

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-1
October 22, 2024
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 Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Manager, Amos Rojas, Jr.
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Economic Development Director, Belkys Perez

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item H-1[2:33 p.m.]

Presentation of the Coral Gables Community of Excellence 2026 program

Mayor Lago: We are going to move onto H-1.

Economic Development Director Perez: Good afternoon, everyone. Belkys Perez with the Economic Development Department. We are here to talk about the Community of Excellence program. Now this is a lot more than a program, this is really a journey that the city has been in for the last five years, in which we are constantly refining and working toward excellence as a community. We have partners and I would be remiss if I didn't apologize that Baptist Health, Aaron Doud and Mark Trowbridge from the Chamber of Commerce were unable to be here, and David Harrowood, which is the person that's been helping us through this journey had to leave, he had to go back to the west coast, so you got me. But basically, this is something that we've been on for the past five years. Baptist Health South Florida is the one that initiated this program and really we are bringing this to you right now, because they've been some recent developments and

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we have very good data that we want to share with you and that you should know about, because the program that we are in right now, this Community of Excellence program has a potential of making us the number one community in the nation, recognized by the President of the United States. And so, its important that we keep you up to speed on this. So, basically if you know Malcolm Baldrige and the criteria, this is the Community of Excellence was based off of the criteria from the Baldrige and made for a community. The Malcolm Baldrige Award is for a single organization and its awarded annually by the President of the United States. So, the Community of Excellence in 2023, Congress established the Community of Excellence as the seventh national award category for Presidential recognition. So, it is slated to be the first Presidential recognition to happen either in 2026 or 2027. So, we've been working closely with our partners, which Baptist Health and the Chamber of Commerce to come up with criteria. So, we've got three, five pillars, excuse me, that we work under to create what it is to be a Community of Excellence. Its quality of life, health and wellness, educational excellence, safe neighborhoods, and a thriving economy. And under those there are different goals that we try to accomplish. So, I'm going to take you quickly through the data. We'll start with a thriving economy, and so, in order to make a case for us having been a community of excellence, we do have to benchmark ourselves. So, we do that with Miami-Dade County, we do it with Florida, how we rank among other cities in Florida and the United States. So, what you are hearing here, what you're seeing here is the median household income and how we rate. So, the navy-blue bar is ours and everyone else are the lines you see there. So, on employment also, we are the blue bar, we're at 1.7 percent and everyone else is a bit higher than us. As far as the safe neighborhood – violent crime rates, we also looked at that. And so, as its indicated here, we have a very, obviously we know this from experience because we do talk to, not only businesses that come, but residents that come to the city, and just yesterday, we had an International Affairs Coordinating Council, we have a brand-new resident on our board from San Diego. We asked why Coral Gables, because it's a safe community, because it's a beautiful community, because of the quality of life. So, it was important for residents as well. So violent crime rate is also down. It's a lot lower than as compared to Miami-Dade County, Florida and the United States. Here we have a little bit of work to do, its high school graduation rates. So, as you can see, Coral Gables, we've got two high schools in the city, we've got the Coral Gables High School and we have ISPA, and so, ISPA has a graduation rate of 100 percent, and Coral Gables High is hovering at the 93 percent, 97 percent. This is something that we've been working with previous Principle for a while, and now we'll work with the new Principle of Coral Gables High, but he had determined that if he got a person to work closely with those individuals that we already at risk and that could pass their SAT scores, their SAT exam, that we could get them ahead of time and have them pass. And so, there was funding that was put aside. We raised funding through out Sip and Shop Events and the Community Foundation did as well, and we've provided some funding so he can get some of these at-risk kids tutored and given a chance to graduate high school. High school proficiency reading also important, particularly at the Coral Gables High School level. So, we are the latest figures that we've got is that we're at 56

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percent proficiency, as related to ISPA, which is 77, and then Miami-Dade and Florida is four. Under health and wellness, we work with Baptist in the Health Department to get this information, but basically, we have obviously a great community, a working community, and so there is health care that there's only 5.5 percent of the population that does not have health care in the city, as compared to Miami-Dade County, 15, and Florida, 11. And then accidental deaths, this was a big one for us as well. We do a lot of proactive measures and I'm sure the Fire Department and the Police Department can attest to that, but based on the latest figures that we have, we had four accidental deaths in 2022. We didn't have any in 2023, which is huge. And then these are items also that how we compared to Miami-Dade County and Florida and the United States – heart disease, we have a very low count for that, diabetes as well, kidney disease, the list goes on. Quality of life – we get these numbers from our community survey that we do every other year, and so we can benchmark it against the U.S. and Florida. We can't benchmark it against Miami-Dade County, its not included here. So, for Coral Gables, we had satisfaction of, would you recommend Coral Gables based on quality of life, and in 2023, the number was 95 percent compared, but the lines here are different. So, the orange line and the gray line are really how we compare to the rest of the nation. So, at the U.S. level, we are at 91 percent, we compare at the 91 percent ranking, and Florida, 86 percent ranking. And here again, for quality of live, satisfaction of living in the city, as far as Coral Gables, we are at 96 percent, but as we compare it to the United States, we're at a 98 percent ranking, and Florida 92. And then satisfaction of working in the city, quality of satisfaction, we went from 91 to 88 percent in 2023, and as compared to the United States, we're at 99 percent ranking, so we're doing great at that level, and in Florida we are at the top of the satisfaction of working in the city. I would say that there is a discrepancy here from 2021 to 2023, from a satisfaction of working, because in 2023, this is when they were fewer people working in the service industry. I remember going to some places even around the nation where you ate and the tables weren't being bused as quickly as you should, because there weren't any workers available. So, I think there was a sense of like concern at that point. Satisfaction of quality of life. Again, we're at 96 percent right now. How does it fair against the U.S. ranking, 97 percent, and for Florida is 93. So basically, these are the same pillars. So, we have a conference that's happening next week, and we wanted all of you to know about it. It's the Baldrige Conference that's happening here, it's the first time in its history that its happened, so about 40 years that the conference actually takes place in Coral Gables. This is a testament to the Chamber of Commerce, Mark Trowbridge, who actually helped to bring it, so they would be at the Biltmore Hotel and there are some recognitions that will be taking place there and we are confident that we will do very good in it and so we would like to invite you guys, if you are interested in attending to see how we end up and what our distinction ends up being that you can attend as well. It is a report that we have to give every year to let the judges know how we're doing. Its basically a judging meeting that happens. It takes about three hours, but it tells us if we're on the right path and if we need to make any changes. So, this is going to be basically a test run of what we expect in 2026. And that's it.

Any questions.

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Commissioner Castro: So, you're inviting us 28th, 29th, and 30th or...

Economic Development Director: Its specifically one day. If you are interested in going to the conference, I'm happy to have you as well, but I can get you the exact day that that recognition is happening at the Biltmore Hotel and its around 5:30.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.

Economic Development Director: Thank you.