

2016 State of the City
Read on Tuesday, April 4, 2017 at City Commission Meeting



Dear City of Aventura Resident:

It is my pleasure as your Mayor to present the City's Annual Report for 2016. Many of your concerns have been addressed this past year. The entire Commission and I look forward to continuing this dialogue with you, our residents, as we ensure that Aventura always remains "The City of Excellence".

Aventura celebrates 21 years of history in 2017. In the 21 years since our boundary lines were drawn, we have been blessed with incredible prosperity. But that doesn't just happen. From our founding days, this City has been governed by elected leaders who are selfless, dedicated and exceptionally bright. As we have transitioned from one Commission to another, innovation has prospered and politics have never taken precedence over people-driven policy. Inside the city of Aventura, the quality of life of our residents has always been the first priority. This City Commission is no exception.

This past year your City Commission focused on expanding facilities and special events that magnify our sense of community and promote community involvement. This past October the newest addition to our great park system, Peace Park on NE 188th street was dedicated and opened. It was named by our ACES students. This 1.5 acre park provides playgrounds for all age groups and outside exercise equipment for adults to utilize while they jog or walk along the promenade on the intercoastal. Additional movie nights in Founders Park have proven to be a big attraction for our families and this past March we celebrated our first Arts, Crafts and Jazz festival for the enjoyment of our residents. The Green Farmer's Market event in the south portion of Founders Park was re-instituted this past year as well. Also, our Community Garden in the south portion of Founders Park, whereby residents can lease a planting bed to grow vegetables or flowers, has expanded over the years. I wish to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Community Services Advisory Board for their valuable input on these important projects.

The City Commission continued to explore alternate transportation modes and support pedestrian and bicycle friendly initiatives. This past September, the City launched Aventura BCycle, a bike share program that includes 5 stations throughout the City aimed to support green transportation by reducing car pollution and reduce traffic, while provide the opportunity for great exercise around the City. Many of our residents and visitors utilize this service and close to 3,000 trips have been recorded since the launch.

The Aventura Express Shuttle Bus service was expanded by increasing the daily starting and ending times, as well as adding the new Silver Route year round. Once, again, ridership records were broken again this past year. A new transit terminal located on the first floor of the parking garage next to Nordstrom's at the Aventura Mall, opened. This allows the opportunity for buses from Miami-Dade County, Broward County, City of Aventura and other jurisdictions to have a central point of drop off and pick up for the convenience of the riders.

A major facelift of the area surrounding NE 29th Place south of Aventura Boulevard, was completed this past year. This capital improvement project included drainage, safety and roadway improvements as well as new sidewalks, decorative street lighting and new landscaping. The Publix Shopping Center located on NE 29th Place, is in the process of being renovated and will open early next year with a state-of-the art new two-story Publix, a CVS with a drive-thru and other new retail shops.

Primarily, to protect the privacy of our residents, the City Commission adopted an Ordinance restricting the use of drones in the City at public events. A great deal of time and effort was also spent this past year on modifying the zoning district that surrounds the Aventura Hospital, to insure that the area is re-developed and meets the high standard for smart growth while having the ability to serve the future needs of the City.

The Aventura Arts & Cultural Center began its seventh season, this past November and continues to increase the number of events as well as attendance at its cultural offerings. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the community for continuing to embrace and support both the arts and our Center.

Having saved the best for last, after years of waiting, Aventura residents will finally have a high school to call their own! The City Commission has entered into an agreement with Gulfstream Park to purchase two acres of land next to Waterways Park. The City is in the planning stages of developing a state-of-the-art charter high school with capacity for 800 students. The school will likely open in August 2019 with 9th and 10th grade classes. Upper classes will be added over the following two years. This school not only provides an additional educational choice for our children, it promises to become a shining beacon for our community.

In retrospect, it really has been an incredible year and I want to take this opportunity to thank the members of our community for their valuable support. The future looks bright and I know that because of all of you, Aventura will be ready to address all future challenges and opportunities.

Sincerely,

Enid Weisman
Mayor