

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item I-4
September 14, 2021
City Commission Chambers
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL

City Commission

Mayor Vince Lago

Vice Mayor Michael Mena

Commissioner Rhonda Anderson

Commissioner Jorge Fors

Commissioner Kirk Menendez

City Staff

City Manager, Peter Iglesias

Assistant City Manager, Ed Santamaria

City Attorney, Miriam Ramos

City Clerk, Billy Urquia

Assistant Economic Development Director, Belkys Perez

Arts and Culture Specialist, Catherine Cathers

Public Speaker(s)

Agenda Item I-4 [Start: 4:22 p.m.]

Presentation of Downtown Coral Gables public art tour

Mayor Lago: I-4 – Presentation of Downtown Coral Gables public art tour. Belkys thank you for your patients. I know you’ve been here all day, last but not least.

Assistant Director Perez: Good evening everyone, Belkys Perez with the Economic Development Department. If you could pull up the PowerPoint.

Ms. Cathers: Good afternoon, Mayor, Vice Mayor, Commissioners, I’m Catherine Cathers, Arts and Cultural Specialist for the city, here with Belkys, Assistant Director of Economic Development. In both our areas we brainstormed different ways we can engage residents and visitors with the best the city has to offer. One of the evolving areas is the city’s collection of

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public art downtown. So right now, we have over 30 artworks in the collection. This project focuses on ten, they are located in downtown. We have an online map of the city's website, however, its not the same as physically meeting people where they are and when they are walking the downtown area. The Business Improvement District is consistently reaching out to assist with information about the collection and understands the impact the arts have on our economic development, quality of life, and has access points that create memorable moments and literal landmarks to remember favorite spots. Adding to the overall experience of being downtown and wanting to promote the city's public art collection, we were fortunate to find a partner through the kiosks and the first phase of this project came together.

Assistant Director Perez: And so basically, what we noticed is that Catherine through her point was trying to come up with a solution, an experience in the downtown and we were doing the same thing. When we talked to Ike, we realized that their owner is an art enthusiast. He is an art collector, and he is looking for initiatives that would promote the arts. And so, as a result, we channeled this through Ike, and they were very receptive. They took up our offer. They did everything themselves, including the artwork, and we really just had to provide the maps, the locations as the art pieces that we have. So, we've had Ike since September of 2019. There are currently four kiosks. There are three on Miracle Mile and there is one on Giralda Plaza, and all of them have this initiative that we are launching. So basically, when you approach a kiosk, everyone of them, there will be a map. It is a thumbnail as you see there. They are individual to the kiosk that you're at. It is a self-guided tour of the public art pieces that are nearest to the kiosk. So, once you engage that thumbnail, you are going to get that poster on the left side of your screen, and it will show you where you are in relation to the art pieces around you, and you can go on this self-guided tour. Catherine, if you want to talk about.

Ms. Cathers: So, each location has a different route. So not only does it provide that recommended walking route, but there is also a brief description of each of the pieces, along with the title and the artist in a little thumbnail of what to expect at those locations.

Assistant Director Perez: And on the right-hand side – you obviously, you've got to go on your walk, so you need this poster so you can download it with this button that you see that you are going to be prompted on the left hand side, on the right hand side of your screen. You can either get it as a text message, so you input your cell phone and then you receive it there or a QR code that you can take a picture of on the kiosk. Both will give you a link. When you hit that link on your phone, it will download this map in relation. Just so you guys know, Ike does not keep your personal information. It does not keep your cell phone numbers, every thirty minutes it is recycled.

Vice Mayor Mena: Is it just the map or is it also the information about the pieces that you see there?

Assistant Director Perez: We know how many people have interacted with it, so we can collect the data in the back of the platform, but we don't know who as far as individuals.

Vice Mayor Mena: No, no. What I'm saying when you go to the QR code, once you go to the link, is it just a map or is it also information about the piece.

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Assistant Director Perez: It is the map. It is the map and so that takes us actually to the next step which is, we wanted it to be something that's a little bit more interactive, and so, this is what we were able to reach with Ike at this moment, but we are in a Phase II. This has been tested for about two weeks now, I would say, and we've been testing it live. It worked perfectly and so now we are going to engage Ike to start step-by-step directions, just like you would do if you were getting directions on Google maps, it will take you step-by-step and provide you some information of the artwork that you are standing in front of and information as far as the artist is concerned.

Ms. Cathers: So that's what we are working on for Phase II and also, moving forward, Ike has been encouraging us to also use this as another opportunity for public art itself. So, we have the possibility of using the kiosks to present artist's work and we feel like this may be a great opportunity to involve more of the local arts community, it would be temporary based, and that's another initiative that we are currently working on.

Vice Mayor Mena: Is there a way to incorporate like QR codes scanners in front of where the pieces are?

Ms. Cathers: Yes. We are actually working with the Business Improvement District on an overall signage project and part of that would be including all signage that's ADA compatible, including QR codes.

Vice Mayor Mena: Are you going to link it with this at some point?

Ms. Cathers: It absolutely can.

Mayor Lago: It would be great.

Vice Mayor Mena: Seems like it would be obvious move once you have that. I just think it would be interesting if you are just walking by that you can click on it and learn about the artist, what the piece is about, etc.

Assistant Director Perez: Those could be linked to our website which is another thing that you were looking at, which is having the information on our website so when you do use your phone to take a picture of the QR code, it links you back to the website.

Commissioner Anderson: Its fantastic. I like the onsite stuff too, because if you're walking around and you don't have to go back to the kiosk to get the information.

Vice Mayor Mena: Not everybody is going to do the whole tour, right, but maybe they just see a piece they think is interesting and they want to learn more about it, that would be great if we can incorporate that.

Commissioner Anderson: Very nice.

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Assistant Director Perez: That's it.

Mayor Lago: I think it's great.

Commissioner Anderson: Fantastic.

Mayor Lago: I think its going to be another great addition to the downtown, so people can start enjoying a little bit more about the significant investment that we made in our downtown. So, I welcome it. I think its great and I congratulate you on your efforts. Thank you very much.

Commissioner Anderson: Love it. Thank you.