



Council Report

776 N.E. 125 Street, North Miami, Florida 33161

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Wisler Pierre-Louis, Director, Public Works Department 

Date: March 8, 2016

RE: **A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE TRI-RAIL COASTAL LINK (TRCL) COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE STATION TO BE SITUATED IN NORTH MIAMI AND COMMITTING TO PROVIDE THE CITY'S SHARE OF FUNDING FOR MAINTENANCE AND OPERATING COSTS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND FOR ALL OTHER PURPOSES.**

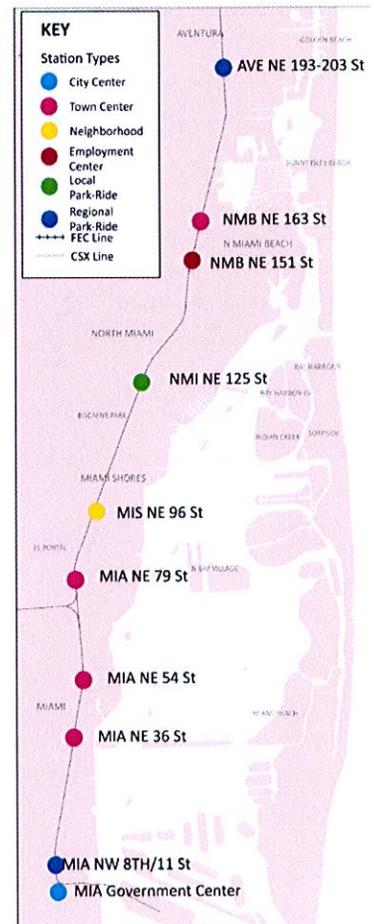
RECOMMENDATION

Staff is requesting that the Mayor and City Council pass and adopt the proposed resolution supporting a Tri-Rail Coastal Link commuter rail service station to be located in the City of North Miami and committing to provide funding for maintenance and operating costs.

BACKGROUND

As all Southeast Floridians know, the development of the area was made possible by the extension of the Henry Flagler's Florida East Coast Railway (FEC). The City of North Miami was no exception as the community settled and grew around the Arch Creek Railroad Station in the early 20th Century. After the post-war period, rail transport was abandoned in favor of the automobile and the City benefited by becoming a bedroom community serving the major commercial centers in downtown Miami and Fort Lauderdale. But as anyone who drives Miami-Dade County's congested roadways will tell you, driving an automobile to work can be infuriating and it will continue to get worse.

History has a way of repeating itself and the City of North Miami is uniquely poised to take advantage of the resurrection of the historic FEC corridor as a commuter rail alternative to the automobile. Currently a station is planned for NE 125th Street but the decision to locate a station in North Miami depends on the City's commitment to contribute financially to operations and maintenance costs.



Proposed train stations

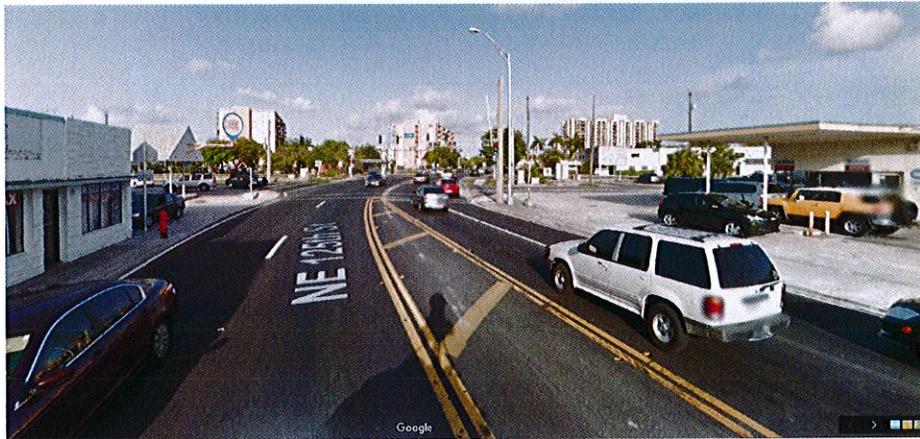
DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The most direct benefits from a station on NE 125th Street will accrue to the underutilized industrial areas surrounding the station and to new transit-oriented development, including housing and shops accessible by rail. Parts of this area are considered “brownfields” and have higher development costs. This is also the Gateway to Downtown North Miami from the east.

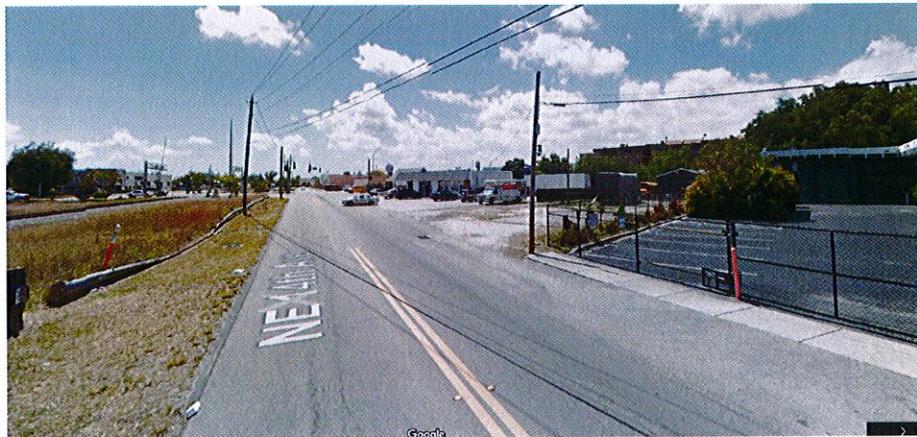
EXISTING CONDITIONS



Westbound NE 125th Street



Eastbound NE 125th Street



Southbound NE 14th Avenue approaching NE 125th Street

Estimated Tri-Rail Coastal Link Station Area Opportunities ½ mile from proposed station

- 7,380 people currently employed: **Expect 1,120 new jobs**
- 8,580 residents in the area: **Expect 170 new housing units**
- New housing value: **\$11.5 million**
- Additional 334,000 sq. ft. of commercial for an **added value of \$33.7 million**
- Expected New Ad valorem and no ad valorem taxes: **\$776,000 per year**



As noted in a recent *Miami Herald* article, significant new development is coming to the North Miami area, and transit is one of the drivers of this development.

Miami Herald, Business Monday, Oct. 25, 2015, BY Peter Zalewski
Aside from attractive pricing, the North Miami-North Miami Beach area looks to be a direct benefactor from the growing efforts to restore passenger rail service to the Florida East Coast Railway tracks between Downtown Miami and West Palm Beach.

A passenger rail service could create an opportunity for residents to live in more moderately priced residential units in areas such as the North Miami-North Miami Beach stretch and work in the downtowns of Miami, Fort Lauderdale and even West Palm Beach.

CITY POLICY

City Council and residents already support transit and transit-oriented development as stated in the 2015 Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the Comprehensive Plan. It is the first goal listed in the future land use element.

Future Land Use Element - GOAL 1

Encourage integrated transit supportive redevelopment in order to enhance the economic base of the City, improve the aesthetic quality of the built environment and provide a range of housing and employment opportunities to accommodate, serve and employ the current and projected population, while protecting established single family neighborhoods.

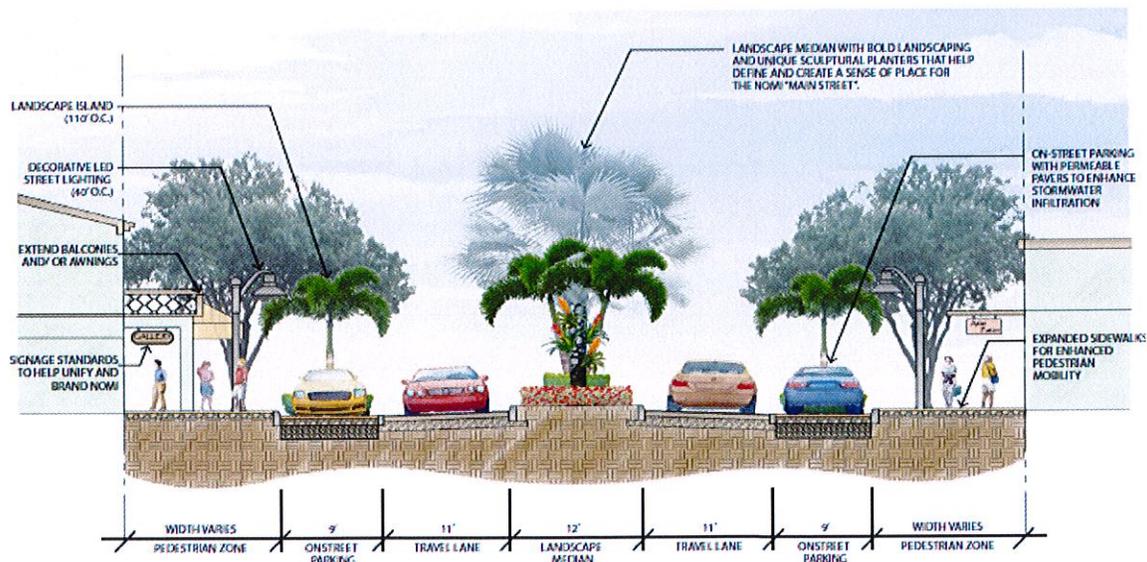
Transit-Oriented Development - Objective 1.3

The City shall recognize Transit-Oriented Development as a compact, urban form of development that is desirable around premium station areas and corridors to improve transit ridership, expand pedestrian access to stations, promote increased land values and provide natural surveillance with a vibrant mix of uses and street-level activity.

The term “transit” can sometimes be vague, especially in relation to land use development goals. But as embodied in the language of the comprehensive plan, it is *premium stations* and premium transit that attracts the choice rider and provides the stability that a developer needs to commit funds for significant development. A bus stop promotes transit use, but it is limited mostly to serving riders that have no alternative transportation, and the stop can be moved easily. A train station, on the other hand, attracts a diverse set of riders including those that choose not to drive an automobile because they find it more convenient and environmentally responsible. And a developer is assured that this amenity is permanent, allowing for longer-term investments and higher density development.

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT

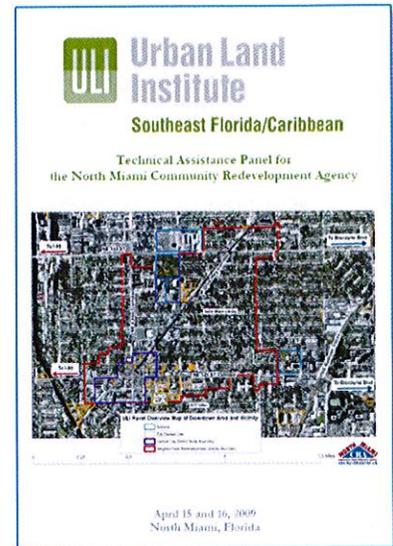
A major goal of City leaders, residents, and businesses is the redevelopment of downtown North Miami. To accomplish the goal of creating a vibrant destination for shoppers and residents, significant changes to the current roadway configuration is needed. The City is pursuing the takeover of sections of NE 125th Street in order to slow traffic down and provide wider sidewalks and medians with shade trees and amenities to foster desired retail, commercial, and residential development.



Changes to the roadway would cause substantial impact the capacity of NE 125th Street to carry automobiles. The only significant way to accommodate those that want to go to our downtown without driving and parking a car is through transit. A transit stop on NE 125th Street can easily be served by local circulators or trolleys that can bring people to and from downtown. There is considerable research showing that development surrounding *premium* transit stops promotes the exactly the kind of development we are seeking for downtown North Miami.

From the Urban Land Institute Study on North Miami Redevelopment

- The quality of life for residents will be enhanced with transit access to the mixed-use activity centers in the 125th Street Station area. Anchored by Johnson and Wales University, the 125th Street Station will connect the region to North Miami's commercial spine at 125th Street.
- Enhances opportunity for desired mixed-use development creates an activity center along West Dixie Highway, NE 6th Avenue and NE 125th Corridors with complete live, work and play environments.
- A mixed-use TOD at the transit station will create a gateway to announce the arrival in North Miami.
- Attracts people to transit
- Improves traffic circulation
- Supports pedestrian activity



From *Capturing the Value of Transit* Report

- Over the past decade, it has become increasingly clear that the presence of transit can increase property values and result in valuable development opportunities.
- Americans are increasingly prioritizing the advantages provided by neighborhoods near transit, including economic savings to households, reduced carbon emissions, healthier lifestyles, fewer traffic accidents, and reduced suburban sprawl. At the same time, demographic and cultural changes are resulting in a growing interest in cities and urban lifestyles, which means that there is increased demand for the kind of neighborhoods that are most likely to be served by transit.
- Fifteen of these studies reported that properties that were located near a transit station experienced a premium effect in terms of obtaining a higher value than comparable properties without transit access.

Other Benefits from Inclusion of Transit Facilities

Environmental Benefits

- Reduced traffic congestion
- Reduced fuel consumption
- Better air quality

- Reduced sprawl
- Conservation of open space

Fiscal Benefits

- Increased property values
- Increased property tax revenues

Social Benefits

- Improved social cohesion through positive interactions among people in a community
- Improved fitness and health as a result of increased walking and biking
- Reduced traffic accidents
- Improved transportation options, particularly for non-drivers
- Reduced consumer transportation costs
- Improved access to job opportunities for workers (and increased labor market shed for employers)
- Neighborhood revitalization

CONCLUSIONS

- A rail transit station will provide significant development opportunities adjacent to the station and increase the value of existing and future developments throughout the City
- The new development and increased property values will lead to increases to the City's tax base
- The South Florida Regional Transit Authority and its partners have committed to undertake all the capital investments needed to build the train station
- Locating the station within the City is jeopardized without a financial commitment to the maintenance and operating expenses of the station
- Transit-oriented development is one of the primary goals in the City's comprehensive plan
- A train station on NE 125th Street is vital to the goal of downtown redevelopment by providing alternatives to driving and parking a car and encouraging mixed use development
- The train station will provide a strong incentive to improve the underutilized industrial area and serve as a gateway to downtown North Miami
- There are significant environmental and social benefits derived from supporting rail transit

Attachments: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA, SUPPORTING THE TRI-RAIL COASTAL LINK (TRCL) COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE STATION TO BE SITUATED IN NORTH MIAMI AND COMMITTING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN TO FUND BOTH MAINTENANCE AND OPERATING COSTS FOR THE COMMUTER RAIL SERVICE STATION; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND FOR ALL OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway has historically operated passenger rail service along Florida’s east coast, and many South Florida municipalities developed around its passenger stations; and

WHEREAS, large portions of the population and businesses within the South Florida region are concentrated within those municipalities where roadway traffic congestion is now degrading the quality of life for residents and is stifling the growth of trade and commerce; and

WHEREAS, commuter rail service station would help mitigate the worsening traffic congestion, improve air quality and reduce fuel consumption in an environmentally sustainable manner; and

WHEREAS, municipalities along the FEC rail corridor are actively redeveloping their downtown centers which straddle the rail corridor and desire transit oriented development (TOD), which generally accompanies rail service stations; and

WHEREAS, commuter rail service station would provide jobs, expand the tax base and increase revenues to strengthen our local and regional economies while providing improved access to job opportunities and greater mobility for transit dependent members of the community; and

WHEREAS, municipal leaders are cognizant of the need to provide local funding for the capital and operating costs of commuter rail service stations within their jurisdictions, and are considering several different means of providing this local funding for the commuter rail service station currently under evaluation; and

WHEREAS, the City of North Miami (“City”) is committed to working with representatives of the Florida Department of Transportation and the South Florida Regional

Transportation Authority to study and develop a plan to fund both maintenance and operating costs for the commuter rail service station within the jurisdiction of the City.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT DULY RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORTH MIAMI, FLORIDA:

Section 1. **City of North Miami Support of TRCL Commuter Rail Station.** The Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, hereby support the Tri-Rail Coastal Link (TRCL) commuter rail service station to be situated in North Miami and committing to participate in the study and the development of a plan to fund both maintenance and operating costs for the commuter rail service station.

Section 2. **Direction to City Clerk.** The City Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to all South Florida municipalities, the Florida League of Cities, Inc., and the Board of Commissioners of Miami-Dade County.

Section 3. **Effective Date.** This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by a _____ vote of the Mayor and City Council of the City of North Miami, Florida, this ____ day of _____, 2016.

DR. SMITH JOSEPH
MAYOR

ATTEST:

MICHAEL A. ETIENNE, ESQ.
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

ROLAND C. GALDOS, ESQ.
INTERIM CITY ATTORNEY

SPONSORED BY: MAYOR SMITH JOSEPH, D.O., PHARM. D.

Moved by: _____

Seconded by: _____

Vote:

Mayor Smith Joseph, D.O., Pharm. D.

_____ (Yes) _____ (No)

Vice Mayor Alix Desulme

_____ (Yes) _____ (No)

Councilman Scott Galvin

_____ (Yes) _____ (No)

Councilwoman Carol Keys, Esq.

_____ (Yes) _____ (No)

Councilman Philippe Bien-Aime

_____ (Yes) _____ (No)