

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: February 21, 2025

TITLE: A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, DIRECTING THE ADMINISTRATION TO EXPLORE THE FEASIBILITY OF SUB-CONTRACTING SOME OF THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT'S PERMITTING FUNCTIONS FOR MAJOR COMMERCIAL PROJECTS TO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S BUILDING DEPARTMENT; AND FURTHER, REFERRING THIS MATTER TO BE FULLY CONSIDERED AND DISCUSSED BY THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COMMITTEE

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Administration recommends maintaining all permitting services under one location locally within the City of Miami Beach. Additional staff have been brought onboard and some of the Ad Hoc Permit Process Improvement Advisory Committee (Ad Hoc Committee) recommendations are being implemented to specifically address commercial projects.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

Item C7 AF was a referral to the Finance & Economic Resiliency Committee (FERC) sponsored by Commissioner Alex Fernandez and approved at the May 15, 2024 City Commission meeting. Refer to Exhibit A.

Resolution 2024-33038, attached as Exhibit B, directed the Administration to explore the feasibility of sub-contracting some of the Building Department's permitting functions for major commercial projects to Miami-Dade County's Building Department and further referring the matter to be fully considered and discussed by the FERC.

The Building Department processes approximately 19,000 permit applications per year, including temporary certificates of occupancy (TCO's), certificates of occupancy (CO's), building recertifications and permit application updates. The majority of permit applications are for condominium and commercial unit remodels. The Building Department currently has 36 plans examiners and inspectors including trade chiefs and supplemental staff for plan review hired through professional service agreements and a staffing agency.

Property owners also have the option, per state law, to hire a private provider to review plans and inspect construction for compliance with the Florida Building Code and Local Amendments. It should be noted that most major commercial projects use Private Providers for review and inspection.

## **ANALYSIS**

The number of major commercial projects, defined for the purposes of this analysis as commercial projects with a stated job value of greater than \$10 million, from January 1, 2022 – January 1, 2025 was 23. Of these 23, 15 projects used a “Private Provider” for plan review and inspections.

During initial discussions with a Miami-Dade County (County) representative, they explained that a current arrangement similar to the one being suggested has been implemented within the Rapid Transit Zones, where the County has full authority over permitting, including Fire and Zoning. This extends beyond the major construction projects, to also any subsequent necessary permits for future repairs. Refer to Exhibit C correspondence with the Miami-Dade County Building official.

The addition of the new Building Director, and his robust recruitment campaign, ensures the improvement of turnaround time for permit review. Additionally, with the conclusion of the Ad Hoc Committee, one of the recommendations considered and being implemented, is the creation of a section dedicated to private provider inspections and documentation review, generally associated with major commercial projects.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

TBD

### **Does this Ordinance require a Business Impact Estimate?** (FOR ORDINANCES ONLY)

The Business Impact Estimate (BIE) was published on .

See BIE at: <https://www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/city-clerk/meeting-notices/>

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

## **CONCLUSION**

The Administration recommends maintaining all permitting review and inspection services within the City of Miami Beach Building Department. Staffing levels have improved and a private provider division is being created, per the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee, to specifically address commercial projects. Any additional resources, if required, can be supplemented by a professional service vendor on an as needed basis

### **Applicable Area**

Citywide

### **Is this a “Residents Right to Know” item, pursuant to City Code Section 2-17?**

No

### **Is this item related to a G.O. Bond Project?**

No

**Was this Agenda Item initially requested by a lobbyist which, as defined in Code Sec. 2-481, includes a principal engaged in lobbying?** No

If so, specify the name of lobbyist(s) and principal(s):

**Department**

Building

**Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Alex Fernandez

**Co-sponsor(s)**

**Condensed Title**

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