



**COMMISSION MEMORANDUM**

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: February 3, 2025

TITLE: REFERRAL TO THE LAND USE AND SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE NORTH BEACH WATER QUALITY AND PARK VIEW CANAL REPORT.

**RECOMMENDATION**

The Administration recommends that the City Commission refer the North Beach Water Quality and Park View Island Canal report to the Land Use and Sustainability Committee for presentation and discussion.

**BACKGROUND/HISTORY**

At the December 13, 2023 City Commission meeting, item C7 L Resolution No. 2023-32852 (Attachment A) authorized the Administration to procure the services of Dr. Solo-Gabriele of the University of Miami (UM) to conduct a post-study after the implementation of short-term actions in North Beach, as they relate to the Park View Canal water quality improvement efforts and Action Plan. The item was sponsored by Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez.

At the March 13, 2024 City Commission meeting, item C7 N Resolution No. 2024-32954 (Attachment B) directed the Administration to prioritize, as part of the FY 2025 Budget process, funding for improvements to address the water quality concerns relating to the Park View Island Canal. The item was sponsored by Commissioner Alex J. Fernandez.

**ANALYSIS**

The City of Miami Beach is committed to maintaining and improving the quality of its waterways and protection of Biscayne Bay. The Administration continues to move forward with prioritized improvements funded through City Commission approval to address water quality concerns related to North Beach Water Quality and Park View Island Canal. The action plan includes above-ground sanitation, below-ground infrastructure improvements, canal dredging design and permitting evaluations and additional research conducted by Dr. Solo-Gabriele, water quality expert from the University of Miami. Despite these efforts, water sampling results continue to show a fecal indicator bacteria concentration that exceeds recreational water quality standards established by the Florida Department of Health.

The initial study completed in 2023 highlighted that rainfall is the main predictor of poor water quality in the canal, with sediments from the canal shoreline, the streets, and sediments in catch basins and shallow groundwater entering the canal from the 81-acre catchment area to the east. Despite rigorous sanitary sewer testing, the system including private connections is aging and could not be ruled out. Sanitary sewer upgrades have been made including closed-circuit television studies and lining the sewer lines from 73 to 76 Street as well as rehabilitated manholes where needed, including North Beach pump station wet well rehabilitations. Stormwater treatment to reduce litter is underway by retrofitting the current gravity stormwater system with advanced

water quality treatment devices with the North Beach Town Center Neighborhood Improvement Project planned to address additional aging infrastructure. The 2023 study also identified many additional sources contributing to degraded water quality, including exotic and feral animal feces, the homeless population, dog waste, litter, and leaking dumpster in commercial areas.

In addition to completed and planned infrastructure upgrades, the City has increased inspections and services. Code Compliance continues focusing on proactive patrols while enforcing the cleanup of pet waste, Parks & Recreation continues its roaming patrols, and Environment & Sustainability staff, alongside the Public Works Operations team continue to work with Homeless Outreach on their increased routine site visits. Sweeping and hand litter collection continue on Park View Island and additional pet waste dispensers were installed in high-traffic areas.

The new Phase II data collection by UM has been completed and is being compiled and analyzed in the form of a final report. The following has been conducted as part of the study:

- Collected stormwater before catch basins (catch system under grate before basin) to determine how much fecal bacteria is coming from the streets vs groundwater.
- Sampled groundwater directly utilizing direct push technology for samples of upper groundwater to determine the background levels of fecal bacteria.
- Tested within catch basins with biomarker source tracking (i.e. bird, dog, human) to determine how much fecal bacteria is coming into the system and from which source.
- Analyzed groundwater elevations to tie the elevation of the canal to groundwater, along with a comparison to pipe elevations.
- Reviewed and updated the City's historical data with information and testing that has been made available since the Phase I study concluded, from both Surfrider's Bluewater Task Force and the City's datasets.

The final report is due to the City by the end of January 2025. The results of the study will be shared once the final report is completed for discussion at the Land Use and Sustainability Committee.

## **FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

The UM study was funded for \$75,000 and the results will be presented to LUSC Committee Members to discuss next steps and findings.

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

If applicable, 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 that the City Commission refer the North Beach Water Quality and Park View Island Canal report to the Land Use and Sustainability Committee for presentation and discussion.

**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?**

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**

Environment and Sustainability

**Sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Kristen Rosen Gonzalez

**Co-sponsor(s)**

Commissioner Alex Fernandez  
Commissioner Laura Dominguez  
Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

**Condensed Title**

Ref: LUSC - NB Water Quality and Park View Canal Report. (KRG/AF/LD/TB) EN

**Previous Action (For City Clerk Use Only)**