

In The News

Neisen O. Kasdin Featured in *Urban Land Magazine* on 40 Years of South Florida's Transformation

September 2, 2026

Akerman Miami Co-Office Managing Partner Neisen O. Kasdin was featured in *Urban Land Magazine*, a publication of the Urban Land Institute, in “Neisen Kasdin on 40 Years of South Florida’s Transformation,” reflecting on the region’s evolution from a cyclical, seasonal real estate market into a truly global city.

The article draws on Neisen’s singular vantage point as a former mayor of Miami Beach, a key figure in the South Beach revitalization movement of the 1980s, and a longtime ULI leader who has shaped the region’s development across four decades.

“I feel I have lived the entire modern history, and been a participant and witness of all of it,” Neisen told *Urban Land Magazine*.

The piece examines how South Florida shed its boom-and-bust reputation and emerged as a magnet for global capital, business, and culture. Neisen traces the turning points that drove that shift, from the preservation and revitalization of South Beach, to the rise of world-class arts institutions, to a new generation of well-capitalized developers whose staying power has fundamentally stabilized the market.

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“The last 10 to 15 years, the city has transformed completely,” Neisen said. “When I look at 40 years ago versus today, it’s a totally transformed city and, in my opinion, the greatest transformation in the city’s history.”

With that transformation well underway, Neisen identifies three challenges the region must address to sustain its momentum: expanding educational offerings at every level, making housing more affordable for the people who live and work there, and building a transit infrastructure that reduces dependence on the automobile. Yet despite those challenges, he remains optimistic about where South Florida is headed.

“I think that the region is, overall, on a great trajectory. We’ve seen people like (Citadel CEO) Ken Griffin and (Amazon CEO) Jeff Bezos who have moved here and other entities, (software investment firm) Thoma Bravo and others, and I think we’re sort of at the tip of the iceberg on that. I think that as the owners and leaders of those companies are here, more of their employees and functions and activities will follow,” he said.

Neisen will moderate a panel at the upcoming ULI Fall Meeting in Miami Beach, October 26-28, 2026, where Akerman is also sponsoring the Welcome Reception. The meeting brings together real estate industry leaders, investors, and decision-makers from across the globe.

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