

**DOWNTOWN CORAL GABLES  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (“BID”)  
STREETSCAPE DESIGN SERVICES**

**A. General Background:**

During the last quarter of 2008, the Business Improvement District (BID) of the City of Coral Gables produced a Streetscape Design Program for Downtown Coral Gables including Giralda Avenue and Miracle Mile—with some peripheral recommendations for the improvement of existing alleyways, parking garages, and pedestrian *paseos*. This design program took into consideration previous traffic/parking reports and was based on empirical studies of existing conditions, a comparative analysis of similar spaces in other communities around the country, and the review of more than a dozen alternative scenarios by BID’s Urban Design Consultants, Design Streetscape Committee, BID members, property owners, tenants, the general public, city staff, members of the City Commission, and other interested parties and consultants.

The design effort was carried, under the sunshine, with an overwhelming public participation. It was lead by Professor Charles Bohl, Director of the Graduate Program in Real Estate and New Urbanism, and by Professor Jaime Correa, Director of the Graduate Program in Suburb and Town Design, at the University of Miami. The results of the proposed design program are a clear expression of the goals and priorities of the greater majority of property owners, tenants, and citizens concerned with the commercial competition potential, ambiance, spatial legibility, character, attractiveness, livability, resilience and redefinition of the public spaces along Giralda Avenue and Miracle Mile.

In addition to the typical elements required for a great urban landscape (lighting, raised crosswalks, legible signage, street furniture, etc.), the following three paragraphs summarize the proposed program and design recommendations:

1. **Giralda Avenue** (“Restaurant Row”) keeps some of its parallel parking while providing several dedicated valet stations. It is ambitioned to become the first “shared street” in the City of Coral Gables –a “*curb-less*” type of street paved with light imprint pavers, two lanes of traffic (10 ft. each), shade trees planted on grates and perpendicularly to the existing lot lines (to avoid covering important shop front conditions), movable landscape devices (planters, clay pots, lattice webs, etc.), new lighting, potential dining pavilions and gallery encroachments onto the resulting pedestrian areas. A system of bollards would generate flexibility for the definition of valet parking stations, for the creation of outdoor dining space, and for the eventual closing of the street during holidays and special festivities.
2. **Miracle Mile** (“Premier Shopping District”) preserves the existing median, reduces the dimension of the existing lanes of traffic (11 feet each), converts existing angled parking to parallel parking (10 feet –with a total loss of

approximately 77 parking spaces), adds substantial pedestrian areas and outdoor dining spaces, improves the existing lighting, expands the existing shade tree canopy with a new double-row of trees staggered every 20-24 feet, affords potential dining pavilions on the improved pedestrian areas, and adds legibility and safety to existing pedestrian crossings. In short, it turns the existing space of Miracle Mile upside down and converts it into a regionally competitive first-class dining, shopping and entertainment area -geared towards a more mature and sophisticated market segment.

3. **Peripheral Areas** ("Alleys and Paseos") mitigate the loss of parking on Miracle Mile and proposes an enhancement of the pedestrian connections between the existing parking garages and the public spaces along Miracle Mile. The enhancement of these peripheral areas should include: movable landscape, lattices and trellises, existing shop front improvements, colored/textured light imprint pavers, textured walls, lighting, the conversion of alleys into one-way thoroughfares, the improvement of trash collection and trash storage areas, etc.

**B. The Design Program:**

1. **Giralda Avenue and Miracle Mile:**
  - a. **General:** Preparation of a set of scaled drawings and documents.
  - b. **Zoning Amendments:** Prepare a set of zoning amendments -required for the correct implementation of this project i.e.: dining-pavilions, gallery encroachments, outdoor dining restroom requirements, parking stall dimensions, parking allowances/requirements, etc.
  - c. **Civil and Traffic Engineering:** Location and dimensions of all horizontal geometric features and roadways, sidewalks, crossroads and alleys. Drawings shall include: traffic lanes, medians, turn lanes, corner radii, parking, crosswalks, valet stations and drop offs, curb and gutter types, traffic signal displays, etc. Please consider future trolley stop locations.
  - d. **Surface Areas:** Identify light imprint pavement materials for travel lanes, crosswalks and sidewalk surfaces, including texture, color samples and patterns. Present scaled drawings at 1:1 scale and at 1' =  $\frac{1}{4}$ ".
  - e. **ADA requirements:** Present compliance plan with ADA requirements.
  - f. **Drainage:** Produce cross road drainage adjustment details.
  - g. **Traffic Calming:** Provide typical sections and dimensions at intersections and crosswalks -add speed tables generated by these interventions. Provide typical drainage connections and curbs for this type of pavement.

- h. **Traffic Signalization:** Identify any adjustments required throughout Giralda Avenue or Miracle Mile. Provide typical details for upgrading mid-block pedestrian crossings (enhanced displays, channel crossing into the designated paths, comfort protection, queuing areas, etc.).
- i. **Traffic Markings:** Provide details for parking spaces, speed tables, mid block crossings, etc.
- j. **Utilities:** Assemble and prepare drawings locating all overhead and underground utilities. Contact appropriate utility companies to ascertain utility conditions. Determine impact of these projects on existing utility lines.
- k. **Lighting and Furniture:** Select light poles and luminaries –and provide their typical spacing. Select tables, chairs, and other street furniture – provide scaled drawings and/or photographs with specifications.
- l. **Dining Pavilions:** Create design guidelines for dining pavilions. Show potential locations and footprints and study infrastructure requirements for electric and water connections –if necessary.
- m. **Street Signage:** Design informational and festive signage. Prepare typical sign layouts including color, sign size, lettering size, and sign height.
- n. **Preliminary Cost Estimates:** Prepare a preliminary cost estimate for the general improvements.
- o. **Other:** the Head Consultant shall be aware that the above list may be refined as the project gets more implementation specificity. Unforeseen items may be added; items here presented may be deleted.

2. **Peripheral Area (Paseos and Alleyways):**

- a. **General:** in addition to all the items required for Giralda Avenue and Miracle Mile, and as applicable to the Peripheral Areas in the 200 and 300 blocks of Miracle Mile, the items below shall also be designed and presented to the BID for general review.
- b. **Utilities:** in addition to the requirements above, include special electric, sewer, water and other utility elements such as generators or wall mounted connectors.

- c. **Paseos:** Identify paving and treatment of the various connections between the parking garages and Miracle Mile, including alleyway crossings and landscape features.
- d. **Solid Waste Handling:** Prepare a solid waste management plan for the areas along the alleyways. Design guidelines for the coverage of trash areas and other eyesores.
- e. **Parking Garage Connections:** Prepare a detailed pedestrian circulation plan between specifying design interventions at parking garages, alleys, paseos and Miracle Mile.

#### **C. Implementation - Design Phases:**

The scale and scope of the project described above requires planning, architectural and landscape design, selection of colors and materials, measurable schedules of work, technical information, the selection of a Head Consultant and the collaboration of a range of professionals attempting to achieve the goals and priorities established during the Business Improvement District workshops and design sessions. To achieve the synchronization of these tasks, the following seven design phases should be accomplished:

- 1. **Engineering Survey and Geotechnical Testing:** provides accurate base information for the group of professionals attempting to intervene within the various areas of Giralda Avenue, Miracle Mile and the Peripheral Areas.
- 2. **Preliminary Streetscape Design:** a design phase where every member of the different professional disciplines assembles a unified set of plan views, sections, details, color schemes, landscape and material selections, technical information, etc. for the various areas of Giralda Avenue, Miracle Mile and the Peripheral Areas.
- 3. **Design Development Phase:** a design phase where a final design is prepared including: accurate specifications, a selection of street furniture and lighting fixtures, project manuals and cost estimates for the various infrastructure components, technical details of the street improvements, drainage, landscaping and irrigation plans, precise signage specifications, electrical plans, etc. This phase shall include the preparation of estimates for executing all of the elements of the improvements recommended in the Design Program.
- 4. **Definition of Priorities and Scheduling of Work:** a design phase where members of the BID, city staff, property owners and the Head Consultant will determine the areas of priority for the implementation of the project *from most urgent to least demanding*. The Head Consultant along with the City shall also determine the work schedule and timing required for the accomplishment of the

various interventions. The City may then order its consultants to prepare construction documents in a more incremental and economically feasible manner.

5. **Construction Documents:** The City's consultants will produce a set of final construction documents for only those Priority Area(s) selected. This process will be repeated incrementally, and as needed, until the final completion of the projects.
6. **Bidding Phase:** The City's consultants shall advertise for bids, answer inquiries, review proposals and contractor qualifications, prepare submission tabulations and make final recommendation for award or awards of contracts by the City.
7. **Construction Phase:** for each Priority Area (each contract awarded), the Architect/Engineer of record and the Contractor will attend pre-construction and weekly construction meetings, review and approve all shop drawings, perform interim and final inspections, review and process Change Order requests, answer information requests, implement the construction documents accurately and in a timely fashion, and perform any and all of the required professional tasks necessary for the successful realization of the projects.

**D. Final Statement and Recommendation:**

The BID asserts that an incremental approach to the implementation of the Streetscape Design Program is fundamental to the general success of the master plan; however, this incremental approach must be based upon an overall design inclusive of all three areas of concern (Giralda Avenue, Miracle Mile and Peripheral Areas).

Therefore, greater thought, funds and time must be dedicated to the preliminary design and development of the project. Then and only then, the City of Coral Gables, the BID, the tenants, property owners, and the general public will be able to assess the implications of these interventions and take informed decisions defining the affects, priority and applicability of these projects.

The BID recommends that the City undertake Design Phases 1 through 4 set forth in C. above.