



Las Olas Boulevard Safety and Traffic Calming: Public Meeting

Riverside Hotel

October 26, 2015 - 6:00 p.m.

Meeting Summary

City staff made a presentation recapping the past Mobility study efforts and explained progress to date and additional analysis that has taken place with new recommendations. Balancing the three plan objectives of 1) reducing traffic volumes/speeds along local roadways in Colee Hammock, and 2) reducing congestion on SE 15th Avenue supporting mobility to/from the Beach, and 3) improving safety and multimodal mobility along Las Olas Boulevard, City staff presented the short-term and mid-term improvements that were approved by City Commission in February 2014 as well as new analysis that has been done with corresponding recommendations.

1. What are the short-term and mid-term improvements the City Commission approved moving forward with?

Answer:

- *Signal timing modifications to SE 15th Avenue at Broward and Las Olas Boulevards*
- *If signal modifications work, remove stop sign at SE 15th Avenue and SE 2nd Street*
- *Enhance the Las Olas Boulevard and SE 13th Avenue crossing*
- *Las Olas Boulevard road diet “Right Sizing of Las Olas” – sandblasting and striping only (temporary trial)*
- *Raised intersections and other traffic calming in Colee Hammock*
- *Modify centerline and stop bar placement at Broward Blvd. and SE 15th Ave to accommodate truck movements*
- *Enhanced crosswalk markings and supplemental signage, markings, and warning devices along Las Olas Boulevard and in-ground pavement markings along Broward Boulevard*
- *Lighting analysis in the study area*
- *Enhanced crossing lighting at Las Olas Boulevard and SE 15th Avenue*
- *Install speed control signs*
- *Install sharrow markings from SE 15th Avenue East along Las Olas Boulevard*
- *Special event signal timing planning*

2. What do “Road Diet” and “Right Sizing” mean when referred to in this project?

Answer: *The Las Olas Boulevard “Road Diet” or “Right Sizing” refers to removal of one travel lane in each direction to the section of Las Olas Boulevard from SE 15th Avenue west to the Himmarshee Canal. This will be a temporary trial for 12 months to determine if it is feasible to make permanent after an evaluation is completed.*



3. Will the on-street parking along Las Olas Blvd remain in place?

Answer: Yes. On-street parking is very important in this corridor and the designers have been instructed to keep existing parking.

4. How does the “Right Sizing” impact the existing parklet and the parklet program?

Answer: The existing parklet within the “Right Sizing” area along Las Olas Boulevard will remain as is. The designers will design around the space (i.e., the cycle track will run on the south side of the parklet next to the travel lane and then move back to the curb).

The overall parklet program will still be available to those businesses that would like to take advantage of the program. Since the “Right Sizing” is temporary and does not include changing of curbs, this can be accommodated.

5. How will bicyclists make left turns?

Answer: Bike Boxes are being considered at signalized intersections, where bicyclists will have the ability to wait at the front of the intersection and be able to make the turn before vehicles do. See the example provided below (Source: NATCO).



6. Will bicyclists follow vehicular rules?

Answer: All modes of travel need to obey the traffic laws. The City will be enforcing pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicle laws so all users will understand what can and cannot be done.



7. Will a crosswalk be installed at SE 12th Avenue and Las Olas Blvd?

Answer: A crosswalk will be added for the east/west movement over SE 12th Avenue along Las Olas Boulevard. A crosswalk across Las Olas Boulevard will be evaluated and considered as part of the temporary "Right Sizing."

8. Lighting within the Colee Hammock neighborhood is a concern. How is this being addressed?

Answer: The traffic calming improvements identified for the Colee Hammock neighborhood will include an evaluation of nighttime visibility for pedestrians and incorporated into the treatment, where possible. Lighting will also be analyzed along Las Olas Boulevard.

9. A radar sign was installed westbound on Las Olas Blvd near Rocco's Taco's. Can the City add another one going east bound after SE 15th Avenue?

Answer: The City is supportive of adding an additional radar sign for the eastbound movements. Staff will evaluate the appropriate location and have the sign installed by the end of the calendar year.

10. The pedestrian crossing at Las Olas Boulevard and SE 15th Avenue is a concern regarding pedestrian safety and the conflict the right turn movement creates. Will the City consider adding a "no right turn on red" sign at this intersection? Will the City be improving safety at SE 15th Ave and Broward Blvd?

Answer: The designers will look into opportunities to increase the pedestrian safety at this intersection as part of the "Right Sizing" and the potential left turn addition being proposed.

11. Will the STOP sign on SE 15th Avenue and SE 2nd Street be removed? What about the on-street parking north and south of this intersection?

Answer: The mobility study recommendation for removal of the STOP sign was based on addressing the current vehicle stacking that occurs through the intersection. If the left turn lane addition recommendation is approved and implemented, staff will evaluate the results of the vehicle staking before making a decision on removing the STOP sign.

The on-street parking only needs to be removed if the STOP sign is removed to allow for safe sight distance at the intersection. The number of spaces that will need to be removed will be based on the required sight distances needed.

12. Can STOP signs be installed at all intersections throughout Colee Hammock?

Answer: Traffic calming improvements such as raised intersections, crosswalks, and parking bulb outs have been identified for intersections within the Colee Hammock neighborhood. STOP signs require certain thresholds are met to qualify, and adding new STOP signs are not contemplated at this time.



13. How is the City keeping the study and the project current, to account for the changes over the lifetime of the project?

Answer: Since the study completion, the City conducted new traffic speed and volume counts. This is expected to continue at significant milestones in the project development such as the addition of the new left turn lanes, if approved, and the 12-month temporary “Right Sizing” of Las Olas Boulevard.

14. Does Broward County perform counts during season?

Answer: Staff does not know of a recurring schedule of counts that Broward County currently administers. It is typically done as a response to a request from the City. However, staff is reaching out to the County to re-confirm.

15. What are the considerations used in the one-way analysis? When were the counts conducted? How does it account for peak season and for new developments?

Answer: The one-way analysis is based on current conditions. Traffic counts were conducted at the end of September 2015 after School was in session. To account for peak season, a conversion rate is factored into the formula and applied to the traffic model.

16. How will traffic be diverted toward the beaches and away from Las Olas Boulevard in the “Right Sizing” area?

Answer: The City will be installing in-ground pavement markings on Broward Boulevard directing traffic to the Shops on SE 8th Avenue and the Beach on SE 15th Avenue, as part of its short and mid-term improvements. As part of this, the existing sign directing people to the Beach at SE 8th Avenue and Broward Boulevard will be removed.

17. The City should consider moving all beach traffic off of Las Olas Boulevard and making the segment identified for the “Right Sizing” a pedestrian mall.

Answer: A pedestrian mall is not being considered at this time.

18. Did the original proposal to do the “Right Sizing” on Las Olas Boulevard take into consideration the impact on the people who reside north and south of the Boulevard?

Answer: Yes, this was factored into the traffic analysis and quality of life considerations.

19. Trucks in loading zones obstruct the right-of-way and create a traffic back-up. What is the City doing to address this?

Answer: The City reviews this as part of the Development Review Committee (DRC) process for new developments. For existing loading issues, the Transportation and Mobility Department should be notified to evaluate and find ways to address.



20. How will emergency vehicles reach the residents in time after the “Right Sizing” along Las Olas Boulevard?

Answer: Movement of traffic, including emergency vehicles was evaluated before proposing the temporary “Right Sizing,” which is paint on the ground and not permanent curb changes.

21. A paddle board sign should be reconsidered for the SE 13th Avenue intersection. These types of signs are beneficial to visitors because they are universal and found all over the world.

Answer: As part of a temporary pilot program, staff will re-evaluate adding paddle board signs at this location by reviewing the effectiveness of other paddle board signage in the City.

22. A sketch of SE 15th Avenue from Broward to Las Olas Boulevards would be helpful to illustrate the proposed changes additional left turn lane recommendation. When will this be available?

Answer: A preliminary sketch should be ready before the end of the calendar year and will be added to the website. Staff will work with the Public Information and Neighbor Support offices to provide updates and notifications to the interested and impacted stakeholders including neighborhood associations and business groups.

23. Will the median improvements be permanent?

Answer: The “Right Sizing” of Las Olas Boulevard stretches from the Himmarshee canal to SE 15th Avenue and will include medians that are painted on as part of the temporary trial. Installation of permanent medians will be dependent on the temporary trial results and the decision to advance forward with long-term project. East of SE 15th Ave is not recommended to be “Right-Sized” because of the vehicle capacity needs of the roadway. In addition, this stretch is owned by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT).

24. With the proposed left turn lanes on SE 15th Avenue, how will the street be calmed to make it safe for residents of Colee Hammock?

Answer: Raised intersections with parking bulb-outs, and pedestrian actuated crosswalk sign at the intersection will provide the street calming and provide safer passage for pedestrians. Alternatively, staff will evaluate the vehicle stacking after the left-turn lanes are installed (pending approval) and evaluate keeping the STOP sign in place.

25. Request to add STOP signs on SE 16th Avenue at SE 2nd St and SE 2nd Court.

Answer: Staff will evaluate this request and how it fits within the larger mobility study efforts and address accordingly.



26. The City should consider building a parking garage on the church property between SE 12th and 13th Avenues along Las Olas Boulevard.

Answer: The City continues to look at opportunities for placement of new parking facilities.

27. Will sidewalk improvements be part of this project?

Answer: Sidewalks are not part of the identified improvements. Under current City ordinance, the sidewalks are the responsibility of the adjacent property owner.

28. Will speed humps be considered for traffic calming traffic mid-block along East-west direction in between intersections?

Answer: The City has a number of tools/options for reducing speed and calming streets, and speed humps are just one of them. The City has analyzed the streets in the neighborhood and vehicular speed and volume counts do not meet the current speed hump speed/volume thresholds. Staff will evaluate further.

29. Enforcement on SE 13th Avenue needs to be increased.

Answer: The City plans to increase enforcement for all modes of travel – bike, pedestrian, and vehicle at various stages of the project.

30. What is the timing of the project, given the new recommendation of the left-turn lanes?

Answer: The recommendation of new left turn-lanes on SE 15th Avenue should be decided upon by the end of the calendar year, with designs completed by early 2016 and construction soon thereafter. The removal of the STOP sign at SE 2nd Street and SE 15th Avenue, and construction of the traffic calming improvements at that intersection (if the STOP sign is decided to be eliminated) will be done after the left turn lanes are added. The "Right-Sizing" of Las Olas Boulevard would then be completed and tested for 12 months.

31. How do I find out more if I have questions? Who is the contact person on the project?

Answer: The project team will be developing a public involvement plan to provide regular updates on the project, including presentations to neighborhood and business groups, email project updates, social media updates, and meetings to discuss construction impacts and ways to mitigate them with the affected property owners and businesses. The City contact person is – Catherine Prince, Project Manager, at (954) 828-3794 or cprince@fortlauderdale.gov and a copy of the presentation is available at: <http://fortlauderdale.gov/home/showdocument?id=12463>