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Federal Highway Administration  
Florida Division

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION  
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
and  
Florida Department of Transportation

Financial Project Number: 251670-1-22-02  
E.T.D.M.: 7701  
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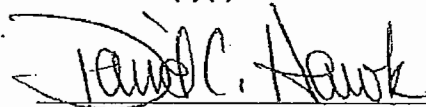
Interstate 395 (I-395), from the I-95 Midtown Interchange (I-95/SR-836/I-395) ramps to MacArthur Causeway West Channel Bridges at Biscayne Bay, in the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, Florida

The existing 1.4-mile corridor is elevated through the Overtown and Edgewater neighborhoods, with four through lanes and ramps for interchanges at I-95, NE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and US-1/Biscayne Boulevard. It is linked with the East-West Expressway (SR-836), a toll road, and with the MacArthur Causeway (US-41, SR-A1A) across Biscayne Bay. Major reconstruction, including interchanges, is proposed. The four construction alternatives include two elevated designs, a tunnel and an open cut.

Submitted pursuant to 42 USC 43332(2)(c) and 49 USC 303.

2/18/10

Date



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Comments must be received by the Administrator of the District Planning and  
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By: 4/12/10

## SUMMARY

### S.1 PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is the reconstruction of the entire Interstate-395 (I-395) corridor, from the original terminus at the west side of the I-95/Midtown Interchange (I-95/State Road [SR]-836/I-395) to the original corridor terminus at the West Channel Bridges of US-41/MacArthur Causeway (1.4 miles). These are logical termini (Figures 1-1, 1-2, pages 1-2, 1-3). The entire I-395 project corridor lies within the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, Florida. I-395 is an independent facility linking I-95 (to the south and north), SR-836 (to the west) and the MacArthur Causeway/US-41 (to the east) over Biscayne Bay. I-395 serves as the emergency evacuation route for the southern part of the City of Miami Beach and for Star, Hibiscus and Palm Islands.

The purpose and need for this project arise in response to the existing deficiencies in capacity, geometrics and safety. The existing I-395 has only two through lanes, and only one continuous lane, in each direction. It has both left-hand and right-hand ramps, and unexpected merges and lane drops. These deficiencies are described in Section 1 (Figure 1-3, page 1-8) and are fully analyzed in the project's Preliminary Engineering Report (PER).

The Begin Project point, the Midtown Interchange, is a major junction of the I-95 corridor. This directional interchange is located approximately one mile west of Biscayne Bay. The project's eastern end is at the West Channel Bridges of the MacArthur Causeway (Figure 2-2, page 2-3). The West Channel Bridges are high-level fixed spans over the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (ICWW), which replaced a mid-level drawbridge in 1999. Beyond the project's eastern terminus, the MacArthur Causeway extends eastwardly approximately three miles to Miami Beach, along the north bank of Government Cut, the Port of Miami (POM) ship channel.

Several corridor options were initially considered but after investigating the area surrounding the existing facility, it was determined that the existing corridor location offers the best potential for the fulfillment of the project's needs. Reuse of the existing corridor has the advantages of minimizing costs, community impacts, residential and commercial displacements, as well as avoiding or minimizing archaeological, historical and parkland impacts and contamination concerns. Reuse of the existing corridor with a slight alignment shift to the north of the existing facility has the advantage of limiting the impact area to only 12 acres, most of which is currently vacant land (Figure 4-1, page 4-11). The slight alignment shift to the north would provide the required additional space to accommodate the Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) Plan that would provide minimum traffic and community disruptions during construction (Figures 4-15 thru 4-21, pages 4-63 thru 4-69). This additional space would also help to address some of the project's needs (i.e., additional capacity, drainage requirements, and aesthetics considerations).

Therefore, all four of the build alternatives that were carried through the Project Development & Environment (PD&E) phase featured this northern shift. The PD&E process was developed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to fully comply with the intent of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). That intent is to evaluate a proposed action for any environmental impacts resulting from that action, to develop and compare viable alternative designs and options, and to advance to the next phase of development (Design Phase) that alternative that best meets the project objectives while causing the least amount of impact to the environment.

Government authority for the project concept is included in the 2010-2014 Metropolitan Miami-Dade County's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that was approved on May 28, 2009 by the Miami-Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Design is funded under Financial Management (FM) Number 251688-1 in FY 2011. This project conforms to the adopted Miami-Dade County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). This is a priority 2 project in the 2030 LRTP and is initiated in the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) cost feasible plan section in the 2035 LRTP update, which is planned for adoption in October 2009. Right-of-Way and Construction Phases of this project will be funded under FM Number 251668-1. All future phases of this project are anticipated to have Federal funding. Even though construction funding is not identified in the TIP, funding generating options will be explored. The project is consistent with the goals and policies of the Regional Plan for South Florida and the City of Miami's Downtown Master Plan.

## S.2 OTHER MAJOR GOVERNMENT ACTIONS AND PERMITS REQUIRED

The project's Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), Section 2 Introduction, contains Figure 2-2 (page 2-3), Projects in Vicinity, which illustrates the locations of all related projects under construction and a legend keyed to the figure that lists the facility, location, improvement and sources of funding for 25 roadway projects. Most of these are minor. The two most important related FDOT projects located within the study area are:

- Reconstruction of SR-836 from approximately NW 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue to I-95/ Midtown Interchange (Figure 1-3, page 1-8): SR-836 links directly to I-395 from the west at the Midtown Interchange. Both SR-836 and I-395 were once included in a single PD&E study begun in 1993 and stopped in 1996. The Class of Action was an Environmental Assessment (EA). The project to reconstruct SR-836 (with collector-distributor roadways) has recently been reinitiated through a Joint Partnership Agreement (JPA) of the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) and FDOT District Six, as an EA. Note that the action to improve I-395 is in no way dependent upon the SR-836 project, and the SR-836 project is in no way dependent upon the I-395 project. Both can be advanced independently, and each has needs clearly independent of the other.
- Port of Miami (POM) Tunnel: The project to build a tunnel under Government Cut is currently entering the Design/Build Phase. Until such time that a tunnel exists, the Port Boulevard Bridge is the only vehicular entry point to the POM.

Currently, the vast majority of truck traffic to and from the POM traverses I-395. Figure 1-3 (page 1-8) illustrates the truck routes to/from the POM entrance at Port Boulevard. At the Midtown Interchange, most of these trucks continue along SR-836 to/from points west, while a small number continue on I-95 to/from points north. Port traffic exits/enters I-395 via the existing I-395 ramps at NE 1st/NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues. Port traffic currently must traverse six blocks of downtown city surface streets (NE 1st/NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues or Biscayne Boulevard) between I-395 and NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the Port Boulevard Bridge. The Record of Decision (ROD) to construct the POM Tunnel was issued by FHWA in 2001. A Design/Build/Finance/Operate contract was let in 2006, assuming a 35 to 50 year period for concessionaire operation to recoup the \$1 billion dollar investment. The consortium headed by Bouygues Travaux Publics was selected. With the economic downturn of 2008, the consortium's financial partner was lost, and the consortium sought another financier. In December 2008, the FDOT halted the negotiations. In early April 2009, the FDOT indicated intent to reopen bidding, then on April 16, reversed this position and announced intent to reopen negotiations with the selected consortium. Should the tunnel project be realized, two tunnels, each with two lanes, would pass under the Government Cut marine channel, between the POM on Dodge Island and the MacArthur Causeway West Channel Bridges on Watson Island. With the two tunnels operational, POM traffic would use the West Channel Bridges of the MacArthur Causeway and the tunnels. The only port traffic that would be likely to continue to use the old Port Boulevard Bridge route over city streets would involve certain cargo that is prohibited from tunnels (e.g., hazardous materials). With the tunnels in operation, truck traffic from the port would traverse the entire I-395 corridor, removing most of this truck traffic from I-395 ramps and city surface streets. In the case of only the I-395 project being advanced, POM traffic would use the proposed Miami Avenue ramps and city surface streets. Note that the action to improve I-395 is in no way dependent upon the POM Tunnel project, and the POM Tunnel project is in no way dependent upon the I-395 project. In fact, the reconstruction of the I-395 project is not expected to improve the traffic patterns on surface streets within the APE and between I-395 and the POM. Both the I-395 project and the POM Tunnel can be advanced independently, and each has needs clearly independent of the other. Note that one local (city) funding source for the POM Tunnel project is an element of the Miami Megaplan, which also includes two museums, a baseball stadium and other urban elements.

Projects by others in the study area include:

- Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts (AACPA), a public facility consisting of a symphony hall and a ballet/opera hall, plus ancillary cultural facilities, is located north of I-395, straddling Biscayne Boulevard, between NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and North Bayshore Drive, and between NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street and NE 14<sup>th</sup> Street (Figure 2-7, page 2-12). This facility opened in 2007. Both buildings face toward I-395, which is located 455 ft to the south. The existing expressway is elevated on embankment and on structure in this area, with a roadway elevation of

approximately 28 ft. The proposed action would place the two I-395 bridges at 48 ft, but the westbound traffic would pass 220 ft to the south and the eastbound traffic would follow the same alignment (500 ft south) as the existing roadway.

- A Miami Streetcar project proposed by the City of Miami in coordination with FDOT, to run three routes connecting the Government Center (NW 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, downtown), the Miami Design District (NE 40<sup>th</sup> Street) and the Civic Center/Health District (NW 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue). This project is intended to benefit City of Miami residents by improving local mass transit. Streetcar routes would pass under I-395 at NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and NE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.
- In 2008, a major development on Watson Island was announced by the Flagstone Property Group/ING Clarion. Elements include two hotels, residences and a marina. The proposed development of Island Gardens on Watson Island (10.5 acres) includes luxury residence condos atop the 43-story Shangri-La Hotel. Westin Hotels will manage another 29-story hotel building. The marina on the west shoreline of the island will feature two main piers with 50 slips to accommodate mega-yachts ranging from 80 ft to over 300 ft in length. The signature gardens will be developed in partnership with Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden, and a maritime gallery will be developed in partnership with the Historical Museum of South Florida. The investment was estimated at \$600 million, and was scheduled to begin construction in 2009 (for opening in 2011); however, global financial issues appear to have delayed the project.

### S.3 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Alternative 1 is the No-Build Alternative (Section 2.2, Figures 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, pages 2-2, 2-3, 2-4). The existing corridor alignment begins in line with NW 15<sup>th</sup> Street, then curves south of NW 12<sup>th</sup> Street, then curves north of NE 13<sup>th</sup> Street to the coastline. Corridor analysis indicated that the only viable alternative corridor would involve a shift northward, to a straighter and shorter expressway alignment.

Another alternative that was explored entailed the potential provision of Transportation Systems Management (TSM) improvements. TSM options are usually generated to alleviate specific traffic congestion/safety problems, or to get the maximum utilization out of the existing facility by improving operational efficiency. A total of seven TSM concepts were considered (Table 2-1, page 2-6) but ultimately were rejected because, although they bring some beneficial effects, they still maintain the existing roadway section, and thus preclude the attainment of any significant improvement in the overall project level of service.

Alternatives 2, 3, 4 and 5 are the Build Alternatives. All Build Alternatives share the same footprint. The Build Alternatives included two elevated designs (structural bridges) and two depressed designs (a tunnel and an open-cut). The two elevated designs were entitled: Alternative 2, Elevated with Ramps at Midtown Interchange (Figures 2-4, 2-5,

pages 2-8, 2-9); and, Alternative 3, Ramps at Miami Avenue (Figures 2-6, 2-7, and 2-8, pages 2-11, 2-12, 2-13).

During project development, it was determined that Alternative 2, Elevated with Ramps at Midtown Interchange, was no longer viable, since it required construction of a related project, which was not advanced. The other project was FM No. 4107261, New Access Ramps from NW 14<sup>th</sup> Street to and from SR-9A/I-95. The cumulative impacts within Overtown associated with the combination of the NW 14<sup>th</sup> Street/I-95 ramps project and the access ramps of I-395 Build Alternative 2 (within Overtown) were not acceptable to the Overtown community. In this case, additional points of access to and from the interstate system were opposed and rejected by the affected community. Thus, through the Public Involvement process, it was determined that Alternative 2 was fatally flawed.

Build Alternative 3, Ramps at Miami Avenue, was the second elevated alternative. The proposed location of the access ramps was east of Overtown, in a generally vacant commercial area. This alternative involved considerably less right-of-way (R/W) impacts and displacement to the Overtown community (Figure 4-1, page 4-11). This alternative was the best at fulfilling the project purpose and need while minimizing the associated impacts to this minority community. It was, therefore, the best option for advancement.

The two depressed designs were Alternative 4, Tunnel, Ramps at Miami Avenue (Figures 2-9, 2-10, pages 2-14, 2-15), and Alternative 5, Open-Cut, Ramps at NE 1<sup>st</sup> and NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues (Figures 2-11, 2-12, pages 2-17, 2-18). Both below-grade concepts had been promoted by local interests for several years as a way to make the expressway disappear from view. However, through four years of extensive PD&E analysis, both were determined to be not viable. The costs were approximately twice that of a surface road or bridge option. Apart from costs, the two underground designs also had major disadvantages in terms of more impacts to the Overtown community (e.g., environmental justice), as well as more involvement with contamination, flooding, and safety impacts, as compared to the elevated roadway concept.

It was determined by FHWA and FDOT through the alternatives evaluation process that the elevated Build Alternative 3 was the preferred design, and the only feasible construction option. This design features paired bridges that span nearly one mile between the Midtown Interchange and Bayshore Drive, with a partial interchange near the bridge's mid-point. The interchange at N Miami Avenue includes two westbound on-ramps and two eastbound off-ramps. The proposed geometry of the two Biscayne Boulevard ramps (slip ramps), at the eastern terminus portion of the I-395 corridor, remains very similar to the existing ramp layout.

The remaining viable alternatives were:

- Alternative 1: No-Build Alternative. This option retains the existing roadway design, but would include minor improvements for system optimization and Traffic System Management (TSM) features (as listed in Table 2-1, page 2-6).

- Alternative 3: Elevated, Ramps at N Miami Avenue. Construction of this option would begin with the westbound part of the expressway being built to the north (Figure 4-15, page 4-63), with a new N Miami Avenue Interchange replacing all the existing ramps at the NE 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and NE 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Interchanges. The eastbound facility would then be built in place of the existing roadway. The mainlines forming most of the expressway would be elevated on two bridge structures, with a minimum of 17 ft and maximum of 33.5 ft clearance over street grade. Only the ramps at N Miami Avenue involve solid embankment. One street (NE 1<sup>st</sup> Court) would be closed to accommodate the ramps. Another local street, NE Miami Court, would be available for reconnection under the I-395 spans.

#### S.4 RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE

After the DEIS was circulated, a public hearing was held to share information with the general public about the proposed improvements, conceptual design and alternatives under study. The detailed evaluation methodology and public input showed that Alternative 3 was the preferred option from a safety, operations, cost and multimodal standpoint.

#### S.5 MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Project implementation will include the following environmental impacts:

- Right-of-Way (Section 4.1.6, Figure 4-1, page 4-11, Table 4-1, page 4-12): Prior to the subject action, FDOT used the corridor preservation process of Advance Right-of-Way Acquisition (AR/WA) to acquire most (but not all) of the urban area needed to construct a new facility. With all build alternatives, the westbound lanes of this facility would be constructed north of the existing facility, affecting approximately 11 acres along 14 blocks. Therefore, all build options basically had the same R/W requirements. Through the first AR/WA action, FDOT acquired the eastern three blocks near the AACPA, curtailing a proposed construction of four 57-story buildings at this location (Appendix A, other project correspondence, FDOT letter dated 08-02-04). This first AR/WA was processed as a Type 2 Categorical Exclusion for acquisition of 26 parcels, and was approved by FHWA on August 30, 2004. The acquisition of this first group of parcels was completed by 2006. The second AR/WA action was processed as a Reevaluation of the CE-2 and was approved by FHWA on August 8, 2006 for acquisition of another 42 parcels along 11 blocks to the west of the first three blocks. Funding is contained in FY 2012-2013; therefore, this second group of properties has not yet been acquired. While these 68 parcels were common to all build alternatives, the individual build alternatives varied slightly in R/W needs. The specific needs of Build Alternative 3 involved an additional 10 parcels (approximately 1 acre) all located south of the existing facility, in the vicinity of the N Miami Avenue ramps. These ten parcels were not acquired through AR/WA, and do pertain to the subject EIS action. These parcels include a

warehouse, a commercial site, a partial clip of an industrial site, and several vacant parcels, but do not include residential displacements.

- Relocations (Section 4.1.6, Figure 4-1, page 4-11, Table 4-1, page 4-12): Based on the FDOT cost estimate dated July 11, 2007, ten (10) families or individuals, five (5) businesses or services, one (1) special category site (former place of worship) and four (4) personal property category items (signs, etc.) will be relocated as a result of the two previous AR/WA actions for corridor preservation and the subject EIS action. FDOT Right-of-Way Section prepared a document entitled I-395 Significant Relocation Impacts dated October 24, 2007 (Appendix A). In the report section entitled Pre-Relocation Needs Assessment Survey Plan were tables listing Business Impacts (five parcels) and Residential Impacts (three parcels). Residential impacts affect ten occupied, one-bedroom apartment units in two buildings (six-plex, four-plex), plus one vacant former apartment building. It stated that housing of last resort measures are likely to be needed for the displaced persons, but that sufficient available residential and commercial properties exist in the Overtown area. This document also listed five (5) business impacts, affecting 48 employees, and stated that none of the employees were residents of Overtown. It stated that suitable replacement commercial space was available. One enterprise is a manufacturer/distributor of batteries for hearing aids (25 employees). The other displaced businesses include: Broz International (restaurant equipment, 8 employees); Sheila Shine (cleaner of stainless steel, 10 employees); Overtown Food Market (3 employees); and, Art Gallery (2 employees). The latter three enterprises are located in Overtown. Note that the actual amount of displacements (residential and commercial) is quite small for a project of this magnitude, especially for one in an urban location. This is due in large part to the fact that 53 of the R/W acquisitions involved parcels of land listed as vacant. The displacement of ten residential units (individuals or families) is not considered a significant impact to the Overtown community. These displaced individuals will be afforded every benefit to assist in their relocation.
- Construction: The total replacement of a major expressway, including construction of two suspension bridges, involves large-scale impacts that are of a temporary nature. MOT and sequence of construction will be planned and scheduled so as to minimize traffic delays throughout the project. The preliminary MOT Plan developed in seven phases for the preferred Build Alternative 3 is illustrated in plan view and cross section (Section 4.3.17, Figures 4-15 thru 4-21, pages 4-63 thru 4-69). First, the new westbound roadway/bridge will be constructed to the north of the existing facility, followed in several stages by removal of the existing two-way facility and construction of the eastbound roadway/bridge. The MOT includes two temporary elevated roadways; a northbound ramp structure, and an eastbound detour on fill. Also, Section 4.3.1, Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities, contains the four phases of MOT for Overtown pedestrians, with illustrations the specific locations and schemes (Figures 4-4 thru 4-11, pages 4-27 thru 4-34).



The following are statements of findings for relevant environmental impact categories:

- In accordance with Executive Order 11990, wetlands were considered in developing and evaluating alternatives for the proposed action. No freshwater or saltwater wetlands are associated with this project. The nearest freshwater bodies consist of three stormwater retention ponds located within the Midtown Interchange which will not be affected by this project. The nearest marine habitat is Biscayne Bay, at the MacArthur Bridges approaches. The subject project's eastern terminus is some 350 feet inland from the shoreline. Refer to Section 4.3.5, Wetlands for additional information.
- It has been determined through consultation with local, state and federal water resources and floodway management agencies that there is no regulatory floodway involvement on the proposed project and that the project involves no floodplain development that is incompatible with existing floodplain management. Refer to Section 4.3.11, Floodplains for more information.
- The Office of Planning and Budget, Office of the Governor has determined that this project is consistent with the Florida Coastal Zone Management Plan. Refer to Section 4.3.12, Coastal Zone Consistency for more information.

## S.6 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY

While the preferred alternative generates minimal impact to the Overtown community, this low-income, minority neighborhood remains sensitive to any large-scale action by the public sector, based on past history. The initial construction of the existing Interstate Highway System, including the I-395 expressway corridor, remains an issue of controversy among the current residents. Section 3.1, Population and Community Characteristics, contains Section 3.1.2, Historical Perspective - Overtown. The community experienced a severe, 25-year decline after World War II. A large public housing project in the late 1960's coincided with the construction of the elevated expressways (I-95, I-395, SR-836) that are linked at the Midtown Interchange. All these actions resulted in direct social, economic and cultural impacts to the minority, low-income community. Environmental Justice is covered in both Sections 3.2 and 4.1.2.

- Other more recent proposals, such as the rejected proposal to add I-95 ramps at NW 14<sup>th</sup> Street, have also heightened the neighborhood sensitivity to any large-scale action.

There are current residents of Overtown who want recognition of past injustices, and have requested present day environmental justice through avoidance of any new impacts to the social, economic and cultural fabric of this Overtown neighborhood. However, after extensive community coordination, most of the social groups representing Overtown have endorsed the preferred alternative (see Appendix A [support letters], Appendix B).

## S.7 LIST OF OTHER GOVERNMENT ACTIONS REQUIRED

This is a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) project. No other government agency is serving as a cooperating agency. Review by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

(EPA) under the Safe Drinking Water Act – Section 1424(e) is required. An Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) and a Water Use Permit are required from the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) for water quality certification and the project's surface water management plans. Permits required from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) include the federally-delegated National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit, and possibly a Class V Deep Well Permit for management of stormwater. Permits required from local regulatory agencies include Miami-Dade County Department of Environmental Resources Management (DERM) Class II Surface Water Management (Drainage) Permit, and Class V Dewatering Permit. As the corridor traverses a brownfield, other government actions may also be required.

#### S.8 PROBABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE AVOIDED

Relocation impacts associated with the proposed action affect ten (10) individuals or families (ten apartment units in two buildings located in Overtown). Additionally, relocations will affect approximately five (5) businesses or services, one (1) special category (non-profit, place of worship) and four (4) personal property category items (signs and/or other personal property). The church, grocery store and art gallery are also in Overtown. Businesses employing 33 of the 48 displaced employees are not located within Overtown.

#### S.9 IRRETRIEVABLE AND IRREVERSIBLE COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES

While the relocation of ten individuals or families will be unavoidable, relocation assistance and payments will be provided, as addressed in Section 4.1.6, Relocations. It was determined that sufficient available commercial properties exist in Overtown to facilitate the relocation of all displaced commercial entities. Residential displacements may involve relocation within or outside of the community, and last resort housing consideration will be provided, if necessary. Also, construction activities in the vicinity of existing drainage structures will be in accordance with Best Management Practices for erosion control and water quality considerations.

#### S.10 FEASIBLE MEASURES TO AVOID OR MINIMIZE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACT

Relocation assistance and payments will be provided, as defined in F.S 339.09 and Public Law 91-646, as amended by Public Law 100-17. The existing drainage system is sub-standard and will be replaced to provide stormwater treatment prior to discharge into receiving waters (Section 4.3.7, Water Quality). In this case, the affected receiving waters are located in the POM turning basin (Biscayne Bay) in front of Bicentennial Park. These waters are designated Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve (Section 4.3.6) and Outstanding Florida Waters (Section 4.3.8). All applicable water quality requirements will be met.

## S.11 SHORT-TERM IMPACTS VERSUS LONG-TERM ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

The short-term impacts associated with the project that will exist during construction operations include items such as inconvenience to motorists and neighbors related to detours and delays. The proposed MOT minimizes such inconveniences (Section 4.3.17). Detailed plans to minimize pedestrian and motorist detours are described in Section 4.3.1. Every effort will be made to minimize these impacts, which are further addressed in Section 4.3.17. Temporary air pollution from fugitive dust and of road emissions, along with noise associated with construction operations cannot be avoided.

Long-term benefits will result from the replacement of the I-395 corridor by the preferred alternative. These include the increase in capacity from two to three lanes for through traffic that will benefit Miami Beach traffic. Safety will be improved by a reduction in the weaving of traffic and better management of cars and trucks through lane continuity. Both the capacity and safety improvements will benefit emergency evacuation. With an improved flow of traffic, urban congestion will be reduced. The reduction of congestion will result in improvements in air quality and energy savings. The replacement of the 1.4-mile I-395 corridor with higher, aesthetically pleasing bridges will allow for improved utilization of land under these spans for community concepts such as street fairs, produce markets, as illustrated in Figure 2-6 (page 2-11). The project may contribute to the redevelopment of the project study area. The potential for reconnected surface streets under the corridor will contribute to easier neighborhood access and improved community connectivity.

The proposed I-395 action will provide an expressway with improved design, capacity and safety for managing increasing volumes of car and truck traffic between Miami Beach and Miami. These benefits will apply to hurricane evacuation. With an aesthetically attractive design, the corridor would improve the experience for visitors moving between the airport and resorts, as well as providing a panoramic city/port vista from the elevated spans. An improved I-395 would also provide benefits of greater safety to the POM, with or without the proposed POM Tunnel project.