

# News and views on MDX Rewards and the newly named ‘Kendall Parkway’

## Community Newspapers

By: [Bill Kress](#) | February 6, 2018



Registration for the 2018 MDX Frequent Users Rewards Program runs through March 31, 2018.

Over the past several months, we’ve been discussing what has been happening with some of the county’s transportation agencies, in particular, MDX. As an update on some past stories, let’s first revisit news about the MDX Frequent Users Rewards Program, before switching over to the newly named “Kendall Parkway.”

### **MDX FREQUENT DRIVER REWARDS PROGRAM**

This is basically a cash rebate program for commuters who use MDX’s expressways. There’s nothing to lose by signing up, and yet a lot to gain if you do.

As a first-time program participant, I enrolled in the early 2017 and got a nice \$110 check just in time for the holidays. My cash-back amount was a factor of what I spent on MDX tolls last year. Some drivers get more, some get less. But one thing is for sure: if you don’t sign up each year, you’re missing out.

Registration for the 2018 program runs through March 31, 2018. This means that if you pay at least \$100 a year in tolls for the use of SR 924/Gratigny Parkway, SR 112/Airport Expressway, SR

836/Dolphin Expressway, SR 874/Don Shula Expressway and SR 878/Snapper Creek Expressway – you can get cash back. You also have to have a valid SunPass account – but it's really as simple as that.

It is important to note that both new members and existing program members need to enroll each year. Go to [www.mdxway.com/frequentdriver/landing](http://www.mdxway.com/frequentdriver/landing) to register or update your account. Don't miss this opportunity.

### **KENDALL PARKWAY**

Let's also address some of the comments posted in response to last month's article on MDX's priority future project, the SR 836 Southwest Extension – or as it has recently been renamed, the "Kendall Parkway."

It is interesting how it appears that some readers commenting on the need for transit may have missed a key detail of plans for the project. It includes transit!

The project includes special lanes called "XT Lanes" as a platform for an MDX-operated express transit service. This feature is similar to the one that they will be operating as part of the Smart Plan on the existing SR 836 starting from the Dolphin Transit Station Park & Ride, now under construction to the airport or downtown.

The other item that some readers perhaps overlooked is that the Kendall Parkway would also include an envelope to accommodate future rapid transit, such as rail or other type of technology. This is not just "talk." Because toll dollars drivers spend on MDX highways will be used not only to fund the new Parkway, but the accompanying platforms for transit, as well. Basically, it's like having one mode pay for the other. By the way, the Kendall Parkway would become the next extension – in West Kendall – of the Smart Plan.

As technology advances, it is important to note that transit, in the form of rail, is not the only answer. Perhaps it is time for a reality check as to the emergence of exciting, new, and realistic transit options. Not only because they may cost less, but because they are more flexible than rail and can be better molded to meet the real needs of commuters.

Such options are not only well suited for the transit-dependent in our communities, but for those of us who might consider transit options in lieu of their cars. The time is now to start seriously looking at such alternatives as bus rapid transit, private multi-passenger vehicles, trackless trains, and driverless platooning vehicles – this is where the future lies.

As far as the Kendall Parkway being a potential western barrier to urban sprawl, the project's objective is to address the underserved existing community of West Kendall with options. And, by the way highway access and exits are being designed only from the east.

This project will also require approval by Miami-Dade County government, as this new transportation corridor will need to be included in the county's Comprehensive Development Master Plan. And the county is looking at safeguards against any further development to the west.

So let's stay tuned to details with an open mind to a multimodal solution to the staggering congestion that has unfortunately become a way of life for people and businesses in West Kendall, many of who have been waiting years for relief.