

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item H-1
August 26, 2025
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago
Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
Commissioner Melissa Castro
Commissioner Ariel Fernandez (Absent)
Commissioner Richard D. Lara

City Staff

City Attorney, Cristina Suárez
City Manager, Peter Iglesias
City Clerk, Billy Urquia
Assistant City Manager, Carolina Vester

Public Speaker(s)

Raquel Regalado, MDC Commissioner
Roy Coley, MDC Chief Utilities and Regulatory Services Officer

Agenda Item H-1 [10:55 a.m.]

Waste Diversion Presentation

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Moving on to the next item on the agenda, H1, Waste Division presentation. Madam ACM, how long do you need for the presentation?

Assistant City Manager Vester: We're going to try to give it to eight minutes, if you allow me. And I have our Deputy City Manager going to hand something out to everybody up here.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I love it.

Mayor Lago: A man of many trades.

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Vice Mayor Anderson: Are we allowed to open it?

Mayor Lago: Many talents.

Assistant City Manager Vester: Good morning, members of the Commission, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, City Manager, City Attorney, City Clerk. My name is Carolina Vester. I'm the Assistant City Manager for the City of Coral Gables and presenting to you today a presentation as requested under the leadership of the Mayor and the Commission who tasked us with exploring solutions to the rising cost of waste disposal. Today, I will be presenting an opportunity for the city to significantly reduce our solid waste disposal costs, particularly for green matter, also known as trash, while also generating new revenue through material recovery and enhancing our resiliency and storm recovery efforts. Each year, more than 70 million tons of wood waste and yard waste are collected in the United States. Despite the opportunity to repurpose those materials, over half still ends up in our landfills. Even though here in the State of Florida, state law permits us to manage this waste stream independently. Globally, yard waste represents nearly 20% of our total waste, underscoring the scale of both the challenge and the opportunity we have before us. As part of this exercise, we looked at several solutions, technology innovations to come up with a solution for our city and the amount of green waste that we have on a daily basis here. Currently, the city disposes of about 26,000 tons of trash and green waste every year at a cost of approximately \$1.3 million based on the tonnage that we collect that is paid to Waste Management. We have an opportunity to change this. By investing improving technology, refined over the last 29 years, originally developed to provide practical, portable solutions for cleaner and more efficient onsite disposal of vegetative waste from land clearing initiatives. We can turn this challenge into sustainable solution. Here's the model that you will see that we will speak about, which is also called air burners. While we are not representing the company, we wanted to give you guys a solution to our problem. And this is the solution that we found most practical, most supported in the industry at this time. With this solution, we're also looking at additional revenue opportunities, potentially partnering with our neighboring municipalities and looking at disposing of commercial waste. Again, waste referring to our green trash that we collect here in the City of Coral Gables. There are also waste to energy solutions. In the rendering here that you see on the right, you will see a battery basically generating electricity for our heavy fleet equipment that has generated that electricity through the solution we're presenting you today. What I'd also like to show you here is a sitemap of our 72nd Public Works facility. Within that sitemap, you'll see two areas that are demarcated here. The one on the upper north side is our currently leased property to the county, which is the West Transfer Station. Right below it, you will find a site that requires remediation. What we're looking at in the proposal is looking at absorbing both those sites to absorb and take care of our own green matter. With that consideration, keep in mind, we currently pay \$42,401 on a week. I'm sorry, we receive \$42,401.76 on a monthly lease from the county. And remediation, there would be a potential consideration for a phase one, phase two cost accounting for approximately \$4 million dollars in remediation of that site. As I mentioned, we explored a

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range of technologies and vendor solutions, but this option truly stands apart as it offers more than just a disposal method for our city. Air burner fireboxes equipped with patented air curtain burner technology, which sets them apart, have undergone extensive testing and earned the support of major environmental and defense agencies. They're currently backed by permit waivers from the US EPA, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and are actively supported by the US Forest Service, Department of Defense and Department of Energy. They're also made in the United States, and they have their local office and plant here in Palm City, just a two and a half hour ride away from our City Beautiful. We actually personally, both myself and the Deputy City Manager went and toured the facility last week. It was a very impressive site. You'll see some pictures at the end of the presentation. Unfortunately, we were not permitted to take photographs inside the factory because of some of their requirements that I have to secure their technology. Here, you will see an example of, again, this technology is about 29 years old. This is one of their very first iterations that was tested in Canada and it is an open burn method, and you'll see an example here of the two. So, if you would look at open burning, which is right behind that graphic, you see the large smoke area that's disposing of about 20 tons of wood waste has an immense air quality issue. With the air curtain technology, there is no smoke coming off that technology and that's also looking at 20 tons of wood waste. In the next photograph, you will see the impact that both have. Now, the first one shows the air curtain technology that is eliminating that same 20 tons of wood waste in one hour. The second is the traditional open burn. That's 48 hours of open burning to dispose the same 20 tons of wood waste and you can see the impact and air quality issues that that is having on that environment. Here again, you will see the technology, the rendering of the open, the air burner here and what it has is has a patent on the, let me try to see if I can show this again. Here we go. So, it has an air curtain that constantly has a flow of air circulating in the machine. So, while it is burning the wood waste, it makes sure that the particulate and the smoke does not come off the machine. Seems unbelievable. Both the Deputy City Manager and myself, we witnessed that in action at a private facility, which is a landscaper actually that disposes of that wood waste and we wanted to see, is that really the case? Is that smoke dissipating within the machine or is that going to be put into the environment? And in fact, that air curtain technology does work and that stays and generates within the machine. With the fire boxes that we presented here, we can process up to 10 to 13 tons, depending on the size that we would acquire of green waste per hour per unit, while also producing what is called biochar. That's what you'll find in your little containers in front of you.

And we have an opportunity for renewable energy that supports both our fleet operations and our sustainability goals. Again, in the rendering here, you'll see the complete module. So, it's not just the firebox module. You'll have the power module, you'll have the cooling module and the battery storage module, which is actually powered by a Rolls Royce battery. Very impressive. And with that, you can power up to four heavy fleet vehicles each evening, each night. The site that we visited actually had the vehicles that were powering and feeding the air burner were actually all battery operated equipment that were being charged each night at the same battery storage unit.

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They also have a mobile solution, which would be something we'd look at during our storm resiliency, where you could actually haul this equipment to any of our sites where we collected the tree debris or our green debris trash, and we could actually dispose of it onsite instead of wasting additional staffing hours and fuel and hauling to an offsite location. Equally important, and here you'll see some key benefits. We would be reducing wood waste by 98%. You're able to capture energy from the wood waste. You actually can save some green and make some green. You can reduce greenhouse emissions and look at carbon credits as a solution that lets us publicly trade some of those carbon credits and another financial opportunity. These units are all easily relocatable and modular. So, you can actually set them up within six hours and break them down within six hours. This does not require a building. So, it's completely mobile and lets us to have a site, but also relocate if need be or disassemble if need be. And it is completely self-contained and ready to use. So again, here's the same slide of our 72nd facility. And you will see here the consideration of having two of these complete units that provide energy between both the current waste transfer site as well as the remediation site. We would also look at renting an additional four units for storm resiliency if that were the case. Equally important to the solution, this would enhance our storm readiness. Like I mentioned, after Hurricane Irma, Coral Gables actually collected over 360,000 cubic yards of debris, more than two years' worth of waste in a single storm occurrence. Today, given the limited staging sites and the additional three hours that we now will have to face for round trip travel of about 146 extra miles with the change from taking our debris during a storm to Pompano, now going all the way to Okeechobee for mulch material disposal and only having onsite processing capacity will be critical to ensuring that rapid recovery in avoiding long, costly hauls to distant disposal areas. As a city, we would be in control of our own destiny. With the rental of four additional units, like I mentioned, we can achieve our goal of completing all storm debris disposal based on what was captured during Irma within 10 weeks of post-storm, which would be a huge accomplishment. And again, here you'll see the graphic Surviving Irma. We collected 360,000 cubic yards, accounting for almost two and a half years of regular debris that we collect based on the tonnage that we collect today. So, what would be our savings as a city? The financial impact is significant. In-house disposal would reduce our cost per ton from nearly \$50 to about \$10, saving the city close to 1 million each year. On top of that, we would generate revenue by offering disposal services to our local landscapers and neighboring municipalities, as well as to the sale of biochar products, reducing harmful emissions and pursue significant certification to earn credits for carbon reduction, which today is a tradable commodity. So here in the graphic, you'll see there are different rates presented. We currently pay a very, very, very nice rate with Waste Management, which is at 49.81 per ton for the disposal. That does not account for collection. That is just for disposal of our green matter. But if we would look at other rates that are out there from the West transfer rate at \$90 a ton, the Medley South Dade contract rate at close to \$75 a ton, the Medley South Dade non-contract rate, which takes it all the way up to \$113 a ton, the cost would be a lot more sizable, up to almost \$3 million dollars a year. So, we have a very, very good rate at this time, but that rate we cannot depend on. That rate is good and

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by contract for another two years. And we don't know if we will get that rate again. So that is something that you have to think about as well. As we look at our savings, the savings might be much more sizable from 1 million to 3 million and plus. And again, here you have a chart showing the savings, as well as a conservative revenue from commercial drop-off site that could account to about 250 to 500,000 a year. We could also look at the potential by-product sale of the biochar. And again, very conservatively looking at 25,000 a year, something that is not part of this consideration yet because it does take additional work is if we want it to get certified for the carbon credits, those revenues aren't even accounted for here in this chart. And that is a tradable on Wall Street commodity at this time. There are other opportunities not mentioned and explored here. There are opportunities for grants, also FP&L partnership, if we wanted to do an on-grid versus the off-grid solution for the air burner. There are, like I mentioned, the revenue opportunities, and of course, the environmental benefits of diverting from the landfill. So, with that initial city investment, we also wanted to look at your ROI over a 10-year period and looking at the initial costs that we have to look at as capital for the equipment, as well as the costs for the remediation. So, with that being said, the approach does require upfront investment, particularly in site remediation and equipment. However, with available grants, partnerships, and the long-term savings and revenue opportunities, the return on investment is both practical and achievable. This solution also allows us to finally make the remediation oversight a priority, a remediation that would be fully funded with a payback period of less than five years. Over a 10-year net benefit, you'd be looking at over \$15 million dollars, not just in savings, but now in profit. And with that, I just want to end it with some of those photographs. Like I mentioned, the Deputy City Manager and myself, we traveled to the site. We were not able to capture photographs from inside the assembly line and the warehouse of where everything was being manufactured, but they did take us in addition to that offsite, and we actually got to witness all the equipment working, running, and doing what it's supposed to do. I mean, in the little mound that you see here at the bottom, that is a biochar mixed with topsoil, and that specific landscaper that owns that property uses for all their high-end projects. And with that, I'll open it up to any questions. Again, I want to summarize that this is more than just a cost savings measure. It's a strategic investment in the future of Coral Gables. By diverting our green waste away from the landfill, we can reduce our annual disposal costs by over \$1 million dollars, generate new revenue streams, and tap into grant opportunities and partnerships. At the same time, we will position the city to respond more effectively when storms hit, ensuring we have the onsite ability and capacity to manage debris quickly and efficiently. This initiative also advances our broader sustainability goals. Instead of paying to bury yard waste in a landfill, we can convert it into useful products like biochar, reduce harmful emissions, and potentially earn credits for waste diversion and carbon reduction, a commodity, like I mentioned, that is currently sold on Wall Street. Yes, there is upfront costs, but by the return, both financial and environmental, it is significant. This is about controlling our costs, increasing our resiliency, and reinforcing Coral Gables' reputation as a forward-thinking, sustainable city.

The proposed solution to waste disposal for our community is an investment that will pay dividends to our finances, our environment, and our community for decades to come.

Mayor Lago: Thank you, Madam ACM. For the record, Mr. Clerk, I did a public records request very briefly. I had him do one to see when I first mentioned this here in the City of Coral Gables. Mr. Clerk, when was that that you were able to find?

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, I'm sure it was sooner, but the earliest I could find right now was December 5th, 2017.

Mayor Lago: So this has been a priority for my office since 2017, and I'll show you, you've already covered every base. I'm not going to waste any more time. The diversion of green matter is critical. It's only going to get more expensive to dispose this. Find a solution. Landfills are filling up. Covanta is no longer. And I'd like to show you what our city is facing every day as a result of our trash pits. Just for the record, before certain people here who deal with blogs go out and say that I want to get rid of trash pits, that's not the case. What I want to do is find a way to collect the green matter and use this system to save the city millions of dollars and invest that money in our police, our firefighters, and our infrastructure. Mr. Clerk, please run the video. This is what we're facing. Do not turn a blind eye. I've showed these videos before. They were sent to me by residents. We need to get a handle of this issue and make this investment for the environment and our future viability.

City Clerk Urquia: If cable TV can put on my computer.

Mayor Lago: These are landscapers right now that were caught throwing out their days' worth of landscaping here in the City of Coral Gables. They paid a pretty huge fine. This is happening every day throughout the city as landscapers work through the entire county. They go to other cities and they come to our city and they throw it in the trash pit one bit at a time as they finish their day. It's cheaper to do this, much cheaper, it's free, than taking it to the landfill and having to pay a tipping fee, the gas, and obviously the labor costs. And the next one, sir?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. This is the most egregious one. And I've shown this one before, but I want to put it on the record because we have the privilege of having the County Commissioner here. And this is a major issue. This video was taken by a gentleman who lives on 57th Avenue. J.C. Padron took this video years ago and I've kept it. So, this is 57th Avenue and Miller. I literally live maybe three blocks away from that. This is an individual coming across from the Miami-Dade County area, coming across and proceeding to dump all the green matter in the trash pit. So, for

some, this may be funny. It may be comical. This is money, a lot of money. So, we can either take this and dump it in the county pits, excuse me, in the county landfill, I apologize. Or we can take action and actually make money off this product. We're going to have to take some tough steps moving forward. But I think that this is the most accountable thing for us to do as a community. And I'm happy and grateful that the DCM, the ACM and the City Manager and the entire team are working on this issue. We can no longer turn a blind eye to this. This represents millions and millions of dollars of lost opportunity here in the city. It's finally the time that we take action on this and use that money to either remove the garbage fee like we did this year, where we reduced it significantly, or reinvest that money into our police and fire, our aging infrastructure, our employees. That's a lot of money that we can use over the next few years. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So thank you, Mayor. I know this is something before I was elected, we talked about. I just wanted to add.

Mayor Lago: You were on the Sustainability Advisory Board. You were on my appointment and you actually brought it up on the board.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes, it was one of those items where people always thought you were taking away their trash pits, so therefore they didn't want it moving forward, but yet I saw trucks across the street from my home coming with stuff that was nowhere in the neighborhood and dumping it off as a rectangle of green stuff across from my house. So, I wanted to add that in addition, the acceptance of biochar as a solution is out there. I went to the Citizens Climate Leaders meeting. There were folks there doing biochar throughout the country and forest and so forth. It is a well-recognized product that can be used for not only remediating the soil and for the farm products and byproducts, but also for our plant industry. And it can also be used as an aggregate for making cement. So it has lots of uses. Instead of paying and losing money by putting it into a "Mount Trashmore," which is becoming a very touchy topic throughout the state of Florida and wasting the fuel and hauling and so forth that goes along with it. Plus, I just think this is the right way to move forward. And thank you for bringing this and thank you for the samples. You know, we get to see the real thing. So, I think you have an extra one for the Commissioner if you want to take one with you. It's fun.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Lara.

Commissioner Lara: So Carolina, that was a wonderful presentation. Very easy to understand. It's compelling. And I hate to use the most overword term. It's to me, it just feels like a no-brainer. But I wanted to understand in simple terms, if our investment is X, how long, and I know there's a lot of moving parts because you're talking about potential grants, revenue opportunities, savings, how

much we spend now could change in the future. But like, how long do you think the runway would be before the investment comes back so that we are on the savings side net?

Assistant City Manager Vester: So investment-wise, there's immediate net. However, looking at the purchase of the equipment and looking at the remediation, which really the remediation is not part of that initial upfront cost, but it's something that we will tackle as part of that.

Commissioner Lara: Throw it in there, yeah.

Assistant City Manager Vester: That's four and a half years.

Commissioner Lara: Gotcha. Wonderful.

Mayor Lago: That's quick. Mr. Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, it depends. The equipment is a little over two years. If we, how we remediate the site, whether it's a \$2.5 million dollar remediation or a \$4 million dollar complete remediation, it would be from the equipment itself will be a little over two years. And with the remediation it will be about five years.

Commissioner Lara: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: Thank you. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this. And I brought our Deputy Director, Roy Corley, with us. First and foremost, as many of you know, we have been working on trash at the County for some time, and I've had the opportunity to bring a lot of different things to the Board of County Commissioners that have been approved. I am more a fan of composting than burning. And one of the latest things that we did is we got the Board of County Commissioners to agree to 40% compost, including green waste. I have been working on composting. I started with a project in Pinecrest, and we're actually redoing our composting rules because the county is the regulator, and there's a lot of issues with the rules and what fits or what doesn't fit. So, we've actually hit the reset button on that and have found a series of ways to allow more composting. The issue with the composting that we have is obviously leakage into our aquifer, and we're working with DERM, and are going to be presenting something shortly on that. That being said, we are doing a pilot for green waste. We are expanding our composting, and the Board has decided to move forward with an incinerator. We do have a 10-year plan that I brought to the Board for moving trash on trains, and we are now collecting methane from our landfills, which we were not doing previously. What you're considering right now would be done on a property that Miami-Dade County leases from you, and we have been in negotiations

about the extension of that lease for some time. As you know, there were changes to the Manager, so there were some confusion as to terms, but I wanted Roy to speak on specifically that lease because we would be in a difficult position if that lease was not renewed, even if it's for a short period of time. And I know, I saw the numbers, but we actually pay you for the use of that property, and one of the things that was being negotiated was a renegotiation of that lease amount to cover some of your solid waste costs. So, I'll have Roy speak on that, and the pilots that we're doing. I can tell you that I brought an item to the Board on adding mini dumps. I want to do green waste collection at Chapman Fields and at other parks that are nearby so that then we can dispose of it. And one of the things that we discussed with your staff is a), having a hurricane plan with priority for Coral Gables; b), composting and taking the green waste. We could probably do that way faster than your plan. And then also providing a vehicle for your mulching. So, you actually have a lot of green waste, as does Pinecrest and other folks, and what we're discussing is the county taking on as part of that mulching and allowing that to be used county-wide, as opposed to you all having to store it. So, Roy can speak to some of the things that we've been discussing and what's happening with the lease at this moment.

Mr. Roy Coley: Mayor Lago, Commissioners, for the record, my name is Roy Coley. I'm the Chief Utilities and Regulatory Services Officer for Mayor Danielle Levin-Cava. Part of my portfolio is solid waste, and what I want to say to you is, first, I applaud the innovative way you're looking at solving a problem, and Miami-Dade County would like to further partner with you. The Commissioner did mention that we lease a property from you that's very important to all of Miami-Dade County's solid waste stream management, and we would very much like the opportunity to continue working with your staff, your City Manager, and find a way that all of your goals are met and ours too. The residents of Coral Gables are also the residents of Miami-Dade County, and we want to make sure all of our decisions are newer to their benefit.

Mayor Lago: Well, thank you very much for being here, and I look forward to the continued negotiations with the Manager. Thank you, Madam Commissioner, for all your hard work. Again, you're leading, as always, in regards to legislation and environmental stewardship, and we're grateful for that. But I will tell you both, we've got to negotiate rigorously. We are in a, like the county is, City of Coral Gables is counting pennies, counting pennies, and I sent you a memo in regard to our financials. We are working hard to make sure that we can be efficient, that we can be stewards of the environment, and I look forward to partnering with you in regard to that property. But at the end of the day, we have to find ways to make it as efficient as possible. We've got to find ways to save money without raising costs. I will not, every year, every year, we get an increase in the garbage fee, and our options are two. Two options. Well, three. Number one, pass it on to the residents, which we've done for so many years and I voted against. Last year, we made a decision. Myself and the Vice Mayor voted against, voted in favor, excuse me, of reducing the garbage fee from the residents. I think we reduced it by \$300, Madam Vice Mayor?

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Vice Mayor Anderson: That sounds about right.

Mayor Lago: \$300, which was a significant reduction across the board. We're trying to save money for the residents and also insulate ourselves from the ever-growing costs. Again, you're facing it, we're facing it. So, let's work together on that issue. I know how important this piece of property is, and I look forward to achieving a goal that benefits both the county and the city.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: But yeah, and the only thing I would add, we are investing in the property. We have been working on, it's part of our capital plan, so there is a building on it. It has a 40-year inspection. We have been working on it. So, we have been making an investment. As we met with the Manager, we talked about different things, obviously paying more rent to offset the costs that you all have. But then, as I said, also finding a solution for your green waste. I think that our portfolio has a lot more options. Some of the properties that you are all interested in, we could actually facilitate. So our portfolio is a lot bigger. And one of the things that I've done at the county is to force our board not to just focus on incineration, but to look at composting, yard waste, and a lot of different things all over the county. So, I think there's a real opportunity here to partner and to do both things. I would just ask you, because of the time constraints, we're just concerned because we need, well, we have six months left on this lease. And it is a large part of our collection and movement of the trash. And we were actually looking at expanding it so that things could move faster.

Mayor Lago: I completely understand your concern. The City of Coral Gables was your partner. We're not going to shut you out from one day to the next. That would never be the way that we operate. What I need to make sure is, for example, when it was mentioned before in that presentation, this is close to 100% emissions-free, as it gets. This has all the qualifications, has all the environmental qualifications, requirements, and achievements in regards to the system. So it is an environmentally friendly system. The city sets itself apart on being the most environmentally friendly city in Miami-Dade County. For example, we have two Commissioners here. I don't think there's any other Commissioner in Miami-Dade County whose house runs on solar. We have two Commissioners here that sit on this side. It's myself and the Vice Mayor.

So I can go on and on and on. But the point is that I got to insulate myself from the continued cost that's going up. I can't pass it on to my retired residents. The cost, we lowered it \$300. We absorbed that. What's the number, Mr. Manager, that it cost us last year? That \$300 cut?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, it cost us \$3.6 million dollars.

Mayor Lago: \$3.6 million dollars. That is a real reduction for residents. So, we're trying to find solutions. We're looking forward to partnering with you. We're going to continue the conversation.

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And I think we can. But I just want you to understand the position that we're in as a city. I got to deliver for the residents.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: We agree. And we're just here to tell you that these two things are not in conflict.

Mayor Lago: I know. I know.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: So you can move forward on this. It's not necessarily in conflict with what we do at the property and with our current use. So that's all that we request and that you continue to negotiate with us as to the extension of that lease.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Mr. Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, through the Mayor, thank you. The problem is not only the waste disposal. The problem is the issues that we have in case of a hurricane. We've lost our rental site. We have no place to put the substantial amount of material. We're a Tree City, USA City. And during Irma, we had 360,000 cubic yards of material. We came within two days of having to stop collection because we had no place to put it. A big problem for us right now is that the site that we were using, the Pompano site from Waste Management, is no longer available. So instead of having a two-hour trip, now it's a six-hour trip. So, we would be forced to use Lee-Lincoln or the golf course. Those are two alternatives that we would use.

Mayor Lago: No, no, no, that's not going to fly with the residents.

City Manager Iglesias: No, no, no, no, and those would be a huge category if there's a huge category hurricane. So, we tried to work with Dade County through Irma. We were not successful. And we came twice within two days of stopping, of almost stopping collection. One of the things that we have with this system is that it's EPA exempt, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection exempt. So it's a very environmentally safe system. It produces this biochar, which is a large reduction in mass that we would use. It could be used the way it's processed into low-grade concrete, low-grade asphalt, could be used as an additive to our topsoil. So I look forward to working with Dade County, but I cannot recommend something that we cannot live with, not only from a monetary perspective, but also from a hurricane perspective. We came very, very, very, very close. It's a huge concern. I had a huge concern during Hurricane Andrew. We had debris all over the city. What happens with green matter, it becomes kindling in a month. I was very concerned about a fire spreading throughout the entire city. We have to be able to get rid of our green waste. It's a life safety issue. And those are the issues that the Mayor and we've been working

on this for a long time. And so, this is what generated this. And we will be happy to help with you, to work with the county, but we have a lot of issues to work on.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: Agree. And like I told you, we have several sites that you all do not have access to. We have our own sites and others that we can acquire. And we're happy to partner with you on that. The only thing that I would add is that pursuant to the divesting that's happening at the State of Florida, DEP will become part of the county in 2026. So, we will be the regulatory authority that oversees all of this. So there's a whole series of other things, right, that happens and we're dealing with it as we work through what we want to do, right? So, I think that there is a tremendous opportunity to partner. And like I said, even if it's a short-term lease and not to the extent that we had it in the past, I think that there definitely is a path forward. And there's a lot of value that we can bring with our existing assets because this will take you some time and we could have something happen in a month, in two months, in three months. And I think what we need to work on is a unified plan that prioritizes Coral Gables, given your participation in our waste management programming because of this property.

City Manager Iglesias: Well, as long as the county understands that we have a long-term goal here and we have looked at solutions that really help our city. And the prior contract was 30 years, I believe that's too long. And if we have something new, it would be for a shorter period of time, but maybe with extensions or something like this. But I think we can work together and see what we can come up with in a number of issues that we have to work out.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: Happy to do so. Thank you all.

Mr. Roy Coley: Thank you for bringing up Irma. My colleague, Jimmy Morales, was the City Manager of Miami Beach there in Irma and I worked for him at that time. And we had the very same experience at Miami Beach that you're describing Coral Gables had in Irma. So, we're extremely sensitive and mindful. Jimmy Morales and I have teamed together working with the county's Emergency Management. We're actively trying to identify additional debris reduction sites county-wide, not only for the county, but for all municipalities, because I think many of the municipalities had the same experience Coral Gables had in Irma and Miami Beach had. And we're also very mindful that when Irma came through here, it was actually in a tropical storm. And that had that been a category two, three or four hurricane, the problem would have been exponentially worse. And so, we're mindful of that. And you have our commitment that we're working to find a solution for all of us there.

City Manager Iglesias: During Irma, the county decided not to have any temporary burn sites or not accept mulch at the landfills. So, we had no place to go. And that's something that is very problematic.

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Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: Agreed.

Mayor Lago: So, we'll work on this. Thank you.

Miami-Dade County Commissioner Regalado: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much.