



Village of El Portal

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EL PORTAL MAYOR'S REPORT (November 18 – December 31, 2014)

Dear Residents of the Village of El Portal:

Last fall, I campaigned for Mayor intent on setting short and long term goals for El Portal based on your—the Resident's— input, and I have hit the ground running. So far, I have taken immediate steps to bring forward a Proactive Village-Wide Agenda, which is Focused on four key areas. But, we will also solve problems with quick-wins and provide strong leadership on urgent and emerging issues. All of this is an effort to ultimately deliver to our Residents a prosperous and beautiful Village—where everyone matters!

The new Council's first 100 days in office concludes on February 27, 2015, where I will deliver "The State of Village Address," which is an update of our action plan to achieve our TOP four priorities.

TEAM: My goal has been to pull the new Council together as a TEAM, because Together Everyone Achieves More! Below is a quick, bullet-point, update regarding our progress, which have also been presented at our last 2 council meetings.

1. FISCAL SUSTAINABILITY: We are working closely with the Village Attorney and Manager to bring the Sale of the Little Farm to fruition. The Administration & Finance Committee are proactively pursuing ways we can increase our revenues, reduce expenses, and increase our reserves (for a rainy day/hurricane fund)! For example: Are we optimizing the marketing of the Village Hall in terms of rental to our community and beyond? Are we maximizing daytime rental (when it is not being used for official Village business) for different organization's meetings? We need to study each line item of expense and revenue in our budget.
2. PUBLIC TRUST IN PUBLIC SAFETY: I want to bring back & invigorate programs such as: Crime Watch & Citizen on Patrol. And, proactively work with the Chief of Police to implement these value-added programs for our residents. It would also be great to implement west-side community events and/or activities, where residents can meet and interact with our police officers. I want

to increase police presence and visibility. We should revamp our Senior-Citizen “check-up” program and ensure our police consistently have all their necessary equipment. Kick-off Crime Watch in 2015 with a block party where our community leaders: Sen. Bullard, Rep. Campbell and Commissioner Edmonson are present. Develop the police program with Horace Mann (take stock in children, cops read out loud or...). Neighborhood team police, or adopt a block. These ideas are just to name a few that will be our focus under the public safety committee.

3. BEAUTIFICATION: Clean up entrance way signs (87 St. & N. Miami) and beautify our right-a-ways to improve curb appeal. We also need to clean-up the Nature Trail, update the Tot-Lot (repave, add a see-saw, and re-sod), re-paint all the marquis, (with a lively color) placing our name back up on east side one. Ask YGreene to host an Educational Workshop for residents, along with a Beautification Workshop. Get the Village Hall landscaping updated, place aesthetically looking garbage cans by bus benches and by Horace Mann Middle School. Work with Horace Mann Middle School to repair the fence by the Nature Trail & NW 2nd Ave. Lastly, take it “street by street” with code enforcement committee & code enforcement officer (PT) to be hired, where we will have a monthly focused village-wide enforcement initiative.
4. COMMUNITY FOCUSED VILLAGE: Develop an Enhanced Senior Program, Teen Club (Horace Mann) with police department and bring back the cost-effective (black & white) Newsletter (where El Portal Residents can advertise their services and where Horace Mann can feature a student of the quarter, etc.). Install a bike rack by the Tot Lot and start a preliminary conversation about establishing a dog park. Lastly, as Mayor, I was recently elected to the board of the Miami Shores Chamber of Commerce, where my goal is to establish stronger community/business ties among the tri-villages of El Portal, Miami Shores, and Biscayne Park.

Tackling these priorities can, and will, only be possible with Village Council that works together. The idea is to have focused and proactive goals (both short and long term)—and to work towards making strides and reporting back to you –our Residents. Happy New Year!

Mayor Claudia V. Cubillos