

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-1
February 11, 2025
Police and Fire Headquarters
2151 Salzedo Street, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Melissa Castro

Commissioner Ariel Fernandez

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Alberto N. Parjus

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Economic Development Director, Belkys Perez

Public Speaker(s)

Ned Murray

Jackson “Rip” Holmes

Agenda Item H-1 [11:35 a.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission to approve the City of Coral Gables Economic Development Strategic Plan. (12.4.24 EDB recommended approval, Vote 5-0)

Mayor Lago: Now we’ll move to item H-1.

City Commission Meeting

February 11, 2025

Agenda Item H-1 - Resolution of the City Commission to approve the City of Coral Gables Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Commissioner Castro: Before we move on, I want to go ahead and I want to thank the Lee Foundation once again, because this is the -- I was going to say the officer, the firefighter of the year, and we are -- his compensation is going to be \$5,000.

City Attorney Suárez: H-1 Mayor?

Mayor Lago: H-1.

Economic Development Director Perez: All right, good afternoon, everyone.

Mayor Lago: Time certain.

City Attorney Suárez: Okay. H-1 is a resolution of the City Commission to approve the City of Coral Gables Economic Development Strategic Plan.

Mayor Lago: Good morning, Belkys.

Economic Development Director Perez: Good afternoon, everyone.

Mayor Lago: How are you? Good to see you.

Economic Development Director Perez: Likewise. I'm Belkys Perez. I'm with the Economic Development Department. The Economic Development Department is involved in many aspects of creating a vital city. It means attracting businesses, cultivating relationships with brokers who sell the City for us and also international partners creating opportunities that attract people to the downtown, promoting quality of life, helping with permitting and ensuring that businesses upkeep their storefronts. That's just a few of the things that we do. So, as you can imagine that we get pulled in many directions, but especially after COVID, it was really important for us to identify the economic growth opportunities in Coral Gables and to put a plan in place to keep us on the course. And that is very important because we are now in competition with other cities around us. And so, it's really important that we stay the course, and we do our very best to put our first -- our best foot forward. So, as a result, we went through an RFP process to hire a consultant to assist in developing an economic strategic plan. The purpose and intent of the department's strategic plan is to guide Coral Gables' efforts in shaping the City's future economic growth through the adoption of realistic, cost-effective, sustainable, and resilient economic development plans and policies. So, Dr. Ned Murray, Associate Director of the Jorge M. Perez Metropolitan Center at Florida International University took on this project and he joins us today to give us a summary of the competitive assessment, which was Phase 1 of the process was a competitive assessment. It has been updated with new data. And Phase 2, which is identifying the strategic recommendations that are part of the economic development plan. And I do want to say that the plan was put together with the input of the community. And that could mean residents, non-residents, businesses,

brokers, stakeholders, other organizations. Everyone had a hand in this project. And I'll turn it over now to Dr. Murray.

Mayor Lago: Dr. Murray, good morning. Thank you for being with us. Thank you.

Ned Murray: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, City Commissioners, City Manager, City Clerk, City Attorney, citizens of Coral Gables. I certainly want to thank Belkys and her staff and City staff in general, the Planning staff, Smart City staff, all who engaged in this process from the beginning. As Belkys mentioned, the process began some time ago and it's actually interesting that it played out this way because we were able to get in on the ground at the very beginning of the post-COVID economic recovery. So, we were able to monitor throughout this process a lot of the economic data and obviously population data that was so affected by COVID. And of course, the City itself was experiencing double-digit unemployment after that economic shock, and much like Miami-Dade, had needed some time to be able to recover. So, we had the baseline data, which came out about a year after COVID. And as Belkys mentioned, we've been able to continue monitoring that. In fact, we have data releases that came out recently, so we're focused on those as well. Not only population data, but economic data that comes out of the state every month, as you know. So, it's been a continuous update. So, with that, Belkys outlined the process pretty much and the stated purpose of course, which from the outset that the City had established was to really provide this guide for economic growth, but do it in a way that would be sustainable, resilient, and obviously effective. Really important words and hopefully what the plan does, the Economic Development Strategic Plan, is put those words into action. Because in my experience, having done economic development, both at the municipal level in terms of being in government myself, I was a former City planning and development director for many years, and obviously, a professor and associate director of the Perez Metropolitan Center at FIU, we've been engaged in a number of municipalities and other local governments, county governments throughout South Florida and the state, doing similar types of projects, similar types of studies. But I can tell you this, that nowhere have we worked, and we've worked in many, many municipalities, more of the pieces already fall in place than in Coral Gables. It made our job easy in some ways, but at the same time we needed to work with your community stakeholders, as Belkys mentioned, your Economic Development Board. We got to meet your city manager at the last Economic Development Board, to take in these comments, have these discussions about how the City has grown or in some ways not grown for a while now. And what does that all mean going back to that stated purpose? So, as Belkys mentioned, and I can't stress it enough, the competitive assessment is really the analytical foundation for the plan. And I know it's a heavy document, there's a lot of data in it, and I'm sure some of you have already read it or gone through it, but that is really what provides the hard data, the hard facts in terms of where the City is right now, how we compare with benchmark cities that were selected early on in the process by the City, and how we're going to measure that going forward, including the performance metrics that need to be built into the plan itself, which I'll get to. So, that's that, but then the plan itself, which I'm going to focus on this morning, is really to provide a plan that's dynamic. When I was in government years ago as Planning and Development Director, and I was speaking to the mayors and city managers that I

worked with, the question that always came up was implementation. So many plans are done, and they collect dust on the shelf. That was always a big criticism of planning in the past, whether it be economic development plans, transportation plans, you name it. So, we've learned that and every plan we have done, I think, at the FIU Metropolitan Center, pretty much have been implemented. And we think this one will be too because you have so much already in place, as I said, but you also have the professional capacity to do that, and I think the leadership to do it along with your Economic Development Board. So, you have a lot of those pieces already. Many cities we go into, we have to start putting pieces together from scratch and that makes it a lot more difficult. I mentioned the competitive assessment and I'm just going to highlight some of these points. Obviously, there's a lot there. I'm sure you'll take your time and read it because I want to get right into the strategies themselves this morning, but certainly we're just down the road. So, if you ever like me to come back to talk about this in length or more depth, I would come anytime. When we do a competitive assessment, we certainly want to focus in on the opportunities, the strengths, the assets of a city. And the ones that stand out, and I don't have to tell you, number one, image and brand, second to none in South Florida, in fact, Florida in general. High population rate in terms of education, educational attainment in general, home to 150 multinationals. Your Smart City initiatives, one of the best in the country right now. And the fact that, which came out of the research, when we do these studies, what we want to focus in on are certain sectors. In the advanced industry sector, which is the major growth industries within the country, we want to see how you line up with those. We know they're here in the county; how much are here in Coral Gables? So that is usually a real fundamental research question that we have when we do the competitive assessment, along with other targeted industries that the Beacon Council has administered over the years. Now, on the other side, on the flip side, no great city can stand on its laurels. The economy's changed, we found that out three years ago. We found that out during the Great Recession, 13 years ago, well, actually, 15 years ago now. So, we are part of a larger economy. So, Coral Gables can do everything right and still be affected. We've seen that because of national recessions or economic shocks or how well the county is doing as a whole. And Miami-Dade County has some issues. They also have a lot of strengths. So, right now, what you're dealing with is a stagnant population growth. And of course, we compare you to the benchmark cities, which we'll get into in a second, to compare that, which is very important. A low, relatively low, labor force participation rate. Low growth in your young professional population. And I think we have more details, some more details have just come out on that, in terms of your younger population, particularly that 25 to 34 age group, which are leaving South Florida in general, but Miami-Dade and here in Coral Gables even more so. We have issues in terms of inflow, outflow, we'll get into in a second. You're basically built out, so very little vacant land. You have aging, underdeveloped commercial corridors. I remember coming through years ago, 25 years ago, and just seeing the corridors and they're not quite as shiny and beautiful as they once were. So, something to think about there. And a lack of connectivity between the districts and neighbors that came out of this transportation analysis that we did. And then, of course, your housing market. No surprise there, you have a really overly expensive housing market, and obviously, that plays into it. Housing and economic development go hand-in-hand these days. It's now a national issue, it's not a Coral Gables issue exclusively, it's not Miami-Dade's issue exclusively, it's a national

issue. Okay, your benchmarks. I mentioned them, I'll just go through these real quickly. These are the cities or municipalities that the County -- the City chose when we started the project. And you can see right away that Coral Gables just jumps out at you in terms of median household income, educational attainment, as I mentioned, but also, on the slide there you can see the labor force participation rate, which has steadily gone down, by the way, and the young professional growth rate, that 5.6 percent, if you look at it in the 25 to 34 age group, that has actually declined and declined considerably in the last five years. So, that's something we have to pay attention to. And there you can see that population growth. We were trying to get over that 50,000 threshold from the beginning. Well, it doesn't look like we're going to get there in the 2020 -- the data from the 2023 census. It was just released in December. Shows you dipping a little bit more. So, all understood, we know the dynamics, we understand it. The competitive assessment tracks that and we'll be able to monitor that going forward. Labor force participation rate, just a couple of charts here just to show you where Coral Gables is in that regard relative to the benchmark cities. That, once again, change in private sector employment, not a lot of growth there as well during that 10-year period, and we have not seen much more in 2023. And in fact, right up until 2025, I just looked at some of the employment data, your labor force data, your employment data that just came out and actually we're going in the wrong direction. Obviously, one of your real strengths are your resident workers. You're in those industries. I mean, your residents are just doing fine, those who live here. Healthcare and social assistance, education, professional, scientific, and technical services, and of course accommodation and food services. So, you have a diversified economy. The question is, do we have a critical mass in the advanced industry sector that we really want to focus on? And are there opportunities for growth within those sectors? I mentioned the inflow-outflow analysis. I know this really caught a lot of our community stakeholders and Economic Development Board members in kind of a surprise mode to see that only 3,349 -- 3,349 of our resident workers actually work here, live and work here, and almost 14,000 leave each day to take jobs in other locations. As I mentioned to the committee back then, and to the board, and the staff's aware of this, this is pretty much what South Florida's all about. This is not just Coral Gables. Obviously, this is an issue that we as Miami-Dade County and all our municipalities have to deal with. But once again, there are opportunities here and that's where we come in with our economic development strategies. Where your workers live and work, real quickly, you can see where our residents work. You see that 3,349 number once again, here in Coral Gables. But more of our resident workers leave to go to Miami each day. Another big chunk go to Doral and Kendall. And then where they come from, those who come in and take the jobs here, mostly by far from the City of Miami. And we also have workers coming in from Kendall, Hialeah, a number of other places. So, this is not atypical, by the way, once again. It's a problem all of South Florida, and particularly Miami-Dade has to deal with. The question is, what do we do about it? And is there anything we can do about it? And there you see you're at the bottom when it comes to that inflow-outflow analysis. Okay, I mentioned the advanced industry sector. We spend a lot of time looking at your industries. And you can see here, as far as the advanced industry sector goes, once again, for those who aren't familiar with the advanced industry, the subsectors essentially that the Brookings Institute had identified after the Great Recession around 2015, these are the industries where you have the highest growth, best wages, R&D, trade, all of these are at the high end when

it comes to the advanced industry sectors. These are your STEM jobs. These are your other tech jobs. So, you can see, Coral Gables pretty much is representative of the county, which is pretty obvious because, once again, we are part of a large -- always part of a larger economy. And these numbers aren't bad. You probably question, well, how do we compare to other parts of the country, the state? We're well beyond the state in terms of the percent of employment in the advanced industry sector. Coral Gables, you're doing relatively well, but not nearly as well as our neighbors up the street in Doral. Once again, what can we do about that? And we'll talk a little bit more about who exactly those industries are, where are they located and what are the occupations that we're talking about and the population we're talking about. The target industries, as I mentioned, these are the ones that the Beacon Council had established years ago. When I first got here in 1997, One Community One Goal, remember that? Then they did an update in 2012. I'm not a really big fan of targeted industry studies. I've done this for a long, long time. Cluster-based strategies is actually my background in research because we target industries that a lot of times are not even legitimate relative to our location. I like the advanced industries better. We can point to them a lot more. We can -- we can communicate with them a lot better. But there is a crossover between target industries and advanced industries as you can imagine. Because obviously we want to target, that being the Beacon Council and other economic development organizations, you want to target these growth sectors, right? But they have to still make sense. And you can see here when we just look at Coral Gables relative to these target industries that the County has identified, we're doing pretty darn good in certain ones. Certainly, life sciences and healthcare, you can see some big numbers under creative design, international banking that I already mentioned, and of course, you see at the bottom, hospitality and tourism. So, we have a lot of employment in these targeted industry sectors. The question is, where do we go from here? Where do we want to grow? Because obviously we know that in certain sectors there's greater opportunity, there's better paying jobs, there's more trade potential. So, that's a really important aspect of what the plan is going to address. I want to just touch upon a couple of retail slides because I know retail is really important to the City and it should be. I mean, your brand is based a lot on not only the history and architecture, which are just wonderful, but also this retail brand, people coming here from all over. And when we first did this, these numbers were actually coming out, I think, two years after COVID hit. And we already had, and it was a concern by many of our community stakeholders, that the vacancy rates in a lot of our retail establishments was fairly high at that time. And it was, but it was like that everywhere. But look at those numbers though. I mean, just the fact that 70 -- you know, destination shopping, 78 percent of your customers are coming in from the outside. So, you already had that in place. The competitive advantages of that, the resurgence of your retail. Retail came back so quickly here in Coral Gables, unlike a lot of other places. And it also ties into very neatly a real important part of our plan and that's placemaking. You'll hear a lot about that term placemaking from us, the term enhancement. What Coral Gables needs to do is not so much redevelop. We won't even use that term here in Coral Gables. We don't have to. But we can enhance. We can enhance the economy. We can enhance our district. We can do a lot of enhancement. And that's really what a lot of this is about. And I'll show you these numbers. You can see the numbers going back. You can see the COVID numbers, the vacancy rate. By the way, the yellow line, you just can't see the writing, is Miami,

the City of Miami. So, we're kind of benchmarking against the City of Miami with Coral Gables. Look at the vacancy rate. Wasn't that high, but it was fairly high relative to, you know, prior to COVID. But look where it is now and look where it's projected to go. We have zero vacancy in retail basically right now. Now, some of the problem with that is that that brings up prices. So, obviously, your retail lease rates, your acquisition prices are much higher. But so are they in Miami, so are they in Doral, so are they probably as whatever they do in South Miami down the road. So, once again, what makes us more competitive though? You know, what do we need to do to enhance that dynamic, right? These are the questions that we need to ask. Okay, I won't spend a lot of time on these. I've kind of encapsulated them already by talking about, for instance, strategy number one, economic diversification, is to really focus in on those sectors where we see real opportunities for growth. Other sectors will grow irrespective of what we do, particularly in areas like tourism and hospitality and healthcare which are basically part of the economic base of all of South Florida anyway. But as far as some of these advanced industries, we're going to have to do a little work there and we'll get into that in a minute. The placemaking part, once again, we're talking enhancing what's already in place and we certainly have laid out a lot of placemaking strategies that the City can undertake. You've been doing this all along. I mean, this is -- this is -- we talk about placemaking, you think of Coral Gables, you're sort of the poster child for that. Focus on competitions to innovation. Innovation is the key word today. And it's so wise that you create an innovation district to your southeast corner. That district is going to be a key part of the plan because that has the types of properties that we can develop into space for some of the advanced sectors that we're talking about here. So, a real opportunity in that location and the fact that it's already in place. And then the fourth strategy is the actual enhancement area. So, let me get into the -- really quickly because I know we're a little bit pressed for time here. We're going to start from the top. We go right down, Ponce de Leon Boulevard. That's your spine essentially. That's your economic development spine. From the top, which I just drove into this morning from Flagler, all the way down. And I have to commend the City and staff over the years for creating mixed-use districts of various intensity that have kind of put it all in place. The idea of the mixed-use districts, as you all know, was to create more pedestrian-friendly, live-work kind of situations, you know, less traffic, less cars. So, you had that vision, and you put it, and you adopted that in terms of your land use and zoning. So, it's already in place. I'm not here today as part of your plan recommending zoning changes. You have them. The question is how do we focus in on these areas? Let me just go through these really quickly. So, that's to the north, where you have your northern gateway, by the way, as you all know. Not as clear as a gateway that you'd want to see, but it is a gateway from the north. And then we've got the areas just south of downtown, along Ponce de Leon, once again. Once again, an area where you can see those darker colors, these are all mixed-use districts of various intensity, and we see a lot of areas along the stretch where the properties are certainly underdeveloped, and a lot of these properties are aging. We go further down, I mentioned the Design and Innovation District, there it is, that's been laid out for us now for a number of years, real opportunities there. Once again, if we target certain sectors and we create the kinds of partnerships that we're going to talk about in the plan, oh, we do talk about it in the plan. Then the last one, which was brought to our attention towards the tail end of the plan, was this whole south gateway from -- on US-1. And the fact is, once again, when you get south

of US-1 going southwest towards South Miami at the corporate border right there, you can see more mixed use. So, there's opportunities here for other types of commercial retail and certainly other types of industries that could locate along this very important corridor. Okay, last point, the management implementation. It doesn't happen unless we have the economic development management capacity in place and the support for that. Fortunately, you do have a department; a lot of cities don't that do economic development plans. You also have an economic development board. So, what we're talking about here and what we have been doing in other locations is we're using this term that's been almost overused, public-private partnerships. We're talking about new forms of public-private partnerships. And we talk about that a little bit more specifically in the plan. But those are going to have to be formed because now we know who we need to partner with, right? These advanced industries, the institutions, they're all a part of that. We know we can really -- we just don't need to have different business or committees on these partnerships. We know exactly who to target, who needs to be on these partnerships along with the City. The stakeholder communications, once again, you have the department and the board service liaison. They need to be empowered to do that. They need to have that clear single access point and flow of information. And then lastly, a marketing -- a multi-pronged marketing plan, which builds into, once again, everything we're trying to do. The plan should be seen as a dynamic and a marketing tool. And that's why we've kept it fairly straightforward. This is a -- the plan itself isn't very long. It gets right to the strategies and what we need to do. So, the Economic Development staff, the Economic Development Board, the City Commission can all use this plan and say, here's what we're trying to do, okay. And then lastly, as I mentioned, you have to have performance metrics. A lot of economic development tries to get done without them. A lot of this can get done. You can put a dashboard together. A lot of this information can be -- you see a lot of this annual, but a lot of employment data, as you all know, is available on a month-to-month basis. So, with that, that in a nutshell, obviously there's a lot to read. And once again, I'd be really glad to come back and talk about any of the details of both the competitive assessment and the strategic plan at your leisure. Thank you very much.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Belkys, will you do me a favor? Will you make sure that we can put this information up on the website so that people can see the efforts that the City is taking to ensure that our downtown is as viable as possible and continues to thrive? I think it's an important study that should be shared with the community and asked for their input, see if they have any guidance. But this should be prominently displayed in the front page as a new tool used in an effort to chart the next 10-year course of our downtown. So, these are steps that we're taking to make sure that we continue to evolve in a positive way. And I want to get community input in regards to this if possible. I'm going to actually bring this over to my town hall next month. So, I want to also learn as much as possible in regards to all the ins and outs of the report. Anything else from the Commission?

Commissioner Menendez: I have a question or comment if I may. I have a couple of questions. One is -- well, first observation, based on talking to residents, housing market is clearly an impediment to young professionals moving to Coral Gables. One of the biggest concerns among

residents is that their kids that grew up in Coral Gables may not be able to live in Coral Gables because they're priced out. But obviously, that's something that's impacting the entire country, but especially Coral Gables. You mentioned the focus was that that age range -- you know, the twenty something hasn't gone up so much. You may not have the data now. Do we know what age range has had the greatest increase?

Economic Development Director Perez: Yeah, so we can tell you that you're right. They have been priced out on the market as they have in other areas. The median age right now for the City of Coral Gables is 38 to 40 years old. That's the median age.

Commissioner Menendez: Okay.

Economic Development Director Perez: And so, you know, having said that, and I'm sure Dr. Murray will mention this, is that there are opportunities for, maybe not in the City, but right outside on our boundaries, to be and still engage with the City and still reside in the City. We've got some developments that are happening just outside of the City, which could present opportunities to have our, you know, employees and to have other residents who are looking to maybe save a little and then come into the City.

Commissioner Menendez: And I only have two more questions. One is -- the first one is, what are the South Florida markets or cities that are our biggest competitors? Because you know, people talk about Downtown Doral, and obviously, South Miami, as you mentioned, you have the Grove, and I guess everybody's battling to draw those people to their downtown to eat at the restaurants and shop. Is there an understanding of who we're most aligned with that perhaps we're sharing, you know, the same pool of people that can come in?

Economic Development Director Perez: You want to say and then I can say something.

Mr. Murray: Yeah, well, you mentioned Doral. Certainly, Coral Gables and Doral are bosom buddies, so to speak, in that regard. Other cities, not so much here in Miami-Dade. The area I would watch out for, though, and we've done a lot of work out there working with West Kendall Baptist Hospital, that area is where most of our professionals live in Miami-Dade County. And there's a football stadium of professional workers who leave West Kendall each morning and head east. And that same group goes back.

Commissioner Menendez: And they cut through Coral Gables.

Mr. Murray: Yeah, a lot of them come here. So, if the West Kendall economy really takes off and they begin to develop the industries that we're talking about here, that could -- that would be competition for us.

Commissioner Menendez: And my last question is, over the years, our downtown has evolved. Back in the day when I was a kid, you know, like everybody jokes, there was a lot of dress shops, bridal shops, then early '90s, or in the '90s, we all of a sudden had Houston's back then, now Hillstone's, Barnes & Noble, and there's been an evolution of downtown. Do we have a particular identity? When people say Downtown Coral Gables, is it the nightlife, is it the restaurants, is it to shop? Do we -- have we coalesced in one, I guess, marketing theme or brand, like you said?

Economic Development Director Perez: So, we don't have a particular one brand, but it just depends. I would say that in -- on Miracle Mile, it is our restaurant area. We've attracted a lot of restaurant, thanks to our retail strategy, chef-driven restaurants to Coral Gables recently. And so, we know that that is the right demographics that we want to go over because chef-driven restaurants are a good quality of income, people who are wanting to spend more money in our downtown and stay here after hours. We don't have a nightlife. That's not what our community, I don't think, is about.

Commissioner Menendez: Right.

Economic Development Director Perez: And what we've seen is, though, they want to stay after hours after they eat to do shopping. And so now that we have a restaurant here, our next goal is to bring more retail and then have that retail stay open after hours. That's very important for us. And we have data, and we have ped counts that can help our retailers to stay open late. The challenge is that many of them are small businesses, they have their own families to tend to at night, and so it's a challenge. But we have been successful with at least one business where we're showing them the data and telling them, look at all the people that are walking in front of your sidewalks after you close; perhaps you should stay open. And maybe it's just a pilot program where they're adjusting their hours, but it is important for them to stay open after hours if we want to be competitive with other neighboring cities. And it's not to say that we're in a competition, we are, but it's not necessarily, it's just that we want to make sure that, and we work with other cities, but I feel that it's important that we also, you know, attract people and keep our residents here in Coral Gables.

Commissioner Menendez: Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, I'll just -- Mayor, if it's permissible, I just wanted to add, you know, because I've dealt with this with my children who now are in their mid-30s and they go through that process of determining where they want to live, because where you live, work, and play, the idea is to spend less time driving. And yes, I agree with West Kendall, if they start providing the jobs closer to there where people don't have to do as much commuting, that's going to blossom that area. And the silver lining to that, though, is we have less traffic cutting through us. So, there's good and bad to everything. As long as we can provide the jobs for our local community here and encourage businesses to come here that cater to our residents, I think we're more likely to reduce the traffic and keep our residents thinking that this is the best place to live.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much again. Great work. Belkys, if you could please let's put this up so everybody can enjoy it and get a better understanding of what the plan is and what we're doing. Do we need a motion or...?

City Attorney Suárez: Yes, it's a resolution approving the plan.

Mayor Lago: Can I get a motion?

Commissioner Castro: I'll move it.

Unidentified Speaker: Public comment.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Second.

Mayor Lago: We will. We'll have one now. Public comment, sir,

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor. Mr. Jackson "Rip" Holmes.

Jackson Holmes: So, the minute he mentioned retail, my ears pick up, right? And I wish that -- I got to connect better with the Economic Development Department. I'm going to come out and see you at FIU. So, I would just add, I haven't had a chance yet to really connect with this gentleman, but when it comes to the downtown where my family is the oldest property-owning family on Miracle Mile, my goal is to keep Miracle Mile low-rise so we don't have too much urbanization and the crime that comes with it, but yet it's to expand the retail and grow it by bringing department stores, or at least a department store. And so, I really appreciate it. I'm going to see if I can make an appointment with you. I would add one last thing. We need to plan a city that is safe to raise children in from the age of birth to the age of 18 when they become adults and can live on their own. And we're not doing that. We're having too much development. There's a long story there, but I think that that has to be an overriding guideline. Smart growth, not growth that makes Coral Gables what it is today, too much development, no longer a safe place to raise children from the age of birth to the age of 18. Thanks.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Mr. Clerk?

Commissioner Menendez: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

(Vote: 5-0)