

**SPECIAL COMMISSION WORKSHOP**  
**June 19, 2001**

The purpose of this Special Workshop was to receive information from the Florida Department of Transportation regarding the timetable and construction of the new Johns Pass Bridge.

All members of the Commission were present as were the City Manager, Deputy City Clerk and Public Works Director. Mr. Rick Adair and Mr. Chris Ray were present representing the Department of Transportation.

The Public Works Director introduced those present from the Department of Transportation.

Mr. Adair discussed the condition of the present Johns Pass Bridge and explained the options under consideration for the new bridge. He explained that the plan is to proceed with the construction of a low-level bascule bridge, 21 feet in height. The project is in the PD&E stage at the present time and construction will occur during 2004-2005.

Mr. Adair indicated that there is a possibility that the current bridge could fail during a storm because of scouring. He indicated that the pilings for the new bridge would be drilled into bedrock.

Mr. Chris Ray discussed structural problems with the Skyway Bridge and explained what would be done to prevent such problems on the new Johns Pass Bridge.

The Mayor indicated that his concern is that the current Johns Pass Bridge is not that old. Mr. Ray indicated that with the pilings being drilled into bedrock on the new bridge, this bridge should last considerably longer.

The construction plan was discussed and Mr. Ray indicated that the plan is to remove the southbound side first and maintain two-way traffic on the northbound span and then reverse the procedure when the southbound span is completed.

Commissioner Ellsworth asked whether reconstruction of the Treasure Island Causeway should be delayed until the Johns Pass Bridge is completed for evacuation purposes. It was noted that the Johns Pass Bridge is not a part of the evacuation route.

The Public Works Director indicated that the City of Treasure Island and the Department of Transportation would work together in the event of a hurricane or tropical storm.

Commissioner Maloof stated that she feels the construction of a high, fixed bridge would be detrimental to both Madeira Beach and Treasure Island even though there would be smoother traffic flow through both cities.

It was indicated that the channel would be maintained for boat traffic throughout construction of the new bridge.

Mr. Ray indicated that a public hearing for the project is scheduled for late summer or early fall. The timetable following the public hearing was discussed.

The width of the bridge and the possibility of timed-openings was discussed.

It was indicated that the new bridge would open mechanically rather than hydraulically.

Mr. Tom DeCesare, Mayor of the City of Madeira Beach, stated that the City of Madeira Beach wants a high-level fixed bridge and it appears that the City of Treasure Island wants a low-level bascule bridge.

Commissioner Lavino asked if parking could be made available under a high-level bridge. Mr. Adair indicated that the right-of-way under the bridge could be used for public parking but not for private parking.

The Mayor stated he was concerned about the height of the low level bridge with ever increasing boat traffic and larger boats. He stated that he feels this is an opportunity to correct a traffic problem. He suggested a compromise with a mid-level bridge.

Mr. Adair indicated that changing to a mid-level bridge would change the timetable for construction since additional funding would have to be obtained and right-of-way acquisition would be necessary.

Commissioner Blush agreed that replacing the existing bridge with a new bridge of the same height would compound the traffic problems.