

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting  
Agenda Items C-1 and C-2  
February 14, 2023  
City Commission Chambers  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**

**Vice Mayor Michael Mena**

**Commissioner Rhonda Anderson**

**Commissioner James Cason**

**Commissioner Kirk Menendez**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**

**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**

**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Development Services Director, Suramy Cabrera**

**Police Chief, Ed Hudak**

**Public Works Director, Hermes Diaz**

**Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer, Melissa de Zayas**

**Assistant Public Works Director, Deena Bell-Llewellyn**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Maria Cruz**

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Agenda Items C-1 and C-2 [9:44 a.m.]

A discussion regarding Code concerns.

(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Discussion regarding Citywide sidewalks.

(Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

Mayor Lago: Alright, so moving on to Mayor's Comments. The first one I'd like to discuss is Item C-1, discussion regarding Code concerns. So, this is not really about concerns. I just kind of want to have a moment here amongst the Commission since we have a little bit of an opportunity for sunshine here, and I want to acknowledge staff's work in regards to Code. We are doing everything in our power, along with the Commissioners, to really focus in on code enforcement. Suramy and her team have grown code enforcement, are refocusing on different areas of the City that we're having issues with, especially in North Gables with illegal dumping. We're going to address that with cameras, hopefully in the near future. We're going to try to get that in this year's budget. Staff is working on that. But I'm trying -- and I want to put this in the radar of the Commission because no matter how hard we hit code enforcement, no matter how much the fines that we're hitting, no matter how much Martha and the team send out constant videos and messaging on the standards that we need to uphold here in the City, it seems that certain residents are not understanding this. And I want to be very careful how I say this because I go by the City on a daily basis and I send 25, 30, 40, 50 code enforcement issues, which are blatant code enforcement issues. You know what your dumping dates are. You know when you're allowed to put things in your trash pit. The idea of putting things out on a Saturday and you don't get picked up 'til next Friday, it's just a lack of consideration for your fellow residents. Your garbage is just sitting out there for days. The illegal dumping in North Gables, we're going to handle that. We're going to handle that with cameras and we're going to prosecute the individuals that are coming into our community and dumping. And it's costing the City -- by the way, it will cost the City money to install these cameras, but it'll save the City money anyways for disposal of garbage over the long one. So, this is a five, ten-year investment. But the idea, when we call ourselves the City Beautiful -- and again, do not believe the scare tactics of certain people in this community who say that we want to get rid of trash pits -- but we need to find a solution here, and I don't know what that solution is. I don't know if that solution is we have to increase fines. I don't know if that solution is we have to hire more code enforcement officers. But it's gotten to the point where people who live in this community who know very well that they're not allowed to dump 50 cans of paint, put 50 cans of paint outside their house. They know that we offer an exceptional recycling event twice a year, which we will take anything that is hazardous waste, and we'll get rid of it for

you at no cost. If you want to dispose of batteries, we can do it in the buildings -- in City buildings. If you have massive amounts of garbage, we can do a special pickup. We do things that no other city does. We pick up garbage in trash pits every single week. We don't want to change that. But I want to work -- I'm trying to make the City as beautiful as possible. Look at what we're doing as a City in our downtown, re-landscaping, focusing on sidewalks, beautifying façades. All City buildings are being cleaned, they're being painted. We're working on beautifying the City and upholding our standard. I want to understand -- and I -- this is just kind of more me just talking - - of what my colleagues think we should do to kind of push forward and make people understand, because we tried with Martha and the team to send out mailers. We just sent out -- we did recycling videos and explaining to people what you can put on your trash pits, what you can't put. I'm sending out letters to new residents that are moving into the City, telling them, "Hey, this is your pickup day for trash. This is your recycling. This is how we expect you to recycle." So, we're doing everything we possibly can. And then we also provide -- Code Enforcement, who does a wonderful job -- we provide them with a warning before we actually give them a ticket. But we seem to have these repeat offenders over and over and over again. And then when residents call us on weekends and they say, "Hey, look, my neighbor has just put all this stuff out; it's been there for four days. Pickup is not 'til Tuesday. I have to live with that over the weekend." We seem to have our hands tied. So, I'd like for my colleagues, if they can, to think about it, you know, to work with staff to see what we can do, to see if they have any ideas, any -- you know, I've fallen short. I don't know what else to do.

Commissioner Anderson: I share your frustrations, Mayor. I mean, we -- it seems that even with Code Enforcement, we go through a process. First, you know, they're warned and cited. Second, they take the labels off the box so they can say, "It's not mine." Third, the box disappears into a black bag. The camera idea, you know, I've seen construction debris dumped at particular sites over and over and over again. And even where residents or tenants in buildings resort to the "take-the-label-off" method, mobilized cameras might be the way to go until we retrain the habits of those individuals to understand that it's just not acceptable behavior. It's adding to our overall trash bill for all residents, increasing the fees for all residents for the cost of disposal of the things

where, if we recycled it, or you know, we didn't have the eyesores out there in front of our houses that, you know, would increase property values. So, yes, I'm in favor of the mobilized camera.

Mayor Lago: Can I add something to that? And I'm happy you brought it up because you just reminded me. I had talked to staff in November, so what we're seeing now is now a proliferation of black bags throughout the city, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Why? Because it's -- before you put your grass clippings and you put your -- and you put your grass clippings into a black bag. So, now what they've done is, okay, perfect, so now residents are starting to put garbage -- garbage with trash clippings and they leave it out there four or five days, five or six black bags. My neighborhood is covered with them. If we're going to keep trash pits, which we're all in favor of keeping trash pits, and the purpose of a trash pit is to allow 24/7, 7 days a week for landscaping debris, then perfect. Let's put landscaping debris free of garbage bags. Staff told me that they were going to have some information for me this year, in 2023, February or March, on how we could proceed with allowing trash pits just to be for landscaping debris seven days a week. And if you wanted to throw out your garbage, you throw it out the night before at 6 o'clock so that people could live with just green matter, not live with piles of black and white garbage bags in an entire community. That is not a civilized way of living, in my opinion. So, if we're going to keep trash pits -- we've already removed the cardboard, which is saving us a lot of money. Now, let's move and not allow for plastic bags to be sitting outside of people's yards. I'm of -- I think that's the way -- I don't have a garbage pit, by the way. I got rid of my garbage pit. And I live -- I'm free of that. My swale is beautiful, it's landscaped. My landscaper takes away the clippings. If I have something -- like a palm frond or an oak, you know, something that I need to pick up, I put it on the side of the yard, and it gets taken away. If I have something to throw away, I have something that I'll put on my driveway, a chair, a refrigerator, anything that gets taken away, we leave it on the driveway, and it gets taken away by our exceptional garbage team. So, I would like for staff -- please, I've asked for this last year. I'm asking for it again with my colleagues, if you'll support me on this. I need a plan to allow trash pits to only be green matter seven days a week, no plas -- no bags, no poopy bags, no nothing, nothing. I have a neighbor that has a thousand poopy bags, and they complain. And I said, "The only thing you can do is get rid of your trash pit." I

can't stop people -- I can't put a police officer in front of your trash pit to stop people who are walking -- we live in a very high traffic area. We live next to UM. I can't stop somebody from dropping a poopy bag in your front door, in your trash pit. And I know it's funny because a lot of people are snickering and laughing, and these may seem like benign Coral Gables problems, but for some people, they're important. So, I ask my colleagues to think about how to resolve this issue. Mr. Manager, Mr. Clerk, I am asking for, in March, for staff to provide me with a resolution on how to only move trash pits to green matter. Please, please, please do not allow and do not proliferate lies so that people get scared in this community. The people out there who write in blogs anonymously, do not lie that we're moving trash pits. We're not removing trash pits. We're trying to find ways to clean up and beautify our City. Nobody's getting rid of trash pits please. So, what I ask the Manager -- if my colleagues will support me, if they're in line with this, to please find me a plan of action on how to move where trash pits are only for green matter up to 6 o'clock the night before, when then you can put whatever you like, as long as it's not hazardous material, to get it taken away.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, if I may add. Trash -- the -- that is the current standard, which is -- which is green matter only until 6 p.m. the day before your pickup. The black bag issue is something that's been done for a number of years, but we can certainly eliminate that and say all green matter has to be outside, and just green matter only. And black bags can be put out after 6 p.m. the day before you pick up, just like everything else.

Commissioner Cason: Just a question.

City Manager Iglesias: I think we can certainly enforce that now.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Cason: It's very frustrating. I remember, like you, I used to write every single person that moves into the Gables. I sent them a letter about...

Mayor Lago: I'm doing the same thing.

Commissioner Cason: Garbage rules.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Commissioner Cason: So that every person moving in knew what you could and couldn't do, but it doesn't seem to make a difference because you have the same problem -- this is 10, 12 years later. I think the question is, you have certain people that are inveterate abusers of the system. Why not publish the names of them. Why not make a list of the ones that have -- have -- we did this with the -- when we had 680 people didn't pay their garbage bill for 10 years, some of them. They owed us \$34 million. We made a list. Suddenly, everybody started paying. Public shaming sometimes can work. I mean...

Vice Mayor Mena: Look, I...

Commissioner Cason: If you have...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, go ahead.

Commissioner Cason: If you have somebody that does is over and over again, you fine them, they don't seem to care, well, maybe people would like to know who these people are, who the neighbors are that are abusing it.

Vice Mayor Mena: I -- yeah, I think -- I do think enforcement is the obvious answer, right? I mean, it's not 100 percent foolproof, but there needs to be more enforcement. My only concern with that, what you just said is -- not my only concern, but one of them is I can tell you, using the example of the dog bags as an example, I used to routinely have -- I don't have a dog. I used to -

- before I closed my trash pit, I would routinely find those bags in my trash pit because people are walking their dog.

Commissioner Cason: Yeah, I mean...

Vice Mayor Mena: They pick it up.

Commissioner Cason: That's not your fault. That's somebody --

Vice Mayor Mena: Right, but if you start enforcing it against the homeowner on that issue, you know, they don't even have a dog, but they have these bags...

Commissioner Cason: I'm not thinking about that so much, but I'm thinking about the people that put massive amounts of cardboard, all kinds of other things...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Commissioner Cason: There's probably 50 or 100 of them that -- I don't know. You have -- probably have the list of who are the ones that you find over and over again, and the fines don't seem to work because they don't care.

Vice Mayor Mena: I don't -- I just don't think the fines are prolific enough, like you need to be consistent on enforcement. I think if people get a fine every time, they will stop. That's my...

Mayor Lago: So...

Commissioner Cason: Is that the case?

Mayor Lago: Let me -- let me add to that. And I'll call Ms. Cabrera up here really quickly because I'll tell you she has an individual that works under her, Antoine, who I speak with every day, okay, and he's doing a great job. And she could tell you about some of the things that they've done, how they've revamped the program, the additional individuals they've added on weekends. But we're a big city, we're a big city, and there's -- and there are -- this comes down to curbing the behavior by just hammering people with fines, trust me. You're not going to do something when you get a fine, you know. You're not going to. So, Suramy, thank you for being here, Madam Director.

Development Services Director Cabrera: How are you?

Mayor Lago: Will you provide just a little bit of background in regards to what we're talking about and what you're seeing out there?

Development Services Director Cabrera: So, yeah, people continue to put cardboard in the trash pits. They'll put them in black bags. You know, I don't know exactly when they put them out, if it's the night before at 6 o'clock or if they have them out when it's not allowed to be out, but it continues to be a problem every week. It just continues -- it doesn't seem like it's going down. I thought at the beginning it would go down, but it hasn't. And we were -- I think we did like a year of educational and it's just a lot of work for the Code Enforcement group. We have hired two additional staff members. We've got two more positions. We filled them; we're training them, but it is a lot of work.

Mayor Lago: And you do have thousands of tickets that you're giving, thousands.

Development Services Director Cabrera: We do.

Mayor Lago: Thousands of tickets are given so -- and I...

Commissioner Cason: I rode around --



Mayor Lago: And I give...

Commissioner Cason: I rode around with Code Enforcement a couple of weeks ago for several hours, and the complaint was that a lot of these people that keep doing it over and over again, you can fine them, and they don't care.

Mayor Lago: It's a lien on their property.

Commissioner Cason: They don't care because they have homestead (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Commissioner Cason: I mean, so I'm just wondering, do we have any statistics on how many of these people are the ones who are really the critical ones and whether the fines work.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, we talked before about not picking up the cardboard. The black bags with the square boxes inside are fairly obvious. I mean, I've reported them after I've gone biking and I -- you know, routinely the same -- same house put out that bag over the weekend. Their pickup day is not until Tuesday, and you can see the pronounced square shape in it. So, sometimes people get the message when you're not picking up their stuff because now they're upset by it because it's still out there, whether it be moved onto their property as opposed to the City's property to not have the eyesore on there. But I mean, we need to look outside the box sometimes for ideas and try to encourage...

Development Services Director Cabrera: I believe that right now we're not picking it up.

Commissioner Cason: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: No, they're not.

Development Services Director Cabrera: I don't know if (INAUDIBLE) is here.

Mayor Lago: They're not. And then what happens...

Development Services Director Cabrera: We're not picking it up.

Mayor Lago: Is that Code Enforcement -- Code Enforcement officer comes right behind. What I think would address this problem...

Commissioner Anderson: (INAUDIBLE) the bag because...

Mayor Lago: What would address this whole problem is very simple. Mr. Manager, I would like -- with the support of my Commission, if you'll support me on this -- I would like for you to draft -- help me draft legislation that would make trash pits -- again, for people who are listening, please don't write that we're getting rid of trash pits. Please don't do that. It doesn't work. You're not going to stop me. I'm going to continue moving forward, okay. We're going to transform the trash pits, like we did with cardboard. We're going to take out plastic bags. You cannot house green matter in plastic bags. You want to throw your green matter, throw your green matter into the trash pit. It's perfectly fine. I need to write legislation and present it in March that allows Code Enforcement to not have to dig through garbage. It's very simple. If there's a plastic bag on a Monday and your garbage is not being picked up until Friday, fine that resident.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, I think we can do that now. I think I can have our Communications Director set up -- similar to what we did on the "Break the Box" -- and to clearly indicate that the only thing that can be -- that was not -- that was something that was allowed -- that has been allowed. And the idea, of course, as you know, was to put leaves and things in there, but obviously, it's not working, so we can have a campaign to tell the residents that the only thing that you can

have before 6 p.m. that you can throw out at any and before 6 p.m. on the day prior to your pickup...

Mayor Lago: Loose green matter.

City Manager Iglesias: Is loose green matter.

Mayor Lago: Okay, but I want to make it law, like we made it law with cardboard.

Development Services Director Cabrera: But do -- are we going to allow them to put bags out at 9 o'clock in the morning the day of?

City Manager Iglesias: After 6 o'clock.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, of course, the night before.

Development Services Director Cabrera: So, they could put plastic bags still in the trash pits.

Mayor Lago: You could put anything you want in the trash pits the night before your pickup at 6 o'clock.

City Manager Iglesias: After 6 o'clock.

Development Services Director Cabrera: So, we could still have trash bags with cardboard in them.

Mayor Lago: I mean, you can't -- how are you going to stop that? How do you stop that?

Development Services Director Cabrera: Well, you...

Commissioner Anderson: I would suggest not pick up the bags that have the cardboard in them.

Development Services Director Cabrera: I know, but what I'm saying is...

Commissioner Anderson: That way...

Development Services Director Cabrera: It's still the same amount of volume of work for our staff.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, I mean...

Development Services Director Cabrera: Obviously, because all they're going to do is just put it in...

Mayor Lago: But I think...

Development Services Director Cabrera: At 6:01 p.m.

Mayor Lago: I understand. But I think -- but I think it's also -- I think it's also saves a ton of work six days a week because when you're driving, there shouldn't be anything in the trash pits at all. It should be zero. It should be only green matter, so you can literally drive through the entire neighborhood and see all the trash pits. Are they clean? No, they have a garbage bag. Okay, go and cite that person or go give that person a warning and tell them what the -- and hand them the information. I think that makes things a lot easier.

Development Services Director Cabrera: I need to check, but I think currently that's what we do.

Mayor Lago: We have a...

Development Services Director Cabrera: If we have bags out before 6...

Mayor Lago: Then we have a...

Development Services Director Cabrera: I need to double check.

Mayor Lago: Then we have a major -- no, no, right now -- my understanding is right now, Code Enforcement allows for there to be green matter and there to be black bags. That's how they're hiding cardboard and garbage and all kinds of things. You can put your...

Commissioner Menendez: Mayor, I have a question.

Mayor Lago: Because right now, what the purpose was, we were allowing a black bag, a garbage bag of any color, and you can use it to fill it with your green matter, and that's where then people have also been putting tons of garbage in there to get it out of -- to get it out of their house. So, I mean, I ride every day, 40, 50 photos a day, and I send them. They're everywhere. So, I need to understand if we -- I want to simplify the process so that Code Enforcement can just drive and say -- and that people understand how clear it is. It's only green matter six days a week in your trash pit. That's all I want it to be.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Only green matter until 6 o'clock. After 6 o'clock, you could put plastic bags.

Mayor Lago: Yeah, but the night before it's your pickup.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Yeah, I understand.

City Manager Iglesias: Night before.

Development Services Director Cabrera: I think that's what we're enforcing now.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, what I think we can do -- I'm sorry, Commissioner. Please go.

Commissioner Menendez: I don't have a trash pit. We put our garbage bags the side of the house. They get picked up. Why -- what's the difference between houses that have trash pits, that don't have trash pits with regards to the location of the garbage bags? I mean, can't the folks that have a trash pit leave their garbage bags on the side of the home, like pretty much everybody else that doesn't have a trash pit? That way, the trash pit's simply for the green matter, and your garbage bags are like every other house that doesn't have a trash pit.

Commissioner Anderson: May I add to that?

Commissioner Menendez: That should simplify...

City Manager Iglesias: That changes the logistics of how we pick up, that you have to go back into the house to do it. And it's a lot -- it's completely different than having something by a swale. So, garbage we pick up back-of-house. Trash, we pick up in the swale. So, operationally, it's completely different, and we'd have to add additional staff to actually handle kind of back of-house pickup as far as trash is concerned.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay, so I'm going to add...

Development Services Director Cabrera: The problem is that people are putting trash now in their garbage pits.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: The -- yeah. The prob -- part of the problem is that, and as we have been discussing, possible separation and reuse of the green matter, we could just limit it to green matter in that trash pit, and put your furniture and every other thing...

Mayor Lago: Right next to it.

Commissioner Anderson: In your driveway or a separate location separately. This also will help train residents in preparation for the next hurricane, so that we have less of a heavy lift when FEMA is concerned, in which we only are supposed to have...

Mayor Lago: So, this gives you an example...

Commissioner Anderson: Green matter in there. And no matter how many times I would explain it to certain residents that it needs to be kept separate...

Mayor Lago: So, these...

Commissioner Anderson: It's hard to retrain people.

City Manager Iglesias: I think under -- Commissioner, under Irma, I think people were very good at keeping garbage separate from actually trash. The problem that we have, if we have a trash pit and then we have to pick up a trash pit, then pick up at a drive way, we could damage the driveway, you know.

Commissioner Anderson: You all have never damaged my driveway.

City Manager Iglesias: Well...

Commissioner Anderson: I put out...

City Manager Iglesias: But if we do that...

Commissioner Anderson: I put out some...

City Manager Iglesias: If we do that citywide, it changes operations completely. I think that what we can do is make sure that we can bring in legislation so that black bags can only be -- that we clearly have an enforcement of green matter only until 6 p.m. the day before the pickup. And if we don't have that, then we can say -- as you said, Mayor, that would make it a lot easier. If you don't have -- it's going to be only green, or a citation is issued. Because if we start picking up in various locations, then I mean, it -- operationally, it gets to be a problem.

Commissioner Anderson: So, I'm going to give you an example. Here's my pile of green matter. Next to it, I can have my black bag or my piece of furniture or whatever it is, but it's separate, so that when we move forward to a more ecological way of dealing with our green matter, okay, it's not a heavy lift. And then again, when next hurricane comes, we've already trained residents that this needs to be separate. And no matter -- you know, I understand we did pretty good, but there are folks that I talk to, you know, their trellis came down, their patio furniture was thrown out, their plastic chairs, they decided to get rid of at the same time, their water heater, whatever else that they wanted to hide underneath the pile of green was there. So, if we start with the training methods now, you know, and follow up with enforcement, we'll be able to do it.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: And I've had (INAUDIBLE) and you know, they just -- you have to sometimes train them by not picking it up.



Development Services Director Cabrera: I got to let you know what Code Enforcement does now because I just had it verified with the Code Enforcement Manager. They don't allow the black backs before 6 o'clock the day before.

Commissioner Anderson: I understand.

Development Services Director Cabrera: That is what they're enforcing now, so it's the same thing.

Commissioner Anderson: But just put it, you know, like a side pile.

Mayor Lago: Then we have a problem.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Well, because...

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, we don't have enough to...

Development Services Director Cabrera: If people hide it under the green matter, they hide it.

Vice Mayor Mena: But you also don't have enough...

Development Services Director Cabrera: We got to dig through the trash pits.

Commissioner Anderson: I understand.

Vice Mayor Mena: I also don't think we have enough enforcement. I'm sure they do do it that way, but they can only cover so much ground. I get that. You know, they can't -- they're not going to cover every pit, you know, in the entire city, I get it. You know, so I think it's a matter

of -- frankly, I think it's a matter of, at some point, we're going to have to allocate more budget dollars to enforcement to be able to adequately enforce the regulations.

Mayor Lago: Well, Vice Mayor, if I may -- and I hate to say this. I already told the Manager, we're just going to have to give up because, look, these are pictures that I took. This is North Gables. This is five days before their pickup day. This is the way these residents live in North Gables, okay. Next picture, please. This is North Gables, the pictures that I took. I took these pictures, like I do every single day. I have 20 minutes before a meeting at Bachour. I just went, I did a little code enforcement. This is 20 minutes before my meeting. These are all the pictures that I took. I took these pictures five days before the code enforcement. You want to know why? Because I them yesterday before I met with the County Commissioner for coffee. This is North Gables, okay. Again, if this was a trash pit that was only allowed to have green matter, it would look completely different. Look at that dirty roof, how dirty that roof is. That roof is black. It's a white roof. I know we're not talking about that, but they included it. This is an abandoned -- an abandoned -- first off, the sign is down, knocked down the sign for the parking lot, City parking lot. And then they abandoned a mattress there. This is why we have to have cameras.

Commissioner Cason: Are the fines working?

Mayor Lago: Look -- but look at this, look at this.

Development Services Director Cabrera: No.

Mayor Lago: They just left there -- five days just left there. And the residents of the North Gables are like, "Vince, we're tired. We're tired of having this like this every day, and we don't know what to do. We don't know what to do." I want to show you all this pictures, and then I -- this trash pit right here -- stop it right there. This corner right here is notorious. Every week, every single week that corner, which is an empty lot, a block away from Salzedo, 2020 Salzedo, is packed.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Right. And who do you find in that situation?

Mayor Lago: But hold on, look.

Development Services Director Cabrera: That's illegal dumping.

Mayor Lago: You see that cone? That cone right there has been there for months. I've been asking it to be removed. Look at the rear of the building, the rear of the building. You know, it's been -- just things that are left out constantly for months and months and months. And that's why you're going to see today a law that I'm pass -- that I'm going to bring to you, which deals with construction infrastructure that's being left out. This is yesterday. This is yesterday, and I think this may interest everybody, if I could just get everybody's attention. This is yesterday, a picture that I took on Santillane, okay. Vice Mayor, look at this. This is in our own backyard, okay. This is an empty lot on Santillane. I'm driving by, I look to the right. This is a homeless encampment. This is a homeless encampment in our city, ten feet away from a school. You can see the fence in the back. That's a school on Ponce. There's a homeless person or group of homeless people living in this empty lot in North Gables. How could nobody -- how could nobody catch this? You know, we drive by -- I drive by, I see it. I see some furniture in the back. I got to stop. I get off and I took -- look, I took all these pictures myself. I do it every single day, do a public records request. I have -- every single day, I take pictures throughout, and I send it to staff to have it addressed, every single day, 40, 50 of them. I'm going to stop doing this because it's not working. It's not working. It's not. And it takes a lot of time from my day to try to clean up certain parts of the City, which people are complaining and say, "Vince, we need to do something about code enforcement. We need to do something about illegal dumping." We need to -- if we're not going to address these issues with either more enforcement, more dollars for enforcement, hiring 50 people, an army of people to be out there doing this, we're going to lose the character of our city. We're going to become like any other city. And if that's what we're going to become, we'll become that. That's fine; that's not a problem. But we need to do something. I really, really want

to pass law that does not allow green -- does not allow any plastic bags or anything in a trash pit outside of green matter and loose green matter. Because if we're already enforcing that and it's not law, we need to make it a law so that people don't have a loophole. "Oh, it's not law, it's not a law," like cardboard is law. You have to recycle your cardboard to save the City money, so we don't have to pass it on to the residents when the County keeps raising the tipping fee every year. So, I don't know...

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, we can bring that to the Commission, and we can also start -- I can speak to our Communications Director to start a campaign on that already to start making it clear that the only thing that you can have before 6 p.m. on your trash day prior -- the day prior to trash day is green matter.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Let me make it very clear. Our team at Code Enforcement is working incredibly hard. I speak to Antoine; I speak to Ms. Cabrera every single day on this. They're doing a great job, lightyears of what it was six months ago. You just need to be a little more focused and give them more resources if it's required in this year's budget. The cameras are going to help North Gables to clean that area up, to hold people accountable. We're going to write this legislation. My last point -- and this is for the City Attorney -- fines -- let's talk fines. You get a warning. What are the state mandates in regards to fines?

City Attorney Suárez: So, Mayor, we have fines set forth in our Code. We have a penalty schedule for different violations. With respect to trash out before six, I believe it's \$100, if I'm not mistaken. For dumping trash in places where it's prohibited, it's \$500.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so is that...?

Development Services Director Cabrera: I just want to be clear. When you're -- when we could tie it to a property, we could enforce it, but we can't enforce illegal dumping as code enforcement.

Mayor Lago: I understand.

Development Services Director Cabrera: We can't enforce the homeless people as code enforcement.

Mayor Lago: I understand that. No, no, that's not in doubt. That's why I'm giving your cameras in the next budget.

Development Services Director Cabrera: But even with the cameras, we would not be able to ticket anybody because we ticket to a property.

Mayor Lago: But let me -- let me just -- me personally, as a civilized person -- and everybody in this room is civilized -- I would find it very, very risky with a career, with a family, to go take my car and go dump all my illegal -- all my furniture in the middle of Coral Gables when there's a camera looking at me and I could be potentially embarrassed that I could have somebody come to my door and send me a letter. You know, I would consider that embarrassing. You know, that's how you curtail the dumping. They're doing it in Kionne McGhee's district in Homestead. He's battling that every single day and he's setting up cameras left and right, and there is an immediate -- and the moment you put cameras, people conform, and they want to act -- they want to act properly. There's -- you know, there's a message that's sent, just like with the police department, as I mentioned before. I can't speak about issues in regards to investigations, but people who are going to commit crimes, they come to the City of Coral Gables to commit them here. Why? Because we're an affluent community, but they better be careful. They better be aware because our police department has every tool that other police departments don't have, and we're going to catch you. And we're going to be an example out of you, and we're going to prosecute you. So, what I would like to do is not only the bags, I would like to give more money in the next budget to hiring more enforcement officers, but I'd also like to send a very strong message.

Development Services Director Cabrera: You have a litter problem. I'm just going to speak openly. You have a...

Mayor Lago: But...

Development Services Director Cabrera: Litter problem. Make a fine that if you litter it's \$500 and enforce it.

Mayor Lago: But I'm not -- that's where I'm going. That's where I'm...

Development Services Director Cabrera: I know, I mean, just...

Mayor Lago: But that's my...

Development Services Director Cabrera: People throwing stuff everywhere.

Mayor Lago: But that's my next thing. That's where I was going to go.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: So, the next thing is -- that's why we replaced all the landscaping in downtown because there was litter every -- inside the landscape, so now you can see it, so now it's visible. So, now, we, as a city, have to step up to clean that litter. You just can't have it hidden inside the trees and the bushes anymore, like I will show you now in some pictures that I sent to the County mayor. And the next step here -- and I would need help from the City Attorney and from the City Manager -- is to tell me, you get a warning, why is it \$100 fine? Let's make it \$1,000 fine. You get a warning, you get a \$1000 fine. You'll see how quickly people conform, and they have to address the issue, okay. So, is that possible? Is there a state preemption that doesn't allow us to do that?

City Attorney Suárez: So, right now, our Code would allow \$1,000 fine, but it has to be set by the Code Enforcement Board or by the special master. And so, it is -- we are allowed to do that but...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Attorney Suárez: But right now, our...

Development Services Director Cabrera: But again, it's only if we have a property owner.

Mayor Lago: That's fine, but that's what I'm talking about. I'm taking about property. I'm not talking about illegal dumping.

City Attorney Suárez: Okay.

Mayor Lago: I'm going to curb illegal dumping with a camera, so let's -- that's done. That's going to be in the budget. We're going to curb illegal dumping with cameras, and I'm going to take care of that. And the homeless issue, I just need people to have their eyes a little bit more open, you know, and look at things because if I drive down Santillane and I see it, and I'm -- I should be wearing glasses, I just don't want to wear them. I already have them on my nightstand. But if I see it 300 feet away that there's something going on in the bushes over there, and I get out of my car and I walk up, it's a problem. So, we need to be -- we need to have staff and my colleagues on the Commission have their eyes open when they're driving around and seeing things and reporting them. As I have copied some of my colleagues on the Commission to show them what I'm doing every single day in regards to code enforcement, and which, as you know, I've been doing for the last four or five years. It's not going to stop; I'm going to keep doing it. But what I need is a real hammer. I need a hammer, and it's got to be \$1,000, perfect. Let's get rid of plastic bags in the garbage pits, and let's do what the Vice Mayor says. Let's increase the budget so we can give you more fire power to start fining people and holding people accountable. Then

when we start liening properties over this, you'll see how quickly people conform. We live in the City Beautiful for a reason.

Commissioner Anderson: Well, I'm going to just add on the cameras -- and I'll ask the City Attorney to chime in. It's recorded on the camera. You have an individual, if they can be identified...

Mayor Lago: Broadcast it, like the Mayor says.

Commissioner Anderson: It's a misdemeanor.

Commissioner Cason: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: The police can give the person a warning. They can charge them with a misdemeanor. I know -- you -- I mean, you don't -- I know you don't...

Commissioner Cason: Can you lien a house over this?

Commissioner Anderson: No, no, but you know, we have drive-through dumpers.

Police Chief Hudak: Yes. No, no, no, I...

Commissioner Anderson: It's illegal to dump. Illegal dumping is illegal dumping.

Police Chief Hudak: It is. No, no. No doubt about that. I just need to manage -- if we put these cameras up there, we can watch them as much as we can, 24/7. They have to be infrared at night. And then the case would get open when we would have to use the CJIS to run the license tag and prove who was in the car and identify it that way.



Commissioner Anderson: Well...

Police Chief Hudak: So, as much -- I just -- I would...

Commissioner Anderson: They have to get out of the car to dump it so...

Police Chief Hudak: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: You know, you dump something...

Police Chief Hudak: Then we would have to identify who the person was that was actually -- we could not arrest or charge the person who owned it because what we're seeing in the south end and when we have had interactions with people, it is some of the landscapers just dumping and pushing and going, and the owner of the truck is the company. So, again...

Commissioner Anderson: But the owner of the truck is the company, and there are times that vehicles are liened, correct?

Police Chief Hudak: Not by the police department.

Commissioner Anderson: Not by the police department.

Police Chief Hudak: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: But I mean, this is something we can explore.

Police Chief Hudak: Right. So, yeah, I think that -- Commissioners, Mayor, I think this needs a much more of a holistic talk with the Manager about how we're going to address this. I think when you look at other code enforcement regimes -- for a better term -- you know, that's why we propose

the body cameras for our Code Enforcement officers. We want to make them safe, but also, to document in front of somebody's house what's in that. So, you know, if the fines go up, we're going to have that documentation. The police department will manage that body cam footage, but it also protects our Code Enforcement officers. We have to have a bigger discussion on noise ordinance violations. The Code Enforcement staffing in one of our cities works 'til like 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, and they work side by side with the police department. And they cite businesses and noise -- and they respond to noise calls at residence, and they cite within the City. So, I think there's some other ways that we can address this because the disconnect of what I think you're all experiencing is -- Mayor, I hadn't seen that. If my officers would have seen that encampment, you know, in year's past, we would call Code Enforcement. To their point, that's not their responsibility, so we can change how we deal with that kind of debris, and then we would contact, through the neighborhood team leaders, Public Works to remove all that stuff, not deal with the individuals. So, I think we have to look at it in a holistic, almost like a workshop type thing of where do we want to go to get where you want us to be.

Mayor Lago: So, you know what needs to happen too then, Mr. Manager, for example, what the Chief is saying right now is you need to go and find that person. That landowner needs to be fined. They have an empty lot. They're not maintaining it. They're not driving by. They don't have a construction fence. They haven't addressed the issue. They have a bunch of overgrown bushes, a little forest in the back. People are using it. By the way, there's a school 10 feet away from them. It's a small -- it's a preschool where kids are playing. So, we either address the issue or we keep throwing up our hands and saying, "Hey, it's somebody else's problem and we'll figure this out." And you know, we got to coordinate amongst ourselves, and I think it starts with addressing the green matter issue, only allowing green matter, no plastic bags. That allows Code Enforcement to literally drive by a street, flying by a street and saying, "There's no garbage in the trash pits. We're good. Go to the next street." They don't have to work trash pit by trash pit by trash pit by trash pit. There shouldn't be anything in the trash pit but green matter. And number two is raise the fines. Mr. Clerk -- Mr. Clerk, Mr. Manager, please, in March, I would like a piece of legislation.

I will be the sponsor. Who else would like to cosponsor with me? I welcome everybody. So far, we got four hands up. And I want it to be...

Commissioner Anderson: Now you have four.

Mayor Lago: No plastic bags, zero, only green matter in the trash pit. Please, in bold, so that everybody can read it. We are not removing trash pits. Number two, raising fines as allowed by the Code, okay. Three, clearly defining how we're going to address the problem. What is it, one warning, then a fine? Or no more warnings? Enough. If someone has lived in the City 20 years, 15 years, they know the process. They know the process, okay. Please, Mr. Manager, will you have Martha and your team send that information that this is...

City Manager Iglesias: We will start...

Mayor Lago: That this is forthcoming, and the same thing we did with cardboard, like Ms. Cabrera said, we educated people. And what are they doing? They skirt the issue. They put the cardboard in the plastic -- in the bags. They dump the bags in the green matter. They put the green matter on top of it. By the way, I just got a resident right here who just sent me a picture, Cecilia and Alhambra, same example, mountain of green matter. It's been there for a week. What do people do? They dump furniture, they dump plastic bags, then they throw more green matter on top, but you can see the furniture. You can see the green matter. That is not a way to live on that street. I have it here so -- Mr. Mayor, can you see that? Yes or no.

Commissioner Cason: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: So...

City Manager Iglesias: Mr. Mayor and Commissioners, I think that that will clarify it. We will bring that legislation. We will also -- we were going to look at raising fines and also warnings.

And I'll have our Communications director start a campaign similar to "Break the Box" to make sure that everybody understands.

Mayor Lago: And the final point, to the Vice Mayor's point, please let's talk about -- see what Ms. Cabrera needs in regards to the next budget cycle to ensure that we have the necessary troops on the ground to address this. I want to be very clear, be very clear, as I always am, because, at the end of the day, you know, things get confusing. This is not an indictment on anybody. We just need to be very clear so that people cannot skirt the law. And if we do not do this today, in the near future, we'll become like any other city. Just like if we don't give the police the necessary resources, our ability to fight crime will dwindle, and we'll suffer. So, we need to do this moving forward to really ensure our way of life here in the City, okay?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Mayor.

Vice Mayor Mena: But one last point, you know, Commissioner Anderson, you mentioned like the idea of separating the non-green matter. From my -- like I don't know how I feel about that, to be honest with you, because it almost sounds to me like now you're going to have a second -- I don't want to say pit, but a second pile of things, so we're almost proliferating the issue with this.

Mayor Lago: Can I tell you why she brings that up, Mr. Vice Mayor?

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: It's because when we talked about potentially having a company who comes in -- we're discussing not only us, Miami-Dade County's...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: Doing a pilot program. Who else? Tallahassee's doing a pilot program.

City Manager Iglesias: Leon County.

Mayor Lago: Leon County, excuse me, where it's -- instead of that green matter going to Miami-Dade County and being disposed at, which costs us money per ton, that is diverted to a company which takes that green matter, recycles it, and uses it for something like an aggregate for sidewalks and construction...

City Manager Iglesias: (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: Where we would actually be able to save some money...

Vice Mayor Mena: Oh, yeah, I recall.

Mayor Lago: And recycle that. So, the only way to do that is you can't throw furniture and plastic bags and everything with the green in the pit because then when they go to pick it up, it's got to be kind of -- it makes it harder and more costly.

Vice Mayor Mena: We don't separate it now?

Mayor Lago: But that's something that we're talking about in the future to see if we can even do something...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: In the future like that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: And I'm -- and right now, it's a study so...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: I'd rather worry about beautifying the city, and we'll look at that in the near future.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, I -- again, I -- to me, it's more enforcement and more enforcement requires more money budgeted that ultimately -- that, to me, is the key to unlock the whole thing. I think you need more people. You know, I am troubled by the photo you shared of the homeless, you know, situation there because the fact that nobody has seen that is a problem. I don't know how long it's been there, you know, if it's...

Mayor Lago: (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: Been there a day or two, okay, but if it's been there longer than that, you know, at some point...

Mayor Lago: There's a lot of garbage. There's a lot of garbage. When I walked up to the encampment, there's a lot of garbage there, so they've been living there for some time.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right, right.

Commissioner Menendez: I just want to comment that, you know, in addition to this situation, there are other situations that I've encountered recently that I identify as gray areas in our rules and regulations, and I think we start -- need to start identifying those gray areas that folks don't quite know what to do with them so that we provide clarity so people can behave and do the things that they're -- they know they're supposed to do and they want to do. But they're -- I think there're some gray areas out there in our rules and regulations, and I think we need to give clarity so we can give proper guidance to let people know this is the way to do this and this is the wrong way to

do this. There'll always be bad apples. There'll always be a few people that'll do whatever they want. And unfortunately, in today's society, it seems to be more and more these days. But I want to create as much clarity so people know the right path forward.

Vice Mayor Mena: And I think -- I'll make this last point, which maybe is a little even more controversial than what we're talking about, but on the green matter, nobody wants to take that away, but you could have some amount of regulation as it relates to that. I can tell you...

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: That my direct next door neighbor, landscapers put the green matter out the day after pickup every single week. So, for six out of seven days a week, the entire year, there is a pile of landscaping out there. We don't want to take away people's ability to put things out there, but I think, like we have a night before...

Mayor Lago: Consideration.

Vice Mayor Mena: On trash...

Mayor Lago: Consideration.

Vice Mayor Mena: Maybe it's not the night before on the landscaping, but maybe two or three days before or something, but we -- you know, we kind of have stayed away from that because we don't want it to be misinterpreted, but I feel like it still leads to, when you drive around, you know, seeing piles of green matter everywhere isn't the most beautiful thing either.

Mayor Lago: No, 100 percent.

Vice Mayor Mena: So, you know, I think you need to have a holistic look at all of this over time and really decide what you want to do about it, but that's something that should be on the table for at least discussing. Not -- again, not taking it away, but I don't know that it should be a free-for-all either.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, we do have a member of the public requesting to speak, Ms. Maria Cruz.

Mayor Lago: Ms. Cruz, good morning. Thank you for being here.

Maria Cruz: I'm walking a little slow. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller Road. I've only lived in the City since 1976, so I have a little history. We're talking about code enforcement. That's how this came up. Code enforcement -- there was a history about code enforcement. Code enforcement was done a little different before. Recently, in recent times, we tried to change how code enforcement was handled before. We have hired people that come from Code Enforcement in other places, and they think that Coral Gables is the same as other places and they try to change. I remember vividly having a Code Enforcement officer assigned to a specific area. That Code Enforcement knew the neighbors, knew when things changed to the degree that they would say, "Oh, my God. I've gone by that house. She hasn't had a garbage for three days. Maybe she's -- there's something wrong." That's what we expected from Code Enforcement. Code Enforcement not only looked at garbage, looked at paint, looked at roofs, I can tell you, because that's why I changed the color of my roof because we had Ms. Bain (phonetic) here that cited me several times for -- because my white roof was not as white as it should have been. Okay, but when you switch the person time and time again and nobody has ownership of an area, it doesn't work like that. When you have the same person going to you, you know what? It's not, "You've never come here. Oh, ma'am, I talked to you a month ago. I talked to you three weeks ago." When you have a different officer rounding,



there's no continuity. That's one problem. Okay, I -- Mayor, you keep saying that Martha and her team -- I don't know what you're talking about. We have a new team?

Mayor Lago: I'm sorry?

Ms. Cruz: Who's Martha? You kept saying Martha and her team.

Mayor Lago: Martha's the -- Martha Pantin, which runs...

Ms. Cruz: Oh.

Mayor Lago: Which runs a lot of our outreach efforts to the residents.

Ms. Cruz: Okay. Now...

Mayor Lago: You know Martha very well.

Ms. Cruz: No, no, but I didn't know who you were talking about. That's why I asked. Okay.

Mayor Lago: I'll refer to her by *apellido* next time.

Ms. Cruz: No, that's alright, that's alright. I just -- I'm just curious. When you're talking about how things look, we're talking about the trash pit. We're talking -- you know what, what about talking about placement of garbage cans and recyclable bins because that also affects -- there are people that live in the City that think that they have to push out their garbage can to the street and that can stays there the whole day. Okay, we have rules. If you're going to set up the rules, include that too.

Mayor Lago: But it's already included.

Ms. Cruz: No, no, but you're talking about legislation now, you know, clean up, make sure people understand. That should be one of the points.

Mayor Lago: Pretty simple. I send pictures of that constantly to staff. And Mr. Manager, you and I've had the discussion. Is -- do we need to clean that up in the legislation to notify residents and to make it easy for staff to find someone who continues to put their garbage bins --? But by the way -- and if we're going to be the clear, like we're going to be very clear about this, it's not only the residents because I drive by when those bins are emptied, they're left at the corner of the street a lot of times...

Ms. Cruz: That...

Mayor Lago: In certain areas of the city. So, we all have to take ownership because -- we all have to take ownership. Because I've sent them to you. I've sent them to Ms. Cabrera where our own team -- and Paula knows this and her team knows this, where I've said, "Guys, you can't -- you cannot take the garbage or take the recycling and leave it on the side of the street." Those bins have to go back behind the house.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, we have...

Ms. Cruz: That's the other thing...

Mayor Lago: You know why? Because I can show you the emails and the text messages from residents who have sent them to me saying we're...

City Manager Iglesias: Yeah, we...

Chair King: We're going into new habits are being formed that are outside of our standards.

City Manager Iglesias: We have a new enterprise system called Rubicon...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

City Manager Iglesias: That is being established with Solid Waste that documents everything, also documents where the truck is. They can take pictures. So, that new system has been implemented, and I think it's working very well. It's paying dividends already.

Ms. Cruz: I think...

Mayor Lago: So, is there legislation -- is legislation required -- that's the one that we're doing with the trash pits now -- that states that residents need to leave their garbage behind and not roll it out to the side of the yard?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, those residents that have been doing that, we've contacted them individually and we're getting compliance. So, the legislation -- the -- that is already in the books.

Ms. Cruz: You know, let me tell you something. It's not just put them behind. They cannot be seen from the street. That was the key in the Code. You cannot see the garbage cans from the street. If you put them in front of your garage, you can see them from the street. That's not where they go.

Mayor Lago: Can we add that to my legislation also, please?

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, yes. And we can look at that, but that's already there. When we have somebody leaving their cans in front, our supervisor visits the site, let's them know that they have to be on the side of the house, not visible, but we can add that if you wish.

Mayor Lago: How about returning it, our employees returning it to the back of the house? Right, that has to be done, correct?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so let's do that. Let's make sure that's...

City Manager Iglesias: Yes.

Mayor Lago: That we notify...

City Manager Iglesias: And our new system -- our new Rubicon system, Mayor, documents every site as we go along.

Mayor Lago: Okay. I'm going to take photos tomorrow on the way to work. I'm going to take photos on the way to work, and I'm going to look to see where all the bins are.

City Manager Iglesias: We've recently implemented that, and I think we're starting to see dividends already. It's something that was recently implemented to -- for Solid Waste management.

Mayor Lago: So, besides focusing on that -- and I sent you pictures of that. Gabby sends you the list every single day. I'm now going to start focusing on all the homes that -- where the garbage bins and the recycling bins are not returned, or the residents are leaving it by -- in front of the house to be picked up. I don't know why they -- they know that we, as a city, pride ourselves in having rear pickup in regards to garbage so...

City Manager Iglesias: We have some people that insist on that, and we're working with that, but we're going to -- I think eventually it's going to generate a fine, which you all will find out.

Mayor Lago: But make sure our team is returning the bins back to the back of the house and where it's not visible because they're -- I see a lot of them thrown, you know, by the driveway. And again, I don't have that issue because I take mine in and take mine out. I leave them right next to the garage. But -- and I don't have a trash pit. But I want to make sure that also gets taken -- I'll document it tomorrow as I drive through the city.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, a few little comments. The letters is good. We used to be -- do it excellent. I thought that the stuff could be taken out after 5 p.m. I don't know when it changed to six.

Mayor Lago: It's always been six.

Development Services Director Cabrera: The Code says 6 p.m.

Ms. Cruz: I'm going to check because...

Mayor Lago: The Code says 6 p.m.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, alright. Now, I have a different view from all of you because I have the privilege of sitting on the Code Enforcement Board.

Vice Mayor Mena: How much time (INAUDIBLE)?

Ms. Cruz: No, but I'm going to tell you.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Ms. Cruz: Code Enforcement Board is for cases that have to do with the property (INAUDIBLE).

Mayor Lago: Okay, yes, I understand.

Ms. Cruz: Every month we meet. Every month we get lots of cases, mostly from three, four people, only three, or four, or five maximum officers. We have more than four or five officers. What are the other officers doing?

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Ms. Cruz: Okay, we're using them to do office work? That doesn't help us, okay. My request to you is assign Code Enforcement people to specific areas. Number one, you can hold them responsible. Number two, they can hold the residents responsible too. Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Thank you very much. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Okay, same topic. I didn't put it on Mayor's comments, but I brought it on board, swales around bridges. We're going to clean this city up, okay. I'd like to see if we can put these pictures up so people can notice -- I -- again, I went yesterday to the bridges, and I went and took pictures myself on the bridges. I want people to be aware of what is happening around bridges and see if this is appropriate. I know that we had some pictures. So, I'll start explaining very quickly while we wait for the pictures. If you go and you stop instead of driving on a bridge, we usually don't pay much attention. If you look at the amount of garbage that is adjacent to the bridge, the amount of overgrowth that is hanging over the bridge into the waterway, the amount of palm fronds, you'll see them now, hundreds of palm fronds, coconuts, garbage that is all there on the side of the street. If you live next to the bridge -- I need a clarification from our staff and I would like a clarification at the next Commission meeting, if possible, in writing, who is responsible for cleaning that swale. Is it the neighbor who is adjacent to the bridge? Is it the County? Is it the City? Is it whoever's responsible for maintaining that bridge? Who is

responsible for that? Okay, I wrote a letter -- my office wrote a letter to the County mayor, which you were copied on, which talks about five County bridges which need to be maintained. Currently, one of them is on Orduna. We take care of their graffiti for them. We pressure wash it. I want the County to start, you know, abiding by their responsibility and taking care of those issues. The bridges look horrible. I -- we don't have the pictures up right now in regards to the bridges, but I'll circle back and show you those pictures when they become available. But I would like, at the next Commission meeting, please, for somebody to tell me who is responsible for maintaining the bridges...

City Manager Iglesias: And Mayor, we...

Mayor Lago: Adjacent -- the swales next to the bridges, which are right there, visible from the street.

City Manager Iglesias: We will be looking at that because there could be multiple right-of-ways [sic]. It could be county, state, and so forth, and we'll be looking at that, and we can clarify that at the next Commission meeting, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Okay, next item, City sidewalks. Mr. Director, I would like an update please on where we are on the sidewalks. This has been an ongoing, almost two-year odyssey, that we've been talking about sidewalks. I need to know where we're at so I can make sure we have the necessary money for this year's budget. University, Doctors Hospital, Blue Road. By the way, notification on Blue Road, those two bridges that are there -- Orduna, which is the ones I'm talking about -- the amount of overgrowth, the amount of dirtiness on those bridges which belong to the County, they were included in my letter to the County mayor, it's unacceptable. After meeting yesterday with a County Commissioner, Raquel Regalado, where I had coffee with her, she made me aware that there are ADA issues already on those bridges because there's no sidewalks. So, imagine if you're a person in a -- if you're in a wheelchair and you're -- have no other option. You have to get on the street in your wheelchair to go up the bridge because the sidewalk -- there's no

sidewalk, only on the bridge, but the rest is just swale. So, I think we need to look into it because if there's already an ADA case, maybe, maybe -- and I mentioned this to her -- the County could help us in paying for these sidewalks. And I think we need to look into that. So, I ask you to please have someone in your department reach out to Commissioner Regalado's office, who spent almost two hours with me yesterday over coffee, and my team -- my chief of staff, Chelsea, was with me yesterday, and we spent two hours going over a litany of issues here in the county, and one of them being this. Where are we on sidewalks on University, Blue Road, Doctors Hospital, and the other one that I forget right now, which is the one-way street, the very tight street in North Gables?

Public Works Director Diaz: Venetia.

Mayor Lago: Venetia, yes.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, we have a brief presentation that we can go over, and then we can have a discussion...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: About that.

Mayor Lago: Okay. How are you, Melissa? Good to see you.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Good, thanks. How are you?

Mayor Lago: Thank you for being here.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Of course. It's not working? (INAUDIBLE). Okay, okay. So, just a little bit of background. We have approximately 41,000



trees in the city with a 40 percent canopy coverage. We are the second largest canopy coverage in the state of Florida. The first (INAUDIBLE) was Gainesville, so really, we have the largest canopy coverage in South Florida. Unfortunately, large canopy, beautiful trees and everything comes at a cost. We, at Public Works, we're dealing with continuous repairs to sewer pipes, sidewalks, drainage systems, utility lines. You know, these are all things that come with having this beautiful canopy that we have.

Public Works Director Diaz: And if I may as well...

City Manager Iglesias: And again, Mayor and Commissioners, we love our tree canopy. We have 41,000 trees in the right-of-way. This is not in any way criticizing our canopy because I think we all love our canopy. Some trees have completely changed in character because of the canopy, but there is a cost involved in our tree canopy -- in maintaining our tree canopy, and that's what we're trying to say.

Public Works Director Diaz: And if I may, that photo is a drainage system that we're now working to replace. It's full of roots.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: So, like the Manager said, our tree canopy just -- you know, it sets us apart, you know. Everybody knows the City of Coral Gables for how beautiful our trees are. But, as you can see in this picture, as Mr. Diaz mentioned, you know, we're dealing with these tree roots and everything, you know, in our infrastructure. So, we're consistently getting requests for repairs for sidewalks and other things. There's different remediation options that we have in order to help, so we'll send out a crew and they'll assess the condition of the sidewalk, and they'll determine whether or not, you know, they should do grinding, put a temporary asphalt patch just to buy us time until we can do full replacement. Currently, we have approximately three miles pending of sidewalk replacement, which is approximately \$3.4 million worth of repairs.

City Manager Iglesias: And if we look at that picture, that picture is really generated by our geology. We've got Miami -- we've got the limestone, the oolite formation very close to the surface. There's very little top soil, so roots spread out horizontally and cause a continuous uplift of sidewalks. So, that geology is very good for many things, but as far as the tree canopy is concerned -- you can see the tree right next to it -- the roots are going under the sidewalk and will continue.

Mayor Lago: Yep.

City Manager Iglesias: So, it causes a continuous maintenance issue.

Commissioner Menendez: I have a quick question. Of the three miles, what percentage -- just off the top of your head -- is caused by tree roots, as opposed to caused by something other than tree roots?

Public Works Director Diaz: All of those are tree roots. According to our Code right now, the maintenance of sidewalks is the responsibility to the property owner. So, if the sidewalk wasn't damaged by tree roots, it will be up to the property owner to replace. So, that -- what's on that list is exclusively the ones that we are replacing.

Commissioner Menendez: Of the calls that we get...

Public Works Director Diaz: Most of them are...

Commissioner Menendez: That we go out...

Public Works Director Diaz: Tree roots related. Most of the damaged sidewalk issues are tree related.

City Manager Iglesias: We are very fortunate, Commissioner, from a structural perspective, that the sound soil provides us a lot of support for our sidewalks, so they can support a fairly heavy load. However, it does cause the tree issue -- the tree roots to go underneath and actually lift. So, most of our damage is trees. We do have some overload damage, and then you have construction and things like that and that's addressed as part of the construction permit.

Commissioner Anderson: Right. So, I'm going to throw in another couple questions and we may need...

Public Works Director Diaz: Sure.

Commissioner Anderson: The excellent advice of our landscape director on some of this. In some instances, you can redirect the sidewalk to be a little further away from the tree. You can put in a root barrier. You can look at options where you build up the soil or even kind of like bridge over. So, I'm going to ask Ms. Deena Bell-Llewellyn to weigh in on this as to, you know, how can we better do this rather than just pour a new piece of slab directly in the same spot again at the same elevation again and not put in root barriers or any other mitigating measures to avoid repeat situations from time to time.

Assistant Public Works Director Bell-Llewellyn: Hi, Deena Bell-Llewellyn, Green Space Management Division of Public Works. As City Manager said, our geology of oolite and our mature trees -- most of the roots are within the top 36 inches of the soil for these large trees. They go out horizontally. We don't cut roots, the structural stability of the tree. So, our strategy when we replace a sidewalk, which we're already doing in Public Works, is sometimes re-routing them around the tree to curve. Sidewalks do not have to be in a straight line. That way, we can get far enough away from the tree sometimes to provide necessary space. We can ramp up -- we can fill with structural soil or compacted lime rock to ramp up over roots that cannot be cut if we have enough horizontal space to meet the ADA sloping requirements for the sidewalk. So, we do that often. The sidewalk concrete is reinforced with a fiber mesh, which helps with cracking and lifting,

that adds cost to the sidewalk because we're not using just playing concrete, which is less expensive. We put structural soils below sidewalk. A structural soil is an aggregate that lets tree roots grow through it, the substrate, instead of lifting the sidewalk. That adds cost as well. In extreme cases, we can look at things like Silva Cells or root barriers, which add more cost. So, there are some of the strategies we use.

City Manager Iglesias: It's quite difficult, Commissioner. If you look at that picture on the left, you see a sidewalk so -- going into the property, which means that if we lift that sidewalk an inch or two, then you have an existing condition that it's not compatible with the property next door. We also have -- we most -- in most of the areas there's nowhere near 36 inches deep. The oolite's probably 12 to 18 inches deep, which really doesn't provide much space without having to cut the roots out. I wish it was 36 inches in most areas. In most areas, it's probably less than half of that, and so we're -- we have an issue where we have existing conditions on the property side, on the private property side that we have to match. We have very, very problematic geological -- actually, from a tree perspective, from a structural perspective is very good for homes and for drainage, but for this, it is not. It's that the oolite formation is so close to the actual surface, so it's a difficult issue to deal with.

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

City Manager Iglesias: As you -- if you meander sidewalks, then you get into issues of getting close to the road. If you get too -- within six feet of the road, then you have to provide a curb, which can affect your drainage and your road grading, so it's not an easy...

Commissioner Anderson: Well, it depends on how much curbing you put in too, and I'm not necessarily saying getting...

Public Works Director Diaz: And if I...

Commissioner Anderson: Closer to the road.

Public Works Director Diaz: I'm sorry.

Commissioner Anderson: So, one last thing, because I'm going to just jump on this because we've had broken sidewalks in front of either commercial or residential properties that have done some work on their homes, had done some major renovations on a commercial property, whether it be an apartment building and so forth, and there's no follow-through with enforcement of replacement of those sidewalk sections, and that's due to, you know, trucks backing over them, you know, tenants moving in and out. It's really not a tree issue at that point. It was caused by the trucks. I don't see results on any of the stuff that I have sent in asking for what happened. Was it cited? Was the bond used? I mean, why don't we follow through on those items?

Public Works Director Diaz: So, specifically, the -- and I know that we've looked into that property on Hernando...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: And I think we've been talking to Suramy, right, and I think we found that the work that you were referring to, the sidewalk was already broken prior to that work that took place, right? That was one of the things that we were looking into.

Commissioner Anderson: It might have been one little crack...

Public Works Director Diaz: So...

Commissioner Anderson: At the time it was brought to the attention.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: It came from one crack to a landline.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right. Well, over time...

Commissioner Anderson: A land...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right, and what happens, once you have a crack, then after that, it goes very quickly. So...

Commissioner Anderson: Well, a hairline crack is one thing...

Public Works Director Diaz: Sure.

Commissioner Anderson: But when you put the weight of a truck over it, okay -- I had to replace all the sections in my sidewalk when I did my driveway, despite the fact that there was no cracks, okay, or a hairline crack, with no beveled pieces that would trip a pedestrian or a child, or you know, make it impossible for somebody that wanted to roller skate on the sidewalk, et cetera, or bicycle ride, you know, as a child would do. But these things have been sitting for, you know, no action, you know. Why -- you know, if I had to post a bond for putting in a driveway to make sure that I replaced the sidewalk or didn't damage the sidewalk, or if I had some work done, whether it be putting in a garden bed, which I've had to post bonds for too even though the garden bed was complete, then why isn't there any follow-through on this?

Development Services Director Cabrera: That property, in particular, that was like that before they replaced the windows. I went back into Google Maps and the sidewalk was exactly like that and the windows were old. It was the trees.

City Manager Iglesias: And by the way, Commissioner...

Commissioner Anderson: I have -- you know, I've walked that area for 30 plus years...

Development Services Director Cabrera: I sent the pictures to Hermes because I can't enforce...

Commissioner Anderson: And it wasn't like this.

Development Services Director Cabrera: Against -- I can't enforce against the homeowner because it's clear in the Google Maps that it wasn't the windows.

Public Works Director Diaz: One of the things that happens too is that the sidewalk is lifted with the roots, and there's some flexibility there, and then the trucks or a car may drive it over even though with some kind of a void underneath, and that's when it cracks. So, it's...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: It's tree related, but it's not so...

Commissioner Anderson: So...

Public Works Director Diaz: And that...

City Manager Iglesias: And...

Public Works Director Diaz: Sidewalk we're probably going to have to address ourself given what we've...

Commissioner Anderson: So then...

Public Works Director Diaz: Found.

Commissioner Anderson: Then address it. But I'm going to point out one other thing.

Public Works Director Diaz: Sure.

Commissioner Anderson: In the pictures I sent you, had the vehicles that had driven over the sidewalks...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: Included.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay. I know what it's like because I've had tenants. And if you allow them to back over the dirt and over the sidewalks, it's going to happen again and again...

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.

Commissioner Anderson: And again, as opposed to staying on the curb side and unloading from that location. So, this shouldn't take over a year to resolve. That's my final point on that.

City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner, our sidewalks are four inches thick, but we ask -- we're one of the few cities that ask for driveways to increase the depth to six inches to get better performance as far as truck traffic on driveways. Sometimes when the driveway gets lifted, voids are created, and it's stressed in different ways. But we do ask for a six-inch sidewalk at driveways, one of the few cities that actually does that.



Commissioner Anderson: Yeah, but it shouldn't take a year to go from a beveled sidewalk that's a trip hazard to get some results.

Commissioner Cason: Are we enforcing the --? When residences have a sidewalk in front that's broken by a vehicle, do we -- are we enforcing the provisions that they have to repair the sidewalks?

Public Works Director Diaz: When we catch them, yes.

Commissioner Cason: Okay, because...

Mayor Lago: So, that's my -- one of my main reasons why we're -- besides getting an update on where we are with certain sidewalk projects, I want to move it in the direction -- after your presentation -- and address how we're going to address future pending sidewalks...

Public Works Director Diaz: That's next.

Mayor Lago: Broken sidewalks, the laws that were changed, and what we need to do as a Commission to move forward to find some sort of funding stream to continue to address sidewalks in our neighbor -- in our community.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: So, we've gone through the exercise of checking to see how many sidewalks we're missing throughout the City. We have -- we plotted on our GIS we have approximately 79 miles of missing sidewalk within the City limits. We've broken it down further into the streets that are non-gated and the ones that are open to the public. So, open streets, 58 miles of missing sidewalks. And the gated communities are 21 miles. So, basic estimate for how much this is going to cost -- and this is just...

Public Works Director Diaz: If I may, these are order of magnitude. There's a little detail that we'll have to get through once we get into that project.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Because we don't know what we're going to encounter when we're actually going to move forward with some of these projects if, you know, the Commission would like to move forward, is approximately \$26 million for all 79 miles, or then for the open streets, it's \$19 million, and then the gated communities would be about \$7 million, rough estimate. So, here it is broken down so you can see the left image is the North Gables area, and then you have the middle image that's around US-1, and then basically all the community down south, which are the gated communities. So, currently, each year we get about \$1.23 million for the pedestrian infrastructure program. That is money that is used for -- it's basically broken down for sidewalk repairs, new sidewalk, sidewalk extensions, which would be when the sidewalk goes around the block and then it doesn't have a ramp that goes to the asphalt. Those are the extensions and crosswalk striping. So, we took the estimates that we got, our order of magnitude estimates, and with the cost of that, in addition to about a million dollars a year for the repairs because, each year, we're still going to be repairing sidewalks because they're still getting ripped up every year, and we're going to have to keep on doing that. It's about \$4.8 million a year for open streets to be able to address all the sidewalks that are missing in the areas that are public streets.

Commissioner Menendez: I apologize for interrupting the presentation. Once you fix a sidewalk, what's the life span...

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: So, that's something...

Commissioner Menendez: Where there are trees?

Public Works Director Diaz: It depends on the tree, and you know, trees are funny. You have this huge tree next to a sidewalk and the sidewalk is fine. You have a smaller tree, and it tore it up. I mean, it's nature. So, some sidewalks may break every five years. So, sidewalks may be fine for 20 or 30, so it's really difficult for us to...

Commissioner Menendez: Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: Put a, you know...

City Manager Iglesias: Commissioner, it's substantially less than just concrete because of the tree damage, so it's substantially less time because of the lifting that creates a trip hazard than it is for the actual concrete.

Commissioner Menendez: Understood, thank you.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: And then if we were to break it down in 10 years, it would be about \$2.9 million a year for the new sidewalks and the repairs for the open streets. So, that's basically what we have in terms of this presentation.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: And if you have any questions regarding...

Mayor Lago: So, just to finish out this presentation, I would like to have a sunshine meeting with my colleagues to discuss sidewalks and discuss the five to ten-year option, and to see what is really feasible in regards to grants, state how we're going to fund this project, and what we're looking at, okay. And obviously, how we're going to get resident approvals and different kind of things that are important. Before we move on, can we get some dates, Mr. Clerk, with -- circulated to my colleagues?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, sir.

Mayor Lago: I will make myself available to make sure we can get this done, okay, so that's number one. Number two, we used to have a sidewalk program that we scrapped as a Commission. Can you talk to me a little bit about, in the residential neighborhoods, just remind us what that sidewalk program was all about, and how it worked, and how -- what were the mechanism for it to be activated?

Public Works Director Diaz: So, several years ago, the way it worked was that if anybody who did a project in their home above a certain threshold -- and I don't recall exactly what that threshold was...

Mayor Lago: \$15,000.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: \$15,000.

Commissioner Cason: \$15,000.

Public Works Director Diaz: It was -- right, it was \$15,000, but there were also square footage. You need to...

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Correct.

Public Works Director Diaz: If it was \$15,000 or a certain square footage of your property, then we would compel you to go ahead and build a sidewalk in front of your house. There was also the option -- because sometimes people find neighborhoods who had no sidewalks, and then, there was something about I'm going to build a sidewalk to nowhere people I'm the only person with a sidewalk. The idea was that they have to give us a covenant where the City could go back and tell them, you know what, now I have enough covenants to do an entire section, connect it (INAUDIBLE) make sense. Now, you can go ahead and -- now we can compel you to go ahead

and build it. That whole program was scrapped by the Commission a few years ago. And I believe, I think, the City Attorney's Office released the covenants that we had in hand at the time.

City Attorney Suárez: They were released upon request.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right, upon request, correct.

Mayor Lago: So, I thought -- you know, now when I look back and I kind of see what's going on in regards to funding and sidewalks and how long it's taking to get, you know, certain sidewalk projects done -- not at the fault of staff, just at the fault that there's a lot of work going on right now. Consultants are busy, budgets. I think we need to have a mechanism.

Public Works Director Diaz: I'm sorry?

Mayor Lago: We need to have a mechanism...

Public Works Director Diaz: Okay.

Mayor Lago: To fund sidewalks. I think that \$15,000 was way too low, because right now, changing a door could be \$15,000 to your front door, okay. You know, changing your garage door could be 6, \$7,000. Doing your kitchen is \$75,000, but there has to be a mechanism. And I think we need to install sidewalks in the City, as you and I have been involved walking neighborhoods. Certain areas are critical. I'm tired of seeing people who are elderly, who are disabled, you know, parents with young children in strollers having to go in the middle of street in Alhambra. It just doesn't work, it doesn't work. That's not quality of life. That's not acceptable. I know people don't want sidewalks in front of their house. I live in front of UM. I have a doublewide sidewalk. There's people running, walking, having a great time. It's okay to have sidewalks. The swale doesn't belong to you; it belongs to the City. So, we need to find a mechanism, a right value, and

I think we can talk about it in the sunshine meeting, to say is it \$150,000, is it \$200,000, so that we could do something appropriate in regards to having something...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Mayor Lago: Not saying it has to be a full sidewalk paid for. There has to be a mechanism, something -- besides the fact that, by the way, we should be checking every construction project that starts to make sure that if the sidewalks are broken, that they're responsible, that we do not give a TCO or a CO until sidewalks are repaired. I hope that's happening, and I hope that we're holding people who are renovating their homes, doing driveways, pools, you know, additions, if they break sidewalks, they -- we do not give them a CO. Do not let them inhabit that property until they repair that sidewalk or do a new sidewalk altogether.

Public Works Director Diaz: One of the things that I think we also need to sort out, according to the Code right now, on collector streets, we don't need concurrency to build sidewalks, and there's a serial contribution from the residents. But the way the Code is written right now on non-collector streets, there's a whole petition process involved, and then the residents are supposed to cover half of it, the abutting property owners. And that's what is on the books today.

Mayor Lago: I just think that we need to have a conversation amongst the Commission, go over that in detail, but I think we need to have a funding mechanism. Because if you're going to spend a lot of money and you're going to tear up, you know, your driveway, you're going to destroy the sidewalk. There's no way around it. I know that I'm going to be working on my backyard on my pool. I'm going to have to redo the sidewalk, which I already did once when I renovated my house 10 years ago, so I know I'm going to redo that area. It's going to be required. So, I think that we, as a Commission, need to sit down, you know, for an hour, or two hours, and have a conversation about what is the future of sidewalks in the City.

Vice Mayor Mena: But those are existing -- that's if you damage an existing sidewalk, which I -- I don't think that's even remotely -- I agree with you 100 percent. I think that's non -- sort of non-controversial. I think the issue you were referencing is when there's no sidewalk.

Mayor Lago: Well...

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Mayor Lago: But we should have a conversation on that.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah.

Mayor Lago: I think we should have a conversation on that because if you -- like I'll give you an example. In my street, in my block, there's sidewalks, but there isn't a sidewalk on my front, but there is one in front of us, in UM. I wouldn't mind having a sidewalk in front of my home. My -- literally, my sidewalk just comes to an end on San Amaro, and they have to cross the street, the person in the wheelchair, which I see all the time, has to cross the street and go across and then come back. We need to get away from this idea that we can't have sidewalks parallel to streets, that they have to have a buffer or some sort of green space. Go to San Amaro and you'll see a sidewalk with a raised curb. It does not do anything for flooding, zero for flooding. There's no issues for flooding. Let's not use it as an excuse, please, please, because I have it there. Up and down San Amaro, there's no flooding on San Amaro, no flooding. So -- and it is a raised curb, and it's a beautiful sidewalk, and we can do it, just like we want to do on Alhambra, and I'm waiting for an update on what we're -- what's up with Alhambra on that issue. So, to me, we need to find a mechanism. Is it \$15,000? I think it's way too cheap, especially with the cost of

construction today. But if you're going to pay for this construction, I'm willing to find a way in the budget to increase it, but I also need the residents to help us out a little bit when they're going to opt into a major construction project.

Commissioner Menendez: I want to add that I think we do need a funding mechanism, a fund that replenishes itself, because as my question was, how long does this last, 5 to 10, 20 years? So, it's going to be a recurring expense because we're going to be constantly fixing, needing to fix sidewalks because of our tree canopy, so it's not going to be a one-time shot. So, I agree with the Mayor, we have to come together and find some kind of fund or funding mechanism where 5, 10, 20 years, the funds are there so we can take care of these repairs at the very least.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right, the sidewalk gaps, obviously, there's a finite amount of those, right. It's the repair that -- it's just (INAUDIBLE).

Commissioner Menendez: By the time you fix it, there's a whole new set of...

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Commissioner Menendez: Sidewalks that you have to repair.

Vice Mayor Mena: But if you already have a sidewalk and you're doing \$100,000 in work on your house and you don't damage the sidewalk...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: Okay, you're not doing this assessment for the future repair of said sidewalk, right?

Public Works Director Diaz: The way that...



Vice Mayor Mena: We're only talking about new sidewalk.

Public Works Director Diaz: The way -- well, what was on the books before, you're right. There was no...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: Assessment made for someone -- that was for places where there were no sidewalks. That's what was on the books...

Vice Mayor Mena: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: I forgot, maybe a couple of years ago, something like that, maybe two years ago.

City Attorney Suárez: Until 2020.

Public Works Director Diaz: 2020? Okay, a couple of -- a little -- okay, two, three years ago. So, that's what used to be in the books.

City Manager Iglesias: And from a design perspective, we haven't had sidewalks in the areas that don't have sidewalks for over 95 years, so there's a lot of things in the right-of-way, trees and so forth, that you have to meander around.

Vice Mayor Mena: Yeah, it's complicated.

City Manager Iglesias: And all those issues -- so it's complicated and -- but it can be done. As the Mayor said, it can be done. It's just more costly.

Mayor Lago: So, can we -- can we have a -- a sunshine meeting, I think, is the right place to have a conversation about this, talk about it for...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Commissioner Cason: That's the right place.

Commissioner Anderson: A couple more two cents in preparation for the sunshine meeting. There was an occasion that brought back impact fees and then went into sidewalks and ADA compliance issues. We're talking about the area along Segovia, along Hernando Avenue, went back to the County, brought the impact fees back to go into the sidewalk fund. I mean, it is a transportation issue, a safety issue. There could be grant programs that we could use to help fund those projects as well because, you know, at the major thoroughfares, like Granada and Alhambra and so forth, that serve the entire community...

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

Commissioner Anderson: Because they serve the entire community, we need to be able to, you know, leverage that with those impact fees, bring them back into our city to try to promote alternative transportation, whether it be walking or biking to school or work. So...

Public Works Director Diaz: And we also have...

Commissioner Anderson: We're looking forward to it.

Public Works Director Diaz: And we also have county and state roads that don't have sidewalk either, at least not consistently so -- and we're actually working with them. For the State, some of the sidewalks on Bird, they're looking into it, and we'll see if that...

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: On the south side.

Public Works Director Diaz: Gets us somewhere, and so on. So, it's a collaborative effort as well, where maybe the County and the State can do their part as well.

Commissioner Anderson: So, for those chronic buildings where you have tenants moving in and out, aside from putting six inches of cement where the driveway is, if they can't enforce keeping their tenants from driving over the sidewalks, perhaps we need six inches of cement there as well.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, one of the things we're doing now, I think pretty much all the sidewalk we're putting, we're putting it with fiber.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: All of them have fiber mesh.

Public Works Director Diaz: Because the price that we're getting, at least so far, the difference was so small and then fiber actually makes it a lot stronger, so pretty much all new sidewalk that we're doing -- it used to be as per the standards, you only do that on the driveways, that's only when it was technically necessary. But we're now putting that every new sidewalk for that very same reason. You know, people park on the swale, and they may spillover into the sidewalk itself, so it makes them a little -- a little bit of extra strength, even though, in cases where we're not necessarily making them thicker...

Commissioner Anderson: Right.

Public Works Director Diaz: So...

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Commissioner Anderson: Is that required for the residential replacements as well?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Yes.

Commissioner Anderson: Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yeah.

Commissioner Anderson: But take a look at the, you know, the apartment building situation where you...

Public Works Director Diaz: Yeah, we'll...

Commissioner Anderson: Backing -- they're backing those trucks up on the...

Public Works Director Diaz: We'll take a look.

City Manager Iglesias: It helps on strength, but it doesn't help on the lifting aspect of...

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct.

City Manager Iglesias: It, unfortunately.

Public Works Director Diaz: It doesn't help, correct.

Commissioner Anderson: This was a truck issue. I know it was a truck issue because I know the before and after.

Vice Mayor Mena: This is a great example of the type of thing that's really ultimately almost like a deferred maintenance type of thing, that if we weren't sending \$30 million a year to go to an unfunded liability, that we could take care of.

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.

Vice Mayor Mena: And you can name any number of examples of that in the budget, so you know, I don't mean to just cherry-pick this issue...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Vice Mayor Mena: But this is the type of thing that, you know, and particularly extra payment that we make alone would cover some of the...

Public Works Director Diaz: (INAUDIBLE).

Vice Mayor Mena: Numbers I saw up there, which is why, you know, whenever we're having those types of discussions, it's important that, from my perspective, that we continue to address that issue. Because when we get to a point that that issue no longer looms over our budget in such a tremendous fashion, we'll be able to address a lot of these things from the property taxes that folks are already paying that really should go to address these type of things.

Mayor Lago: Just to give you a -- on your -- which is a great point that you bring up. We're going to pay over \$8 million dollar this year in additional -- extra, extra, extra, not just extra. We're paying what's required as regard -- as per the State unfunded, and then we're paying an extra \$8 million this year. So, if you would that eight -- if you would add that \$8 million, plus the \$1.3 million that we have for sidewalks already, you're talking about close to almost \$10 million a year. We could resolve this issue in two years of the sidewalks.

City Manager Iglesias: Mayor, Vice Mayor, catchup payments are 24, \$25 million.

Mayor Lago: Yeah.

City Manager Iglesias: That's a lot of money.

Mayor Lago: If we're talking about -- a year, a year.

City Manager Iglesias: A year.

Mayor Lago: So...

Vice Mayor Mena: Alright.

Mayor Lago: That's a great point. So, we'll call for a sunshine meeting. Can we get back -- just really quickly, just give me an update on where we are with Doctors Hospital, Sun -- University, Blue Road, all those kind of...

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Okay, so Pisano, which is Doctors Hospital, we issued NTP for a designer a few weeks ago. They said that from the date of NTP, it's about 150 days. So, given 150 days, it'll probably be summer design will be complete, and we can move forward with construction. Alhambra, we have 100 percent plans. We do have some -- one comment from the County that's causing us some concern, and we've been trying to coordinate with them to see if that's a comment that needs to be applied for that.

Mayor Lago: Did you see the email that I had with Josenrique Cueto and the Manager going back and forth where he was able -- he has all hands on deck from the County. So, can -- I hate to use -- we continue to use this contact and his...

Public Works Director Diaz: Absolutely.

Mayor Lago: You know, his interest in helping us...

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Yes.

Mayor Lago: To address this issue on Alhambra. I mean, he's incredible, incredible. What is the pending note on the...?

Public Works Director Diaz: It has to do with traffic calming because -- in Alhambra, we're mixing...

Mayor Lago: I know.

Public Works Director Diaz: Everything together that we're doing. There's traffic calming, there's milling and resurfacing, there's the sidewalk. It's all blended.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, it's really the relationship with the new sidewalk that we're putting with the traffic calming that's being proposed and some of the width in between that some of the County staff is having some heartburn about.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Public Works Director Diaz: And that's what we're working with them about -- over.

Mayor Lago: But I think we need to answer that as quickly as possible. And if we need to get into a room with Mr. Josenrique Cueto, we will, through the Manager, and get this going because

that's a game changer. It's a game changer. And by the way, since we're talking about Alhambra, that bridge is the City's responsibility, right?

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct, yes.

Mayor Lago: So, what's the plan for that bridge?

Public Works Director Diaz: So, that bridge, it's...

Mayor Lago: You have both guardrails that are off on that bridge.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, we've repaired that -- this is the third time in, I will say, in about two years that it's been hit. It broke, we fixed it, now it's hit again. We have somebody working on a design for the repair. That was actually one of the first bridges that we started to address. I mean, that bridge was painted, everything was nice, and we have three accidents in less -- roughly two years so...

Mayor Lago: And don't forget we have a guardrail on the other side that's also -- that's basically slid down the embankment.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right. The traffic calming, we're hoping that it will help some of the craziness that goes on over there as far as the cars and the curb and going too fast.

Mayor Lago: When do you think we're going to be able to get rid of those barricades and actually address it?

Public Works Director Diaz: So, I have to touch base with the consultant to see what we have designed. We do have a contractor that's on board for that, so we'll have to touch bases with the designer.



Mayor Lago: Can you give me an update by the end of the week?

Public Works Director Diaz: I will absolutely give you an update.

Mayor Lago: Through the Manager. Through the Manager, give me an update, please.

Public Works Director Diaz: Sure.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. What else?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: So, Blue Road sidewalk, we asked for a revised survey because the County milled and resurfaced that roadway recently, so we had to get new elevations, new edge of pavement, all of that so that we can move forward with the design. The initial design was already submitted to the County. We have some comments, so we're just waiting on that survey so that we can complete design and send in a final submittal to the County for final review.

Mayor Lago: Through the Manager, through the Manager, please, I ask you to reach out. Let's start working on funding. Please reach out to Commissioner Regalado's office. That is a County -- those are County bridges, okay. Those are County bridges. They have ADA issues supposedly, so let's deal with Raquel, our City Attorney, our City Manager. Let's write them a letter. Let's write them an email. Deal with Tony Escarra, deal with Raquel and say how can we fund this now. I don't want to talk about funding in six months from now. Let's see how we can work in conjunction, maybe do a 50-50 split, maybe the County -- I heard the County has money -- infrastructure money. Let's get them to address the ADA issue and help us with the sidewalks, please, okay?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: That was one of their comments as well, that they wanted the guardrail approaches upgraded.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right...

Mayor Lago: But help them pay...

Public Works Director Diaz: On Alhambra.

Mayor Lago: Let them help us pay for it so we don't...

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Mayor Lago: Have to come out of pocket.

Public Works Director Diaz: But technically, yeah, those are their guardrails so...

Mayor Lago: So, let's pay for them.

Public Works Director Diaz: Yep.

Mayor Lago: Okay, let's figure it out and pay for it. What else?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: University Drive, we are moving forward with that one soon. We have the proposal. The design is complete. We just need to move forward with that one so...

Mayor Lago: When are we moving forward?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: As soon as I'm able to get NTP with the contractor. We're hoping within the next few weeks.

Mayor Lago: Okay, what else?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: What else do we have? We've got -- oh, Venetia Terrace.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Venetia Terrace, we issued NTP for the study because you -- you know, we had that meeting and we were looking into maybe doing a one-way conversion, so our consultant reached out to the County to see how they could develop their proposal for that study. They've ironed out all the language, they got the scope approved, and we already issued NTP for the proposal. That should be completed by July.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so let's be honest. Let's be -- I want to be honest, okay. We're not going to get this started for at least -- any of these projects -- for potentially a year to a year and a half...

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Well, University Drive...

Mayor Lago: At the rate that we're going.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Will start this year.

Mayor Lago: Which one?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Hmm?

Mayor Lago: Doctors?

Public Works Director Diaz: University.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: University Drive.

Public Works Director Diaz: No, no, no.

Mayor Lago: University will?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay. What can I do, through the Manager, to help you get this done as quickly as possible.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: There is -- it's just a matter of time when it comes to get these things approved, you know, through the County.

Mayor Lago: Can I help you?

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: There's...

Mayor Lago: Like I've helped you with Josenrique Cueto. Can I help you facilitate a meeting with the County to push this forward to -- so that we can, you know, cut through the red tape and get some of these approved? I have great relationships with the County. Just tell me what I need to do, and I'll help you.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, once we resubmit, if we get into any roadblocks, we can certainly reach out and...

Mayor Lago: Why don't we do this instead of that? Through the Manager, why don't you tell me when you submit, tell my chief of staff. We will write a letter. We'll write an email to the Commissioner of the district, copy Mr. Josenrique Cueto and copy the mayor of the County asking for expedited review and to address this immediately, please.

Public Works Director Diaz: Will do.

Mayor Lago: And I'm -- please, I'm -- and my team, if Gabby and Chelsea are listening, please work with the Manager so that we can be on the same page and we can get this expedited as quickly as possible, please.

Commissioner Menendez: Since we're talking about that area, I have an item that residents have reached out to me. I think it's something new to discuss, but it's old. So, the corner of Pisano and Campo Sano, it floods after every rainfall.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: That's one of the things we're going to be looking at.

Public Works Director Diaz: Right.

Commissioner Menendez: And I just -- they've been asking and that would be part of the process to review?

Public Works Director Diaz: Correct. And because -- that project is not just a sidewalk project. It's basically the entire -- I think that would be the east side of the right-of-way that's being redone. And part of that is going to have to probably involve some drainage as well.

Commissioner Menendez: And just so that I can get back to the residents, so it's something that we're working on, and I guess...

Public Works Director Diaz: On the design for now, yes.

Commissioner Menendez: Design for now, okay. I appreciate it. They've been asking.

Mayor Lago: Alright, before we move on, we're going to -- we're not done with bridges. Can we cue the pictures up that I finally got them on? Alright, so that's the bridge of a current situation that we have there. Obviously, it's nobody's fault. They ran into the bridge. This is the best that we can do, but we need to address this. There's going to be a problem here. There's going to be a problem. I know that we're doing our best here.

Public Works Director Diaz: So, Mr. Mayor, specifically on that bridge, that bridge, it got hit.

Mayor Lago: I know.

Public Works Director Diaz: We sent a consultant out there.

Mayor Lago: I know.

Public Works Director Diaz: Then it got hit again, so we told them, "Wait, wait, wait, wait. You need to go again because something else happened."

Mayor Lago: I know, but there's a reason why. Look at the embankment. The embankment there, when you get off -- these are pictures that I took. I got off, again, and I took these pictures. The embankment -- the foundation of the embankment is completely loose. Go -- can you go back to the previous picture, please? Okay, the other one. The one with the embankment. These pictures

are taken -- these pictures -- this is a tool that we can use to the County to express the urgency of the situation.

Public Works Director Diaz: This one is ours.

Mayor Lago: No, I'm not talking about this, my friend. I'm talking about the approvals on Alhambra...

Public Works Director Diaz: One hundred percent.

Mayor Lago: That you're waiting for the bridge because they say there's an issue with the correlation between the bridge, the traffic calming, and the sidewalks. Guys, we need to sit in a room and get this done. We can't wait any longer. You're going to have an accident. They're -- that embankment, you see the -- you see those columns. They're completely out of the ground. The only reason that they're there is because of the fact that they're concrete columns. You can't see them. I took a bad photo. I should have taken an ang -- a photo from an angle. Just telling you, we need to do something about it. Something's going to happen there. Okay, moving on to the next picture. Okay, next picture. Alright, this is the bridge on Orduna. This is an example of the ADA issue that they're talking about. The sidewalks are a critical need here. We got to get this done. We've got to get this done. There's going to be an accident. Someone's going to hurt themselves one day there. We've been talking about this for a long time. Let me help you get this across the finish line, okay. Next picture. This is the lack of maintenance on the County bridges. You see all -- you see the coloration, the different coloration in the paint of the bridge. You want to know why it's like that? Because that was full of graffiti and the Manager sent his team out there to clean that up, and they did a good job, but that's not our responsibility. That's a County bridge. They don't maintain the County bridge. Look at the grass. Look at the garbage. Look how dirty the sidewalk is. I took these pictures myself yesterday. Okay, moving on to the next picture. Look at the overgrowth on all the trees. Look at the swale. This is what I want to understand. Who -- and this is what I'm asking from staff. Please, for the next Commission

meeting, Mr. Clerk, I need this on the agenda. Who is responsible for managing the swales between the bridge and the next home? I'm going to show you further pictures. This is not that bad. It's not a big deal, but I'll show you the next one. Keep going. Alright, look at the amount of food and garbage on all these swales. Keep going. Garbage, food, you know, look at all the overgrowth. That's a -- there's a homeowner there, someone -- just because it's over the wall doesn't mean it's not to be addressed. Out of sight, out of mind, it's still got to be addressed. Graffiti, look at the swale. Keep going. Look at the overgrowth on the swale. Keep going. Next picture. Next picture. Look at that. Next picture. That's all the garbage. That is right there on Orduna. There is an adjacent home. Look at the amount of dead palm fronds. Last week -- last week, as the Manager would tell you, there was wooden pallets there. There was cardboard boxes there. There was a chair. It was a bunch of stuff that had been thrown there for about two or three months. I've been calling to get it removed. It was finally removed, but I still took the pictures, probably a few hundred palm fronds there and a ton of garbage. Keep going, picture. Look at the amount of garbage. Beer, keep -- next picture. That's the swale between the house and the bridge. You can see the waterway all the way at the end. Someone is responsible for this. We got to find out who's responsible. If it's the County, it's the County; if it's us, it's us, or if it's the homeowner. Next picture. Again, the County bridge needs to be maintained, pressure cleaned maybe every six months, painted once a year, pressure cleaned. We need to stay on top of this. Can I have an answer, please, from the City Attorney and the City Manager at the next Commission meeting to see who's responsible for this?

City Attorney Suárez: Yes, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: And I will love to address it if we have to legislate it in one form or another.

City Attorney Suárez: Yes, Mayor. We're look -- we're already looking into it.

Mayor Lago: Perfect, I appreciate it. Okay, with that being said, thank you. Please...



Public Works Director Diaz: Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Use me as a resource, I'm here. Use me as a resource, use the Commission, any way we can help you to push these projects forward to address funding, to address roadblocks by the County, by the City, by my office. I take responsibility. I'm here to help you. Let me help you. I want to help you. I want to make you guys look great. Thank you very much.

Senior Multimodal Transportation Engineer De Zayas: Thank you.

Public Works Director Diaz: Thank you.