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# THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH



## Community Interview Summary

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### Follow-On Research with Residents and Business Owners

April 2006

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## Introduction

In 2005, the City of Miami Beach partnered with Hay Group Insight on its Community Satisfaction Survey, which was administered to City residents, businesses and civic organizations. The purpose of this survey initiative was to better understand how the City of Miami Beach is performing with regards to its stated mission, which is to provide excellent public service and safety to all who live, work, play and visit the City.

The results of the Community Satisfaction Survey were reported Citywide in 2005. The City has been systematically working to address issues that were identified as key concerns from the survey results. As examples of what has already been implemented, the City has increased police presence in neighborhoods, increased service levels for cleaning City streets and sidewalks (particularly in business areas) and increased programming and free offerings in City parks, among other actions.

To assist the City in responding to some of the survey feedback, Hay Group Insight conducted several focus group meetings and telephone interviews of residents and businesses during late March through early April 2006. The objective of these follow-up activities was to delve deeper into several *specific* topics identified from the 2005 survey results for which the City desired additional information prior to proceeding with action planning efforts on those issues.

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

The following community groups were contacted to obtain their perceptions and opinions on the topics of interest:

- *Residents* from each of the three geographic segments of Miami Beach (North, Middle & South Beach)
- *Business Owners* (from across the entire City)

This report is intended as a summary of the qualitative feedback received in these meetings and interviews in order to assist City government in gaining a more thorough understanding of the root causes behind community perceptions on these topics, as well as, to design and implement appropriate countermeasures to address these areas in order to further improve quality of life and community perceptions.

As a consequence of conducting the focus group meetings and phone interviews, Hay Group Insight offers the following overall observations:

- 1) *Involvement of participants:* In each of the focus group meetings and interviews, residents and business owners were involved and passionate about expressing their thoughts and concerns to the City regarding the topics of interest. Participants often mentioned that, despite some of the areas they felt needed to be addressed, they still feel that the City of Miami Beach is a great place to live, work, play and visit.
- 2) *Caring about community input:* We also observed that participants were appreciative of the City's efforts to obtain their input via the focus groups, indicating that this demonstrated a commitment by the City to listen and react to community opinions on how to improve services.

- 3) *Increasing survey recognition:* Using the Community Satisfaction Survey as a springboard for the discussion further helps to solidify the significance of the survey and increases its recognition-value among the community, both in what the City has been doing and plans to do (based on what we were asking about in the meetings and interviews). It also continues the process of helping the community link their input (either from the survey or meetings/interviews) with City initiatives and actions.
- 4) *Networking:* Getting input from residents and business owners in a focus group setting not only continuously improves communication from these groups with the City, but also *among* the groups themselves. Residents and business owners listened, shared and learned from each other in each of the meetings, and several walked away with new neighbors and colleagues. This benefits the City as well as it increases the resources available to residents and business owners when they need to turn to others in times of need, and it fosters a stronger sense of community among its members.

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# Methodology

## Selection of Participants

In order to collect qualitative information from community groups on the topics of interest, Hay Group Insight proposed the implementation of focus group (in-person) meetings and telephone interviews. The following methodological approaches were used to invite and/or interview residents and business owners:

- 1) *2005 Community Satisfaction Survey* (Primary Source) – Hay Group Insight reviewed the 2005 City of Miami Beach Community Satisfaction Survey results and identified 220 residents and 55 business owners who provided negative ratings on the topics of interest for the focus group meetings/interviews. Hay Group Insight contacted these residents and business owners to invite them to attend a focus group meeting to discuss the topics in greater detail. Hay Group Insight did not share the list of contact names with the City and managed this process solely.
- 2) *City outreach* (Secondary Source) – The City of Miami Beach disseminated information across the community to inform residents and business owners of the planned focus group meetings (objectives, timing, etc.). This information was distributed via various media channels, including the City's website, local newspapers, and other flyers/postings. A toll-free number and web address were provided for interested community members to contact Hay Group

Insight for more information. Over 100 residents contacted the Hay Group based on this outreach effort.

## Participation: Focus Group Meetings

The focus group meetings were held from April 4<sup>th</sup> to April 6<sup>th</sup> 2006. Each focus group session lasted two (2) hours, with the business owner focus group conducted in the late morning/early afternoon, while all resident focus groups were scheduled for the evening. Refreshments and snacks were provided to all attendees. For the resident groups, as tokens of appreciation, gift totes were distributed to each attendee, as well as, the chance for one attendee to leave the meeting with a valued prize (e.g., dinner for two at local restaurant, artwork).

## Summary of Focus Group Attendees

| Segment/Location  | Date/Time                                     | # of Attendees |
|---|---|----------------|
| Mid Beach Residents<br>(21 <sup>st</sup> Community Ctr) | Tues April 4 <sup>th</sup><br>6:30 – 8:30 pm  | 15             |
| North Beach Residents<br>(Youth Center)                 | Wed April 5 <sup>th</sup><br>6:30 – 8:30 pm   | 6              |
| South Beach Residents<br>(Flamingo Park)                | Thurs April 6 <sup>th</sup><br>6:30 – 8:30 pm | 10             |
|   |   |                |
| Business Owners (Miami Beach Golf Club)                 | Wed April 5 <sup>th</sup><br>11 am – 1 pm     | 6              |

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

The attendees in each group consisted of a wide mix of individuals from various income levels, as well as, length of time they have been living in the City. Within the business owner meeting, several were in the real-estate industry while others were entrepreneurs.

### Participation: Phone Interviews

In addition to conducting the in-person focus group meetings, Hay Group Insight also interviewed a number of residents who could not attend one of the meetings but were willing to answer questions via phone related to the topic areas of interest. **53** resident interviews were completed in this manner. The qualitative information obtained in these interviews has been incorporated into this summary report.

### Participation: In Sum

Taking both focus group meetings and phone interviews together, a total of **82** residents and **6** business owners were interviewed.

### Reliability of the Results

Hay Group has a high level of confidence in the reliability of the interview feedback for the following reasons:

1. Most interview participants are a subset of respondents interviewed for the 2005 Community Satisfaction Survey, which was held to a rigorous stratified sampling methodology. As part of this larger pool, they are representative of the City's diverse population.
2. Moreover, the interview feedback aligns with the survey results. The comments supported many of the findings identified from the community in 2005.

3. Feedback is also consistent across region, further supporting the reliability of the findings.

### Protocol for Focus Groups/Interviews

Hay Group Insight and the City designed a detailed interview guide (protocol) for the focus groups and interviews. The protocol followed the following structure:

- 1) Introduction: Setting the stage (welcome, stating of objectives, expectations and ground rules)
- 2) Review of the 2005 Community Survey and Results (brief synopsis of the 2005 process, results and actions taken thus far by the City)
- 3) Outlining the Agenda (run through of the topics that will be covered in the meeting)
- 4) Discussion: Probing and Learning (detailed discussion/probing of each topic area)
- 5) Other/Miscellaneous Topics (discussion of other topic areas not already covered, if needed)
- 6) Conclusion (thanks, providing gift tote/drawing)

Hay Group consultants facilitated each of the focus group meetings. Hay Group Insight's telephone partner managed all contact to residents and business owners by phone, including invitations to focus groups and interviewing. Below is the listing of topic areas covered in the meetings/ interviews:

- ➔ Safety (particularly at night and/or in business & commercial areas)
- ➔ Cultural activities/Special events

- ➔ Construction in neighborhoods
- ➔ Affordable housing
- ➔ Value of services for tax dollars paid (*Residents only*)
- ➔ Available labor pool (*Business owners only*)

All topics were discussed in each meeting, although not always in the order listed above. The interview guides for both the resident and business owner focus group meetings, and for the phone interviews, are provided in the Appendix.

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## 3 Executive Summary

The focus group meetings and phone interviews provided rich, detailed feedback regarding the topics of interest to the City of Miami Beach. Overall, the information received across groups was consistent – residents and business owners offered similar feedback. However, there were some unique concerns/differences by region. Below is a summary of the information received for each topic area:

**Safety:** Participants have a holistic view of safety, that is, in their minds, when asked about safety concerns in the City of Miami Beach, comments encompass some of the 'typical' concerns around crime but also includes personal safety issues like trash and sanitation and getting around the City (traffic, sidewalk safety, etc). In relation to personal safety issues, residents most frequently spoke about the need for increased enforcement of existing codes and laws, more street lighting

in alleyways and along the Boardwalk, and the need to have a more pedestrian-friendly City (make it easier to walk/bike around). On a positive note, some residents indicated that they have seen an increased police presence recently and that, overall, the City is safer now than it was 10 years ago. Many residents would like to see more foot/bike patrols by police officers, however.

**Construction in neighborhoods:** Residents feel that the biggest challenge with respect to construction is the litter/sanitation concerns that develop (e.g., blowing of dirt/dust, cement on sidewalks, overflowing collection bins, etc.). Other key challenges mentioned include impacts on traffic (jams, slow moving construction trucks, detour delays), destruction of public property by construction vehicles, and the number of 'unfinished' projects around the City. Finally, residents questioned whether the City has the infrastructure to support the influx of residents that new construction brings.

**Affordable housing:** Discussion focused less around the City providing government-type housing (e.g. Section 8) and more around lower/middle-class residents' ability to afford to live in the City. Frequently mentioned was whether public employees (i.e., police, teachers, etc.) can afford to buy a home or pay rent in the City (the sense is that many cannot). Landlords also commented that, due to high property taxes on rental properties, it was becoming increasingly difficult to offer apartments at an affordable rate (hence, the trend to sell properties to developers). Moreover, there is concern that the City's diverse mix of residents may soon disappear, as lower/middle-class residents are squeezed out of renting/owning homes. It should be noted however that several residents do

not feel that it is the City's job to assist the community with housing (i.e., should be market-driven).

**Cultural activities/Special events:** Residents do make a distinction between the City's cultural activities and its special events. Cultural activities, which are attended by most residents, are viewed more positively and are seen as being geared more towards their interests (e.g., movie night, Pavarotti on the Beach, street festivals). Special events (e.g., Hip Hop weekend, Memorial Day, Boat Show) are instead seen as geared towards visitors/tourists and bring inconveniences into the lives of residents (e.g., parking issues, noise, cleanliness, etc.). However, many residents have attended these events and understand their importance to the City's economy (there were the suggestions to allow residents first opportunity to buy tickets and to offer tickets to residents at reduced prices). However, if given the choice, residents want to see more cultural activities or special events that are smaller in-scale, family-friendly and celebrate the diversity of the City's residents (e.g., Latin Music, Opera, etc.). Safety does not appear to be a real concern at these activities or events – indeed, there were comments that the City should expend the same high levels of effort into safety and cleanliness, which it does at events, everyday!

**Value of service for taxes:** When questioned as to the value of services residents receive for the taxes they pay, majority (a little over half) rated the value as "good", while a third said "fair" (less than 10% rated it either "excellent" or "poor"). Services such as the Police, EMS, and Hurricane Preparedness are given high marks. The services most often mentioned that need attention are improving cleanliness of streets/alleyways, street/sidewalk repair, increased

enforcement of codes (esp., traffic violations, construction/building violations), further beautification of the City overall (especially parks/planting of trees), and offering a reliable, consistent public transportation system.

**Available labor pool (business owners only):** The challenges regarding development of labor for businesses in the City are tied to the construction/affordable housing debate. With property taxes and rents/mortgages increasing, businesses looking for cheap labor usually go outside the City since the higher City rents squeeze out people who cannot afford to live in the City (as noted earlier). It was mentioned that landlords/owners would have to lower the rents they charge in order to 'subsidize' a labor pool for businesses, which most agree is not likely to happen. Therefore, many feel that cheap labor will continue to come from outside the City, thereby putting extra pressure on the City to develop/provide 24-hour public transportation, especially for those who live outside the City.

### **Regional Findings**

**North Beach:** Interview participants from North Beach generally had a more negative attitude with regards to most of the topic discussions, most notably around safety and construction/housing. Levels of crime, homelessness and lack of affordable housing were key concerns among this group. In their view, although the tax rate is the same, the City does not devote the same resources or time to North Beach as it does in Mid/South Beach. There were several comments to this effect (the 'neglected child'). While North Beach participants did comment on seeing some recent positive trends (increased police presence, development of the Youth Center), they still feel much more needs to be done.

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**Mid Beach:** As a largely residential area (single-family, condos), concerns surrounding construction, affordable housing and property taxes/values were high on the minds of Mid-Beach residents. They also commented on the issues with traffic in the area and that the City should provide more in the way of recreation facilities/opportunities and parks for the community.

**South Beach:** As the most trafficked and visited region (by residents and tourists), the South Beach residents interviewed commented a great deal about safety concerns due to high levels of traffic (on weekends especially), outside nightclubs (drugs, rowdiness), and during special events (noise, vandalism). The group seemed to be split as to whether it is the City's responsibility to assist residents with affordable housing. Most felt that code enforcement (traffic, sanitation) is lacking.

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## Detailed Feedback

### Safety

In phone interviews and the focus groups, residents were asked about safety including perceptions of safety at night, sufficiency of street lighting, causes of perceived lack of safety, and the presence of police.

Residents most frequently commented on:

- ◆ pedestrian/traffic safety and street lighting/ traffic lights
- ◆ the police presence
- ◆ safety on the beach
- ◆ sanitation
- ◆ the homeless
- ◆ differences in treatment and City resources by region
- ◆ enforcement of City code (especially in relation to sanitation, traffic, and construction)

On the following pages, the themes of residents' opinions about safety in Miami Beach are shown by representative, summarized comments. The consistency of the opinion across the regions is also indicated. Specific examples and locations, as provided during the focus groups and phone interviews, are included in parentheses.

THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

**Safety (Continued)**

| <b>Mid Beach</b>               | <b>North Beach</b> | <b>South Beach</b> | <b>Business</b> |  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| <b>Pedestrians (Sidewalks)</b> |                    |                    |                 |  |
| X                              | X                  | X                  | X               | Congestion (crowds on sidewalks) around clubs - People are forced from sidewalk into street  |
| X                              |                    |                    |                 | Building burned during Wilma (23rd and Collins) and obstructs sidewalk; City has still not removed   |
| X                              |                    |                    |                 | Broken sidewalks (holes, cracks, dirty)  |
| X                              |                    | X                  |                 | Hedges next to sidewalks (people hide in them/people sleep under them, also they narrow the available space to walk), trees need to be trimmed                         |
| X                              |                    |                    |                 | Cars park on sidewalks in front of restaurants and hotels  |
|                                |                    | X                  |                 | Crosswalk lights are out   |
| <b>Traffic/Roads</b>           |                    |                    |                 |  |
| X                              |                    | X                  |                 | Cars speed and drive through stop signs and stop lights (Lincoln Rd, Bay St, residential areas)  |
| X                              | X                  | X                  |                 | Drivers ignore traffic rules: Lack of sufficient police enforcing traffic rules  |
| X                              |                    |                    | X               | Cars block traffic on the roads (illegal parking)  |
|                                |                    |                    | X               | Delivery trucks double-park when doing deliveries (Washington, Collins); double-parking narrows road and makes unsafe; City should restrict time for making deliveries |
| X                              |                    |                    |                 | Motor scooters disobey traffic rules (drive the wrong way, go over the walk bridges); City needs to be more proactive about regulating/enforcing motor scooter rules   |
| X                              |                    | X                  |                 | During special events, City becomes very congested; there are not enough police patrols  |
| X                              |                    |                    | X               | Bumps out to narrow street to slow traffic are not well-lit and in bad shape (Harding Ave)   |
|                                |                    |                    | X               | Traffic lights out of sync; causes delays and road rage  |
| X                              | X                  | X                  |                 | Traffic lights are out (8th & Meridian)  |
|                                |                    | X                  |                 | Put cameras on streets to photograph traffic violators   |

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## Safety (Continued)

| <b>Mid Beach</b>       | <b>North Beach</b> | <b>South Beach</b> | <b>Business</b> |   |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---|
| <b>Street Lights</b>   |                    |                    |                 |   |
| X                      | X                  | X                  |                 | Street lights still out since Wilma/last 6 months (Hilton & 42nd St, 15th & Meridian, some stretches of Jefferson, Collins Ave, 30 St and Collins, on 13th St one block from the police station): Have contacted the City repeatedly but still not fixed  |
|                        |                    | X                  |                 | Not only having street lighting, but the type of street light: Many street lights in City disperse light upwards instead of downwards, this is ineffective. Also the watts of the lighting are important  |
|                        |                    | X                  |                 | Wilma blew down poles on 81st street walk-over bridge, cables still on ground and no one has taken action   |
| X                      | X                  | X                  |                 | Places without sufficient lighting (73rd and Ocean Terrace, Flamingo Park, Alton Rd, Normandy Island, West Ave, 85th and S. Harding, Pinetree, near Miami Beach High School, 31st St, south of 5th St, Lake Penkos Dr, by the public library, intersection of Lincoln Rd and Ocean Dr, 4th and 5th around Michigan), broken/insufficient lights make it difficult to see to drive, increase crime |
| <b>Police Presence</b> |                    |                    |                 |   |
| X                      |                    |                    |                 | Good at night   |
|                        |                    | X                  |                 | Police don't care about the things that impact quality of life (care more about drug busts than traffic violations)   |
| X                      | X                  |                    |                 | Some have seen more Public Safety officers patrolling in last few months  |
|                        | X                  |                    |                 | Police arrive much quicker now (used to take up to 40 minutes)  |
| X                      |                    |                    |                 | Lots of beach patrols   |
| X                      | X                  | X                  |                 | Need more police on bikes and more foot patrols (Washington Ave past midnight, in areas where homeless are, beach patrols, etc.)  |
|                        | X                  |                    |                 | Lack of police leads to drug dealing being allowed to happen (Washington Blvd)  |
| X                      |                    | X                  | X               | Need more police on Friday and Saturday nights and at special venues to man traffic and crowds  |

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## Safety (Continued)

| Mid Beach                    | North Beach | South Beach | Business |   |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---|
| <b>Litter and Sanitation</b> |             |             |          |   |
|                              | X           | X           |          | Graffiti and lack of cleanliness attract crime  |
| X                            |             |             |          | Need better trash collection: For example, after trash collection, half the trash is still lying on the ground (Collins Avenue by 21st St and Fontaine) |
|                              |             | X           |          | Streets need to be cleaned more frequently  |
| X                            |             |             |          | Waste bins are always overflowing   |
|                              | X           |             |          | Overflowing dumpsters   |
|                              |             | X           |          | Commercial areas (Collins, Ocean, Washington) well-kept, but side streets are drowning in garbage   |
| X                            |             |             | X        | Filthy beaches (south of 5th St, South Pointe)  |
|                              |             | X           | X        | Scatterizing (depositing of flyers on sidewalks) should not be allowed (200-300 block of Lincoln Rd)  |
|                              |             | X           |          | City should educate more about the problems with littering, should fine   |
|                              |             |             | X        | Seen as unfair that when people dump trash on property, the City holds property owner liable  |
|                              | X           | X           | X        | Lack of facilities and lack of knowledge: people do not know where to dump their trash (especially large items); causes them to illegally dump it       |
|                              |             | X           | X        | City should involve youth in clean-up efforts   |
| <b>Homeless</b>              |             |             |          |   |
| X                            | X           | X           |          | Fear homeless will attack: Aggressive panhandling and unpredictable behavior  |
|                              |             | X           |          | Fights among homeless (15th and Ocean)  |
| X                            |             |             |          | Drug abuse leads to petty crimes/thefts (bikes stolen out of garage)  |
|                              | X           |             |          | Thickly wooded parks (North Shore Park) attract homeless  |
|                              |             | X           | X        | Need more resources for the homeless (more Homeless Outreach, training of police officers, etc.)  |
| X                            |             |             |          | More busy positive activities in parks (children's activities, etc.) to reduce presence of homeless   |
| X                            | X           |             |          | Should be an ordinance against the Mom & Pop stores that will only cash checks of homeless if they purchase alcohol                                     |

## Safety (Continued)

| Mid Beach                                   | North Beach | South Beach | Business |   |
|---|-------------|-------------|----------|---|
| <b>Disparity between City Neighborhoods</b> |             |             |          |   |
| X   | X           |             |          | City taxes needed to be shared more equally   |
| X   |             |             |          | North Beach probably worst/least safe area  |
| X   |             |             |          | Normandy Drive (North Beach) always has rundown apt buildings (renters/not entrenched homeowners) leads to unsavory activity                            |
|   |             | X           |          | If City did more code enforcement and capital improvements, livability of areas would increase and safety; businesses would follow                      |
| <b>Beach</b>                                |             |             |          |   |
| X   | X           |             |          | Beach is unsafe at night  |
| <b>Safety of Tourists/Visitors to City</b>  |             |             |          |   |
| X   |             |             |          | Tourists are unaware of safety rules ("leave all worldly goods on the beach", easy targets by clubs for pickpockets)                                    |
| <b>Other Safety</b>                         |             |             |          |   |
| X   |             |             |          | City should have an alternative to 911 for people to call for non-emergency safety issues   |
|   |             | X           |          | Clubs encourage people to get drunk: Need to fine for overserving; many Clubs force people to buy drinks to get a table                                 |
| X   | X           | X           | X        | Code compliance is unfair/unequal; City not enforcing code where it should be   |
|   |             | X           | X        | Lack of enforcement of dog leash law and other dogs' ordinances   |
| X   |             | X           |          | Public parking lots are not well maintained (garbage, broken meters, junked cars) (16th St parking garage, public parking lot by Subway in North Beach) |
|   |             | X           |          | Lack of activity or business leads to more crime  |

## Construction in Neighborhoods

In phone interviews and the focus groups, residents were asked about their views on the most challenging issues in regard to construction within the City including parking disruptions, the noise level, and litter.

Residents most frequently commented on:

- ◆ litter and sanitation
- ◆ noise
- ◆ traffic and destruction of public property (sidewalks, fences, etc.)
- ◆ effect of delays in construction
- ◆ density of construction and lack of sufficient infrastructure
- ◆ desire for greater citizen review, planning, and enforcement of City code

On the following pages, the themes of residents' concerns about construction in Miami Beach are shown by representative, summarized comments. The consistency of the opinion across the regions is also indicated. Specific examples and locations, as provided during the focus groups and phone interviews, are included in parentheses.

## Construction in Neighborhoods (Continued)

| Mid Beach                             | North Beach | South Beach | Business  |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <b>Litter and Sanitation</b>          |             |             |   |
| X                                     |             |             | Huge dumpsters at construction sites attract homeless (homeless use materials for shelters) |
| X                                     | X           |             | Dumpsters are not routinely emptied (2nd and 3rd St)  |
| X                                     | X           | X           | When projects are stopped, construction sites are not cleaned up                            |
|                                       |             | X           | Nails, other materials in street (40 St and Collins)  |
|                                       |             | X           | Tons of dirt from construction of High School blows into yard                               |
| <b>Traffic</b>                        |             |             |   |
| X                                     |             |             | Huge trucks drive by too quickly and make house shake                                       |
|                                       | X           |             | Need to enforce traffic ordinance in regards to construction (parking, etc.)                |
| X                                     |             |             | Trucks back out right into road during normal rush hour                                     |
|                                       | X           |             | Trucks parked on City streets for 2 years without being moved                               |
| <b>Destruction of Public Property</b> |             |             |   |
| X                                     |             |             | Cement trucks dump cement on sidewalks  |
| X                                     |             |             | Fencing around construction sites destroyed by trucks and not repaired                      |
|                                       | X           |             | Fencing across sidewalks forces pedestrians to walk in street                               |
|                                       | X           |             | Dusty, broken roads caused by heavy construction trucks and construction debris             |
| <b>Noise</b>                          |             |             |   |
|                                       | X           |             | Lack of code compliance; can still hear noise late at nights and on Sundays                 |

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## Construction in Neighborhoods (Continued)

| Mid Beach                   | North Beach | South Beach | Business |   |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---|
| <b>Project Delays</b>       |             |             |          |   |
| X                           | X           | X           |          | Takes too long for many projects to be completed  |
| X                           |             | X           |          | City delays on public improvement projects (Beachwalk, Normandy Pool, park by Purdy Ave)  |
| X                           | X           |             |          | So many stopped projects: When project is stopped, site is not cleaned up or repaired   |
| <b>Density</b>              |             |             |          |   |
| X                           | X           |             | X        | Need more roads and stores to support increased populations (Mid Beach, only one road to get to house at 57th and Collins)                                      |
| X                           | X           | X           |          | Need master plan for City development, need more European style city planning, need for City to consider what type of community it wants and plan for that goal |
|                             |             | X           |          | Too many new condos purchased by part-time residents fails to build community   |
| X                           |             | X           |          | Filling up every space; paradise is going away  |
| <b>Citizen Input/Review</b> |             |             |          |   |
| X                           |             |             |          | City needs to gather more input from affected businesses when construction is planned in business areas   |
| X                           |             |             |          | City does not always adhere to input/dismisses complaints (W Hotel)   |
| <b>Praise</b>               |             |             |          |   |
| X                           |             |             |          | Like what City did on 31st and creek; bridge is nice  |

## Cultural Activities/Special Events

In phone interviews and the focus groups, residents were asked to define cultural activities and special events, the frequency of their attendance, the level of safety at activities and events, and suggestions for future activities and events.

- ◆ Residents have favorable views of the abundance of cultural activities within the City
- ◆ Residents generally have less favorable views of large scale special events (Memorial Day, etc) that attract people from outside Miami Beach
- ◆ Requests for future activities were mainly centered on small-scale cultural activities, events for families and children, and free or lower cost events.

On the following pages, the themes of residents' views and desires for cultural activities and events in Miami Beach are shown by representative, summarized comments. The consistency of the opinion across the regions is also indicated. Specific examples and locations, as provided during the focus groups and phone interviews, are included in parentheses.

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Cultural Activities/Special Events (Continued)

| Mid Beach                | North Beach | South Beach | Business |  |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|--|
| <b>Favorable Views</b>   |             |             |          |  |
| X                        |             |             |          | Literature   |
| X                        |             |             |          | Theater  |
|                          | X           |             | X        | Art Basel  |
| X                        | X           |             |          | Art Deco Weekend   |
| X                        |             | X           |          | Pavarotti on the beach   |
|                          | X           |             |          | Jackie Gleason Theater   |
|                          |             | X           |          | Fireworks on beach   |
|                          |             | X           |          | Comedy show on Lincoln Rd  |
|                          | X           | X           |          | International Film Festival  |
|                          |             | X           |          | Jazz brunch  |
| X                        |             |             |          | Great programs for seniors   |
| X                        |             | X           |          | Food and Wine very successful  |
| X                        |             |             |          | Polo on beach  |
| <b>Unfavorable Views</b> |             |             |          |  |
| X                        |             |             |          | A lot of galleries have left due to high rents; City losing some of its uniqueness               |
|                          |             | X           |          | Food and Wine event too expensive  |
|                          | X           | X           |          | City events/activities are too expensive for residents to afford and/or tickets sold out quickly |
| X                        |             |             | X        | Music festivals to 2 am; can't sleep; volume of bass   |
| X                        |             |             |          | Spring Break   |
| X                        |             | X           |          | Memorial Day (traffic jams, etc.)  |
| X                        | X           |             | X        | Large events; issues with crowd control, City should be more selective about large events        |
|                          |             | X           |          | Artists and musicians see Miami Beach as more commercial than cultural                           |
|                          |             | X           |          | 70% of time convention center is unused  |

THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Cultural Activities/Special Events (Continued)

| Mid Beach              | North Beach | South Beach | Business |   |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---|
| <b>Safety</b>          |             |             |          |   |
| X                      | X           | X           |          | Feel safe at events   |
| <b>Boat Show</b>       |             |             |          |   |
| X                      |             |             |          | Brings in crowds/traffic but not rowdiness  |
| X                      |             |             |          | City does a good job with event (well lit, cleans up quickly afterwards)  |
|                        |             | X           |          | Unlivable in streets near Boat Show during event  |
| <b>Would Like More</b> |             |             |          |   |
| X                      | X           | X           | X        | More events for children; events earlier in day so children can attend  |
|                        |             | X           |          | Cirque du Soleil  |
| X                      | X           | X           |          | Music types of events (concerts, jazz, symphony, etc.)  |
| X                      |             |             |          | Make Indian Creek Waterway like San Antonio's waterways   |
| X                      |             |             |          | Collins Avenue Park would be a great place for an outdoor stage   |
|                        | X           |             |          | Have events again by Normandy Fountain  |
| X                      | X           | X           |          | Use the Jackie Gleason Theater  |
| X                      | X           |             | X        | Free activities/events for residents, more affordable events for residents  |
| X                      |             |             |          | Capitalize on mix of people in Miami Beach with events celebrating diversity  |
|                        |             | X           | X        | Capitalize on weather with more outdoor events (street fairs, etc.)   |
| X                      | X           | X           |          | Special events for residents (smaller events)   |
|                        | X           |             | X        | Cultural activities at Bandshell Park   |
|                        | X           |             |          | Create Hispanic Youth Center  |
|                        |             |             | X        | Allow non-profits to use City facilities for cultural activities/special events at a lower cost, streamline permit process for special events |
|                        |             |             | X        | Better communication of public free events  |
|                        |             |             | X        | City create a science event similar to Art Basel  |
|                        |             |             | X        | Give awards to artists (would encourage more artists to come to Miami Beach)  |
|                        |             |             | X        | Opportunity to exploit relationship with IBM  |
|                        | X           |             |          | Suggest having volleyball and soccer in North Shore Park  |

## Affordable Housing

In phone interviews and the focus groups, residents were asked about their views about affordable housing within the City and their suggestions.

Some residents did not see affordable housing as a City responsibility.

Other residents commented about the need for affordable housing:

- ◆ maintain cultural diversity in the City
- ◆ enable public workers to live in the City that they support

Landlords discussed rising costs and high taxes as forcing them to sell their rental properties to property developers for condo conversion.

On the following pages, the themes of residents' views about affordable housing in Miami Beach are shown by representative, summarized comments. The consistency of the opinion across the regions is also indicated. Specific examples, as provided during the focus groups and phone interviews, are included in parentheses.

## Affordable Housing (Continued)

| Mid Beach                                  | North Beach | South Beach | Business |   |
|--|-------------|-------------|----------|---|
| <b>Some Views</b>                          |             |             |          |   |
| X  |             |             |          | Lack of affordable housing is a problem all over country; it is not just a problem in Miami Beach   |
|  | X           | X           | X        | Not concerned about lack of low-income housing or affordable housing: Affordable housing is not a City responsibility   |
| <b>Concerns</b>                            |             |             |          |   |
|  | X           | X           |          | Lack of affordable housing reduces the diversity of the City  |
| X  |             | X           |          | Lack of affordable housing for middle-income people   |
| X  | X           | X           | X        | People who work in the City's infrastructure are being forced out of the market: Teachers, firefighters, and police can't afford to live here   |
| X  |             |             |          | Very transient city   |
| <b>Cause of Lack of Affordable Housing</b> |             |             |          |   |
|  | X           |             | X        | With increases in taxes, insurance, and water rates, small apartment owners being forced out (operating at loss); can no longer afford to rent apartment at affordable rent; often will sell to Condo developer |
|  | X           |             |          | Greed of landowners and developers  |
| <b>Suggestions</b>                         |             |             |          |   |
|  |             | X           |          | City should institute "one-stop shop" where a property owner can go when wants to buy a piece of property; currently have to go to many different departments   |
|  |             | X           |          | Create an Affordable Housing Taskforce with community participation   |
|  | X           | X           |          | Need comprehensive plan (labor, housing, transportation)  |
| X  |             |             |          | City should have program to assist police officers and other public servants to buy homes   |
|  |             | X           |          | Give developers incentive to provide affordable housing or provide tax breaks   |
|  |             | X           |          | CDCs to purchase and provide affordable housing   |
|  |             | X           |          | Without affordable housing, need to ensure adequate transportation to get workers into City   |

THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

## Value of Services for Tax Dollars Paid

In phone interviews and the focus groups, the City's portion of property taxes was communicated to residents and residents were asked about the value of City services for tax dollars paid.

Residents generally had favorable views, but also had some unfavorable views (code compliance, responsiveness of some City departments, sanitation) as well as suggestions for improvement.

On the following pages, the themes of residents' opinions of the value of City services for tax dollars paid are shown by representative, summarized comments. The consistency of the opinion across the regions is also indicated. Specific examples, as provided during the focus groups and phone interviews, are included in parentheses.

| Mid Beach | North Beach | South Beach | Business | Favorable Views  |
|-----------|-------------|-------------|----------|--|
| X         |             | X           |          | City cleaned streets and restored electricity very quickly after last two hurricanes |
|           | X           |             |          | Excellent police   |
| X         |             |             |          | Police, Fire, and EMS always arrive quickly  |
| X         |             | X           |          | Little neighborhood bus is good  |
| X         |             | X           |          | Enough public buses in neighborhood  |
| X         |             |             |          | Sunny Isles is nice play park for kids   |
|           | X           |             |          | Very good that City welcomes input (as shown by holding these Focus Groups)          |
|           | X           | X           |          | Excellent City leadership programs for residents                                     |
|           |             | X           |          | Parking lot on 7th and Washington looks good (nice landscaping)                      |

THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

Value of Services for Tax Dollars Paid (Continued)

| Mid Beach                | North Beach | South Beach | Business |   |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---|
| <b>Unfavorable Views</b> |             |             |          |   |
| X                        |             |             |          | City employees very friendly but don't follow-up on complaints  |
| X                        |             |             |          | City doesn't live by its word (W Hotel Construction)  |
| X                        |             |             |          | Collins Park little bus taken away: City provides something and then takes away   |
| X                        |             |             |          | City has grown so quickly it can't keep up  |
| X                        | X           |             |          | Dirty city is embarrassing for residents and tourists   |
|                          | X           | X           |          | Disparity in treatment of City's Regions (SoBe gets more attention than North Beach); all are taxed at same rate so should receive equal services |
| X                        |             |             |          | Lack of green areas in City   |
|                          |             | X           |          | City neglects businesses: After hurricane, residents received building permits for repairs free, but business owners had to pay full price        |
|                          | X           | X           |          | Building Department is difficult to deal with   |
| X                        |             |             |          | City depends too much on communicating through newspapers, to get out message to people should communicate through tv                             |
|                          |             | X           |          | Purdy Ave (Sunset Dr) goes underwater when rains and high tides; City has known for years but does nothing about it                               |
| <b>Suggestions</b>       |             |             |          |   |
| X                        | X           | X           |          | Room for more education of City residents about the City  |
|                          |             | X           |          | More bike infrastructure in City (bike paths, bike racks)   |
| X                        |             |             |          | Reduce taxes  |
|                          |             | X           |          | More stormscaping   |
|                          |             | X           |          | More maintenance of public property, parks, and trees   |
|                          |             | X           |          | Extend South Beach shuttle  |
|                          |             |             | X        | Wireless Miami Beach could transform City   |

## Available Labor Pool (Businesses Only)

In the business focus group, business owners were asked what the greatest challenges facing the City in regard to developing an available labor pool and asked for suggestions for helping the City develop such a labor pool.

Business owners generally saw the availability of the labor as tied to the availability of transportation and the availability of affordable housing in either Miami Beach or nearby communities with adequate transportation to Miami Beach.

The business owners' representative, summarized comments are included below.

| Business | Suggestions  |
|----------|--|
| X        | As low income workers (hotel, restaurant staff) increasingly cannot afford to live here, put in reliable public transportation from Miami Beach to Miami |
| X        | Light rail would be a good medium for getting people around  |
| X        | Labor, education, and housing are all tied together; comprehensive plan needed   |
| X        | At current time, there is no incentive for private or non-profit organizations to invest in the City   |

## Section

## 5

## Conclusion

By undertaking this survey initiative, City of Miami Beach government has demonstrated a serious commitment to listen and respond to community's opinions and concerns. While several actions have already been implemented, some work remains.

Based on the feedback received from the focus groups and interviews, Hay Group offers the following recommendations:

- **Acknowledge** that you have heard the community's feedback and continue **communications** (in MB Magazine, website, City speeches/state of the City, etc.) regarding actions taken based on the survey and subsequent feedback received (make the connection between the survey & actions clearly and consistently)
- **Broaden** the view of safety to not only address concerns over crime and homelessness (which remain), but also sanitation, street lighting and traffic (note locations identified in the detailed feedback above) – in the minds of residents and business owners, these are all safety issues.
- **Consider** devoting additional resources to cleanliness in residential areas (street cleaning, trash collection, code enforcement).
- **Respond** quickly to safety concerns raised by the community – there is some perception that, while City officials are courteous and pleasant, requests for assistance when it comes to cleanliness, fixing lights and traffic are not

addressed promptly. Many residents would like to see police patrol the City and beaches more on foot and bicycle

- **Increase** enforcement of codes regarding perceived violations at construction sites (litter/debris, destruction of property) – consistent and timely application of codes/laws can address concerns over sanitation and safety issues
- **Improve planning** and **communication** to residents with regards to construction activities to avoid inconvenient delays/detours and increased traffic/congestion around sites
- **Review scheduling/timing** of construction projects to address resident concerns regarding number of projects currently undertaken across the City and impact it has on quality of life (getting around the City, health/safety, etc.)
- With respect to affordable housing, community divided as to whether the City should get involved or let the market decide the cost of homes/apartments. However, several recommendations were made:
  - **Review income levels** across regions and **adapt** tax structure accordingly (e.g., North Beach owners should pay property tax in line with average region income level vs. City-wide income level),
  - **Provide assistance** directly for public employees (teachers, police, etc.) who do not currently make enough to afford to live in the City
  - **Multi-pronged approach:** Task force consisting of City finance, lawyers, builders/developers, and regulators that reviews housing, labor and education across the entire City (all are intertwined)
- **Provide** for cultural activities and events that **include residents** – they would like to see activities/events that are more family-friendly, smaller-in-scale, on the beach/boardwalk and celebrate the cultural richness/diversity

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

of the City. For special events like the Boat Show, Memorial Day, etc., while some residents do not like the number of visitors this brings to the City, they understand the importance and want to see continued dedication regarding safety and noise/loitering issues. Residents would also like the first opportunity for tickets/admittance to events.

- **Increase enforcement of codes regarding cleanliness (not just at construction sites but all over the City – littering, overflowing trash bins, etc.) and traffic (speeding, all moving violations).**
- **Expand beautification of parks** (lighting, plant more trees/greenery) – several commented that Miami Beach is one of the cities with the fewest number of green spaces in Dade County
- **Address public transportation** (offering more buses in/out of the City, more options to get around like Baylink, etc.)
- Further publicize **Neighborhood Leadership Academy** and leverage this as a source of community involvement and information for residents – We heard very positive comments from those who had attended this training.

In sum, it is clear from the Community Satisfaction Survey results, the focus group meetings and interviews that the Miami Beach community, while very satisfied overall with living in the City, is concerned about preserving those qualities that attracted them to the City in the first place. As the City continues to grow and develop, maintaining this environment becomes more challenging. But, the City's efforts to incorporate resident and business owner feedback into its policies will help ensure that they remain in touch with their most important resource, the community.

# Appendix

## FOLLOW-ON FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL- RESIDENTS

As part of the City of Miami Beach Community Survey process, Hay Group Insight, the survey research firm selected by the City, will conduct several focus groups with selected residents. The objective of these focus groups is to collect specific information regarding several of the key opportunities for improvement identified in the 2005 survey results. A final report of the interviews will be provided, highlighting key findings.

### SCHEDULE

- **Mid Beach:** Tuesday, April 4<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ 21<sup>st</sup> Street Community Center, 2100 Washington Avenue
- **North Beach:** Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ 501 72<sup>nd</sup> Street
- **South Beach:** Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 pm @ Flamingo Park, 999 11<sup>th</sup> Street

The following is applicable to the focus groups that will be conducted with residents. Key points to remember:

- The point of the interview is to ***delve deeper into specific issues identified from the 2005 survey results***. It is critical that the facilitator keep the group focused on discussing the issues that the City wants to know more about. However, as it is to be expected that some residents may wish to express opinions/attitudes regarding other topics, only after exhausting each of the survey issues thoroughly, the facilitator can spend some time probing ***other/miscellaneous*** topics towards the end of the meeting (time permitting).

- Residents are investing time in the process – show appreciation for their participation.
- Set a tone of openness and trust – residents must feel comfortable if they are to discuss frankly without fear of retaliation or retribution.

### Focus Group Protocol

Five stages:

1. Introduction: Setting the Stage
2. Review of the 2005 Community Survey and Results
3. Outlining the Agenda
4. Discussion: Probing and Learning
5. Other/Miscellaneous Topics (*time permitting*)
6. Conclusion

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

### 1. INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

- Introduce Self and Objective

- "Good evening and thanks for coming. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ from the Hay Group, a global consulting firm that conducts survey research with federal and local government organizations. In 2005, the City of Miami Beach partnered with the Hay Group on its Community Satisfaction Survey, which was administered to residents, businesses and civic organizations. The objective of these surveys was to better understand how the City of Miami Beach is performing with regards to its mission, which is to provide excellent public service and safety to all who live, work and visit the City."
- The feedback has been received and carefully reviewed by the City for necessary follow-up. And the City has already taken a number of steps to address some of the issues identified from the survey including such things as increasing police presence in neighborhoods, increasing service levels for cleaning streets and sidewalks, particularly in business areas, and increasing programming and free offerings in parks, as some examples.
- Now, to help the City further respond to some of the feedback, we are holding a series of focus group meetings this week around the City to further explore several of the key topic areas identified for improvement, including views regarding safety, construction, and cultural and special events, among other topics. Your input today will help the City to better understand and address these key concerns.

- I want to assure you that your feedback and comments will only be reported back to the City on a group-wide level. Your individual comments will not be identified. The City decided to use an outside party (us) to conduct these focus groups and surveys to protect your confidentiality.
- Let me explain to you briefly the format for this session. This discussion will be focused specifically on several key issues that the City has identified, based on the survey results, as requiring more information before actions can be taken to address these issues. Our first task is to go through each item on this list in detail so that I can hear from you what you see as the main cause behind what is driving each issue. It is important for this exercise that you be as specific as possible in your feedback – this will greatly help the City to focus its action efforts more constructively and with a greater likelihood of success.
- Before we begin, let's lay down some quick ground rules:
  - There are absolutely no right or wrong answers to any of our questions. We want to hear what you have to say and value all opinions.
  - Please do not interrupt others while they are speaking. We will do our best to get everyone's input.
  - Feel free to disagree with one another but do it with courtesy. We don't expect everyone to have the same opinions about the topics and issues we will discuss.
  - We may redirect the conversation to keep us focused on our objectives and keep the discussion on track.
  - Please do not discuss what anybody here says after this session with your friends, neighbors, etc. (although it's OK to mention that you were part of a focus group)!

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

- Thanks for your attention and before we begin, is everyone clear about why they are here and what we plan to do? (*Wait for questions, respond, then proceed.*)”

### **2. Review of the 2005 Community Survey Process and Results**

“Before we get into the discussion, let’s take a quick step back and talk about the 2005 survey that we conducted for the City. Since our conversation will be focused around the outcomes of the survey results, it’s helpful that you have a perspective on what was done in the past.

“The 2005 Community Surveys were developed through discussions with the City Mayor, Commissioners and Staff, as well as, with focus group meetings (like this one) with residents, businesses and civic groups. It was administered via phone in February – March of 2005. 5,000 residents were contacted from our sample and over 1,000 responded (which is a 21% participation rate, an excellent response).

“Residents expressed positive opinions about quality of life across the City, recent capital improvement projects (like Beachwalk, Youth Center, etc.), services like Police, Fire, EMR, Ocean Rescue and Hurricane Preparedness, City staff being courteous and knowledgeable, and availability of restaurants, among many other areas.

“Residents did indicate concerns regarding several matters, among them transportation, homelessness, safety at night or in business/commercial areas, construction in neighborhoods, desire for more cultural & special events, lack of affordable housing, and the value of service for tax dollars paid.

“As mentioned, the City has already taken some actions to address these issues but needs your help to clarify some specific concerns.

“You can find more information about the survey and review a copy of the results on the City of Miami Beach website – go to ‘Search’ and type in the word ‘Survey’ as well as, in the December/January issue of MB Magazine.

“You can also find more information regarding the many initiatives the City has underway in response to the survey by reviewing the City Manager’s Budget message for Fiscal Year 2005/06 available on the City of Miami Beach website – the address is <http://www.miamibeachfl.gov/newcity/depts/finance/budget06/2006%20ADOPTED.pdf>

“That’s a quick review. Any questions before we proceed? (*Wait for questions, respond, then proceed.*)”

### **3. OUTLINING THE AGENDA**

- “Now, for the purposes of this session, we will be focusing our discussion on the following topics: (*note to facilitator: prior to the start of the meeting, create a flip chart with the following topics listed and refer to them now – place them on a wall or board for all to see throughout the meeting*)

- Safety at night or in business/commercial areas
- Construction in neighborhoods
- Cultural activities / Special events
- Affordable housing
- Value of services for tax dollars paid

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

- “Once we have gone through each topic in detail and if time permits, we can discuss other topics not listed on this page. However, our primary focus tonight is to review each of these and get your specific thoughts and opinions.

### 4. **DISCUSSION: PROBING AND LEARNING**

- “OK! Let’s take each topic one at a time.

#### **Safety**

- We heard feedback from some residents that they felt unsafe at night or in business/commercial areas in the City. In which areas do you feel most unsafe? [**Facilitator: Probe for specifics**]
- What do you feel is the main cause of the safety issues in these streets/areas?
- [**Facilitator: If not mentioned**] How would you describe the police presence in these areas?
- Are there any areas across the City where you feel there is not enough street lighting? [**Facilitator: Probe for specifics**] Which areas do not have enough lighting and what is the exact problem (for example, no street lights at all, too little light, broken lights, etc.)?
- What additional specific actions, other than providing more street lighting, do you think the City can take to address safety in these streets and areas?
- In commercial areas, what do you think businesses can do to improve the safety of their patrons and residents/visitors?

#### **Construction**

- What are the most challenging issues facing you as a resident with regards to construction in your neighborhood? [**Facilitator: Create list on flip chart – by show of hands, mark with a check each answer chosen by participants**].
  - Parking disruptions (by construction workers, etc.)
  - Noise level around construction areas
  - Litter around construction areas

d. Other?

- What do you think the City can do to address each of these issues?

#### **Cultural activities**

- What would you describe as a “cultural” activity or event in the City of Miami Beach? In other words, what falls into this category?
- How often do you attend such activities?
- Why do you go to these activities? If you don’t go, why?
- Do you feel safe at these events? If not, why?
- What cultural activities and events would you go to if they were made available?
- Where in the City would you most like to see/go to an activity or event (either geographic area or specific location)? Please tell me exactly where in the City.

#### **Special events**

- What would you describe as a “special” event in the City of Miami Beach? In other words, what falls into this category?
- How often do you attend such events?
- Why do you go to these events? If you don’t go, why?
- Do you feel safe at these events? If not, why?
- What special events would you go to if they were made available?
- Where in the City would you most like to see/go to an event (either geographic area or specific location)?

#### **Affordable housing**

- What do you feel are the most challenging issues facing the City with regards to providing affordable housing to residents who need it?
- What suggestions do you have for the City to be able to provide such housing?
- Do you have knowledge or examples of how other cities have handled this issue and done it well?

#### **Value of tax dollars**

The City of Miami Beach receives one-third of the taxes *you pay* through your property tax bill, with the remaining going towards the County,

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

School Board, Water Management District and other entities. Focusing just on the one-third paid of taxes that go to the City:

- ➔ How would you rate the overall value of City services (safety services like police, fire, EMR; trash collection; maintenance of playgrounds and parks, etc.) for the tax dollars you pay? Would you say Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor? [**Facilitator: Ask participants, by show of hands, to choose one answer.**]
- ➔ What could the City do to improve the overall value of services for tax dollars paid?

### **5. OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS**

- "In the time we have remaining, are there any other topics or issues you would like to discuss which we haven't covered?  
*(Wait and take further notes, if applicable. If not, proceed.)*

### **6. CONCLUSION**

- "Your input has been very helpful. I want to remind you that your feedback will remain confidential and to please respect the confidentiality of others in this room. On behalf of the City, I wish to express our gratitude for taking the time out of your schedule to be here and to contribute to making the City a better place for everyone to live, work, play and visit. Have a great night!"

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

### FOLLOW-ON FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW PROTOCOL - BUSINESSES

As part of the City of Miami Beach Community Survey process, Hay Group Insight, the survey research firm selected by the City, will conduct a focus group meeting with selected business owners in the City. The objective of these focus groups is to collect specific information regarding several of the key opportunities for improvement identified in the 2005 survey results. A final report of the interviews will be provided, highlighting key findings.

#### SCHEDULE

- ➔ Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM @ The Miami Beach Golf Club, 2301 Alton Road

The following is applicable to the focus groups that will be conducted with businesses. Key points to remember:

- ➔ The point of the interview is to ***delve deeper into specific issues identified from the 2005 survey results***. It is critical that the facilitator keep the group focused on discussing the issues that the City wants to know more about. However, as it is to be expected that some businesses may wish to express opinions/attitudes regarding other topics, only after exhausting each of the survey issues thoroughly, the facilitator can spend some time probing *other/miscellaneous* topics towards the end of the meeting (time permitting).
- ➔ Business owners are investing time in the process – show appreciation for their participation.
- ➔ Set a tone of openness and trust – business owners must feel comfortable if they are to discuss frankly without fear of retaliation or retribution.

#### Focus Group Protocol

Five stages:

1. Introduction: Setting the Stage
2. Review of the 2005 Community Survey and Results
3. Outlining the Agenda
4. Discussion: Probing and Learning
5. Other/Miscellaneous Topics (*time permitting*)
6. Conclusion

#### 1. INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

- Introduce Self and Objective
  - "Good evening and thanks for coming. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ from the Hay Group, a global consulting firm that conducts survey research with federal and local government organizations. In 2005, the City of Miami Beach partnered with the Hay Group on its Community Satisfaction Survey, which was administered to residents, businesses and civic organizations. The objective of these surveys was to better understand how the City of Miami Beach is performing with regards to its mission, which is to provide excellent public service and safety to all who live, work and visit the City."

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

- The feedback has been received and carefully reviewed by the City for necessary follow-up. And the City has already taken a number of steps to address some of the issues identified from the survey including such things as increasing police presence in neighborhoods, increasing service levels for cleaning streets and sidewalks, particularly in business areas, and increasing programming and free offerings in parks, as some examples.
- Now, to help the City further respond to some of the feedback, we are holding a series of focus group meetings this week around the City to further explore several of the key topic areas identified for improvement, including views regarding safety, cultural and special events, the labor pool, among other topics. Your input today will help the City to better understand and address these key concerns.
- I want to assure you that your feedback and comments will only be reported back to the City on a group-wide level. Your individual comments will not be identified. The City decided to use an outside party (us) to conduct these focus groups and surveys to protect your confidentiality.
- Let me explain to you briefly the format for this session. This discussion will be focused specifically on several key issues that the City has identified, based on the survey results, as requiring more information before actions can be taken to address these issues. Our first task is to go through each item on this list in detail so that I can hear from you what you see as the main cause behind what is driving each issue. It is important for this exercise that you be as specific as possible in your feedback – this will greatly help the City to focus its action efforts more constructively and with a greater likelihood of success.
- Before we begin, let's lay down some quick ground rules:
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  - Please do not interrupt others while they are speaking. We will do our best to get everyone's input.
  - Feel free to disagree with one another but do it with courtesy. We don't expect everyone to have the same opinions about the topics and issues we will discuss.
  - We may redirect the conversation to keep us focused on our objectives and keep the discussion on track.
  - Please do not discuss what anybody here says after this session with your friends, neighbors, etc. (although it's OK to mention that you were part of a focus group)!
  - Thanks for your attention and before we begin, is everyone clear about why they are here and what we plan to do? (*Wait for questions, respond, then proceed.*)"

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

### **2. REVIEW OF THE 2005 COMMUNITY SURVEY PROCESS AND RESULTS**

- "Before we get into the discussion, let's take a quick step back and talk about the 2005 survey that we conducted for the City. Since our conversation will be focused around the outcomes of the survey results, it's helpful that you have a perspective on what was done in the past.
- "The 2005 Community Surveys were developed through discussions with the City Mayor, Commissioners and Staff, as well as, with focus group meetings (like this one) with residents, businesses and civic groups. It was administered via phone in February – March of 2005. Over 5,000 businesses were contacted from our sample and 466 responded (which is a 8% participation rate, a good response for a business survey!).
- "Businesses expressed positive opinions about quality of life across the City, recent capital improvement projects (like Beachwalk, Youth Center, etc.), services like Police, Fire (including inspections), EMR, Ocean Rescue and Hurricane Preparedness, City staff being courteous and knowledgeable, and availability of restaurants, among many other areas.
- "Businesses did indicate concerns regarding several matters, among them transportation, homelessness, safety at night or in business/commercial areas, desire for more cultural & special events, lack of affordable housing, available labor pool, cleanliness of streets in commercial areas, contacting the City to pull a permit, and code enforcement.
- "As mentioned, the City has already taken some actions to address these issues but needs your help to clarify some specific concerns.

- "You can find more information about the survey and review a copy of the results on the City of Miami Beach website – go to 'Search' and type in the word 'Survey'.
- "You can also find more information regarding the many initiatives the City has underway in response to the survey by reviewing the City Manager's Budget message for Fiscal Year 2005/06 available on the City of Miami Beach website – the address is  
<http://www.miamibeachfl.gov/newcity/depts/finance/budget06/2006%20ADOPTED.pdf>
- "That's a quick review. Any questions before we proceed? (*Wait for questions, respond, then proceed.*)"

### **3. OUTLINING THE AGENDA**

- "Now, for the purposes of this session, we will be focusing our discussion on the following topics: (*note to facilitator: prior to the start of the meeting, create a flip chart with the following topics listed and refer to them now – place them on a wall or board for all to see throughout the meeting*)
  - Safety at night or in business/commercial areas
  - Cultural activities / Special events
  - Affordable housing
  - Available labor pool
  - Code Enforcement
  - Street Cleanliness in Commercial Areas
  - Contacting the City (permits, etc.)

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- "Once we have gone through each topic in detail and if time permits, we can discuss other topics not listed on this page. However, our primary focus tonight is to review each of these and get your specific thoughts and opinions.

### 4. **DISCUSSION: PROBING AND LEARNING**

- "OK! Let's take each topic one at a time.

#### **Safety**

- We heard feedback from some businesses that they (and/or their employees/patrons) felt unsafe at night or in business/commercial areas in the City. In which areas do you feel most unsafe?  
[**Facilitator: Probe for specifics**]
- What do you feel is the main cause of the safety issues in these streets/areas?
- [**Facilitator: If not mentioned**] How would you describe the police presence in these areas?
- Are there any areas across the City where you feel there is not enough street lighting? [**Facilitator: Probe for specifics**] Which areas do not have enough lighting and what is the exact problem (for example, no street lights at all, too little light, broken lights, etc.)?
- What additional specific actions, other than providing more street lighting, do you think the City can take to address safety in these streets and areas?
- In commercial areas, what do you think you as a business owner can do as well to improve the safety of employees and patrons?

#### **Cultural activities**

- What would you describe as a "cultural" activity or event in the City of Miami Beach? In other words, what falls into this category?
- How often do you, as a business owner, attend such activities?
- Why do you go to these activities? If you don't go, why?
- Do you feel safe at these events? If not, why?

- What cultural activities and events would you go to if they were made available?
- Where in the City would you most like to see/go to an activity or event (either geographic area or specific location)? Please tell me exactly where in the City.

#### ***Special events***

- What would you describe as a "special" event in the City of Miami Beach? In other words, what falls into this category?
- How often do you, as a business owner, attend such activities?
- Why do you go to these events? If you don't go, why?
- Do you feel safe at these events? If not, why?
- What special events would you go to if they were made available?
- Where in the City would you most like to see/go to an event (either geographic area or specific location)?

#### ***Affordable housing***

- What do you feel are the most challenging issues facing the City with regards to providing affordable housing to residents who need it?
- What suggestions do you have for the City to be able to provide such housing?
- Do you have knowledge or examples of how other cities have handled this issue and done it well?

#### ***Available labor pool***

- What do you feel are the most challenging issues facing the City with regards to developing an available labor pool for businesses?
- What suggestions do you have for the City to help businesses develop such a pool?

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**5. OTHER/MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS**

- "In the time we have remaining, are there any other topics or issues you would like to discuss which we haven't covered?  
*(Wait and take further notes, if applicable. If not, proceed.)*

**6. CONCLUSION**

- "Your input has been very helpful. I want to remind you that your feedback will remain confidential and to please respect the confidentiality of others in this room. On behalf of the City, I wish to express our gratitude for taking the time out of your schedule to be here and to contribute to making the City a better place for everyone to live, work, play and visit. Have a great night!"

## Phone script for Residents

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling on behalf of the City of Miami Beach from the Hay Group. May I please speak with Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_?

- ➔ { **Yes, speaking**} In 2005, your household participated in the Miami Beach Resident Satisfaction Survey. The City has already taken a number of steps to address some of the issues identified from the survey including increased police presence in neighborhoods, increased service levels for cleaning streets and sidewalks particularly in business areas, and increased programming and free offerings in our parks, as some examples. To help the City further respond to some of the feedback received, we would like to invite you to a focus group session to further explore several of the key topic areas identified for improvement, including safety, construction in your neighborhood, and cultural and special events.

If you would be interested in discussing these topics in a comfortable surrounding with other residents, we would very much like to have you there! Are you available to attend a focus group meeting at:

- **If Mid Beach resident:** 21st Street Community Center 2100 Washington Avenue on Tuesday April 4th from 6:30 – 8:30 PM
- **If North Beach resident:** North Shore Park, 501 72<sup>nd</sup> Street on Wednesday April 5th from 6:30 – 8:30 PM
- **If South Beach resident:** Flamingo Park, 999 11<sup>th</sup> Street on Thursday April 6<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:30 PM

To thank you for your participation at this meeting, you will receive a gift tote as well as an opportunity to participate in a drawing for dinner for two at a Miami Beach restaurant. Snacks and refreshments will also be served at the meeting. Will you be able to attend?

- { **YES**} Great! Please be sure to write down the location for the meeting and the day & time now so you don't forget. It will be at (NAME OF FACILITY & ADDRESS) on (DAY) from (6:30 – 8:30 pm). We'll call you the day before to confirm your attendance. We look forward to seeing you there. Thank you very much for your time and support! Have a great day!
- { **NO**} OK. We're sorry to hear that you can't make it. But you can still help us now! I'd like to ask you just a few questions about some of the topic areas I mentioned earlier (safety, construction, and cultural/activities), so we can at least add your feedback to the recommendations that will go to the City on what they should be doing to improve these areas. It'll only take several minutes of your time – can we begin? { **YES – go to "Interview questions for phone call"; NO – thank and terminate**}
- ➔ { **Not available**} When is a good call back time to speak to him/her?
- ➔ { **No such person**} OK. Am I speaking to a resident of Miami Beach? Are you over the age of 18? { **If no to all, ask for someone who fits those criteria and proceed. If still no, thank and terminate**} Great – I can speak to you as well. The City of Miami Beach plans to conduct focus groups in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April to get feedback and information from residents about several topics areas, including safety, construction in your neighborhood, and cultural and special events. Would you be interested in attending a focus group meeting at (mention location, day and time of focus group in resident area) to talk about these topics? We'd appreciate your attendance at this group meeting – it will greatly assist the City in allocating the proper resources to address these concerns. { **If yes, go to YES above under "Will you be able to attend?"; if no, thank and terminate**}

### Phone script for Businesses

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm calling on behalf of the City of Miami Beach from the Hay Group. May I please speak with Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_?

- ➔ {**Yes, speaking**} You may recall that in 2005, you participated in the Miami Beach Business Satisfaction Survey. The City of Miami Beach has already taken a number of steps to address some of the issues identified from the survey. They have increased police presence in neighborhoods, increased service levels for cleaning streets and sidewalks particularly in business areas, and increased programming and free offerings in our parks, as some examples.
- ➔ To help the City further respond to some of the feedback received, we would like to invite you to a focus group session to further explore several of the key topic areas for improvement, including safety, construction in your neighborhood, and cultural and special events, among others.

If you would be interested in discussing these topics in a comfortable surrounding with other business owners from across the City, we would very much like to have you there! Are you available to attend a focus group meeting at the **Miami Beach Golf Club** on **Wednesday April 5<sup>th</sup>** from **11 AM – 1 PM**? Lunch will be served.

Will you be able to attend?

- {**YES**} Great! Please be sure to write down the location for the meeting and the day & time now so you don't forget. It will be at the **Miami Beach Golf Club, 2301 Alton Rd** on **Wednesday April 5<sup>th</sup>** from **11 AM – 1 PM**. We'll call you the day before to confirm your attendance. We look forward to

seeing you there. Thank you very much for your time and support! Have a great day!

- {**NO**} OK. We're sorry to hear that you can't make it. But you can still help us now! I'd like to ask you just a few questions about some of the topic areas I mentioned earlier (safety, construction, and cultural/activities), so we can at least add your feedback to the recommendations that will go to the City on what they should be doing to improve these areas. It'll only take several minutes of your time – can we begin? {**YES – go to "Interview questions for phone call"; NO – thank and terminate**}
- ➔ {**Not available**} When is a good call back time to speak to him/her?
- ➔ {**No such person**} OK. Am I speaking to the owner or manager of this business? {**If no, thank and terminate**} Great – I can speak to you as well. The City of Miami Beach plans to conduct focus groups in early April to get feedback and information from businesses about several topics areas, including safety, construction in your neighborhood, and cultural and special events. Would you be interested in attending a focus group meeting at (mention location, day and time of focus group) to talk about these topics? We'd appreciate your attendance at this group meeting – it will greatly assist the City in allocating the proper resources to address these concerns. {**If yes, go to YES above under "Will you be able to attend?"; if no, thank and terminate**}

## THE CITY OF MIAMI BEACH: COMMUNITY INTERVIEW SUMMARY

### Phone Interview questions

#### **Safety**

- ➔ Regarding business/commercial areas across the City, are there areas where you feel most unsafe? Tell me exactly which streets and areas do you feel the most unsafe?
- ➔ What do you feel is the main cause of the safety issues in these streets/areas?
- ➔ Are there any areas across the City where you feel there is not enough street lighting? Tell me exactly which streets and areas do not have enough lighting and the exact problem (for example, no street lights at all, too little light, broken lights, etc.).
- ➔ What additional specific actions, other than providing more street lighting, do you think the City can take to address safety in these streets and areas?

#### **Cultural activities**

- ➔ What would you describe as a "cultural" activity or event in the City of Miami Beach? In other words, what falls into this category?
- ➔ How often do you attend such activities?
- ➔ Why do you go to these activities? If you don't go, why?
- ➔ What cultural activities and events would you go to if they were made available?
- ➔ Where in the City would you most like to see/go to an activity or event (either geographic area or specific location)? Please tell me exactly where in the City.

#### **Special events**

- ➔ What would you describe as a "special" event in the City of Miami Beach? In other words, what falls into this category?
- ➔ How often do you attend such events?
- ➔ Why do you go to these events? If you don't go, why?
- ➔ Do you feel safe at these events? If not, why?
- ➔ What special events would you go to if they were made available?
- ➔ Where in the City would you most like to see/go to an event (either geographic area or specific location)?

#### **Affordable housing**

- ➔ What do you feel are the most challenging issues facing the City with regards to providing affordable housing to residents who need it?
- ➔ What suggestions do you have for the City to be able to provide such housing?

#### **Construction**

- ➔ What are the most challenging issues facing you as a resident with regards to construction in your neighborhood? [*Interviewer: Read list and ask respondent to choose – more than one answer acceptable*].
  - a. Parking disruptions (by construction workers, etc.)
  - b. Noise level around construction areas
  - c. Litter around construction areas
  - d. Other?
- ➔ What do you think the City can do to address these issues?

#### **Value of tax dollars (RESIDENTS)**

The City of Miami Beach receives one-third of the taxes you pay through your property tax bill, with the rest going to the County, School Board, Water Management District and other entities. Focusing just on the one-third paid to the City,

- ➔ How would you rate the overall value of City services for tax dollars you pay? Would you say Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor?
- ➔ What could the City do to improve the overall value of services for tax dollars paid?

#### **Available labor pool (BUSINESSES)**

- ➔ What do you feel are the most challenging issues facing the City with regards to developing an available labor pool for businesses?
- ➔ What suggestions do you have for the City to help businesses develop such a pool?