Memorandum

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Date: July 8, 2010

Agenda Item No: 12B3

To: Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: George M. Burgess
County Manager

Subject: Report - Item 2B on the May 12, 2010 Transit, Infrastructure and Roads Committee

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The above mentioned item modifies the description of *Building Better Communities* General Obligation Bond (GOB) Fund Program project No. 293 "Historic Preservation Fund," allocates $1 million in program funds to a single project, the Curtiss Mansion. The following information is provided regarding the Fund and the proposed changes.

As a component of the GOB, the Historic Preservation Fund is a $10 million grant program which was designed to provide matching monies for the rehabilitation of eligible projects through grants to municipalities, nonprofit organizations and individual property owners. The program was developed working closely with the Dade Heritage Trust and the Historic Preservation Board and is expected to be managed by Office of Historic and Archaeological Resources (OHAR). The description for Project 293 was approved by the Board on July 20, 2004 under Authorizing Resolution R-919-04, and approved by the voters in November 2004 under ballot question eight.

The authorizing resolution required that to qualify, properties must be designated as a historic building or site (or a contributing structure within a district) by a municipality, the County, State of Florida, or be listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Individual grants of up to $250,000 were to provide emergency funding for property owners of residential and commercial historic sites whose rehabilitation would make an impact at the neighborhood level, particularly in historic districts and other areas having a high concentration of older buildings. Although not legally required, the GOB Administrative Rules contemplate a competitive process where organizations such as the Dade Heritage Trust and the Dade Community Foundation would assist in the evaluation of proposals. This item waives this provision of the Rules.

The Historic Preservation Bond Fund is a project of considerable interest among preservation advocates. The Dade Heritage Trust, the Villagers, Inc, and other local historic preservation organizations advocated strongly to have the fund included on the GOB ballot approved by voters in 2004. The intent has always been for OHAR to work with these community groups to competitively evaluate applications for bond fund allocations.

It is important that any projects considered for direct allocations from the Historic Preservation Fund meet criteria for historic integrity, level of neighborhood impact and endangerment (need for immediate repair.) The Curtiss Mansion meets the criteria of being an important historic landmark in critical need of repair and it is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Because of its significance, the Curtiss Mansion was allocated $1 million in a separate line item

of the original GOB project list approved by voters. If this item is approved, it will bring the total GOB allocation for this project to $2 million.

This item was reviewed by the GOB Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) at their meeting of May 3, 2010. The item was forwarded to Committee with a favorable recommendation with the stipulations that the allocation be limited to $1 million and that the Dade Heritage Trust provide a letter of support for the project. It is also important to note that neither this project nor any other project funding for Historic Preservation is included in the preliminary list of projects being vetted for inclusion in the next two BBC GOB bond sales due to lack of funding capacity.

Assistant County Manager