

**AGENDA**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**

*Alyce Robertson Conference Room*  
201 South Biscayne Blvd., Suite 2600  
Miami, FL 33131

*Friday, October 17, 2025*  
9:00 a.m.

**BOARD MEMBERS**

**BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Commissioner Ralph “Rafael” Rosado, Chairman  
Commissioner Eileen Higgins, Vice Chairwoman  
Arva Suzanne Graham Gibson  
Amal Solh Kabbani  
T. Spencer Crowley, III  
Jarred Diamond  
Nicolas “Nick” Katz  
Gary Ressler  
Martu Freeman-Parker  
Maryam Laguna Borrego  
Melissa Tapanes Llahues

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Suzanne Amaducci  
Alicia Cervera Lamadrid  
Jose Mallea  
Patrick Goddard.

**1. WELCOME**

- ***Welcome – Chairman Ralph “Rafel” Rosado, Commissioner District 4, City of Miami***
- ***Roll Call & Public Comment – Elvira Manon, Miami DDA Executive Board Secretary***  
Terrel Fritz made a comment regarding the a possible partnership between the DDA and the Flagler Bid for this new an upcoming retail report with the Idea to improve the district and remarking how important is Flagler for the district.  
Lori Bowen, a downtown resident, expressed concern about homelessness, cleanliness, and public safety throughout the district. She urged the DDA to prioritize essential quality-of-life improvements and visible enforcement before expanding cultural or aesthetic initiatives.  
James Torres, representing a group of residents, raised concerns about the DDA’s oversight of grant-funded organizations, specifically referencing property code and transparency issues. She requested stronger accountability measures and compliance monitoring for grantees operating within the downtown area.

Billy Corben, filmmaker and community advocate, commended the DDA for supporting arts and cultural programming, noting that such initiatives strengthen community engagement, attract visitors, and enhance downtown's identity.

Diliana Alexander, co-founder of Filmgate Miami, responded to comments regarding her organization, clarifying that Filmgate is compliant with City requirements and committed to transparency and collaboration with the DDA and residents.

Following public comment, the Chair thanked all speakers for their input and reaffirmed the DDA's commitment to balancing arts, culture, and public safety priorities while maintaining open communication with the community.

## 2. CEO & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

- *Executive Report Sep 2025 – Christina Crespi, Miami DDA CEO/Executive Director*

## 3. PRESENTATIONS/DISCUSSIONS

- ***Business Development Retail Report Review – Michaeljohn “MJ” Green, Chief of Economic Development & Strategy, Miami DDA***

Mr. Green, presented the comprehensive Downtown Retail Strategy Report, developed in partnership with consulting firm HR&A Advisors. The 104-page study provides an in-depth analysis of both the challenges and opportunities within the Flagler District and the broader downtown area, offering a detailed roadmap to strengthen retail performance and enhance downtown Miami's position as a premier shopping and cultural destination.

Mr. Green explained that the report identifies the high volume of vacant retail space within the Flagler District not as a weakness but as a significant opportunity for strategic redevelopment. Emphasizing the importance of Flagler Street as Miami's first main street, he noted that the plan seeks to preserve its historic character while repositioning it as a vibrant, contemporary, mixed-use corridor. According to the demographic data, more than 300,000 people work in the downtown district daily, and approximately half a million cruise passengers arrive each month, yet this potential customer base remains largely underutilized.

The study's survey results revealed strong demand among both residents and visitors for reasonably priced food and beverage establishments, personal care services such as salons and barbershops, and social “third spaces” – community-oriented gathering spots like cafes and boutique gyms that foster interaction and a sense of belonging. Mr. Green stated that the DDA's goal is to diversify the downtown retail landscape by encouraging hyperlocal, independent, and boutique-style businesses that reflect the authentic character of Miami, contrasting with the national chain stores that dominate Brickell City Centre and the Design District.

The strategic vision outlined in the report is to position Flagler Street as the connecting thread among Miami's major shopping and entertainment districts, transforming it into what Mr. Green described as “the greatest shopping corridor in America.” To achieve this, the plan calls for an implementation process over three years, including the creation of a working group that will convene quarterly. This group will include property owners, representatives from the Flagler Business Improvement District, and local residents, all collaborating to advance retail activations, incentive programs, and coordinated cultural programming designed to attract and retain both businesses and patrons in the downtown area.

The Board commended the Retail Strategy Report as a comprehensive roadmap for revitalizing downtown Miami's economic and retail landscape. Members agreed that the plan effectively balances business growth, cultural activation, and community engagement to strengthen the Flagler District's identity as a vibrant, authentic destination. The discussion emphasized the need for measurable progress, ongoing

collaboration with local partners, and coordinated efforts across DDA departments to ensure sustained success. Overall, the Board expressed strong support for the strategy's focus on local entrepreneurship, placemaking, and inclusive development to drive long-term downtown vitality.

▪ ***Downtown Creative Collaborator Grants Presentations***

CEO/Executive Director Christina Crespi introduced five finalists for grants exceeding \$25,000 under the Downtown Creative Collaborator (DCC) program, selected from 73 applications and 35 awardees total. Committee members were recognized for their extensive review process.

• ***The District Board of Trustees of Miami Dade College, Florida - MDC Live Arts***

Katherine Garcia Executive Director presented an ambitious performance project involving aerial “vertical dance” on the Freedom Tower facade as part of the Freedom Tower Centennial Series. The free outdoor event (Feb. 6–8, 2026) will celebrate migration, resilience, and community, enhancing downtown’s global cultural reputation.

• ***Miami Center for Architecture & Design***

Diana Reiser and Vanessa Cruz-Rousseau described the third annual Open House Miami, a multi-day, citywide architecture and design festival (Feb. 27–Mar. 1, 2026). The event features 100+ curated experiences, behind-the-scenes tours, and lectures highlighting Miami’s architectural heritage. The team emphasized collaboration with local businesses and downtown institutions.

• ***IFCM CORP dba FilmGate***

Diliana Alexander, Executive Director, presented a six-month program culminating in the Filmgate Interactive Festival (Mar. 18–24, 2026). The initiative combines immersive digital art, AI storytelling, projection mapping, and hackathons, expected to attract over 15,000 attendees and international partnerships from 15 countries. Venues include Miami Worldcenter, Brightline, and Bayfront Park.

• ***Nu Deco Ensemble, Inc.***

Sam, Co-founder and CEO, outlined the orchestra’s ongoing downtown residency at the Adrienne Arsht Center. The program connects contemporary and classical music through collaborations with major artists (e.g., P.J. Morton, Louis Fonsi), education outreach to 10,000 students, and community performances. Nu Deco projects a \$2.5 million economic impact on downtown annually.

• ***Margo Velvet Events***

Margo Velvet, Artistic Director, joined via Zoom to present a plan for large-scale street activations on Flagler Street, including a “Gothic Halloween Festival” and recurring art walk events engaging local businesses and residents with performances, installations, and live music.

▪ ***Education Reform Legislation (Phase 1) –Efren Nunez, City of Miami Planning Department***

The City of Miami Planning Department Provided an outline of Phase 1 of the proposed Education Reform Initiative, which was developed in coordination with DDA leadership. The initiative seeks to address the growing shortage of childcare and educational facilities within the downtown core and surrounding urban districts as the area’s residential population continues to expand. The proposed legislation would permit educational uses by right in T6 zoning districts that do not abut single-family (T3) residential areas and would provide development incentives—specifically, up to two additional stories of height—for projects that dedicate a portion of their new floor area to educational space. The proposal also aligns local standards with those of Miami-Dade County for parking, stacking, and recreational requirements associated with educational uses.

During discussion, the Board expressed general support for the legislation, noting its importance to fostering a more family-friendly and sustainable downtown community. Members emphasized the need to ensure that the incentives offered are sufficient to encourage meaningful inclusion of educational facilities within new developments, suggesting that the current 15 percent floor area dedication may need adjustment to achieve practical results. The Board also recommended that future phases of the initiative explore opportunities to expand these incentives along major commuter corridors such as Coral Way, 27th Avenue, and U.S. 1, in order to better serve families traveling to and from the downtown area. Following discussion, the Board voted unanimously to support the Education Reform Initiative, with friendly

amendments reflecting these recommendations for expanded incentives and corridor-based application in subsequent phases.

#### **4 LEGISLATIVE ITEM(S)**

##### **4A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –September 19, 2025 - Miami DDA Board of Directors Meeting. \**

Motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

##### **4B. RESOLUTION 61/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA (“MIAMI DDA”) AUTHORIZING THE CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH FUNDACION HERMANOS DE LA CALLE, INC. (“GRANTEE”), SUBJECT TO CITY ATTORNEY APPROVAL, FOR HOMELESS OUTREACH SERVICES TO INCLUDE MANAGED HOUSING SERVICES, REALLOCATION ASSISTANCE, AND EMERGENCY HOUSING SERVICES FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR AT AN ANNUAL COST NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND (\$150,000.00) FROM THE MIAMI DDA FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET; AUTHORIZING THE CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

##### **4C. RESOLUTION 62/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, (“MIAMI DDA”) AUTHORIZING THE CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE A GRANT AGREEMENT WITH SUNDARI FOUNDATION, INC. DBA LOTUS HOUSE WOMEN’S SHELTER, IN SUBSTANTIALLY THE ATTACHED FORM, FOR SHELTER SERVICES AND PROGRAMMING FOR THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES PROGRAM FOR A PERIOD OF ONE (1) YEAR AT AN ANNUAL COST NOT TO EXCEED FIFTY THOUSAND (\$50,000.00) FROM THE MIAMI DDA FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026 BUDGET; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

##### **4D. RESOLUTION 63/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA (“MIAMI DDA”) AUTHORIZING THE CEO/ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT WITH THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA (“CITY”), IN A FORM ACCEPTABLE TO THE CITY ATTORNEY, TO PROVIDE ENHANCED POLICE SERVICES WITHIN THE GEOGRAPHIC BOUNDARIES OF THE MIAMI DDA (“EXHIBIT A”) IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,500,000.00); FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS NECESSARY FOR SAID PURPOSE, SUBJECT TO CITY ATTORNEY APPROVAL AND MIAMI DDA BUDGET APPROVAL.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

##### **4E. RESOLUTION 64/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, WITH ATTACHMENTS, APPROVING A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00) TO THE DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF MIAMI DADE COLLEGE, FLORIDA - MDC LIVE ARTS FOR THE FREEDOM TOWER CENTENNIAL SERIES: FLOCK BY BANDALOOP; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Gary Ressler and second By Board Member Amal Solh Kabbani

#### **4F. RESOLUTION 65/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, WITH ATTACHMENTS, APPROVING A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$25,000.00) TO MIAMI CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN INC, - MCAD, INC. - MCAD FOR OPEN HOUSE MIAMI; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Gary Ressler and second By Board Member Amal Solh Kabbani

#### **4G. RESOLUTION 66/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, WITH ATTACHMENTS, APPROVING A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00) TO IFCM CORP DBA FILMGATE MIAMI FOR THE DOWNTOWN IMMERSIVE SERIES: FILMGATE INTERACTIVE 2025–2026; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by Board Member Eileen Higgins and second By Board Member Gary Ressler and opposed by Board Member Amal Solh Kabbani

#### **4H. RESOLUTION 67/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, WITH ATTACHMENTS, APPROVING A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$50,000.00) TO NU DECO ENSEMBLE INC. FOR THE NU DECO ENSEMBLE AT THE ARSHT CONCERT RESIDENCY; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by Board Member Eileen Higgins and second By Board Member Gary Ressler and opposed by Board Member Amal Solh Kabbani

#### **4I. RESOLUTION 68/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIAMI DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA, WITH ATTACHMENTS, APPROVING A GRANT IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND

DOLLARS (\$25,000.00) TO MARGO VELVET EVENTS FOR THE ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT NIGHTS ON FLAGLER STREET AND THE HALLOWEEN ON FLAGLER – GOTHIC HALLOWEEN FESTIVAL; AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR THE PURPOSES STATED HEREIN.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Gary Ressler and second By Board Member Amal Solh Kabbani

#### **4J. RESOLUTION 69/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA (“MIAMI DDA”), SUPPORTING REFORM PHASE 1 OF EDUCATIONAL SPACE WITHIN THE CITY OF MIAMI’S URBAN CORE; DIRECTING THE MIAMI DDA CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO TRANSMIT THIS RESOLUTION TO CITY OF MIAMI ELECTED OFFICIALS AND MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH TRUST.

After requested amendments motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

#### **4K. RESOLUTION 70/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA (“MIAMI DDA”), WITH ATTACHMENT(S), AUTHORIZING THE CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO PIGGYBACK OFF OF THE EXISTING AGREEMENT BETWEEN LLC D/B/A FREEBEE AND THE CITY OF PLANTATION, FL, FOR MICRO TRANSIT SERVICES; FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CEO/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE ANY AND ALL NECESSARY DOCUMENTS, ALL IN FORMS ACCEPTABLE TO THE GENERAL COUNSEL, FOR SAID PURPOSE.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

#### **4L. RESOLUTION 71/2025**

A RESOLUTION OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF MIAMI, FLORIDA (“MIAMI DDA”), WITH ATTACHMENT(S), SUPPORTING THE MIAMI PARKING AUTHORITY’S (“MPA”) SMART LOADING ZONES PROGRAM.

Motion to pass item was made by board member Melissa Tapanes and second By Board Member Gary Ressler

### **5. ATTACHED DOCUMENTS**

- Financial Report – September 2025
- Event Calendar

### **6. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7. MEETING ADJOURNMENT**

***Next Miami DDA Board Meeting Date: Friday, November 14, 2025 – 9:00 a.m.***