

Meet the New Boss

Written by Erik Bojnansky, BT Senior Writer
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Alex Diaz de la Portilla has taken Miami City Hall by storm -- storm as in natural disaster



Miami City Commissioner Alex Diaz de la Portilla has ideas. He wants to streamline, maybe abolish, Miami's Downtown Development Authority. He wants to consolidate two of the city's community redevelopment areas under one new community redevelopment agency (CRA) and add within the new area the predominately working-class neighborhood of Allapattah. And he wants to tap into the property taxes collected in District 2, which covers some of the most affluent neighborhoods in the City of Miami and is represented by Commissioner Ken Russell.

"Russell's district is the money district, where all the money is, and all the poorer districts in Miami don't benefit from that. They need to," says Diaz de la Portilla, who represents District 1, which includes Allapattah.

Diaz de la Portilla has been a Miami city commissioner for less than three months. But he's already pushed through legislation stripping Russell of his chairmanship of the Omni Community Redevelopment Agency and his chairmanship of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

In the process, Diaz de la Portilla himself became chairman of the Omni CRA, vice chair of the Southeast Overtown Park West CRA, and the city's representative to the Miami-Dade Tourism Development Council. District 4 Commissioner Manolo Reyes was named chair of the DDA, and District 3 Commissioner Joe Carollo was made vice chair of the Omni CRA.

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