



The Wolfsonian

1001 Washington Avenue
Miami Beach, FL 33139

305.531.1001
wolfsonian.org

May 5, 2020

Commissioner David Richardson
City of Miami Beach
1700 Conventions Center Drive
Miami Beach, FL 33139

Dear Commissioner Richardson,

In November 2004, as part of the Building Better Communities General Obligation Bonds (BBC-GOB), Miami-Dade County voters approved \$10 million for The Wolfsonian–FIU to add 25,000 square feet of new publicly accessible space, an expansion that remains one of the few BBC-GOB-funded projects yet to formally launch. The County has now asked that we present a plan for consideration by the end of calendar year 2020.

The Wolfsonian’s master plan for expansion is designed to better serve Miami Beach and meet the BBC-GOB requirements under the following organizational goals:

- Enhance accessibility to The Wolfsonian’s collection by tripling our programmatic space and substantially increasing the number of artworks on view at any one time;
- Create a visionary new street and lobby presence that eases potential barriers to entry and better integrates the museum into the neighborhood;
- Open exciting new avenues into educational and behind-the-scenes experiences by way of state-of-the-art classrooms, studio environments, and a digital lab;
- Bridge the gap between University faculty, museum leadership, and the community by establishing a new center for The Wolfsonian Public Humanities Lab, a multidisciplinary FIU Emerging Preeminent Program that engages the public in civic and cultural life; and
- Improve museum facilities to protect and preserve collection objects.

These goals have informed the development of conceptual designs that take into account Miami Beach’s unique community values and vision for the Washington Avenue corridor. Incorporating open-air green spaces (garden, terraces, and roofs) that emphasize resiliency, the designs prioritize the balance between today’s needs and the critical importance of historic preservation, cohesively merging but also clearly distinguishing between “old” and “new.”. They also present optimal solutions to some of the museum’s long-standing challenges through flexible, scalable, and phaseable features: mixed-use spaces adaptable for shifting curatorial, educational, or rental needs; dynamic display and programmatic venues; and ground-level storefronts that maintain leasing

and economic growth opportunities for local retail businesses and community amenities. In addressing the museum's day-to-day operations, the designs streamline visitor flow and create a more transparent, welcoming experience for pedestrians and guests.

To realize these transformative conceptual designs, we request consideration of an increase in FAR for our properties located along Washington Avenue. The proposed expansion—though modest in scale, with three levels artfully stepped back from the street—would have extraordinary impact on our ability to meet, and hopefully exceed, public expectation fitting for a cultural cornerstone and landmark destination of Miami Beach.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Casey Steadman', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Casey Steadman
Incoming Acting Director