



January 15, 2017

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/Committee), 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?**

On October 13, 2016, the Miami City Commission, further demonstrating its and the City's commitment to seriously addressing the impacts of sea level rise (SLR), passed Ordinance No. 13640 codifying and strengthening the SLRC. The Ordinance rescinded Resolution No. 16-0254 in its entirety, and reestablished the City of Miami Sea level Rise Committee. Pursuant to the Ordinance the SLRC's purpose is:

*"to serve in an advisory capacity to the City Commission. The Committee shall recommend changes to the Code of the City of Miami and any City of Miami policies necessary to help the City and its residents adapt to and prepare for the adverse impacts of sea level rise, including impacts related to storm surges, flood damage prevention, infrastructure, public health, water supply and quality, housing, and socioeconomics."*

The Committee continues to serve this purpose and also its closely aligned formal mission:

*"To study sea level rise and its effect on the City of Miami, incorporating all available information on the subject; and make recommendations and help to frame legislation to be considered by the City Commission, for enhancing the resilience and sustainability of all the City's communities from the impact of sea level rise"*

During this reporting period, the SLRC has served in an advisory capacity to the Commission with appearances before the body to discuss various SLR-related topics and recommend actions (detailed within) to help the City better adapt to the expected

impacts. Having generously been granted quarterly discussion item appearances before the City Commission for calendar year 2017; and, increasing coordination with City management and departments to work closely on SLR efforts; The Committee anticipates better serving and providing increased value to the City Commission in an advisory capacity over the next year.

In addition, during this period, the Committee held 9 general meetings and 3 workshops, open to the public. These meetings featured a variety of key community stakeholders and experts across several areas including; government, academia, community-based organizations and the private sector. As the SLRC is charged with studying sea level rise and its impacts on the City and incorporating all available information, these very informative meetings remain a critical vehicle for gathering information and allowing the public to directly engage with officials on this issue central to our community's resilience.

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

Yes, the SLRC is serving current community effectively. The Committee's meetings are generally well and increasingly attended, with more interested persons from the general public participating, wishing to learn, and share information and varying perspectives about the topic.

The Committee continues to demonstrate a strong commitment to enhancing the resilience of all the City's communities to SLR. Moreover, the SLRC is committed to ensuring that traditionally underserved communities and equity considerations play an integral role in a community-based solutions approach for adapting to SLR. In demonstrating this commitment the Committee has: formally met with/hosted representatives of several community-based organizations serving disadvantaged communities including Catalyst Miami & the New Florida Majority; had several of its members attend community climate forums (including in Liberty City and Little Haiti) to hear directly the concerns of residents in these communities.

The Committee will continue to ensure that along with the infrastructure, physical, and economic considerations - human and community concerns remain an integral aspect of studying the effects of SLR and planning for a more resilient Miami for all.

Lastly, in an effort to better serve members of the public wishing to attend and participate in its meetings, the Committee finalized a regular meeting structure for 2017. Therefore this year, all regular monthly SLRC meetings will occur at 6:00 pm on the fourth Monday of every month (except December 11, 2017) in the Miami City Commission Chambers.

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

The following highlights some of the Committee's major accomplishments during the reporting period:

- **Resolution to Study the Impacts of Sea Level Rise and Insurance Implications – June 2016**

On June 7, 2016, the SLRC unanimously passed the following resolution:

“A RESOLUTION OF THE SEA LEVEL RISE COMMITTEE (“SLRC”) TO STUDY SEA LEVEL RISE AND THE ASSOCIATED INSURANCE ISSUES (INCLUDING THE FUTURE OF FLOOD INSURANCE), AND TO MAKE RECCOMENDATIONS TO THE CITY COMMISSION FOR ADDRESSING EXPECTED FUTURE INSURANCE ISSUES AND THE EFFECT ON THE CITY”

The Committee believes it is critical to its future economic viability, that the City starts exploring the potential of sea level rise impacts to reshape the local insurance landscape.

- **Creation of Position Advocating for Vulnerable Low-Income Communities – September 2016**

Pursuant to Ordinance No. 13640, requiring that at least one member shall possess an expertise in advocating for vulnerable low-income communities, on September 8, 2016 the City Commission appointed Ms. Kilan Ashad-Bishop to serve this purpose.

- **Review University of Miami's 2016 Climate Change Special Report – September 2016**

Issued via Resolution 16-0230, in May 2016 the Sea Level Rise Committee was directed to review the University of Miami's 2016 Climate Change Special Report and report their findings to the City Commission. During the September 8, 2016, Miami City Commission Meeting, Chair Mr. Wayne Pathman, member Mr. Reinaldo Borges, and then member Ms. Jane Gilbert (now Chief Resilience Officer with the City), presented their findings to the Commission and included recommendations for how best the City could partner with academic institutions on SLR efforts. The SLRC prepared a *UM Climate Change Report Response* document that recommended three actions the City could take to advance partnerships with academic institutions. The following recommendations were unanimously accepted by the City Commission on September 8, 2016:

- Department leads within City staff meet with University leaders with applicable expertise to explore avenues for partnership in the areas of mapping, communications, IT, storm water management plans, land use and building codes. Include City grants writing and university

advancement so that each may seek opportunities to resource these partnerships.

- City of Miami increase number of paid internships offered to local college students across departments but focused on issues related to adapting to sea level rise and climate change.
- City of Miami join Miami Dade County and City of Miami Beach in a Greater Miami and the Beaches application to join the MetroLabs Network. The MetroLabs Network currently provides organizational support and resource sharing with over 30 regional city – university partnerships throughout the United States. Partners focus on Research, Development and Deployment (RD&D) projects that offer technological and analytically based solutions to challenges facing urban areas including: inequality in income, health, mobility, security and opportunity; aging infrastructure; and environmental sustainability and resiliency. City-University relationships are mutually-beneficial in which the city's R&D department and the city is a test bed. When networked nationally, they present an opportunity to scale effective solutions, accelerate best practices and advance the understanding of urban science. Since this partnership would offer benefits far beyond supporting the City in its response to sea level rise, this partnership is best advanced through the ***Greater Miami and the Beaches Resilience Partnership***, which includes the City of Miami Beach and Miami-Dade County.
- **Ordinance No. 13640 Reestablishing SLRC – October 2016**  
This ordinance of the Miami City Commission, adopted October 13, 2016 – rescinded Resolution No. 16-0254, adopted on May 26, 2016, in its entirety, and re-established the City of Miami Sea Level Rise Committee by amending Chapter 2/Article XI/Division 18 of the Code of the City of Miami.
- **Collaboration with Office of Resilience and Sustainability, Chief Resilience Officer, Vulnerability Mapping – October 2016**  
Since its official forming in October 2016, the Office of Resilience & Sustainability (ORS) has been a strong partner and supporter for the SLRC's work. The Committee is thrilled to have its former member, Jane Gilbert as Chief Resilience Officer. Both organizations recognize the need to continue working closely. ORS, specifically in response to the first SLRC resolution recommending the City of Miami explore comprehensive flood and SLR vulnerability mapping efforts, has elevated vulnerability assessment and mapping as one of its first priorities – and will work closely with the Committee to achieve this.
- **Review Virginia Key Marina RFP – December 2016**  
In December 2016, the Director of the City's Department of Real Estate & Asset Management (DREAM) requested that the SLRC review the proposed (round 2)

Request for Proposal for Lease of Waterfront Property at Virginia Key (VKM RFP). The Director and staff from DREAM presented on the VKM RFP before the Committee on January 4, 2017. At the time of writing this report, the SLRC intends to provide initial comment and recommendation(s) to DREAM in the near future, and remain engaged, as requested, throughout the development process for the RFP.

- **Sea Level Rise Committee – Planning & Zoning Workshops – January 2017**  
On January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the Committee held its first of (at least 3) joint workshops with the Planning & Zoning Department. The purpose of these workshops is to forge an exchange of information, and jointly identify opportunities in operations and legislation, to make recommendations for improving community resilience to SLR. The SLRC and the department have committed to growing this collaborative effort, and exploring areas for strengthening planning documents including the Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan and Miami 21, to better help the City plan for and adapt to SLR.

**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 with much work to be done to protect the City's residents from those effects.

Nevertheless, the SLRC recognizes the need for a closer working relationship and collaboration on overlapping issues with other City of Miami boards including but not limited to the; Downtown Development Authority, Historic and Environmental Preservation Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Planning & Zoning and Appeals Board, Urban Development Review Board, Virginia Key Advisory Board, and Waterfront Advisory Board. When applicable to informing its information gathering processes, the SLRC will host members of these boards and also participate in their hearings as requested/needed.

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

At this point the SLRC is not requesting further changes to the ordinance creating this board.

Included in our prior 2015 Annual Report, the Committee recommended that the City consider the following changes to its creating resolution:

- 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.

Ordinance No. 13640 adopted October 13, 2016, reflects several of the recommended changes including:

- Sec. 2-1271. Establishment and purpose  
*The "Sea Level Rise Committee" ("Committee") is established to serve in an advisory capacity to the City Commission. The Committee shall recommend changes to the Code of the City of Miami, Florida, as amended ("City Code") and any City of Miami ("City") policies necessary to help the City and its residents adapt to and prepare for the adverse impacts of sea level rise, including impacts related to storm surges, flood damage prevention, infrastructure, public health, water supply and quality, housing, and socioeconomics.*

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

At this point the SLRC is not requesting further modifications to its membership.

Included in our 2015 Annual Report, the Committee recommended that the City consider modifying its membership requirements as follows:

- 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.

Ordinance No. 13640 adopted October 13, 2016, reflects several of the recommended changes in in Sec. 2-1272. Composition; appointment and terms of office of members; filling of vacancies – including:

- Sec. 2-1272 (d):  
*Term of Voting Members. The voting members shall serve for a two (2) year term, but may continue to serve beyond the two (2) year term until a successor has been appointed and qualified. Membership shall be limited to three (3) full, consecutive terms; however, this limitation shall not prohibit any individual from*

*being reappointed to the Committee after a hiatus of two (2) years. Likewise, the limitation of membership to three (3) full, consecutive terms may be waived for a particular voting member by a unanimous vote of the members of the City Commission to permit the voting member to be reconsidered annually for an additional one (1) year term.*

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

Currently, a liaison from the Office of Resilience & Sustainability has been assigned to the SLRC and the City Attorney's Office has also assigned one Assistant City Attorney to serve as counsel.

However, I respectfully request that the Administration consider a stipend for Committee members, and/or mechanism to reimburse expenses, including parking fees, incurred by Committee members in the course of conducting official SLRC business.

Lastly, on August 19, 2016, the SLRC passed the following resolution that recommends establishing a budget for the Committee and position within the Office of Resilience and Sustainability in direct support of the SLRC specifically, and the City's wider efforts to combat the effects of SLR:

"A RESOLUTION OF THE SEA LEVEL RISE COMMITTEE ("SLRC") TO: RECOMMEND TO THE MIAMI CITY COMMISSION THAT A BUDGET OF \$500,000 BE ESTABLISHED FOR FUNDING SLRC ACTIVITIES RELATING TO ADDRESSING SLR ISSUES FACING THE CITY, INCLUDING - COMMISSIONING A COMPREHENSIVE SLR VULNERABILITY/GAP ANALYSIS FOR THE CITY AND RETAINING A QUALIFIED CONSULTING FIRM TO PROVIDE THESE SERVICES; AND, RECOMMEND THAT THE OFFICE OF RESILIENCE & SUSTAINABILITY, ESTABLISH A POSITION FOCUSED SPECIFICALLY ON SLR ISSUES THAT WILL ALSO SERVE AS A SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT LIAISON (NOT ADMINISTRATIVE) TO THE SLRC."

I would be grateful for the opportunity to discuss with you the possibility of additional support.

Should you need further information, please contact me through the City of Miami's Office of Resilience & Sustainability 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 2017

Cc: Mr. Jose Regalado, Vice Chairperson  
Ms. Kilan Ashad-Bishop, Committee Member  
Mr. Reinaldo Borges, Committee Member  
Mr. Albert Gomez, Committee Member  
Mr. Pete Gomez, Committee Member  
Mr. David Martin, Committee Member  
Mr. James Murley, Committee Member  
Ms. Rachel Silverstein, Committee Member

Mr. Todd Hannon, City Clerk  
Ms. Diana Arteaga, Senior Advisor to the City Manager  
Ms. Jane Gilbert, Chief Resilience Officer  
Mr. Ajani Stewart, Environmental Programs Manager  
Mr. Daniel Goldberg, Assistant City Attorney