



Neighborhood Resiliency Projects Advisory Committee

Committee Members

Clare McCord, Chair
Curt Dyer, Vice Chair
Julie Basner
Stephan Ginez
Karin Matos
Barbara Montero
Ronald Starkman

TO: Members of the Neighborhood Resiliency Projects Advisory Committee

DATE: March 12, 2026

SUBJECT: DRAFT Minutes of the Neighborhood Resiliency Projects Advisory Committee on January 29, 2026, Meeting

Present: Clare McCord, Chair, Curt Dyer, Vice Chair, Julie Basner, Barbara Montero, Ron Starkman, Karin Matos

City Staff:

Amy Knowles, Liaison

Sabrina Batlle, Melissa Berthier, Lauren Firtel, David Gomez, John Norris, Kara Petrella, and Albert Rosales.

Members of the Public:

Stephan Genez

CALL TO ORDER AND WELCOME

C. McCord calls meeting to order.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Selection of Chair/Vice Chair

C. Dyer nominates C. McCord to be Chair. K. Matos seconds. Passed unanimously. C. McCord nominates C. Dyer to be Vice Chair. B. Montero seconds. Passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

C. McCord moved to approve November 18, 2025, minutes. C. Dyer seconds. Approved unanimously.

West Avenue Project Updates/News

C. McCord welcomed the Committee, City staff, and guests to Season 5 of the Neighborhood Resiliency Projects Advisory Committee. Noting that, as a result of the previous meeting, LTC #526-2025 had been issued. C. McCord then reviewed the committee's agenda and invited D. Gomez to speak.

D. Gomez greeted the Committee and explained that his team has reviewed internal processes. He noted that since the last meeting, Commissioner Fernandez scheduled monthly virtual meetings and walkthroughs. D. Gomez shared that the recent walkthrough was one of the most successful

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communication efforts to date, as it allowed residents to gain a clearer picture of the project's complexity. D. Gomez acknowledged that his team is actively working on multiple fronts to mitigate impacts and address issues quickly. He reported that following the last meeting, a WhatsApp communication channel was launched to provide rapid updates when plans shift during construction. The channel now has over 900 subscribers and has received positive feedback for its effectiveness in delivering timely, short-notice alerts.

The Committee asked several follow-up questions regarding the WhatsApp communication channel and the logistics of the walkthroughs. These questions were addressed and clarified by D. Gomez and M. Berthier.

C. Dyer asked if GPS-based notifications could be used to alert residents about active construction areas. In response, D. Gomez explained that this approach is challenging because most navigation apps rely on user-reported data.

D. Gomez added that an updated advisory would be issued soon regarding project milestones. The contractor is now moving into a major phase of work involving the installation of large structures. This milestone will affect traffic, where temporary detours will be in place. Coordination with the Fire Department has been completed, and adjacent buildings have been notified, with assistance from S. Ginez in facilitating the outreach

C. McCord invited the committee and guests to make comments and ask questions.

S. Ginez reported that he feels the past month has been one of the most productive periods, noting that there is now a clear, shared understanding of how to move forward and make meaningful progress. S. Ginez expressed that he was particularly pleased that the team is focusing not only on resolving issues but also on improving how issues are managed. He also highlighted the success of the recent walkthrough, noting that it demonstrated transparency by allowing residents to see conditions firsthand rather than relying solely on written communication. He felt the walkthrough helped reinforce that nothing is being hidden and that the City is committed to open communication.

C. McCord asked whether an on-site staff member could be available to handle in-person questions.

D. Gomez confirmed that flagmen and the contractor are present to assist and address issues. He added that the suggested 6–9 p.m. coverage was meant to support residents during after-hours activity, but since this is not part of the contractor's scope, the team is evaluating how to staff that need.

C. McCord asked whether a resident-facing tracking system could be created to capture updates, concerns, and feedback.

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D. Gomez noted that the City currently uses an internal system. The team is now working on making communication clearer for issues which require more time. He also noted that the existing system contains personal information and cannot be made public, so alternative options are being explored.

J. Basner asked whether WhatsApp is the primary communication channel and requested clarification on what the main channel should be.

D. Gomez responded that WhatsApp is used for last-minute or emergency-type notifications. He stated that the Public Information Officer (PIO) is the primary communication channel. D. Gomez added that the challenge is ensuring residents understand that longer-term issues are still being worked on, even when immediate updates are not available.

C. McCord observed that J. Basner's question illustrates a broader problem. Despite having multiple communication channels, residents need a clear understanding of how major project information flows.

D. Gomez stated that this type of detailed information is typically provided through the City's website and other formal communication methods.

J. Basner suggested weekly emails. D. Gomez said this is possible but cautioned that construction progresses slowly and weekly updates may be repetitive.

M. Berthier introduced herself and commented that she had reviewed and updated the website within the past 24 hours. She noted improvements in the organization of email updates, which now display clearly by date. She emphasized the need for simpler, cleaner presentation on the project page.

C. McCord summarized the discussion and invited the committee and attendees to ask additional questions.

S. Ginez thanked staff and acknowledged the improvements, expressing hope that the momentum will continue.

C. McCord asked who the PIO consults when she receives questions.

D. Gomez explained that it depends on the topic. The PIO is familiar with departmental roles and directs inquiries to the appropriate staff, elevating issues as needed. He added that she has support staff to manage the volume of concerns.

C. McCord asked whether there were any additional updates. Noting that, with increased awareness, information is now being shared through multiple channels collectively strengthens communication. She thanked staff for their time.

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C. McCord then brought up the topic of trees being impacted by construction projects and inquired on the possibility of a rehoming program and asked A. Knowles her thoughts.

A. Knowles emphasized the City's commitment to preserving tree canopy, noting that Miami Beach's conditions make maintaining healthy trees challenging. She explained that during capital projects, each tree is evaluated by an arborist and the City's urban forester to determine next steps. She briefly outlined the relocation process.

D. Gomez stated that the Commission's mandate to not remove trees is clear. Removal is only considered when there is no alternative.

The committee then discussed the logistics of creating a formal tree-relocation program.

J. Basner suggested prioritizing public spaces in need of shade. Recommending schools and other community areas before exploring broader tree-adoption ideas.

A. Knowles advised that if the committee wishes to pursue a relocation program, a motion to the City Commission would be required. The Commission would likely refer the matter for further study, as the program would need funding and a review of legal considerations regarding transferring public assets to private property.

The committee agreed to revisit the topic at a future meeting.

FUTURE MEETING DATES/TOPICS

The committee agreed on 2026 meeting dates.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- No public comment.

ADJOURNMENT