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# The Future of Miami Parks

Presented by Miami Neighborhoods United

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# The Future of Miami Parks

# Miami Neighborhoods United

The umbrella organization of  
neighborhood associations  
across the entire  
City of Miami



# I. The Issues- Specific Problems

## **A. Miami level of service compared to other cities**

B. Current Standard in the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan is deficient

C. Current Impact Fees are deficient

D. Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan and the Evaluation and Appraisal Report are deficient

E. Neighborhood participation in the development of Miami 21 goals was totally absent



# A. Miami level of service compared to other cities

## High Population Density Cities

City	Population	Acres All Parkland *	Acres per 1000 Persons	
Minneapolis	383,000	5,694	14.9	
Washington, D.C.	572,000	7,576	13.2	
Oakland	399,000	3,822	9.6	
Boston	589,000	5,451	9.3	
Baltimore	651,000	5,749	8.8	
Los Angeles	3,695,000	30,134	<b>8.2</b>	<b>Median</b>
San Francisco	777,000	5,916	7.6	
Philadelphia	1,518,000	10,621	7.0	
Long Beach	462,000	2,792	6.0	
New York	8,008,000	36,646	4.6	
Chicago	2,896,000	11,676	4.0	
<b>Miami</b>	<b>362,000</b>	<b>1,138</b>	<b>3.1-2.9</b>	
<b>Average</b>				<b>8.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>20,312,000</b>	<b>127,215</b>		<b>6.3</b>
<b>Ave by Population</b>				

\* NOTE: "All Parkland" includes all parks and preserves owned by municipal, county, metropolitan, state and federal agencies within the boundary of the city.

Miami was at 3.1 acres per thousand residents in 2002 but because population has been added and no parks have been added the ratio has diluted to 2.9 acres per thousand residents.



# A. Miami level of service compared to other cities

## Medium-High Population Density Cities

City	Population	Acres All Parkland *	Acres per 1000 Persons	
San Diego	1,223,000	38,993	31.9	
Portland, Ore.	529,000	12,959	24.5	
Cincinnati	331,000	7,000	21.1	
Dallas	1,189,000	21,670	18.2	
Arlington, Tex	333,000	4,151	12.5	Median
Las Vegas	478,000	5,416	11.3	
Denver	555,000	6,251	11.3	
Seattle	563,000	6,024	10.7	
St. Louis	348,000	3,385	9.7	
Sacramento	407,000	3,694	9.1	
Pittsburgh	335,000	2,735	8.2	
Toledo	314,000	2,206	7.0	
Detroit	951,000	5,890	6.2	
Cleveland	478,000	2,884	6.0	
San Jose	895,000	3,858	4.3	
Fresno	428,000	1,323	3.1	
Average				12.2
Total				

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# A. Miami level of service compared to other cities

## Medium-Low Population Density Cities

City	Population	Acres All Parkland *	Acres per 1000 Persons
El Paso	564,000	26,372	46.8
Albuquerque	449,000	17,746	39.5
Colorado Springs	361,000	10,150	28.1
Phoenix	1,321,000	36,944	28.0
Louisville/ Jefferson Count	694,000	14,209	20.5
Fort Worth	535,000	10,554	<b>19.7</b>
Tulsa	393,000	7,110	18.1
Memphis	650,000	10,490	16.1
Milwaukee/ Milwaukee County	940,000	15,115	16.1
Indianapolis	792,000	11,868	15.0
San Antonio	1,145,000	16,503	14.4
Columbus	711,000	8,494	11.9
Tampa	303,000	3,408	11.2
Houston	1,954,000	21,252	10.9
New Orleans	485,000	5,228	10.8
Atlanta	416,000	3,235	7.8
Mesa	396,000	2,862	7.2
Tucson	487,000	3,175	6.5
Average			18.2

**Median**



# In Summary...

...the City of **Miami ranks 12 out of 12** for High Density Cities and **28 out of 28** Medium-High Density Cities in the United States.

It is also **55 out of all 55 U.S. cities surveyed** in terms of park acreage per 1000 residents!



# Approximate Acreage by Commission District

	<u>Commission District</u>				
	1	2	3	4	5
Total Acreage by Commission District	88.42	944.79	25.05	41.90	95.56
Percentage of acreage in each district	7.39%	79.03%	2.09%	3.50%	7.99%
Total Acreage for entire city	1,195.72				

\* Approximately 30 acres or 50% is covered with cement structures and retail, which renders most of the park useless for normal park activities.



# Miami Parks Acreage by Commission District

- 79% of our total park acreage lies in Commission District 2. Four Commission Districts desperately need more parkland
- The Comprehensive Plan has no stated goal of how parks should be maintained, or the amount of plant material or other features usually found in parks outside Miami



# I. The Issues- Specific Problems

**B. Current Standard in the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan is deficient**

**C. Current Impact Fees are deficient**

**D. Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan and the Evaluation and Appraisal Report are deficient**

**E. Administration did not seek Neighborhood participation in setting Miami 21 Goals**



## B. MCNP standards

- The Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan has no goal or objective to increase the amount of parkland, recreation space, or other open space
- It states only that its *Level of Service Standards (LOS) will be a minimum of 1.3 acres of public park space per 1000 residents*



## C. Current Impact Fees are deficient

- Miami Impact Fees on new construction do not provide sufficient funds for the purchase of parkland to even maintain the level of level of service we had in 2002
- There must be provisions that the 3.1 acres per thousand residents (thru a combination of on and off site public accessible green space) be maintained
- There should be additional efforts to increase the 3.1 standard over time
- Residents who live in the four districts west of downtown have paid for Bicentennial Park and other district two parks but yet have no significant parks in their neighborhoods.
- The Impact Fees collected for parks currently are not set aside for the purchase of new park land



## C. cont...

- Current Impact Fees vary according to seven development areas
- Non-residential buildings in all areas of the city, except in the downtown area, pay no fees toward parks.
- With every new building permit issued our problem becomes worse and the cure more difficult.
- Beside our impact fees for parkland being extremely low, we have also learned that many Impact Fees over the last four years have not been collected. Audit Number 05-010 dated February 25, 2005, shows that between October 2001 and July 2004 **over \$1.336 million went uncollected!**



## D. MCNP and Evaluation/Appraisal Report are deficient.

- The Planning Department has not responded to MNU requests for open dialogue relating to revisions to the Evaluation and Appraisal Report.
- No plan to acquire new parkland has been revealed beyond the Homeland Security Bond program. That program money is being used substantially to construct buildings

## E. Administration did not seek Neighborhood participation in setting Miami 21 Goals



## II. Immediate Corrective Actions Needed

- A. Immediate correction of Impact Fees and other considerations.
- B. Assure MNU and other stakeholders' participation in drafting the revised Evaluation and Appraisal Report
- C. Assure neighborhood participation in Miami 21



## A. Immediate Correction...

- We ask this Commission to place a 45 day moratorium on the issuance of all building permits larger than a duplex residential unit in order that your Planning and Finance Departments can develop a new Impact Fee Schedule. We recommend that the impact fee for parks be standardized throughout the City
- Property tax payers all over this city have paid for downtown parks and now new residents of Miami need to pay their fair share toward parks



## A. continued...

- During the 45 day moratorium, this Commission should consider adding a requirement such as Tampa imposes which requires that 35% green space be left around buildings located on waterfront property. Tampa and other cities require 10% green space to be included around other buildings.
- Impact fees collected must be set aside exclusively for the purchase of additional parkland, there must be a time frame for land acquisition and park improvement and the process needs to be detailed in the Comprehensive Plan. This Commission must assure that Impact Fees for Parkland Purchase are segregated in a separate account with transparent administration and oversight.
- **MNU will work with the Planning and Finance Departments, the Miami 21 consultants.**



## B. Assure MNU and other stakeholders' participation

- **Please instruct the Planning Department to work constructively with MNU on changes to the Evaluation and Appraisal Report relating to the Parks and Recreation section.**



## C. Assure neighborhood participation in Miami 21.

- Please insure that the Miami 21 project puts in place a process for participation in drafting and review of proposed plans together with both the Miami 21 consultants and the Planning Department. There is no such explicit process described in any Miami 21 materials made available so far.
- For instance, the public was told on April 16 that there is already model form based zoning codes for several areas of the City. MNU and other stakeholders need **immediate** access to such models and to all other planning goals being used.
- As far as MNU has been able to investigate, no contract has yet been signed to formally engage Duany Plater-Zyberk and therefore no Scope of Work or other information concerning the contract has been made available to the public or to MNU. A more explicit participative process should be incorporated in the contract, to insure timely and broad participation in the setting of goals and the planning process



## III. Short Term Corrective Actions Needed

- A. Assure MNU and other stakeholders' active, reoccurring participation in drafting amendments to the Parks & Recreation section and all other sections of the Miami Neighborhood Comprehensive Plan.
- B. Assure MNU and other stakeholders' active participation in drafting Miami 21 Goals, Regulating Plan and Form Based Code
- C. Initiate a plan to locate a substantial number of parks in four commission districts which are deficient.
- Establish a Concurrency Information Center.



## A. Continuous, reoccurring participation

- Four out of five districts expressed the need for more park space in their neighborhoods.
- Nearly every line of the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan needs revision, as current Goals, Objectives and Policies are inadequate, vague and not measurable in most instances.
- The plan needs details and time frames for achievement.
- Instruct the Planning Department to seek advice from your Parks and Waterfront Advisory Boards and MNU.



## C. Initiate a plan to locate a substantial number of parks in four commission districts which are deficient.

- The city should work toward a commonly accepted goal of providing a park within one half-mile walk of every residence.
- Tax dollars coming from new construction should be put toward the purchase of parkland.
- This new money can be leveraged with state, federal and private grants to be able to reach beyond our 3.1 acres



## **D. Establish a Concurrency Information Center**

- **Establish a Concurrency Information Center to provide information on capacities and levels of service to the public**
- **Tampa has such a center**



## IV. Long Term Corrective Actions Needed

- A. Set a Level of Service Standard for parkland acreage which is competitive with other high density population cities.
- B. Establish an Independent Board to Manage Parks & Recreation.
- C. Increase operation funding for Parks and Recreation.



## A. Set a Level of Service Standard for parkland acreage which is competitive

- Miami's Level of Service Standard for parkland per thousand residents must be radically increased to a level somewhere between the average acres per 1,000 by population of high population density cities which is now 8.02 and the median city which happens to be Los Angeles at 8.2 acres.
- MNU will be conducting detailed investigations and analyses for discussion with the consultants and Planning Dept.



## B. Establish an Independent Board to Manage Parks & Recreation

- Independent Board should be given management authority, including developing the budget, for parks operation and maintenance, including the disposition of park bond funds
- Establish at least one Park Trust Group for every NET area
- Each Trust Group should be the liaison between the neighborhood and the Independent Board.
- A separate Park Land Acquisition Board should oversee land acquisition and improvement
- Neighborhood trust groups can be elected by city residents as is done in Minneapolis



# V. Conclusions

- Immediate action is necessary to collect Park Impact Fees for purchase of additional parkland - on a standardized basis from all new development projects across the whole City.





# More Conclusions...

- The Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan was written many years ago and needs a complete re-write based on the City's current situation and future growth goals.
- The Comprehensive Plan needs specific, measurable goals and objectives with detailed policies so residents can be assured that the quality of life will not flounder from one administration to another.
- Miami 21 is a tremendous, positive effort on the part of the Mayor and the Commission to create a wonderful vision for Miami and the legal/regulatory infrastructure to accomplish it.

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