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OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
NO. LTC # 172-2008

LETTER TO COMMISSION

TO: Mayor Matti Bower and Members of the City Commission

FROM: Jorge M. Gonzalez, City Manager

DATE: June 20, 2008

SUBJECT: North Beach Focus Group Meeting Summary

The purpose of this LTC is to update you on the continued efforts to gain insight from our residents as to the services we are providing throughout the community.

In 2007, the City implemented a second Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) citywide to learn whether the City was still on course to achieve its mission, vision and strategic plan and determine how perceptions of the community changed based on actions the City had taken to address the first CSS findings as well as other initiatives the City had implemented. The results indicated a great deal of achievement through the City's focus on its mission, vision and strategic plan. The City witnessed considerable improvement in community perceptions and attitudes across a number of key strategic priority areas. However, several areas of focus remained.

The most noteworthy area of focus from the 2006-2007 CSS concerned the consistently lower ratings observed from North Beach residents to the survey questions, notably in comparison to their South Beach and Middle Beach counterparts. North Beach residents were often the least positive region within the City and the gap in survey ratings between North Beach and the rest of the City was widening.

To assist the City in responding to the survey feedback received from the second CSS, Hay Group Insight facilitated several focus group meetings and telephone interviews. The objective of these follow-up activities was to delve deeper into some key topic areas identified for improvement with those City residents who provided negative opinions from the North Beach area. The City held the focus group meetings on May 20 and May 21, 2008 in the evening time at North Shore Youth Center on 72 Street to obtain maximum participation from North Beach residents with (4) sessions conducted, two of which were in Spanish. Taking both focus group meetings and telephone interviews together, 87 residents participated.

Listed are the topic areas from the meetings and phone interviews:

- Condition of Streets and Sidewalks
- Safety
- Construction & Development
- Recreation Programs and Facilities
- Value of Services for Taxes Paid
- Communications from the City

All topics were discussed in each meeting, although not always in the order listed above.

The participants in each group consisted of a wide mix of residents from various income levels and ages, as well as, length of time they have been living in the City and knowledge of City government activities. This ensured that the opinions received were representative of the wider North Beach community. Moreover, most of the North Beach interview participants are a subset of respondents interviewed from the 2007 CSS, held to a rigorous stratified sampling methodology. As part of this larger pool, the focus group and telephone participants are representative of North Beach's diverse population.

In 2008, the sentiments of North Beach residents have noticeably improved from findings noted in the 2005-06 CSS follow-up focus groups and telephone interviews. Resident comments point to an increased focus and commitment by the City of Miami Beach in addressing and resolving quality of life issues. Moreover, the consensus of the North Beach residents reveals an *overall improvement* in resident satisfaction with quality of life living in North Beach and *increased positive attitudes* regarding the specific CSS issues identified within North Beach. Not surprisingly, there remain several concerns among residents regarding quality of life issues identified from the 2006-2007 CSS. Still, the perception among North Beach residents is that quality of life issues are moving in the right direction.

Below is a high-level summary of the findings for each topic area.

Condition of Streets and Sidewalks. North Beach residents feel that, generally, the North Beach area is improving concerning cleanliness and City government has picked up efforts to maintain and enforce cleanliness in the area. Residents attribute some cleanliness issues to a lack of civic duty (personal pride) on the part of residents in keeping North Beach clean but also feel the City can do more to clean streets, alleyways and beach areas of trash, refuse and dumping. Storm drainage and waterways were occasionally raised as continued problems across North Beach (and the City of Miami Beach generally), however many noted that the lack of rain over the last several months has currently lessened this as a serious issue (although they also point out that it will become more of a problem during hurricane season). There were also mentions of street pavement issues that need to be corrected.

Safety: North Beach residents do indicate an increased police car presence in the area as well as fast response from safety services (Police, Fire/Rescue, EMR, etc.). The majority of North Beach residents say that the number of homeless in the area has declined over the past year but the homeless that remain within North Beach are still a top-of-mind safety issue for residents. Loitering youth on streets and in parks was mentioned as another safety concern in North Beach. Several North Beach residents perceive an increase in car theft and house/apartment break-ins over the past year. Generally, residents would like to see more and brighter lighting on streets and the Beachwalk. Discussion of safety issues also included pedestrian safety, such as speeding cars, cars that run lights, etc. and pedestrian safety in the context of building/sidewalk/street construction projects, which cause residents to walk into roads and increase their chances of being struck by a moving vehicle.

Construction & Development: While North Beach residents do feel that construction and development are important indicators of the City's growth and economic viability, there remain strong feelings that over-development of buildings (condos especially) have caused significant quality of life issues for current North Beach residents. There were comments that the vertical high-rises have reduced the amount of sunlight across the North Beach area during the day. Moreover, North Beach residents are increasingly anxious that the area will not be able to support the influx of new residents that the condominium construction will bring (reaching maximum population density). North Beach residents perceive that the City is not enforcing its own regulations regarding construction sites, both in terms of regular inspections by the City to sites and the City ensuring projects are completed in full and on schedule. Other key challenges mentioned include the impact of construction/development projects on traffic congestion and lack of available street parking. On a positive note, construction projects that are seen as benefiting the area (e.g., new parks/recreation facilities, Beachwalk) are viewed very positively.

Recreation Programs and Facilities: North Beach residents are overall quite satisfied with the recreation programs and facilities available to them. Naturally, the beaches themselves were cited as a source of great affection among residents, but as mentioned earlier, some feel beaches can be cleaner. Some of the facilities and events like the Bass Museum are highly regarded but are seen as expensive. Some would like to see parks remain open longer so that youth can have a place to congregate, as opposed to doing so in the streets at night. There were also comments to build a soccer field in the area, bring in a movie theater, as one does not currently exist in North Beach and to develop/publicize activities for seniors.

Value of Services for Taxes Paid: Services such as the Police, Fire/Rescue, EMR and Hurricane Preparedness are given high marks. The services and areas most often mentioned for attention include improving cleanliness of streets/alleyways, increased enforcement of codes (especially anything related to motor vehicles and construction), beautification of North Beach (more trees/shrubbery), improving the school system (overcrowding, the curriculum), and offering reliable public transportation.

Communications from the City: While mostly satisfied with MB magazine and other forms of communications, North Beach residents would like more proactive contact and communications from the City on matters that affect them, for example, regarding construction projects, events and programs, etc. Most often mentioned forms of media to use are email and in-person City meetings in North Beach.

Overall, findings suggest that the changes seen from 2006-2007 are attributable to the increased attention by the City of Miami Beach to the areas of focus within the North Beach region. This can be interpreted as an encouraging sign that the results for North Beach for the next CSS (scheduled for 2009) will reflect this continued positive change in resident perceptions.

For additional results from the 2008 North Beach focus group and telephone interviews, please see the attached report provided by the Hay Group Insight.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me.

JMG:KGB:LDR

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2006-7 Community Satisfaction Survey

Follow-Up Focus Groups & Interviews with North Beach Residents

Report of Findings

June 2008

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I. Background and Objectives

The City of Miami Beach's Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan

The City of Miami Beach is committed to providing excellent public service and safety to all who live, work and play in its vibrant, tropical and historic community. Miami Beach's vision and strategic plan have been articulated by City government in a clear and specific manner. Miami Beach is committed to being a city that is:

- Cleaner and safer
- A beautiful, vibrant, mature, and stable residential community, as well as, an urban and historic environment
- A cultural, entertainment and historic capital
- An international center for innovation in culture, recreation and business
- Maintaining a well-improved infrastructure
- Supporting outcomes that will sustain its vision

The Community Satisfaction Survey

In 2005, the City of Miami Beach conducted its first Community Satisfaction Survey (CSS) with Hay Group Insight, a globally recognized survey research firm. The main objectives of the CSS are aligned with Miami Beach's mission, vision and strategic plan and are specifically outlined as follows:

- Understand the level of satisfaction among the City of Miami Beach community (residents and businesses) with quality of life in the City, services received, City government, and recent initiatives
- Determine areas of strength and opportunities for improvement relative to the City's mission, vision and strategic plan
- Benchmark Miami Beach to similar cities/jurisdictions
- Utilize community input to support the budget process
- Provide actionable data to make decisions

To assist the City in responding to the survey feedback received from the first CSS, Hay Group Insight facilitated several focus group meetings and telephone interviews with residents and business owners 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 CSS' results for which the City desired additional information prior to proceeding with action planning efforts on those issues.

In 2007, a second CSS was implemented city-wide to learn whether the City was still on course to achieve its mission, vision and strategic plan and determine how perceptions of the community changed based on actions the City had taken to address the first CSS findings as well as other initiatives the City had implemented. The results indicated that a great deal had been achieved through the City's focus on its mission, vision and strategic plan. The City

witnessed considerable improvement in community perceptions and attitudes across a number of key strategic priority areas. However, several areas of focus remained.

The most noteworthy area of focus from the 2006-7 CSS concerned the consistently lower ratings observed from North Beach* residents to the survey questions, notably in comparison to their South Beach and Middle Beach counterparts. North Beach residents were often the least positive region within the City and the gap in survey ratings between North Beach and the rest of the City was widening.

The City of Miami Beach decided to investigate these findings further and partnered with Hay Group Insight to conduct a series of focus groups and telephone interviews. Only in this instance the focus groups and telephone interviews would be conducted with North Beach residents only.

Objective of this Report

This report is intended as a summary of the quantitative and qualitative feedback received in the focus group sessions and telephone interviews with North Beach residents so that it may assist City government in gaining an in-depth understanding of the reasons for North Beach residents' perceptions from the 2006-7 CSS. More specifically, this report's main goal is to help City government design and implement action plans to address areas of focus that will further improve quality of life and services for residents in North Beach.

This report should not be used to suggest its findings beyond the study's research objectives. It should not be used to generalize findings for residents in regions outside of North Beach (i.e., South Beach and Middle Beach residents). The findings in this report are unique to the residents of the North Beach region of Miami Beach.

For the summary of the topic areas, we have taken into account those observations and comments from North Beach residents that were similar both *within* and *across* the focus group sessions and interviews. Comments made by focus group participants and phone interviewees that were of a singular nature (that is, uniquely expressed compared to other feedback received) are provided throughout the Detailed Comments section following the Executive Summary.

* North Beach encompasses 64th Street to 87th Terrace from Collins Avenue to the City limits along the Bay.

II. Methodology and Approach

Selection of Participants

In order to collect the information on the topics of interest, Hay Group Insight proposed a combination of focus group (in-person) meetings and telephone interviews with North Beach residents. The following methodological approaches were used to invite and/or interview North Beach residents to the focus group meetings or telephone interviews, respectively:

1) *2007 Community Satisfaction Survey* (Primary Source) – Hay Group Insight identified the 214 residents from North Beach who responded to the survey in 2007. Hay Group Insight contacted these residents 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 distributed an email to its listserve contacts within North Beach. This email provided brief information on the focus groups that were to be held in North Beach and solicited participants for the groups. An email address was provided in the message for interested residents to contact Hay Group Insight to be scheduled for a group. Over 30 North Beach residents contacted Hay Group Insight from this outreach effort.

Participation: Focus Group Meetings

The focus group meetings were held on May 20th and May 21st 2008. The focus groups were scheduled for the evening time to obtain maximum participation from North Beach residents. A total of four (4) sessions were conducted, two of which were in Spanish. Each focus group session lasted two (2) hours. Refreshments and snacks were provided to all attendees. Gift totes were distributed to each participant, as well as, the chance for one participant to leave each evening's meetings with a valued prize (dinner for two at local restaurant). All focus groups were conducted at the North Shore Youth Center on 72nd Street.

Summary of Focus Group Participants

Group/Language	Date/Time	# of Participants
North Beach residents (English)	Tues May 20th 6:30 – 8:30 pm	15
North Beach residents (Spanish)	Tues May 20th 6:30 – 8:30 pm	4
North Beach residents (English)	Wed May 21st 6:30 – 8:30 pm	10
North Beach residents (Spanish)	Wed May 21st 6:30 – 8:30 pm	4
TOTAL		**33**

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 the meetings but were willing to answer questions via telephone related to the topic areas of interest. 54 resident interviews were completed in this manner. The information obtained in these interviews has been incorporated into this summary report.

Participation: In Sum

Taking both focus group meetings and telephone interviews together, a total of **87** residents were interviewed. †

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) Brief review of the 2007 CSS
3) Outlining the Agenda (run through of the topics that will be covered in the meeting)
4) Administration of Short Survey Questionnaire
5) Discussion: Probing and Learning (detailed discussion/probing of each topic area)
6) Other/Miscellaneous Topics (discussion of other topic areas not already covered, if needed)
7) Conclusion (thanks, providing gift tote/drawing)

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

- Condition of Streets and Sidewalks
- Safety
- Construction & Development
- Recreation Programs and Facilities
- Value of Services for Taxes Paid
- Communications from the City

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

† For the 2006 follow-up focus groups, 82 residents were interviewed in total across the 3 regions – 6 of which were from North Beach.

Overall Observations

The focus group meetings and telephone interviews provided rich, detailed information regarding the topics of interest within North. Similar to the focus groups conducted by Hay Group Insight in 2006, as a consequence of conducting the focus group sessions and telephone interviews with North Beach residents in 2008, Hay Group Insight offers the following overall observations:

- *Involvement of participants*: In each of the focus group meetings and interviews, North Beach residents 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 feel that North Beach remains a great place to live, work, play and visit.

- *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.

- *Increasing survey recognition*: Using the CSS 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.

- *Networking*: Getting input from residents in a focus group setting not only continuously improves communication from these residents with the City, but also among the residents themselves. Residents listened, shared and learned from each other in each of the meetings, and several walked away with new neighbors. This benefits the City as well since it increases the resources available to residents when they need to turn to others in times of need, and it fosters a stronger sense of community among its members.

Reliability of the Results

Hay Group Insight has a high level of confidence in the reliability of the focus group and telephone interview feedback. The participants in each group consisted of a wide mix of residents from various income levels and ages, as well as, length of time they have been living in the City and knowledge of City government activities. This ensured that the opinions received were representative of the wider North Beach community. Moreover, most of the North Beach interview participants are a subset of respondents interviewed from the 2007 CSS, which was held to a rigorous stratified sampling methodology. As part of this larger pool, the focus group and telephone participants are representative of North Beach's diverse population.

III. Executive Summary

In the summary findings from the 2005-6 CSS follow-up focus groups and telephone interviews, Hay Group Insight provided the following commentary regarding North Beach residents' feedback at that time:

"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."‡

In 2008, we can report that the sentiments of North Beach residents have noticeably improved. They point to an increased focus and commitment by the City of Miami Beach in addressing and resolving quality of life issues. Moreover, the general consensus of the North Beach residents we spoke with reveals an *overall improvement* in resident satisfaction with quality of life living in North Beach and *increased positive attitudes* regarding the specific CSS issues identified within North Beach. Not surprisingly, there remain several concerns among residents regarding quality of life issues identified from the 2006-7 CSS. Still, the perception among North Beach residents is that quality of life issues are moving in the right direction. Below is a high-level summary of the findings for each topic area.

Condition of Streets and Sidewalks. North Beach residents feel that, generally, the North Beach area is improving with regards to cleanliness and City government has picked up efforts to maintain and enforce cleanliness in the area. Residents attribute some cleanliness issues to a lack of civic duty (personal pride) on the part of residents in keeping North Beach clean but also feel the City can do more to clean streets, alleyways and beach areas of trash, refuse and dumping. Storm drainage and waterways were occasionally raised as continued problems across North Beach (and the City of Miami Beach generally), however many noted that the lack of rain over the last several months has currently lessened this as a serious issue (although they also point out that it will become more of a problem during hurricane season). There were also mentions of street pavement issues that need to be corrected.

Safety: North Beach residents do indicate an increased police car presence in the area as well as fast response from safety services (Police, Fire/Rescue, EMR, etc.). The majority of North Beach residents say that the number of homeless in the area has declined over the past year but the homeless that remain within North Beach are still a top-of-mind safety issue for residents. Loitering youth on streets and in parks was mentioned as another safety concern in North Beach. Several North Beach residents perceive an increase in car theft and house/apartment break-ins over the past year. Generally, residents would like to see more and brighter lighting on streets and the Beachwalk. Discussion of safety issues also included

‡ From 'Miami Beach Community Data Interview Summary", April 2006, prepared by Hay Group Insight.

pedestrian safety, such as speeding cars, cars that run lights, etc. and pedestrian safety in the context of building/sidewalk/street construction projects, which cause residents to walk into roads and increase their chances of getting struck by a moving vehicle.

Construction & Development: While North Beach residents do feel that construction and development are important indicators of the City's growth and economic viability, there remain strong feelings that over-development of buildings (condos especially) have caused significant quality of life issues for current North Beach residents. There were comments that the vertical high-rises have reduced the amount of sunlight across the North Beach area during the day. Moreover, North Beach residents are increasingly anxious that the area will not be able to support the influx of new residents that the condo construction will bring (reaching maximum population density). North Beach residents perceive that the City is not enforcing its own regulations regarding construction sites, both in terms of regular inspections by the City to sites and the City ensuring projects are completed in full and on schedule. Other key challenges mentioned include the impact of construction/development projects on traffic congestion and lack of available street parking. On a positive note, construction projects that are seen as benefiting the area (e.g., new parks/recreation facilities, Beachwalk) are viewed very positively.

Recreation Programs and Facilities: North Beach residents are overall quite satisfied with the recreation programs and facilities available to them. Naturally, the beaches themselves were cited as a source of great affection among residents, but as mentioned earlier, some feel beaches can be cleaner. Some of the facilities and events like the Bass Museum are highly regarded but are seen as expensive. Some would like to see parks remain open longer so that youth can have a place to congregate, as opposed to doing so in the streets at night. There were also comments to build a soccer field in the area, bring in a movie theater as one does not currently exist in North Beach and to develop/publicize activities for seniors.

Value of Services for Taxes Paid: Services such as the Police, Fire/Rescue, EMR and Hurricane Preparedness are given high marks. The services and areas most often mentioned for attention include improving cleanliness of streets/alleyways, increased enforcement of codes (especially anything related to motor vehicles and construction), beautification of North Beach (more trees/shrubbery), improving the school system (overcrowding, the curriculum), and offering reliable public transportation.

Communications from the City: While mostly satisfied with MB magazine and other forms of communications, North Beach residents would like more proactive contact and communications from the City on matters that affect them, for example, regarding construction projects, events and programs, etc. Most often mentioned forms of media to use are email and in-person City meetings in North Beach.

IV. Survey Results

For both the focus group meetings and telephone interviews that were conducted, a six-item questionnaire was administered to participants and interviewees in order to obtain a quantitative measure that would supplement the qualitative information (comments) received. The content and format of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix B of this report.

A total of 81 questionnaires were collected from the focus groups and telephone interviews. The number of questionnaires received allows for 95% level of confidence, +/- 10 margin of error. Given this, the survey results should be interpreted with some caution as not to over-generalize their results without further research. Moreover, not all of the responses received are based on a random sample of North Beach residents. However, this is a sufficient response to provide a general indication of the current attitudes of North Beach residents.

Table 1 – Overall Survey Results for North Beach (2008)

		% Favorable*	% Excellent	% Good	% Fair	% Poor	
Q1	Quality of life in Miami Beach	78	19	59	20	2	
Q2	Services for tax dollars paid	65	8	58	24	11	
Q3	City government meeting your needs	78	12	65	16	6	
Q4	Miami Beach as a place to live	89	42	47	10	1	
			% Better	% Same	% Worse		
Q5	Place to live compared to one year ago	42	42	47	11		
			% Yes, Definitely	% Yes, Probably	% Hard to Say	% No, Probably Not	% No, Definitely Not
Q6	Recommend to family/ friends as place to live	80	59	21	11	6	2

** % Favorable = "Excellent" + "Good" for Q1 – Q4, "Better" for Q5, and "Yes, Definitely" + "Yes Probably" for Q6*

The survey results (as shown in Table 1 above) illustrate positive attitudes among the North Beach residents who completed the survey regarding quality of life and a very favorable view of how City government is meeting their needs (both 78% Excellent or Good responses for each question). 89% of the North Beach participants we interviewed feel Miami Beach is an Excellent or Good place to live. Moreover, almost two-thirds of North Beach participants feel positively about the services they receive for the tax dollars they pay in North Beach.

80% of North Beach participants in the focus groups and telephone interviews would recommend Miami Beach to others as a place to live and with respect to change over time,

many (42%) feel Miami Beach is better now as a place to live than it was a year ago – 47% feel it is the same. Only 11% say it is worse now as a place to live than it was a year ago.

The above survey data was then compared to the comparable questions from the last CSS in 2006-7 (for North Beach residents only) to determine whether the current results represent a change from what was observed in the 2006-7 CSS results. In fact, the recent surveys collected from the 2008 focus group meetings and telephone interviews with North Beach residents show a marked improvement from their respective 2006-7 CSS results – nearly all items have higher ratings of favorability compared to the 2006-7 CSS results.

Table 2 – Overall Survey Results for North Beach (2008 vs. 2007) **

		% Favorable*	% Excellent	% Good	% Fair	% Poor	
Q1	Quality of life in Miami Beach						
	North Beach 2008	78	19	59	20	2	
	North Beach 2006-7	63	14	49	27	11	
	Difference	*15*					
Q2	Services for tax dollars paid						
	North Beach 2008	65	8	58	24	11	
	North Beach 2006-7	39	7	32	40	21	
	Difference	*26*					
Q3	City government meeting needs						
	North Beach 2008	78	12	65	16	6	
	North Beach 2006-7	57	13	44	33	10	
	Difference	*21*					
Q4	Miami Beach as a place to live						
	North Beach 2008	89	42	47	10	1	
	North Beach 2006-7	73	26	47	21	6	
	Difference	*16*					
Q5	Place to live compared to one year ago						
			% Better	% Same	% Worse		
	North Beach 2008	42	42	47	11		
	North Beach 2006-7	48	48	19	33		
	Difference	*-6*					
Q6	Recommend to family/friends as place to live						
			% Yes, Definitely	% Yes, Probably	% Hard to Say	% No, Probably Not	% No, Definitely Not
	North Beach 2008	80	59	21	11	6	2
	North Beach 2006-7	69	48	21	9	9	14
	Difference	*11*					

** % Favorable = "Excellent" + "Good" for Q1 – Q4, "Better" for Q5, and "Yes, Definitely" + "Yes Probably" for Q6*

*** North Beach 2008 cases = 81; North Beach 2007 cases = 214*

The only item that did not show improvement in the level of favorability concerns residents' perceptions of Miami Beach as a place to live compared with one year ago. While those responding "Better" is lower than in 2006-7, the number of North Beach respondents who answered "Worse" has dropped 22 percentage points, from 33% in 2006-7 to just 11% in 2008, a major shift. Moreover, those responding "Same" have significantly increased (from 19% in 2007 to 47% in 2008). In this context, the results for this item can be interpreted as an indicator of stabilization in residents' attitudes over time, despite the fact that the number of respondents who indicated "Better" has slightly declined.

It should be noted that even though the number of completed survey respondents between years varies (81 North Beach questionnaires in 2008 compared to 214 North Beach questionnaires in 2007), the difference in % Favorable from 2006-7 to 2008 for questions 1 – 4 and question 6 is in fact *statistically significant*[§]. This is also true for the difference in % Same and % Worse from 2006-7.

This significant finding suggests that the changes seen from 2006-7 occurred for reasons other than random chance and are likely attributable to the increased attention by the City of Miami Beach to the areas of focus within the North Beach region (since, as noted in the Executive Summary, the focus group comments do indicate that residents perceive more time and energy being directed towards North Beach than in previous years).

Overall, this can be interpreted as an encouraging sign that the results for North Beach for the next CSS (scheduled for 2009) will hopefully reflect this continued positive change in resident perceptions.

For additional results from the survey questionnaire administered to North Beach focus group and telephone participants in 2008, please see Appendix E of this report.

§ Significance determined at the $p<.05$ level. There was no significant difference in ratings regarding methodology (that is, whether surveys were administered to North Beach residents in focus group meetings or via telephone interviews).

V. Detailed Comments

Condition of Streets and Sidewalks

Key Themes and Sample Resident Comments:

1) Overall, the condition of streets and sidewalks are viewed as improving across North Beach:

- "The cleanliness is good, the City maintains the streets better and I see them around more often. They have someone that now comes to sweep the streets and there is also a truck."
- "Storm drainage has improved. There's less flooding."
- "The roads have improved. Everything is cleaner and more organized."
- "I always see the streets getting cleaned, the street cleanliness has improved."
- "79th and Byron Ave have improved a lot. Before it would fill up with water and what they're doing is beautiful. 74th is good as well."
- "Some areas are cleaner. There are more people cleaning North Beach."
- "The sidewalk conditions have improved. They're working to put new things in like drains to avoid flooding in my neighborhood. Construction is very good in Normandy Isle."
- "71st Street and Collins Ave is cleaner."
- "Cleanliness and the sidewalks on Bay Drive have improved."
- "I would say that the resurfacing has improved and it made a big improvement when they fixed Indian Creek Drive."
- "Sidewalks have gotten better like in Normandy Isle."
- "Where I live on 81st and Abbott Ave, the sidewalks have been fixed."
- "A little better because they're fixing Normandy Drive and 71st Street."
- "More streets are clean more often, the conditions of sidewalks and pavement are excellent and, as far as I'm concerned, the storm drainage is fine."
- "All of it. It's all gotten much better, specifically on 71st, Bay Drive and Rue Bordeaux."
- "Everything is perfect on my side (73rd Street and Wayne Ave)."
- "The streets are cleaner and the sewers seem to drain faster."
- "I see they've cleaned up a lot, have planted trees, and added pretty things."
- "Waterways seem to have been cleaned up considerably."

2) The following are comments made by North Beach residents regarding streets and beach areas that still require attention for cleanliness issues (trash, debris):

- "Although trash cans are present, residents are not utilizing them as much as they should. Along Abbott Ave, there is trash on the street and sidewalks."
- "On 83rd Street, residents are literally throwing trash out their windows, which attracts rodents."
- "Alley ways are especially affected since cars don't travel through alleys (as in regular streets) and the trash piles up."
- "In my opinion, in the area around Palms Ave and 71st Street the beach looks dingy and dirty."
- "Cleanliness needs to be improved on Bay Drive and 1100."
- "All the streets around 81st and Collins Ave need to be cleaned more regularly."
- "I would say Normandy Drive needs more cleaning. Especially around Bay Drive. I've seen debris, bottles, paper, and trash. People not cleaning up after their dogs. Landlords don't keep their property clean."
- "I've lived on Byron for 8 years and it's always needed more cleaning. By 8025 Byron Ave, close to Collins Ave."
- "The cleanliness is excellent, except for behind 72nd & 75th, behind the garden is not maintained but everything else is excellent.
- "Bay Drive and the neighborhood around it need more cleanliness and some of the dumpsters need to be changed more often because of overflowing garbage."
- "Dog owners are not picking up after their dogs. This occurs mainly along 73rd Street as well as Dickens Ave. Owners take their dogs through 73rd Street to reach the green play area. There needs to be more effective advertising campaign from the City (with fines listed, etc.) to make sure owners clean up after their dogs."
- "The City should do more education of its residents around plastics and recycling, as it seems some residents don't know what to do."
- "The City needs to put more garbage cans, make them larger and empty them more often around the beach areas of 70th and 76th Streets. There should also be recyclable bins all around the beach as well, by the entrances."
- "People throw their trash into dunes on the beaches as well – these need to be cleaned more often."
- "I have seen waterways with debris and trash, specifically rubber gloves from the hospital. I've seen this along Indian Creek Island and Stillwater Island."
- "I cannot say that there are many improvements on 81st and Collins Ave by the park which has still not been finished and they need supervised people to carry out the cleaning."

- "Between 71st and 74th Streets, it has improved a little but it still continues being a zone for the homeless. I am talking about Collins Ave, but there has been improvement."

3) The following are comments made by North Beach residents regarding dumping of household items across North Beach:

- "Dumping is a serious problem in the North Beach area. From here (the Youth Center) to 80th Street, people dump furniture on the streets. Especially mattresses. Landlords should be penalized for furniture in front of homes."
- "Although the City has a program in which one Saturday a month people can bring their "Bulk Waste" to an area on 75th Street, either some residents are not aware of this program or simply ignore it."
- "You can see mattresses and other large items simply dumped on streets. People are coming in from other areas of the City or maybe even Miami to dump their large waste items on the streets of North Beach."
- "There should be strict fines and monitoring to deter dumping."

4) North Beach residents feel that the reasons for poor storm drainage are that there are not enough drains to handle storm water and that drains are not cleaned to allow water to flow easily into sewers and waterways. The following are comments regarding storm drainage areas to address:

- "Dickens Ave, between 75th and 79th Streets."
- "Harding Ave, between 75th and 80th Streets."
- "80th Street and Crespi Blvd. When it storms here, it gets very flooded and there's a foul odor in the air."
- "Southeast corner of 79th Street and Byron Ave, there is literally a small tree growing inside the sewer."
- "The storm drainage is very poor and the sidewalks are still the same on Bay Drive."
- "There's a storm drainage problem on Bay Drive on 1200 block. Also on Bay Drive and Brest Esplanade Streets, and Marseille Drive."
- "Here by the beach some places still floods like 79th & Abbott Ave."
- "Normandy Shore Drive gets flooded – please address that area."
- "85th and Hawthorne Ave gets pretty bad, even the sidewalks."
- "Focus especially around 80th Street and all the intersections there."
- "1745 Biarritz Ct always would get flooded. With the new work being done and lack of rain I don't know it has recently."
- "The streets that get flooded are the east/west streets on Normandy Isle and also 69th Street between Indian Creek and Harding Ave."

5) The following are comments regarding condition of streets (pavement, etc.) to address:

- "On Fairway Drive, they don't have handicap access at the end of the block and some areas have no sidewalk."
- "One that I drive by everyday and I break an axle is between Harding Ave going east, south going east. The whole south point of the park is bad. Speed bumps would be nicer."
- "In Normandy Island, they've been constructing non-stop and the sidewalks are in terrible condition."
- "The streets along South Shore Drive, like 100 and 300 block, need to be fixed."
- "On Bay and Normandy Drives (where they intersect), the sidewalks are uneven. It's dangerous. The sidewalks are slanted. I'm a runner and it's hard for me to run in this area. The City should fix this."
- "On Tatum Waterway Drive and 77th Street, the condo near the east bridge, there is a demolished sidewalk. The handicapped have to maneuver around it and it's a safety hazard."

6) Other cleanliness comments:

- "Graffiti on walls and lifeguard stands are a problem in the area and it should be removed immediately. Owners of properties/businesses should remove graffiti immediately so as not to encourage 'tagging' by loitering youth."
- "On 74th Street, between Collins and Carlyle Avenues, there is someone who feeds stray animals (cats and pigeons). This brings in additional stray animals to the area looking for food and causes some cleanliness issues (animal waste in shrubbery/parks)."
- "There's a sunken boat in Tatum Waterway. No one takes responsibility for it. Who's responsible for removing it from there?"

Safety

Key Themes and Sample Resident Comments:

1) Most North Beach residents feel safer in the City than they have the past few years, with Police, Fire/Rescue and EMR receiving positive feedback:

- "Since there's a Fire station on the corner, they keep us safe. There is good police presence and that makes me feel safe."
- "The Police are quicker to respond and move around. Also the medical response is pretty fast too."
- "Police are very responsive. They arrive within minutes when you call."
- "The Police have a substation on 69th and Indian Creek and it does make me feel safer to know they are close."
- "I'm not sure because I really don't leave my house. My friends say it's gotten better."
- "It's always been very safe. The Police are always active."
- "It's very good to have Police on our streets, especially at night."
- "I see a lot of Police in my neighborhood."
- "Very good. The Police close the park at night and keep vigilant."
- "I feel really safe because I can walk in the street at 4 in the morning. I feel safe and there are no weird people."
- "I see more Police and prevention."
- "The crime rate in North Beach is under control."
- "I know it has improved as a few years back there were a lot of gangs and delinquents."
- "Well the homeless situation has gotten better with an increase in Police."
- "Nothing has gotten worse here on 75th and Abbott Ave."
- "My area is very safe around Indian Creek."
- "Statistics will tell you it's actually safer here in North Beach than in South Beach." [*In response to a resident who mentioned that they feel safer on Lincoln Rd at night than in North Beach at night.*]

2) Though safety has improved, concerns related to crime do remain, including theft, lighting and loitering youth:

- "The vehicles of my tenants have been broken into numerous times for the past few years. There have been shootouts, fights, and a year ago I witnessed a death right on my corner. I happen to live in the red zone of Miami Beach 7996 Crespi Blvd

and it is very sad and extremely frustrating to find out that the households that have the highest crime rates are homes supported by the government with plan 8."

- "On Park View Island, there have been a lot of break-ins by boat."
- "I live in a gated community and a car was stolen from it when someone jumped over the fence. Security could have been better."
- "Well I see certain people hanging in the streets drinking and that concerns me greatly. This would be at 6941 Bay Drive."
- "After 6pm, it's dark and I'm scared to even wait for the bus, we need more police to keep us safe. This is at 76th and Carlyle Ave."
- "There is a lack of police along North Shore Drive. In the park on 79th & Collins they have destroyed all the trees that used to give us shade and all the animals have disappeared. "
- "I have been run out of Stillwater Park by gunfire. I hear they will be training dogs and doing more dog patrols which are great."
- "Any area in North Beach that has section 8 housing is a problem. Mainly burglaries, graffiti and loitering in these areas."
- "There's a neighborhood from 81st to 72nd around Abbott Ave that seems unsafe."
- "The robberies along Bay Drive. The City needs to increase police presence there."
- "Well, we've had 6 robberies in our neighborhood since January 1st on Daytonia Rd and Cleveland Rd."
- "Crime in my neighborhood has gone up at North Biscayne Point Rd."
- "Address the robberies and crimes on 79th and Crespi Blvd."
- "I noticed an increase of criminal activity around Park View Island."
- "There have been some burglaries in the neighborhoods in North Beach, around 84th Street."
- "There are a lot of young people hanging around North Beach doing graffiti."
- "Two blocks east of the fountain near Bay Drive, there are markings and graffiti all over the walls. These youth also ride their motorcycles down the sidewalks as well."
- "Kids on jet skis around Park View Island are a real pain. They make a lot of noise and they make me nervous riding around close by."
- "There are loitering youth around Stillwater Drive. There are shootings and graffiti all over. It affects everyone who lives in this area."

3) Street lighting (insufficient or malfunctioning) also is an issue for some residents in North Beach:

- "At night there's no light in North Shore Park or on 73rd & Dickens Ave."

- "We have lights by our buildings but the city lights don't work. On Bay Drive, the light by the garbage disposal does not work."
- "North of 71st Street and Collins Ave, there is very little light."
- "Street lighting is low especially on my block, 79 Tatum Waterway Drive."
- "The entrance to all of the North Beach parks needs to be better lit, but it seems like they've started to do some improvements. Hopefully it comes out nicer."
- "In the alley by 74th where the Walgreens is, there should be more lights. Also further up 74th until 80th."
- "Add more lights along Normandy Village."
- "On Biarritz Drive, it's poor but they are fixing it."
- "On my street on 1100 Bay Drive, we need more lighting."
- "The areas by the park on 81st and the Beach as well need more light."
- "On Dickens Ave and 73rd, there's a parking lot but there is no lighting."
- "In the area of 71st Street and Normandy Drive, need more lighting."
- "The street lights are out around Bay Drive and Brest Esplanade."
- "Compared to South Beach, North Beach is darker in general." [*note: not all agreed with this statement.*]

4) North Beach residents also report that the <u>number of homeless</u> has also improved but they would still like to see more done to address this problem:

- "The homeless are mostly harmless; they are more a nuisance with their urination." [*note: not an opinion shared by other focus group participants.*]
- "The homeless are still a problem though it has gotten better. It's better from 69th Street and above. Enforcement has been better there. 63rd to 69th is really the problem areas. There are probably about 20 homeless persons in North Beach and at times they are aggressive. It's seasonal though."
- "They hang out a lot around 67th and Collins Ave where the Publix and Walgreens are. There is a liquor store there that sells single cans of beer, so they go there to buy that and get drunk.
- "I have been chased by a homeless person one time – they have become more aggressive and scary. They expose themselves and urinate on the street. This happened on 72nd and Collins Ave so they are up here as well. There may be fewer of them but the ones that are here are confrontational."
- "I'm afraid to walk on the beach path from end to end because of the homeless. Now that we have this path, we're going to have a problem with it being taken over by the homeless. The homeless are getting territorial. They hang out in bushes so sometimes you may not even know they are there."

- "One specific area near the library has been prone to a gathering of homeless people and loitering. There is police presence, but they have not addressed this. The lack of good lighting contributes to loitering in the area near the library."
- "Collins Ave and 71st Street is a problem area. Since this area also has hotels and tourists, homelessness and loitering bring a negative image to North Beach."
- "There's a boarded up building at 78th and Dickens Ave. This contributes to lack of safety and loitering from the homeless."
- "Park View Island, on 73rd Street and Bandshell, with the homeless along the beach.
- "I would say the youth and people that go out drinking at night are a safety problem – they are loud and graffiti the area."
- "At North Shore Open Space Park (Collins Ave, between 79th and 87th Streets), there is a section with a fence around it, but in the northern section of the park there's an area with a lot of trees and groups gather in these sections. This happens at all hours during the day. This park also has a lot of homelessness."
- "Police don't bother the homeless at all. The Bandshell at night is like their camp ground. It's like a cat and mouse game though. If they tell them they can't stay there, they go to the beach. If the Police tell them they can't stay at the beach, they go back to the Bandshell. It's like their hands are tied."
- "Look at Surfside or Bal Harbor and how they do with the homeless. The citizens do want a more aggressive position on the issue of the homeless. The City is limited by Pottinger."
- "A few years ago, a police officer was killed by a homeless person in Miami Beach. That alone should give them the right to toughen their stance on the homeless."

5) For North Beach residents, safety concerns are not only crime-related but also include <u>traffic issues</u> around the City:

- "Laws that are being passed should be enforced. Kids with no helmets, stopping at Stop signs. It would be nice to train police dogs in our park."
- "Cars are driving too fast down the streets – there needs to be more enforcement of this."
- "The biggest problem is cars speeding through the island with kids in the area."
- "The lack of traffic enforcement. Right or left turns are made without considering pedestrians."
- "Cars are running the red light on Indian Creek especially in the morning."
- "There is a speeding problem on Biscayne Point, on 71st and Collins Ave, along Harding Ave. Pretty much across the whole City of Miami Beach. Everyone is always in a hurry. This needs to be enforced better."
- "I don't know but in 81st & Abbott Ave there's a tree that's touching a transformer I get worried whenever there's a hurricane."

- "Commercial vehicles are parked illegally and are disrupting the traffic flow."
- "I crashed my car because there is no light on the corner where I live. It's very dangerous for my kids and the elderly. It's on 1170 71st Street. There are always accidents for many years and I don't like it."
- "On Bay Drive, the light by the garbage disposal does not work."
- "As soon as people drive into Miami Beach, they hit the accelerator. They hit the gas and zoom on down. This is especially the case around Indian Creek, Marion and 71st Street."
- "There are no pedestrian cross lights from 71st to 73rd Streets. These are greatly needed here as it's a safety hazard trying to cross these streets."
- "From 63rd to 65th Streets, it's like a race track as well with speeding cars."
- "At the North Shore Open Space, 81st and Collins Ave, the light takes forever to change. This is the 'Walk/Don't Walk' light. Even if you press the button to make it change, it takes 5-10 minutes."
- "There are no lights back on Ocean Terrace."
- "Too many traffic lights are not functioning. Where 63rd Street joins Collins Ave, FDOT still has orange cones guiding traffic and the project was finished a very long time ago."
- "The traffic light at Indian Creek and 67th Street, around Harding Ave. It's a one way facing east – west. The way facing west regulates traffic. The light stays red for a very long time and I have seen a few drivers just go through it."
- "On 85th Street east, west of Harding Ave, two traffic lights are not synchronized. And they are long. People violate the second light most often. Least you can do is have a sign up telling you the light takes a while to change. Everyone goes up to the block to turn on the church instead."
- "85th Street and Harding Ave: There's a roundabout and a pedestrian can get hit while crossing because there's a garden they have placed that is blocking view of traffic."
- "From 64th to 69th Streets, the new signage the City has erected. The poles for these are in the middle of the sidewalk. They force people to walk into the road and meander around them. This increases the chance of being struck by a car."
- "69th Street and Abbott Ave: For beach access, suggest placing a light there."

6) <u>Other</u> safety concerns shared by North Beach residents:

- "Lifeguards go home at 6:30pm. But people still go in the water to swim, fish or hand glide. The City complains that they don't have money for lifeguards but they leave a safety risk with this issue."
- "We have a siren or warning system for hurricanes. We are currently at war and Miami is a port city. Does the City have an emergency warning system for things besides hurricanes?"

7) The following are recommendations by North Beach residents for further improving safety:

- "More Police presence in all areas of North Beach, especially in parks and alleyways to make their presence known."
- "More bicycles and marine patrols by Police."
- "Have dog patrols in parks and alleyways to find drugs and deter other crimes."
- "I received an email from the Police about burglaries in the area and with so many people on the computer it's a good way to send information. But don't forget about communicating these things to seniors since they usually don't have computers or log on as much."
- "Create a law to deter stores from selling single beer cans to customers. This is what is attracting the homeless. If there is a law, enforce it."
- "Greater enforcement of Police regarding speeding and traffic violations. Include cameras at major lights to deter speeding or running lights."
- "Be consistent in the amount of light across the City in all areas – street lighting appears to be dim across the whole City."
- "More signs informing drivers of lights and not to use side streets."
- "More activities for youth at the Center to take them off the streets. Round up kids and make them do something productive, like removing graffiti or cleaning the streets."
- "I work with kids and I don't know if we have a Big Brother/Big Sister program in North Beach. If not, we should have it as it will help with the kids who are on the streets, especially after school or at night. For example, some kind of youth programs for having them work at stands during events or on beaches. Or a baseball league for little kids."

Construction & Development

Key Themes and Sample Resident Comments:

1) Overall, there are varying views from North Beach residents regarding construction and development. The following are positive comments by North Beach residents on construction and development in the City, mostly related to completion of recent projects:

- "They finished the construction in front of my house (in front of overpass in 63rd and Indian Creek). After the construction, traffic has gotten much better."
- "The crosswalks made of brick are nice along 85th Street."
- "I love the walkway they created (Beachwalk). North Beach Community Garden that opened is great. They should expand it, make it bigger."
- "I guess construction has helped to improve the quality of the neighborhoods in the City."
- "I think everything has gotten better. Construction sites are patrolled and more controlled." [*note: an opinion which divided many residents*]
- "It looks like their winding up some of their projects on Collins Ave and Indian Creek. The sidewalks are much better."
- "The construction is getting better in my area. They are repairing Marseille Drive."
- "Construction is moving along a little more but there is a lot of it. The overpass on 63rd and Alton road has gotten better."
- "Development in North Beach has been positive. The area is growing, the condos are beautiful and it all contributes to the progress of the city in all senses (economic, property values, tourism, etc.).
- "The bridge on 61st has finished and has improved the area."
- "What has improved is the bridge on 73rd Street."
- "It's gotten better, especially on Dickens Ave and 74th all the way until 79th."
- "The streets are being repaired."
- "Well we have a lot of new buildings, a lot of new sidewalks and I guess Miami Beach High is getting remodeled."

2) The following are mixed to negative comments by North Beach residents concerning construction and development in the City, mostly concerning the amount of and pace of completion regarding construction and development:

- "The City allows for so much construction across the entire area. There's no more sun after 2pm. New construction is getting out of control. It feels like the builders have priority to the City over its citizens."
- "It's a lot more popular to initiate a project than it is to complete it."

- "The construction just takes too long. The standard time it takes to complete it and any excess time the project goes over must be better enforced. Penalize the contractors for not sticking to the timeline."
- "Bad follow-through. On 76th Street and Collins Ave, Allison park has degraded worse now than when they started the project. Walking in the park, you can break an ankle due to the pavement issues. Where were the City inspectors to ensure this didn't happen?"
- "North on Bay Drive (950 Bay Drive) by Kingfall. There is a building that has been gutted and started to be rehabbed. But then, they stopped. There is not lighting around it. There is no chain link fence. There should be motion lighting as the back of the building is very dark now. It seems a lot of construction along Collins Ave and Indian Creek has stopped."
- "Part of the problem is the contractors and developers that the City hires. Just drive across 77th Street. The projects that the County has done, with expensive lighting, etc. There are some major issues with those projects. The contractor has also been hired to do City projects but it's the same company that refuses to take responsibility for what happened along 77th Street. Why would the City hire them when they have failed other projects?"
- "Normandy shores looks like Beirut. The road is a disaster. I needed to get my shocks replaced twice."
- "We are too preoccupied with building upwards, which blocks out the sun on the beaches."
- "There seems to always be some type of construction over the last 5 years or so around 65th Street and Indian Creek. It seems they can't get it right the first time."
- "The City needs to be better prepared for the development and progress with more police presence, parking, traffic flow, etc."
- "It's just too much of it. It's just all over the place. Too many people living here."
- "Construction is where it was at when it started. Things are progressing too slowly."
- "There are delays in construction where infrastructure and storm drainage are being replaced on Normandy Isle."
- "Sometimes you have to walk around buildings because access to the beach area is blocked by a new construction."
- "The construction noise and dust around all the projects is crazy. Please enforce this better."
- "In the past three years, there have been quite a number of condo conversions. Rules should be followed and condo associations should be developed for a condo. Smaller condos, however, do not have condo associations with rules and owners may not know the responsibilities of owning a condo."
- "Developers may be developing buildings and not properly screening the type of people that have been moving into the area."

- "The standards that the City is using to hold any development projects to code are inconsistent. This goes for the construction itself and other things like painting of the house. North of 74th and 75th Streets near Biscayne Beach, there are a lot of buildings there that are not up to the North Beach standard in terms of construction and painting."
- "People seem to forget that citizens voted for heightening the regulations around buildings size so we asked for this." [*note: there was considerable confusion in the group regarding the existence of this vote and the outcome.*]

3) One of the biggest concerns expressed by North Beach residents is traffic congestion, which they feel is caused by several factors including the on-going construction across the City and the increase in the number of residents/visitors such development causes:

- "Fix that last lane on the 63rd Street flyover project. The City is going along with the developers. They don't want people to complain about the 2nd light there. The planning wasn't right."
- "The traffic itself has gotten worse. It isn't properly monitored."
- "When they do construction, they block streets without Police directing the traffic. It's a mess. "
- "Too much traffic by the construction on 71st Street."
- "There are too many cars and not enough roads."
- "The population density is very alarming. And the City hasn't really grown enough to match it. Because of all the traffic, it now takes me 1 ½ hours to get to downtown Miami when it used to be 30 minutes like a year or two ago."
- "Well sometimes there is a lot of congestion in the streets in the mornings. Indian Creek has a lot of traffic and 75thStreet."
- "At 64th and Collins Ave, they are building some kind of atrium there. One lane is blocked causing back ups and delays. The other problem is that cars are driving too fast in that area as well, north on Collins Ave."
- "Byron Avenue that runs into the park. It's a 3 way stop and they put up a traffic light. It's 75th Street and runs on north end of park. It's a waste of fuel because you have to sit in the red light to cross the street."
- "It's impossible to take Collins Ave. There's too much congestion."
- "People are not respecting the Stop Sign located at 77th and Byron Ave, especially drivers on Byron Ave. This is a constant occurrence."

4) Another concern expressed by North Beach residents is lack of available parking, which they also feel is caused by construction projects and the increase in the number of residents/visitors to the City:

- "How will the City maintain and have room for all the additional cars (usually 2 cars per condo)."

- "On weekends, everyone comes to the beach and there's no resident parking."
- "A lot of commercial trucks park in empty spaces. Clearly they need to park somewhere but spots on the street should be reserved for residents."
- "The loss of parking has a lot to do with the development. Take for example the condo on 64th Street and Indian Creek. We lost close to 60 parking spaces when that condo was built."
- "Next to 6545 Indian Creek Drive, there is an empty lot behind the building. They have three times the amount of cars in the lot than they should. I have complained to the City but nothing happens. The noise level is so loud. I think it is managed by VIP Parking Specialists."

5) The following are recommendations by North Beach residents regarding construction and development across the City:

- "A City representative should be present at all jobs. Contractors should not get paid until quality and safety standards, as well as, keeping to the schedule are reviewed and approved."
- "Less tall condos, more development that benefits us and gives us more options for recreation and parking."
- "Connect the Beachwalk on 81st Street to North Shore Open Space Park, in other words, continue the pathway further."
- "At Julia Tuttle, build a pedestrian path connecting Miami to Miami Beach."
- "More walkways and bicycle paths for pedestrians."
- "Ensure that all projects include an impact fee. This is an additional fee that developers pay which helps offset the impact that the project has to the quality of life of the people who live in North Beach."
- "We need a paid night-time parking building to help resolve the parking issue."
- "There's a lot at 77th and Carlyle Ave that can be used for parking (parking garage)."
- "There's a lot at 73rd and Dickens Ave that can also be used for parking (parking garage)."
- "I miss the cards that you could buy for parking on the streets. The pay meter machines. Will those be revived? I think the City is losing money also because of broken meters."
- "A resident decal would allow someone X number of months to park at meter for example."

Recreation Programs and Facilities

Key Themes and Sample Resident Comments:

1) North Beach residents have very positive comments regarding the current recreation programs and facilities in the area:

- "The beaches are great and they generally tend to be well maintained."
- "The recreation programs and facilities offered are excellent."
- "The swimming pool and lessons provided at the Youth Center are great."
- "The new playground at 71st by the Normandy pool is a nice addition to the North Beach area."
- "Movies and Arts in the park events are great."
- "MB Magazine is a great place to find information on recreation programs in Miami Beach."
- "I'm excited that Canyon Ranch (resort and spa club) is coming soon to Miami Beach."
- "Shows every Sunday at the Bandshell are nice."
- "The flower garden with the water tower they put by Parkview Park in is a nice idea."
- "Jazz shows at Normandy Park are good. I also like the Brazilian events and the Art Fair."
- "Normandy is like a little known secret. It's a nice strip. The Farmer's Market is a nice event every weekend."
- "Other great treasures are the nursery and Log Cabin on Collins. The Oasis is also very nice."

2) The following are some recommendations regarding recreation programs and facilities North Beach residents would like to see made available in the area:

- "There is no movie theater in North Beach. The theater on 71st (Byron Carlyle Theater) is used for plays and not movies. We would like to see a regular movie theater in their area."
- "I would like to see more activity at the Byron Carlyle Theater. Right now, it seems to be just dance shows. What about adding more plays, art movies and foreign films?"
- "North Shore Park sometimes has programs, but they are focused mainly on children's recreational programs. Would be nice if they could have more activities for adults, like a Senior Center with activities for seniors. For example, yoga or Tai Chi classes."

- "There are no soccer fields in North Beach. Young people are playing soccer on the streets, and with so many Latinos, a soccer field makes sense. There are tennis courts and baseball fields, but it would be nice to see soccer fields in some areas of North Beach."
- "Put in a volleyball court at the 64th Street Park (Allison Park)."
- "The Bass Museum is expensive for an entire family. What about having at least one day a week where the museum could be free for families or for kids?"
- "Some cities have cultural passes that visitors can buy at discount. Why not have these for residents as well?"
- "They close down the basketball courts and parks at Crespi and Tatum at 8pm. The teenagers don't have anywhere to go so they get together in the streets. Leave the parks open longer with adult supervision."
- "Look at Hollywood Beach. Their programs are more geared towards families. I would like to see Miami Beach follow more like what they do."
- "I work with kids and I don't know if we have a Big Brother/Big Sister program in North Beach. If not, we should have it as it will help with the kids who are on the streets, especially after school or at night. For example, some kind of youth programs for having them work at stands during events or on beaches. Or a baseball league for little kids."

Value of Services for Taxes Paid

Key Themes and Sample Resident Comments:

1) Not surprisingly, comments from North Beach residents regarding the value of services received for taxes paid were mixed overall. The following are comments which are more positive in nature:

- "I've lived on Byron for the last decade, from 76th-77th, in 3 different places. Housing seems to be doing better."
- "They try to keep the neighborhood decorated for holidays, like for 4th of July and Christmas such as decorations, plants."
- "They have more sidewalks, parks, and pools."
- "The free Wi-Fi, if it is true."
- "Yes, the parks, they have done a lot of improvements to them."
- "We get great service from Police, Fire/Rescue and EMR."
- "The non-emergency police number handles issues well."
- "I don't know, maybe the emergency services like the Fire/Rescue."
- "Services like Police and Fire/Rescue are terrific. And we even get $300 back a year though that looks like it will change."
- "So far I haven't even seen new things going on except the new park built on 72nd and 73rd."
- "I guess the work done in the parks is a good thing."

2) The following are comments which relate to concerns regarding services received for taxes paid:

- "There are just people in the streets when they are drunk and we need more security in my area."
- "Taxes are too high and the rent has also risen."
- "The taxes have gone too high."
- "The only ones who benefit are those who don't pay taxes. Those who work hard have to pay way too much for services that those who don't pay also receive."
- "The garbage disposal problem needs to be addressed (for bulk waste)."
- "The knowledge that there is not enough oversight of corruption in the city departments."
- "Too much traffic and in my opinion, having less police around."
- "North Beach is still neglected for cleanliness issues compared to South and Middle Beach areas. It's improved but still is behind where it should be."

- "The Mayor has promised to cut taxes and I'm still waiting for it. I am watching her next move on this issue."
- "There is a lot of waste in government. They could really be saving us much more than they cost us now. They spend money uselessly. I don't blame the department heads only, they are doing what they can."
- "Spend more on the beautification of North Beach, like in making our beaches spotless, planting new trees and vegetation, new parks, just more greenery. I like what they did with the little islands with new tress on Indian Creek."
- "We need more trees to have the chance of resting in the shade. The hurricanes have taken all the small trees left."
- "It seems Miami Beach subsidizes the County more than any other City. I think we are paying too much because we make a lot of money from the tourism. This should be reviewed and make sure there is a better balance."
- "Compare what we pay in taxes to what they pay in Surfside and Bal Harbor. We pay more and yet don't get the same level of service overall than what they do. Why is that?" [*note: opinion split among group as to relevance of comparison to these locations*]

3) The following are comments which relate to taxes paid and the <u>school system</u> in Miami Beach:

- "The schools are great. Biscayne Elementary always has security but people never follow the speed limit."
- "I don't know much about the school because I don't have children. The only thing I know is that the buses are really crowded with children."
- "There is a lack of teachers in all of Florida, for children or adults. I would like to take a class for English but I don't go out at night."
- "Beach high is a really good school."
- "Very excellent, the schools of Fisher Island are great."
- "The teachers complain about having too many students in each class."
- "Biscayne Elementary is a very good school."
- "They are great, especially North Beach Elementary."
- "They are better than the average schools in other cities."
- "My views are that the children are being underserved."
- "Biscayne Elementary is a Grade A school but overcrowded."
- "Treasure Island elementary school is very good."
- "Public education here in Florida is inferior." [*note: opinion not shared by most in the group.*]

- "Some of the problem is that a lot of kids in Miami Beach schools are not residents, they have parents who work here and so the kids go to school here. But I know this is not an issue the City can fix but since you asked about taxes, it happens in every city I guess."
- "We need more funding for schools in Miami Beach – the City should look at getting more money from the County on this."
- "While not a City issue, schools are crowded. Schools should have a program where children are taught civic duties and responsibilities."
- "Learning starts in the home. Parents need to take responsibility for their children. Schools can help with this. It's an important step to reducing behaviors such as throwing garbage on the streets, etc."

4) The following are comments which relate to taxes paid and public transportation/ getting around the City:

- "It would be nice if the City included a public bus that takes you to key shopping places like Publix. Something like the local for $.25."
- "County buses come by too fast. And they don't come by with enough frequency. We need a local bus just for us that takes us around the City."
- "For the Boat Show, they had a certain bus that took residents down there from up here. People seem to love to ride trains and trolleys. Something like that would be great to have more often, not just during the events. Look at Key West or San Francisco for examples."
- "If they had this, it would be used for everything and would reduce traffic and get people physically moving around more often."
- "There should be more investigation on projects that will help the City in terms of growth, like so we need another driving lane on the streets, do we need to have a trolley or train system, do we need more water taxis, that kind of thing."
- "Gas is $4.00. There is a lot of density. How much more can we fit? Why are cars the only methods of getting around? We should be a city of vision. Have more bike paths and cycling lanes."
- "Can the City make more bicycle lanes or promote the use of scooters which are 1/3 the size of cars?"

5) The following are additional comments on what the City of Miami Beach can do regarding services received for tax dollars paid:

- "Ensure Miami Beach is paying its share fair share of taxes but not subsidizing the County by paying too much or making up for why other cities in County don't pay as much."
- "I hope they could eliminate people on the streets who are drunk and intoxicated who bother and harass people."

- "Parking, it's a problem. Everyone from these buildings that used to come without a car now has a car and there's no place to park. They could make more parking spaces in North Shore Recreation Center across Harding Ave."
- "To improve the public housing and help the elderly."
- "More Police. There are lots of people who come to the park who don't even live around here."
- "To offer free or discounted visits to the museum or theater like Collins or Byron Carlyle."
- "To lower taxes. I am a widow and the taxes are a burden. The last year, I usually send a gift to my family overseas but not this year. Those that live in condominiums have the hard life."
- "I would like to see North Beach doing even better because it is not as nice as the rest of the City and there's a problem with people because of the housing and we need more police patrolling in the evening. More incentives for businesses to open here as well."
- "I think a little police presence would be nice. A little enforcement of basic laws."
- "I think they need to reduce the taxes, one barely has enough money to eat with all the taxes."
- "Cut down some of the branches of the coconut tree on 79th because it cuts visibility."
- "I think that the poor should be given more affordable housing."
- "They should continue fixing the roads, parks, and provide more parking."
- "I think that what residents pay for services has gone too high. Even restaurants charge outrageous prices because of tourists."
- "Put more lights in the main streets."
- "On 71st, there are buildings that are abandoned and they should do some construction."
- "Better responsiveness from Public Works."
- "It's doing what it can to improve the parking. Landscaping could be a little bit better."
- "More areas for the children to play. To make sure that buildings stay clean."
- "They can have a greater police presence."
- "They shouldn't charge for parking meters or if they do, they should build free parking lots."
- "Build more garages and parking in North Beach."
- "They should require construction companies to put sound muzzling on their machines."

- "I guess they can clean more, like they've come a long way but they can do a better job."
- "Focus on keeping the City workforce busy. I have walked along the beach and have seen the garbage men in the morning dozing off in the trucks when they should be working. Then the garbage trucks pick up trash during rush hours (between 7:30 and 9am). Is this what we pay for?"

Communications from the City

Key Themes and Sample Resident Comments:

1) Communications from the City are mostly characterized in a favorable manner:

- "MB Magazine is a great source for staying current on what is happening in Miami Beach."
- "The City does a good job communicating with residents. Access to information, like MB Magazine, is also useful."
- "MB Magazine is a great place to find information on recreation programs in Miami Beach."
- "MB77 is another great tool to get information on the City and what is happening."
- "I'm signed up to the email list and get information that way on what's happening and meetings like this one. I think it's great."
- "The City is responsive when you send messages on-line or by email. I sent them a message about a pool that needed to be drained and they addressed it. Even contacting by phone has been OK, like going through the switchboard. Someone will help you. They are consistent in their response."
- "We have a wonderful Mayor Bower who cares about the City and lets us know what is happening."
- "I'm pleased with the meetings that the City has monthly on foreclosures and mortgage fraud. They bring in people from the State on what to do and look for. It's an excellent public service."

2) North Beach residents do have recommendations for further improving communications from the City:

- "I would like to have the phone numbers and emails of all of the Commissioners and Department Heads so I know who I need to go to when I have a problem. It seems that you only get things resolved when you speak to the higher-ups."
- "There should be better communications from the City on construction projects, the impact they will have on the neighborhood and when the work will be done. And if things go beyond the schedule, let us know so we can plan for it."
- "Where does the City publish information on the quality of the beach water, for example, contamination levels? Is it daily or monthly? They should publicize this or make it easy to find."
- "There is no publicity on what is going on at the Byron Carlyle Theater. There should be more advertisement in North Beach on the types of plays that are happening at the Theater."

- "Use bus depots or other types of signage around the City to inform us of what is happening across the City. This will help spread the word on events that are going on in the City. Don't just rely on MB Magazine or newspapers."
- "I would like to see a 'welcome wagon' kit for new residents that let's us have the information we need about the City and where to find what we need. The website is a good place to start but something specifically for new residents would be good."
- "I received an email from the Police about burglaries in the area and with so many people on the computer it's a good way to send information. But don't forget about communicating these things to seniors since they usually don't have computers or log on as much."

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

At the conclusion of each of the focus group meetings conducted by Hay Group Insight, we inquired North Beach residents if they still recommend the City to others as a place to live. The consensus among participants was a resounding "yes"! As we have seen in the previous survey activities, residents have a high level of pride living in the City of Miami Beach and despite their concerns, remain positive regarding the City as a great place to live.

In addition to the recommendations included in the "Detailed Comments" section, Hay Group offers the following overall recommendations as well:

- 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)
- Continue to broaden the view of safety to not only address concerns over crime, loitering and homelessness (which remain), but also sanitation, street lighting and traffic (including pedestrian safety around construction areas) – in the minds of residents, these are all safety issues. Please note that the report has identified specific locations in North Beach for action
- Devote additional resources to street cleanliness and storm drainage in the North Beach area. The City should also consider a communications campaign to re-educate residents with regards to littering and dumping in the North Beach area and existing programs that exist that address cleanliness issues across the City
- North Beach residents would like to see police patrol the parks, beaches and waterways more on foot, bicycle and boat to deter theft and break-ins
- Reassess planning and communication to residents with regards to construction activities and review scheduling/timing of projects to address resident concerns regarding the impact on their quality of life, such as on North Beach not being able to support the influx of new residents (additional traffic congestions, lack of street parking, cleanliness, etc.)
- Provide for cultural activities and events that include North Beach residents. They would like to participate in more family-friendly events, and some suggested an agreement with Bass Museum for one family day a week when children have free or reduced price access. To help keep youth busy (and not loitering), residents suggest keeping parks open longer (under adult supervision). Broaden communication of events that are occurring in the North Beach area
- Expand beautification of the City through the Beachwalk and parks (more playgrounds, plant more trees/greenery)
- Address public transportation needs (offering more buses in/out of the City, more options to get around like Baylink or trolleys, etc.)

By incorporating the above recommendations into its strategic plan, the City will continue to make progress on improving quality of life and services to North Beach residents.

Appendix A:

Focus Group Protocol for Residents

OBJECTIVE

As part of the City of Miami Beach Community Satisfaction Survey process, Hay Group Insight, the survey research firm selected by the City, will conduct four focus groups with selected North Beach residents. We will hold two parallel sessions on each date. The objective of these focus groups is to collect specific information regarding several of the key opportunities for improvement identified in the 2007 survey results pertaining to the North Beach region (33141). A final report of the interviews will be provided, highlighting key findings.

LOCATION & SCHEDULE

- Focus Groups will be held at:

  North Shore Park and Youth Center

  501 72nd Street

  Miami Beach, FL 33141

  Phone: 305-861-3616

  Room location: Auditorium (1st floor lobby)

- May 20-21, 2008: Two sessions conducted simultaneously each day from 6:30 – 8:30pm (at least two will be in Spanish)

CONDUCTING FOCUS GROUPS

The following is applicable to the focus groups that will be conducted with North Beach residents.

- The goal of the interviews is to delve deeper into specific issues identified from the 2007 survey results, specifically for North Beach area residents. 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

Six stages:

1. Introduction: Setting the Stage
2. Administer Questionnaire
3. Outlining the Agenda
4. Discussion: Probing and Learning
5. Other/Miscellaneous Topics (*time permitting*)
6. Conclusion

1. INTRODUCTION: SETTING THE STAGE

- Introduce Yourself and Objective
  - "Good evening and thanks for coming. My name is _____ from the Hay Group Insight, a global consulting firm that conducts survey research with federal and local government organizations. In 2007, the City of Miami Beach conducted the second set of community surveys to gather opinions and attitudes regarding services provided throughout the community. The results of this community satisfaction survey have been widely reported citywide and the City continues to address the issues identified as key concerns. Recent issues of MB Magazine and City Page are good sources of information to get news on what the City is doing to address survey issues.
  - Now, to help the City further respond to some of the survey issues, we are holding focus group sessions like this one with North Beach residents to further explore several of the key topic areas identified for improvement, including views regarding safety, construction, condition of streets, and cultural and special events, among other topics. Your input today will help the City better understand and address these 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 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 each issue. It is important for this exercise that you are 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)!
  - To thank you for your time this evening, we'll be providing a free gift bag for everyone here and your name will also be entered into a drawing for a free dinner for two at a local Miami Beach restaurant. Please also help yourself to the refreshments and snacks.
  - Thanks for your attention and before we begin, is everyone clear about why they are here and what we plan to do? *(Facilitator: Wait for questions, respond, then proceed)*"

2. Administer Questionnaire

- "Before we get into the discussion, I would like you to complete a brief questionnaire, which will ask you for your current views on several important areas. It should take you no more than 5 minutes to complete it. If you need a pen or pencil, please let me know. Once you are done, please turn the survey over so I will know that I can collect it from you." (*Facilitator: Distribute questionnaire and proceed with next stage of the focus group when all participants are done)*

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*)
  - Condition of streets and sidewalks (cleanliness, storm drainage)
  - Safety
  - Construction/Development
  - Recreation programs and facilities
  - Value of services for tax dollars paid
- 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. [***Facilitator: Probe fully on all of the below***]

Condition of streets and sidewalks

➔ What's your current opinion of the overall cleanliness of streets in North Beach?
➔ Are there any streets that need to be addressed for cleanliness? If so, where specifically and what is the cleanliness issue on these streets?
➔ Are there specific areas in North Beach where you have observed high levels of flood waters during rain? Where are they? What is the reason for this issue in these areas?
➔ Are there any specific areas where the condition of sidewalks or pavement in general is poor? Please name the streets and the issue.
➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to cleanliness and conditions of streets and sidewalks in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

Safety

➔ We heard feedback from some residents that they felt unsafe around the City. In which areas specifically do you feel most unsafe?
➔ What do you feel is the main cause of the safety issues in these streets/areas?
➔ Do you feel that homelessness may also be contributing to you feeling unsafe in certain North Beach areas, and if so how?
➔ 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? 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 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?

- ➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to safety in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

Construction/Development

- ➔ What is your current view of construction and development across the City and specifically in North Beach?
- ➔ 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***]
    a. Parking disruptions (by construction workers, etc.)
    b. Noise level around construction areas
    c. Litter around construction areas
    d. Lack of pedestrian trails
    e. Traffic flow / traffic congestion
    f. Other
- ➔ What do you think the City should do to address each of these issues?
- ➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to construction and development in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

Recreation programs and facilities

- ➔ What is your current view of the recreation programs and facilities offered by the City for residents? [***Facilitator: you may need to first ask residents to define, in their mind, what they think recreation programs and facilities include***]
- ➔ How do you feel these programs and facilities are being maintained by the City?
- ➔ How would you feel about the current quality of beaches across the City and in North Beach in particular?
- ➔ How do you feel beaches are being maintained by the City? [***Facilitator: probe around cleanliness, maintenance of beach facilities, etc.***]
- ➔ Are there any recreation programs and facilities you would like to see added across the City? If so, what are they?
- ➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to recreation programs and facilities in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

Cultural activities/events

- ➔ 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 not?
- ➔ Do you feel safe at these events? If no, why not?
- ➔ 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.
- ➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to cultural activities/events in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

Special events / family events - museums

- ➔ 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 not?
- ➔ Do you feel safe at these events? If no, why not?
- ➔ 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)?
- ➔ Many NB residents expressed there are too few museums/theaters in the City. What's your opinion on this?
- ➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to special events/family events - museums in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

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

- ➔ What is your current view of the value of tax dollars paid for the services you receive?
- ➔ What are your views of the schools in North Beach or across the City?
- ➔ What could the City do, if anything, to improve the overall value of services for tax dollars paid?
- ➔ **MUST ASK**: What has gotten better over the past year or so with regards to the value of tax dollars you pay for the services you receive in the City of Miami Beach and North Beach specifically? What if anything has gotten worse? ***[Probe for specifics.]***

Summary

- ➔ What do you feel about your current OVERALL quality of life in North Beach?
- ➔ **MUST ASK**: Is the overall quality of life in the City getting better, worse or staying the same compared to about a year ago? Why?
- ➔ Would you recommend Miami Beach as a place to live – why or why not?
- ➔ Do you feel City government is meeting your needs as a resident – why or why not?

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!"

SUMMARY GUIDELINES FOR GROUP INTERVIEWS

DO

DO restate the purpose of interview at the outset

DO establish and maintain a permissive, confidential and friendly atmosphere. Assure anonymity.

DO maintain two-way communications. When appropriate, answer questions and clarify points that may be unclear to the participants.

DO listen attentively and thoroughly.

DO determine the importance of what is not said, but implied, and encourage further comment when warranted.

DO be objective. Deal with the facts. Consider statements in their proper context.

DO obtain clarification of ambiguous statements.

DO lead the interview smoothly from one topic to another.

DO conclude the interview by expressing appreciation for their cooperation.

DON'T

DON'T assume that the participant knows the purpose of the interview.

DON'T lose participant confidence and trust, or cause them to "tighten up."

DON'T make abrupt, dogmatic statements or refrain from giving factual information as appropriate.

DON'T interrupt the participant's statement or train of thought.

DON'T overlook important underlying meaning behind what is being said. However, don't play psychologist.

DON'T inject personal biases and opinions in listening and evaluating what is stated.

DON'T "pass over" points that are not clear.

DON'T conduct a "choppy," unconnected interview.

DON'T end the interview abruptly.

Appendix B:

Focus Group Questionnaire

Questionnaire

English

1. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life within the City of Miami Beach?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

2. How would you rate the overall value of City services for the tax dollars that you pay?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

3. In general, how good a job do you feel Miami Beach City government is doing in meeting your needs and/or the needs of your family?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

4. Overall, how would you rate the City of Miami Beach as a place to live?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

5. Would you say that as a place to live, the City of Miami Beach is…?
    1. Better now than it was a year ago
    2. About the same as it was a year ago
    3. Worse now than it was a year ago

6. Would you recommend the City of Miami Beach to family and friends as a place to live?
    1. Yes, definitely
    2. Yes, probably
    3. Hard to say
    4. No, probably not
    5. No, definitely not

Please turn over when done or signal the facilitator to collect the questionnaire.

Questionnaire

Spanish

1. En general, ¿que opinión le merece la calidad de vida que hay dentro de la ciudad de Miami Beach, diría usted...?
    1. Excelente
    2. Buena
    3. Mas o menos
    4. Mala

2. ¿Que opinión le merece el valor en general de los servicios que ofrece la ciudad a cambio de los impuestos que usted paga? Diría usted...?
    1. Excelente
    2. Buena
    3. Mas o menos
    4. Mala

3. Hablando en términos generales, ¿que tan buen trabajo realiza el gobierno de la ciudad de Miami Beach en cuanto a cumplir con sus necesidades y las necesidades de su familia? ¿Diría usted que es...?
    1. Excelente
    2. Buena
    3. Mas o menos
    4. Mala

4. Hablando en términos generales, ¿que opinión le merece la ciudad de Miami Beach como lugar para vivir? ¿Diría usted que...?
    1. Excelente
    2. Buena
    3. Mas o menos
    4. Mala

5. ¿Diría usted que como lugar para vivir, la ciudad de Miami Beach es...?
    1. Mejor ahora de lo que estaba hace un año
    2. Mas o menos igual a como estaba hace un año
    3. Peor ahora de lo que estaba hace un año

6. ¿Usted recomendaría a la ciudad de Miami Beach para vivir a familiares y amigos? ¿Diría usted...?
    1. Si, indudablemente
    2. Si, probablemente
    3. Difícil de decir/no sabe
    4. No, probablemente no
    5. No, indudablemente no

Cuando listo, por favor señale para que el representante de Hay Group Insight pueda recoger este cuestionario.

Appendix C:

Telephone Interview Protocol for Residents

Phone script for Residents

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

➔ {***Yes, speaking***} In 2007, your household participated in the Miami Beach Community Satisfaction Survey. The City has already taken a number of steps to address some of the issues identified from the survey. However, 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.

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 on either **Tuesday, May 20** or **Wednesday May 21** from **6:30 – 8:30pm** at the **North Shore Park and Youth Center**.

To thank you for your participation at this meeting, you will receive a gift from the City of Miami Beach for being part of the focus group meeting AND your name will be placed into a drawing for a dinner for two at a local Miami Beach restaurant. Snacks and refreshments will also be served at the focus group meeting. Will you be able to attend?

- {***YES***} Great! Which day would you be available to attend? {***Chooses a date***} Excellent, please be sure to write down the location for the meeting and the day & time now so you don't forget. North Shore Park and Youth Center which is at 501 72nd Street on {***Repeat date chosen***} from 6:30 – 8:30pm. 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, 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 a few 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 week of May 19th to get feedback and information from residents about several topics areas of interest. Would you be interested in attending a focus group meeting at {***Mention location, days and scheduled time from above***} 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. You will receive a free gift from the City and chance to win a free dinner at a local restaurant. {***If yes, go to YES above under "Will you be able to attend?"; if no, thank and terminate***}

Interview questions for phone call

1. Overall, how would you rate the quality of life within the City of Miami Beach? Would you say...?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

2. How would you rate the overall value of City services for the tax dollars that you pay? Would you say...?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

3. In general, how good a job do you feel Miami Beach City government is doing in meeting your needs and/or the needs of your family? Would you say...?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

4. Overall, how would you rate the City of Miami Beach as a place to live? Would you say...?
    1. Excellent
    2. Good
    3. Fair
    4. Poor

5. Would you say that as a place to live, the City of Miami Beach is...? Would you say...?
    1. Better now than it was a year ago
    2. About the same as it was a year ago
    3. Worse now than it was a year ago

6. Would you recommend the City of Miami Beach to family and friends as a place to live? Would you say...?
    1. Yes, definitely
    2. Yes, probably
    3. Hard to say
    4. No, probably not
    5. No, definitely not

Free-form questions

- ➔ What has gotten better regarding the streets in Miami Beach, specifically, cleanliness, conditions of sidewalks and pavement, and storm drainage? Has anything gotten worse? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: For both questions, probe for specifics, e.g., street names, reason/cause, etc.)***
- ➔ Are there any streets that need to be addressed for cleanliness? If so, what streets and what is the cleanliness issue?
- ➔ Are there specific areas in North Beach where you have observed high levels of flood waters during rain? What streets and areas? What is the reason for this issue in these areas?
- ➔ Are there any specific streets where the condition of sidewalks or pavement is poor? Please name the streets and the concern you have.

- ➔ What has gotten better regarding safety in Miami Beach? What if anything has gotten worse? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: For both questions, probe for specifics, e.g., street names, reason/cause, etc.)***
- ➔ What do you feel is the main cause of safety concerns, if any, around North Beach? Where are these focused? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: get names of streets and locations)***
- ➔ Are there any areas where you feel there is not enough street lighting? Where specifically and what is the reason?

- ➔ What has gotten better regarding construction or traffic in Miami Beach? What has gotten worse? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: For both questions, probe for specifics, e.g., street names, reason/cause, etc.)***

- ➔ What has gotten better regarding the value of tax dollars paid for the services you receive in Miami Beach? What has gotten worse? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: For both questions, probe for specifics, e.g., street names, reason/cause, etc.)***
- ➔ What are your current views of the schools in North Beach or across the City? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: probe for specifics, e.g., names of schools)***
- ➔ What could the City do, if anything, to improve the overall value of services for tax dollars paid? ***(NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: probe for specifics)***

Thank you for your time and for helping make a difference in the City of Miami Beach. Have a great day!

Appendix D:

Email Text for NoBe listserve

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

- Is safety a major concern for you?
- Is the pace of new construction and traffic flow an issue in your neighborhood?
- Would you like to see more cultural events or special events in your area?

The City of Miami Beach will be conducting follow-up activities to the Community Satisfaction Surveys conducted in 2007 with Miami Beach residents during the evening of Tuesday and Wednesday May 20th and 21st to answer the questions above and many others.

If you would be interested in participating in this follow-up, please send an email to the Hay Group Insight, our survey partner, at Kalily_Campos-Diana@haygroup.com.

Use the following subject line for your email - Miami Beach Focus Groups. Please include the following information in the email:

Name:

Phone Number:

Zip Code of Where You Live:

Best Time to Reach You:

Thanks for your support and contribution to improving the quality of life for everyone in the City of Miami Beach!

¡HAGAN OIR SU VOZ!

- ¿Es la seguridad una gran preocupación para usted?
- ¿Es el ritmo de nuevas construcciones y la circulación del tráfico un problema en su vecindario?
- ¿Te gustaría ver más eventos culturales o eventos especiales en su área?

Como sigue la Encuesta de Satisfacción de la Comunidad de la Ciudad de Miami Beach, en 2007, la Ciudad va a organizar sesions de preguntas y respuestas con los residentes, el dia, 20 y 21 de mayo por la tardes.

Si tiene interés en participar, por favor enviar un e-mail a Hay Group Insight, nuestro socio encuestador, a Kalily_Campos-Diana@haygroup.com.

Usar el siguiente Asunto para su e-mail: Grupos Focales de Miami Beach. Por favor incluyen en su e-mail:

Nombre:

Número de Teléfono:

Código postal de donde usted vive:

Horario en que se lo puede llamar:

¡Gracias por su apoyo y contribución en mejorar la calidad de vida de todos los que vivimos en la Ciudad de Miami Beach!

Appendix E:

Additional Survey Results

Table 3 - Results for North Beach residents who answered in English (2008 vs. 2006-7) **

		% Favorable*	% Excellent	% Good	% Fair	% Poor
Q1	Quality of life in Miami Beach					
	North Beach 2008	89	19	70	6	4
	North Beach 2006-7	59	13	46	28	13
	Difference	*30*				
Q2	Services for tax dollars paid					
	North Beach 2008	77	11	66	17	6
	North Beach 2006-7	47	7	40	38	15
	Difference	*30*				
Q3	Government meeting needs					
	North Beach 2008	81	15	66	15	4
	North Beach 2006-7	48	8	40	39	13
	Difference	*33*				
Q4	Miami Beach as a place to live					
	North Beach 2008	87	38	49	11	2
	North Beach 2006-7	69	20	49	25	6
	Difference	*18*				
Q5	Place to live compared to one year ago					
			% Better	**% Same**	**% Worse**	
	North Beach 2008	36	36	57	6	
	North Beach 2006-7	39	39	19	42	
	Difference	*-3*				
Q6	Recommend to family/friends as place to live					
			% Yes, Definitely	**% Yes, Probably**	**% Hard to Say**	**% No, Probably Not**	**% No, Definitely Not**
	North Beach 2008	75	47	28	17	6	2
	North Beach 2006-7	59	34	25	8	16	16
	Difference	*16*					

** % Favorable = "Excellent" + "Good" for Q1 – Q4, "Better" for Q5, and "Yes, Definitely" + "Yes Probably" for Q6*

*** North Beach 2008 English cases = 47; North Beach 2006-7 English cases = 111*

Differences in % Favorable for questions 1 – 4 and question 6, as well as, % Same and % Worse for question 5 are significant

Table 4 - Results for North Beach residents who answered in Spanish (2008 vs. 2006-7) **

		% Favorable*	% Excellent	% Good	% Fair	% Poor
Q1	Quality of life in Miami Beach					
	North Beach 2008	62	18	44	38	0
	North Beach 2006-7	66	15	51	25	9
	Difference	*-4*				
Q2	Services for tax dollars paid					
	North Beach 2008	49	3	46	33	18
	North Beach 2006-7	31	8	23	42	27
	Difference	*18*				
Q3	Government meeting needs					
	North Beach 2008	74	9	65	18	9
	North Beach 2006-7	66	17	49	28	6
	Difference	*8*				
Q4	Miami Beach as a place to live					
	North Beach 2008	91	47	44	9	0
	North Beach 2006-7	79	33	46	16	6
	Difference	*12*				
Q5	Place to live compared to one year ago					
			% Better	**% Same**	**% Worse**	
	North Beach 2008	50	50	32	18	
	North Beach 2006-7	59	59	18	23	
	Difference	*-9*				
Q6	Recommend to family/friends as place to live					
			% Yes, Definitely	% Yes, Probably	**% Hard to Say**	**% No, Probably Not**	**% No, Definitely Not**
	North Beach 2008	89	77	12	3	6	3
	North Beach 2006-7	78	62	16	10	1	11
	Difference	*11*					

** % Favorable = "Excellent" + "Good" for Q1 – Q4, "Better" for Q5, and "Yes, Definitely" + "Yes Probably" for Q6*

*** North Beach 2008 Spanish cases = 34; North Beach 2006-7 Spanish cases = 103*

None of the differences noted in Table 4 are significant

Table 5 - Results for North Beach residents (Focus Groups vs. Telephone) **

		% Favorable*	% Excellent	% Good	% Fair	% Poor
Q1	Quality of life in Miami Beach					
	2008 Focus Groups	87	21	66	10	3
	2008 Telephone Interviews	73	17	56	25	2
	Difference	*14*				
Q2	Services for tax dollars paid					
	2008 Focus Groups	68	4	64	21	11
	2008 Telephone Interviews	64	10	54	25	12
	Difference	*4*				
Q3	Government meeting needs					
	2008 Focus Groups	76	14	62	17	7
	2008 Telephone Interviews	79	12	67	15	6
	Difference	*-3*				
Q4	Miami Beach as a place to live					
	2008 Focus Groups	93	45	48	7	0
	2008 Telephone Interviews	86	40	46	12	2
	Difference	*7*				
Q5	Place to live compared to one year ago					
			% Better	**% Same**	**% Worse**	
	2008 Focus Groups	52	52	41	7	
	2008 Telephone Interviews	37	37	50	14	
	Difference	*15*				
Q6	Recommend to family/friends as place to live					
			% Yes, Definitely	**% Yes, Probably**	**% Hard to Say**	**% No, Probably Not**	**% No, Definitely Not**
	2008 Focus Groups	87	52	35	10	3	0
	2008 Telephone Interviews	78	64	14	12	8	4
	Difference	*9*					

** % Favorable = "Excellent" + "Good" for Q1 – Q4, "Better" for Q5, and "Yes, Definitely" + "Yes Probably" for Q6*

*** North Beach 2008 Focus Group cases = 29; North Beach 2008 Telephone cases = 52*

None of the differences noted in Table 5 are significant