

C4 I REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COMMITTEE -
DISCUSS POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICAL CONCERNS
RELATED TO MIAMI DESIGN PRESERVATION LEAGUE'S MULTIPLE ROLES.
Applicable Area:

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Commissioner David Suarez
DATE: March 19, 2025
TITLE: REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COMMITTEE -
DISCUSS POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND ETHICAL CONCERNS
RELATED TO MIAMI DESIGN PRESERVATION LEAGUE'S MULTIPLE ROLES.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

N/A

ANALYSIS

See revised Memorandum attached.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

N/A

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

N/A

CONCLUSION

N/A

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): N/A

Department

Office of Commissioner David Suarez

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner David Suarez

Co-sponsor(s)

Condensed Title

Ref: FERC (3/26/2025) - Conflict of Interest/Ethical Concerns Related to MDPL's Multiple Roles.
(Suarez)

Previous Action (For City Clerk Use Only)



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ANALYSIS

Please place on the March 19, 2025 agenda a referral to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (the "Committee") to discuss the potential conflict of interest and ethical concerns related to the Miami Design Preservation League's multiple roles. I respectfully request that this item be placed on the agenda of the Committee's March 26, 2025 meeting.

The Miami Design Preservation League ("MDPL") is a City contractor managing the Miami Beach Ocean Front Auditorium ("the 10th Street Auditorium") as a Visitors' Center and Art Deco Museum. This organization is also a recipient of grant funding from the City and engages in fundraising to comply with the terms of the management agreement. Pursuant to the City's Resiliency Code, MDPL also has the right to nominate three individuals for appointment of one of them to a seat on the Historic Preservation Board. MDPL has also been granted special status under the Resiliency Code; specifically, MDPL has standing, when other third parties generally would not, to appeal certain decisions of the City's land use boards. In addition to these interactions and relationships with the City, one or more MDPL representatives frequently appear(s) before the City Commission, various Commission Committees, and the City's land use boards as lobbyists advocating for policies that could affect the City's decisions on matters related to historic preservation and development.

MDPL's overlapping roles as a City contractor and lobbyist, as well as its preferred status under the Resiliency Code, raise important questions about potential conflicts of interest and ethical considerations. The blurring of lines between these various roles could create perceptions of impropriety or undue influence, especially when decisions regarding City contracts and land use matters are being discussed and voted on by the City Commission.

I would like to engage in a conversation with my colleagues on the Committee to assess whether these multiple roles are appropriately managed and whether additional safeguards or clarifications are needed to address any potential conflicts. This discussion will help ensure that the City's processes remain transparent, ethical, and free from conflicts of interest.