



**Economic Development Committee  
Semi-Annual Report to Council  
March –November 2016**

**Members:**

Name	Committee Position	Nominated by:
Mara Falero	Chair	Ceasar Mestre
Michael Huffaker	Vice Chair	Tim Daubert
Andrea Rechichi	Secretary	Ceasar Mestre
Jorge Alvarez	Vice Secretary	Frank Mingo
Elizabeth Coto	Member	Tony Lama
Marta Diaz	Member	Nelson Rodriguez
Ladd Howell	Member	Tony Lama
Yefrei Musa	Member	Manny Cid
	Member	Tim Daubert
	Member	Manny Cid
Paul Marino	Member	Frank Mingo
Neill Robinson	Member	Michael Pizzi
Magaly Rubio	Member	Michael Pizzi
John Tingle	Member	Nelson Rodriguez

On behalf of the Economic Development Committee, I am pleased to offer this semiannual report as a detailed update on our activities. As reported in past updates to the Council, the Committee has continued to focus on not only promoting economic development in Miami Lakes by attracting new businesses, but also ensuring that our current businesses remain pleased and ensure their desire to remain in our town. Our goal is to reinforce, strengthen and promote the livability and sustainability of our commercial and industrial business districts.

The following represents the activities of the committee from March 2016-present:

- 1) **New Business Welcoming Committee:** The committee continues its efforts in reaching out to all of the new businesses moving into the Town. Each month every committee member is responsible to reach out to a new business by phone, email or a personal visit. We remind these business owners about all the great opportunities that Miami Lakes offers including the free listing on the Marketplace, grand opening ceremonies and the sponsorship opportunities available for Town events. This has generated a very positive response from each of the new businesses.
- 2) **International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC):** The ICSC Orlando is the number one convention for the Florida shopping center industry and provides networking, deal making and educational opportunities for the retail real estate professionals. In August, the Town's Economic Development director along with another representative attended the event and was very successful in promoting the Town.
- 3) **Business Workshops:** The committee hosted a series of 4 workshops this year, aimed at educating our local business community on the many resources available to them. The last two workshops, Social Media and the Access to Capital events were the most successful. We had over 50 attendees at the Social Media workshop. The Access to Capital had several of our local financial institutions represented offering their small business loan programs; special presentations by the Small Business Administration and the Beacon Council.
- 4) **Business Marketplace flyer:** A direct mail postcard was sent to all of our local businesses reminding them about the FREE listing the Town provides on the Miami Lakes Marketplace site. In total, the system now lists 1,163 of the Town's businesses.
- 5) **Youth Job Fairs:** We are partnered with the Town's Youth Activities Task Force to offer two job fairs this year, aimed at matching local talent with local businesses. Over 50 local companies participated, and over 100 students attended, many of which were hired.
- 6) **Small Business Saturday:** The Economic Development Committee is encouraging all residents to show their support for our local business community by "shopping small" on Small Business Saturday. Small Business Saturday is a day dedicated to supporting small businesses across the country. Founded by American Express in 2010, this day is celebrated each year on the Saturday after Thanksgiving and encourages people across the country to support small, local businesses. This year, Small Business Saturday will be celebrated on Saturday, November 26th also the same day as the Festival of Lights held on Main Street.
- 7) **Business Survey:** A survey will be distributed to businesses to learn from them what they would like to see the Committee focus its efforts on.

Last July, the Town's Mobile App was introduced and we've been able to add the website tools to the app to assist local and new businesses. Below is an update on the usage of the various sites that make it easy for businesses to access online services and find information about steps to open a business in Miami Lakes and the services offered by the Town after opening.

- 1) [www.MiamiLakesMarketplace.com](http://www.MiamiLakesMarketplace.com): **The Marketplace** which is available on both the website and the new Mobile App offer all Miami Lakes business a FREE site to showcase their business. Each business can include photos of their merchandise, service or menu items, upcoming events, coupons and even job opportunities.

As of **November 2016** the site has had over **29,178 visitors** and lists **1,163** of the Town's businesses. That's an increase of almost **10,000 more visitors** since our last report.

- 2) [www.Miamilakes-fl.gov/properties](http://www.Miamilakes-fl.gov/properties): **The Property Search Portal** on the Town's website is also available on the mobile app. This Portal allows Commercial Realtors and Brokers to show their listings of commercial properties for sale or lease. The Portal also offers demographic details which are key indicators for businesses when looking to relocate or expand. This is a great tool for prospective business owners to research what properties are available in Miami Lakes.

As of **November 2016** the site has had over **11,600 visitors** and lists **64** of the Town's available commercial properties. That's an increase of almost **3,000 more visitors** since our last report.

- 3) [www.miamilakes-fl.gov/bizresources](http://www.miamilakes-fl.gov/bizresources): **The Business Resource Page** on the Town's website was designed to showcase the opportunities provided by the Town to local businesses including, steps on how to open a business, Grand Opening ceremonies with elected officials, sponsorship opportunities for Town local events, and the local business preference program.

Last **November**, this page had **470 views**, and to date it's up to **2,371 views**.

For 2017, the EDC intends to continue to market Miami Lakes as a place to do business via new marketing materials, promotional events, and attendance at trade shows, along with educating our business community with informational workshops.

On behalf of all the members of The Economic Development Committee, I would like to thank the Town Council and staff for their continued support.

Mara Falero, Chair