

MIAMI BEACH

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

NO. LTC # **254-2021**

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Honorable Mayor Dan Gelber and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager 

DATE: June 21, 2021

SUBJECT: Summer Police Enhancement – Miami Dade Schools Police Department

The purpose of this Letter to Commission is to provide an update on the additional measures being taken by the Miami Beach Police Department (MBPD) in the Art Deco Cultural District (ADCD) to enhance visibility and deter criminal activity. The MBPD has partnered with various law enforcement agencies during the first half of 2021 to address this effort and will continue to do so throughout the summer.

At various times during the year, Miami Beach experiences an increase in visitors that has exceeded what would be considered normal. This influx at times has challenged the department's ability to respond to and/or deter criminal activity. MBPD consistently evaluates these time periods, which often coincide with holidays and events. During the first six months of 2021, we partnered with Miami-Dade Police, Miami-Dade Schools Police (MDSPD) and other municipalities to augment police capabilities. This has resulted in a substantial law enforcement presence in the ADCD area.

With the increased presence of tourists in the ADCD, we have also noticed an increase in calls for service along the Collins Avenue corridor (5 to 15 streets). From January 1 to date, there have been 872 case reports generated associated with criminal activity and/or law enforcement efforts, including: 124 narcotics-related arrests, 38 arrests associated with quality of life ordinance violations, and 25 weapon offenses. The underlying issues show no signs of slowing down but have been minimized by the consistent presence of law enforcement. As MBPD is anticipating a busier-than-usual tourist season this summer, it is our recommendation that this presence be maintained to suppress criminal activity.

MBPD is moving forward with a plan to provide an additional uniform presence in the Collins Avenue corridor of the ADCD. The department will partner with MDSPD to provide and maintain increased visibility. This strategic partnership has, in the past, proven to be fruitful. It allows the MBPD to reassign police officers to other parts of the ADCD. The plan is to have MDSPD work every Friday and Saturday evening beginning on Friday, June 25 through August 21, 2021 from 7 p.m. until 3 a.m.

The inclusion of the MDSPD into the crime prevention effort will be accomplished in an off-duty capacity. The estimated costs associated will involve the remuneration of 25 officers per day, two days a week as aforementioned, for eight-hour shifts. The total projected fiscal impact over the eight-week period is \$180,000.

On June 3, 2021, Chief Clements along with police chiefs from across Miami-Dade County and personnel from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

(ATF), Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), as well as State Attorney Katherine Fernandez Rundle and Miami-Dade Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, gathered to announce the creation of Operation Summer Heat. The purpose of this law enforcement operation is to increase manpower and intelligence gathering/sharing with a specific focus in curbing increased gun violence around the County where more than 30 people have been shot and several killed over the last few weeks.

MBPD serves as a key stakeholder in this operation. We recognize that many individuals travel to Miami Beach and specifically to the ADCD to partake in what is perceived to be a "party atmosphere." Apprehensions and arrests made over the past six months indicate that most of these individuals reside outside of Miami Beach, and specifically in other parts of the County and other neighboring jurisdictions. Since November 30, 2020 when the department organized a proactive street crimes unit (now named Strategic Enforcement Team – SET), MBPD as a whole has been very proactive in tackling quality of life crimes, narcotics violations, while also focusing on the removal and seizure of illegal firearms from our streets. Since this date, MBPD has made 3,347 arrests in the ADCD while seizing 358 firearms of all sorts.

Beginning on June 7 of this month and over the next 12 weeks ending on August 29, the department's SET will focus on arresting violent offenders, deterring violent criminal behavior and continuing the mission of removing firearms from the streets of Miami Beach as part of Operation Summer Heat. The intelligence gathered from arrests, field interviews, and firearm seizures will be tracked and shared with our federal partners and local Miami-Dade Schools Police to help in curbing the violent crime that is affecting the ADCD.

At the conclusion of this summer deployment, MBPD will assess its effectiveness through strategic crime analysis information. We will compare this data against historical data from 2019 and from the eight-week deployment in 2021.

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