

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

--MEMORANDUM--



TO: City Manager Peter Iglesias

CC: Deputy City Manager Joe Gomez; Assistant City Manager Carolina Vester; City Attorney Cristina M. Suárez; Public Works Director Hermes Diaz; Mayor Vince Lago; Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson; Commissioner Ariel Fernandez; Commissioner Richard Lara

FROM: Commissioner Melissa Castro

DATE: August 19, 2026

SUBJECT: Agenda Item H-4 (26-1856) – Biltmore Way Streetscape Project

I am requesting clarification regarding Agenda Item H-4 (26-1856), relating to the Biltmore Way Streetscape project, prior to the Commission's consideration of this item.

A resident contacted my office with concerns regarding the final design of the project and the extent to which affected residents have had an opportunity to review it.

The City held a community meeting regarding Biltmore Way landscape improvements on May 28, 2025. I also understand that the project design continued to develop following that meeting and was reported to be approximately 80 percent complete as of December 2025.

Given that the Commission is now being asked to authorize construction, I respectfully request clarification on the following:

- 1. Please confirm that the plans included with this agenda item represent the final design to be constructed, including the proposed tree species, quantities and sizes, and whether Silva Cells or similar root-management infrastructure are included.**
- 2. Were any material changes made to the project after the May 28, 2025 community meeting?** If so, please identify the significant differences between what residents were shown and the final construction plans.
- 3. Were residents given an opportunity to review the final or substantially completed design before the project proceeded to bid?** If so, please identify when and how that occurred.

Additionally, the agenda description for Item H-4 does not clearly identify the Biltmore Way Streetscape project by name. For purposes of transparency and to ensure residents can readily understand the project and expenditure being considered, I respectfully request that the project be clearly identified in the public record.

These questions should not be interpreted as opposition to improvements along Biltmore Way. Residents have advocated for improvements to this corridor for many years. My objective is simply to ensure that before the Commission authorizes construction, the Commission and affected residents clearly understand the final design and how it reflects the public input previously received.

Because this matter involves a procurement, I am routing this request through the City Manager's Office and copying the City Attorney and Public Works so that any responsive information can be provided in the appropriate manner and made part of the public record.

This memorandum is provided for informational purposes and is not intended to solicit discussion among members of the City Commission outside of a publicly noticed meeting. Any Commission deliberation regarding this matter should occur at the duly noticed public meeting.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Commissioner Melissa Castro
Office of the City Commission