



## **A GROVE 2030 REPORT: THE COCONUT GROVE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID) MAY 24, 2018**

### **Merchants, Residents Share Ideas for Improving Grove BID**

Close to 75 people attended Grove 2030's community forum May 15 to better understand the Grove Business Improvement District's mission and mandate and to make recommendations for changes to its structure and operations. The event—*Bidding Adieu? The Once and Future Coconut Grove Business Improvement District*—was co-sponsored by the Coconut Grove Village Council.

Grove BID executive director Nicole Singletary outlined the BID's structure, its budget and other operational details. Urban planner Juan Mullerat of PlusUrbia Design presented an overview of a master plan for the Grove's central commercial district commissioned by the BID. It's expected to drive future BID projects and initiatives. Finally, Assistant City Attorney Xavier Alban explained the process for renewing the BID's charter, which expires in 2019. Also attending the meeting were District 2 Commissioner Ken Russell, who serves as the BID chairman, and Angel Diaz, director of operations for the Miami Parking Authority.

After a Q&A session with the speakers, audience members were asked to provide feedback that would help guide BID members and City officials as they consider modifications to the BID's structure, operations and governance. See the following pages for their responses. Anyone who was unable to attend the event is welcome to forward comments, suggestions or recommendations to us at [info@grove2030.org](mailto:info@grove2030.org).

Following are (1) a summary of key aspects of the BID and its operations and (2) a compilation of feedback from forum participants.

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BID

### 1. Who makes up the BID?

As stated in a City of Miami resolution adopted in 2009 that established the BID, the BID is a semi-autonomous board of the City of Miami. It was established by property owners and merchants within the limits of the BID's central Coconut Grove commercial district.

### 2. Who sits on the board of the BID and how are the board members determined?

The affairs of the BID are under the direct control of the board of directors. There are 19 voting members of the BID board. The commissioner for district 2 (Ken Russell) is the chairman of the BID board and a voting member. Other voting members include the chief executive officer of the Miami Parking Authority, representatives of Cocowalk and the Mayfair Center, property owners, representatives of lodging establishments, and representatives of retail and restaurant establishments. Each member of the BID board serves without remuneration.

### 3. Can residents and regular citizens be involved in the BID?

Four of the voting members of the BID board are property holders. Additionally, the chair of the BID can appoint an unlimited number of non-voting members; these individuals must live, work, or own property within the boundaries of the Miami-Dade County. All meetings of the BID board are open to the public and announced on the City of Miami website. Many of the BID board and committee members are Coconut Grove residents.

### 4. Where does the BID get its money?

The sources of revenue for the BID include parking waiver and surcharge fees, assessments, sidewalk café fees, special event supplemental fees, and investment income. Total revenues in 2017 were nearly \$1,400,000.

### 5. Who decides how the BID spends its money?

The BID board and the city commission vote on the BID budget annually.

### 6. What projects does the BID currently fund?

- Freebee (free electric vehicle transport on demand)
- Special events and activities—yoga in Peacock Park, July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks, Saturday bike tours
- Bike racks and bus benches
- Flower baskets and holiday decor on lamp posts along Grand Avenue, Main Highway, Florida Avenue, Mary Street, Virginia Street, Fuller Street, and Commodore Plaza
- Maintenance of medians along South Bayshore Drive, McFarlane Road, and Grand Avenue
- Wayfinding and gateway signage
- Street signage

- Major capital improvement projects (whole or partial funding): proposed Playhouse garage, burial of FPL power lines, sidewalk repair and rebuilding through the BID district
- Contract for large-scale tree trimming
- Facade improvement grants
- Hospitality ambassadors and block by block safety ambassadors
- Together with Block by Block, development and implementation of hurricane preparation procedures – pre-storm; debris collection and removal – post-storm
- Together with Block by Block, operate clean teams to keep the district free of litter and graffiti
- Installation of permanent recycling receptacles
- Hiring of off-duty city of Miami police officers to assist in safety and security
- Maintaining and operating 13-HD security cameras in the district
- Purchase (2017) of 2 trolleys for the City of Miami
- In collaboration with Grove 2030 and the Coconut Grove Village Council, secured a Miami-Dade County Quick Build grant for temporary crosswalks at selected pedestrian junctions
- Publicity and marketing related to all of the above

**7. Will these projects be funded ad infinitum?**

They would need to be approved each year as the BID board and the City Commission vote on the BID budget annually and choose which projects, programs, and initiatives to fund.

**8. Who votes on whether the BID continues its existence?**

The property owners who will be assessed vote on whether or not they want to be assessed and, therefore, whether the BID continues to exist.

**9. Concerning the PlusUrbia master plan: What is the plan for moving it forward? Who is in charge? Who will pay? What is the timeline?**

The answers to most of those questions are not yet clear. The PlusUrbia master plan was adopted as a living document to guide the BID over the next 10 years. The BID board, through its annual budgeting process, will determine which projects, programs, and initiatives to fund. This is contingent on City approval and coordination.

To view the complete PlusUrbia master plan online [click here](#). Or view a summary [here](#).

## **For more information**

[BID Annual Report \(2017\)](#)

[Flyer: Key services provided by the BID](#)

## Grove BID Community Forum—Audience Feedback

1. ***As the City of Miami considers a charter renewal of the Coconut Grove Business Improvement District (Grove BID), what changes to its mission and mandate would you propose?***

- Focus beyond retail/restaurant core business. Include all businesses.
- More community involvement. More interaction with the Chamber, Village Council and Grove 2030
- Mission statement is too narrow – bringing “high value customers” to Grove. Is that it? Is that all there is to making the grove work?
- BID should be there to help business owners. Not just property owners.
- More open -- they are too secretive
- The BID should focus more on making the Grove more livable – a place where people want to live, not just a place to visit.
- Better branding.

2. ***What changes to the Grove BID’s operational and governance structures would you propose?***

- Include residents.
- More residential seats on Board – not just Center Grove. Include North Grove, West Grove, South Grove, Bayshore Condo Corridor.
- Less than a third of the BID’s budget comes from special assessments for property owners. The rest (\$1.2 million) is public money, and yet people who live here have no say in how it’s spent. This is taxation without representation.
- More transparency. I went to a board meeting once and was made to feel unwelcome and couldn’t hear a thing they were saying.
- Diversity? How many BID members are white males?
- Have seats on the board reserved for civic groups – Village Council, Grove 2030, Center Grove Assoc.
- Can they televise the meetings? (Maybe on Facebook). Can they send out meeting minutes, so people have a better idea what’s going on? And advertise BID meetings. Try to encourage people to attend meetings.
- The BID affects EVERYBODY who lives, works and visits the Grove, not just a few select businesses and the people who patronize them.
- Make the BID truly fund itself – fully funded with special assessments only. And then use the parking money and other “fees” the city collects on projects that the WHOLE Grove can benefit from.

**3. Should the Grove BID's geographical boundaries be reconfigured? If so, what streets/blocks should be included or excluded?**

- Yes! I have had one business in the Grove for over 20 years. We always wanted to be part of the BID and could not do it, even though the building we are located in is well known and part of the community (2601 S. Bayshore Dr.) Now Biscayne Bank Building.
- Yes. Extend on Grand beyond 32nd Ave. to 37<sup>th</sup> Ave.
- 27<sup>th</sup> to US 1
- Bird Ave.
- Connect to Dinner Key.
- Extend down Grand to 37<sup>th</sup> Ave. Help activate that part of the Grove.
- West Grove

**4. Which projects or initiatives within the Grove BID Masterplan would you most like to see implemented? In what order of priority?**

- Entrance "scapes" – S. Bayshore medians, 27 Ave., Grand Ave. Improve look and quality.
- Walkability. Better pedestrian safety.
- Make it easy to go anywhere by bicycle. That's in masterplan.
- Masterplan talks about "Community" Good idea. BID should integrate within the community, reaching out and partnering with other groups. They are too closed.
- The Grove is known around the world because of its history and waterfront beauty and because it's a real village. We should prioritize preservation, especially of the downtown historic buildings that are all going to be knocked down.
- I liked the idea about "open space" that is in masterplan. But business owners need to buy in. Open space brings people together.
- Parking. Why isn't the parking assessment fund being used to create more parking or to alleviate parking hassles? Where's that money going?

**5. General comments and suggestions...**

- Integration with Coconut Grove Chamber and other organizations within Grove, such as Women's Club.
- More residential input besides Center Grove.
- Have rotating board membership.
- More outreach besides "social media."
- How can the BID say it funds itself? Only \$500K of almost \$2 million budget is the special assessment.
- Meeting notices are not announced (use the chamber to announce meetings).
- Share info.
- More attention to sustainability solutions/environmental projects and action. Education programs and action: plastic, Styrofoam, single usage disposable. No straws.
- The BID is and has been secretive – very uninformative and very unfriendly.
- What percentage of parking Waiver money is allocated to create new parking space?
- The BID allowed MPA to sell the Oak Ave. parking garage. And they replaced it with... valet stands! Where's the accountability for all this!