Memorandum

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Date: May 15, 2015

To: Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor

Subject: Report on The Underline Implementation Plan – Directive 150056

At the October 7, 2014 Board of County Commissioners (Board) meeting, the Board approved Resolution No. R-910-14 (Attachment 1) sponsored by Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz and co-sponsored by Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, Vice Chair Lynda Bell, Commissioner Bruno A. Barreiro, Commissioner Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, Commissioner Jean Monestime, Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, Senator Javier D. Souto, Commissioner Xavier L. Suarez and Commissioner Juan C. Zapata directing the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to prepare a report within 60 days containing a possible implementation plan for the creation of a ten-mile linear park along the Metrorail corridor consistent with The Underline (formerly The GreenLink) proposal. The Board also directed that the implementation plan include more specific information about how The Underline project can be realized, the cost, available funding sources, and a timeline for construction.

Introduction and Background

The Friends of The Underline have proposed an initiative to transform various lands underneath the Metrorail right-of-way into a contiguous ten-mile walkway, bike path, linear park, and transit mobility corridor from the Miami River north of the Brickell Metrorail Station to the Dadeland South Metrorail Station to be known as "The Underline."

This project is part of the 2008 Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Spaces System Master Plan, which serves as the County's framework for building a system of parks, public spaces, natural, and cultural areas connected by greenways, waterways, trails, and streets designated as linear parks in order to create a healthier, greener, and more economically vibrant place to live, work, and play.

When completed, The Underline will be the country's longest under-rail, world-class urban trail and linear park directly related to transit. The ten-mile corridor will be the only multi-modal transportation connector in Miami-Dade County, connecting the County's Kendall Area to downtown Miami. The Underline's ten-mile span serves 400,000 residents within a ten (10) minute walk. Its unique connection to eight (8) Metrorail transit stations provides access to all County residents via public transit. The Underline runs through the cities of Miami, Coral Gables, and South Miami, and will provide over 100 acres of new park space to serve both residents and tourists as a destination iconic park space.

Urban green spaces and trails are proven to produce considerable returns on investment through increased values for adjacent properties, resulting in substantial incremental increases in tax receipts. Examples include New York City's High Line, Atlanta's BeltLine, the Washington, D.C. Capital Crescent Trail, and Chicago's The 606 trail. The goals of The Underline include promoting the safety, health, and well-being of County residents and visitors by providing a safe walkable and bikeable corridor that also promotes mass transit opportunities. It will provide a world-class multimodal corridor and linear park modeled after successful linear parks such as the High Line and The 606 trail.

Amenities include a widened, straightened and lighted path; improved crosswalks; and the transformation of the existing M-Path into an iconic public park space providing recreational options for pedestrians and cyclists along the trail which connects a series of park nodes.

The development of this public asset into a linear park will serve the community with purposeful green space and serve as a catalyst for meaningful mixed-use, transit-oriented development of the eight (8) Miami-Dade Transit Metrorail stations along the proposed path. Transit-oriented development at these Metrorail stations will create an urban environment for commuters, residents, workers, and visitors that integrates quality amenities and enhances lifestyle and mobility by providing easily accessible transit connections to commercial, cultural, and residential venues throughout the County.

Partners

The Friends of The Underline have created a broad partner base including Miami-Dade Transit (MDT), Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces (PROS), Miami-Dade Public Works and Waste Management (PWWM), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the University of Miami Schools of Architecture, Business and Medicine, and municipalities including the City of Miami, City of Coral Gables, South Miami, and the Village of Pinecrest. Other partners include The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, The Miami Foundation, the Health Foundation of South Florida, and the Mitchell Wolfson Foundation. Additionally, The Underline has been endorsed by numerous business organizations and biking advocacy groups (a list of endorsements can be found on the following website: https://theunderline.org/).

Current Status

The Friends of The Underline have raised $650,000 in public and private funds to support the master plan framework for the ten (10) miles, as well as the preliminary design drawings of two (2) park demonstration projects, including Brickell Station and one (1) additional site to be determined. The Friends of The Underline were responsible for administrating the Request for Qualifications process to select the Design Consultant, resulting in the selection of James Corner Field Operations. The master plan process has begun and will conclude in September 2015. One of the goals of the master plan is to produce a budget for planning and construction. The master plan will also provide a cohesive vision that specifies design standards for the bicycle and pedestrian trail, crosswalks, and iconic landscape design. Prior to finalizing the master plan, approval from FDOT and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will be required.

Implementation

As stated in my 2015 State of the County address, my Administration has made The Underline a top priority and set the agenda for lobbying, communications and public relations, funding, and planning. All current and future projects that may impact The Underline's goals and vision will be coordinated and vetted through the MDT and PROS departments.

The County has obtained a $1 million FDOT Transportation Alternative Program grant to leverage construction funding for the Brickell Station Promenade. Additionally, FDOT is prepared to correct the intersection crossings of The Underline in order to maximize bicycle and pedestrian safety and make The Underline a model for safety in urban areas throughout the state. The master plan will provide a better sense of the actual budget requirements and implementation phasing.

Trail projects in similar urban communities such as the Atlanta BeltLine and Chicago's The 606 trail, range from $10 million to $20 million per mile. New York's High Line invested $63 million per mile.

PROJECT	LOCATION	SIZE	CONSTRUCTION BUDGET
The 606	Chicago, IL	2.7 miles	$53.7 million ($50 million in federal funding)
BeltLine	Atlanta, GA	22 miles	$10 million/per mile for trail (under construction)
High Line	New York City, NY	1.9 miles	$63 million/per mile
Capital Crescent Trail (first phase of 11-mile project)	Washington, D.C.	4 miles	$95 million

The County, through MDT, owns the land underneath the Metrorail, and PROS' Right-of-Way Aesthetic and Assets Management Division maintains the landscaping and provides litter removal services at an annual cost of $31,250 per mile. This includes 24 cycles of routine landscape maintenance and an additional 12 litter removal cycles in-between the routine cycles.

The Underline will consist of amenities including ten (10) miles of trail, five (5) pedestrian bridges, 15 reconfigured intersections and eight (8) park nodes: Brickell, Vizcaya, Coconut Grove, Douglas, University of Miami, South Miami, Dadeland North, and Dadeland South.

Preliminary Construction Phases (pending master plan completion) are:

- Phase 1 - 2016 construction – Brickell (includes Brickell station)
  Construction: Begin construction of 1 mile trail (includes trail construction, lighting, water and landscaping) and begin construction of park space at Brickell. Includes two (2) intersection reconfigurations.

- Phase 2 - 2017 construction – Southwest 26 Road to Coconut Grove station (includes Vizcaya station)
  Construction: Continue construction and complete Phase 1 (funded 2016), begin additional two (2) miles of trail. Begin construction of Vizcaya and Coconut Grove station parks.

- Phase 3 - 2018 construction – Coconut Grove station to LeJeune Road (includes Douglas Station)
  Construction: Complete construction of Phase 2. Begin final Phase 3 of trail construction. Begin construction of Coconut Grove and Douglas station parks.

- Phase 4 - 2019 construction – LeJeune Road to South Miami (includes University Station)
  Construction: Complete construction of Phase 3. Begin construction of Phase 4.

- Phase 5 - 2020/21 construction – South Miami to Dadeland South (includes Dadeland Stations)
  Construction: Complete construction of Phase 4. Begin construction of Phase 5.

PROS has submitted a budget funding request of $200,000 for fiscal year 2015-16 for a consultant to manage the implementation of The Underline and $50,000 for administrative support. Once the master plan is completed initial estimates of construction cost and operating expenses will be generated for the five phases.

As The Underline construction phases are completed and segments come on-line, management and maintenance will be performed by the County or possibly through a Conservancy. Conservancy or "friends of the park" groups are financed largely by donations and participate in the management of public spaces by funding improvements and maintenance, and take the nonprofit form. A management and operating agreement between the County and the nonprofit would need to be developed and then approved by the Board.

Secured Funding

Secured funds for The Underline's master plan total $645,000, listed below. Sources of additional funding actively being sought are from private fundraising and federal grants.

$250,000 – Knight Foundation
$200,000 – City of Miami
$50,000 – Miami Foundation
$50,000 – Mitchell Wolfson Foundation
$50,000 – City of Coral Gables
$25,000 – City of South Miami
$20,000 – Health Foundation of South Florida

Conclusion and Next Steps

The Underline is part of a larger greenway, trail and transportation system, and, while we are beginning the first part of the project in the southern end of the County, The Underline concept will be evaluated to possibly extend north to Liberty City and Hialeah.

The Underline project is a priority for the County. The 10-mile corridor will be the only multi-modal transportation connector in the County connecting the Kendall area to downtown Miami, and will serve as a catalyst for meaningful, mixed-use transit-oriented development of the eight (8) Miami-Dade Transit Metrorail stations along the proposed path. The County will continue to seek funding opportunities for the implementation of the project through state and federal grants in coordination with the County's Intergovernmental Affairs Office, as well as with The Friends of The Underline and the various partners engaged in the project.

Per Ordinance 14-65, this memorandum will be placed on the next available Board of County Commissioners meeting agenda.

I will continue to report on the progress of this effort in the coming months. If you have any questions, please contact Deputy Mayor Alina Hudak, at 305-375-2531; Senior Advisor Michael Spring, at 305-375-5049; or PROS Director Jack Kardys at 305-755-7903.

Michael Spring, Senior Advisor
Office of the Mayor

c: Alina T. Hudak, Deputy Mayor and Director, Public Works and Waste Management
Michael Spring, Senior Advisor and Director, Department of Cultural Affairs
Ysela Llort, Director, Miami-Dade Transit
Jack Kardys, Director, Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces
Antonio Cotarelo, County Engineer, Public Works and Waste Management
Albert Hernandez, Assistant Director, Miami-Dade Transit
Maria Nardi, Chief of Planning, Research, Natural Areas, Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces
Meg Daly, Founder of The Friends of The Underline
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator

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CLERK OF THE BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

ATTACHMENT 1

MEMORANDUM

Amended
Agenda Item No. 11(A)(3)

TO:	Honorable Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa and Members, Board of County Commissioners	**DATE:**	October 7, 2014
FROM:	R. A. Cuevas, Jr. County Attorney	**SUBJECT:**	Resolution directing the County Mayor to prepare a report within sixty days containing a possible implementation plan for creation of a ten-mile linear park along the MetroRail corridor consistent with the Underline (formerly the GreenLink) proposal Resolution No. R-910-14

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz and Co-Sponsors Commissioner Bruno A. Barreiro, Vice Chair Lynda Bell, Commissioner Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, Commissioner Jean Monestime, Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, Senator Javier D. Souto, Commissioner Xavier L. Suarez, Commissioner Juan C. Zapata.

R. A. Cuevas, Jr.
County Attorney

RAC/cp

MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

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

DATE: October 7, 2014

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

SUBJECT: Amended Agenda Item No. 11(A)(3)

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 Mayor'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 _____

Amended
Agenda Item No. 11(A)(3)
10-7-14

RESOLUTION NO. R-910-14

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO PREPARE A REPORT WITHIN SIXTY DAYS CONTAINING A POSSIBLE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR CREATION OF A TEN-MILE LINEAR PARK ALONG THE METRORAIL CORRIDOR CONSISTENT WITH THE UNDERLINE (FORMERLY THE GREENLINK) PROPOSAL

WHEREAS, the Friends of The Underline (formerly the GreenLink) have proposed an initiative to transform various lands underneath the MetroRail right-of-way into a contiguous ten-mile walkway, bike path, linear park, and transit mobility corridor from the Miami River north of the Brickell MetroRail Station to the Dadeland South MetroRail Station known as "The Underline"; and

WHEREAS, this project is in keeping with the 2008 Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Spaces System Master Plan, which serves as the County's framework for building a system of parks, public spaces, natural and cultural areas connected by greenways, waterways, trails and streets designated as linear parks in order to create a healthier, greener and a more economically vibrant place to live, work and play; and

WHEREAS, this Board supports the goals of The Underline project in that it promotes health and well-being of County residents and visitors by providing a walkable, and bikable corridor that promotes mass transit opportunities; and

WHEREAS, The Underline will provide a world-class multimodal corridor and linear park modeled after successful linear parks such as the High Line in New York City and the 606 Trail in Chicago; and

WHEREAS, The Underline would provide for a widened, straightened and lighted path, improved crosswalks, and transformation of the existing M-Path into a world-class public park space providing recreational options for pedestrians and cyclists in the heart of the urban core; and

WHEREAS, the development of this public asset into a linear park would serve the community with purposeful green space and serve as a catalyst for meaningful mixed-use transit-oriented development of the eight Miami-Dade Transit MetroRail stations along the proposed path; and

WHEREAS, the development of transit-oriented development at these MetroRail stations will create an urban environment for commuters, residents, workers, and visitors that integrates quality amenities and enhances lifestyle and mobility by providing easily-accessible transit connections to commercial, cultural and residential venues throughout the County; and

WHEREAS, the project will create positive changes for the local community and environment whereby, according to the TrailBenefit estimate provided by Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department, this ten-mile corridor and the expected enhanced transportation-oriented developments will reduce or eliminate 1.4 million motorized trips and 630 tons of carbon dioxide emissions, and save 60,000 gallons of fuel; and

WHEREAS, the project will result in improvements to social, environmental, and economic conditions alongside U.S. 1, one of Miami-Dade's most highly trafficked corridors; and

WHEREAS, The Underline will provide an urban restoration of natural habitats for plant and animal life in a park setting; and

WHEREAS, Friends of the Underline have been working with Miami-Dade Transit, Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces, Miami-Dade Public Works and Waste Management, Florida Department of Transportation, the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization, the University of Miami Schools of Architecture, Business and Medicine, and municipalities including the City of Miami, City of Coral Gables, and Village of Pinecrest; and

WHEREAS, as the land is primarily MetroRail right-of-way, the County should take a leadership role in planning and promoting The Underline project; and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2014, the County Mayor prepared a "Report on a Program to Use the Area Underneath the Metrorail Guideway for a Mobility/Recreational Corridor and Greenway (i.e. The "Greenlink")"; and

WHEREAS, this Report outlines the history of The Underline project and demonstrates the County Mayor's engagement and commitment to the concept of The Underline project; and

WHEREAS, this Board shares the enthusiasm for this project and wishes that the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee prepare an additional report which examines the issues outlined in the July 1, 2014 Report in greater detail, including but not limited to how this project can actually be implemented; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to see an implementation plan prepared by the Mayor or Mayor's designee which provides more specific information and puts forth in detail how The Underline project can be realized, the cost, available funding sources, and a timeline for construction,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee is directed to provide a report to the Board of County Commissioners within sixty days containing a possible implementation plan for the creation of a ten-mile linear park along the MetroRail corridor consistent with The Underline (formerly the GreenLink) proposal.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz and the Co-Sponsors are Commissioner Bruno A. Barreiro, Vice Chair Lynda Bell, Commissioner Esteban L. Bovo, Jr., Commissioner Audrey M. Edmonson, Commissioner Sally A. Heyman, Commissioner Barbara J. Jordan, Commissioner Jean Monestime, Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, Chairwoman Rebeca Sosa, Senator Javier D. Souto, Commissioner Xavier L. Suarez, Commissioner Juan C. Zapata. It was offered by Commissioner **José "Pepe" Diaz**, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Bruno A. Barreiro** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

Rebeca Sosa, Chairwoman			**aye**
Lynda Bell, Vice Chair			**aye**
Bruno A. Barreiro	**aye**	Esteban L. Bovo, Jr.	**aye**
Jose "Pepe" Diaz	**aye**	Audrey M. Edmonson	**aye**
Sally A. Heyman	**aye**	Barbara J. Jordan	**aye**
Jean Monestime	**aye**	Dennis C. Moss	**aye**
Sen. Javier D. Souto	**absent**	Xavier L. Suarez	**aye**
Juan C. Zapata	**absent**		

The Chairperson thereupon declared the resolution duly passed and adopted this 7th day of October, 2014. 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: Christopher Agrippa
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

Alex S. Bokor