

VILLAGE HALL
500 NE 87TH ST
EL PORTAL, FL 33138
CHRISTIA E. ALOU, ESQ.
VILLAGE MANAGER



MAYOR OMARR C. NICKERSON
VICE MAYOR ANDERS URBOM
COUNCILPERSON LUIS PIRELA
COUNCILPERSON ANNA LIGHTFOOT-WARD
COUNCILPERSON DARIAN MARTIN

MEMORANDUM

TO: Village of El Portal Council
FR: Christia E. Alou, Village Manager
DATE: July 26, 2022
RE: July 2022 Village Manager's Report

Please accept this memorandum as my July 2022 Village of El Portal Administrative Report to Council and the Community.

Hurricane Season and Emergency Preparedness 2022

June 1, 2022, marked the start of hurricane season. The Village Administration updated our internal emergency protocols and have placed service orders for our annual stormdrain maintenance with Shenandoah Construction and our annual dangerous tree limb trimming with Orchidman Landscaping Artisans. Unfortunately, Orchidman has not been able to provide the tree trimming due to staff shortfalls. We hope to have the trimming soon. The Village's stormdrain contractor, Shenandoah Construction, submitted an proposal for this year's maintenance that is awaiting approval by the Village Council at the July 26, 2022 meeting. This annual maintenance is necessary in our emergency preparation for flooding and hurricane emergencies and the overall water quality and public safety of our community.

The annual Miami Dade County Hurricane Preparedness Guides is being mailed to every resident of Miami Dade County, and extra copies are available at the Village Hall. We encourage residents to download the Miami Dade County App Ready MDC. It is free and it has critical information for emergency conditions.

A Citizens Crime Watch Hurricane Prep Meeting is being scheduled by EPPD and its recording will be on the Village Website to serve as a preparation guide for Village residents.

As a reminder, the Village of El Portal has a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Florida Department of Emergency Management to address post-hurricane safety clean-up. The MAA requires certain procedures for reporting and removal of hazards that may not be immediate. Prevention and preparation are the Village's best defense against weather emergencies.

Hurricane Irma Financial Recovery

There has been no change since the last update. See this: The Village renewed its note with Synovus Bank that paid for Hurricane Irma debris removal. There has been no change in the

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reimbursement with the Village owing \$679,750.56. The Village's Appeal of the partial de-obligation of reimbursement is still pending with FEMA. The Village's Legislative Consultants are preparing meetings for the Village Administration and FDEM to advocate for the appeal.

Corona Virus/COVID-19 Pandemic Municipal Response

American Rescue Program Act (ARPA) funds were distributed by the US Federal government through Florida Department of Emergency Services. The Village of El Portal is a non-entitlement unit (NEU) and has been allocated funds to be utilized in our pandemic response efforts that address front line employees dealing directly with the public, technology-based service delivery, parks, pandemic related water projects. The Village is utilizing these funds to enhance the El Portal Police Department with equipment and staff that has been long- needed, and the Village is undergoing a digitization project for all departments, starting with the Building Department and Code Enforcement. By implementing digital services, the Village will make services and operations in those departments more efficient and convenient for residents. The Village is also planning for an inner-office renovation to allow for more space for co-workers to safely distance from one another, emergency communications that includes a digital marquee at the Village Hall, and other tech advances that will greatly impact emergency services for the municipality. This project is ongoing.

Since March 2020, the Village Administration observed state and county executive orders to follow the CDC guidelines in practicing safe social distancing. The Village Hall is open to the public and we are asking visitors to wear masks, but this policy has become a lot more relaxed due to pandemic monitoring, we continue to observe social distancing and hand sanitization when visiting our offices. Staff continues to wear masks when interacting with others or utilizing small workspaces. All Village parks are open. The Emergency Management Team continues to observe the viral variants and the numbers that may affect our service.

Short-term Vacation Rental In the Village of El Portal

The Village of El Portal passed an ordinance regulating Short-Term Vacation Rentals (STVR) within the municipality in May 2022. Councilperson Darian Martin hosted a STVR Community Workshop on Saturday, July 23, 2022 10AM-12PM where I provided my license application/permit, renewal and inspection fees recommendation and the Local Business Tax Receipt fees to the body, giving the community members and the Village Council members who were present an opportunity to review and consider the recommendation and their own experiences and requests for the ordinance and its fees. An item will be placed on the September 2022 Council agenda.

State Appropriation Funded School Safety Roundabout at Horace Mann Middle School

The Village received \$300,000 from the State of Florida in the 2021 Legislative Appropriations to fund the development of a traffic calming project at NW91 Street and NW 2nd Avenue. The project will be designed, and the construction management will be with Village engineering firm, Craig A. Smith and Associates. Mayor Nickerson and I presented the project at the December 2021 Miami Shores Village Council Meeting. Miami Shores is in full support of the project and has advised us

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to have our legal counsel prepare the requisite Memorandum of Understanding with it. The stakeholders are Florida Department of Transportation, Miami Shores Village, Miami Dade County, and the Miami Dade Public Schools. CAS and I are responding very quickly to production requests from Florida Department of Transportation Contract Coordinator and to establish and stick to timelines for completion of the project. Senior Engineer Orlando Rubio and I participated in an update meeting with FDOT, and we were told that we must keep the project moving and have our contract executed by July 2022 in order to keep the funds. We are presently awaiting legal documentation in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Miami Shores Village to be drafted, presented and executed in order to finalize our contract with FDOT. This project is ongoing.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Village of El Portal Parks Renovation

The Village of El Portal Parks Renovation is on track for 2022. Our landscape architect and project manager have been working closely with the county's archeologist, and considering and incorporating community, Sustainability and Resiliency Taskforce Members input on the initial plans. The plans were discussed at the July 19, 2022 Public Works Committee by the project manager. Some light revisions are being made, and next steps are being prepared in conducting the renovation project.

Village of El Portal Transportation Circulator Pilot Project Shuttle to Downtown Transit

The Village of El Portal has a lovely electrical shuttle vehicle, fully operating through FreeBee. An application may be downloaded to access the shuttle schedule and map. This information is also provided in a flyer and card that may be picked up at the Village Hall or on the Village website. The shuttle stops are at the Village Hall parking lot (next to the Little Library) and at the El Portal Nature Trail. A security camera was installed to maintain the equipment. The Village has requested the execution of an Interlocal Agreement for the circulator with Miami Dade County. Due to state funding being held until the Village submits the 2019 audit, the matching funds from FDOT were held for this project. The Village continues the project with CITT (Transit) funds, an allowable expenditure for these funds that are very limited for what they may be used.

NE 2nd Avenue Business Corridor

The Sanctuary Property – According to the property owners, there has been no changes at The Sanctuary. There are delays associated with supply chain issues and inflation, extending the project because of material availability. A private sewer line to tie-in to Miami Shores Village's lift station is being explored by the owners.

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Roadway and Traffic - Miami Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works is working with the Village to install "painted" crosswalk(s) at NE 87 and NE 89 and NE 2 Avenue. Our Public Works Director is reviewing engineering considerations presently. This project was born from the meetings that the Village Mayor and I had with Miami Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava in November 2021 and several department directors and leaders to discuss areas of partnership with the County such as the Pedestrians First, the Resiliency and Sustainability Adaptation Action Area, and areas of collaboration with departments such as Economic Development, Transportation and Planning, Water and Sewer, and Community Action.

Signage, Sewer Conversion, Parking - The Village also applied for a transportation planning grant with the County's assistance, to prepare this project. This is the planning necessary to start the development of the Village's Business Corridor as planned in meetings with me, Mayor Nickerson, our urban planners at Plusurbia, and our Village Attorney to consider policy changes for businesses owners along the NE 2nd Avenue corridor that include septic to sewer conversion that is critical to the Village's economic development, as well as signage and short-term rentals and lodging. Traffic changes are also a consideration for NE 2nd Avenue. This project is ongoing.

Biscayne Boulevard/Annexed Area Development

The Kavista Rental Development at El Portal Annex

The Kavista Project was granted an extension of construction hours to 7AM from 8AM. One City of Miami resident has complained about the Skatebird Miami and Kavista construction project noise. Under the Code and according to the Z5 zoning, music and noise are permitted within 100 feet of the property in its usual course of business. For the Village of El Portal, music and noise outside of the business hours and construction hours are permitted only upon application and approval of Special Events Permit. Kavista Project has applied for both and will be granted the extension and the construction noise, in the interest of project completion in a timely and professional manner. Kavista Project will also be submitting a right-of-way permit application with Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plans for construction activities requiring partial road closures. They may need to coordinate with City of Miami also as part of the NE 83rd Street is in the City's right-of-way. Building Official Martinez and I have been addressing permitting questions and timelines with the developers to start the project in July 2022.

Skate Bird Miami (Skate Park)

Skate Bird Miami is open for business with a temporary certificate of occupancy.

Former Trailer Park "Little Farm"

No movement to sell or develop has been reported at this time.

DEPARTMENTS

Police and Public Safety/El Portal Police Department (EPPD)

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The EMT (Emergency Management Team) is meeting regularly to prepare for Hurricane Season 2022.

From Police Chief Alex Mendez July 2022

- *Dell Tough Books delivered and are being issued as they come online.*

Digital Road Signs are in transit to the Village.

The Departmental Issued firearms have been delivered and will begin upfitting.

We had a great turnout for the El Portal Police Department's Summer Safety and Community Farm Share event held at Horace Mann Middle School on July 7, 2022.

Phase 2 of the Police Vehicle Fleet was ordered this month. Expected delivery is end of 2022, early 2023.

Code Enforcement

From Code Enforcement Officer Carlos Herrera for July 2022

In the Month of July the Code Enforcement Has reviewed approximately 323 open cases within the Village of El Portal.

Below You Will Find Open Burglar Alarm Permits that Have Expired, going back from September of 2014 All the Way to June of 2022. All Burglar alarm Permits have been Closed due to Compliance by the property owners. All Property owners have paid the late fees required, therefore all cases are considered in compliance and the cases have been since closed.

The Addresses Are;

- *149 NW 88 St.*
- *110 NW 90 St.*
- *9021 N. Miami Ave.*
- *241 NE 88 St.*
- *413 NE 89 St.*
- *69 NE 87 St.*
- *352 NE 89 St.*
- *291 NW 86 St.*
- *386 NE 88 St.*
- *8601 NE 4th Ave. Rd.*
- *180 NW 87 St.*
- *8671 N. Miami Ave.*
- *465 NW 87 St.*
- *115 NW 87 St.*

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- 8733 N. Miami Ave.
- 87 NE 88 St.
- 354 NE 89 St.
- 455 NE 90 St.
- 188 NW 88 St.
- 64 NE 88 St.
- 102 NE 86 St.
- 2 NW 89 St.
- 92 NE 90 St.
- 415 NW 89 St.
- 245 NW 86 St.
- 330 NE 88 St.
- 100 NW 90 St.
- 8825 NE 2 Ave.
- 8755 NW 1st Ave. *
- 94 NE 86 St.
- 12 NW 91st ST.
- 420 NE 87 St.
- 8671 NE Miami Ct.
- 199 NW 90 St.
- 475 NW 88 St.
- 8760 NE 2 Ave
- 8755 NW 1st Ave. *
- 8955 NW 1st Ave.
- 158 NW 91 St.
- 8760 NE 2nd Ave.
- 8633 NE Miami Ct.

*Asterisk * = Two(2) Alarm Permit Violations. All Burglar Alarm Permits are Governed by the Village of El Portal Code of Ordinances, As per Ordinance No. 03-423. All of The Above Burglar Alarm Permits have been satisfied. All cases are closed. The property Owners either renewed the Burglar alarm Permit or The Property owners decided to cancel the renewal for financial Hardship and/or other reasons. However, all cases have been satisfied. The Above 41 cases are Now Closed Cases by The Village of El Portal Code Enforcement Office & Code Enforcement Officer Carlos Herrera.*

Below you Will See The number(s) Of Open Violations for Exterior Maintenance / Exterior Façade , i.e. Structure/Home /Business & Alike that need to be Painted in the Village of El Portal , As per The Village of El Portal Code of Ordinances , As per Ordinance No. 03-420.

There are Currently 109 Open Cases/Violations For Exterior Maintenance in The Village of El Portal, all of Which are from Previous Code Enforcement Officers.

The Code Enforcement Office of the Village of El Portal & Code Enforcement Officer Carlos Herrera Has Already Visited all 109 Properties & All of The Open Violations mentioned Herein

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are Going to Be Transferred & Re-assigned to Officer Herrera & be Re-Issued and the Violations will be Sent To The Property Owners via Regular Mail , Certified Mail & Posted on The Property.

NOTE: all 109 Cases will be re-reviewed on a case by case basis to ensure that Either that the Violation has Been Corrected by a Painting permit or that the Violation is Deemed Unfounded , in Which case the violation(s) will be Closed & no further Action will be Required.

The Above Cases with All The Addresses & Follow-up Status and Information will Be Provided in Next Months' Report To The City/Village Manager Ms. Alou for her Review and Provide Said Information to The Mayor & the rest of the Commission/Council for Review.

Also, the Village of El Portal has Approximately 53 Cases /Violations that are currently opened for Working without a permit.

Again, The Code Enforcement office & Code Enforcement Officer Herrera will be Re-reviewing & Re-visiting all Illegal Construction Sites in order to Transfer & Re-issue All Open Cases under his name in order to determine through the Inspection Process , if Either The Violation has Been Corrected through the Permitting Process or if said opened cases/Violations are deemed unfounded in order to proceed further.

Building Department

From CAP/Building Department Building Official Pedro Martinez for July 2022

There have been 38 issued permits for the month of July. \$76,875.90 collected for the 38 permits. \$0 grand total construction value.

Planning and Zoning

Public Works and Maintenance

Many of the Village's Special Projects fall under the Public Works Department. In addition to those projects already described, the department conducted the following:

From Public Works Department, Director Mohan Thampi for July 2022

- 1. Reviewed Traffic Study proposals from 3 consultants and recommended David Plummer & Associates at Public Services Committee Meeting.*
- 2. Attended first Public Works Committee meeting, introduced staff and gave project updates.*
- 3. Attend first meeting of Sustainability & Resiliency Task Force Board Meeting for VOEP Environmental Charrette Masterplan.*

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4. *Attend Biscayne Bay Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP) meeting with regard to VOEP applying for wastewater grant funds available. Recommended and assisting in completing RAP grant application for Septic to Sewer Phase I project.*
5. *Complete and submit by July 31, VOEP's Stormwater 20-Year Needs Analyses/New Reporting Requirement per F.S. 403.9302 to Miami Dade County RER-DERM Water Management Section.*
6. *Submitted Miami-Dade County Phase I MS4 Cycle 4 Year 4 Annual Report and Reapplication for NPDES Stormwater Permit.*
7. *Installed multicolor lighting at Main Entrance of City Hall for holiday themes. Like red, white, and blue lights on July 4th.*
8. *Completed Village Hall and Police Station Floor Plan for Police Station Hardening Grant requirements.*
9. *Review Hurricane Plan with Orchidman and coordinate trimming of trees.*
10. *Review proposal for stormwater pipes vacuum cleaning from Shenandoah.*
11. *Coordinate installation of new catch basin behind Horace Mann Middle School.*
12. *Installed and operating the new Village Hall Digital Sign by Adware.*
13. *Coordinate construction conversion of Jail Cell by Leading Edge to office space.*
14. *Continue to coordinate installing new Village Hall carpeting and flooring replacements.*
15. *Drive and inspect daily to various areas of Village to check for litter, problems or issues.*
16. *Coordinate landscaping activities with Orchidman.*
17. *Continue to make inspection and inventory of streetlights which need repairs and bulb replacement.*
18. *Continue checking stormwater drainage inlets, clear and clean them of surface debris as needed.*
19. *Review various Village right-of-way permit applications submitted to Miami Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW).*
20. *Studying restroom facility for Tiny Tots Park.*
21. *Obtaining quotes for painting of Village Hall.*

Village of El Portal Sustainability and Resiliency

Most public works activities affect the Village's sustainability and resiliency. The Village of El Portal Sustainability and Resiliency Taskforce Liaison, Mayor Nickerson, makes reports to Council.

On July 13, 2022, Public Works Director Mohan Thampi, PlusUrbia and I met with the Sustainability and Resiliency Taskforce as part of its planning of a Sustainability and Resiliency Charette. Details of what the charette will address and how to incorporate the 2014 Village Charette and stormwater master plans were contemplated, and a PowerPoint presentation was provided by members of the taskforce regarding sustainable blue-ways and greenways in other areas of Miami Dade County and their potential in the Village of El Portal.

The Miami Waterkeepers and the Village conducted an outreach in the Village during the week of July 18-22, 2022 to encourage members of the community to participate in an on-line/app survey and to be and to practice water quality improvement measures.

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On July 25, 2022, Public Works Director Mohan Thampi completed the MS4 Stormwater Inspection training as part of the Public Works Department's ongoing improvements that will add to the improvement of water quality in the Village. Trainings of other Village staff such as Public Works Coordinator, Code Enforcement are forthcoming through Mr. Thampi.

Miami Dade County's Renovation of C7 CANAL BRIDGE at N. Miami Avenue

There is no update since last month's submission on the N. Miami Avenue bridge reconstruction.

Other Outstanding Public Works Projects:

1. Septic to Sewer Project on West Side of Village

99 Homes of the Village's West Side – the Village met with and finalized all portions of the easement payment for the small parcel required for the lift station at Horace Mann Middle School. The first installment payment for \$18,000 was issued to Miami Dade County Public Schools, and the executed land conveyance is expected but being processed through the MDCPS. Once it is received a notice to proceed will be forthcoming for the Village's engineering firm in this project, Pennoni, to commence the final design work. Miami Dade County CDBG funds that were awarded to the Village of El Portal are being used on this project. Compliance meetings and document production are ongoing and up to date by the Village of El Portal and consultant, Ecostratas/Robert Ruano.

2. CDBG/HUD critical facilities hardening grant was awarded to the Village of El Portal. An environmental assessment was conducted twice and addressed by me and Building Official Pedro Martinez and Robert Ruano. I have painstakingly prepared all the requirements of the contract with HUD/DEO for these funds. Consultant Robert Ruano of Ecostratas Consulting, the Village of El Portal Public Works Department and the Chief Financial Officer and I have done the requisite reports, policy drafts, correspondence with the Miccosukee Tribe regarding the project and are now awaiting responses and approvals. We also prepared a draft RFP/Invitation to Bid (ITB) for the necessary work that this grant will provide: the contractor will do the replacement of external doors and the installation of a generator at the Police Station/Village Hall. The grant amount is \$50,000.

3. El Jardin Stormwater Improvement.

A phase of the El Jardin storm water improvement project was completed in January 2022. Just recently, the Village of El Portal was granted the Resilient Florida Grant for 2021 by Governor DeSantis. This grant is a matching grant that would provide the Village over \$900,000 from the State (FDEP) to do the next phase of the El Jardin project. Receiving the Resilient Florida grant is a tremendous win for the Village of El Portal, and a meeting between me and FDEP garnered the approval of the use of the El Jardin Stormwater Improvement Phase 1 project to serve as a portion of the match

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requirements of Phase 2. Phase 2 will require the outfall easement that we desperately need in El Jardin. Craig A. Smith and Associates Consultant Engineer Orlando Rubio and I met with homeowners in the area in the first weeks of July 18, 2022 to begin the process of securing the outfall easement.

Public Affairs

My and the Administration's participation in public affairs is to supplement and aid the Public Affairs Committee/El Portal's Women's Club where possible. Councilperson Anna Lightfoot Ward held a Public Affairs Committee meeting on July 12, 2022, where she read her plans for the committee into the record. The Administration will continue to support all public affairs efforts.

Administration and Finance

From Chief Financial Officer Harry Taubenfeld for July 2022

- *Audit 2019 is complete and submitted! The process for Audit 2020 has commenced and is expected for completion at the end of August 2022.*
- *Working on various Finance matters for the Village.*
- *Preparing budget documents and State and County submittals for the Administration and Council for the FY 2022-23 Budget.*

• ***From Office Administrator Christian Abril for July 2022***

- *Continuing to assist CFO Taubenfeld with ongoing audit.*
- *Processing cash receipts and payroll.*
- *Paying the Village's invoices.*

More from the Village Manager, July 2022

Below are more highlights to inform as to the partnership and participation in external affairs of the Village Manager. These activities are supplemental to my day-to-day activities and responsibilities:

July 13, 2022 attended Davis Bacon Fraud Training per federal funding of the Critical Facilities Grant to improve the Village's Police Department.

July 14, 2022 participated in a Biscayne Bay Reasonable Assurance Plan meeting with Miami Dade County Chief Bay Officer.

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July 18, 2022 conducted site visits and met with residents with CAS Engineering in the El Jardin and Sherwood Forest neighborhoods of VOEP to plan for stormwater and water quality improvements and planning.

July 22, 2022 with the Miami Dade County City and County Managers, met with Mayor Daniella Levine Cava regarding infrastructure, water quality, grants and overall state-of-the County matters.

July 27, 2022 I will attend the Miami Dade County Biscayne Bay Commission Meeting and later that day, the Flood Mitigation Assistance and BRIC training.

July 28, 2022 I plan to attend the Energy Efficiency South Florida conference.

And on July 29, 2022 I plan to attend the Transportation Partnership Coordination Committee Meeting and submit the Quarterly Report on behalf of VOEP.

There also continue to be varied requests, directives, and projects I provide at the request of individual councilpersons and members of the El Portal community. For more information, please contact me directly.

Thank you.

Village Manager Christia E. Alou, Esq.

