

Memorandum



Date: January 18, 2013

To: Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: SunPass Conversion on the County's Causeway System

At the Jan 14th Regional Transportation Committee, the Committee asked for a timeline and status report on the implementation of the Sunpass conversion on the County's Causeway System. The below provides brief background information and the next steps to move this project forward.

Background

The Rickenbacker and Venetian Causeway Toll Plazas both operate a cash and C-Pass electronic toll collection system, which was implemented in 1998. The C-Pass transponders are not interoperable with the Statewide SunPass system utilized by Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) and other toll agencies around the State. The Board of County Commissioners (BCC) directed the administration to analyze and make recommendations to convert the County's Causeway system to Open Road Tolling (ORT) or other forms of modern tolling, including SunPass, to achieve interoperability. Since then the Public Works and Waste Management Department (PWWM) has made many efforts to accomplish this initiative but has thus far not been successful.

In October 2011, PWWM commenced discussions with the FTE to become SunPass interoperable and to identify suitable system integration companies to install the necessary equipment and develop the computerized processes to provide the services needed on the Causeways. In June of 2012, the Department engaged a consultant to manage the project through completion. This vendor has been involved in many previous SunPass implementations, including the FTE and MDX projects.

Aside from installing the equipment and software, a vendor would also need to connect the County with the existing SunPass System consistent with all other toll agencies in Florida that accept SunPass. This connection to SunPass and adherence to standards is of critical importance, not only to the County, but also to all other participating toll agencies. According to FTE, at this time there are only two toll system integrators that have successfully integrated into the SunPass System over the past ten years. Of those two vendors, only one has provided toll systems capable of accommodating the annual plans utilized by residents and frequent commuters of the County's toll plazas. Utilizing other vendors will require that they successfully pass testing through FTE and provide a fully functional customer service component which would increase the timeframe and costs for implementation of this project.

Next Steps

While this project has had a series of difficulties, it has not received the focused attention that I would have expected of such a critical need. As such, I have directed the PWWM and Internal Services Department (ISD) to fast-track a solicitation based on the information that only two vendors have successfully integrated into the SunPass System over the past ten years.

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PWWM staff expects to have an item before the Board of County Commissioners in April. Further, staff expects to start work by June and be completed in approximately 12 months. Concurrently, PWWM will be completing roadway work to facilitate the transition. Throughout the process, staff will consistently look for opportunities to expedite the process. A timeline of these future milestones is attached for your reference (Attachment 1).

Attachment

c: Honorable Franklin Caplan, Mayor, Village of Key Biscayne
Honorable Mayra Peña Lindsay, Vice Mayor, Village of Key Biscayne
John C. Gilbert, Village Manager, Village of Key Biscayne
R.A. Cuevas, Jr., County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Kathleen Woods-Richardson, Director
Public Works and Waste Management Department
Lester Sola, Director, Internal Services Department
Angel Petisco, Director, Information Technology Department

Timeline of Future Milestones

- January 2013 – The Department will submit the Business Case along with bid waiver form to ISD (this is needed to justify that the Department conducted sufficient market research and that this is the best solution for the Department).
- February 2013 – The Department will prepare and submit a Scope of Service to ISD. ISD will prepare a contract and engage the vendor. The County will negotiate with the vendor regarding scope, terms, and cost. Negotiations will be finalized in March 2013.
- April 2013 – The contract will go to the appropriate Committee of the Board of County Commissioners.
- May 2013 – The contract will go to the full Board of County Commissioners.
- June 2013 – The Contract will be awarded.
- June 2013 – The awarded vendor will begin installation of equipment and software coordination with FTE for interoperability. This step is anticipated to take twelve months.
- December 2013 – Roadway work will begin. This step is anticipated to take up to four months.
- June 2014 – The project is anticipated to be complete and ready for use.