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Shaping Downtown Miami: Michaeljohn Green On Urban Growth And Investment Opportunities



([MENAFN](#)- Mid-East Info) **Michaeljohn Green** is the Chief of Economic Development and Strategy at the Miami Downtown Development Authority (DDA), where he spearheads transformative urban projects that shape the city's skyline and community spaces. With expertise in public-private partnerships, mixed-use development, and urban revitalization, he bridges visionary planning with actionable strategies to drive economic growth. A passionate advocate for equitable and sustainable development, Michaeljohn plays a pivotal role in positioning downtown Miami as a dynamic global hub for innovation, culture, and investment.

In this interview, he shares insights on Miami DDA's participation in the America Property Expo, highlighting how the organization supports urban development, attracts investment, and enhances the quality of life in Downtown Miami.

Q. What motivated Miami DDA to become a partner/attendee at the America Property Expo, and how does this align with your current strategic goals?

The Miami Downtown Development Authority's (Miami DDA) mission is to grow, strengthen, and elevate the quality of life and economic development in Downtown Miami. Partnering with the America Property Expo provides a platform to showcase our district's transformation into a global hub for commerce, culture, and community, aligning with our goals of attracting new investment opportunities for the city, advancing mobility and infrastructure projects, improving the quality of life of our residents and positioning Downtown Miami as one of the most dynamic urban centers in the world.

Q. How do you see Miami DDA's involvement in the Expo benefiting stakeholders in downtown Miami, for example, investors, property developers, local businesses, and civic leaders?

The Miami DDA's involvement in the America Property Expo gives investors and developers an opportunity to see firsthand the countless major projects underway in Miami's urban core, ranging from mixed-use residential towers, business support, and global corporate relocations to our district. They will

also have a chance to learn more about our initiatives to support businesses in downtown including our Business Incentive Program and Permit Clinic, as well as the numerous infrastructure projects underway to enhance mobility in Downtown.

Q. Could you share what Miami DDA is planning to showcase at the Expo (projects, investment opportunities, urban development initiatives)? What message do you most want to communicate to attendees?

The Miami DDA plans to showcase the tireless work we do in terms of supporting the development of infrastructure projects that will bolster the local economy by attracting visitors, improving mobility and fostering a business-friendly environment. Here are some of the highlights attendees will see:

The **3D Development Pipeline Map**: This is a free, real-time tool that lets anyone virtually explore Downtown Miami, see what's been built, track what's rising, and preview what's next.

- **The Underline**: The project is transforming the land below Miami's Metrorail into a world-class, 120-acre linear park, urban trail and public art destination. The full project will span 10-miles that will transform regional mobility and celebrate diversity, culture and lifelong learning. Five out of the 10 miles have already been constructed, with the project scheduled to be finished in late 2026.
- **The \$800 million Signature Bridge will be complemented by The Underdeck and Heritage Trail.**
 - This 33-acre public open space will completely transform a lifeless infrastructure corridor into a significant landscape and actively programmed destination for residents, workers, and visitors.
 - The Underdeck is within or adjacent to multiple established and merging neighborhoods: Overtown, Omni, Downtown, and the Innovation District.
 - The U.S. Department of Transportation recently awarded \$60 million for the \$82 million project.
 - Construction should begin in 2027/28.
- **The I-395 Baywalk Pedestrian & Bikeway Bridge**:
 - This will provide critical connections north-south along the Miami Baywalk, and east-west to the eventual Underdeck/Miami Heritage Trail.
 - It will also extend to both the Museum Park and Adrienne Arsht Center Metromover Stations, provide potential connections to the SMART Plan Baylink service, and provide waterfront access to waterborne transportation and transient dockage are also focused on attracting new businesses and investors to our district to further establish its reputation as a global business hub. Our recent accomplishments include:
- **Our Business Incentive Program in 2024** has awarded grants to 44 businesses to date.
 - These grants help bring a vibrant mix of companies to Downtown, spanning industries such as fintech, hospitality, health and wellness, creative services, workforce training, and more.
- Through our **Downtown Creative Collaborator Grants**, we provide grants of up to \$50,000 for projects that activate and enrich Downtown Miami, including free family events, art exhibitions, concerts, festivals, and more.

- Our **Property Improvement Grants** awards up to \$50,000 to individual businesses and property owners to enhance the overall appearance of their storefronts
- We also have a **Downtown Lighting Grant Program** which awards up to \$2,500 for lighting upgrades to enhance safety and security
- Finally, through our free **Permit Clinic**, we help entrepreneurs open and maintain a business in Downtown.

Q. In your view, what are the biggest opportunities and challenges for property development in Miami at present, and how does attending this expo help address them?

Downtown Miami is full of opportunities for property development. We've experienced strong population growth and numerous global corporate relocations to our district, including FC Barcelona's headquarters.

The current challenges we face and work to address are mobility and infrastructure issues and enhancing safety initiatives. Work is already underway on these priorities and we are finding solutions through the funding of numerous programs such as a \$150,000 drone for the City of Miami, providing additional hours per month of police patrolling the Central Business District and Brickell, expanding our security camera network and license plate readers, and investments in infrastructure/transportation.

Small business funding

At the same time, we know that permitting has historically been a barrier for developers and small businesses. To address this, we launched our Permit Clinic, which has already assisted more than 832+ businesses and residents in navigating the process, helping ensure that projects can move forward more efficiently and with fewer delays.

By engaging at the Expo, we can attract the right partners and investors who understand our district's unique needs and are prepared to invest in additional solutions that address the opportunities we have as well as the challenges we face.

5. How does Miami DDA measure success from events like America Property Expo? What metrics or outcomes would make this partnership a win for your organization?

Success comes from turning conversations into tangible outcomes. We hope to secure follow-up meetings with developers, civic and business leaders, and decision makers who can strategically invest in our city and help capitalize on Downtown's existing growth. The Expo provides opportunities that we can leverage to bring in business owners and entrepreneurs who will further activate our district.

Internally, we set goals around the number of meetings, new relationships formed, and prospects added to our pipeline. We also have strategic marketing plans in place to keep those connections engaged and move them toward real investments.

Q. How does Miami DDA plan to engage with potential partners and international investors at the Expo, and what follow-up actions do you envision post-event?

As mentioned, our success comes from meaningful connections. The Expo is the first step, and we plan to build on it by inviting partners to future Miami DDA networking events and encouraging ongoing engagement through our channels, including our newsletter, Instagram , LinkedIn , and Facebook .

Join us at the America Property Expo 2025 to explore the transformative projects and investment opportunities shaping Downtown Miami. Hear directly from Michaeljohn Green and other industry leaders about the future of urban development, innovation, and business growth in Miami's dynamic core.