




MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DATE: August 29, 2005

TO: George M. Burgess
County Manager

FROM: 
Carlos Alvarez, Mayor
Miami-Dade County

SUBJECT: Parrot Jungle & Gardens – USHUD Loan

This month, the County issued another payment to the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (USHUD) to cover the Section 108 loan to Parrot Jungle & Gardens (Parrot Jungle). The County has now covered one year of debt service payments to USHUD without receiving any funds from either Parrot Jungle or the City of Miami (City). Because the County's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars guarantee this loan, it is within our best interest not to default on our obligations to the USHUD. However, the payment of this loan should not be at the expense of County taxpayer dollars.

In my memorandum dated January 27, 2005 (copy attached), I directed you to work with Parrot Jungle and the City of Miami to resolve this situation. In July, the Board of County Commissioners allowed you to negotiate a compromise agreement with the City. Whereby, the City would be responsible for 70% of the Section 108 Loan and missed debt service payments, which was to be approved by the City Commission. It is my understanding that there is still no signed agreement with the City of Miami.

At this time, I am requesting an update on the recovery of the payments made and future liabilities of the County, if any. Any measures necessary to bring the City to a final agreement on this matter should be considered. I would like this status report within 10 days and expect a resolution prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Attachment

c: Honorable Chairperson Joe A. Martinez and Members,
Board of County Commissioners
Honorable Harvey Ruvlin, Clerk of Courts
Murray A. Greenberg, County Attorney
Kay Sullivan, Director, Clerk of the Board



**MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

TO: George Burgess
County Manager

DATE: January 27, 2005

FROM: 
Carlos Alvarez
Mayor

SUBJECT: Section 108 Loan to
Parrot Jungle

I appreciate your bringing to my attention your proposal to have Miami-Dade County remit a \$933,764.25 debt service payment to United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (USHUD) to cover the Section 108 loan to Parrot Jungle & Gardens on Watson Island. This will be the second County bailout for Parrot Jungle & Gardens in the past year. It is my understanding that a similar payment of \$1,296,276.25 was made by the County last July on behalf of Parrot Jungle.

Your memorandum to the Board of County Commissioners on January 20, 2005, identifies funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for this latest payment on the \$25 million federal loan since the CDBG dollars serve as guarantee for the Section 108 loan. Historically, CDBG funds have been used to assist social service agencies and community-based organizations that provide vital programs and services in our community.

Given the scarcity of CDBG dollars and the great demand for these resources by our community-based social service partners, I do not support the recommendation to cover Parrot Jungle's debt obligation from this funding source. I am also troubled by the fact that this is the second time that such a bailout by the County is being pursued.

It is for these reasons that I would request that you work with the interested parties, including the City of Miami, to develop an alternative approach to resolving this matter. At a minimum, the solution should not come at the expense of the limited resources we have at our disposal to provide needed social services to our residents.

cc: Honorable Chairman Joe Martinez and Members,
Board of County Commissioners
Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Clerk of the Courts
Robert A. Ginsburg, County Attorney
Kay M. Sullivan, Clerk of the Board