


Memorandum



Date: October 9, 2015

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

From: Carlos A. Gimenez
Mayor 

Subject: Reorganization of Transportation and Public Works Functions

In July 2015, I announced my plans to consolidate the functions in Miami-Dade County government that impact the delivery of public transit and surface transportation-related services. Transportation and mobility are critical issues for our community and continue to be top priorities for my administration. We are identifying funding opportunities, service efficiencies, and new concepts for moving our residents and visitors from one place to another. This requires a reorganization of functions within Miami-Dade County government, as well as a new emphasis on the relationships we have with our public and private sector stakeholders. We all have a shared vision to expand our public transit system in one way or another, but we must focus on services beyond our bus and rail systems and work more closely with agencies such as the Florida Department of Transportation, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (Tri-Rail), and the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority, as well as regional planning boards like the Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Since first being elected Mayor four years ago, my administration has streamlined our government, reducing the previous 46 departments to 25 in an effort to reduce overhead and be more responsive to the needs of our residents. We have made slight adjustments, moving activities from one department to another, to leverage similarities in service delivery and mission. With this reorganization, however, we are making a much more significant change, not only consolidating services, but also changing the reporting structure to have the Director responsible for transportation and mobility services reporting directly to me, rather than through a Deputy Mayor. I believe it is that important.

Effective immediately, I am establishing the Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW). This department will include the functions of Miami-Dade Transit, along with the County Engineer, Traffic Operations (to include Traffic Engineering and Traffic Signals and Signs), Construction and Maintenance (to include Road, Bridge and Canal Maintenance), and Highway Planning (to include Roadway Engineering and the Right of Way Division), as well as the Passenger Transportation Regulation function from the Business Affairs Division of the Regulatory and Economic Resources Department (RER). Special Taxing District Management and Causeways will become part of the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department (PROS), and Stormwater Utility and Planning will be transferred to RER. Solid Waste Management and Mosquito Control will continue as the Department of Solid Waste Management (DSWM). I strongly believe that this reorganization is necessary for our residents to have a better organized, more responsive government.

My vision for Miami-Dade County has always been focused on the future and the resilience and sustainability of our region. DTPW will be responsible for our entire surface transportation system. Sustainable public transportation is an important element of a larger plan for community resilience. We must address not only the financial impacts of the delivery of public transportation services both to the County and our riders, but the social, environmental and climate impacts are critical as well. Components for evaluating sustainable transportation include the types of vehicles used, the source of energy, and the infrastructure. Transportation operations and logistics and transit-oriented development are also involved. Transportation sustainability is largely being measured by system effectiveness and efficiency, as well as the environmental and climate impacts of the system.

Public transportation systems exist to provide social and economic connections and riders quickly take advantage of opportunities offered by increased mobility. Traffic congestion imposes social and economic costs by lengthening the time our residents are in traffic and not at work or at home with their families, and by slowing the delivery of goods and services. Traditional transportation planning aims to improve mobility, especially for vehicles, but may not adequately consider wider impacts. The real purpose of transportation is access - to work or school, moving goods and services, meeting friends and family - and my goal is to improve that access while simultaneously mitigating environmental and social impacts and managing traffic congestion. Communities which are successfully improving the sustainability of their transportation networks are doing so as part of a wider goal of creating more vibrant, livable, sustainable cities and improving the quality of life of their residents. I believe our goal should be the same.

Many transit agencies are embracing the concept of 'mobility management,' which is a strategic approach to service coordination and customer service that is becoming a worldwide trend in the public transportation sector. Mobility management moves transit agencies away from the traditional role as a fixed-route service operator, and toward collaboration with other transportation providers, both public and private. The idea behind this approach is to create a full range of well-synchronized mobility services within a community. Mobility management starts with the creation of partnerships among transportation providers in a particular region, so as to expand the range of viable options that communities have for transportation. Communication is also a critical component of mobility management. With the mobility management approach, transit resources are efficiently coordinated, enabling customers to make better decisions, as well as improving customer service.

With these concepts in mind, I am consolidating all functions that have to do with planning, maintaining and operating our roadways, transit system, and taxicab and limousine services in one department, led by Director Alice Bravo, who will report directly to me.

Back in 2007, when I was a member of the Board of County Commissioners, we approved the Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan. This plan had a vision for a seamless, sustainable parks and open space system and guiding principles that included beauty, access, equity and sustainability. The creation of PROS when I was first elected was an initial step in bringing the responsibility for all publicly-owned green spaces together. Moving the Causeways function to PROS is another step. The causeways are essentially linear parks that serve as greenways connecting our community. They will be important elements as the greenways system grows with the eventual completion of *The Underline* and Ludlam Trail.

Co-locating all special taxing district functions in PROS, which already has the responsibility of managing landscape maintenance special taxing districts, and stormwater utility planning in RER with other planning and development functions, makes good sense both from an operational and a managerial standpoint.

Finally, emphasis will be placed on the solid waste management functions of collection, disposal and enforcement. As DSWM nears the point at which determinations will need to be made regarding future rate increases and service delivery standards, Deputy Mayor Alina Hudak will continue to lead this important regional function in addition to her diverse portfolio.

The financial and budgetary and personnel adjustments necessary to accomplish this reorganization will be a part of a mid-year budget amendment that will be brought to the Board for consideration in the coming months. Analysis is being finalized to ensure that overhead and administrative support for operations is properly allocated amongst these functions.

I look forward to a better-connected Miami-Dade County with a government that is much more responsive to the needs of its residents. I have initiated this reorganization because I believe our county will ultimately become a more resilient and sustainable community as a result of it. I have mentioned this numerous times but it is worth repeating: I first ran for Mayor because I wanted to leave my three children and soon-to-be six grandchildren with a better, more sustainable Miami-Dade County. I know that if we do our work correctly, future generations of residents will enjoy the benefits of our hard work.

c: Abigail Price-Williams, County Attorney
Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
Department Directors
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor