

Mayor Vince Lago



Strategic Priorities Plan
2025-2027

September 19, 2025

Overview: As part of Mayor Vince Lago’s comprehensive targeted approach to govern with integrity and transparency and building on the accomplishments of the mayor’s first and second terms, the following Strategic Priorities Plan outlines his priorities as mayor for 2025-2027.

The role of Mayor’s Citizens Advisory Council is to ensure the fulfillment of the Mayor’s Strategic Priorities Plan.

PRIORITY 1. TRANSPARENCY & ETHICAL CONDUCT

Create an open form of government where information is easily accessible, disclosed, and available to the community. To ensure the city’s elected officials are held to the highest standard and act in the best interest of the community.

Transparency

Accomplishments

- Explore solutions to make city information and content easily accessible on the city website.
 - Disclosure of Mayor’s Office expenditures and city reports on the city website.
 - Post Mayor’s internal memos to the city website.

Next Steps ‘25-‘27

- Establish an Inspector General office to ensure that public funds are used responsibly and that city programs are operating as intended. *(Ballot question April 2026)*
- Require a resident vote prior to any changes to elected officials’ compensation, beyond the annual CPI adjustment. *(Ballot question April 2026)*
- Require a resident vote prior to changes to the fund balance and reserve policy and/or use of the city’s reserves, except during certain emergencies. *(Ballot question April 2026)*
- Increase transparency in financial planning by sharing long-term budget forecasts on the city website.

Ethical Conduct

Accomplishments

- Eliminate conflicts of interest by prohibiting City Commissioners from serving as campaign or political consultants for candidates for elected office in the city.
- Commit to following the terms of the Florida Sunshine Law.

PRIORITY 2. ACCOUNTABILITY & CUSTOMER SERVICE

Ensure the city delivers timely, transparent, and excellent customer service by establishing clear service standards and implement accountability measures for all departments to foster trust.

Accomplishments

- Establish the Mayor’s Citizens Advisory Council to ensure fulfillment of the mayor’s strategic plan.
- Review existing protocols and procedures required for lobbyists.
 - Implement a new law requiring lobbyists to not blanket-represent entities but require representation on specific issues.
 - Prohibit campaign and/or political consultants from lobbying and doing business with the city.
- Ensure that development projects adhere to the terms outlined in their Development Agreement contracts.
- Creation of Tasks Forces:
 - Assemble a Water Quality Task Force to address issues affecting Biscayne Bay
 - Assemble a Transportation Task Force to work in conjunction with Miami-Dade County on issues affecting existing transportation concerns.
- Completion of the one-stop-shop Development Services building.
- Improve the building department’s turnaround times and digitizing permitting services.
- Creation of a city mobile app for residents to request services, report city issues, pay bills, find parking and other important city-related services.

Next Steps ‘25-‘27

- Establish a Building Permit Advisory Committee to gain input from the community on opportunities for improvement.
- Create a permitting assistance program for businesses to expediate permitting and encourage businesses to occupy available office space.
- Conduct a resident survey as a follow up for services and publish an annual “Customer Service and Accountability Report” detailing achievements and areas for improvements.

PRIORITY 3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Explore all opportunities to enhance civic engagement, listen to community concerns, and share information while remaining accessible and building on residents' passion and the desire to shape the future of Coral Gables.

Accomplishments

- Listening Tour and resident survey.
- Weekly office hours to listen to resident concerns, thoughts and suggestions on all topics affecting the city.
- Site visits as requested by residents and business owners to discuss site-specific issues and offer solutions.
- E-newsletters highlighting initiatives and updates on issues affecting residents.
- Social media engagement.
- Work with community partners to increase participation in public meetings, city activities, and conversations about the future of Coral Gables.
- Develop an advisory board of city neighborhood associations.
- Send welcome letters to new residents.

Next Steps '25-'27

- Biannual Town Hall meetings. (*Scheduled for October 2025 and April 2026*)
- Move election date to align with State and Federal elections in November to increase voter turnout. (*Ballot question April 2026*)
- Identify and incorporate new methodologies to ensure the city engages a broad audience.
- Utilize voter rolls or voter registration lists to inform voters of upcoming elections to maximize voter participation.

PRIORITY 4. ENHANCE QUALITY OF LIFE

Explore opportunities to make the city a more livable and enjoyable destination for all by improving mobility, enhancing public spaces, leveraging State and Federal governments, promoting cultural events, prioritizing education, and supporting the local business community.

Accomplishments

Mobility

- Trolley Service:
 - Expand trolley service to include Saturdays.
 - Expand trolley route from Douglas Station to 57th Avenue along Ponce.
 - Expand trolley route to connect residential areas to downtown.
 - ADA Improvements to trolley stops.
- FreeBee Ridesharing:
 - Continue to monitor ridership feedback to determine if service area should be adjusted.
- Traffic Calming:
 - Work with staff and residents to address traffic concerns, divert congestion, make streets safer and expedite traffic calming initiatives.
 - Establish Traffic Calming Methodology:
 1. Resident Input
 2. Data Collection & Analysis
 3. Public Involvement (workshops and balloting for each device)
 4. Implementation (design, installation of temporary devices, and construction of permanent devices)
- Sidewalks:
 - Implement sidewalks where missing.
 - Implement safety enhancements at the Coral Gables High School including connector sidewalks, lighted crosswalk at Altara on Riviera Dr. bike and/or micromobility lanes connecting the high school with the Underline and work with MDCPS to improve the drop-off and pick-up of the nearly 3,000 students.
 - Study feasibility of permanent jogging/ walking path around Granada Golf Course.
- Street Improvements
 - Biltmore Way
 - North Ponce de Leon median project.
- Mobility Hub and Parking Garages:
 - Mobility Hub at Municipal Garage Site 1
 - Completion of Parking Garage 7
- Establishment of an Eruv (a symbolic boundary that extends the private domain for use by observant Jews on the Shabbat) within City Limits (*in process*)

Parks and Open Space

- Increase parks and green space inventory with the goal of having a park within half mile or ten-minute walk of all residents.
- Work with developers to grant minor variances in exchange for green space downtown.
- Study opportunities for kayak, paddle board and canoe launch sites for residents to access interior waterways for recreational uses. *(Under review by staff)*
- Improve existing larger parks.

Home Rule & Government Engagement

- Strong assertion of Home Rule.
- Engage with local and state government officials for the betterment of residents.
 - State representative Demi Busatta City Hall office

Public Art & Cultural Events

- Strategically invest development fees in acquiring world-class art that enriches public spaces, fosters community pride and enhances the cultural vibrancy of the City.
- Amend the City's existing Art in Public Places Program to be fiscally efficient
- Integrate world-class art and cultural events that celebrate our community.

Education

- Partner with the city's public schools to educate and empower children to become successful, intelligent and actively engaged members of the community.
- Review Hopkins/ Cooper Scholarship program to maximize applicants.

Business Community

- Support the Economic Strategic Plan with the aim of increasing visibility and economic growth.

PRIORITY 5. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Create a more sustainable city, reduce overall carbon footprint, reduce energy usage, and educate the community on the importance of caring for the environment.

Education and Environmental Care

Accomplishments

- Host coastal and environmental clean-up events to promote awareness.
 - Partner with environmental organizations such as Friends of Biscayne Bay, Miami Water Keeper, etc.
 - Maintain existing programs Keep Coral Gables Beautiful and International Coastal Clean up.
- Build partnerships and leverage relationship with environmental stakeholders, educational institutions, and organizations.
- Relocate and/or remove invasive species.
- Protect and preserve existing tree canopy.
- Reduce fertilizer pollution through education.
- Reduce the amount of material that goes into the landfills.
 - Green Matter Recycling initiative
 - Christmas tree recycling program
 - Bi-annual electronics and chemical waste drop off program
 - Prescription and battery drop collections
 - NexTrex plastic film recycling
- Explore and integrate technology to monitor and track environmental investments and consistently review our performance and costs savings.
 - Create a dashboard to track progress against goals
- Mangrove Management
 - Work with DERM to streamline permitting process for trimming mangroves
- Eliminate Styrofoam, plastic straws and stirrers use and limit the use of single plastic bags for carry out.
- Increase fines for discharging pollution into waterways

Next Steps

- Septic to sewer conversion:
 - Complete survey to identify properties without sewer.
 - Complete financial plan for conversion.
- Identify funding strategies that would help fund environmental initiatives that fit within the scope our city's long-term sustainability efforts.
- Swale care education campaign related to capturing rainwater, reducing erosion and filtering pollutants.

Reduce Carbon Footprint and Energy Usage

Accomplishments

- Advance sustainable initiatives that aim to improve the environmental, social, and economic health of the city.
 - Replace city gas cars with electric vehicles and install charging stations.
 - Waive permit fees for solar panels and EV charging station installations.
- Change zoning code to permit metal roofs where appropriate.

Next Steps ‘25-‘27

- Review historic preservation and energy efficiency (where modern technology and historic preservation meet).
- Create an educational campaign to increase awareness regarding sustainable improvements that can be made to residential and commercial properties (solar panels, etc.).
- Work with FPL to allow FPL’s Evolution Program to work with homes with a carport or detached garage.
- Inventory the number of homes with solar power and determine a future goal with a 5-year plan to increase the number of households with solar.
- Explore and consider adopting additional sustainable policies.
 - Review energy efficiency codes in new buildings (residential and commercial) that go beyond base codes on insulation, windows and HVAC.
 - Incentivize the use of LowE glazing on new builds or window replacement.

PRIORITY 6. BEAUFITICATION, HISTORIC PERSERVATION & RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT

Keep the city beautiful by promoting clean, vibrant public spaces while preserving the historic character through thoughtful restoration and responsible development.

Beautification

Accomplishments

- Educate the community on swale and trash pit rules.
- Undergrounding of FPL utility lines.
 - Request state Public Utility Commission to regulate abandoned poles
- Complete city-wide parking meter removal.

Next Steps '25-27'

- Be a good neighbor – review construction rules and regulations to lessen construction impacts on neighboring residences.
 - Review code enforcement citations at construction sites to determine if any changes to the rules are required.
- Review locations for city entrance signs, gateways and neighborhood signs.
- Work with state officials and telecom companies to underground internet, phone and cable for service reliability and aesthetics.

Historic Preservation & Responsible Development

Accomplishments

- City Hall restoration
- Venetian Pool restoration
- 1926 Historic Whiteway Steet Light restoration
- Biltmore Gondola building restoration
- Adhere to the City of Coral Gables Zoning Code

Next Steps

- Study the need for a “concierge service” to assist property owners through the Historic Department.
 - Create easy to understand guidelines for homeowners wanting to renovate a historic home.
- Reevaluate the Mediterranean Bonus program to ensure results are as intended.
- Create an overlay for county RTZ sites to protect the city’s interests.
- Adopt an Interlocal Agreement for county RTZ sites to protect the city’s interests.

PRIORITY 7. A SAFE AND HEALTHY CITY

Foster a safe and healthy city by implementing best-in-class hiring practices, investing in state-of-the-art public service facilities, utilize real-time data from Smart City hubs to proactively address issues, and improve emergency response times to meet the growing needs of our residents.

Accomplishments

- Completion of the Public Safety Building.
- Completion of Fire Station No. 2 on US 1 and Riviera.
- Completion of Fire Station No. 4 on Sunset Drive.
- Referendum of High Pines and Ponce Davis area to square off city's borders and improve public safety.
- Collaborate with Miami-Dade County and neighboring municipalities on strategic public safety initiatives such as: anti-human trafficking and anti-prostitution joint police enforcement efforts and making city streets safer.
- Educate community on safety tips through City E-News Letter.
- Add additional police and fire personnel.
- Utilize Everbridge for disaster alerts.
- Installation and data collection from Smart City Pole.
- Conduct speed studies as necessary and install traffic calming/ speed radar signs.
 - Reduce residential street speed limits to 25 mph.
- Ensure city and county bridges are up to standard.
 - LeJune and Cocoplum Circle

Next Steps '25-'27

- E-Scooter, E-Bike and E-Motorcycle regulations

PRIORITY 8. TRAILBLAZING WITH TECHNOLOGY

Foster a culture of innovation and collaboration. Provide all departments with the tools and training needed to adopt and implement the latest technology.

Accomplishments

- Continue to invest in IT Smart City Hub initiatives that aim to bring transparency, convenience and better quality of service to residents.
- Ensure the City's Information Technology Initiatives easy to understand by all age groups with an effective communication campaign.
- Leverage AI to improve efficiency, enhance public services, optimize resources.

Next Steps '25-'27

- Study feasibility of partnering with others to launch a telecommunications satellite for redundant cell and internet service, educational opportunities, and space research as an economic driver.
- Study feasibility of accepting Cryptocurrency as payment for city services.