

PLANNING

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

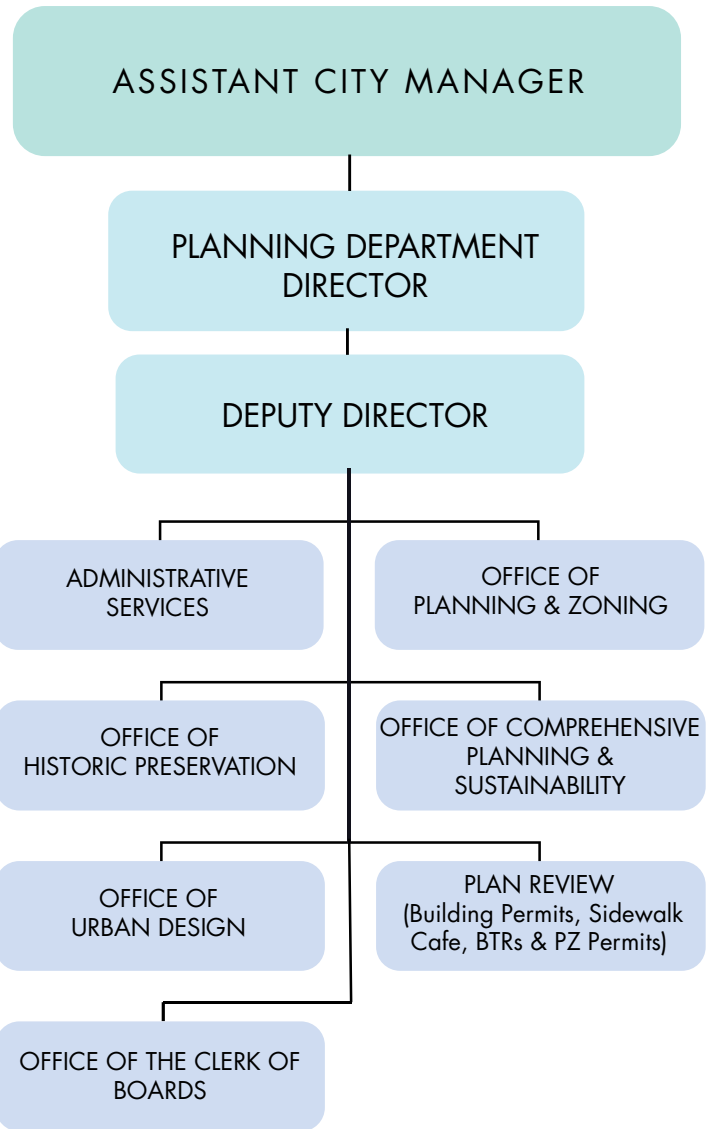
The Planning Department is dedicated to developing, refining, and implementing a comprehensive urban planning vision for Miami Beach with the goal of preserving the integrity of the City’s unique design heritage and enhancing the quality and diversity of the urban experience, inclusive of its residential neighborhoods, business districts, resorts, recreation, and entertainment areas.

DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION

The department provides guidance in design and applies regulatory standards and policies with the intent of ensuring progressive urban design principles, while preserving the City’s rich architectural and historic resources.

The Planning Department is responsible for providing professional analyses and recommendations to the City Manager and City Commission on all land development issues. We serve as staff to the City’s Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Design Review Board, Historic Preservation Board and the Land Use and Sustainability Committee. The department processes applications, reviews and prepares recommendations. It is also responsible for implementing and updating the comprehensive plan as required by Florida statutes. The department reviews building permits for compliance with land development regulations, board orders and for consistency with architectural review guidelines as well as preservation criteria.

Additionally, the department conducts studies on specialized topics, such as resiliency and sustainability, growth management, way-finding, historic designation, urban and landscape design while also preparing master and conceptual plans for neighborhoods and conservation districts. Such efforts generally involve extensive public participation and collaboration with other City departments and governmental agencies to facilitate implementation of the plans once approved by the City Commission.



FISCAL ENVIRONMENT

The department is funded from the General Fund and continues to analyze and adjust fees in an effort to align revenue and operational costs, while providing financial incentives to homesteaded residential properties, and other development types such as affordable and workforce housing, and projects that include a resiliency component. This facilitated the evaluation of land use board applications, and other processes, which now include permit review. Services are provided, both in person and virtually as preferred by applicants. These flexible options are considered valuable tools for developments teams, contractors, and applicants to optimize and manage their time. Facilitating and providing review options has played a significant role in maintaining the volume of reviews, allowing the department to meet projected revenue and reduce operational costs.

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STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Main Vision Area:

Neighborhoods

Management Objectives:



- **Prosperity**
 - Revitalize targeted areas and increase investment through master plans and business vibrancy efforts as well as core services like safety and code enforcement. Better leverage our assets and parking lots. Areas include North Beach, Ocean Drive, 41st Street, Lincoln Road and Washington Avenue.
- **Neighborhoods**
 - Modernize and streamline our old and complex land development regulations and City codes through routine and comprehensive reviews to be more user-friendly and to reduce conflicts.
 - Prioritize historic gems and create opportunities to build resilience into historic properties to protect our unique Miami Beach identity.
- **Mobility**
 - Increase housing options for current and future residents and enable growth in housing that protects seniors and encourages first-time home-buyers.
 - Support affordable, compatible workforce housing through public and private partners for key industries, including the use of development incentives.
- **Organization Innovation**
 - Support all objectives to improve strategic decision making and financial stewardship, making the city more business friendly and user friendly, with an employee culture of problem solving and engagement.

Strategic Plan Actions:

- **ASSIST** applicants and property owners in the continued development and revitalization of North Beach Town and Ocean Terrace.
- **INCREASE** compliance with the Building Code by streamlining the process and providing continued training to the public and applicants on the process.

Budget Enhancement Actions:

- Intensity and Density Capacity Analysis

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

The department serves as the liaison to several land use boards that include Planning, Design Review, Historic Preservation and Board of Adjustment. Additionally, the department manages and is the liaison for the Land Use and Sustainability Committee as well as the Flood Plain Management Board. Planning conducts Special Area Studies that require participation with civic organizations such as the Miami Beach Community Development Corporation, North Beach Development Corporation, Housing Authority, as well as several homeowners' associations and neighborhood groups. Planning also addresses and responds to requirements from state agencies and the South Florida Regional Planning Council and represents the City at select committee meetings with the School Board of Miami Dade County, other county government entities and neighboring municipalities based on various inter-local agreements. Internally, Planning maintains a close working relationship with various departments, including, Transportation, Public Works, Housing, City Clerk, IT, Building, Code Compliance, Economic Development, Fire, CIP, Parks and Recreation, Environmental and Sustainability, Housing and Community Services, Office of the City Attorney and Facilities Management and provides technical and professional guidance on projects that may need approval from (LUB), Commission Committees, or the City Commission.



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SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The ordinance on outdoor alcohol sales on West Avenue is intended to improve the quality of life for residents in the West Avenue Neighborhood. The ordinance would prevent existing establishments with 5 AM liquor licenses from serving alcohol outdoors beyond 2 AM. This is intended to prevent crowds outdoors that could make noise or create other nuisances that can negatively affect residents' ability to quietly enjoy their homes.
- The amendment to the Land Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan on R-PS4 FAR Transient Use Incentives is intended to improve the quality of life for residents in the South of Fifth neighborhood by creating an incentive for existing waterfront hotels to convert to residential uses. The hotels draw large crowds of tourists to a predominantly residential area, creating conflicts and nuisances for residents. The ordinance provides an FAR incentive if the hotel properties are developed as residential uses, along with a covenant that properties shall not be used for short term rentals. It is expected that the Marriott Stanton Hotel will take advantage of the incentive. There are two other properties that could potentially use the incentives.
- The establishment of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) online database provides easy access to conditional use permits (CUP) approved by the Miami Beach Planning Board. The design and implementation of the database was a coordinated effort with the IT Department. The new database includes a map component and allows for direct downloading of any CUP in PDF format and gives users the option of searching through more than 800 conditional use permits. The database is updated regularly and is searchable by address and zoning district. The database will also be useful for Miami Beach Code Enforcement personnel who are investigating complaints against businesses.
- The establishment of a Historic Preservation Database - This resource allows residents to search through a database of permits issued in Historic Districts. This tool contains an interactive map, multi-search options and the ability to download permit information in PDF format. The databased is regularly updated and facilitates access to permit information quickly and efficiently.
- The Department has processed 592 Certificate of Use Permits in the first two quarters of FY 2024.

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS CONT'D

- **Legislation Updates**
 - Accessory Dwelling Units - This legislation created new administrative approval rules, as well as revised regulations for the Palm View area, to incentivize Accessory Dwelling Units as an option for long-term housing and multi-generational homes.
 - Fencing Requirements - This legislation updated the minimum standards and requirements for the fencing of vacant lots city-wide to prevent loitering and neglect and maintain an esthetically pleasing and safe environment
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Requirements - This legislation updated current requirements for electric vehicle charging citywide in support of green initiatives and climate change mitigation.
 - South Beach Development Regulations - This legislation set forth uniform height and setback regulations for all new buildings in the South Beach Historic Districts, to provide a protection from projects pre-empted by State.
- The adoption of the Resiliency Code enables the City to continue to promote and protect the historic character of the City's neighborhoods while identifying areas for sustainable growth that can better address any future shocks and stresses. Developers now have a clearer understanding of the areas that are available for growth and will be able to focus their resources on projects that can benefit the City. The predictability will encourage residential and commercial investment that benefits both the City and its residents. Staff is working on transitioning the code and related maps to the Gridics platform, which will facilitate the public's ability to view the code, search for information, and obtain zoning information on specific properties much more efficiently.

The Resiliency Code has provided a more transparent and user-friendly method for all affected stakeholders to access all applicable local regulations pertaining to development.

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CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

- Adopt regulations to support the City's efforts in becoming more resilient to the impacts of climate change including sea level rise
- The adoption of the Resiliency Code enables the City to better formulate a strategic plan that will continue to promote and protect the historic character of the City's neighborhoods, while identifying areas for sustainable growth that can better address any future shocks and stresses. The Code took effect on June 1, 2023. Developers now have a clearer understanding of the areas that are available for growth and will be able to focus their resources on projects that can benefit the City.
- At the direction of the City Commission, the Planning Department has created a database to access Conditional Use Permits (CUP). The department continues to add documents to the database as they are retrieved from archives to facilitate and enhance public access. In collaboration with the IT department, an online map tool has been created to allow residents, stakeholders, and City staff to quickly locate CUPs. This tool can also be used by the City's Code Compliance Officers to ensure that business and buildings are being operated as intended. Given that CUPs have been approved as far back as the 1970s, the repository is making it easier for these permits to be located and enforced.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Operationally, sustained increase in requests for reduced turn-around times as mandated by the State for permit reviews and a consistent number of submittal of applications for Land Use Board Approval continue to tax the resources of the Department affecting our ability to deliver services. Demand analysis will be conducted once the State mandates are fully implemented, and impacts can be observed.

Gridics Code Hub was launched on November 27, 2023. This software provides full access to the Resiliency Code, including a 3D zoning map and property data. Gridics provides an easy to use, transparent and efficient platform for all users, including, but not limited to, residents, property and business owners, architects, developers, and city staff. The new online database will allow residents to access Conditional Use Permits (CUP) approved by the Miami Beach Planning Board. It also includes a map component and allows for direct downloading of any CUP in PDF format. All CUP's contain conditions specific to an individual property and/or business.