

SR A1A LIGHT REPLACEMENT PROJECT



Project Information

This project is a joint venture between the Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA), the City of Fort Lauderdale Parking and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to replace the existing city owned lights along east side of SR A1A with Turtle Friendly Lights from Fort Lauderdale Beach Park to Sunrise Blvd.

In addition, due to our efforts, other beach municipalities have now been approved to use this fixture for their beach lighting projects.

Project No:	11498
Project Cost:	\$1,609,422.00
Contractor:	Southeast Underground Utilities Corp
Consultant:	Chen Moore & Associates
Start Date:	Fall 2011
Planned Completion:	Spring 2012



The project began on Fall 2011 and is anticipated to be completed by Spring 2012. If you have any further questions, please call Earl Prizlee at 954-828-6522.

Turtle Nesting / Lighting Background

The turtle nesting habit within the city limits of Fort Lauderdale Beach is approximately 6 miles of sandy beach including a 2 mile segment of public beach directly adjacent to SR A1A. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, artificial lighting from developed beachfront areas often disorient nesting females and turtle hatchlings, causing them to head inland by mistake, which leaves them vulnerable to predation, exhaustion, or being crushed by vehicles. Adult females also may avoid brightly lit areas that would otherwise provide suitable nesting sites.

This project seeks to restore coastal and marine habitat and recover threatened and endangered species by decreasing the light visible from the sand, thus providing a prime turtle-nesting habitat and an increase in the hatch success. Through minimizing light sources, the number of turtle nests is expected to increase thereby increasing the number of healthy hatchlings making their way into the ocean.

Over the past several years, the City of Fort Lauderdale has tried different methods of protecting sea turtle hatchlings from becoming disoriented by the pole lights located along the east side of State Road (SR) A1A, adjacent to the beach. The City's existing acorn-style light fixtures were installed in 1993 and do not comply with the current lighting requirements of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Prior to the 2007 turtle-nesting season, the FWC had a policy of relocating turtle nests from well-lit areas to areas with less light. During the 2007 nesting season, FWC changed their policy of relocating nests and required the City, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Florida Power and Light (FPL) to turn off roadway lighting on both sides of SR A1A so that the lights did not disorient turtle hatchlings.

In an effort to comply with FWC's lighting restrictions, while providing safe levels of lighting on the road and sidewalk, the City-owned acorn-style lights on the east side of SR A1A have been shielded with canvas bags. This effort was approved by the FWC as a temporary measure to comply with the turtle lighting restrictions. The cobra-style lights owned by FDOT and FPL on the west side of the road have been retrofitted with a shielded fixture also approved as a temporary measure by FWC. These temporary measures have allowed for reduced lighting during the turtle-nesting season while a permanent solution could be designed.

Over the past several months, City staff has worked with lighting manufacturers, FDOT and FWC to design a permanent recessed light fixture to replace the acorn-style lights that complies with FWC lighting criteria, including a non-visible source from the beach and zero tolerance of light on the sand, while at the same time providing for lighting on the roadway and sidewalk. This task required development of several prototypes and field tests on site with FDOT and FWC. On October 15, 2008 FWC approved the fixture. This fixture will be used for both replacement of the existing acorn-style lights along the east side SR A1A and the new lights included in the Fort Lauderdale Beach wall replacement and ADA Improvement Project. A total of 110 light poles and 220 light fixtures will be replaced along a two mile segment of SR A1A on Fort Lauderdale Beach.