

Jim Ellis

Mr. Ellis began his entrepreneurial career at the age of 23, as Founder, President and CEO of Movies To Go, Inc. (MTG), a video store chain. He, along with his brothers John, Joe, David and long-time friend Tim Ott grew MTG to 30 stores in 6 years. In 1987, Movies To Go was the largest privately held independently owned video chain in the country when it was acquired by Blockbuster Entertainment, which owned 14 corporate stores at the time.

Mr. Ellis joined Blockbuster's Board of Directors and served as Senior Vice President of Development, spearheading its aggressive growth, which resulted in the development of over 1,700 store locations in less than two and a half years, averaging two and a half store openings per day. Mr. Ellis also spent time in London, where he established Blockbuster in the European market.

In 1990, Jim founded Ellis Diversified, Inc. (EDI), a real estate development and investment firm principally developing and or investing in high-rises in Fort Lauderdale (Sunrise Harbor, Wilton Station, 350 Las Olas Place, The Tides at Bridgeside Square, The Whitney (FKA one20fourth), The Rise (FKA 2nd Street Residences), 1st Avenue Residences, 488 Residences at Riverwalk, Eclipse, etc.), while also developing multiple award-winning estate homes in Lake Tahoe, Fort Lauderdale, and the Bahamas. To date, Mr. Ellis, along with Tom Bluth, Sandra Roy, and again, Tim Ott, has identified, selected, financed, entitled and/or developed over 2,500 residential units and over 10,000,000 square feet of retail, residential and commercial real estate.

Mr. Ellis also gives his talent, time, and resources to charitable causes in the communities he works and lives in. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of Friends of Birch State Park, Inc. (7 years as President). He served on the board of the Fort Lauderdale Downtown Development Authority (DDA) for 8 years, Riverwalk Fort Lauderdale for 10 years (3 years as Chair) and Flagler Village Improvement Association (over 15 years as President). Jim co-founded the Fort Lauderdale Downtown Coalition, and in early 2019, Mr. Ellis founded Friends for a Safer Greener Fort Lauderdale and spearheaded the community-led effort for the approval of the City of Fort Lauderdale \$100 million Public Safety bond and \$200 million Parks bond. Jim was also instrumental in the evaluation and pursuit of a joint Broward County/ City of Fort Lauderdale government center in downtown Fort Lauderdale. Mr. Ellis' work has been recognized by numerous awards, including the Riverwalk Tribute Honoree, Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Downtowner of the Year, City of Ft Lauderdale Citizen of the Year, Junior Achievement Hall of Fame Laureate and Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame Honoree.