

Miami-Dade County
Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW)
 NW 17th Avenue Bridge PD&E Study Public Kick-off Meeting Summary
 Miami Police Benevolent Association
 2300 NW 14th St, Miami, FL 33125
 Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 6:30 p.m.

Summary Background

The Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) conducted a Public Kick-off Meeting for the NW 17th Avenue Bridge Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. The meeting was conducted in person at the Miami Police Benevolent Association and simultaneously online via Zoom.

The PD&E Study will evaluate alternatives to improve the bridge's operational reliability and address its functional deficiencies. Proposed solutions include rehabilitating or replacing the bridge and enhancing access to key routes such as the westbound entrance ramp to State Road 836/Dolphin Expressway and NW North River Drive. The NW 17th Avenue Bascule Bridge, built in 1929, is a vital part of Miami's infrastructure and is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

During the meeting, DTPW introduced the project and its limits, outlining the purpose and need for the study while also presenting an overview of the existing conditions. The project team explained that the Study will evaluate engineering alternatives and assess environmental impacts, including those on social, cultural, natural, and physical resources. Additionally, the project timeline was explained, and the impacted stakeholder groups were described as well as opportunities for further public participation. The full presentation may be found on the project webpage at <https://www.miamidade.gov/global/transportation/public-works/nw-17-ave-bridge.page>.

Meeting Activity Timeline

- A display advertisement was published in the El Nuevo Herald and in The Miami Herald on November 2, 2024. (See attached advertisements).
- A Florida Administrative Register (FAR) ad was published on October 31, 2024.
- A media alert was submitted to DTPW on November 2, 2024.
- Letters of invitation were mailed to 1,473 property owners on October 4, 2024.
- Letters of invitation to elected and appointed officials were distributed by email from the office of DTPW Director Eulois Cleckley on October 11, 2024.
- The meeting announcement notice was distributed by email to project partners, elected officials project stakeholders, and community groups.

Meeting Attendance

Twenty-five attendees signed the sign-in sheets (See the attached sign-in sheets) and nine people participated via Zoom (See the attached Zoom registration and attendance reports).

Elected Officials Included:

Eileen Higgins, District 5 Commissioner, Miami-Dade County, Chair of the Miami-Dade County Transportation, Mobility, and Planning Committee (TMPC)

Misty Brown, Chief of Staff to Keon Hardemon, District 3 Commissioner, Miami-Dade County

Miguel Angel Gabela, District 1 Commissioner, City of Miami

Christopher Monge and Erina Anwar, Aides to Ashley Viola Gantt, District 109 Florida House of Representatives

DTPW Staff:

Gabriel Delgado, Project Manager, Highway Bridge Engineering

Luis Espinoza, Communications Special Projects

Project Team Included:

Rick Crooks, EAC Consulting, Inc.

John Izquierdo, Gannett Fleming

Nicole Carter, Stantec

Yvette Holt, Holt Communications, Inc.

Greg Harleston, Holt Communications, Inc.

Maria Jose Gonzalez, Holt Communications, Inc.

Rosanna Gonzalez, Holt Communications Inc.

Meeting Agenda

- I. Meeting Guidelines
- II. Project Overview
- III. Purpose and Need
- IV. Existing Conditions

- V. Study Process and Timeline
- VI. Environmental Considerations
- VII. Public Involvement
- VIII. Question and Answer Session (Discussion)

Discussion

Speaker cards were offered to participants interested in asking a question or giving a verbal statement during the public meeting. The participants via Zoom were allowed to ask questions or provide comments by speaking or writing in the chat. A total of six participants asked questions and provided comments in-person and online. Following is a summary of the Q&A:

- Commissioner Higgins asked which agency would lead and control the environmental clearance. She inquired if it would be the Coast Guard.
 - Mr. Crooks responded by saying that it will be the Office of Environmental Management (OEM) within the Florida Department of Transportation.
- Mr. Hacker mentioned that the project stops at 14th Avenue and wanted to know if it would be possible to extend the project further up 17th Avenue to establish a business relationship with the historic community in the area.
 - Mr. Delgado responded, saying that the limits have already been extended beyond the bascule bridge and that the traffic study extends beyond the identified project limits in order to capture the surrounding impacts to traffic.
- Mr. Bramson, an in-person attendee who introduced himself as a historian and expert in Miami and South Florida, expressed that he wants the bridge to be preserved and saved.
 - Ms. Holt thanked Mr. Bramson for reminding the group of the bridge's historical importance to the County.
 - Mr. Delgado added that the No Build and Rehabilitation options are included as part of the study.
- Mr. Calendar, who attended the meeting via Zoom, asked if pedestrian improvements would also be considered as part of the study.
 - Mr. Delgado said that that will be taken into consideration.
- Mr. Omar Elfeky, with The River Run Condo Association noted that there is no crosswalk on the bridge. He also said that he believed replacing the bridge would be better than preserving it and added that the project should be expanded to address pedestrian safety concerns and to avoid fatalities.
 - Commissioner Gabela added that lighting is also a concern. He shared that next year, the City of Miami would be undertaking a project along 22nd Avenue to 19th Avenue, which includes sidewalk improvements.

- Ms. Holt thanked everyone for sharing the pedestrian concerns and assured them that it would be taken into consideration.
- Commissioner Higgins suggested that the project team meet with the Miami Marlins to discuss how the project study might impact traffic in the area.
 - Ms. Holt thanked Commissioner Higgins for sharing this concern and said that this will be considered.

Ms. Yvette Holt asked if there were any further questions or comments, and since there were none, she concluded the meeting by thanking the participants for attending and encouraged them to continue submitting their comments and questions through email after the meeting.

Attendees were also encouraged to leave written comments and provided comment cards. A total of three written comments were submitted.