

MIAMIBEACH

Transportation Master Plan Update: First/Last Mile Connections to the SMART Plan Study

Executive Summary

June 2022



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The preparation of this report has been funded in part from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the State Planning and Research Program (Section 505 of Title 23, U.S. Code), and Miami-Dade County, Florida. The contents of this report do not necessarily reflect the official views or policy of the USDOT.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The **First/Last Mile Connections to the SMART Plan Study** was commissioned by the City of Miami Beach, with grant assistance from the Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), to assess the accessibility of proposed Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) stations within Miami Beach for pedestrians, cyclists, and transit riders. Providing better access to and from SMART stations for multiple transportation modes, rather than focusing on one specific mode, will ultimately lead to better or improved connections to the future SMART Beach Corridor and Bus Express Rapid Transit (BERT) services.

The success of regional transit services outlined in the SMART Plan is key to the City of Miami Beach's broader goals, particularly reducing the driving mode share for travel to, from, and within the City.

Projects identified and described in this study are intended to drive success for Beach Corridor and BERT services in Miami Beach in coordination with regional efforts. Proposed Beach Corridor stations in Miami Beach are scheduled to open in 2026, with BERT services opening earlier in spring 2023.

This is not a standalone document – the strategies listed here are intended to integrate directly into the Miami Beach Transportation Master Plan (TMP) Update, to be completed in the future, which will include a comprehensive assessment of transportation needs throughout Miami Beach. Project concepts included in this document should be viewed as a guide for specific investments leading up to Beach Corridor opening in coordination with broader TMP efforts.

Existing Conditions

Analysis conducted for this report demonstrates that multimodal access throughout the expected service area of future Beach Corridor and BERT services is already quite strong. However, incremental improvements are needed to ensure that the potential of these future services is maximized. This report identified critical challenges to first mile and last mile connections to and from SMART Plan services, including:

- Lower intersection density and more auto-oriented infrastructure in the Mid-Beach area necessitates strong non-pedestrian connections to and from SMART stations located in the area, particularly at Mt. Sinai Medical Center.

- Blocks adjacent to proposed SMART stations do not always feature adequate bicycle facilities or connections to already existing bicycle infrastructure. Providing safe bike connections on these final blocks is key to overall bike access.
- Long-term bike storage and bikeshare facilities are not sufficient at proposed SMART stations.
- Most streets in Miami Beach have posted speeds above 25 mph – streets that do not have bike facilities can be fast and thus unsafe.
- Operating hours of existing and future (Better Bus Network) transit service may not match the proposed operating hours for the Beach Corridor and BERT.
- Reduced frequencies on both Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) and Miami Beach Trolley routes due to pandemic conditions limit the potential of transit as a last mile connection – these services need higher frequency, which may come in before the SMART services start operations as pandemic conditions subside.

Project Development Approach

A specific list of both programmatic and infrastructure projects was developed to address the key challenges identified during the existing conditions analysis. These projects address challenges near all proposed SMART stations in Miami Beach. Projects were developed with specific consideration for implementation, cost-effectiveness, and integration with broader TMP objectives.

The following existing plans and programs also directly influenced the recommendations that were developed in this study:

- DTPW's Better Bus Network
- 2015 Miami Beach Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan
- 17th Street Bicycle & Transit Lanes Feasibility Study
- 41st Street: Conceptual Streetscape Design
- City of Miami Beach Bus Stop Improvement Program
- Integration of Micromobility Across SMART Corridors

Proposed Projects

The final set of recommended projects is listed in the table below. These projects range from specific street infrastructure interventions intended to improve SMART access to citywide policy changes which can facilitate SMART station access. Projects are organized around specific SMART stations and displayed accordingly.

Table 1 List of Recommended Projects

Station or Program Element	Project Number	Project
5th & Lenox	1	Lenox Ave sharrows (5 th to 6 th)
	2	6 th St greenway (West to Meridian)
	3	West Ave protected bike lane (5 th to 16 th)
	4	Long-term bike storage
5th & Washington	5	5 th St bike lane (Washington to Ocean)
	6	Long-term bike storage
Washington & 10th/14th	7	10 th St greenway
	8	11 th St greenway
Convention Center area	9	17 th St bike lane (West to Beachwalk)
	10	Convention Center Dr sharrows (18 th to 17 th)
	11	Intersection improvements (18 th & Meridian)
	12	Intersection improvements (17 th & Convention Ctr)
	13	Mid-block crossing
28th Street	14	Long-term bike storage
	15	Bike racks
Fontainebleau	16	Collins Ave bike lane (north of 44 th) (44 th to 63 rd)
	17	44 th St bike lane (Indian Creek to Collins)
	18	41 st St bike lane (Indian Creek to Beachwalk)
	19	Collins Ave bike lane (south of 44 th) (26 th to 44 th)
	20	Indian Creek Dr bike lane (41 st to 44 th)
	21	Bike racks
Mid-Beach	22	Pine Tree Dr bike lane (23 rd to 63 rd)
	23	Royal Palm Ave greenway (28 th to 42 nd)
Mount Sinai Medical Ctr	24	Alton Rd bike lane (Bay/Chase to hospital)
	25	N. Bay Rd greenway (Alton to Sunset + Alton to 48 th)
Improve trolley frequency	26	Allocate funding
	27	Pursue electric, low-floor vehicles
	28	Extend service hours
	29	Coordinate with DTPW to complement services
Include Washington & 17th transit hub as a SMART station	30	Collaborate with other regional agencies
	31	Analyze for bus bunching mitigation

Station or Program Element	Project Number	Project
Leverage flexibility of on-demand transit	32	Monitor service efficiency and quality
	33	Expand service area
	34	Match service hours to SMART services
Enhance bikeshare	35	Co-locate bikeshare stations at SMART stations
	36	Monitor bikeshare demand
	37	Consider providing subsidies or joint passes
Implement transportation incentives and marketing campaigns for tourists	38	Transform parking garages into mobility hubs
	39	Market SMART and trolley services to tourists
	40	Coordinate with regional entities
Leverage existing transit access programs	41	Develop an education and outreach campaign to encourage participation in these programs
	42	Develop a timeline aligned with SMART services roll-out

Next Steps

This study is a planning document intended to support the long-term vision for SMART Plan services in Miami Beach. The recommendations in this document will require further vetting and evaluation prior to implementation. The anticipated timeline presented in Figure 1 shows what the next steps should be for the involved stakeholders to bring these first/last mile solutions to fruition in coordination with the SMART routes.

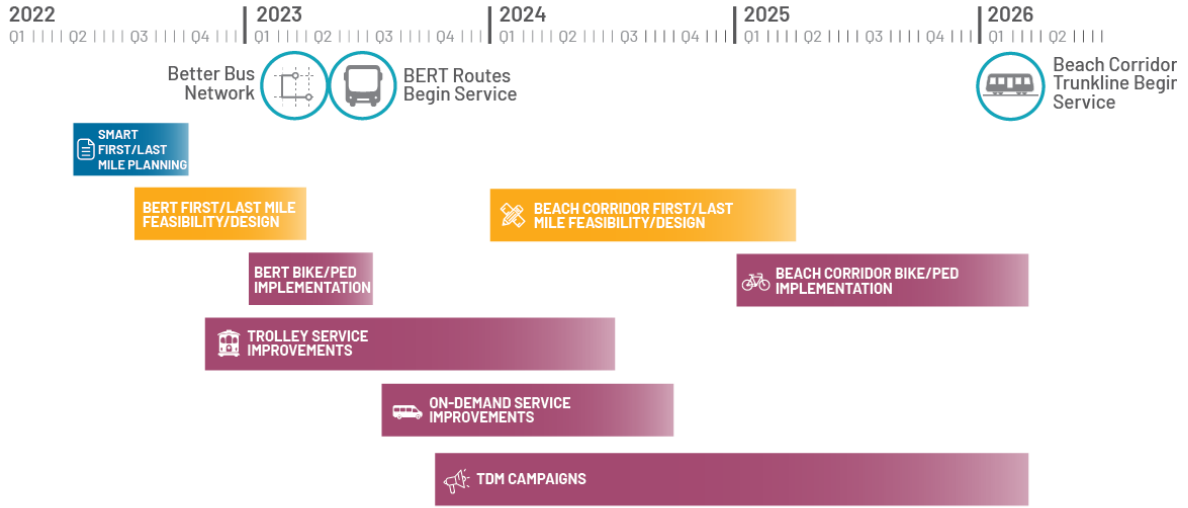


Figure 1 Project Implementation Timeline

Funding

A variety of external funding sources exist to support implementation of specific projects identified in this plan beyond internal City of Miami Beach funding. These include:

- 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Law
- 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities
- 5307/5311 Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC)
- Flexible Funding Programs – Transferring Title 23 Funds from FHWA to FTA
- Surface Transportation (STP) Funds and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) for Transit Projects
- Congestion, Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funds
- Intermodal Development Program
- Public Transit Block Grant Program
- Transit Corridor Program
- County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP)
- Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

Coordination with Partner Agencies

The success of the SMART Plan relies on strong coordination between multiple regional and local agencies. Implementation of projects recommended by this study should be led by the City of Miami Beach in close coordination with the following agencies:

- Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
- Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW)
- The Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)