

GOOD MORNING, EVERYONE.

BUENOS DÍAS A TODOS.

DEPUTY MAYOR HUDAK, THANK YOU FOR THAT INTRODUCTION AND FOR SPEARHEADING THIS PROJECT WHILE SERVING AS PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR.

MY THANKS ALSO TO THE DEPARTMENT'S STAFF AND TO OUR NEW TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR ALICE BRAVO.

THANK YOU ALL FOR THE OUTSTANDING WORK YOU HAVE DONE ON THE PROJECT THAT WE'RE HERE TO CELEBRATE.

I'D ALSO LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO THANK AND RECOGNIZE COMMISSIONERS AUDREY EDMONSON, SALLY HEYMAN AND BRUNO BARREIRO FOR BEING HERE, AND FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF THIS PROJECT -- WHICH WILL BENEFIT OUR COMMUNITY EACH DAY BY IMPROVING MOBILITY AND SAFETY FOR OUR 2.6 MILLION RESIDENTS.

IT'S ALSO GOOD TO HAVE MIAMI BEACH MAYOR PHILIP LEVINE WITH US THIS MORNING. MAYOR LEVINE, THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND THAT OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I'M PLEASED TO JOIN YOU THIS MORNING FOR THE RE-OPENING CEREMONY FOR THE VENETIAN CAUSEWAY!

THE HISTORIC VENETIAN CAUSEWAY IS AN IMPORTANT FIXTURE IN OUR COMMUNITY -- CONNECTING MAINLAND MIAMI WITH THE VENETIAN ISLANDS AND MIAMI BEACH.

THIS LOCAL AND NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK WAS CONSTRUCTED NEARLY 90 YEARS AGO AND CONSISTS OF 12 BRIDGES -- 10 FIXED AND TWO DRAWBRIDGES -- WHICH SPAN THE 11 MAN-MADE VENETIAN ISLANDS.

THE VENETIAN CAUSEWAY PROJECT WE'RE CELEBRATING THIS MORNING BEGAN NINE MONTHS AGO AND WAS COMPLETED ON TIME AND ON BUDGET.

THAT'S WORTH REPEATING -- THIS NINE-MONTH PROJECT WAS COMPLETED ON TIME AND ON BUDGET.

THIS \$12.4-MILLION PROJECT INVOLVED THE DEMOLITION AND REPLACEMENT OF THE WESTERNMOST 730 FEET OF THE WEST VENETIAN BASCULE BRIDGE (MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS A DRAWBRIDGE) TO EXTEND ITS LIFE ANOTHER 60 YEARS.

THE REHABILITATION AND RE-OPENING OF THE VENETIAN CAUSEWAY IS JUST ONE OF THE MANY WAYS WE'RE ENHANCING MOBILITY, PUBLIC SAFETY AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY.

AND WHILE THERE'S STILL MUCH WORK TO BE DONE TO OUR BRIDGES, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK TO ENHANCE OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.

OVER THE COURSE OF THE PAST 10 YEARS, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS COMPLETED NEARLY 30 BRIDGE PROJECTS.

LAST YEAR, WE RE-OPENED THE MIAMI AVENUE BRIDGE AFTER INVESTING \$7.7 MILLION TO EXTEND

ITS LIFE SO WE CAN ALL ENJOY IT FOR YEARS TO COME.

IN 2014, WE COMPLETED THE RICKENBACKER WEST BRIDGE/BEAR CUT REHABILITATION THAT WILL EXTEND THE LIFE OF THE BRIDGES AND IMPROVE VEHICULAR, PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY.

THE COUNTY ALSO CONVERTED THE RICKENBACKER AND VENETIAN CAUSEWAYS TO ELECTRONIC TOLL COLLECTION, WHICH IS ALREADY ALLEVIATING TRAFFIC CONGESTION FOR OUR RESIDENTS.

AND WE FINALIZED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE BEAR CUT BRIDGE.

AS YOU'VE HEARD ME SAY MANY TIMES BEFORE, TRANSPORTATION IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RESIDENTS -- AND RELIABLE, SAFE, FUNCTIONING BRIDGES ARE CRITICAL COMPONENTS OF OUR COMMUNITY'S TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE.

DEPUTY MAYOR ALINA HUDAK HAS LED A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES THAT EXTENDED THE LIFE OF OUR BRIDGES AND IMPROVED SAFETY, AND DIRECTOR

ALICE BRAVO IS CONTINUING THAT MOMENTUM AT THE HELM OF OUR NEW, UNIFIED DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS.

THE VENETIAN CAUSEWAY REPRESENTS ONE OF THE MANY SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENTS IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE THAT WILL GREATLY IMPROVE THE LIFESPAN, CONDITION AND USABILITY OF THIS MAJOR THOROUGHFARE.

OUR RESIDENTS WILL BE HAPPY TO SEE THAT THE NEW SECTION OF THE VENETIAN IS CONSISTENT WITH THE HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE OF THE EXISTING BRIDGES ALONG THE CAUSEWAY -- WHICH INCLUDES ARCH BEAMS, RAILINGS AND LOW-PROFILE ELEVATIONS.

AND BECAUSE THE SAFETY OF OUR COMMUNITY'S PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS IS A TOP PRIORITY, WALKING AND CYCLING LANES WERE PRESERVED ON EACH SIDE OF THE CAUSEWAY TO MAINTAIN MOBILITY FROM THE MAINLAND TO MIAMI BEACH ACROSS THE VENETIAN ISLANDS.

I'M SURE MANY CYCLISTS WILL BEGIN ENJOYING THE BRIDGE THIS VERY DAY WITH THEIR

AFTERNOON RIDE ACROSS THE NEW AND IMPROVED VENETIAN CAUSEWAY.

BUT THIS PROJECT REPRESENTS MORE. MUCH MORE.

IT SHOWS THAT NO MATTER HOW CHALLENGING OUR BUDGETARY ISSUES HAVE BEEN, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY MUST CONTINUE TO INVEST IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.

OUR WORK ON THE NEW VENETIAN CAUSEWAY REPRESENTS A COMMITMENT TO SAFETY AND MAINTAINING OUR QUALITY OF LIFE.

AND THAT'S IMPORTANT BECAUSE OUR RESIDENTS COULD CHOOSE TO LIVE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

INSTEAD, THEY SETTLE IN MIAMI-DADE DUE TO THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND TO ENJOY BEAUTIFUL VIEWS LIKE THIS ONE.

YOU CAN'T ASK FOR A MORE BEAUTIFUL PLACE, FELLOW RESIDENTS.

WE'RE VERY FORTUNATE TO CALL MIAMI, HOME!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THANK YOU FOR JOINING US THIS MORNING.

PLEASE JOIN ME NOW IN RECOGNIZING THE GREAT WORK OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS EMPLOYEES AND OUR PARTNERS.

THANK YOU.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND CONTINUE TO BLESS MIAMI-DADE COUNTY!

