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Pedestrian, bike bridge under I-395 on bay rolls ahead



A long-planned pedestrian and bike bridge beneath I-395 is moving closer to reality, with final design approval and more than \$2 million in new funding set to close the last major gap in Miami's Baywalk and link the city's waterfront along Biscayne Bay.

Miami city commissioners are expected to sign off March 12 on the design for the I-395 Baywalk Pedestrian and Bikeway Bridge and authorize an application for state grant funding to help pay for the estimated \$2.14 million first phase. The roughly 600-foot bridge would link Maurice A. Ferré Park with the area just north of the MacArthur Causeway, creating a continuous waterfront path and potentially generating \$1.46 million to \$1.95 million in additional annual property tax revenue.

The bridge marks the final major gap in the Miami Baywalk, a project decades in the making. Since the Baywalk's inception, the city has developed waterfront access incrementally, but the stretch beneath I-395 has remained a barrier to pedestrians and cyclists, cutting off a prime link between downtown parks and waterfront destinations. Completing this connection has been a central goal of the 2025 Downtown Miami Master Plan, which emphasizes leveraging Miami's tropical waterfront for public enjoyment and economic growth.

The Bay 2-Enhanced Connector emerged as the preferred design following years of study and public input. In 2019, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) hired Lambert Advisory to assess the potential economic benefits of completing the Baywalk, estimating that increased property values and tax revenues generated by the project could offset its cost within a few years.

That same year, the city and the DDA secured a 25-year lease agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation allowing construction and maintenance of the bridge beneath the MacArthur Causeway. Early funding followed, including a \$1 million Transportation Alternatives Program grant, \$275,000 from the Florida Inland Navigation District, \$150,000 in seed funding from the Miami Yacht Show's International Yacht Brokers Association and \$225,000 in Downtown Development Regional Impact fees authorized by the city.

A consulting team led by EXP Engineering and Inform Studio was selected to develop the bridge's design. A feasibility study completed in 2022 outlined three potential concepts, known as the Connector, the Enhanced Connector and the Iconic Destination.

Over the following years, the project was refined through analysis and public outreach. Community meetings and committee presentations helped shape the bridge's alignment beneath the MacArthur Causeway, including updated renderings that routed the structure through the second bay of the highway's support columns.

By June 2025, the Miami DDA's Urbanism Committee recommended the Enhanced Connector option as the most practical design, balancing accessibility, cost and aesthetics. The DDA's board reaffirmed that recommendation in February, identifying the Bay 2-Enhanced Connector as the preferred concept for the project.

If the commission signs off on the bridge's design and the grant application, city staff will pursue funding, secure permits and prepare for construction. The completed bridge would close one of the last missing links in the Baywalk, creating a continuous pedestrian and bike route along Biscayne Bay and bringing the long-running waterfront project closer to completion.