

**STATEMENT ABOUT DTPW'S APRIL 27 PRESENTATION
ON THE SOUTH BAYSHORE DRIVE PROJECT**

**FRIENDS OF THE COMMODORE TRAIL
MAY 5, 2022**

We applaud DTPW for its approach to involving the public in redesigning and rebuilding So. Bayshore Drive between Darwin St. and Mercy Way. The April 27 online event demonstrated DTPW's openness to public input and willingness to listen. We expect DTPW to continue in this vein as the project evolves, and we commit our organization to acting as an integral part of the process. Following are our thoughts about how to make the process and the project optimally successful and effective.

1. Now that the City of Miami Master Plan process for the Commodore Trail is well underway, we have come to think of the entire five-mile length of the Commodore Trail and the existing roadway it parallels as a *transportation/mobility corridor, not just a trail*. As such, the corridor addresses the needs of multiple users—walkers, runners, cyclists, residents, visitors, and motorists. Thinking of it as a corridor with multiple uses and constituents broadens the vision and possibilities to create a legacy of great beauty and utility for future generations. Thinking of it as just a roadway needing improvement that happens to have the potential of a parallel shared-use path greatly limits the possibilities of the project. **We call on DTPW to provide a defining framework that sets the stage for a comprehensive *corridor approach*, not just the more conventional *roadway approach*.**
2. DTPW has made it clear that it will be optimal to create direct connections between the Commodore Trail and the South Bayshore Dr. project at both the northern and southern ends. **We urge DTPW to take this a step further by working closely with the City of Miami Office of Capital Improvements and its contractors to ensure the most seamless possible connection of the projects, both north and south, including collaborative efforts to ensure consistent design and engineering elements and standards.** It would be a serious mistake—a mistake that could last several lifetimes—to create one kind of trail/corridor for the 1.5 miles of the South Bayshore Dr. project and a different type of trail/corridor both north and south of it.
3. **We favor the shared-use path (SUP) alternative because it's the only alternative that addresses the issue of safety for bicyclists and pedestrians.** In light of current design and safety standards for bike lanes, the bike lane alternative is completely unacceptable and potentially dangerous for all users. However, we are concerned about the constraints of the approach presented by DTPW for the SUP alternative. For example, at points the SUP would be 8 feet wide. This is not wide enough to allow the safe and comfortable circulation of multiple users and modes such as walkers, runners, cyclists, rollerbladers, and scooter users. **We call on DTPW to set a minimum standard of 10 feet for the SUP.** It's entirely feasible that DTPW can find two additional feet of width at critical points by reducing the width of the swale and greenspace. In all locations possible, we call on DTPW to further enhance user safety by separating bike and pedestrian lanes from each other.
4. **Assuming DTPW chooses the SUP alternative, attention must still be given to the experienced bicyclists who will use the roadway and are entitled by law to do so.** Faster and more experienced cyclists would endanger other users of the SUP and may never use it. Therefore, as much as possible, provisions should be made for their safety on the main roadway. Assuming that standard-width bike lanes are an impossibility, we call on DTPW to find other ways to make the roadway as safe as possible for cyclists. This will require creative and inventive thinking, but ignoring the need is not acceptable.
5. Much of the feedback during the April 27 webinar focused on speeding motor vehicles in the project area. This is a problem throughout the Commodore Trail corridor. Both of the proposed alternatives will make the problem worse. Specifically:

- a. The addition of new turn lanes and the lengthening of existing turn lanes will encourage greater flow of motor vehicles and faster speeds. **We ask DTPW to eliminate all new turn lanes from the plan and adopt a policy of discouraging new turn lanes for the entire corridor.**
 - b. The roadway width of 11 feet will also encourage speeding. **We urge DTPW to narrow the standard roadway width to 10.5 feet.**
 - c. The “design speed” of the roadway and corridor has not been given sufficient attention in the plan presented on April 27. For example, the plan says nothing about the addition of shade trees that would greatly enhance the attractiveness of this historic corridor and help to slow traffic. **We call on DTPW to make the addition of shade trees a key element of the plan.** This could be complemented by other design and visual elements that will make it clear to motorists that So. Bayshore Drive is a relatively slow neighborhood street, not an alternative highway for people avoiding U.S. 1. Beautifying the street with signature design elements and shade trees will win the support of neighbors who are already concerned about the impact of the project, and it could serve as a model for traffic calming and roadway improvements countywide.
6. The DTPW plan is not serious about pedestrian safety. It points out that there are only two midblock crosswalks in the project area, but no new crosswalks are proposed. **To remedy this, DTPW should include several additional midblock crosswalks at strategic locations, preferably with flashing lights and other devices such as speed tables and textured pavement.** This change to the plan will influence the design speed of the corridor, slow traffic, and protect vulnerable pedestrians.

We thank DTPW for the opportunity to provide these comments, and we look forward to our continuing involvement as the project progresses.

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Mel Meinhardt, Board Chairman

