VILLAGE OF PALMETTO BAY

Mayor Karyn Cunningham
Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer
Council Member Patrick Fiore (Seat 1)
Council Member Steve Cody (Seat 2)
Council Member Marsha Matson (Seat 3)

Village Manager Nick Marano
Village Attorney John Quick
Village Clerk Missy Arocha

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, persons needing special accommodation, a sign language interpreter, or hearing impaired to participate in this proceeding should contact the Village Clerk at (305) 259-1234 for assistance no later than four days prior to the meeting.

AGENDA
VIRTUAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2026 – 7:00 PM

(305) 259-1234

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1. **CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, INVOCATION, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND DECORUM STATEMENT, IN THAT ORDER:** Any person making impertinent or slanderous remarks, or who becomes boisterous, while addressing the Council may be barred from further appearance before the Council by the Mayor, unless permission to continue or again address the Council is granted by a majority vote of the Council. Applauding speakers shall be discouraged. Heckling or verbal outbursts in support or opposition to a speaker, or his or her remarks, shall be prohibited. No signs or placards shall be allowed in the Council meeting. Persons exiting the Council meeting shall do so quietly. All cellular telephones and beepers are to be silenced during the meeting.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS** Individuals wishing to speak on matters on the agenda and on items pertinent to the Village may do so by speaking during this section of the agenda. The Mayor will recognize those persons who wish to speak. Each speaker must sign-in prior to speaking on the designated public commentary sign-in sheet. Items for public hearing provided for within the agenda shall not be a topic of discussion during this section of the agenda. Please limit your comments to three (3) minutes or less. Public comments made by members of the public are important to the Village Council. Speakers will address the Village Council with respect.

3. PRESENTATIONS

A. STORMWATER PROGRAM UPDATE *(Sponsored by Administration)*

B. STORMWATER PROGRAM UPDATE BY RAFTELIS CONSULTANTS *(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer)*

4. VILLAGE COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. PUBLIC SAFETY DISTRICT AS A DEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT *(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer) (Deferred from July 6, 2026, Regular Council Meeting)*

5. NEXT COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP DATE

- TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2026, AT 7:00 PM

6. ADJOURNMENT

WE, THE VILLAGE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF PALMETTO BAY, HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES TO MAINTAINING CIVILITY IN OUR PUBLIC AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE AND PLEDGE TO THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPLES:

- We will respect the right of all citizens in our community to hold different opinions;
- We will avoid rhetoric intended to humiliate or question the wisdom of those whose opinions are different from ours;
- We will strive to understand differing perspectives;
- We will choose our words carefully;
- We will speak truthfully without accusation and we will avoid distortion;
- We will speak out against violence, prejudice, and incivility in all of their forms, whenever and wherever they occur.

NOTICE OF APPEAL RIGHTS

Pursuant to Florida Statutes 286.0105, the Village hereby advises the public that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Council with response to any matter considered at its meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings, and that for such purpose, the affected person may need to ensure that verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. This notice does not constitute consent by the Village for the introduction or admission of otherwise inadmissible or irrelevant evidence, nor does it authorize challenges or appeals not otherwise allowed.

AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990

This meeting is open to the public. In accordance with the American Disabilities Act of 1990, persons needing special accommodation or a sign language interpreter to participate in this proceeding should contact the Village Clerk at (305) 259-1234 no later than four (4) days prior to the meeting. Hearing Assistance Devices are available with the Village Clerk.

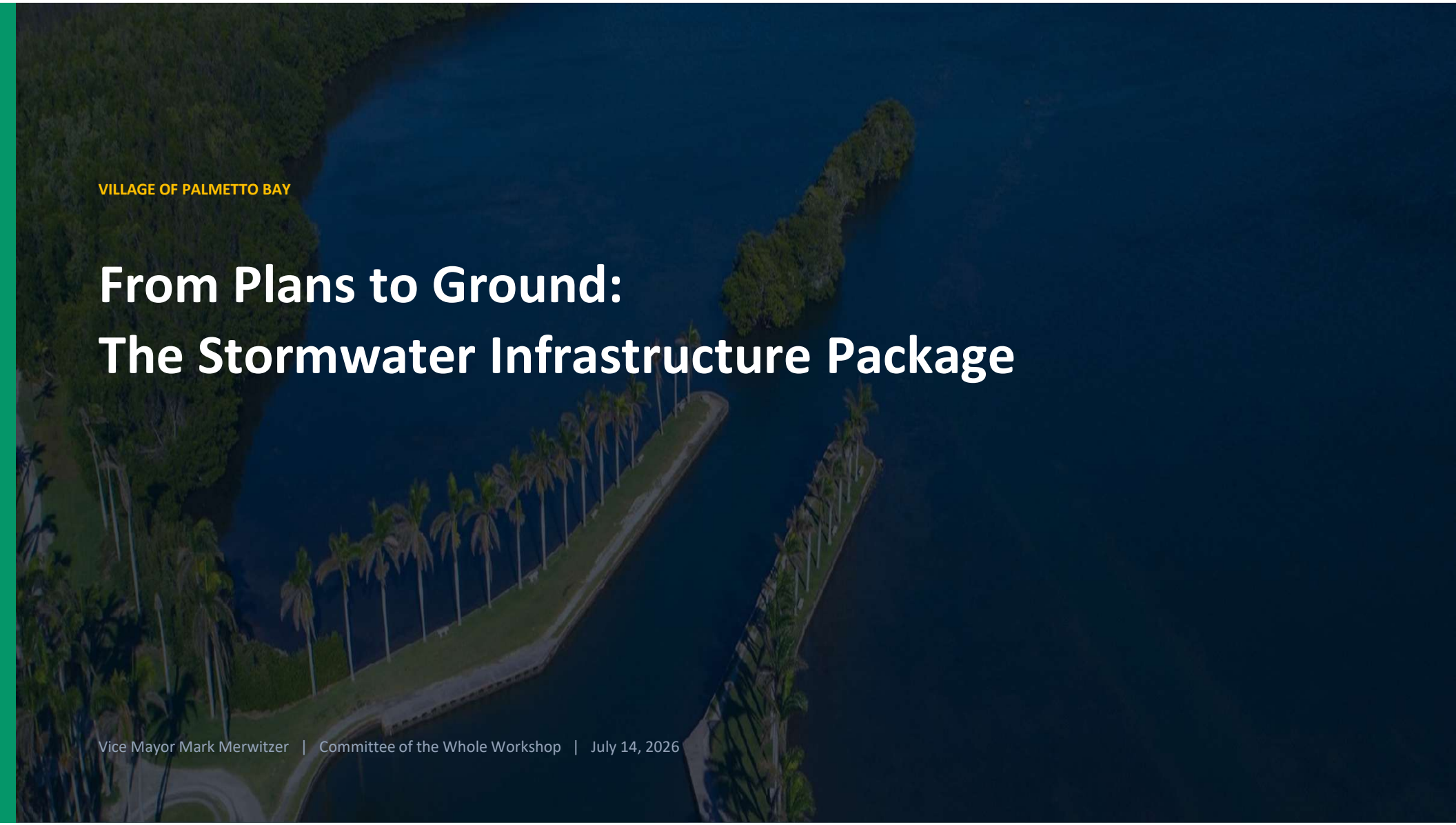
AGENDA ITEM NO. 3.B

Item Cover Page

VIRTUAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE:	July 14, 2026
SUBMITTED BY:	Missy Arocha, Village Council
ITEM TYPE:	Presentation
AGENDA SECTION:	**PRESENTATIONS**
SUBJECT:	STORMWATER PROGRAM UPDATE BY RAFTELIS CONSULTANTS *(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer)*
SUGGESTED ACTION:	

ATTACHMENTS:
Presentation-Stormwater Package



VILLAGE OF PALMETTO BAY

From Plans to Ground: The Stormwater Infrastructure Package

Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer | Committee of the Whole Workshop | July 14, 2026

TONIGHT'S AGENDA

What We're Covering

01 The Philosophy

Why we're stepping up from a pipes-only program to managing rain where it falls and what our own data says.

02 The Package

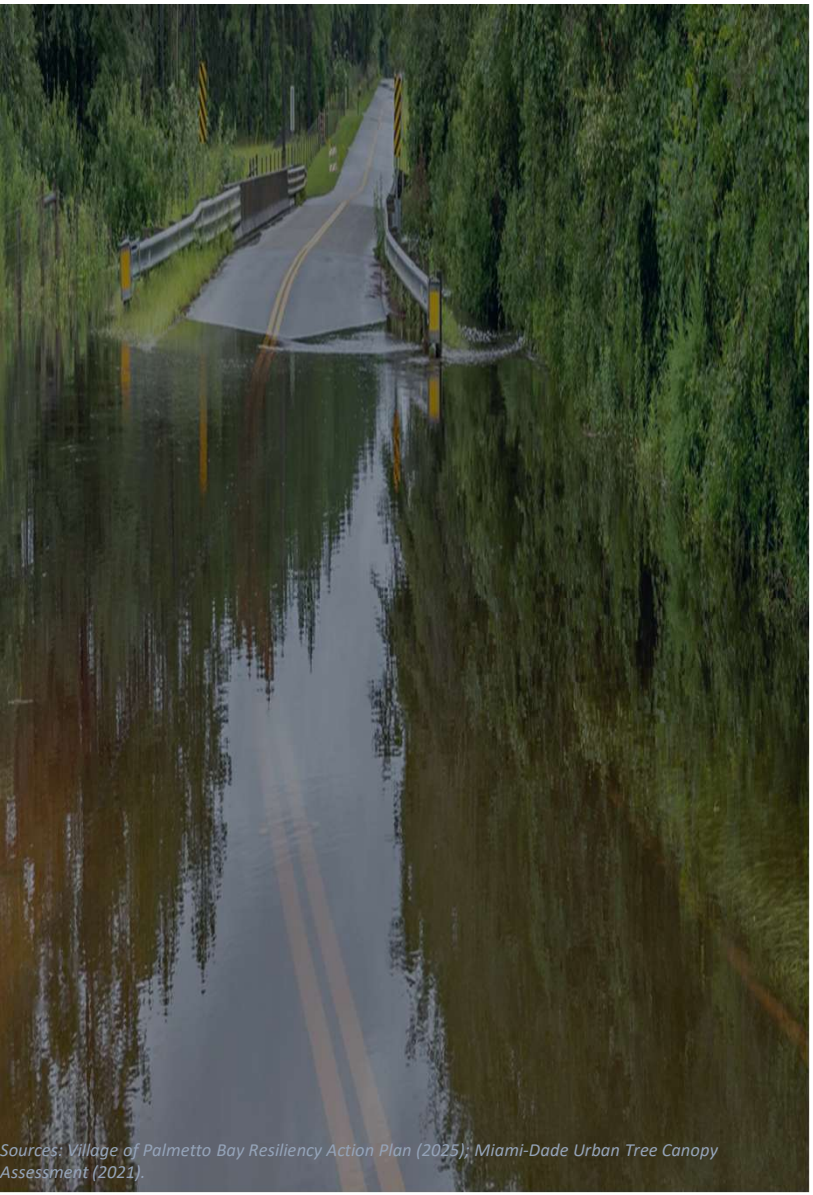
How the three ordinances work together

03 What Each One Does

Palmetto Bay Beautiful, the stormwater fund expansion, and the Land Development Code, including what's grandfathered.

04 Money & Sequencing

A Year One pilot inside existing means, and a timeline that tracks the budget cycle.



Sources: Village of Palmetto Bay Resiliency Action Plan (2025); Miami-Dade Urban Tree Canopy Assessment (2021).

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE

The Water Is Not Waiting on Us

60

days per year

of high-tide flooding projected by 2050

41+

and climbing

heat-index warning days per year

2070

planning horizon

compound flooding (sea level + surge) threatens Village infrastructure

↓

2016–2020

Palmetto Bay lost canopy while the county held flat

Rising groundwater and tidal outfalls mean the pipes we have will do less over time. We can pour bigger pipes forever or we can also shrink the amount of water that reaches them.

THE PHILOSOPHY

Manage the Rain Where It Falls

This package is a step up from a maintain-the-pipes program. It treats every parcel as part of the stormwater system because hydrologically, it already is.

WHERE WE ARE: COLLECT & CONVEY

- Every drop that lands on a roof, driveway, or lawn is someone else's problem and drains to the pipes.
- The utility maintains drains, canals, and outfalls.
- Capacity is fixed and expensive and every new hard surface spends a little more of it.

WHERE WE'RE GOING: ABSORB AT THE SOURCE

- Every surface either sheds water or soaks it up. We start counting the ones that soak.
- Trees, soil, and plantings are treated as infrastructure
- The solution is distributed across thousands of parcels, adding capacity the pipes never have to carry.

Our natural geology is going to constantly try to reclaim our land and we have to work with it and embrace it.

THE SCIENCE IN ONE SLIDE

Trees Are Stormwater Infrastructure

2,380

gallons / year

of rainfall intercepted by a single mature tree

50B

gallons / year

of runoff prevented by Florida's urban forest

$451M

annually

in avoided treatment costs statewide

40%

canopy by 2040

Village target, up from roughly 28-32% today

F.S. §403.031(18): stormwater management includes methods that "absorb" and "inhibit" water. §403.0891(6): stormwater fees fund green infrastructure.

Sources: USDA Forest Service i-Tree; FL "Trees to Offset Stormwater" pilots (Orange Co., Jacksonville, Miami Beach); UF/IFAS.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

The Toolkit, in Pictures



Stormwater Trees

Canopy intercepts rain before it ever becomes runoff and cools the street below.



Rain Gardens

Planted low spots that collect roof and driveway water and let it soak in. This one is on the UF campus.



Bioswales

Curbside planted channels that slow, filter, and absorb street runoff on its way to the drain.



Turf-to-Native

Native beds in place of thirsty turf: less fertilizer to the Bay, more infiltration, zero mowing.

Also on the menu: permeable driveways & walkways · stormwater planters · cisterns & rainwater harvesting · green parking areas

Photos: UF/IFAS Gardening Solutions; US EPA green infrastructure program publications.

THE PACKAGE

Three Ordinances, One System

01

FUND IT

Stormwater Ordinance · Ch. 15

Lets the stormwater utility pay for green infrastructure, urban forestry, outfall adaptation, monitoring, and outreach.

02

MAKE IT EASY

Palmetto Bay Beautiful · Ch. 15

One application, a pre-priced design menu, pre-qualified contractors, and the Village pays its share directly.

03

BUILD IT RIGHT

Land Development Code · Ch. 30

Resilience standards for new construction and major redevelopment, tree protection during construction, and the Canopy Mitigation Fund.

The code sets the standard → the program is the easy, automatic-compliance path → the fund pays for what has a stormwater nexus.

ORDINANCE 1 OF 3 · FUND IT

Stormwater Ordinance Update

WHAT IT DOES

- Adds modern definitions and includes green stormwater infrastructure, natural permeable surface, urban forestry program, sea level rise projection.
- Expands eligible fund expenditures to include:
    - green infrastructure
    - urban forestry
    - Stormwater Inventory ·
    - Tidal-backflow outfall retrofits
    - System monitoring.
- Anchors every dollar to a documented stormwater nexus (i-Tree methodology, approved species list)

When residents are asked to support a properly funded utility, they can see exactly where the money goes and can participate in the program directly.

ORDINANCE 2 OF 3 · MAKE IT EASY

Palmetto Bay Beautiful: One Program, Two Parts

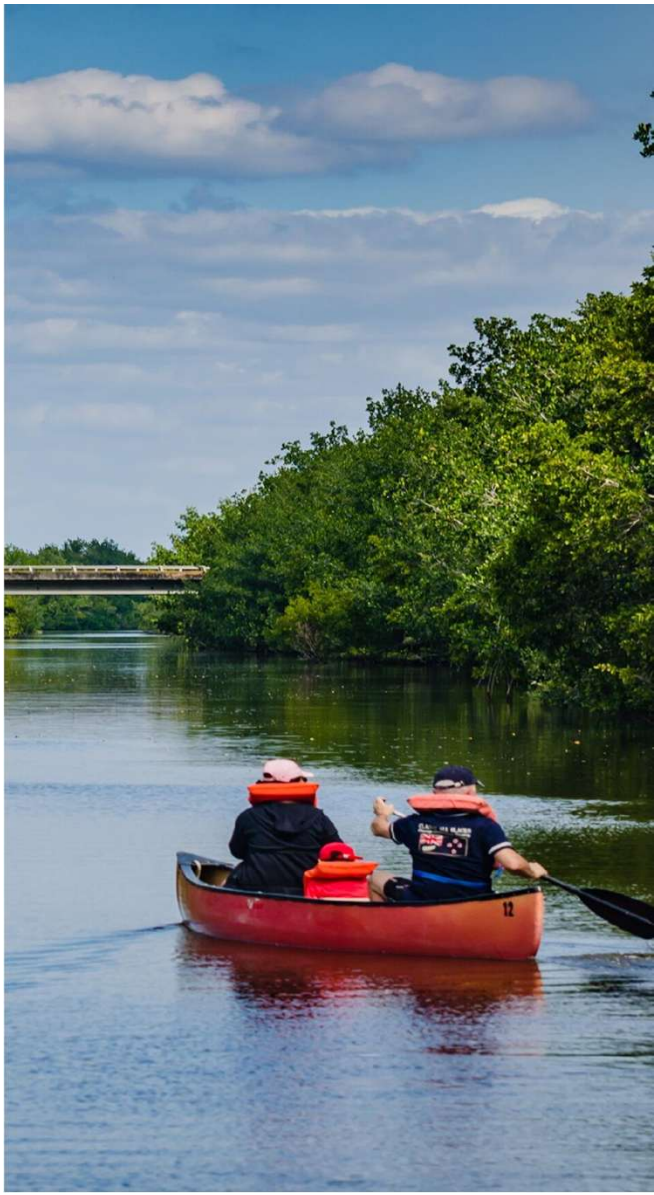
Part A - Community Appearance & Economic Development

Continues and expands today's Business Improvement Grant that includes facades, signage, lighting, accessibility, and streetscape improvements for commercial and multifamily properties. Existing grant agreements are honored.

Part B - Natural Infrastructure & Resilience (new)

Stormwater trees, rain gardens, bioswales, permeable driveways, turf-to-native conversions, and cisterns that is open to every property in the Village, including single-family homes.

One application for everything. Residents never pick a "part" or a funding source that staff classifies internally.



PALMETTO BAY BEAUTIFUL · BEFORE LAUNCH

First We Build the Machine

Engineer the standard designs

A consultant designs and prices each menu item including the stormwater tree pits, rain gardens, bioswales, permeable driveways to a Village-approved spec that can be installed the same way on any lot.

Set the price schedule

Competitively bid unit prices for every standard design, so the Village's funded share is locked in before applications open.

Qualify the contractor roster

Procure and pre-qualify the contractors who will install from the menu, so residents are matched to a vetted installer instead of finding their own.

BUILD PHASE CONSULTANT-LED, ONE TIME

Design, price, and procure the effort that makes every project after it fast.

STEADY STATE EVERY PROJECT AFTER

Apply, get matched, get it installed, and project administration becomes a checklist.

PALMETTO BAY BEAUTIFUL · FUNDING

Year One A Pilot Inside Existing Means

PART B · STORMWATER ELEMENTS

Funded by the stormwater utility fund

- Year One runs as a capped pilot and installations with a documented stormwater nexus only.
- Annual report back to Council to include uptake, cost per installation, and estimated stormwater benefit.

PART A · BUSINESS IMPROVEMENTS

Carries over the existing grant funding

- The current Business Improvement Grant appropriation rolls into Part A, with no new general fund ask
- Pending applications convert seamlessly and executed grant agreements keep their original terms.

GUARDRAILS BUILT INTO THE ORDINANCE

Appropriation

Every dollar is subject to the annual budget; intake pauses when funds run out.

Inspection first

No contractor is paid until the Village verifies the work.

$25K threshold

Any 100%-funded project over $25,000 needs a Council resolution.

Startup ask

Standard-design engineering, program manual & contractor qualification: a FY2027 line item for Council.

ORDINANCE 3 OF 3 · BUILD IT RIGHT

Land Development Code

- Prospective only and applies to new applications and nothing existing becomes non-conforming, and no one is sent a violation for their lawn.
- Scaled to the project. A kitchen remodel sees a checklist while a teardown sees the full standards. Requirements ramp with impact.
- Easy ways to comply everywhere. Install a Palmetto Bay Beautiful menu item and you automatically comply
- Effective October 2, 2027. Nothing to fund this year, staffing starts next cycle.

Two tiers: Tier 1 baseline practices for everyday permits, Tier 2 full standards for new principal structures and substantial redevelopment.



ORDINANCE 3 OF 3 · THE STANDARDS THEMSELVES

Inside the Land Development Code

Four standards do almost all of the work. Each one applies only at the point a property is already being built or rebuilt.

Parking lot shade	*20+ space lots*	One canopy tree for every 8 spaces today, stepping up to 1 per 6 in year six and 1 per 5 in year twelve. Each tree gets real soil volume so it actually reaches maturity.
On-site retention	*New construction, major redevelopment for commercial properties*	Hold the first inch of rainfall on site through green infrastructure, rising to 1.5 inches by year twelve. Anything already meeting county or SFWMD standards counts.
Turf reduction	*Teardowns, rebuilds, and major relandscaping only*	Lowers maintained turf cap from 60% of the required area to 40% of required landscaped area. The rest goes to trees, native groundcover, or other permeable planting. No turf within 20 feet of a canal or drainage feature.
Canopy replacement	*Tree removal on qualifying projects*	Remove a tree of 5 inches or more in trunk diameter, replace the canopy area, not just the trunk count. Roughly one large tree, two medium trees, or three small trees per 500 square feet removed.

Every one of these standards has a safe harbor of install the matching Palmetto Bay Beautiful design and you comply automatically, with no engineering review.

Protect the Trees We Already Have

WHY

The main way established neighborhoods lose is construction damage. Equipment parked under the canopy, trenches through roots, and compacted soil kill a mature tree one to three years after the job and the loss is never attributed to the permit.

WHAT THE CODE ASKS

- Show your trees on the permit sketch
- If risky work happens under a tree's root area (trenching, paving, pool digs, equipment staging), the ordinance asks the applicant to fence the the area and hand-dig near roots. No arborist needed for typical projects.
- An arborist plan is required only for the highest-risk work that includes excavation, utilities, foundations or pools within the drip line, or cutting roots 2” and up.
- Routine yard work mowing, trimming, mulching never triggers the ordinance.



A preserved native tree provides in year one what a new planting takes 15+ years to grow.

Mechanism reflected in Miami-Dade Code Ch. 24 “tree abuse” (root damage, soil compaction) and UF/IFAS construction-impact guidance.

What It Means for a Single-Family Home

Most permits	*Fence, roof, kitchen, small addition*	A one-page checklist that has a sketch of where your trees are on the site plan, and asks to keep equipment off their roots.
Big projects	*Adds 1,500+ sq ft of new hard surface (large addition, pool + deck, big driveway)*	Add one water-absorbing feature or use the safe harbor of planting two stormwater trees from the approved list.
Teardowns & rebuilds	*New house, or redevelopment on the same scale*	Replace the canopy you remove, keep turf to 40% of required landscape area, and no new turf within 20 ft of a canal or swale.

Nothing in this package requires existing homeowners to change their current yard. These standards apply only building a new house, or replacing 50%+ of the landscaped area after Oct 2027.

What Does Not Change

Existing homes & yards

Fully exempt as they stand. No one is required to retrofit, replant, or rip anything out.

Existing lawns near canals

Grandfathered. The 20-ft buffer applies only when you rebuild or re-landscape inside that strip and conversion is free-to-cheap through Palmetto Bay Beautiful.

Existing parking lots

Untouched until 50%+ is reconstructed or a major redevelopment occurs. Routine repaving overlays don't count.

Applications in the pipeline

Anything deemed complete before the effective date is reviewed under today's rules.

Hazardous trees

Always removable with an arborist letter under F.S. §163.045 and this ordinance doesn't touch it.

Repairs & maintenance

Routine maintenance, in-kind replacement, agriculture, and emergency work are exempt across the board.

The code is prospective. It shapes what gets built next and it does not police what's already here.

Larger Projects: Shade the Asphalt, Soak the First Inch

- Parking lots (20+ spaces, new or rebuilt): one canopy tree per 8 spaces, planted in real soil volume so the trees actually grow.
- Phasing up requirements to 1 tree per 5 parking spots over twelve years, with a Council check-in before each phase.
- Retain the first 1.0” of rainfall through green infrastructure, rising to 1.5” by year 12. County/SFWMD compliance is credited.
- Cool pavement or more trees. Requires reflective surfaces, or 150% of the required trees for standard asphalt.
- If you cannot plant more trees, applicants can opt to pay the Canopy Mitigation Fund to pay for the real cost of planting it elsewhere in the Village, pending a study.



Tree islands plumbed to receive parking-lot runoff, shade, and drainage from the same square feet.

Recorded maintenance agreements, a 36-month tree survival guarantee, and 1- and 3-year Village inspections.

WHAT RESIDENTS GET BACK

The Return on Getting This Right

Less flooding

Distributed absorption plus outfall retrofits reduce the street flooding that's already there, and will worsen without action.

Cooler streets

Shade is a public-health investment: Miami-Dade data ties each 1°C of surface heat to ~0.75 more heat-illness EMS calls per 100k residents.

A cleaner bay

Less turf and more planted buffer means less nitrogen and phosphorus reaching Biscayne Bay

Lower insurance

Documented green infrastructure and inspections support our FEMA CRS standing

Property value

Canopy, drainage, and a credible resilience program are proven value drivers in coastal markets.

A fair deal

Standards where they belong (new construction), help where it's wanted (every property), and a fund that pays for public benefit.

Sources: Miami-Dade Extreme Heat Vulnerability Mapping; Miami-Dade Code §24-42.8 (Outstanding Florida Waters); FEMA Community Rating System.

THE PATH FORWARD

Sequencing

JUL 14

Tonight

Direction on the philosophy and the three drafts

September

First reading

Funding ordinance + Palmetto Bay Beautiful move as a paired item

September

Adoption + rate

Second reading of the pair; rate ordinance first reading with the budget

October

Second Reading

Budget adopted with the program; Year One pilot begins in FY2027

FALL

LDC introduction

After staff consolidation with Planning

OCT 2027

LDC effective

Standards apply to new applications from October 2, 2027

AGENDA ITEM NO. 4.A

Item Cover Page

VIRTUAL COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM REPORT

DATE:	July 14, 2026
SUBMITTED BY:	Missy Arocha, Village Council
ITEM TYPE:	Presentation
AGENDA SECTION:	**VILLAGE COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATION DISCUSSION ITEMS**
SUBJECT:	PUBLIC SAFETY DISTRICT AS A DEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT *(Sponsored by Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer)* *(Deferred from July 6, 2026, Regular Council Meeting)*
SUGGESTED ACTION:	

ATTACHMENTS:
Presentation-Public Safety District

THE BLUE LINE

The Palmetto Bay Public Safety District

A proposal from Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer

A new way to fund police. Not a new tax.

WHAT IT IS

One idea, three moving parts



Splits the budget

Police funding becomes its own dedicated fund, separate from day-to-day Village operations.



Splits the rate

One blended tax rate becomes two visible lines on the property tax notice.



Locks in the purpose

Money raised under the police rate can be spent on police, and nothing else.

Same total tax rate. Same legal cap. Same Village Council.

THE TAX NOTICE

One rate becomes two

TODAY

Palmetto Bay General Fund	**2.3018 mills**

Police, parks, public works, and administration are all funded from this one combined rate.

UNDER THE BLUE LINE

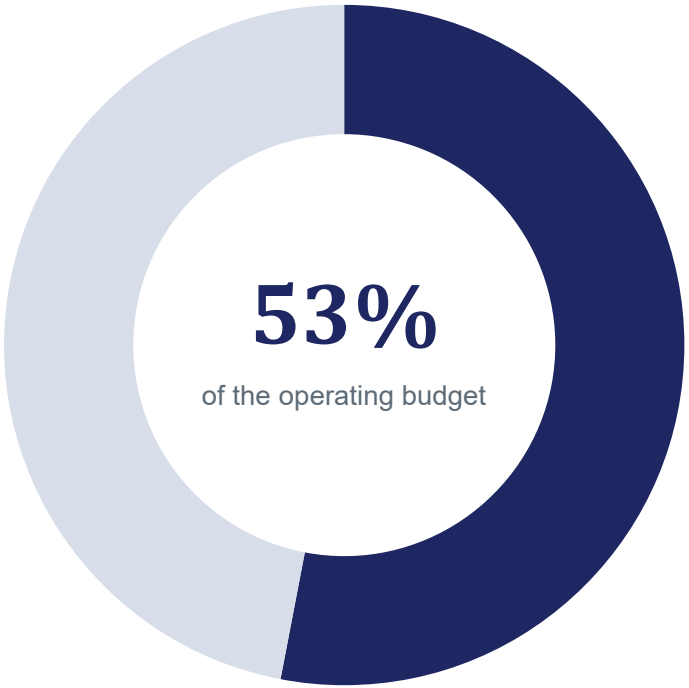
Palmetto Bay General Fund	operating rate
Palmetto Bay Public Safety District	**police rate**

The police rate appears as its own labeled line on the annual tax notice and the tax bill.

Both rates are set every year, at the same public budget hearings the Village holds today.

WHY NOW

Police is the biggest line, and it moves on its own



$11.7M of $22.6M

goes to police services under the Village's contract with the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office. It is the single largest line in the General Fund.

Set by contract, not by Council

Police staffing, wages, and benefits are negotiated through the Village's interlocal agreement with the Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office. That cost moves on its own schedule, independent of any other budget decision the Council makes.

Right now, all of that sits inside one blended number. Nobody outside Village Hall can see it moving.

PRECEDENT

Fire and libraries already have this



Fire Rescue

Miami-Dade Fire Rescue is its own dependent special district, with its own dedicated millage line, capped at 3 mills.



Public Library

The Miami-Dade Public Library System is funded the same way: its own district, its own visible rate.

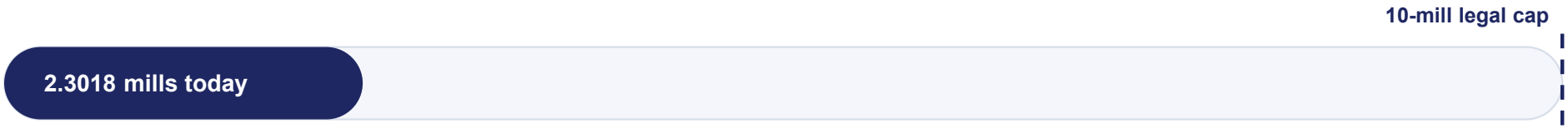


Police (proposed)

Palmetto Bay police is the one essential first responder service without this structural protection. The Blue Line closes that gap.

HOW IT WORKS

Same cap, set the same way



Both the operating rate and the police rate are added together. State law will not let that combined number pass the Village's existing cap, and today's rate leaves wide room below it.

Set every year

The Council fixes both rates annually, at the same public budget hearings held today.

Same oversight

Same audits, same TRIM notices, same ethics and public records rules that already apply.

One added filing

The Village Clerk files the district's charter with the state. That is the only new paperwork.

THE PROCESS

Path to adoption

01

First Reading

Initial Council vote at a public meeting.

02

Second Reading

Final vote after public comment. The ordinance is adopted.

03

County Approval

A joint resolution from the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, per County Code Section 18-3.1.

04

State Filing

The Village Clerk files the district's charter with the Florida Department of Commerce, under Chapter 189, Florida Statutes.

05

Next Tax Notice

The police rate first appears on next fiscal year's TRIM notice and tax bill.

Once adopted and approved, the separate police line first appears on next fiscal year's TRIM notice and tax bill.

WHAT THIS PROTECTS

A record worth locking in

Violent crime has fallen every year since 2021

even as crime rose across the rest of Miami-Dade County over the same period

Overall crime in the Village is trending down, reinforcing Palmetto Bay's reputation as a safe community.

Source: Village of Palmetto Bay FY2026 Adopted Budget

THE BLUE LINE

A dedicated line, for those who protect ours.

QUESTIONS?

Proposed by Vice Mayor Mark Merwitzer · Village of Palmetto Bay