



U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**Federal Transit  
Administration**

REGION IV  
Alabama, Florida, Georgia,  
Kentucky, Mississippi,  
North Carolina, Puerto  
Rico, South Carolina,  
Tennessee, Virgin Islands

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Mr. Harpal Kapoor, Director  
Miami-Dade Transit  
Overtown Transit Village  
701 NW 1 Court, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Miami, Florida 33136

April 7, 2010

RE: Environmental Assessment & FONSI for 344<sup>th</sup> Street Park and Ride Facility in Florida City

Dear Mr. Kapoor:

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has received and reviewed the Environmental Assessment (EA) dated March 2010 submitted on behalf of the City of Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) for the Florida City Park and Ride Facility located at 344<sup>th</sup> Street. Based on our review of the material submitted, and in accordance with 23 CFR 771.119, it is our finding that there are no significant impacts on the environment associated with the development and operation of this project. Therefore, a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) has been approved.

Enclosed is a copy of the FONSI for your information. Please note that the "Environmental Impact and Related Procedures" regulation requires that Environmental Assessments be made available to the public. Further, MDT should send a Notice of Availability of the FONSI to affected units of the Federal, State, and local government. The final environmental assessment and FONSI will need to be posted to your website and made available from MDT and FTA upon request from the public. The FONSI approval letter should be scanned and attached to any application for FTA funding placed in FTA's Transportation Electronic Award and Management (TEAM) system for the subject facility.

If you need further assistance, please contact Myra Immings of my staff at (404) 865-5608, or at [myra.immings@dot.gov](mailto:myra.immings@dot.gov).

Sincerely,

  
Yvette G. Taylor, Ph.D.  
Regional Administrator

# **FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)**

## **Park and Ride Facility in Florida City Florida City, Miami-Dade County, FL Project No.: CIP014**

**Submitted to:  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration**

**Prepared by:**



**Miami-Dade Transit (MDT)  
701 NW First Court, Suite 1500  
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In association with**



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**and**



**URS Corporation - Miami  
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**March 2010**



U.S. Department of  
Transportation  
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**FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI)**

**Miami-Dade Transit  
Park and Ride Facility in Florida City  
Florida City, Miami-Dade County, Florida**

The Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) proposes to construct the "Park-and-Ride in Florida City", a transit commuter parking and transfer facility in the City of Florida City, Miami-Dade County, Florida. Based on the Park and Ride in Florida City *Environmental Assessment* dated February, 2010 prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. Section 4321 et seq.) and Federal Transit Administration's implementing regulations (23 CFR Part 771), the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) finds, in accordance with 23 CFR Section 771.121, that the Park and Ride in Florida City (hereinafter referred to as the PROJECT) will have no significant impact on the human environment.

This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) which has been independently evaluated by the FTA and determined to adequately and accurately discuss the need, environmental issues, and impacts of the proposed project and appropriate mitigation measures. It provides sufficient evidence and analysis for determining that an EIS is not required. The FTA takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the attached EA.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

*Justin S. Taylor*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

4-6-10

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
Date: March 5, 2010**

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**Project: Park and Ride Facility in Florida City  
Applicant: Miami-Dade Transit  
Project Location: Florida City, Miami-Dade County, Florida**

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approved the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the new Park and Ride Facility in Florida City (hereinafter designated or referred to as the "PROJECT") serving Miami-Dade County, Florida, and sponsored by Miami-Dade Transit (MDT).

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has completed its review of the proposed Park and Ride Facility and has found the proposed project to have no significant adverse impact on the environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is based on the Environmental Assessment (EA) and supporting documentation for this project. These documents have been reviewed and evaluated by the FTA and determined to accurately discuss the project's purpose, need, environmental issues, impacts, commitments and mitigation procedures.

## **PROPOSED PROJECT**

### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the Park and Ride facility in Florida City project is to provide existing and future transit riders and the neighboring community an organized, safe and convenient public parking facility. The facility will address problems with safety and convenience associated with the high service demand for the existing Bus Station at SW 344 Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Florida City which serves passengers traveling not only to the northern part of the Miami-Dade County (along the South Miami-Dade Busway) but also those passengers traveling to Monroe County and the lower Florida Keys.

The potential development of the proposed Park and Ride Facility is in line with the goals and policies of federal, state and local government authority. The proposed project is included in the following approved transportation plans and local government comprehensive plans:

- The current adopted 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which considers this project as a Priority 1 project.
- The MPO-approved Fiscal Year 2009 Transportation Improvement Plan.
- The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Park and Ride Program was initiated in 1982 to provide organized, safe parking for vehicles constantly congregating on roadsides. FDOT identifies the project as Financial Management (FM) Number 420457-1 and 420458-1 and indicates the capital improvement allocation for the project is \$600,000 and \$2,322,000 respectively.

The Facility will improve the overall functionality of the area transportation system by:

- Providing transportation options to county commuters;
- Improving linkage to transit service;
- Providing improved access to jobs, trade centers and services;
- Improving the safety and aesthetics of the neighboring community (by removing make-shift parking);

The proposed Park and Ride Facility will encourage continued private sector development in the area and reduce the need for costly future infrastructure (roadway) investments.

Additionally, anyone in the Miami area will have improved access to the affordable goods and housing in the southern portion of the County, contributing to an economic rejuvenation of Miami-Dade County. The facility will also provide local residents improved access to economic opportunities, consumer goods, health and civic services, and other social necessities.

### **Project Description**

The proposed PROJECT consists of the construction of an approximately 260-car "Park and Ride" facility (surface lot) and small bus driver's lounge building with associated amenities including but not limited to fencing, landscaping, lighting and signage.

The PROJECT will provide service to the southern termini of the South-Dade Busway at Palm Drive in Florida City, Miami-Dade County, Florida. The Preferred Alternative for the proposed project is located adjacent to the north side of Palm Drive/Southwest 344<sup>th</sup> Street between Northwest 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Northwest 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in Florida City, Miami-Dade County, Florida. Palm Drive is a four-lane paved divided roadway with access to Florida's Turnpike less than one-half mile away via US-1. Northwest 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues are both two-lane paved undivided local roadways. The 3.88-acre site is of sufficient size; contains unimproved land, commercial buildings, and residences; is desirable for transit operations; and does not have any significant environmental impacts.

### **Public Participation**

The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was created for the purpose of discussing the area transportation problems with the local (Florida City and Homestead) community and the users of the existing transit (Miami-Dade Bus and Metro-Rail) system, and to involve the using public in the process of developing a new park and ride facility that would adequately address the areas of public concern. The Park and Ride in Florida City PIP is consistent with the PIP for the Miami-Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), CEQ regulations for implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and 23 CFR 771.

Based on the PROJECT demographic location, type, and design concept, the affected public and other stakeholders were identified using Miami-Dade County Property Appraiser's Office records and Geographical Information Systems technology. Property and business owners whose properties lie within 300 feet of any project alternative were contacted through the Public Outreach program and included in the EA decision making process. Other interested parties were identified based on specific issues related to needs associated with Park and Ride improvements.

Due to the potential public relocations and property acquisitions associated with the PROJECT individual meetings with several affected area residents and business owners were incorporated into the public outreach strategy. Close coordination with the Florida City Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) was another specific strategy implemented to disseminate PROJECT information to potentially disenfranchised community members and the transit using populace of the Florida City and Homestead communities. A public meeting was held at Florida City Commission Chambers to provide all interested parties the opportunity to participate in the development of the PROJECT in a "Town Hall" setting. A public hearing was held at the Miami-Dade Public Library, Homestead Branch on January 20, 2010, to give the public an opportunity to have official comments on the project incorporated in the final record. Invitation letters (for all meetings) were mailed in advance to property owners within 300 feet of the PROJECT footprint. In addition invitation letters were also mailed to area businesses, persons who have previously shown an interest in the project, local officials and agencies. In total more than 600 letters were sent as a part of the outreach effort for this project. Notification for the hearing was published in the Florida Administrative Weekly (FAW) on December 31, 2009 and a newspaper ad was published in the Miami Herald, Neighbors section on December 27, 2009.

Based on the overall general support and anticipation for the PROJECT expressed by the affected community members (i.e. parties that will be relocated), local endorsements by the City of Florida City, and the fact that there were no detracting comments received (despite high public awareness of the project undertaking) during the outreach effort, the program has effectively engaged the public in the development of the PROJECT in accordance with public involvement best practices and 23 CFR 771.111. During the course of the public outreach effort no opposition to the proposed Park and Ride facility was encountered and reception by the general public has been very positive. In keeping with NEPA guidelines public outreach efforts will be on-going through subsequent project phases. All written correspondences (through the public hearing comment period) are appended to the final version of the EA report.

### **Agency Comments and Coordination**

Initial agency coordination was conducted through individual coordination letters to relevant agencies (transmitted by MDT) in accordance with 23 CFR 771.111. Coordination with public agencies, community associations, and other area stakeholders has been ongoing throughout the study process. All written agency comments relating to project affects is appended to the EA.

The MPO Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC) reviewed the project for comment on July 22, 2009 and the city of Florida City has endorsed the development of the facility (by resolution). Coordination with public agencies, community associations, and other area stakeholders has been ongoing throughout the study process as per Executive Order 12372. All written agency comments relating to project are appended to the EA.

## **DETERMINATIONS AND FINDINGS**

### **Transportation Impacts**

The major roadways within the study area will not be adversely affected by the construction or the operation of the proposed PROJECT at the preferred location, although additional signalization may be required. A detailed Traffic Study has been performed for this project.

The study indicates that project related traffic impacts will be minimal, and that all adjacent intersections and roadway segments meet the required acceptable level of operation in the proposed opening year (2012) for the facility.

#### Signalization

The State of Florida and Miami Dade County have specific criteria for Level of Service (LOS). In the PROJECT area an acceptable Level of Service is "E" with allowances based on proximity to various levels of transit. The proposed Park-and-Ride Lot does not create impacts that will diminish the LOS on any roadway below the "E" requirement. However, the intersection of SW 344<sup>th</sup> Street/Palm Drive and NW/SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is currently a two-way stop controlled intersection. The intersection will be at LOS "F" before the PROJECT is fully built-out. For this location, increasing the cycle length from 170 seconds to 195 seconds and optimizing signal timing will improve the intersection delay by approximately 10 seconds. Additional congestion mitigation can be achieved by adjusting critical gaps per field observations, and incorporating driver aggressiveness and the availability of gaps due to signal metering effects. Adjusting the critical gap improves the NB delay by approximately 7 seconds and the SB delay by approximately 28 seconds.

#### **Water Resources**

The assessment of project area water resource management and mitigation measures associated with the provision of Alternative 2 are described in the following sections:

##### Floodplains

In accordance with Executive Order 11988, "Floodplain Management," and DOT Order 5650.2, potential impacts to floodplains were evaluated. According to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) for Miami-Dade County, the PROJECT at the Alternative 2 site would involve work in areas of Zone AH, corresponding to areas of 100-year shallow flooding with a constant water-surface elevation where average depths are between one and three feet. Construction in these areas must meet local flood plain zoning ordinance requirements.

Minimal unavoidable floodplain impacts will be compensated for with the proposed stormwater management features. It is currently anticipated that the primary drainage system will consist of drainage wells, which will allow the storm runoff to be fully contained and disposed of on site. It is recommended that the new system consist of French drains and catch basins with pollutant retardant baffles and be designed consistent with a 100-year design storm. Specific mitigation measures for any floodplain impacts at the Alternative 2 site will be addressed during the subsequent design phase.

##### Water Quality

Because of the developed nature of the Alternative 2 site and the lack of any surface water features on the site, the proposed project will not impact water quality. Based on the Florida Administrative Code (FAC.) 62-302 (Surface Water Quality Standards), no Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW) or aquatic preserves occur within the general project study area or at the preferred Alternative 2 location. Any proposed storm water management facilities design will include, at a minimum, the water quality requirements for water quality impacts as required by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and Miami-Dade County DERM. Therefore, no adverse impacts to water quality are anticipated.

## **Contamination**

### **Phase II Environmental Site Assessment**

A Phase II Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) was conducted at the Alternative 2 (preferred) site location. The Phase II ESA is available upon request. The Phase II ESA results showed that the groundwater samples did not exceed the Groundwater Cleanup Target Levels (GCTLs). The analytical results of the soil samples showed that some contaminants exceeded the Soil Cleanup Target Levels (SCTL) within the top two (2) feet of soil. One of these contaminants is arsenic. However, statistical evaluation of data along with a review of historical information suggests that, the elevated arsenic exist mostly in the sub surface, in particular in the top two to four feet of vadose zone which is believed to be due to agricultural activities and land use in South Miami Dade County. Therefore, DERM does not require additional assessment of the arsenic impacted soils. (DERM Memorandum dated August 28, 2009)

Taking into consideration the proposed future site use which is a Park and Ride Facility (industrial/commercial) and design considerations for construction, which include removing the top layer of soil not suitable for construction, the County's Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM) and MDT agreed to address the environmental issues during final design. The final design will follow Chapter 24 Risk Based Corrective Actions (RBCA) provisions in order to provide for site closures (i.e. no further action, NFA or NFA with conditions) that will be protective of human health and the environment.

### **Recreational / Parkland Protection**

Although designated bike trails (Everglades/Biscayne Trail along Palm Drive, South Dade Trail along NW 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, and Krome Trail along Krome Avenue), exist in close proximity to the Alternative 2 site no existing public parklands or historical properties exist within the limits of the proposed improvements. In addition, access to these facilities will not be restricted as a result of the Alternative 2 site selection.

No impacts are expected to occur to any public parklands or historical properties as a result of the PROJECT at the Alternative 2 site. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District VI has an on-going *Krome Avenue Truck By-Pass Study* that includes one possible alternative which abuts the Alternative 2 site, if selected. Coordination with the FDOT during the development of the Truck By-Pass route will be on-going to ensure that no adverse impacts to the selected route will result from the provision of the new park and ride lot at the preferred (Alternative 2) site.

### **Zoning Considerations**

It is anticipated that PROJECT implementation will impact existing zoning classifications (i.e. C-1, RD-1) at the (Alternative 2) site. MDT is committed to perform the level of permitting and agency coordination required to achieve the appropriate "*Community Facilities*" (CF) zone reclassification.

The existing and proposed zoning for each impacted parcel is shown in Exhibit A below.

**"EXHIBIT A"**

<b>Park &amp; Ride Facility in Florida City</b>			
<b>Parcels Current Florida City Zoning Criteria</b>			
<b>(PARCEL LIST)</b>			
<b>Parcel No.</b>	<b>Folio</b>	<b>Primary Zone</b>	<b>Classification</b>
100		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
101		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
102A		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
102B		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
103		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
104		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
105		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
106		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
107		Neighborhood Commercial District	C-1
108		Residential Duplex District	RD-1
109		Residential Duplex District	RD-1
110		Residential Duplex District	RD-1
111		Residential Duplex District	RD-1
112		Residential Duplex District	RD-1
<b>Parcels Proposed Florida City Zoning Criteria</b>			
100		Community Facilities District	CF
101		Community Facilities District	CF
102A		Community Facilities District	CF
102B		Community Facilities District	CF
103		Community Facilities District	CF
104		Community Facilities District	CF
105		Community Facilities District	CF
106		Community Facilities District	CF
107		Community Facilities District	CF
108		Community Facilities District	CF
109		Community Facilities District	CF
110		Community Facilities District	CF
111		Community Facilities District	CF
112		Community Facilities District	CF

**National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 49 U.S.C. 5324(b)**

The FTA finds in accordance with Federal Transit Law, 49 USC Section 5324(b), that an adequate opportunity to present views was given to all parties with a significant economic, social, or environmental interest; that the preservation and the enhancement of the environment, and the interest of the community in which the project is located were considered; and that no significant adverse environmental effect is likely to result from the proposed Park and Ride Facility in Florida City undertaking.

**Commitments**

To avoid or minimize the impacts of the proposed project, MDT is committed to the following measures:

- MDT will carry out a Right-of-Way (ROW) Acquisition and Relocation Program in accordance with Florida Statute 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17).

- MDT in coordination with DERM will mitigate contaminated soils during the final design phase in accordance with Chapter 24 Risk Based Corrective Actions (RBCA) of Miami-Dade County code. If any unexpected contamination is discovered at any time, MDT is committed to implement necessary remedial actions.
- MDT will maintain close coordination with the FDOT District VI Krome Avenue Truck By-Pass Study to ensure that impacts to a selected By-Pass route are minimized.
- MDT will ensure the construction effort is performed in accordance with the Miami-Dade County flood plain zoning ordinance requirements for Zone AH. Minimal unavoidable floodplain impacts will be compensated for with the proposed stormwater management features.
- MDT will maintain or exceed the required Miami-Dade County minimum Roadway Level of Service "E" (during and following PROJECT construction) by carrying out appropriate signal phasing and timing improvements, making necessary critical gap adjustments and performing micro-simulation analysis and signal warrant studies as needed.
- MDT will facilitate the required zoning changes for the thirteen (13) impacted parcels. The proposed new zoning classification is Community Facilities (CF) District.

### **Conclusions**

The EA (February 2010) constitutes the environmental record of the proposed project and presents the alternatives to the proposed project that have been considered and the environmental impacts of the alternatives, including any adverse environmental effects and irreversible and irretrievable impacts. FTA has reviewed the EA for the Park and Ride in Florida City Facility Project, along with all supporting documentation. FTA finds the PROJECT undertaking will have no significant impact on the environment, pursuant to 23 CFR 771.119. Details regarding the environmental effects of the PROJECT on the social and physical / natural environment can be referenced in the attached Environmental Assessment (EA) Report. The EA was made available to the public before the public hearing and consideration was given to all comments received as a result of public availability and the public hearing. After investigating potential effects to the physical / natural and social environment FTA finds that no significant environmental or community impact will result from the PROJECT as described herein.