without bike lanes veer farther left into the next lane of traffic. It also found that bike lanes promote safety for cyclists since bikers in bike lanes don't hug the curb as close to those on unmarked streets.

The construction of sidewalks is an important component of this project. Pedestrians are the most vulnerable users of the public rights-of-way. Where sidewalks are absent, pedestrians are often forced to walk alongside vehicles on travel lanes. This peril to life safety must be considered. Sidewalks provide a safe path for those on foot and mitigate this peril.

Transportation Linkages

Lack of safe connected infrastructure decreases the mode of any use. Dead end streets see little automobile traffic because they are not connected. This applies to pedestrian and bike infrastructure that is disconnected. 4.6 miles of new bicycle lanes on Alhambra Circle will provide connections from existing bicycle facilities located on Alhambra Circle to downtown Coral Gables, University of Miami and the Underline, an active mobility trail which the City has committed up to \$15 million dollars for funding. The Underline provides no parking and currently has only one high stress bicycle connection on Red Road. Safe connected access by walking and biking is critical to Underline success.

The Alhambra project will also link to pedestrian and bike facilities on Sevilla Avenue and Anastasia Avenue that connect to bicycle lanes and sidewalks on Red Road, The Biltmore Hotel, and The Coral Gables War Memorial Youth Center and the nearly completed Betsy Adams Park. With these connections, these facilities provide safe walking, bicycling and Metrorail transit access to 400,000 residents and tourists within a 10 minute walk.

Guiding Policy and Regulations

- Ordinance 2010-09 - Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan; calls for a reduction in the impacts of vehicular traffic as well as increasing multi-modal options, including these specific objectives:
 - Objective MOB 1.1: Provide solutions to mitigate and reduce the impacts of vehicular traffic on the environment, and residential streets in particular with emphasis on alternatives to the automobile including walking, bicycling, public transit and vehicle pooling.
 - Objective MOB 1.1.4: Support incentives that promote walking, bicycling and public transit and those that improve pedestrian and bicycle access
- Ordinance 2016-47 - Coral Gables 3 Year Strategic Plan, 2017-2019; includes objectives to: Attain world-class performance levels in public safety by 2019, Enhance the pedestrian experience, safety, and connectivity in the City through improved lighting, crosswalks, sidewalks, and way finding, and increase alternative mobility options to the community by 2019

- Resolution 2017-151 - Active Design Policy; an approach to encourage design and policy strategies for healthier communities through active mobility and improved design in the public right of way
- Resolution Age-friendly resolution: Adopted on May 22nd, 2018. Supports the creation of transportation networks that provide safe mobility for all ages and abilities, especially meeting the needs of senior citizens
- Resolution 2018-80 - Complete Streets Resolution: Calls for the creation of multi-modal, human-scaled streets, including completing the city's sidewalk and bicycle network, and shifting focus from automobile level of service to multimodal level of service
- Resolution 2018-268 which eliminated the concurrency requirements for the construction of new sidewalks along collector streets.
- Safe Routes to School - Eligible activities for funding under Safe Routes to School include both infrastructure projects and non-infrastructure related activities. States are to spend 70-90% of funding on infrastructure projects that improve safety for children walking and bicycling to school. All improvements have to be made within a two-mile radius of school.
- Neighborhood Parks Development – Over \$6.5 million dollars has been and is planned to purchase land within the City to develop neighborhood parks over the next 5 years. These parks do not typically provide parking facilities and are meant to be accessed by other modes of transportation.
- Introduction of E-scooter mode – E-scooters are growing in popularity and offer the benefits of reduction in automobile traffic and greenhouse gas emissions. Like people walking and biking, scooters should be separated from fast moving automobiles and bike infrastructure is accommodating this need.

Schedule

September 2019 - Community Meeting

July 2020 – Design Completion

First quarter 2021 – Begin Construction