

Pinecrest

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It's time to stop MDX takeover of South Dade Busway

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You probably have not heard about it – primarily because of the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority's shoddy and ineffective community outreach program — but it looks like those trendy new High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes soon will be coming to South Dade.

In late August, MDX representatives gave presentations in Cutler Bay and Palmetto Bay (see video at <GetMDXoffTheBusway.com>) detailing their latest scheme to construct yet another cash-generating ribbon of concrete, cars and crashes along South Dade's US 1.

Apparently looking to emulate the cash-cow success of the I-95 Expressway project, MDX seems to be moving forward with its own flawed plan to replace the South Dade Busway north of Southwest 232nd Street to Dadeland with a semi-elevated freeway containing reversible toll lanes and bus transit lanes.

Though this latest incarnation of the US 1 express lanes is shorter than what was presented last year — because MDX did not want to compete against the Turnpike — a trip along the entire length will cost commuters as much as \$10 in

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tolls each way during peak traffic hours!

Much like we witnessed in June, this \$6.5 million tollpayer-funded study on the US 1 express lanes is proceeding despite overwhelming public opinion against it. The MDX non-elected board recently approved a dramatic billion-dollar toll hike despite an onslaught against that decision from state and local elected officials led by Cutler Bay Mayor Ed MacDougall.

And just as we witnessed in June, Mayor MacDougall's community is once again in the MDX crosshairs. South Dade community leaders have had decades of success resisting neighborhood-destroying public works projects like the US 1 express lanes project, but with the out-of-control MDX pushing hard, there may be little recourse left.

At this stage, MDX does not even have control over the busway, yet they are making plans to impose tolls on those who would use it. At this time, MDX only maintains five roads in Miami-Dade County. Yet this unelected board is attempting to grab control of a vital and valuable transit corridor to help bolster its

lucrative toll-road empire. This will surely come back to haunt South Dade drivers in years to come.

We must act now to stop this takeover!

The idea of paying \$10 simply to be guaranteed a travel speed that should be possible without a toll is frustrating by itself, but when you consider that the purposely preserved blue sky and treetops of the entire US 1 corridor from Goulds to Pinecrest would be replaced with on ramps, sound walls and a five-lane MDX river of cash, the idea becomes a downright nightmare.

We applaud local officials like Mayor MacDougall who have stood up for South Dade taxpayers and frustrated motorists who have aligned against the MDX and its takeover tactics.

For information on this new MDX toll scheme, go to <GetMDXoffTheBusway.com> or visit <MDXway.com>.

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