



January 15, 2016

Daniel J. Alfonso, City Manager  
City of Miami  
3500 Pan American Drive  
Miami, FL 33133

**RE: Sea Level Rise Committee Annual Report**

Dear Mr. Alfonso:

As chairperson of the Sea Level Rise Committee (SLRC), and on behalf of its members, please allow this to serve as our annual report pursuant to Section 2-890 of the City Code.

**Section 1: Is the board serving the purpose for which it was created?**

Yes, the SLRC was created on February 26, 2015, pursuant to Resolution R-15-0072, and began meeting on October 1, 2015 (at the time of filing this report, the committee has had four meetings and one workshop). Its purpose is to recommend changes to City policy to help the City better combat the deleterious effects of sea level rise (SLR). We have had the opportunity to engage the public; host experts to speak on topics related to SLR; and pass a number of resolutions in connection with the impacts of SLR on our City.

However, I would like to request additional support from the City's Administration for the SLRC to accurately investigate the various consequences related to sea level rise and identify steps that the City might take to better adapt to its changing climate. Specifically, the SLRC needs assistance from the City Manager's Office and the Departments of Public Works, Building, Planning and Zoning to help:

- Evaluate provisions of the City Code and Miami21 that can be amended to ensure development within the City accounts for SLR.
- Map and identify areas of the City most vulnerable to sea level rise or that are targeted for increased development,
- Review state guidelines for developing adaptation action area designations pursuant to Florida's Community Planning Act, and
- Establish a budget for the SLRC so that it might adequately investigate potential solutions to the challenges posed by sea level rise.

In addition, I would like to request that representatives from the City Manager's Office and the Departments of Public Works, Building, Planning and Zoning attend SLRC meetings.

**Section 2: Is the board serving current community needs?**

Yes, although the SLRC is a new committee, its meetings have usually been well attended by the public and officials from other local governments. However, the SLRC has only just begun the work necessary to help the City cope with the challenges of sea level rise.

**Section 3: What are the board's major accomplishments?**

As a new informational, educational, and public forum committee, the SLRC has passed the following resolutions, identifying important first steps in the City's efforts to adapt to sea level rise:

- **Mapping Tools:** Resolution "to engage IT Dept., outside resources, as it relates to mapping of flood prone and sea level rise areas that will be areas impacted by sea level rise, to do an internal study and invite speakers to come to address the committee. . . ."
- **Information on Insurance & Re-insurance:** Resolution to "collect as much information from the administration and outside sources to analyze impending increases in insurances over the next 10 years"
- **More Cohesive Working Relationships between City Departments and the Committee on Sea Level Rise:** Resolution suggesting "to the administration and the commission to have the various departments – building, planning, fire, public works" to investigate SLR collectively and determine how to include relevant SLR initiatives in the City Code to best design a more sustainable and resilient community.

**Section 4: Is there any other board, either public or private, which would better serve the function of the board?**

No, the SLRC is the only board charged with the specific responsibility of helping the City better combat the deleterious effects of sea level rise and there is a great deal of work to be done to protect the City's residents from those effects.

Nevertheless, the SLRC, and the City, should endeavor to cooperate more closely with other government agencies and organizations combatting sea level rise at a regional level. To that end, I strongly recommend that the City follow the example of Miami-Dade County and other local governments by creating a Chief Resiliency Officer position.

Other possible collaborations include:

- Joint investigations with Miami-Dade County's Office of Resilience,
- Attendance at Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact events, and
- Partnerships with FIU's Sea Level Solutions Center and academics at UM and FAU to develop more detailed maps of the City to illustrate areas that will be impacted by future sea level rise and storm surges.

**Section 5: Should the ordinance creating the board be amended to better enable the board to serve the purpose for which it was created?**

Yes, I recommend that the City consider the following changes to the resolution creating the SLRC:

- Replace the resolution with an ordinance formally establishing the SLRC, and its role, within the City Code,
- The ordinance should clarify the scope of the SLRC's mission to include providing recommendations to the City on the impacts of sea level rise related to storm surges, public health, water supply and quality, socioeconomics, education, and
- The ordinance should establish a budget for the SLRC, without which the committee will not be able to acquire the tools and expertise necessary to adequately investigate potential solutions to the challenges posed by sea level rise.

**Section 6: Should the board's membership requirements be modified?**

Yes, I recommend that the City consider modifying the membership requirements in the following ways:

- The term of membership should be extended to two (2) years, enabling committee members to better acquaint themselves with the complex challenges related to sea level rise that specifically affect the City,
- Membership on the SLRC should be capped at six (6) consecutive years,
- The SLRC Chairperson should serve for a specified term, and
- One of the SLRC members should be required to have an expertise in real-estate development.

**Section 7: The cost, both direct and indirect, of maintaining the board.**

The SLRC has been meeting for only three months and is still in the process of determining the scope of its need for logistical support. Thus, it is difficult to make an accurate estimation of the SLRC's maintenance cost at this time. Currently, a liaison from the Office of Sustainable Initiatives has been assigned to the SLRC and the City Attorney's Office has also assigned one Assistant City Attorney to serve as counsel. However, as the SLRC formally clarifies its role and works with the City's Administration to establish a budget to better investigate potential solutions, I would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss with you the possibility of additional staff support.

Should you need further information, please contact me through the City of Miami's Office of Sustainable Initiatives at 305-960-5191.

Sincerely,



Wayne Pathman  
Chairperson  
On behalf of the Sea Level Rise Committee as a whole

Respectfully submitted this 15<sup>th</sup> day of January 2016

Cc: Dr. Tabitha Cale, Vice Chairperson  
Mr. Reinaldo Borges, Committee Member  
Mr. Jim Murley, Committee Member  
Mr. Pete Gomez, Committee Member  
Mr. Jose Regalado, Committee Member

Mr. Ajani Stewart, Environmental Programs Manager & Board Liaison  
Mr. Matthew Haber, Assistant City Attorney