Memorandum

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Date: April 6, 2010

To: Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Item No. 8(J)(1)(A)

From: George M. Burgess
County Manager

Subject: Resolution Endorsing a Proposal to Designate the M-Path and South Dade Trail (Busway Path) as Part of the East Coast Greenway Trail System

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RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners (Board) approve the attached Resolution related to the endorsement of a proposal submitted to Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) by the East Coast Greenway (ECG) Alliance to have the M-Path and South Dade Trail (Busway Path) designated as an integral part of the ECG trail system.

SCOPE

The M-Path and South Dade Trail (Busway Path) are within the geographical boundaries of Commission Districts 7, 8 and 9.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to the County. The estimated cost for signs is approximately $1,000; installation will be provided by MDT. Grant funding will be pursued by the Green Mobility Network, local representatives of the East Coast Greenway Alliance, to cover the costs for the signs. The ECG trail markers clearly identify local trails as part of the ECG, and increase public awareness of the local link to this national urban route. Trail markers also help guide trail users along the route. The ECG signage with its trademarked "two trees" logo is designed to complement rather than compete with local identification markers or informational signage.

TRACK RECORD/MONITOR

The staff responsible for oversight and monitoring of all associated activities is Bob McClellan, Chief, MDT Field Engineering and System Maintenance (FESM).

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

In accordance with Section 2-8.3 of the Miami-Dade County Code related to identifying delegation of Board authority, there are no authorities beyond that specified in the resolution.

BACKGROUND

The East Coast Greenway Alliance (ECGA) was found in 1991 as a national non-profit organization to plan and promote a greenway that would connect existing and planned trails into a continuous 3,000 mile "spine route" between Atlantic coast cities. With a span that covers the Atlantic seaboard from Maine to Florida, the 3,000 mile ECG route is composed of locally owned and managed trail segments that provide a firm-surfaced off-road route that serves non-motorized travelers for recreation, exercise, transportation and tourism. The launch of the East Coast Greenway is considered the nation's most ambitious long-distance urban trail projects; aimed at forming a traffic-free route linking Calais, Maine at the Canadian border and Key West, Florida, the southernmost portion of the United States.

The goal of the ECG is to establish an "urban Appalachian Trail." An endorsement allows the M-Path and South Dade Trail (Busway Path) to officially become part of a national network that currently connects 25 major cities along the East Coast in 15 states. The ECG increases the visibility of local paths, promotes their use and adds value to the trails.

Currently 21% of the ECG is off-road with safe on-road connections for those who choose to cycle or walk. ECG travelers enjoy the local community's natural wonders, access to coastal regions, museums and historic sites along its trails. By supporting public enjoyment of these traffic-free travel corridors, the ECG increases non-motorized transportation options, reduces roadway congestion, attracts eco-tourists, and supports safe recreational areas for walkers and cyclists.

The South Dade Trail (Busway Path) runs from MDT's Dadeland South station along the South Dade Busway for 20 miles to Palm Drive (SW 344 Street), a mile along the FEC right-of-way, Southwest 3rd Avenue and the east side of Krome Avenue, and ends 150 feet from the junction with US-1. The initial phase of the Busway and trail (8.2 miles) formally debuted in 1997. A 5 mile extension to SW 264 Street was completed in 2005 and another extension of 6.5 miles was completed in 2007.

The M-Path was built in 1983 by MDT as part of the original Metrorail construction. The nine-mile paved multi-use path meanders within the right-of-way, under the elevated Metrorail guideway. It provides a course of travel from the Miami River in downtown Miami, south to SW 67 Avenue in South Miami. The path connects six Metrorail stations: Brickell, Vizcaya, Coconut Grove, Douglas Road, the University of Miami, and South Miami.

In 2008 the M-Path marked 25-years. A 2007 Master Plan was developed to address operational concerns and enhance the user experience of the existing trail. The recommended improvements are part of a project plan that is currently underway. Additionally, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is in the design phase of an extension of the M-Path which will connect the existing M-Path to the Dadeland South station and the South Dade Trail. FDOT will be utilizing American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to complete the project within two (2) years. When completed, the joint trails will become one of the longest non-motorized trail facilities in Florida.

The East Coast Greenway designation will help elevate the visibility of the trails for both residents and visitors. MDT worked closely with the MPO and the County's Greenways Committee in the development of this item.

Assistant County Manager

MEMORANDUM
(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: April 6, 2010

FROM: R. A. Cuevas, Jr. County Attorney

SUBJECT: Agenda Item No. 8(J)(1)(A)

Please note any items checked.

_____ **"3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised**

_____ **6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing**

_____ **4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing**

_____ **Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget**

_____ **Budget required**

_____ **Statement of fiscal impact required**

_____ **Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Manager's report for public hearing**

_____ **No committee review**

_____ **Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous _____) to approve**

_____ **Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required**

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 8(J)(1)(A)
4-6-10

RESOLUTION NO. _____

RESOLUTION ENDORSING A PROPOSAL TO DESIGNATE THE MIAMI-DADE TRANSIT (MDT) M-PATH AND SOUTH DADE TRAIL (BUSWAY PATH) AS LINKS WITHIN THE EAST COAST GREENWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

WHEREAS, the East Coast Greenway seeks to establish a 3,000-mile "urban Appalachian Trail" that spans the Atlantic seaboard by connecting the trails of cities, towns and country sides from Maine to Florida in a route that serves non-motorized travelers for transportation, recreation, exercise and tourism; and

WHEREAS, the M-Path and South Dade Trail (Busway Path) are multi-use urban trails in Miami-Dade County with the M-Path extending from the Miami River, 9 miles to South Miami and the South Dade Trail from the Dadeland South Metrorail Station some 21 miles to a point close to the junction of Card Sound Road and US-1; and

WHEREAS, it has been demonstrated that community trails enhance the quality of life, promote wellness, offer unique recreational opportunities, improve the environment, and provide an alternative travel option that reduces traffic congestion; and

WHEREAS, by aligning the local trails with a national system, Miami-Dade County further promotes the positive impact of the trails locally and multiplies the benefits to South Florida by bringing trail-related tourism to the community; and

WHEREAS, this Board desires to accomplish the purposes outlined in the accompanying Manager's Memorandum, a copy of which is incorporated herein by reference,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board hereby endorses a proposal to designate the M-Path and South Dade Trail (Busway Path) as part of the East Coast Greenway.

The foregoing resolution was offered by Commissioner , who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Dennis C. Moss, Chairman
Jose "Pepe" Diaz, Vice-Chairman

Bruno A. Barreiro	Audrey M. Edmonson
Carlos A. Gimenez	Sally A. Heyman
Barbara J. Jordan	Joe A. Martinez
Dorrin D. Rolle	Natacha Seijas
Katy Sorenson	Rebeca Sosa
Sen. Javier D. Souto	

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 6th day of April, 2010. This resolution shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By:_____
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

Bruce Libhaber

Oct. 26, 2009

Mr. Harpal S. Kapoor
Director, Miami-Dade Transit
701 NW 1st Ct., Suite 1700
Miami, Florida 33136

Dear Mr. Kapoor:

We are seeking the endorsement of Miami-Dade Transit for the designation of the M-Path and South Dade Trail (busway path) as important parts of the East Coast Greenway (ECG) trail system.

The ECG spans the Atlantic seaboard, connecting cities, towns, and countryside from Maine to Florida. It is a 3000-mile route composed of locally owned and managed trail segments. Our objective is to provide a firm-surfaced route of consistent quality that is off-road, using waterfront esplanades, rail trails, canal towpaths, park paths, and parkway corridors. It serves non-motorized travelers of all kinds for recreation, exercise, transportation and tourism.

The East Coast Greenway is the pre-eminent route on the eastern seaboard for adventure touring by bicycle and foot, and an ideal facility for heritage tourism. As a link in this trail system, each local trail gains added value as part of this long distance touring route. At the same time, it retains its identity as an independent facility with a distinct local name and continues its important role of serving local recreation and transportation needs.

We believe the ECG will have a positive impact on South Florida. It has been clearly demonstrated that community trails enhance quality of life, improve our environment, ease traffic congestion, promote wellness, and provide unique recreational opportunities for the public. All of these benefits are multiplied when local trails are aligned with a national system. Becoming part of the ECG aids local economies by bringing trail-related tourism to the community.

I am enclosing a letter of endorsement that we would like you to complete for your trail (see attached). By signing it you would indicate your agency's approval of this designation and your agreement to work with East Coast Greenway Alliance staff to post ECG trail markers along your trails at mutually agreed-upon locations. You may see our guidelines for posting our trial markers at http://www.greenway.org/trailcouncil/trail_signage_manual.pdf . I am also enclosing a list of the benefits we can provide to you as the trail manager when your trail becomes part of the ECG Trail System (see attached).

Please call me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Paul Haydt
State Committee Chair
East Coast Greenway Alliance

BENEFITS OF JOINING THE EAST COAST GREENWAY TRAIL SYSTEM

ADVOCACY

If the M-Path and South Dade Trail are designated part of the East Coast Greenway trail system, both the national and local East Coast Greenway Alliance committees will, if requested, provide support for the trail in seeking funding from national, state or local governments, foundations or other funding sources. We will support your efforts to secure funds for general operations, trail improvements, trail maintenance, visitor services, signage, and other appropriate trail expenses. Being part of this national trail system can be a powerful incentive for funders.

PROMOTION

If the M-Path and South Dade Trail are designated part of the East Coast Greenway trail system, the East Coast Greenway Alliance will promote the (name of trail) nationally as a part of the East Coast Greenway trail system by:

* developing a user map of the M-Path and South Dade Trail, provided that funding becomes available, as part of a map series being produced to facilitate public use of the East Coast Greenway.
* including the trail in the GIS database/mapping system being developed for the network, and when appropriate, promoting it in other East Coast Greenway Alliance publications and in articles in local and national media
* providing ECG trail markers (with our logo) to mark the trail at mutually agreed upon location(s)
* promoting you as an important partner and your trail as a vital link in a national trail system.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The East Coast Greenway Alliance will provide information and guidance, if requested, on trail issues including but not limited to the following areas:

* safe trail design
* visitor safety
* general public relations and maintaining good relations with trail neighbors
* economic benefits of trails and greenways
* management and use of community volunteers, including youth group service projects, historical research efforts, flower bed and beautification projects, and citizen patrol programs

ii. ECG trail marker options

a. signage for marking the spine route

ECGA large spine route trail markers are intended for use at trailheads, such as parking lots or trail access points at public transit nodes. Being larger, they are more visible, and therefore better for leading people toward the trail. However, they may also be used as standard trailside identification signs if the trail managing authority so desires. Large spine route trail markers are .063 gauge aluminum back with the graphic and text silkscreened onto engineer-grade vinyl sheeting.

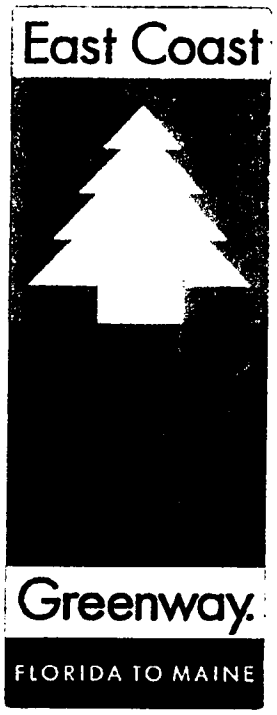

Fig. 1.2: large spine route marker Florida to Maine (northbound) shown at approx. 30% actual size actual size: 5.5" x 15"

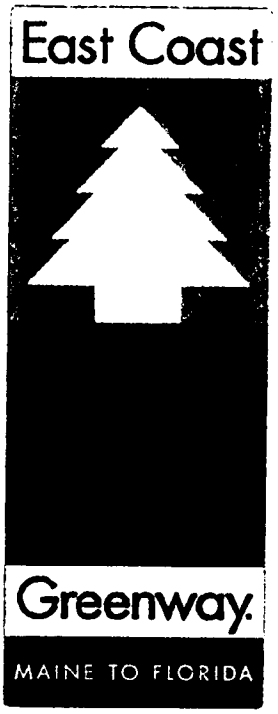

Fig. 1.3: large spine route marker Maine to Florida (southbound) shown at approx. 30% actual size actual size: 5.5" x 15"

Two options are available, Florida to Maine and Maine to Florida. These should be facing the appropriate direction on the trail – that is, Maine to Florida for southbound travel and Florida to Maine for northbound travel. Signs are pre-drilled with 3/8" holes at intervals permitting mounting on steel u-channel posts or square tubular posts. Brackets or mounting clamps may be used to attach these signs to round tubular posts (aka "pipe posts"), which do not have pre-drilled holes for signage installation.