

PLANNING

DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

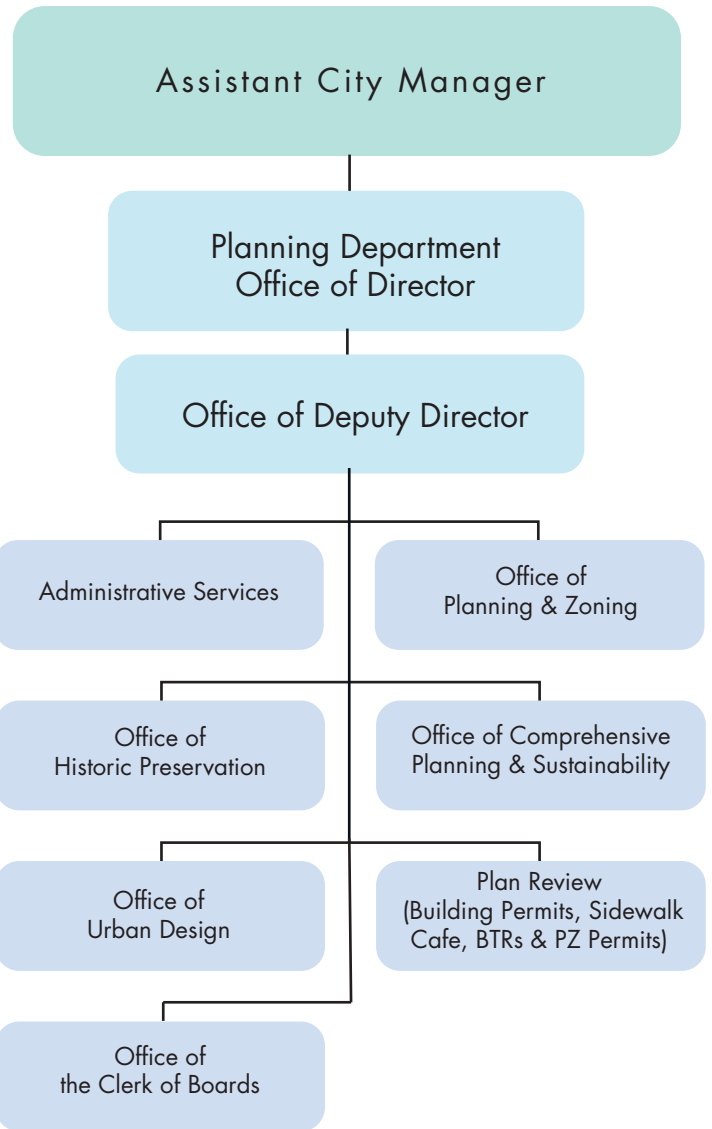
The Planning Department is dedicated to developing, refining, and implementing a comprehensive urban planning vision for Miami Beach with the goal of preserving the integrity of the City’s unique design heritage and enhancing the quality and diversity of the urban experience, inclusive of its residential 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 homestead 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, 41 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:

- N/A

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

- **Resiliency Code:** The Planning Department is in the final stages of updating the current Land Development Regulations. Throughout the year, the Department has engaged the public, elected officials, and other stakeholders to craft and refine the Code so that it is resilient, transparent, and responsive to the needs of residents and businesses of Miami Beach. The adoption of the Resiliency Code will enable 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. Developers will have a clear 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 that comes from this knowledge will encourage residential and commercial investment that will benefit both the City and its residents. First Reading of the Resiliency code took place on September 14, 2022.
- **Ordinance 2021-4446 (October 13, 2021) – Nonconforming Residential Buildings – Repairs Exceeding 50%:** This ordinance amends the City's nonconforming building regulations to address the long-term safety of multifamily residential buildings located throughout the City. This Ordinance modifies requirements for improvements to existing non-conforming residential structures in order to ensure that property owners have the ability to maintain and retain the structure a safe and secure condition without being overly burdened by changes to the Land Development Regulations (LDRs) that may have been made since the building was originally constructed. Typically, if repairs exceed 50% of the value of a building, the building must be brought into compliance with the existing LDR's. The provisions of this Ordinance incentivize the comprehensive repair and rehabilitation of existing, nonconforming, and residential buildings by forgoing the 50% requirement if certain conditions are met.
- **Ordinance 2021-4455 (December 8, 2021) – Single-Family Solar Panel Setback Exceptions:** This Ordinance modifies the City's single-family home setback regulations to permit solar panels and related equipment to encroach into required yards. This promotes sustainable and resilient development and green energy. This ordinance helps furthers the City's goal of achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- **Ordinance 2022-4459 (January 20, 2022) – Comprehensive Plan 10 Year Water Supply Plan and Property Rights Element:** This Comprehensive Plan amendment strengthens the coordination between water supplies and local land use planning and incorporates an updated 10-year water supply facilities work plan. In November 2018, the South Florida

SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS CONT'D

Water Management District Governing Board approved the Lower East Coast Water Supply Plan Update to ensure there will be enough drinking water for more than 6 million residents in South Florida's Lower East Coast Region. Miami-Dade County subsequently updated its plans. The Planning Department coordinated with the Public Works Department in the update. This update ensures that there is sufficient capacity to handle the City's projected growth. Additionally, this amendment ensures that there is compliance with State law and incorporated a Property Rights Element into the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Ordinance 2022-4465 (January 20, 2022) – Landscape Neighborhood Overlays:** This Ordinance established a framework to allow neighborhoods that have special landscaping characteristics that differ from the City's landscape standards to create an overlay to preserve those characteristics as new development takes place. Specifically, an overlay for the La Gorce neighborhood was created to preserve the Royal Palm Trees that line all of the streets.
- **Ordinance 2022-4471 (February 9, 2022) – Commercial Height Limits for Office Uses in the CPS-2 District:** This Ordinance is intended to incentivize the development of Class A office buildings on the western portions of 5th Street. This is part of a continued initiative to transform the City's economy from an over-reliance on tourism by promoting the growth, diversification, and resiliency of the City's economy. Class A office space tends to require higher floor to ceiling heights than other classes of office space. This ordinance provides modest height increases for office buildings, while providing safeguards to ensure that new buildings do not negatively impact surrounding areas.

The Resiliency Code will establish development regulations that are transparent and responsive to the needs of residents and businesses.

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SIGNIFICANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS CONT'D

- Ordinance 2022-4489 (May 4, 2022) – Expansion of Art Deco MiMo Overlay District: Ocean Drive, Collins Avenue, and Washington Avenue are premier streets in Miami Beach, all of which provide residents and visitors with a unique cultural, retail, and dining experience that are vital to Miami Beach’s economy. This Ordinance expanded the Art Deco MiMO Commercial Character Overlay District west to Washington Avenue and north to the Collins Park neighborhood. This Ordinance limits the number of nuisance establishments that negatively affect these areas and detract from the type of experience that the City is trying to encourage for its residents and guests.
- Ordinance 2022-4503 (July 20, 2022) – Sunset Harbor Overlay Office Height Amendment: In 2021, the City adopted the Sunset Harbour Vision Plan ordinance that intends to preserve the quality of life in the Sunset Harbour neighborhood while encouraging office development on the perimeter of the neighborhood. This Ordinance modifies the Sunset Harbour Vision plan ordinance to further encourage the development of Class A Office Space by increasing the maximum height limit to 75 feet for a portion of the overlay along Alton Road, in order to reflect current market conditions. It also allows for decorative rooftop elements at a maximum height of 16 feet and prohibits the Design Review Board from approving the reduction of the clear pedestrian path requirements. This Ordinance is allowing for a new Class A office development that is continuing to help diversify the City’s economy.
- Ordinance 2022-4511 (September 14, 2022) – R-PS1 and RPS2 Apartment-Hotel Conversion Incentives: The R-PS1 and RPS2 districts consist of low-intensity multifamily neighborhoods in the South of Fifth area of the City. Previously the regulations for these districts allowed for apartment-hotel construction. The neighborhood has a few apartment-hotels that had been permitted prior to the removal of the apartment-hotel use from the list of permitted uses. This Ordinance created a FAR and density incentives for the conversion of apartment-hotels to residential uses. Pursuant to Section 1.03 (c) of the City Charter, the adoption of this Ordinance required the prior approval of the voters in a Citywide referendum. The voters approved the Ordinance on the August ballot. It is expected that over time, existing and permitted apartment-hotels will convert to apartment uses due the new ability to gain extra density and FAR beyond what is typically allowed in the area.

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.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS CONT'D

- Identify sections in the Land Development Regulations that are in conflict or impede process improvement and delivery of services

Both factors are being addressed in the redrafting and update of the land development regulations under the Resiliency Code initiative.

FUTURE OUTLOOK

The department is in the process of analyzing and updating the current land development regulations. Over the past two years, the department, in conjunction with a consulting team, has completed a public engagement and drafting process to prepare new Land Development Regulations known as the Resiliency Code. The code will be much more transparent and responsive to the needs of residents and businesses of Miami Beach. The adoption of a resiliency code will enable the City to formulate a strategic plan that will continue to promote and protect the historic character of the district neighborhoods, while addressing our shocks and stresses by providing for development that is resilient. Developers will have a clear understanding of the areas that are available for growth and will be able to focus their resources on projects that can succeed. The predictability that comes from this knowledge will encourage residential and commercial investment that will benefit both the City and its residents.

The Code will establish a framework that will allow for further refinements over the next year to address major issues that affect the City, including the need for workforce and affordable housing, improved parking regulations, and enhanced mitigation against climate change and sea level rise.

Operationally, sustained increases in requests for reduced turn-around time with respect to permit reviews and application submittals for land use board approvals continues to tax department resources affecting our ability to deliver services.

At the direction of the City Commission, over the next year, the Department will be working with the IT Department to create an online tool that will allow residents to view the files proposed and recently approved developments to be viewed via an interactive map. This will improve residents and other stakeholders’ understanding of the changes and trends taking place within their neighborhoods.

Also, at the direction of the City Commission, the Planning Department is working at locating all Conditional Uses Permits (CUPs) that have been approved within the City and uploading them to a central electronic database. This will allow residents, stakeholders, and City staff to quickly locate CUPs to ensure that businesses and buildings are operating as intended. Given that CUPs have been approved as far back as the 1970s, it is often difficult for these permits to be located and enforced.