

# Memorandum



Date: **March 2, 2010**

To: Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

From: George M. Burgess  
County Manager 

Subject: Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee Recommendations

Agenda Item No:  
12(B)3

This is a follow-up to the Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee (EPSAC) Recommendations report that was submitted on October 6, 2009 (attached) as a result of Resolution No. R-748-09. As you may recall, EPSAC was to formulate recommendations to the Board regarding:

- Suggesting effective methods of educating the elderly and of disseminating information to the elderly regarding pedestrian safety precautions;
- Reviewing infrastructure in areas highly populated by the elderly to explore the feasibility of engineering solutions to mitigate potential injury and to improve pedestrian safety and mobility;
- Suggesting methods of enforcement to increase compliance with traffic laws by drivers and pedestrians;
- Recommending alternatives to promote and encourage elderly pedestrian safety.

The second EPSAC meeting was held on September 15, 2009 (attendees and agenda attached) and the recommendations developed at the first meeting were reviewed. Below is a status on the implementation of the recommendations noted in the October 6, 2009 report.

**Education:** The Alliance for Aging will prepare a list of healthcare contacts including health centers and hospitals and is adding elderly housing contacts. The contacts will be used for dissemination of pedestrian safety educational material and a train-the-trainer session for service providers to the elderly. Printed material alone is not as useful as other media (live presentations or radio). AARP and Miami-Dade Police Department Community Affairs Bureau both have access to radio time and can include pedestrian safety information in their presentations. MPO staff has prepared a talking points fact sheet for use. The FDOT Safety Office will sponsor a Community Traffic Safety Team devoted to elderly pedestrian safety so relevant agencies can continue to work together on this topic as needed after the EPSAC sunset date of December 2, 2009.

**Engineering:** The Public Works Department (PWD) has issued a work order to the FIU College of Engineering for "Priority Locations for Elderly Pedestrians" project. The data analysis and background research are underway. The project will recommend engineering improvements, including warning signs, countdown pedestrian signals, raised medians, curb extensions, flashing beacons, high-emphasis crosswalks, additional pedestrian crossing time, in-road pedestrian warning signs, turn prohibitions, audible pedestrian signals, and street lighting etc., where traffic crashes involving elderly pedestrians have occurred. The study is scheduled to be completed within 12 months. PWD will review design standards to emphasize the use of sidewalk curb ramps that are oriented at right angles to the intersection over ramps that are diagonal to the intersection.

**Enforcement:** Miami Beach has done traffic enforcement targeting drivers that fail to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks under a grant in the past. Pedestrian ticketing for illegal street crossing is less common, although aggressive and distracted walking are observed behaviors. The "Priority Locations for Elderly Pedestrians" project will also identify high-crash sites for recommendation for special traffic enforcement.

**Encouragement:** Information from the American Medical Association's "Exercise is Medicine" program will be included in the material provided to healthcare workers. The Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department "Walking Clubs" program also encourages older pedestrians to walk more. The County is also working to provide increased opportunities for physical activity and encouraging healthy lifestyles, such as improving road and sidewalk conditions, increasing pedestrian awareness, enhancing driver education about pedestrian safety needs, and increasing enforcement of laws to protect pedestrians.

In addition, the committee recommended that any safety projects and programs undertaken be evaluated to assess their effectiveness.



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Assistant County Manager



Miami-Dade County  
Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee (EPSAC)

9:00 am September 15, 2009  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor CITT Conference Room  
Stephen P. Clark Government Center

MEETING NOTES

The meeting started at 9:10. Review of recommendations from previous meeting.

**Education:** The Alliance for Aging has prepared a listing of healthcare contacts including health centers and hospitals and is adding elderly housing contacts. The contacts will be used for dissemination of pedestrian safety educational material and a train-the-trainer session for service providers to the elderly. Printed material alone is not as useful as other media (live presentations or radio). AARP and Miami-Dade Police Dept Community Affairs Bureau both have access to radio time and can include pedestrian safety information in their presentations. MPO to prepare a talking points fact sheet for use. The FDOT Safety Office will sponsor a Community Traffic Safety Team devoted to elderly pedestrian safety so relevant agencies can continue to work together on this topic after the EPSAC sunset date of Dec. 2, 2009.

**Engineering:** A work order has been issued to FIU College of Engineering for the Public Works Department's "Priority Locations for Elderly Pedestrians" project. The FIU College of Health and Urban Affairs is also involved. The data analysis and background research are underway. The project will recommend engineering improvements at the locations of traffic crashes involving elderly pedestrians. The project is scheduled to be completed within 12 months. MDPW to review design standards to emphasize the use of sidewalk curb ramps that are oriented at right angles to the intersection over ramps that are diagonal to the intersection.

**Enforcement:** Miami Beach has done traffic enforcement targeting drivers that fail to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks under a grant in the past. Pedestrian ticketing for illegal street crossing is less common, although aggressive and distracted walking are observed behaviors. The "Dangerous Locations for Elderly Pedestrians" project will identify high-crash sites for recommendation for special traffic enforcement.

**Encouragement:** Information from the American Medical Association's "Exercise is Medicine" program will be included in the material provided to healthcare workers. A representative from the Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department will be invited to the next meeting to discuss their "Walking Clubs" program.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40. The sign-in sheet is attached.



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Miami-Dade County  
 Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee (EPSAC)

9:00 am September 15, 2009  
 10<sup>th</sup> Floor CITT Conference Room  
 Stephen P. Clark Government Center

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## Defensive Walking: Pedestrian Safety for Adults

Each year almost 25 older pedestrians are killed and over 200 injured in traffic crashes in Miami-Dade County. Elderly pedestrians are more vulnerable to fatal and severe injuries because they are more likely to have other health problems and their injuries take longer to heal. The following safety information for older pedestrians was developed for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration by the University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center.

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Many people spend years practicing defensive driving, anticipating what the other driver might do. Walking also requires thinking ahead about what a driver might do. While the safest walking conditions may require changes to the physical environment – like sidewalks and traffic signals - or help from law enforcement in slowing speeding traffic, there are things that pedestrians can do to make themselves as safe as possible. Defensive walking is all about identifying situations that carry higher risks of being hit by a car and taking steps to control these situations as much as possible.

### Crossing

- **Intersections:** Although intersections are where pedestrians should cross, intersections are often where you need to look in the most directions for vehicles.

**What should a pedestrian do?** Anticipate that a driver might run a red light. Look around before stepping into the road even when a light turns green or the walk signal appears. Check the direction that cars may be coming and make sure approaching drivers see you.

- **Stepping off the curb:** The first half of the crossing has its own risks. This is when a pedestrian may be the most difficult for a driver to see or expect and there is also less time for the pedestrian to react.

**What should a pedestrian do?** Check for cars before stepping out and make sure drivers see you.

- **Visual screens:** When there's more than one lane of traffic in the same direction, one car that stops can act as a "visual screen," so that the driver in the next lane does not see the pedestrian.

**What should a pedestrian do?** While crossing, as you come to the end of the first car, stop and look to see if another car is approaching. If so, can that driver see you? Does that driver have enough time to stop for you? If not, then allow the vehicle to pass before continuing.

- **Crossing time at traffic signals:** The walk signal might not provide enough time to comfortably cross the street.

**What should a pedestrian do?** If you've not started crossing and the "Don't Walk" signal is flashing, then wait until the next walk signal begins. If you're crossing and the signal starts to flash "Don't Walk," keep crossing the street. If the signal does not provide enough time to cross safely, the city transportation department needs to know. Give them a call.



## Backing vehicles

There are three main situations in which pedestrians might encounter backing cars: 1) when a walkway crosses a driveway, 2) when crossing between parked cars and 3) in a parking lot. When backing up, a driver may not be able to see directly behind, or may not look for pedestrians. Likewise, pedestrians may be looking for moving cars, not parked cars about to move. Hybrid cars are particularly tricky because they have very quiet engines so there's not the typical engine noise that pedestrians expect.

**What should a pedestrian do?** When possible, pick a route that doesn't require walking behind cars. Look for brake lights and listen for engine noise and other cues that a car is about to move. Notice large parked vehicles that may block the view of smaller vehicles as they back up and look for vehicles backing out of driveways.

## Being seen

When pedestrians are hit by vehicles, the drivers often say that they did not see them. This may be because the drivers are paying attention to something besides driving or it's dusk and difficult to see, or another reason. No matter what the case, it's worth the extra effort to make sure that drivers see you.

**What should a pedestrian do?** Make eye contact with the approaching driver. Nod or wave if appropriate. That is the surest way to make sure you have the driver's attention. Dress to be visible by wearing light, bright clothes with retro-reflective markings and carry a flashlight or other lighting when walking at twilight and dark.

## Take a moment to check again

People make mistakes, and driver mistakes can be costly to people walking. Just because the light says it's your turn to cross does not mean that cars will yield. Sometimes situations make it hard for drivers to see, like when they are backing up or it's dark outside. Defensive walking means counting on yourself as the final judge of what's happening. Take a moment to make eye contact with a driver or wait until a car passes before continuing on your way.

For more information on pedestrian safety visit:

[www.walkinginfo.org](http://www.walkinginfo.org)

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov>

Or contact:

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[www.miamidade.gov/mpo](http://www.miamidade.gov/mpo)

# Memorandum



Date: October 6, 2009

To: Honorable Chairman Dennis C. Moss  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Item No.  
12(B)1

From: George M. Burgess  
County Manager

Subject: Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee Recommendations

This report responds to Resolution R-748-09, "Resolution Creating Elderly Pedestrian Advisory Committee," passed on June 2, 2009. The Resolution established the Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee (EPSAC) to formulate recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners regarding:

1. Suggesting effective methods of educating the elderly and of disseminating information to the elderly regarding pedestrian safety precautions;
2. Reviewing infrastructure in areas highly populated by the elderly to explore the feasibility of engineering solutions to mitigate potential injury and to improve pedestrian safety and mobility;
3. Suggesting methods of enforcement to increase compliance with traffic laws by drivers and pedestrians; and
4. Recommending alternatives to promote and encourage elderly pedestrian safety.

The recommendations were to be submitted within 120 days and the EPSAC was to be dissolved within six months after adoption. EPSAC membership was comprised of one representative from the following departments or organizations to the extent they are able to participate.

1. Miami-Dade County Public Works Department
2. Miami-Dade County Planning and Zoning Department
3. Alliance for Aging
4. Miami-Dade County Police Department, Community Affairs Bureau
5. Florida Department of Transportation, Traffic Operations
6. Miami-Dade County Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
7. Metropolitan Planning Organization
8. Miami-Dade Health Department
9. University of Miami School of Medicine
10. City of Miami Police Department
11. City of Miami Beach Police Department
12. Department of Elder Affairs
13. American Automobile Association
14. AARP
15. Office of Americans with Disabilities Act Coordination
16. The Senior Advocate of the Department of Human Services, Elderly Services Division, and
17. Any other offices, organizations or entities deemed appropriate by the Mayor or his designee.

The EPSAC met on August 19, 2009. The meeting agenda and sign-in sheet are attached. Leadership for this effort was provided by the Metropolitan Planning Organization's Bicycle Pedestrian Specialist.

### Committee Discussion

The EPSAC reviewed data related to traffic crashes involving elderly pedestrians. There was discussion of existing safety education programs, traffic enforcement, and pedestrian safety roadway improvements.

### Recommendations

The EPSAC recommendations are grouped into the four areas described in the Resolution.

### Education

- Develop and implement an elderly pedestrian safety campaign that is language and culturally appropriate (e.g., Spanish and Haitian Creole) and uses a variety of media (for example, the UM Miller School of Medicine's "Safe Crossings" program).
- Compile a list of healthcare providers and other organizations that interact with elderly persons and which could provide information on pedestrian safety to their clients.
- Support formation of an Elderly Mobility Safety Team through the Florida Department of Transportation's Community Traffic Safety Program to continue raising awareness of elderly pedestrian safety after the EPSAC sunsets on December 2, 2009.

### Engineering

- Implement appropriate pedestrian safety improvements at intersections and adjacent facilities (e.g., sidewalks, mid-block crossing, etc.) in Little Havana, South Beach, Little Haiti, Hialeah, Flagami, Westchester, downtown Miami and Sunny Isles where traffic crashes involving elderly pedestrians are concentrated as funding permits.
  - Improvements should include countdown pedestrian signals, raised medians, curb extensions, rapid flashing beacons, high-emphasis crosswalks, additional pedestrian crossing time, in-road pedestrian warning signs, turn prohibitions, audible pedestrian signals, accessible sidewalks, pedestrian pavement markings, and street lighting as appropriate.
  - A traffic safety study of elderly pedestrian crash sites is scheduled to be conducted by the Miami-Dade Public Works Department in 2009/2010 and will include cost estimates of improvements.
- Review roadway design standards to encourage the use of ADA sidewalks and curb ramps that are parallel to the direction of travel. Some ADA curb ramps are built on the diagonal and lead into the center of the intersection instead of along the crosswalk.

### Enforcement

- Work with the Florida Transportation Technology Transfer Center to provide their Pedestrian Law Enforcement training in Miami-Dade County.
- Provide information on the locations of elderly housing and traffic crashes involving elderly pedestrians to police departments for targeted enforcement.

### Encouragement

- Give healthcare professionals the information they need to encourage more walking by their clients, for example the AMA's "Walking is Medicine" walking prescription program.
- Promote Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department's Walking Clubs program among healthcare professionals and others involved in elder care.

### Next Steps

- Coordinate with the Public Works Department on their traffic safety study of traffic crashes involving elderly pedestrians.
- Work with EPSAC to prepare list of healthcare providers and other organizations that interact with elderly clients and which could provide information on pedestrian safety to their clients.
- Continue to collect and disseminate information on safety programs for elderly pedestrians.
- A follow-up EPSAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 15, 2009 to discuss implementation of recommendations at which time a follow up report will be provided to the Board.



Assistant County Manager



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**Miami-Dade County  
Elderly Pedestrian Safety Advisory Committee (EPSAC)**

**9:00 am August 19, 2009  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor CITT Conference Room  
Stephen P. Clark Government Center**

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome – Introduction of Members
2. Background Data: Traffic Crashes Involving Elderly Pedestrians
3. Pedestrian Safety Countermeasures
  - a. Education
  - b. Engineering
  - c. Enforcement
4. Discussion of Recommendations
5. Transmission of recommendations to the BCC
6. Wrap-up





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9:00 am August 19, 2009  
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