SUSANNE M. TORRIENTE

Susanne is an accomplished organizational strategist with 29 years of local government experience in South Florida. Her strength is breaking down complex issues into manageable solutions, fostering collaboration and directing organizational strategic planning. She recently joined Jacobs as City Resilience Global Technology Leader for People & Places Solutions and as part of the Advance Planning Group in Strategic Consulting. In this role she is bringing her expertise and experience to leverage Jacobs’ broad base resilience skills to deliver integrated solutions to city, industrial, corporate and institutional clients.

She joined the City of Miami Beach in September 2015 as assistant city manager (ACM) and as the City’s first chief resilience officer (CRO). Her portfolio of departments included Planning, Building, Code Compliance, Sustainability and Environmental Management, Transportation and Mobility, Economic Development, Housing & Community Development and strategic planning. The City of Miami Beach is a leader and pioneer in climate adaptation efforts. As CRO she built on that foundation to produce an action-oriented updated strategic plan, through the lens of resilience, and a broader Greater Miami & the Beaches 100 Resilient Cities Strategy, Resilient 305, supported by the 100 Resilient Cities Network of the Rockefeller Foundation. Over the last years she has secured and managed several important grants and projects including the Urban Land Institute (ULI) Review of the Miami Beach’s Stormwater Program, Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayor’s Challenges and Columbia University’s Resilience Accelerator for the West Avenue neighborhood improvement project.

During her four years in Fort Lauderdale as assistant city manager for operations she focused on streamlining city services (from 16 departments to nine), initiating strategic management practices & performance measurement systems and integrating sustainability into city operations. She was responsible for overseeing Sustainable Development, Transportation & Mobility, Public Works, Parks & Recreation and Structural Innovation. While in Fort Lauderdale she served as co-chair of the Infrastructure & Growth Leadership Pillar for Broward’s Six Pillars Planning process and was the lead staff to the city’s visioning process producing Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale: Our City, Our Vision, 2035. She was selected as a Fellow for the 2012 ICMA Sustainable Communities Fellowship in Wellington, New Zealand. She led the team that trained and achieved ISO 14001 environmental management certification for the city’s fleet yard.

Susanne was appointed Miami-Dade County’s first sustainability director in July 2009. She spearheaded the planning effort to develop the County’s first sustainability and climate action plan, GreenPrint. Susanne is a founding member of the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Compact staff steering committee. She chaired the Transportation Work Group of the Compact, as well as the Emergency Management and Risk Reduction Work Group for the regional climate action plans.

During her 21-year career in Miami-Dade, she served as the public-safety assistant county manager, which landed her in a central role during the County's response to the numerous damaging hurricanes of 2004 and 2005. Due to that experience she was appointed to FEMA’s National Advisory Council. In Miami-Dade she also served as chief of staff, chief assistant county manager, human resources deputy director, procurement assistant director and budget analyst. She began her career in Miami-Dade's prestigious Management Trainee Program.

Susanne was invited to contribute in the National Academy of Science review the Fourth National Climate Assessment (NCA4) in 2017-2018. She is the co-chaired the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce Resiliency Committee (2017-2019); and is currently the president of the Resilient Utilities Coalition (RUC) Board. She was also a founding board member of Resiliency Florida.

In 2019, Susanne was invited to participate in a US Department of Commerce National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Community Resilience Center of Excellence (CoE) Evaluation Panel. Last year she was recognized by the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce with a Hispanic Leadership Award in Sustainability and she was profiled in ozy.com Can She Keep Miami Beach Above the Rising Sea.

In 2020 Susanne was appointed to the Institute for Building Technology & Safety Equitable Climate Resilience Advisory Panel, funded by the Kresge Foundation. This year she received the University of Miami Abess Center for Ecosystem Science & Policy - Reitmeister-Abess Center Award for her work Miami Dade County developing Resilient 305 and championing sustainability causes.

Susanne has shared her experience and the South Florida story at hundreds of climate, sustainability and resilience conferences around the world over the last 10 years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and a Master of Public Administration from the University of Miami.