

KENDALL GAZETTE

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W. Kendall / W. Dade, let your voice be heard

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The Kendall Parkway is promising to bring a wide range of transportation choices in West Kendall/West Dade, a community that represents almost a quarter of Miami-Dade County's population.

But it is much more than an expressway. This new, multimodal corridor also will offer special lanes for express bus service with climate-controlled stations, and a 14-mile long nature path for walking, jogging and bicycling.

And it is right on time, because it represents a solution that can be delivered on short order, with construction starting as soon as 2019. The Kendall Parkway will offer residents and businesses an option to fighting traffic for 45 minutes to an hour — with the greatest time savings during the peak morning and afternoon travel periods.

The Kendall Parkway is proposed east of Krome (177th) Avenue and east of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan area (CERP), as close to the Urban Development Boundary (UDB) as possible. As part of the planning efforts, MDX has gone through a rigorous analysis of all social, environmental and physical impacts for the past four years to avoid, minimize, or mitigate any potential impacts.

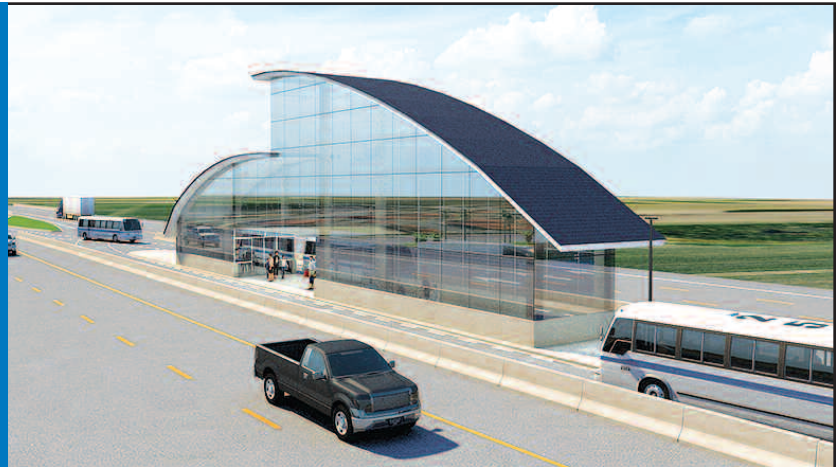
Various entities having jurisdiction over the area — including the Army Corps of Engineers, South Florida Water Management District, Miami-Dade County's environmental regulatory agencies — have strong regulations in place to protect the environmental resources such as wetlands, endangered species, floodplains, and drinking water. MDX must comply with all federal, state and local regulations in order to construct the Kendall Parkway.

Miami-Dade County, under the direction of Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez, has included several unprecedented requirements. One such requirement is that all mitigation to the extent possible be on-site, which means MDX purchasing approximately 1,000 acres of privately owned property in the Bird Road Basin to be protected and put in public trust in perpetuity with no possible chance to develop or otherwise use these lands.

Another requirement stipulates that any traffic capacity created by the Kendall Parkway cannot be used to justify any new development whether inside or outside the UDB Line, while others deal with agricultural lands and location of the project with respect to the West Wellfield. All these additional requirements have never been imposed on other applications before and serve as additional safeguards.

Regardless of its merits for those residents and businesses directly impacted by the Kendall Park-

Conceptual representation of a transit station. Actual design to be provided at design phase.



way, a highly negative misinformation campaign regarding the established process that MDX has followed continues to be advanced among certain entities opposing the Parkway.

Take for instance a recent article in *The Miami Herald* that bemoans the use of toll funds by MDX to advocate for the approval of the project — a transparent effort by *The Herald* to discourage and intimidate the elected officials and community support for this much needed project.

Educating and informing the community impacted by this significant project in West Kendall/West Dade is not only customary, but an important aspect of every transportation or infrastructure project. More so when it includes a Comprehensive Development Plan Amendment (CDMP), which is a process in addition to the usual approval process for a project.

The MDX informational campaign regarding the CDMP amendment is only part of the agency's expansive public-involvement program. For instance, the Project Development and Environmental Study for the Kendall Parkway or SR 836 Southwest Extension has included scheduled public meetings at key points over the past four years, a Citizen Advisory Committee, and an Environmental Forum designed to bring together all environmental interest groups at the onset of the study with the intent to work together to find solutions. It also is important to note that all these efforts are required by state and federal project-study manuals.

The particular MDX outreach effort being questioned was designed simply to inform residents about the two public hearings by the Board of County Commissioners on this project that directly impacts them.

It was the goal of MDX to provide the 600,000 residents of this working class community, all of whom reside in unincorporated Miami-Dade County, an alternate mechanism by which they may effectively express their support. Not everyone can afford

to take time off and travel 25 miles to go before their county commissioners in person to ask for their support on this important quality-of-life issue.

Perhaps if the CDMP hearings were held in West Dade or West Kendall, it would be easier for residents to attend instead of mailing out expressions of support. The 5,000 households that submitted support cards provided their addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses so that their county commissioners might better appreciate the sincerity and strength of their support.

We take great exception to *The Herald's* use of a quote comparing the MDX outreach effort with "the way they do it in Cuba," as expressed by an attorney on the opposing side. Such rhetoric is a clear insult to many members of the Hispanic communities that make up this great county who had to flee oppressive governments. Furthermore, such comments that there is "not enough information" are mere delay tactics geared to stop the Kendall Parkway from becoming a reality.

All that aside, MDX wishes to say thank you to the many residents who made the effort to attend the last public hearing — in person — before the commission on June 20, and to those who mailed in or signed online to support the Kendall Parkway.

We also wish to stress that now, more than ever, it is important that the voices of all those residents and businesses of West Dade and West Kendall be heard once again — and stronger than ever.

The final approval by the Miami-Dade County Commission is the first step in allowing us to proceed with the design, as well as to gain permitting via all environmental agencies, before moving toward eventual construction.

The final public hearing takes place on the morning of Sept. 27 at the Stephan P. Clarke Government Center, 111 NW 1 St., Visit www.mdxway.com/KendallParkway for information.

Let your voice be heard!