

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: September 27, 2022
RE: August/September 2022 Village Manager's Report

Please accept this memorandum as my August and September 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 J. Joe's Landscaping and Tree Services. Unfortunately, our contracted landscaper, Orchidman was not able to provide the tree trimming due to staff shortfalls. Village-wide bulk pick-up is scheduled for this week, September 27-29, 2022.

The annual Miami Dade County Hurricane Preparedness Guide was 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

We received an appeal amount of **\$448,998.21 for debris and other appealed Hurricane Irma expenses as Monday, September 26, 2022**. FEMA has sent the appeal grants to be obligated and those funds will be transferred to the Village of El Portal, whereupon we will immediately wire them to Synovus Bank to pay on the \$695,551.21 note. The Village has sixty days to appeal for more funding, and we intend to do so within that deadline.

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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 continue to use caution and staff continues to observe social distancing and hand sanitization when visiting our offices. 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, 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 is working with me and our contractor to execute the MOU, and to confirm utilization of the Miami Shores right-of-way. 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

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establish and stick to timelines for completion of the project. Senior Engineer Orlando Rubio and I participated in an update meeting 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 incorporated community, Sustainability and Resiliency Taskforce Members input on the initial plans. The plans were finalized this month and a Request for Proposal package is being prepared by the project manager. Information about the renovation will be distributed the area residents.

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.

Roadway and Traffic - Miami Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works provided the Village of El Portal a grant opportunity for a mobility study. Once completed, the department is also 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.

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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.

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)

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

August 2022

Officer Albis Cuevas came on board as a Full Time Officer

Officer Berthet Manricky and Officer Luis Molina are on board as Reserve Officers

September 2022

- Follow Up Meeting with FPL Contractor reference County Wide Copper Wire thefts which affect the Village on Miami Avenue and NE 2 Avenue. Coordinating with Miami-Dade for Resources.

- Officer Dorcin is now a Full Time Officer

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- Officer Canela is attending FTO School*
- Commendation for In Progress Burglary arrests by Officer Garcia and Canela!*
- Attended the Marvin Dunn Academy First Annual Sandy Hook Promise Event.*

Code Enforcement

A new Code Enforcement Officer was hired for the Village of El Portal in August 2022. Mr. Fitzgerald Simmons is assessing the department and creating processes to develop a more efficient service and department.

From Code Enforcement Officer Fitzgerald Simmons August/September 2022

- Open Liens- 7*
- Satisfied Liens- 169*
- Active Cases (CCIN's, NOCI's, Verbal Warnings, Complaints) - 278*
- Compliances - 3*
- Overhead (Supplies/Fuel/Equipment/Software) - iPad Air, iPad Air Protector Case, Fuel, GovPilot, Trash & Litter Stickers, Wireless Mouse.*
- Board-Ups - 0*
- Parking Citations Issued - 0*
- Short-Term Vacation Rental (STVR) Inspections - 0*
- Minimum Housing (MH) Inspections - 0*

September FYI(s)/Reminder(s)

- Trained on GovPilot (New Code Enforcement/STVR) software for streamlined code enforcement services. This software has the capacity to allow residents to review code enforcement activities through:*

*1. Public map: <https://map.govpilot.com/map/FL/elportalvillagefl>
(Review and track the progress of all complaints and cases)*

2. Public forms and file a complaint: <https://www.govpilot.com/forms/main/dfb9fa03-049/Report-a-Concern/elportalvillagefl/FL/47122/0> (File a formal complaint. Complainant contact info is required, per F.S.S. 162.06(b))

- Bulk Pick-Up Schedule and Placement of Garbage Cans/Trash*

Tuesday, 12/27/2022

Wednesday, 12/28/2022

Thursday, 12/29/2022

- Sec. 8-4. - Placement of garbage cans.*

(a) No garbage cans or trash containers shall be kept or maintained upon or adjacent to any street, sidewalk, parkway, front yard, side yard or other place within the view of persons using the village streets or sidewalks, earlier than 4:00 p.m. of that day preceding the day when garbage and trash collection are customarily made from such premises.

(b) Such garbage cans and trash containers may and shall be placed within five feet of the street for the purpose of permitting the collection of garbage and trash therefrom, and such containers shall be permitted to remain in such place for a period of 12 hours following the collection.

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(c) Garbage cans and trash containers shall not be kept upon neighboring property not in the ownership or tenancy of the person by whom the garbage or trash is accumulated, irrespective of whether such neighboring property be vacant or improved.

• *Sec. 8-5. - Tree trimmings and yard trash.*

(a) Tree, shrub and lawn cuttings and garden trash shall be deposited upon the parkway immediately in front of the premises of the person by whom such accumulation is made, or where such premises are located upon a used alley, at a point easily accessible to and readily noticeable from such alley, only on the day prior to the dates specified, by the village for the collection of trash from such premises.

(b) It shall be unlawful for any person to deposit such tree, shrub and lawn cuttings and garden trash upon any adjoining lot or premises, whether vacant or improved, occupied or unoccupied, or upon any other lot or premises, or street, alley, or park, or in any canal or waterway, lake, or pool within the village.

• *Do I Need a Permit?*

A permit is required to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy or occupant content of a building or structure. In addition to, erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert, or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system of every building or structure or any appurtenances connected or attached to such buildings or structures.

• *Prohibited Parking*

- No Parking shall be permitted in the unpaved portion of the Front Yard of any private property, however Parking is permitted in any paved Driveway approach, so long as it does not obstruct the Sidewalk or Street.

- Parking is prohibited in swales and Village rights-of-way, except that a Parking space for one (1) vehicle will be permitted in the swale, provided that a Variance is applied for and obtained. However, Parking is permitted in any paved Driveway approach which is otherwise permitted under this section, so long as it does not obstruct the Sidewalk or Street.

- Parking or storage of commercial trucks, buses, vans, sign trailers; trailers or semi-trailers for freight, cargo; non-recreational watercraft; or the like shall not be permitted in any Z3, Z4 or Z5.

Building Department

*From CAP/Building Department Building Official Pedro Martinez for August/September 2022
August 2022*

Building Permits Issued: 9

Electrical Permits Issued: 3

Plumbing Permits Issued: 4

Special Permit Events Issued: 3

Kavista pulled 2 special permits for concrete pours.

TOTAL PERMITS: 27

Monthly Revenue: \$16,553.93

September 2022

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*Building Clerk Dina Escobar had a 6 lb baby boy named AMAURY
ATT provided Bond Required for the replacement of 23 poles and 3 anchors within the Village of
EL Portal.*

Revenues for Local Business Tax Receipts as of 9/27/22: \$2,375.67

Revenues for Building Department as of 9/27/22: \$20,458.59

Number of permits issued as of 9/27/22: 53

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 August/September 2022

August 2022

- 1. Coordinating Traffic Study with David Plummer & Associates. Also looking to see can incorporate NE 2nd Avenue Mobility (Traffic) Study grant up to \$40,000.*
- 2. Attend Biscayne Bay Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP) second meeting with regard to VOEP applying for wastewater grant funds available. Recommended and assisting in completing RAP grant application for Septic to Sewer Phase 1 project.*
- 3. Prepared and applied for Biscayne Bay RAP FDEP Water Quality grant for "Septic to Sewer Conversion Phase 1" project. Requesting \$ 4 million.*
- 4. Prepared and applied for Biscayne Bay RAP FDEP Water Quality grant for "El Jardin Stormwater Improvements Phase 2". Requesting \$750,000.*
- 5. Attend Reliance Grant Discussion statewide meeting.*
- 6. Attend El Portal Tree Survey Grant coordination meeting with Robert Ruano.*
- 7. Attend Sanctuary Parking discussion meeting with developer.*
- 8. Coordinate training of Public Works and Code Enforcement staff on requirement for MS4 NPDES Stormwater Permit.*
- 9. Completed Village Hall and Police Station Floor Plan for Police Station Hardening Grant requirements. Coordinating and providing engineering information to Ecostrata as requested by State grant manager*
- 10. Review Hurricane Plan with Orchidman and coordinate trimming of trees.*
- 11. Review and inspect stormwater pipes vacuum cleaning from Shenandoah at 500 NW 89th Street. Full of roots.*
- 12. Coordinate installation of new catch basin behind Horace Mann Middle School.*
- 13. Installed and operating the new Village Hall Digital Sign by Adware. Getting training on changing messages and displays.*
- 14. Complete construction conversion of Jail Cell by Leading Edge to Public Work Coordinator office space.*
- 15. Continue to coordinate installing new Village Hall carpeting and flooring replacements.*
- 16. Drive and inspect daily to various areas of Village to check for litter, problems or issues.*
- 17. Coordinate landscaping activities with Orchidman.*

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18. *Continue to make inspection and inventory of streetlights which need repairs and bulb replacement.*
19. *Continue checking stormwater drainage inlets, clear and clean them of surface debris as needed.*
20. *Review various Village right-of-way permit applications submitted to Miami Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW).*
21. *Coordinating painting of Village Hall.*
22. *Complete conversion of storage room to office for two staff.*
23. *Coordinate tree trimming request with resident.*

September 2022

1. *Coordinating Village Traffic Study with David Plummer & Associates.*
2. *Coordinating conditions of award for NE 2nd Avenue Mobility (Traffic) Study grant up to \$40,000. Need to get David Plummer's scope and schedule submitted before September 30 to County to meet grant submittal deadline.*
3. *Regarding Biscayne Bay RAP Grant application, MDWASD contacted and discussed with Village about taking over "Septic to Sewer Phase 1" project utilizing the grant monies as they will be using County allocated grant for El Portal. Village does not have an issue transferring to MDWASD as they are going to be the owner and operator of the new Phase 1 sewer system and pump station. Waiting to hear from MDWASD who have informed Mayor and Village Manager about transferring the project.*
4. *Provide solid waste generation information to Compost for Life, Inc. who are applying for grant to compost in Village.*
5. *Coordinating training of Public Works and Code Enforcement staff on requirement for MS4 NPDES Stormwater Permit.*
6. *Continue to provide engineering information to Ecostrata as requested by State grant manager for Police Station Hardening Grant requirements.*
7. *Review Hurricane Plan with Joe's Landscaping and Tree Services and coordinate trimming of trees.*
8. *Inspect sink hole on west side of Village, coordinated vacuum cleaning from Shenandoah at 500 NW 89th Street. This is completed and pipe was found full of roots which were removed.*
9. *Two road depressions looking like sinkholes at NE 89th St need repair. Three quotes received with recommendation to go with Ozuna's quote of \$3,500.*
10. *Completed construction conversion of Jail Cell by Leading Edge to Public Work Coordinator office space.*
11. *Continue to coordinate installing new Village Hall carpeting and flooring replacements.*
12. *Coordinate new restroom facility for Tots Park. Have created layout and requested quotes from contractors.*
13. *Reviewing quotes for repairing and replacing pavers at NE 87th. St. One-Stop Paver quote of \$6,765 is lowest responsive quote.*
14. *Drive and Inspect daily to various areas of Village to check for litter, problems or issues.*
15. *Coordinate landscaping activities with Orchidman.*
16. *Continue to make inspection and inventory of streetlights which need repairs and replacement.*
17. *Continue checking stormwater drainage inlets, clear and clean them of surface debris as needed.*

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18. *Review various Village right-of-way permit applications submitted to Miami Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW).*
19. *Coordinating painting of Village Hall.*
20. *Completed conversion of storage room to office for two staff.*
21. *Coordinate tree trimming request with resident and coordinating replacement of tree with.*
22. *Review status of Parks project. Design package is 100% complete. Village will request consultant to prepare bid package to advertise.*

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.

The Village of El Portal was granted approximately \$900,000 for the Resilient 305 2021-22 grant to be utilized for stormwater improvements on Phase Two of the El Jardin community as was detailed in the Village's Local Mitigation Strategy. This is a matching grant, for which I met with FDEP leadership to determine if the El Jardin Stormwater Improvement Phase One work that was just completed earlier this year may be considered for the Village's match. The answer is yes, but we must add approximately \$250,000 to make up the residual amount of the match. This is good news for the Village and for our efforts in bringing water quality improvements to the residents.

The Village of El Portal was included in the Miami Dade County Reasonable Assurance Plan (RAP), led by Miami Dade The RAP coordinates County water quality policies and initiatives and prioritizes the County's most vital areas, with El Portal and our neighboring municipalities being identified as most needy due to the C7 Little River Canal's effect on Miami Biscayne Bay's water quality.

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

There is no update since last few 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 from MDCPS was received last month. Additionally, Miami Dade County Transportation and Public Works received a grant that they will use to take over the project in the coming months.

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We will be meeting with them to formalize the transition and roles and responsibilities of the project.

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 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 are meeting with homeowners 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. The Administration will continue to support all public affairs efforts.

At present the Village's website and social media, the digital marquee sign, Mayor Omarr Nickerson's door-to-door flyer distribution with vital information about what is happening in the Village, are being utilized as outreach.

Administration and Finance

From Chief Financial Officer Harry Taubensfeld for August/September 2022

- *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.*

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- *Preparing budget documents and State and County submittals for the Administration and Council for the FY 2022-23 Budget.*

From Office Administrator David Perez for September 2022

- *Learning and assessing the Village's finance department and administrative needs. Will be making new systems and efficiencies.*
- *Processing cash receipts and payroll.*
- *Paying the Village's invoices.*

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.

