

MIAMI BEACH

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: February 21, 2025

TITLE: DISCUSS DIVIDING AREA 2 INTO TWO (AREAS/ZONES): EAST OF INDIAN CREEK AND WEST OF INDIAN CREEK, AND FUNDING FOR ANY ADDITIONAL POLICE OFFICERS NECESSARY FOR FY 2026 TO PROPERLY STAFF THIS INITIATIVE.

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends keeping the current configuration of two (2) patrol officers assigned to the seaside area of Mid-Beach on a high-visibility overtime detail funded through the fiscal year. If, however, a more robust enhancement is desired in the future, the Commission could consider a future allocation for permanent officers assigned to patrol the seaside area of Mid-Beach.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

At the October 30, 2024 City Commission Meeting, at the request of Commissioner Alex Fernandez, the Mayor and City Commission approved a referral (C4 R) to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee ("FERC") to discuss dividing the Mid-Beach area into two (areas/zones): east of Indian Creek and west of Indian Creek, and funding for any additional police officers necessary for FY 2026 to properly staff this initiative.

ANALYSIS

This memorandum outlines the costs associated with the proposed creation of a new, stand-alone policing zone within Mid-Beach in the area known to the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) as "Area 2". Costs for this expansion are compared with an alternative staffing option to address the current requests of residents of Mid-Beach.

Current Configuration of Area 2

Area 2, also known as Mid-Beach, is the largest geographical area within MBPD's jurisdiction. The current configuration begins at Dade Boulevard to the south and extends west along the Venetian Causeway, east to 23rd Street, and north to 63rd Street, encompassing the beach/waterline and stretching west to the bay.

Area 2 is currently staffed as follows:

Patrol Coverage: 5–6 police officers per shift, with one officer permanently assigned to the Venetian Causeway 24/7. The remaining 4–5 officers cover the rest of Area 2 during all shifts.

Beat Officers: Two officers are permanently assigned to the 41st Street Corridor, providing coverage from 10:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M., seven (7) days a week.

Overtime Detail: A high-visibility overtime detail operates from 7:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M., seven (7) days a week. This detail is staffed by one (1) sergeant and five (5) officers, with two (2) officers conducting directed patrols east of Indian Creek:

- One (1) officer patrolling from 41st Street north to 63rd Street
- One (1) officer patrolling from 41st Street south to 23rd Street

The two (2) officers have now also been assigned to proactively patrol the seaside area of Mid-Beach for the remainder of the current fiscal year.

It is important to note that officers assigned to the High-Visibility Detail are also tasked with conducting the Traffic Mitigation Plan during afternoon rush hours Monday through Friday.

The reassignment of two officers from the Mid-Beach overtime detail to the seaside area of MidBeach was implemented as a result of the commission's interest in increasing the proactive patrolling of this area. The Administration believes this staffing model has increased visibility and has had a positive impact on crime. Whereas the Administration believes the current configuration is fiscally viable and operationally effective, below are two (2) alternative staffing models. Each is more expansive than what is currently being deployed, however, they incur a substantial financial impact.

Proposed Staffing Options

1. Stand-Alone Area

A proposed Seaside Area within Area 2 as proposed by the City Commission would consist of the eastern portion of the current Area 2, bounded by Indian Creek to the west, the beach/waterline to the east, 23rd Street to the south, and 63rd Street to the north. This designated zone would also include the beachwalk and the beach along these boundaries.

The creation of a stand-alone patrol zone in Area 2 would require long-term commitment to new positions, operational and hierarchical infrastructures. The proposed staffing and resources necessary to create a stand-alone area and adhere to the requirements and the same standards of service as the four (4) official MBPD geographical areas include:

Personnel:

- 1 Area Captain
- 1 Neighborhood Resource Officer (NRO)
- 1 Crime Analyst
- 1 Crime Scene Technician
- 4 Public Safety Specialists
- 20 Police Officers (to provide 24/7 coverage)
- 4 Sergeants
- 2 Lieutenants
- Specialized Units:
 - ATV/Beach Patrol
 - Beachwalk Patrol
 - Road Patrol

2. Seaside Designation Alternative Staffing

As an alternative to the complex and lengthy creation of an official and full-fledged area,

the Administration recommends an alternative permanent staffing solution through the creation of an Area 2 Seaside designation to address specific needs in the specified east area of Area 2. This approach would staff critical functions without requiring the creation of hierarchical infrastructure, while assigning the necessary resources to the area in question.

The costs for this alternative would require a budget enhancement to fund:

- A permanent assignment of 10 assigned officers and two (2) supervisors
- Dedicated use of specialized units to provide targeted coverage

Officers would operate from 11:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M., seven (7) days a week, delivering enhanced visibility and coverage in the Seaside area of Area 2 at a reduced cost and in a timelier manner as an immediate enhancement to the Department's current recruiting efforts. This structure could be a replication of the longstanding and proven City Center Redevelopment Agency (RDA) which oversees City Center and Lincoln Road.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Cost Analysis

Stand-Alone Area

The estimated costs to establish and maintain a proposed new Area as a stand-alone zone with the same responsibilities and policing services as the four (4) other geographical areas of the City are approximately **\$7,000,000.00** for the first year. This includes the resources described in the proposed plan and accounts for:

- Personnel salaries and benefits
- Specialized equipment and vehicles
- Operational costs (e.g., training, technology, and support services)

Seaside Designation Alternative Staffing

The alternative Seaside designation alternative staffing approach involves assigning permanent officers as delineated above. The annual cost for the first year of this option is estimated at approximately **\$2.5 million**. This funding would provide:

- 2 Sergeants
- 10 Police Officers

CONCLUSION

The Miami Beach Police Department remains dedicated to delivering the professional public safety and community policing services residents and visitors expect and deserve. This enhancement to the Mid-Beach area, a direct request from the community via its elected officials, has been assessed based on current resources and fiscal realities.

The Administration does not believe that the creation of a stand-alone police area would be necessary to achieve the goals of increasing police presence and public safety to Mid-Beach and would in turn be fiscally and operationally challenging.

Since October 2024, enhanced staffing officers have been assigned to strategic patrol of the seaside area of Mid-Beach. The Administration believes this staffing model has increased visibility and has had a positive impact on crime.

If, however, a more robust enhancement is desired in the future, the Commission could consider a future allocation for permanent officers assigned to patrol the seaside area of Mid-Beach in accordance with either of the options provided.

Applicable Area

Middle Beach

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

Police/Budget

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Alex Fernandez

Co-sponsor(s)

Condensed Title

Divide Area 2 into East/West; Fund Additional Police Officers as Necessary FY 26