

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

City of Miami Beach

F L O R I D A



RAFAEL A. PAZ
City Attorney

Telephone: (305) 673-7470
Facsimile: (305) 673-7002

February 26, 2024

Via e-Mail

Dear Mayor and Commissioners,

I am writing to provide formal notice of my decision to step down as your City Attorney, effective May 28, 2024, in accordance with Section 10 of my Employment Agreement.

It has been a privilege to serve in a leadership role for an organization as dynamic and vibrant as the City of Miami Beach. However, after dedicating over 20 years of my career to government practice, including the last decade representing our great City, I have decided to pursue an exciting opportunity in the private sector. In early June, after I leave the City, I will join the law firm of Bilzin Sumberg as a partner in the Land Development and Government Relations Group.

I came to the City in 2014 to do serious work, and by every measure, the City has not disappointed. In the last decade, I have enjoyed working closely with our Elected Officials and the Administration on many complex projects and matters that will have lasting impacts for the benefit of our City, including the \$600+ million convention center renovation project; the convention headquarter hotel project; several public-private partnerships that will deliver important community benefits for our residents, such as public parks or workforce housing; legislative initiatives intended to improve quality of life for our residents; and public safety initiatives, such as the successful expansion of the City's municipal prosecution program, the only such program in Miami-Dade County.

The ability to navigate complex legal challenges is not, by itself, enough to measure the success of a city attorney. What I am most proud of is that I have strengthened the Office by hiring and promoting high-caliber attorneys who are uniquely prepared to address the many opportunities and challenges the City faces.

The exceptionally talented lawyers and legal assistants in the City Attorney's Office have demonstrated their commitment to working with you and the Administration to advance the City's goals and protect its interests. I owe a great debt of gratitude to the entire Office for all of their hard work and commitment to client service; most especially, my assistant Amada Gonzalez and my leadership team, Ricardo Dopico, Mark Fishman, Nick Kallergis, Rob Rosenwald, and Steve Rothstein, for their dedication, expertise, good judgment, and strong ethics.

As you know, the attorney-client relationship is a personal one that is first and foremost based on trust. Thank you for placing your trust in me. I am grateful to each of you, and to the former Mayors and Commissioners I have been lucky enough to work with over the years, for this incredible experience. I also wish to thank former City Attorney Raul Aguila, our current and former City Managers Alina Hudak and Jimmy Morales, City Clerk Rafael Granado, and my colleagues in the Administration, for their support, collaboration, and friendship.

In the next 90 days, I remain fully committed to working with each of you on your legislative priorities, while providing the stability and continuity that is necessary to ensure a smooth transition for the Office. To this end, I strongly urge you to select one of several highly qualified attorneys in the Office to serve as your next City Attorney. The City's priorities require a successor who can hit the ground running, and who is capable of leading with integrity and maintaining the highest standards of professionalism and ethics.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rafael A. Paz', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rafael A. Paz

RAP/ag

cc: Alina T. Hudak, City Manager
Eric Carpenter, Deputy City Manager
Rafael E. Granado, City Clerk
Joseph Centorino, Inspector General