

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Items G-5 and I-1 are related
January 11, 2022
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Public Works Director Hermes Diaz

Parks and Recreation Director, Fred Couceyro

Finance Director, Diana Gomez

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Items G-5 and I-1 are related [10:57 a.m.]

Discussion regarding expanding traffic calming funding sources.

(Sponsored by Commissioner Anderson)

Discussion regarding the Parks Master Plan Bond referendum.

Mayor Lago: Moving on to time certain, 10 am, agenda I-1 agenda G-5. We'll come back to Mayor's comments. I have a few other ones, but I wanted to respect the fact that we're almost an hour late on that issue.

City Commission Meeting

January 11, 2022

Agenda Items G-5 and I-1 are related - Discussion regarding expanding traffic calming funding sources and discussion regarding the Parks Master Plan Bond referendum.

City Attorney Ramos: Yes, Mayor. This is a discussion regarding the Parks Master Plan bond referendum and the related item regarding traffic calming funding sources. I just want to make the Commission aware that we do have special counsel from Tallahassee -- who is our bond counsel -- available for any questions after staff makes their presentation.

Mayor Lago: The floor is yours.

Public Works Director Diaz: Good morning. This is Hermes Diaz, Public Works Director. I'm happy to be here. So, we're going to start with a presentation, like a refresher for our traffic calming program, and then we're going to follow with the Parks Master Plan.

Unidentified Speaker: There you go.

Public Works Director Diaz: Thank you. Make sure I got it right. Here we go. So, for a little bit of the background here. We started out with a multi-modal transportation plan and a planning process that started in 2016. The objective at the time was to develop a ten-year blueprint for the City's transportation system and to provide various choices. Out of this plan we ended up with -- traffic calming was one of the priorities that came from this multi-modal transportation plan. In order to advance this vision, we had multiple community meetings starting back in 2016. We had meetings at Coral Gables Library, St. Theresa Catholic High School -- School, Coral Gables Branch Library, Temple Judea, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Sunset Drive Parking Day -- it's a yearly event -- and then Miracle Parking Day, Miracle Mile as well. Traffic calming was strictly a resident-driven approach. The goal from the get-go was not for us to impose anything on the residents that they didn't want. It was based on resident feedback. We've been collecting data from residents for over seven years, and we compiled over 150 citizen comments that have been logged, reviewed, mapped. They've been analyzed and tested for specific locations where these requests were provided. In 2018, as part of this process, we managed to convince the County to lower the speed limits in Coral Gables residential streets from 30 to 25 miles per hour. And this

is important for us to meet our traffic calming goals and to create a more livable city and safer as well. Then later in 2018, we entered into an agreement with the County. It's an interlocal agreement that allows us to construct specific types of traffic calming measures without having to go through specific County approval. And there's a number of these items that we can do without having to go through the County process, which you all know that can be a little bit lengthy and cumbersome, so this is very helpful for our efforts. Through this -- in this agreement, we actually developed a criteria, and these criteria takes into account certain critical points that are touched. And in order for you to qualify for traffic calming, you need to meet some minimum requirements. You need to score -- basically you need to score a 10. And this criteria is based on daily traffic volumes, 85th percentile speeds, the presence or lack of sidewalks, pedestrian areas, such as parks, schools or transit stops, the driveway density, and the number of crashes. So, if you score a 10 or higher, you qualify for traffic calming. If you score less than 10, you don't qualify. So, through these process, we created a systemic approach, and we developed a toolkit. And I'm not going to dwell too much on this. We're going to have some pictures that are going to follow through some of the things that we have been working on. The County-approved measures that we can do without any extensive approval from the County involve the installation of speed tables, speed cushions, raised intersections and circles and roundabouts. In fact, we have already done about 24 of them as an early out of part of this process throughout the city. We got some samples here. That's a speed table. That is a speed cushion, serves the same purpose, slightly different geometry. Raised intersection, circles and roundabouts, more images of more larger roundabouts. We also been installing -- we have pedestrian crossings and raised pedestrian crossings. That crossing is in Aragon near the cinema to help slow people down and facilitate crossing. There are other items that we have in our toolkit. This, however, will require County approval, including medians, chicanes, and chokers. I just want to make sure -- it's one of the things that's in the toolkit, but as it stands right now, we don't have any proposals to install any chicanes and chokers in the city, but it's part of the toolkit that we could potentially use, you know, in certain areas. And medians, yes, is something that will probably be part of our -- the things that we'll be working on, but this will require County approval. And this is one example of what a median will look like. We also have traffic separators, which also require Miami-Dade County approval. There are also options to

relocate stop signs to limit unrestricted traffic flows, the use of yield signs, potential for bulb outs, geometry realignment, and also the removal of access asphalt in some areas. And this is just the general things that we've been using. So what we've done is that we divided the City into five zones, one through five. And the idea is for us to have an incremental approach. And we're starting in Zone 1 -- unfortunately, somebody's got to be first, and somebody will be last. Right now, there's a total of 123 devices that have been proposed and these projects bond funded over the next five years. In Zone 1, currently, there's 37 recommendations, and this is probably the heaviest zone, and I'll go through the schedule a little further ahead. Zone 2 has a total 19 recommendations. Zone 3, we got 10 right now. Zone 4 has 27. Zone 5 has 29. And this is the current schedule. We are planning to start construction on Zone 1 in February of 2022. And the completion date is as follows: Zone 1, late 2023; Zone 3, fall '24; Zone 3 in '25; Zone 4, 26; and Zone 5 in 2027. And obviously, there's a number of things the residents need to get to vote on so there are certain things that don't get done simply because they were denied, so you know, we will move that accordingly. There's a balloting process with some of the features that we're installing with the residents. So, in summary, currently, we have 123 recommended devices. They're all fully funded over the next five years. All the mailings for upcoming zones will be mailed out as we're closer to anticipated construction dates. Since some of this construction is proposed a few years down the line, we don't think it makes sense for us to be sending ballots now for something that's going to happen three years from now. So, we want to make sure that we're closer to construction dates before we start sending out the ballots. We actually have specific community meetings already in Zones 1 through 4. But because Zone 5 is so far out, we have chosen not to have the community meeting yet, because again, you know, people move, so you know, it's where we are. And I don't have anything else. I'm happy to answer any questions that you may have.

Mayor Lago: If I may just really quickly. First off, I want to comment staff for your efforts. I know it's been a long...

Public Works Director Diaz: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Time coming.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes.

Mayor Lago: And I think this was -- Commissioner Mena was -- Vice Mayor Mena was here when we started this, and this has been a long process. It's been a long process --

Public Works Director Diaz: It predates me.

Mayor Lago: -- where -- a very convoluted process that dealt with the County, getting approvals from the County in regards to signage. It also, you know, dealt with the issue of lowering speed limits to 25 miles an hour. So this is something that's been taking years and years and years to get done. And I put that on the record always because people -- residents get frustrated. They're like, "Listen, Vince, when can we finally get this done?" And I said, "A lot of it's been out of our hands, but now we're funding for it," so I appreciate the efforts and we're moving forward as quickly as possible.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, we started this in 2016, so it's --

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Public Works Director Diaz: -- been that long. And now, like I said, we already built up a few, and now we're going through the zones. And now everything's going to be kicked off in earnest.

Mayor Lago: And this has been a pet project -- no, no, I don't want to use the word pet project. But this has been like a main focus for the Vice Mayor, myself, and now this Commission has all coalesced and has really made it a priority. Because we're never going to stop people driving through the City.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Mayor Lago: We're never going to be able to close streets; the County doesn't let us. But we can at least have people respect our streets because if not, you may leave your axle behind if you go over one of those...

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Mayor Lago: Traffic calming devices at over 30 miles an hour.

City Manager Iglesias: And let me say, Mayor, that we're also working with the Fire Department to make sure that, you know, our response times do not increase.

Mayor Lago: Yes. Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Commissioner Anderson: Mr. Diaz, I have a...

Public Works Director Diaz: Yes. How are you?

Commissioner Anderson: Quick question for you. Assuming, you know, the funding was not an issue -- okay? -- a year from now or two years from now, and you had the necessary funds to move forward on this, what kind of bandwidth would you have or ability to fast forward it through the various zones?

Public Works Director Diaz: We would probably have to hire off-site consultants and several -- some for CI and some additional design. There's a few things that we're doing in-house, fairly minor stuff because it makes no sense to consult out. If the schedule gets compressed, we might

need to send more. So we estimate that you're looking at a 15 to 20 percent increase in the budget. If we were to compress that schedule, which depends on how much have been done at that point, when that comes across, what's left to do, and what's the new desire for the comprehensive schedule. But if we're going to basically farm things out, you're looking at an additional 15 to 20 percent increase in cost, which I think right now the overall cost is eight and a half million dollars over five years, right off the top of my head so...

Commissioner Anderson: What was that number?

City Manager Iglesias: We were slightly over \$5 million.

Public Works Director Diaz: I'm sorry?

City Manager Iglesias: Over \$5 million.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yeah, I think it's one and a half million dollars per year -- I'm using round numbers -- for four or five years, so...

Mayor Lago: Madam Commissioner, any other comments in regards to the issue?

Commissioner Anderson: No, it was just a question.

Mayor Lago: No, no. I just want to make sure you feel fulfilled that you got everything.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: I'm in the same boat as you and I know that my colleagues are. I would love nothing more than to expedite this, but it's an issue of funding. And there will be hopefully windfall

financially as a result of property increases this year, but there's so many things in the docket that -- this is one of them, by the way, and there's a priority, public safety.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.

Mayor Lago: So, we will be discussing that as the funding comes in and we start allocating the available resources to see if maybe this gets a little bit more priority.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: So I don't know if we want to address the sort of -- I've heard that these items are linked because there may be some idea of connecting it to a potential bond referendum for parks. I don't know if that's up for discussion today or if that's not accurate. So if we want to discuss it, we can discuss it. If that's not what we're discussing today -- but the two items are linked here, so I'm just trying to understand if that's what's being proposed or...

Commissioner Anderson: It was a question that I brought down to Finance. How much is this going to cost if we tag it in with the bond referendum? You know, can we do it? Single subject rule issues, things of that nature have to be -- those bridges need to be crossed first, and you know, have a discussion with you all. Put it on the agenda so we can speak about it, you know.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah. I just wasn't sure if we were going to discuss that aspect of it because that wasn't really part of the -- that's why it was mentioned so...

Commissioner Anderson: That's why I was asking the bandwidth question. I mean, does it make sense. Is it going to speed it up? Is it going to cost us more? Correct me if I'm wrong, I think you said about 30 percent more in cost.

Public Works Director Diaz: 15 to 20.

Commissioner Anderson: 15 to 20?

Public Works Director Diaz: Yeah. I think the yearly...

Commissioner Anderson: 15 to 20 percent more.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor, the reason that these two are linked is for that discussion.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay, well...

Commissioner Anderson: So, you know, it comes down to money numbers, and...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: If it's part of the referendum and people want it, if you guys want to include it into the referendum, you know, now's the time for us to have that discussion.

Vice Mayor Mena: So just to address that point, I don't want to get ahead of the parks aspect of this, which I think Fred was about to get into, but -- so I'm all for everything in your presentation just now. With that said, I'm not -- I'm personally not for having a joint referendum, and really just because I think each item should stand on its own. If we want to do two separate referendum items, that's okay. If we think we have the funding and we don't need it for this item, that's fine too. But you know, I don't want to put -- I think the goal of a referendum is to get, you know, the residents to be able to say they support an item or not. And when you commingle two things that are generally unrelated -- I understand that there's some traffic calming that's, you know, around parks that, you know, there's a little bit of overlap there, but it's really two distinct items. And I think a voter should be able to say I'm in favor of A, and maybe that voter's against B, and they should be able to indicate that, you know, without one thing weighing in favor of the other or vice

versa. And I think on both items, frankly, it makes the potentiality of either one being approved, it decreases, I think, that likelihood because it's just going to increase the amount of a requested bond. And so again, I don't want what I'm saying to be misconstrued as not supporting what -- everything you just presented because I have and will continue to do so. But I -- just for me, a referendum should try to stay as single issue focused as possible, legal, or otherwise. I know there are some legal implications there, but I'm not saying it's not lawful or anything like that. I'm just saying that would be my personal preference as far as how a given referendum...

Public Works Director Diaz: No, and we're okay either way. You know, we'll manage our schedule accordingly. It's a matter of, you know, as long as we get the resources and the money's available, we can manage that, or we can continue the path that we're going to. And as far as some of the traffic calming on parks, that's a somewhat related discussion because it's a youth zone item that's going to...

Vice Mayor Mena: Of course.

Public Works Director Diaz: Come across, and there's going to be a little bit of an overlap there also. So, there's going to be some -- you know, so we're going to kind of touch on this again...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Public Works Director Diaz: When we talk about that.

Vice Mayor Mena: And there may be something in the parks proposed referendum that does incorporate some traffic calming relating to the park, but...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: More sidewalks, walkability.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: That's in the plan.

Vice Mayor Mena: And so maybe that takes some of the items on your side of the equation off your ledger, if you will, and so we'll navigate that.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right. A little of the things are commingled, you know...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: The traffic calming, the parks, and the youth zone concept. there's a lot of potential for...

Vice Mayor Mena: And I don't have an issue with that to the extent, again, it's...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: You know, a sidewalk around the Youth Center or whatever, obviously, that makes sense. I'm talking about sort of the broader...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Traffic calming that's not directly tied to a park.

Commissioner Anderson: And I do agree with you on that, whether we...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, however we do it.

Commissioner Anderson: (INAUDIBLE) to be able to take care of these youth zone areas, you know, and include that with the referendum. How much dollar amount that is, I have no idea.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: But I do think it's an important factor around these parks.

Commissioner Menendez: I want to add to the discussion. I agree in terms of the importance of traffic calming and traffic and speeding cars is an issue and safety. As the Mayor said, public safety is number one. I commit my efforts going forward as my number one priority to work on that with Commissioner Anderson and my colleagues. I do agree with the Vice Mayor though that, quite honestly, getting any referendum approved is a challenge. You encounter a lot of obstacles. You encounter people that maybe don't understand what's at issue. And sometimes there's misinformation, so it's always a challenge. I've had the good fortune of talking to different civic groups in our community. Community Recreation has also reached out to some of our boards, and there is enthusiastic support so far based on my dealings with the community and groups that have been around forever, young and old, for the parks referendum. And what I don't want to do is draw in folks that perhaps think that we can do things differently than maybe roundabouts and then bring them into something that has so much goodwill going for it, which is the parks referendum. I was thinking about it. I guess to put it in children's terms, we have a wonderful cheese pizza. And anchovies are good for you, Omega 3, but if you throw the anchovies on the cheese pizza, not everybody wants the pizza with the anchovies. So that's my kids reference as a dad. So I give my full commitment to find the funding in any way possible going forward, but I think for the benefit of what is trying to be accomplished here in terms of having the best parks in South Florida, making a youth center that is truly a community center that provides everything the community's always ever wanted, I think we need to go forward as originally planned, and obviously, work hand-in-hand with the other issue.

Commissioner Fors: For the record, I also don't think it's a good idea to have a referendum on two things, whatever those two things are. I'm sure some subjects exist that you can potentially couple together, although from what I understand from the City Attorney, the single-subject rule which prohibits -- I don't remember it perfectly from law school -- but prohibits linking or forcing the voter to cast one vote for two subjects doesn't apply here. So we would be able to do it. I also think that if we're talking about the idea or the concept of considering a 10 -- an expedited rollout of traffic calming, and that means a potential 10 to 15 percent increase in costs, when I hear that, a 10 to 15 percent increase in cost for one line item, albeit a large one in our budget, I also am not sure that it is the -- that it calls for a referendum, that it's really referendum material. And I think referendums are for large undertakings and financial commitments that we want to verify the will of the residents on. I think a 10 to 15 percent increase in funding in order to expedite traffic calming or somewhere in the middle is something that I feel -- that I would feel comfortable, and I think -- I'm sure everybody here would feel comfortable simply making a decision on by majority rule. Finances, obviously being considered, and it's not something we'd have to really -- all we're talking about is that 10 to 15 percent. Do we really need to referendum that? I think we can decide if we want to do that during budget season or whenever we want. I don't know if we need to put it on the ballot.

Mayor Lago: Can I --? May I just add something before we move on? I ask that my colleagues sit down with the Manager and the Finance Director. I'm going to be preparing -- more like the Finance Director is going to be preparing a very brief presentation in regards to the monies that we lost over the last two years, where we stand, maybe a projection in regards to where tax revenue's going to come in just to understand that this is going to take, at a minimum, at a minimum, two to three years to plan. And maybe we could find a way or a road map to limit the amount of public debt that we need to go after. And that's my only intention here. I want to see how -- it may not be 100 percent, but maybe we need 50 percent, and the rest of the money we could potentially save up over the next five years, knowing that -- our Finance Director will tell you I've also asked for a schedule of the debt that's being sunsetted over the next five to ten years so that we understand do we want to accrue more debt. We have major projects in the books

forthcoming, including the renovation of City Hall, which is going to take about \$10 million. So I want everyone to be aware and to see if maybe we can potentially do some sort of mixed bag of public debt with actual funds that we allocate over the next three, four or five years that we schedule to really undertake such an incredible project in the city. So that's a conversation that we'll be having with the Manager I think in the next month or so. Staff is preparing it. And I want -- once we sit down, maybe we can have a sunshine meeting, just get everybody in a room over an hour and have a candid conversation, which is something that I would prefer because I really appreciate the input of my colleagues. They see things in a very different light sometimes and I think it's very beneficial to the discussion.

Vice Mayor Mena: Listen, I agree with you. I think we should -- even from a -- even from the perspective -- and I talked about this a little bit in my sort of one-on-one meetings with Park staff and City staff. Even from the perspective of the viability of the referendum, I think the lower you can keep the number, the, you know -- I think voters -- and this is just my personal sort of speculation, if you will. But I think the average person looks at their fixed costs, they look at their taxes, and they have, you know, a certain tolerance for -- they're going to say, "Okay, I like the idea of the referendum. What's it going to cost me per month over time?" And they have a certain tolerance, and whether that's tolerance -- this is going to cost me, you know, an extra 200 bucks, or it's going to cost me an extra 2,000 bucks, I think somewhere in the middle there, there's a tolerance level. And so I think from our perspective, we need to just be cognizant of that and try to keep the number as best we can to a reasonable number, and I think we need to work through that. Well, you know, one of the things -- I mentioned this to the Manager three days ago maybe. I'm not sure if you all had a chance to speak on it yet, Fred, but I did speak to Peter, and I was meaning to speak to you about it. When we talked about the Youth Center portion of the Parks Master Plan -- and I don't have the exact numbers in front of me -- but you all did rightfully an apples to apples comparison when you said, "Okay, we could build a brand-new facility and it would cost us X, or we could try to refurbish the existing facility to have all of the same features of that new facility and it would cost Y." And the difference is only -- was it \$8 million bucks or something?

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: I think the final was around 10, 10 to 12.

Vice Mayor Mena: \$10 million...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Delta.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: And obviously, from our perspective, and I still think that, like, well, if I get a brand-new state-of-the-art facility with all of the new infrastructure and not the old infrastructure for only a delta of \$10 million, that's probably worth it. you know, part of what I would like to discuss as we move forward -- and I still think we should probably pursue the new facility -- but is there some -- is there -- instead of doing an apples to apples, is there sort of an apple to oranges comparison? Is there a --? Maybe we don't need every single feature in the proposed plan as proposed, and maybe, you know, there's a way to bring that number down obviously because the Youth Center number is the biggest number in...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: The plan for obvious reasons...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yep.

Vice Mayor Mena: And as it should be. But -- and that's really, I think, across the board is where -- to the Mayor's point, you know, if we're going to try to bring the number down a little bit as best we can, you know, we really need to look at the proposed plan and be like, "Okay, do we need this

here if we're going to do that there?" You know, are we going to get every single little thing on the list or on the plan or are there things we can live without. You know, I think we still have to go through that exercise, and I'm sure you probably...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: On your staff level have been doing that. But the idea here is, to the extent there's support for it, is to move forward, put together the referendum as best we can so that voters can decide -- at least that's my objective. But in the meantime, and I think simultaneously with that, working through some of the details in the plan itself to see what we can do to keep the costs and the debt as low as possible, understanding that, in any event, it's a big number.

Mayor Lago: By the way, this may be an issue where, like the Vice Mayor said, maybe we do a multi-schedule opportunity where we do the building now, and then we budget two years down the road to do the fields or to do the pool or to do different things, you know, where...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: Again, where it makes financial sense.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Sure.

Mayor Lago: You don't want to be building things and then tearing them out later. Again, that's -- that would be a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, and also if we think there's items that -- and this is a tough balancing act. If we think there's items that, hey, you know, as we look at our debt schedule over the next few years, we think we can just pay for X, Y, and Z ourselves without making it part of the bond and without taking out debt.

Mayor Lago: That's exactly it.

Vice Mayor Mena: Then that's great, but then the question becomes, but if we think the voter tolerance is there to have it in there, and it's kind of like a -- because the bond is really like a revolver. It's like a line of credit.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: You know, even if you get X amount approved, you don't have to use it all.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Correct.

Vice Mayor Mena: Now, let's be honest. If it's approved -- once it's there, it's very easy to tap into it once it's approved and you have it, and you have other priorities in the City that you want to address. And so, you know, let's assume that whatever we're asking for we're going to use. And we can -- and it may not be the five of us sitting up here making those decisions, you know, in five or six or eight years, whenever -- you know, I don't know how long this is all going to take to play out on all the individual projects, so I can't bank on that. But long story short, I think you need to weave into this process, you know -- and you may have already done that...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: I've got a little bit that I'll go over that -- some of the methodology as we go because it's important as we all lean into and move into whether we go to a voter referendum, some of the things have to be done, and that's what I bring in my presentation, you know, project summaries and identifying what should be financed, what level, the information that we give to the public and see what their input is in terms of what the appetite is to even move forward. So...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Commissioner Menendez: I want -- I'm sorry.

Mayor Lago: No, go ahead. I just want -- we have a lot of items on the agenda today, so I want to make sure...

Commissioner Menendez: Yeah, I -- yeah.

Mayor Lago: That we cover everything. Go ahead, Commissioner.

Commissioner Menendez: Just from experience and having been around a long time, I guess, in Coral Gables and just having seen things, one thing -- I have a question for you, Fred. The current Youth Center was built upon the prior Youth Center, so basically some of the bones of the prior Youth Center are part of the current Youth Center.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: On the north...

Commissioner Menendez: Which limits...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: The northern half.

Commissioner Menendez: Which limits what you can do.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Correct.

Commissioner Menendez: And I agree, we -- you know, at the end of the day, the residents are the ones that will decide, and the residents are the ones that will live with the impact of having an improved park system, and hopefully, a state-of-the-art Youth Center that provides everything for everybody, but it's a balancing act. And what I want to make sure is that going forward with --

you know, if this goes forward with regards to the Youth Center, we've come up with a plan, a design that once it's built, it's not obsolete in five years. Because if you all remember the old Miami Arena where the Heat originally played, within two years, that was obsolete. And we can't afford -- not only financially, we can't afford as a community to cut corners with a facility like the Youth Center or Venetian Pool, where five years, ten years later, it's already obsolete. We're limited as to what we can do. So, I think there are ways that we can definitely save money for the taxpayers, but we have to be creative to find designs that give you the flexibility to create programming as our residents demand new programming. That's -- I think that's how we can find a balancing act.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, and what I -- well, listen, what I would recommend at the end of the day is, at least right now where we are, let's schedule -- I don't know if we're already doing that...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah, if you...

Vice Mayor Mena: Sort of a workshop.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: I'll move quick through a lot of my stuff.

Vice Mayor Mena: No, but I think -- we could -- but let me be clear. Move quick through it, but I don't -- but I think we have to roll up our sleeves and not move quick through it at some point.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Well, there's a few things that...

Vice Mayor Mena: And so...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: We wanted to share, like some numbers...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, please.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Just to get a -- if you can, real quick, and I'll pass through a little bit of it. This is just -- we've gone through some of this because we did adopt a plan and we did -- we've already had follow-up conversations. This is a, I think, second or a third follow-up where we're looking at this and the funding of the referendum.

Commissioner Anderson: Just clarify for me when you're going through it whether or not you've included the traffic calming component on...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Okay, I can tell you that in my presentation I did not because Hermes was going to include his. Now, what I do have in here, which is part of the master plan, is some of the sidewalk and walkability improvements that are part of the master plan. But in terms of traffic calming, that's why Mr. Diaz did his as a separate funding.

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, and I'm just -- I'm concerned about the traffic calming around these parks.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Because there are...

Vice Mayor Mena: Can you just...?

Commissioner Anderson: A considerable number of complaints.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Sure.

Vice Mayor Mena: Can you just itemize out -- not right now.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: No, I will.

Commissioner Anderson: Later.

Vice Mayor Mena: Separately.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: I can, I can.

Vice Mayor Mena: Everything that's in the...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Existing plan that is traffic calming related or pedestrian...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Mena: You know.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: And you know, the needs and the priorities that came out of the plan, you know, show that we needed to provide trails, walkability. And then in terms of the Youth Center, you know, expand the offerings, increase capacity, and improve the access to the center. So that's what we're talking about here. These are the five main areas that we're concentrating our plan on, which is the -- improving the facilities, the programming, and this is where we are. The funding and phasing plan. This is where we are in terms of the master plan and the implementation. So this is kind of the information I've already shared with you, and as we move forward, this is when we started talking of the money. This is what we presented in the plan. There's three phases. The first phase is immediate needs and the highest priorities of existing facilities. The second phase is the further advancement and reinvestment, and that includes the War Memorial facility, the Youth Center facility. And then the phase three, which is the new parks

and facilities addressing growth. Those three different phases are important when it comes to the bond and the way that we take the money and the funds. And Diana will be here to explain that. The total funds for the entire project, we're looking at \$160 million, which is -- as we talked about -- it's a substantial amount, and it's something that needs to be talked about.

Vice Mayor Mena: Where did you tell me that the -- I apologize -- that the Youth Center fits into that phasing?

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: What was that?

Vice Mayor Mena: Where does the Youth Center fit into this phasing?

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: It's in the four to six year total. It's in phase two.

Vice Mayor Mena: Phase two, okay.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: So this is a portrait of the bond and how the millage impact -- and Diana's here to give you that information.

Finance Director Gomez: Sure, good morning. So, assuming the \$160 million and it's taken out in four different tranches based on -- so this is just like estimated information based on rates and expectations. We don't know what the rates are going to be in years to come or whatever, but this is just a good ballpark for right now where we're at, if we were doing this today, more or less, where we would be. So what this tells me is that the first tranche -- we call it a tranche every time you take a -- and you have a not to exceed limit, and then every time we go out to bond, you lock in the rates for that 30-year -- or this -- for the purposes here, I did it for 20 years -- 20-year bond issuance. So, the first issuance would be roughly in 2023, \$51 million based on the schedule that Fred had just shown. It says -- so if -- the way this reads is, across the top, I have assessed values, so up to 25 thou -- \$250,000 of assessed values in total is about 26 percent of the properties fall

under that. Up to -- from 25 to 500,000, about 31 percent of the homes in Coral Gables fall under that -- or properties rather not homes, so on and so forth. That's how the top part reads. So, their current tax is roughly -- Coral Gables portion of taxes, not including the County, not including the School Board, the Coral Gables portion -- is currently -- for instance, for the \$250,000 value home, \$1,390 is their Coral Gables portion of taxes. So, when we add on that first tranche of \$51 million, that individual's taxes will go up by \$46. Somebody who's between 500 and 750,000 roughly, will go up by about 139,000 -- I mean, \$139 a year for that tranche. And then when you add on three years later, the next tranche of \$63.5 million, it would add on -- sorry -- \$314 in total. So that's inclusive of the 139 that was already there, so it'll go -- the differential will be about 150.

Vice Mayor Mena: Will there be a way --? And I know we've talked about this in the past, but I want to get just a little more granular on it. We've talked about -- I think it's going to be very important to have some sort of calculator...

Finance Director Gomez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: That people can go in...

Finance Director Gomez: And I have -- I mean, my financial advisor provided me a draft one of those. We didn't -- we haven't cleaned it up or made it look pretty.

Vice Mayor Mena: Sure.

Finance Director Gomez: But yes, you could put in your exact value, and it'll tell you...

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay, so that's part of my question right there.

Finance Director Gomez: And we could put that on the website and...

Vice Mayor Mena: And I think that's great because I think that even at this full total number, you know, you have 50 plus percent of residents that even over time the increase is only between, you know, a hundred, two hundred and something dollars, which I think is hopefully a reasonable number. I don't know, we'll see. Obviously, there's then a percentage of people where it's a more significant number. Is there a way for that calculator -- and I know this is probably asking a lot, maybe not; maybe Raimundo thinks it's easy -- where for giving -- where a person can plug in their address as opposed to -- right. Because I understand what you're saying. Because if I'm now the user and I -- wait, let me go look up what my taxable value is. It's X; now I got to come back to your calculator, plug it in. It would be great -- and I don't know how easy that is or isn't -- if there's a way to like...

City Manager Iglesias: Link it to the tax roll.

Unidentified Speaker: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: I go in, I plug in my address, it pulls somehow my taxable value, and it tells me, you, for your house, this will be your number.

Finance Director Gomez: Well, estimated based on the percentage of -- the interest rate...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Finance Director Gomez: That we put in there because -- right? I don't know what the rates are going to be.

Vice Mayor Mena: All the disclaimers you have to put.

Finance Director Gomez: Yes.

Mayor Lago: So...

Vice Mayor Mena: And that's fine.

Mayor Lago: Madam Director, why don't we refine this as per the Vice Mayor's comments, and we have that sunshine meeting where we sit down as a Commission, and we look at how we're presenting this to the public. But I agree with him. I think that this is -- if you want to build consensus and you want to build people saying, "Listen, I can afford this, or I can't afford this..."

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: This is as transparent as it gets.

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: And it has to be...

Mayor Lago: You can't hide. This is the numbers.

Vice Mayor Mena: If we start putting charts like this in front of people...

Mayor Lago: They're going to get confused.

Vice Mayor Mena: As part of some ten-page presentation and their eyes are going to gloss over, and they're going to say, "I don't want my taxes to go up," and...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, that's it.

Vice Mayor Mena: I like parks, but no thanks.

City Manager Iglesias: Vice Mayor, I think what you want is to link it to the tax roll, so you put the address...

Vice Mayor Mena: I want it to be so easy...

City Manager Iglesias: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: If you want to know what this amazing parks plan and all of these bells and whistles are going to cost you, plug in your address. Boom, boom, boom, here's the estimate, all the disclaimers. And it's going to cost you \$46 in 2023 more, and in 2026, if you're still own your house, it will cost you about \$105. And that way people -- oh, great. Yeah, I can get behind it.

Mayor Lago: I can afford this. I go to the Youth Center on a weekly basis.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: I go -- you know, I would like to have -- if we do link it, traffic calming -- I would like to have this parks upgrade.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: You understand?

Vice Mayor Mena: I think that's the easiest -- hope -- I think, hopefully, the best way to get people behind it because...

City Manager Iglesias: But if we can look at this, we can see that 85 percent of the people will pay less than \$600 a year.

Mayor Lago: But that...

Vice Mayor Mena: But \$600 becomes a real number.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: It does.

Vice Mayor Mena: And that was my point earlier about there's a tolerance.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: You tell somebody a hundred bucks five years from now, 50 bucks, three years -- okay, cool. You tell them 5 or \$600 a year difference, that's a real number.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: It is.

Vice Mayor Mena: I mean, that's -- now people are going to think about it.

Mayor Lago: And the only what that you're going to build trust is by being as transparent as possible.

Commissioner Anderson: You're right.

Mayor Lago: That's it. Can we --? What else do we have left in the presentation?

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Some quick steps.

Mayor Lago: I want to hit the two -- I want to get to two items before...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: I understand.

Mayor Lago: 12 o'clock.

Finance Director Gomez: This was just to show the amount of debt service each year that the City's paying.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Finance Director Gomez: You know, the total debt service and the increase in the millage rate because it would be a separate debt millage rate if we do GOB bonds. So, you see that if we -- if -- sorry, one more time. If you keep the -- our current 5.559 rate, the -- each year, you'll see how much the debt millage would go up by. That's all that this slide shows.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: The last thing that I want to go over is just the strategy of what the next steps are.

Finance Director Gomez: And one more, sorry. So, this is assuming a 20-year bond, right? So, if we wanted to make it less expensive for the end -- or each home, you could do a 30-year bond if you want.

Mayor Lago: I'm not -- I have some reservations about 30 years.

Finance Director Gomez: Right, I agree, but there are options.

Mayor Lago: I have reservations on debt period.

Finance Director Gomez: Well...

Vice Mayor Mena: Of course.

Mayor Lago: Along with my colleagues and raising taxes...

Finance Director Gomez: Right.

Mayor Lago: Because any way you put it, any way you put it, this is a tax so...

Finance Director Gomez: Well, this one for sure is a tax. If goes to general -- if we are not -- the City is not paying for it, the residents are paying for it out of their tax...

Mayor Lago: We have to...

Finance Director Gomez: Out of the taxes. It's not...

Mayor Lago: We have -- to the Vice...

Finance Director Gomez: Our debt, per se.

Mayor Lago: But to the Vice Mayor's point, if we're going to go out there and we're going to do this, the only way I will do this is if we ensure that it is so clear and that everybody wants this. This has to be a referendum that wins not by the skin of its teeth but wins by significant approval. And it happens all the time.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: It happens.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: There's a few examples that are up there.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, look at that.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: The smaller margin -- the smaller amounts will, obviously...

Mayor Lago: I'm not looking for Cape Coral and Doral numbers. I'm looking for West Palm numbers. That's what I'm looking for because that is -- that's...

Commissioner Anderson: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: I haven't studied that; I haven't seen it. I don't even know what referendum they were passing. I'm going to look into it now, but...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Sure.

Mayor Lago: That was overwhelmingly supported for a reason. What are those reasons? I can't give you those reasons.

Vice Mayor Mena: But look, whatever the -- the beauty of this is, whatever the margin is...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Then we'll have those conversations.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: And we would never, as a body from our position, impose these kind of taxes on the community.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: We've kept our millage rate the same.

Mayor Lago: We've lowered our millage rate.

Vice Mayor Mena: We're very vehement about that. We talked about debt...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: I think that's why we're here is to...

Vice Mayor Mena: The beauty of this is this is up to you, the residents. We think this is a good plan. We think the numbers...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Are more or less accurate and a good estimate and all that. We -- these are things we've heard I think that we need, generally speaking, or want. Do you want it or not? Do you want to impose this tax on yourself?

Mayor Lago: And this will...

Vice Mayor Mena: But that's the important thing.

Mayor Lago: And hopefully, this plan will elevate the quality of life to the next level.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: That's what we're hoping.

Commissioner Menendez: And by the way, one thing I remember from your presentation was you can specifically -- the City can specifically identify where the money's going.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Specific projects with all the descriptions. It's not, here's the money and we'll figure out what to do with it.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: No.

Commissioner Menendez: It's very important.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: That's part of our implementation plan is, if we continue, we work -- continue with our consultant, AECOM. We're going to have public engagement, websites. We'll also have that calculator, but we'll also have websites for input. We'll have five public engagement and information meetings, and we'll put together a couple of concept plans so the public can see this is what these improvements are going to look like in terms of the different types of levels of improvement and then create a lot of outreach. For us just to be transparent and just give the information because...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: As you said this is to be determined by the voters.

Mayor Lago: But we're going to have to reach new levels of transparency here. And I'm not going to talk about what those are now because we got to get to the next item.

Commissioner Menendez: What's the timeline in terms of...?

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Here's the timeline real quick because my last one -- then we don't have to do anything else. The public engagement coordination with our consultant, the scope is 142 days. The general election is November 8th, 2022. The deadline to submit -- according to the City Clerk's office -- is Friday, July 29, 2022. I've spoken with Diana. The bond funds are available approximately three months after the bond is sold.

Finance Director Gomez: Three to four.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: More or less. And the cost for placement on the ballot, that 30,000 number is a number I had at the time, but we've gotten a couple of estimates that there's one option on the low end that's like 19. And then if we need another page to add, it becomes 38 instead of 30. So...

Mayor Lago: Let's (INAUDIBLE)...

City Attorney Ramos: So I just want to add to that really quickly. There's a bond validation process that has to happen as well. Counsel's on Zoom and we need to factor that into this because it's getting pretty tight.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Finance Director Gomez: Yeah, and that happens kind of concurrently with my three-month period. It may add an extra month, but it does work...

City Attorney Ramos: Just want to make sure it's factored in.

Finance Director Gomez: We can work in tandem, yes.

City Attorney Ramos: Okay.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: And the cost to continue to work with the consultant -- there's a contract -- is forty-nine nine...

Mayor Lago: So, my advice...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: For that process.

Mayor Lago: My advice -- so we can close this out and move on to the next item -- is we need to have a sunshine meeting...

Vice Mayor Mena: Soon.

Mayor Lago: Sooner...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: Rather than later.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: And (INAUDIBLE) to the Manager, okay?

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, very soon.

Commissioner Menendez: And one thought -- because I mentioned it earlier...

Vice Mayor Mena: Like this month.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Menendez: I would like -- I'd like to see a lot of our -- you know, we have a lot of amazing civic community organizations in our city that are always here before the City, and they're our partners and we're their partners. And I would love to see those community civic organizations step up to the plate...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yep.

Commissioner Menendez: And help our residents with this opportunity. So I call upon everyone to chip in.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Great.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Great presentation and...

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Like the Vice Mayor said, we need to have that sunshine meeting amongst the Commission.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Yeah, we need to have it pretty quick.

Mayor Lago: And if anybody wants to attend, this month.

Parks and Recreation Director Couceyro: Okay.

Mayor Lago: This month before the end of January.

City Manager Iglesias: And Mayor...

Vice Mayor Mena: We don't have to have everything fleshed out, but we need to start talking (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: Mr. Manager, yes.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I think I would like to engage AECOM for that meeting to make sure that we...

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Manager Iglesias: Have a top-notch presentation. And I could engage them under my authority initially, and then we can bring that back to the City Commission.

Mayor Lago: But I need you to do me a favor. If AECOM wants to be engaged on that, they need to work on their price proposals. They need to help me out on that. Everybody's going to take a haircut here. If we're going to get \$160 million project -- AECOM does a lot of business with the City, so I'm asking them to take a haircut. I saw their number up there. I'm asking them, on behalf of the Mayor, be kind and give us a little bit of a price reduction. You do a lot of business with the City, okay?

Unidentified Speaker: Okay.

Mayor Lago: And we move forward with your recommendation under your \$50,000 allotment of money in the City Manager's office to move forward, but I just ask you to negotiate with them and please ask them for a discount if possible. Okay?

City Manager Iglesias: We have already done so, Mayor. So, we are negotiating, and we will continue to do so, just to let you know.

Mayor Lago: Tell them to do me a favor if they can.

City Manager Iglesias: We negotiate hard.

Mayor Lago: I know you do; you always do. But let's negotiate a little bit more. Alright, moving on. Everybody -- the Commission is fine with the Manager moving forward, obviously, with engaging AECOM.

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Yes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Alright, moving forward. Madam City Attorney, do you need something in regards to that?

City Attorney Ramos: No, no, no.

Mayor Lago: Alright.

Vice Mayor Mena: No.

City Attorney Ramos: He can do it under his authority, and he's got blessings from the Commission.

Mayor Lago: No, I just want to make sure. Want to make sure. Alright, moving forward.