



- Fort Lauderdale Office** · 1800 Eller Drive · Suite 600 · Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316 · 954.921.7781(p) · 954.921.8807(f)
 West Palm Beach Office · 560 Village Boulevard · Suite 340 · West Palm Beach, FL 33409 · 561.684.6161(p) · 561.684.6360(f)

Date: September 28, 2020

To: Roseann Prado, Interim Village Manager

From: Xavier R. Falconi, PE, Director, Traffic Engineering Department

Subject: Lane Repurposing for NE 6th Avenue (NE 113th Street to NE 121st Street)

Project: 18-1041.1

CC: Alex A. David, AICP, Director of the Miami Dade Office

INTRODUCTION

On September 14, 2020, the Village of Biscayne Park reconvened a meeting to discuss the possibility of applying for a Lane Repurposing study for NE 6th Avenue from NE 113th Street to NE 121st Street. Attending the meeting were Vice Mayor MacDonald Kennedy, Interim Village Manager Roseann Prado, and Cesar Hernandez with the Public Works Department, representing the Village of Biscayne Park. Also, in attendance were Alex David, Director of the Miami-Dade Office, and I with Calvin, Giordano and Associates (CGA).

The request was for CGA to present the following items at the October 6th Village Commission meeting:

1. Price to submit a Lane Repurposing study application to FDOT on behalf of the Village of Biscayne Park
2. Price to conduct a Lane Repurposing study for the Village if FDOT approves the study application
3. Verification if CITT will allow any funds to be used to pay for either or both, the Lane Repurposing application, and the study
4. CGA's professional opinion on the feasibility of the Village of Biscayne Park obtaining approval of the application and/or final request for lane repurposing for NE 6th Avenue within the limits indicated. This should include consideration of the Village's Comprehensive Plan, projected impacts on the Village (traffic congestion, pushing traffic to the side streets, aesthetics, etc.), and other considerations that were not discussed during the September 14th meeting.

BACKGROUND

Based on the request from the Village of Biscayne Park, CGA proceeded to gather and review information related to the current FDOT project on NE 6th Avenue from NE 113th Street and NE 121st Street. It is our understanding that the scope of the project includes the following:

- Sidewalk improvement project
- New lighting system to replace the current
- Incidental drainage system due to the new sidewalk
- Upgrade crosswalks and pedestrian signalization features at NE 113th Street
- Landscape modifications within the FDOT right-of-way



Following are some relevant dates from the FDOT presentation conducted for the NE 6th Avenue project on July 22, 2020:

- Design Start Date: November 2019
- Letting Date: July 2021
- Construction Start: November 2021
- Construction End: June 2022
- Cost of Construction: \$2.6 Million (including cost difference for decorative lighting)

On August 4, 2020, the Village Commission approved Resolution No. 2020-35 requesting FDOT suspend all further design and development work on the proposed modifications of SR 915/NE 6th Avenue to allow the Village Commission to develop, with resident's input, alternate design proposals for the proposed modifications consistent with the Village's community character. As a result of this Resolution, FDOT has stopped working on this project and the schedule indicated at the July 22 presentation will be modified.

Following on the request from the Village for the consideration of a Lane Repurposing study, CGA proceeded with reviewing the NE 6th Avenue project background information as provided by the Village. CGA also set up a virtual meeting with FDOT to discuss the process to apply for Lane Repurposing along NE 6th Avenue as well as to determine any relevant information from the project that could be utilized for the Lane Repurposing application and study. Another goal of the meeting was to find out specific FDOT requirements to initiate the application and subsequently the technical information that will need to be provided as part of the study.

On September 22, Diana White, PE (Assistant Director, Traffic Engineering Department) and I from CGA met with FDOT District 6 representatives to discuss the Lane Repurposing option for NE 6th Avenue. The Village Interim Manager was also invited but was unable to attend. The following were some relevant items discussed at the time:

- FDOT indicated that the NE 6th Avenue project is currently on hold pending response from the Village as to how to proceed.
- Results of the Ped Study for NE 6th Avenue at NE 115th Street and NE 119th Street (June 2014).
- Results of the Signal Warrant Study for the intersection of NE 6th Avenue at NE 119th Street (February 2018)
- FDOT indicated that the Department will be facing some reductions on their Work Program that could potentially impact the future of the NE 6th Avenue project.
- Coordination of the Lane Repurposing study in addition to FDOT should include the Miami Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), Miami Dade County, Miami Dade Transit, and neighboring cities.
- As part of the analysis for the Lane Repurposing study, traffic modeling for NE 6th Avenue and the adjacent transportation system within the Village will need to be included.
- FDOT will provide Level of Service map, Context Sensitive Classification map for FDOT District 6, an example of a similar Lane Repurposing study and available traffic counts for NE 6th Avenue.
- Procedure for the Lane Repurposing application and study according to FDOT. On August of this year, FDOT released the Lane Repurposing Guidebook outlining the application and study review process.
- Some of the documents that should be evaluated as part of this Lane Repurposing study should include travel demand, impacts on surrounding network, assessment of where traffic is going to be distributed to, any bridges, and review of the language on the Village Comprehensive Plan related to the proposed Lane Repurposing.
- Development of the Lane Repurposing study methodology.
- FDOT indicated that there needs to be a reason for the Lane Repurposing study within the Village of Biscayne Park.



ANALYSIS

Following are some key findings from reviewing prior FDOT studies for NE 6th Avenue:

- The 85th percentile is 39 mph. With the posted speed at 30 mph, it appears that the 85th percentile is nine miles over the posted speed limit, indicating that speeding is a concern along NE 6th Avenue. A mitigation measure mentioned in the reports indicates that marking the posted speed limit on the NE 6th Avenue road surface could serve as a reminder to drivers to obey the 30 mph. Also, there is a reader board that alerts drivers of the speed at which they are driving that appeared to be in the need of repair at the time of the field observation. Speed reader boards could also serve as a good reminder to drivers to maintain the posted speed limit while driving along NE 6th Avenue in the Village.
- Field observations from the studies indicate that there appears to be limited sight distance for drivers approaching from the side streets that can be mitigated by clearing some vegetation. This creates a situation where drivers exiting the side streets may be pulling further into the intersection to be able to see oncoming traffic before making turns onto NE 6th Avenue.
- The results of the pedestrian study conducted in 2014, indicate that crosswalks at the intersections of NE 115th Street and NE 119th Street at NE 6th Avenue did not meet the criteria for installation of crosswalks. Also, the signal warrant study at the intersection of NE 119th Street and NE 6th Avenue conducted in 2018, concluded that this intersection did not meet the criteria for a traffic signal installation.
- Additional field observations conducted as part of the studies revealed that because of the long waiting time for drivers attempting to turn from the side streets, drivers appear to take chances by proceeding with the turn as soon as there is a gap in traffic moving on NE 6th Avenue. This creates a situation where vehicles will have to wait at the median opening to complete the turn. This is further complicated due to the narrow width of the roadway median, which is only eight feet and not enough to safely store a vehicle. These turning vehicles then obstruct the free flow of traffic on the inside lanes of NE 6th Avenue, which in turn creates congestion and delays.
- Additionally, prior field observations showed that vehicles traveling northbound and southbound along NE 6th Avenue can experience some delays as some vehicles attempt to turn left onto the side streets and obstruct the free flow of vehicles. Currently NE 6th Avenue does not have any designated left turning lanes north of NE 113th Street to NE 121st Street.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After reviewing all the information presented, CGA recommends the following in order to proceed with the application for the Lane Repurposing of NE 6th Avenue:

1. In coordination with FDOT the Village should proceed with the implementation of the mitigation measures recommended in the studies previously conducted for NE 6th Avenue. After the implementation of the mitigating measures, FDOT should continue monitoring the vehicular speed along NE 6th Avenue within the limits of the Village.
2. Define the purpose and goals of the proposed Lane Repurposing project because this will guide the evaluation criteria before and after the project is completed. In discussions with FDOT District 6 representatives, they indicated that the purpose of the project would have a major bearing in determining if the Lane Repurposing application should proceed. In general, as part of the statewide and regional transportation policies, transportation projects must include a multimodal component, that is the inclusion of facilities that address circulation of pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users are an important component of any new transportation project on a state roadway.
3. The coordination of the application for a Lane Repurposing project should include other stakeholders such as Miami Dade County, the Miami Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), the neighboring cities of North Miami and Miami Shores, FDOT District 6, Miami Dade Transit as well as public input. Determining the



Memorandum

funding for the implementation of the Lane Repurposing project is crucial for this application to proceed for further consideration.

4. FDOT has indicated that the deterioration of the level of service (typically A-F with A being the best and F the worse), would be a concern in considering the Lane Repurposing application for approval. From field observations from prior studies, it appears that there are already some delays caused by turning vehicles from the side streets and storing on the median prior to completing the turn. With the elimination of one lane on each direction of travel along NE 6th Avenue, this situation would only get worse as drivers would continue to look for gaps to complete their turning movements. Any deterioration of the level of service of NE 6th Avenue could have the potential to impact the adjacent local streets within the Village. There are several bus stops located along NE 6th Avenue that need to be accounted for as part of a consideration for the Lane Repurposing.
5. The potential for left turns from NE 6th Avenue should also be another consideration in proceeding with the Lane Repurposing application. This situation would increasingly get worse with the implementation of the Lane Repurposing project since there would not be another travel lane that drivers could use to continue traveling northbound or southbound along NE 6th Avenue.
6. Another concern mentioned by FDOT District 6 representatives during our meeting is related to the consideration of maintaining the standards for the flow of traffic for not only NE 6th Avenue but also the entire transportation corridor (SR 915), a state roadway that serves as the main route of access for the neighboring cities of North Miami, Miami Shores and beyond.
7. After inquiring about the potential to utilize funding from the Office of the Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust (CITT) to conduct a Lane Repurposing study, the response was that those funds can be used for this purpose. It needs to be charged to the Transportation portion of the Village's surtax use. It cannot be charged to the 20% Transit side.
8. The total preliminary cost to assist the Village of Biscayne Park with the application process and attending the initial meeting with FDOT would be approximately \$15,000.
9. The total anticipated cost to proceed with the development of the Lane Repurposing study would be approximately \$380,000. This figure could be modified based on the first meeting with FDOT District 6 after reviewing the application. In terms of schedule, it is anticipated that the completion of the study could take as long as a year. A more definite schedule will be determined after the initial application meeting with FDOT.

Please let me know if you need additional information. Thank you for the opportunity to assist the Village of Biscayne Park during this preliminary evaluation of a Lane Repurposing for NE 6th Avenue and provide our preliminary recommendations.