

13. DISCUSS THE ACTIVATION OF ALLEYS IN SOUTH BEACH (ART DECO SIGNS) AND NORTH BEACH (MIMO SIGNS).

Applicable Area:

MIAMI BEACH

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee Members

FROM: Eric Carpenter, City Manager

DATE: May 14, 2025

TITLE: DISCUSS THE ACTIVATION OF ALLEYS IN SOUTH BEACH (ART DECO SIGNS) AND NORTH BEACH (MIMO SIGNS).

RECOMMENDATION

The Administration recommends continuing its efforts to beautify North and South Beach through the enhancement of lighting and cleanliness in the alleys to deter criminal activities and enhance public safety.

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

On July 24, 2024, at the request of Commissioner Tanya Bhatt, the Mayor and City Commission (City Commission), approved item C4L (Attachment A), a dual referral to the Public Safety and Quality of Life Committee (PSNQLC) and the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee (FERC) to discuss the activation of alleys in South Beach (Art Deco signs) and North Beach (MiMo signs).

The referral originates from the need to address alleys in urban areas, which often become breeding grounds for crime and unsavory activities due to their hidden and neglected nature. Commissioner Bhatt's vision is to reclaim these alleys and transform them into engaging, well-lit spaces, deter criminal activities, and enhance public safety.

The original concept of the referral was to activate alleys through the installation of Art Deco signs and historical markers in South Beach, and MiMo signs and historical markers in North Beach as a way to create visually engaging elements. Following discussions with the sponsor and Public Works staff, a comprehensive review of the alleys for more pressure washing and potential drainage points are being analyzed. Public Works will also be looking at any potential opportunities for pilot programs with businesses and condominium boards to improve these areas.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

To be determined

CONCLUSION

The Administration recommends continuing its efforts to beautify North and South Beach through the enhancement of lighting and cleanliness in the alleys to deter criminal activities and enhance public safety.

Applicable Area

North Beach

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

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

Yes

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

Department

Public Works

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

Condensed Title

DISCUSS THE ACTIVATION OF ALLEYS IN SOUTH BEACH (ART DECO SIGNS) AND NORTH BEACH (MIMO SIGNS).

MIAMI BEACH

COMMISSION MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

DATE: July 24, 2024

TITLE: REFERRAL TO THE FINANCE AND ECONOMIC RESILIENCY COMMITTEE AND THE PUBLIC SAFETY AND NEIGHBORHOOD QUALITY OF LIFE COMMITTEE TO DISCUSS THE ACTIVATION OF ALLEYS IN SOUTH BEACH (ART DECO SIGNS) AND NORTH BEACH (MIMO SIGNS).

RECOMMENDATION

BACKGROUND/HISTORY

ANALYSIS

Please place on the July 24, 2024, agenda a dual referral to the Finance and Economic Resiliency Committee ("FERC") and the Public Safety and Neighborhood Quality of Life Committee to discuss the activation of alleys in South Beach (SoBe) with Art Deco signs and in North Beach (NoBe) with Miami Modern (MiMo) signs. This initiative is in furtherance of a previously referred item (April 3, 2024 City Commission meeting item C4O), which was also a dual referral to the FERC and the PSLQLC. The objective is to improve alley engagement and safety.

Alleys in urban areas, including Miami Beach, often become breeding grounds for crime and unsavory activities due to their hidden and neglected nature. By reclaiming these alleys and transforming them into engaging, well-lit spaces, we can deter criminal activities and enhance public safety.

The concept is to activate alleys through the installation of Art Deco signs and historical markers in South Beach, and MiMo signs and historical markers in North Beach. We can utilize Miami Beach's iconic neon signage from the Art Deco and Miami Modern eras to create visually engaging elements. The City should explore collaboration with cultural anchors such as the Miami Design Preservation League and the Wolfsonian to create and curate QR code-generated self-guided walking tours accessible via smartphones. The alley activations should celebrate and elevate recognition of Miami Beach's historical and architectural heritage.

This project will not only beautify the alleys, but has the potential of enhancing public safety by transforming dark, neglected alleys into safe, engaging and Instagram-ready destinations. The application of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) best practices could assist in this endeavor. Of course, the installations would need to be installed to ensure they do not block or interfere with vehicular access or impinge on residents' privacy and sleep.

This project has the potential to capture local, national, and international nostalgia for Miami Beach's unique history and culture.

References:

- Las Vegas Neon Museum: <https://www.neonmuseum.org/>
- Study/history of MB hotel names: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/453627?seq=1>
- Neon Alley Lights Up Pueblo: <https://springsmag.com/neon-alley-lights-up-pueblo/>
- Alberta Canada Neon Sign Museum:
<https://www.facebook.com/travelalbertacanada/posts/the-neon-sign-museum-the-first-of-its-kind-in-canada-is-a-free-outdoor-museum-fe/10158192443328942/>

The appropriate members of the Administration should be prepared to discuss the financial and logistical implications of this proposal, and how best to move forward. Additionally, the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) should be prepared to discuss how this initiative could improve crime issues in these two parts of our city.

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-notice/>

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

CONCLUSION

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):

Department

City Attorney

Sponsor(s)

Commissioner Tanya K. Bhatt

Co-sponsor(s)

Condensed Title

Ref: FERC/PSNQLC - Activation of Alleys, SoBe and NoBe. (Bhatt) CA