

[https://www.miamitimesonline.com/opinion/editorials/library-makeover-a-long-time-coming/article\\_b10aa05c-06a2-11e8-b7f3-97bf11821d8f.html](https://www.miamitimesonline.com/opinion/editorials/library-makeover-a-long-time-coming/article_b10aa05c-06a2-11e8-b7f3-97bf11821d8f.html)

Editorial

## Library makeover a long time coming

Jan 31, 2018

After years of waiting, the city of Miami has finally begun the renovation of historic Dorsey Library. The rehab comes not a moment too soon.

The library honors Dana Albert Dorsey, Miami's first Black millionaire and major landowner. Dorsey donated the land to build the second library for Black residents in 1940, shortly before his death. The Dorsey Memorial Library opened in 1941.

The city of Miami declared the structure as historic in 2003. But that designation did not come with funding, so the building fell to disrepair. Residents protested, to no avail. A lawsuit filed by historic preservationist Elliot Jones caught the attention of city officials.

But it wasn't until Miami Commissioner Ken Russell came on the scene that real change happened. Russell and the Omni CRA are providing most of the funds for the \$1.3 million project, and the county will pay the balance. We're confident that CRA administrator Jason Walker will steer this project successfully to completion.

Far too often, Black landmarks fall by the wayside, and to the wrecking ball because of lack of foresight or funds. The Cola Nip Bottling Company building in Overtown is an example of a structure that should have been saved for posterity.

The Dorsey Library project is an example of the importance of preserving our artifacts and relics that were important to our growth and development. These are the things to which our children, grandchildren and ultimately our descendants can look and know without a doubt that we mattered then, and we matter now.