

Contracting Private Security Officers for Lincoln Road and Washington Avenue

Proposal Overview

The proposed initiative seeks to contract private security officers for Miami Beach's heavily-touristed business districts, including Lincoln Road and Washington Avenue. The program's goals are to enhance public safety, serve as a deterrent to crime, provide additional support to the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD), and create a welcoming environment for residents and visitors. By leveraging private security as a force multiplier, the City aims to improve safety while optimizing police resources.

Background and Precedent

The City of Hollywood implemented a similar program following the May 2023 Broadwalk shooting. The initiative, which integrates private security as a visible deterrent and auxiliary support for law enforcement, has demonstrated success, with no major incidents reported since its launch. Hollywood's model includes close oversight by local police and internal quality control by the security company to maintain consistent, high-quality services.

In Miami Beach, contract security services have already proven effective in other settings, such as City Hall, where similar coordination and oversight mechanisms are in place.

Key Benefits

1. **Enhanced Public Safety:** Private security officers would provide additional "eyes and ears" on the streets, acting as a visible deterrent to potential criminal activity.
2. **Force Multiplier:** By supplementing MBPD efforts, private security can free up police officers for high-priority tasks, increasing the overall efficiency of public safety operations.
3. **Community Ambassadors:** Security personnel would also serve as approachable ambassadors, assisting visitors, providing directions, and fostering a sense of safety in the business districts.
4. **Cost Efficiency:** Contracting private security is a cost-effective alternative to increasing full-time police staffing for non-emergency functions.
5. **Proven Track Record:** The success of Hollywood's program and the effectiveness of contract security at City Hall provide a foundation of evidence to support this approach.

Implementation and Oversight

Private security personnel will operate under the supervision of MBPD and their company's internal quality control. Coordination will ensure adherence to contract terms, service consistency, and alignment with MBPD standards. This dual oversight structure mirrors the model used at City Hall, ensuring quality service delivery and contract compliance.

Considerations

- **Budget Impact:** The cost of contracting security officers should be analyzed to ensure alignment with the City's financial priorities and budget constraints.
- **Integration with MBPD:** Clear protocols for communication and coordination between private security and MBPD are essential to maintain a seamless public safety network.
- **Performance Metrics:** Establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the program's effectiveness over time will help ensure accountability and continued improvement.

Recommendation

Refer this item to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (FERC) for discussion and analysis. The committee should evaluate the financial implications, operational feasibility, and expected outcomes of implementing contracted private security in Lincoln Road and Washington Avenue.

By addressing these considerations, the City can ensure a strategic, impactful approach to enhancing safety and economic resilience in its iconic business districts.