

# MDX Dolphin Expressway project is opening avenues to the future

By: [Lee Stephens](#) March 2, 2018

The world is changing faster than ever. Consider just one of the global megatrends that is challenging highway transportation experts: the population of the world's urban areas is increasing by 200,000 people per day – all of whom demand fast and easy ways to get between point A to B within their respective metropolitan areas.

In the face of such challenges, MDX is working to meet this new reality by transforming an existing highway infrastructure here in Miami by offering commuters mobility choices and by preparing the platforms for tomorrow's emerging transportation technologies.

Commuters who travel on the Dolphin Expressway are getting a front-row seat to an historic transformation of the 55-year-old stretch of SR 836 between 57<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

The modernization of SR 836 is adding more lanes as well as incorporating major improvements such as the relocation of the eastbound exit to northbound LeJeune to access the airport from the right-hand side of the expressway.

By doing this, commuters can avoid the weaving that currently occurs as drivers move to the left lane to access the airport exit – a condition that slows traffic on the mainline and creates a less-than-desirable movement for drivers. In the coming weeks, the ramp to provide a singular exit on the right from eastbound SR 836 to the



A ramp off eastbound SR 836 to Miami International Airport and LeJeune Road will open in March within weeks.

Miami International Airport (MIA) and NW 42nd Avenue/LeJeune Road will open, and the reconstruction of NW 14th Street will be complete.

This entire MDX project is being seen as a fascinating engineering and construction fete, as motorists are witnessing an outdated highway being demolished right before their eyes, while on the same footprint, observe the building of a brand new facility with towering overpasses.



Nightly closures (11 p.m. – 5 a.m.) allow crews to through off-peak hours while minimizing impact on daytime drivers.

As Jose Abreu, former Florida Secretary of Transportation and ex-MDX board member has noted, “This is like replacing the tile in a bathroom while taking a shower.” Not an easy task, but it’s got to be done.

Millions of daily commuters, tourists, and visitors mixed in with cargo vehicles are still busily moving along the Dolphin every week. And those nightly closures that some drivers have experienced or

heard about in the news are crucial to the operation, as they allow crews to perform work effectively during off-peak hours (11 p.m. – 5 a.m.), while minimizing inconveniences to SR 836 commuters during the busy daytime.

Having reached the 65-percent completion point in the project, MDX this year enters the final stages of construction. The new modern SR 836 will feature the latest and best in safety and technology, as well as the new multi-modal XT Lanes on the inside shoulder. These special lanes will allow transit vehicles to bypass any congestion on the general lanes – and will ultimately serve as a platform for autonomous vehicles.

The SR 836 Dolphin Expressway was built in the 1965 to connect the SR 826 Palmetto with downtown Miami. Later extended by MDX to 137th Avenue, the 836 has long served as Miami-Dade’s east-west lifeline. It provides a connection to the most important economic engines and employment centers including the West Dade

industrial areas, Doral, MIA, the Health & Court Districts, Downtown Miami, and the Port of Miami.

The Dolphin Expressway was originally built to serve a population of less than 1 million residents. To keep pace with the growth of this community over the past 50 years, MDX is committed to forwarding new, improved, and multimodal infrastructure choices that successfully address the needs of a local population of 3 million residents as well as 16 million visitors and 182,000 commuters from Broward and Palm Beach Counties.