



MIAMI BEACH

270-2014

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Philip Levine and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jimmy L. Morales, City Manager

DATE: August 6, 2014

SUBJECT: **REINSTATING SOUTH BEACH LOCAL SERVICE TO BELLE ISLE**

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The purpose of this Letter to Commission is to provide a status update regarding the South Beach Local (SBL) service to Belle Isle.

As you are aware, in April of this year, Miami-Dade County Public Works and Waste Management Department identified structural deficiencies in the bridges of the Venetian Causeway and consequently imposed an 11-ton weight limitation on the easternmost bridge as a precautionary measure until a more thorough structural analysis could be performed. The newly imposed weight limit resulted in the temporary interruption of SBL service to Belle Isle and the truncation of the route at the intersection of Purdy Avenue and Dade Boulevard.

The lack of SBL service impacted many residents of Belle Isle as they depended on it to access the South Beach area businesses. Many residents provided feedback to the City, including a letter to the Mayor requesting the reinstatement of service, along with a petition signed by over five hundred (500) Belle Isle residents. The City Commission directed the Administration to work closely with Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) to expedite a solution and additionally recommended to extend the Alton-West Trolley to Belle Isle on a temporary basis in an effort to provide a mobility option for Belle Isle residents until the SBL service is reinstated.

The Administration followed all the necessary steps to implement the service, including the submission of an application for each trolley vehicle to Miami-Dade County Public Works and Waste Management Department to confirm compliance with imposed weight limits, and the submission of an application for modification to the certificate of transportation issued by the County for the Alton-West Trolley service. The Administration obtained approval of the modification from the County's Board of County Commission (BCC) at its July 15, 2014 meeting. Upon approval, the Administration began coordinating with the City's trolley operator, Limousines of South Florida (LSF), in order to ensure the prompt implementation of the service; however, a couple of days after receiving approval from the BCC, the Administration was notified that the County had received the results of a supplemental structural analysis performed by the Florida Department of Transportation for the County. The results of the analysis concluded that the weight limitations on the easternmost bridge of the Venetian causeway could be restored to its original limit of 15 tons. Therefore, the Administration has determined that extending the Alton-West Trolley route to Belle Isle is no longer necessary as the SBL service will be reinstated. Please note that the easternmost bridge was the only bridge along the Venetian Causeway that received a favorable qualification from the analysis; thus the weight limit of this particular bridge is the only one being adjusted while the current weight limits on all other bridges remain unchanged.

The County has advised that signage on the easternmost bridge will be updated by the end of this week. MDT anticipates reinstating regular SBL service to Belle Isle within the following week.

KGB/JRG/JFG