

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Item F-3**  
**February 10, 2026**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**  
**Deputy City Attorney, Stephanie Throckmorton**  
**Assistant Director Public Works, Deena Bell-Llewellyn**

**Public Speaker(s)**

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Agenda Item F-3 [Start: 1:09 p.m.]

Discussion regarding state law and the city's ability to regulate leaf blowers.  
(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Anderson)

Mayor Lago: F-3, Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: This is a discussion regarding state law and city's ability to regulate leaf blowers. I've asked staff to update us on both the legal aspects and the practical aspects. We have Deena Bell-Llewellyn here as well, so staff take it away.

Deputy City Attorney Throckmorton: Thank you. Thank you, Vice Mayor. Stephanie Throckmorton, Deputy City Attorney. As you all may recall, in 2025, at the end of the 2024-2025 legislative session, there was a preemption built into an Appropriations Act that was line item vetoed by the Governor then, which by operation of law meant that that preemption was also vetoed, but what is pending right now at the state legislature, so we are free to act in the world of

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gas-powered landscaping equipment at the moment, though I do note that there is a Bill pending at the legislature this year, moving through the House, HB 433, which would preempt to the state all regulations about gas-powered farm and landscape equipment, not specific to blowers generally, but all gas-powered equipment. There is a move to that there. So, at the moment, that's something we can regulate, though, as attempted in the past, and again, in this legislative session, there is a move for preemption at the state legislature. As far as the details of how they work and effectiveness, I'll turn that over to Deena. That's our area of expertise.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'm going to ask you a legal question off the cuff here, and I don't expect you to know the answer right now. Let's assume for a moment that there is some kind of muffler system that comes into play to muffle the sounds of the gas blowers. I want you to look at whether or not the preemption that's proposed would prohibit us from trying to require something like that.

Deputy City Attorney Throckmorton: My understanding of the current language is that the definition of gasoline-powered landscape equipment is what's preempted to the state, and it doesn't include, as far as I can tell at the moment, any exceptions for noise muffling additions. It's the regulation of gasoline-powered landscape equipment generally. So, I'll turn it over to Deena. Thank you.

Assistant Director Public Works: Thank you. Okay, Deena Bell-Llewellyn. I am Assistant Director of Public Works for Green Space Management, and so what we do is, we maintain all the landscaping sites in the city. We have a combination of in-house staff of 30 people, more or less, working mostly the downtown sites. Our downtown sites, meaning Miracle Mile and Ponce and most of the streetscapes in the urban area, we're already using the electric-powered blowers. They're effective in these small areas in downtown where you have a lot of pedestrian traffic, you have a lot of car parking. They of course help with noise and help with keeping the streets clean. The downfall to them is the batteries only last less than two hours, so we're constantly having to switch out by either bringing two or three different blowers in a truck per day just to create a shift or go back and forth to charge the machines. Okay. So, they're not as powerful as the gas blowers. So out in the, I guess, the hinterland, I call it, the rest of the neighborhood, the rest of the cities where most of the residential homes are, where we have our larger parks and our big medians, such as look at Alhambra median for an example. That is full of the large Ficus trees with very large leaves. These leaves get wet. It's very difficult for staff to get the leaf volume blown off of those streets using the electric blowers, so they continue to use the gas blowers just for efficiency. Now, if we were to go to 100 percent electric in these areas, our vendor, who's currently SFM, would most certainly increase the cost of service to give the current level of service delivering a site on time because what it would do is just obviously make landscape maintenance take twice as long. They would have to go to rakes and, you know, do a lot of manual leaf blowing and removal of debris. So, with that said, those are the pros and cons.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Okay. All right. I mean, I just wanted to get the full Commission an update. I know there was at least one email that had come to all of us, and I thought it would be best that we all received the uniform information across the board, so we know how to respond. That's it.

Mayor Lago: Well, thank you, Madam Vice Mayor. We've been receiving, I think, like probably two or three emails in the last week, I think we got as a Commission in regard to this, and I appreciate the update, Ms. Bell.

Assistant Public Works Director: Okay. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: And anything new that comes out, for example, just like we're waiting for leaf blowers to become more efficient, we're also waiting for trolleys. We've been talking about electric trolleys for 10 years. We've actually done tours. We've actually been on an electric trolley. But one of the concerns has been, where is it manufactured? They were made in China, so we were not able to come close to even purchasing those. We could have bought it, but again, I asked the Manager not to, and I know my colleagues also agree with me on that front. So, we have to be very, very careful that we get ourselves into something that, again, we lose efficiency. We're trying to balance that environmental stewardship and also be as efficient as possible. So, it's a tough balance.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I'll add to that, Mayor. We've also been looking at electric garbage trucks, you know, and again, you have to look at performance, and staff has to evaluate that. Is it going to function for the purpose that we're using it for?

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Is that an easy answer? Okay, moving on to G1. Thank you, Dina. Great work, as always.