

## Introductions

### 1998 East-West Multimodal Corridor

#### Background/Project Need

- There has been a long demonstrated need to improve east-west mobility in Miami-Dade County. Moving east-west has always presented a challenge with only one major option SR 836/Dolphin Expressway which is tolled.
- In early 1990's, the MPO prepared a report "Dade County Transit Corridors Transitional Analysis" that identified and prioritized the premium transit corridors for the county. Two of the corridors identified (West and Beach Corridors combined make up the East-West corridor). This was the birth of the East-West Transit Corridor as we know it now.
- This corridor is our key radial spine to and from the Downtown and Brickell CBDs.
- This corridor also provides a connection to major existing (TriRail) and planned transit modes (TRCL, AAF).
- Connects to major employment, educational, and tourist centers (FIU, Airport, Health District, Downtown Miami, and Miami Beach).
- High levels of bi-directional congestion contributing to unreliability, decreased quality of life, and poor air quality.
- Goal is to improve transit connections and provide residents with enhanced transit options so they can leave their cars at home.
- We cannot continue to build ourselves out of congestion.
- Ensuring an effective transportation network by maintaining good connectivity and high levels of mobility in all modes is important for the success of any region.

#### Project History

- In 1994, A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was conducted by FDOT (in coordination with FTA, FHWA, FRA, FAA, MARAD, and USCG) for the East-West Corridor from (FIU to Miami Beach) culminating with a LPA & ROD in 1998. The ROD included a transit line, highway improvements to SR 836, and bike-pedestrian improvements.

#### Project Components

- Project broken down into 3 major components (West, Central, East). All with distinct characteristics.
  - West (FIU/Turnpike to MIC)
  - Central (MIC to Downtown Miami/Government Center)
  - East (Downtown Miami/Government Center to Miami Beach Convention Center)
- Pro-Active public involvement throughout Planning and environmental process. Over 500 meetings held.
- The ROD was for the segment from the Palmetto to Port Miami. Although there was support for the entire project limits, it was decided to phase it in smaller scale transportation projects that would be more cost manageable. Once a segment was built, other segments were to be introduced.
- Unfortunately funding was not available at the time and project was put on hold.

### 1999 Pursued 1¢ Sales Tax Referendum fund transit/transportation projects – failed

### 2002 Pursued ½ ¢ Sales Tax Referendum which passed and components of East-West Multimodal Corridor were advanced (People's Transportation Plan (PTP) identified 8 Rapid Transit Corridors)

- **The East-West Corridor** was repackaged into 3 phases of the "Orange Line" (Phase 1: MIC-EH "AirportLink", Phase 2: North Corridor, and Phase 3: East-West)
- **AirportLink (2004 EA/FONSI-Opened for Revenue Service 2012).** This project was able to move forward quickly because it was funded with State and Local funds (Approx. \$506M). Additionally, MDT pursued and obtained a Letter of No Prejudice (LONP) from FTA for the replacement of 136-Rail Cars so that funds spent in this project could be applied towards local match contribution later for any of the Orange Line projects.
- **East-West Corridor** (2005 began Supplemental Draft EIS-2008) was stopped due to several factors including the economic downturn & County revenue shortfalls.

- **County continued to invest in transit in order to serve the existing demand and build ridership (2009-Ongoing)**
  - Communities along the corridor did not want Enhanced Bus Service. They wanted more premium service (BRT or Rail) that would be more reliable and had its own lane or ROW.
  - Bay Link/Beach Corridor 2013-2015 Feasibility Study.
  - Community continued to express support for transit but don't want to wait 10 years for implementation.
- **2016 Continuation of East-West Corridor Implementation**
  - County would like to move forward expeditiously with the Transit Component of East-West Multimodal Corridor (FIU to MIC)
  - Starting with the "Palmetto Connector" which was part of the 1998 ROD. Although the population and employment densities continue to increase, changes in the affected environment that impact a NEPA document have been minimal.
  - The westernmost section, the "FIU Connector" will be mostly contained within the Dolphin and Turnpike ROWs and the impacts to the affected environment are anticipated to be minimal.
- **Next Steps**