April 25, 2022

To: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor

Subject: Progress Implementing Miami-Dade County’s Sea Level Rise Strategy

Attached is the Year 1 Progress Update on implementation of Miami-Dade County’s Sea Level Rise Strategy. Released in 2021, the Strategy was created to comply with BCC Resolution R-46-15 directing the County to develop an enhanced capital plan in response to sea level rise (SLR). Thoroughly describing how the County is already investing in multiple adaptation approaches to reduce flood risks, this current update is dedicated to Commissioner Rebecca Sosa for her long-standing leadership in this area and the numerous relationships and partnerships she has helped foster.

Major implementation successes in 2022 include:

- Securing state and federal funding for a wide range of County resilience initiatives from the Resilient Florida Grant Program bringing more than $247 million for local resilience projects, including $5.8 million for the Environmentally Endangered Lands Program to protect and restore the Everglades, Biscayne Bay and our coastal wetlands so that our community continues to be a healthy, beautiful place to live, work and play resiliently. This grant program will also provide $15 million for affordable housing improvements in the Little River Adaptation Action Area, our award-winning model for adaptation planning and a priority in our Thrive305 Action Plan.

- More than $20 million in direct Biscayne Bay restoration funding with an emphasis on sewage and stormwater pollution reduction projects in the Little River Adaptation Action Area and parts of the Bay already compromised by rising groundwater levels.

- Launch of the County’s Connect2Protect program aimed at eliminating septic waste getting into our groundwater and Biscayne Bay

- Proposed ordinances to ban standard septic tanks and establish new criteria for advanced septic systems, and critical revisions to County flood criteria have been drafted and worked with stakeholders.

With our commitment to collaborate with residents, community partners, municipalities, state and federal agencies, universities, and businesses, Miami-Dade County is in a great position to continue our success in securing funding for shovel-ready adaptation projects that help protect our residents from the impacts of Sea Level Rise. An outstanding example of long-standing relationships with federal agencies includes several studies conducted with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on beach renourishment, storm-surge protection and wetlands restoration. We also continue our efforts with the South Florida Water Management District to plan, fund and implement upgrades to our regional water management system. These numerous projects make our County a global leader in climate change adaptation as we creatively reimagine how we live with water by further implementing the Sea Level Rise Strategy.

We look forward to continuing partnerships to proactively address these issues in cost-effective ways. If you would like a follow-up meeting on this topic, please let us know.

cc: Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
    James F. Murley, Chief Resilience Officer, Office of Resilience

Attachment