

# MIAMI BEACH

## COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: January 24, 2025

TITLE: REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS/TAKE ACTION TO FUND EXPANDING THE NORTH BEACH TREE PLANTING PILOT PROGRAM TO ADDITIONAL PARKING SPACES LOCATED AT 78TH, 79TH, AND 80TH STREETS OR OTHER POTENTIAL LOCATIONS

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Administration recommends the Finance and Economic Resilience Committee (FERC) review and discuss the options presented. The Administration prefers option two; since this provides better likelihood of longer-term tree survivability and is in line with the City's policies for public and private development to plant trees with adequate soil volume.

The Administration also recommends the Committee consider the broader infrastructure plans and critical needs in North Beach, noting the Request for Qualifications for the North Shore D Neighborhood Improvement Project was issued in September 2024. North Shore D is a significant infrastructure project that will include increasing the tree canopy and associated underground infrastructure for tree survivability within its boundaries. It will require major funding resources and be a priority from the staffing capacity perspective. The construction will have some disruption for the community at large and additional projects would need to be carefully coordinated.

### **BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

At the March 20, 2024 Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee (the "PSNQLC" or "Committee") meeting, the Administration presented an update on the tree planting pilot program in North Beach. The Committee unanimously recommended that the Public Works and Environment and Sustainability Departments collaborate on presenting a cost estimate to expand tree planting in North Beach through the use of contractors in areas currently without tree canopy. It was recommended that the update should incorporate visual aids and explore potential collaborations in the form of Public Private Partnerships (PPP). The item is sponsored by Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez.

At the June 5, 2024 meeting, the Committee provided a favorable recommendation to fund expanding the North Beach tree planting pilot to additional parking spaces located at 78th, 79th, and 80th streets or other potential locations and requested that the item be referred to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee for a discussion on funding.

At the July 24, 2024 City Commission meeting, this item was referred to the Finance and Economic Resilience Committee (FERC) to discuss funding for the expansion of the North Beach Tree Planting Pilot Program.

At the November 8, 2024 Finance and Economic Resilience Committee (FERC) meeting, the item was not heard.

## **ANALYSIS**

The North Beach tree-planting pilot project was initiated by the item sponsor Commissioner Rosen Gonzalez and was approved by the Mayor and City Commission. The pilot is located on the northern side of 78 Street, between Byron and Carlyle Avenues. The pilot project included creating triangular tree pits with minimal soil volume due to space within existing angled parking. This pilot was a new way to introduce much-needed shade without losing parking spaces and maintaining required sidewalk access. Six (6) Satin Leaf trees were planted in the triangular areas. The work was led and completed internally by the Public Works Department in coordination with the Environment and Sustainability Department.

Many lessons were learned that will be valuable for future projects. The following learnings are noted: there were some delays making sure that American Disabilities Action (ADA) space requirements were met for the sidewalk, local residents remain committed to keeping parking spaces, and old underground infrastructure may cause space and repair delays. Ultimately, adding additional greenspace and canopy introduces a broader vision that may include a careful redesign of streets such as reducing lane widths, one-way conversions, or exchanging parking spots for plantable space.

As noted during the March 2024 Committee meeting, City staff does not have the capacity to expand this pilot and perform this volume of work in-house, which includes: 1) identifying the locations of existing underground infrastructure components; 2) demolition and excavation of pavement and limerock debris to create the tree pits; 3) forming and pouring of D-curb borders around the perimeter of tree pits to prevent planting soil and mulch from washing away and to serve as a wheel-stop to ensure that parking cars don't make contact with the trees; 4) re-striping of the parking spots; 5) supplying and installing the trees; and 5) daily tree watering to establishment. These trees may not thrive over time given the restricted planting space, but can offer some vegetative relief in an otherwise very hot area of the city and maintain the existing streetscape and parking spots.

Following direction from the Committee, additional locations were identified to expand the pilot to create triangular tree pits within existing angled parking. An estimate of \$179,200 was provided at Committee to fund forty (40) locations. Note that this estimate does not include a standard warranty for one-year tree survivability given the restricted planting space.

Following a discussion with the item Sponsor Commissioner Rosen Gonzalez, two options are now being put forth for consideration by the Finance and Economic Resilience Committee:

(1) The initial proposal to fund 40 tree pits with the original design of the North Beach Tree Pilot Program on 78th Street understanding these trees are not likely to mature given the constrained growing space for roots with an estimated cost of \$179,200; or

(2) a transformative installation of 40 tree pits with underground infrastructure to include suspended pavements to allow for the trees to reach a more full canopy potential and not be limited by space. The latter recommendation would cost approximately \$25,000 per tree, inclusive of suspended pavements, for a total cost of \$1,000,000. The trees would be installed in the same locations analyzed for the original tree pit design expansion.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

\$179,200 for option 1 or \$1,000,000 for option 2 based on Committee direction. The actual trees planted as a result of this project could be funded by the G.O. Bond program, however the capital project(s) associated with the construction will require a different funding source.

**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**

Given the scarcity of plantable public space in North Beach, the Administration is pleased to provide an option for tree pits as a short-term vegetative relief for the Finance and Economic Resilience Committee's discussion and consideration, as well as a more transformative option of providing underground infrastructure to allow the trees to grow to maturity at the Sponsor's request. If the Committee provides a favorable recommendation, the feasibility study item can be provided to the full City Commission for review, approval, and prioritization during the FY 2026 budget process.

**Applicable Area**

North Beach

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

Yes

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

Yes

**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**

Environment and Sustainability

**Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

**Co-sponsor(s)**

**Condensed Title**

Ref: FERC – Fund Expanding NB Tree Planting Pilot Program. (Rosen Gonzalez) EN