I would like to thank the participants in the GreenPrint planning process for their time, dedication and professionalism. The core planning team worked tirelessly to ensure that GreenPrint captures the key sustainability priorities of our government, community and economic partners, as well as concerned residents. During the process, I was struck by the passion and thoughtfulness of all participants to preserve and improve Miami-Dade County for generations to come. It is their unique and collective commitment to GreenPrint's development and implementation that will lead all of us to accomplish our comprehensive and inclusive sustainability goals.

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Mayor's Sustainability Advisory Board
Honorable Katy Sorensen, Former County Commissioner, Advisory Board Chairperson
Honorable Shirley Gibson, Mayor, City of Miami Gardens
Colleen Allen-Hettich, Director, Earth Institute, Miami Dade College
Veronica Benzinger, Senior Vice President, Aon Environmental Services Group
Truly Burton, Director of Government Affairs, Builders Association of South Florida
Ray Castellanos, Owner, Authentic Construction
Tracey E. Gallentine, Senior Account Executive, Ameresco
Barry Johnson, President and CEO, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
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GreenPrint Interdepartmental Team
All County departments played a vital role in developing this plan and will be essential for implementation.

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability
Cyrus Bhedwar, Southeast Regional Director

Climate Change Advisory Task Force
Honorable Harvey Ruvin, Chair and Members

In addition to the institutions referenced above, additional research and implementation partners include:

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Office
Audubon Society
Beacon Council
Builders Association of South Florida (BASF)
Building Owners and Management Association (BOMA)
Chicago Climate Exchange (CCEX)
Citizens Independent Transportation Trust (CITT)
Civic Organizations
Clean Cities Coalition
Climate Leadership Initiative, Steve Adams
Community bicycling enthusiasts
Community Image Advisory Board (CIAB)
Dade Community Foundation Miami Fellows Initiative
Dade County Farm Bureau
Dream in Green
Environmental Education Providers
Earth Learning
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Fairchild Tropical Gardens
Federal Transportation Authority (FTA)
Financial Institutions
Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)
Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)
Florida Highway Administration (FHWA)
Florida Power and Light (FPL)
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What does sustainability mean to Miami-Dade County?

Miami-Dade County is a beautiful and resilient community; but it’s no secret that the past few years have been challenging. Unemployment has grown. Government, school, and private-sector budgets have shrunk. The real estate and construction industries have suffered. Life has been a struggle for many of our residents. What is sustainability, and why do we need to plan for it now? We need it now more than ever. If you care about the people here, if you care about your finances, if you care about our beautiful surroundings, then you care about sustainability. GreenPrint is your plan, and it is our plan. Join us in designing our sustainable future.

Sustainability, or being “green,” is a relatively new term. In GreenPrint, sustainability is offered in a comprehensive, balanced, and progressive spirit. A sustainable community has a vibrant economy and clean, pedestrian-friendly, and tree-lined healthy communities. It provides for responsible land use and smart transportation, with easy movement via a variety of transportation options for the benefit of current and future residents and visitors. Sustainability ensures that our environment is clean and carefully managed for adequate water supplies, ecosystem health, and sustainable solid waste management. These sustainability elements directly help us reduce our vulnerability to climate change. Our geography and population are expansive and diverse. Strong leadership, connections, and commitment are essential to focus our actions as one community.

The most important principle of sustainability is that it starts with community commitment. That means developing a common language and involving residents, developers, businesses, environmentalists—all stakeholders, in other words—in a dialogue about what needs to change and how. It means creating long-term policies that are consistent and reliable and not subject to whimsical change. And it means recognizing that sustainability is not about one piece of community building, but about completing an entire puzzle.

It is critical that we learn from our past, build on our strengths, and wisely define sustainable living in Miami-Dade County. GreenPrint, along with other excellent County and municipal plans, will provide the framework and action plan to do this, focusing on long-term vision and goals and a manageable five-year horizon of decisive actions to move toward those goals.

Our history of progress and resilience

A century ago the first Miamians built railroads, drained the Everglades, and established a tropical tourism destination. What we are now is a metropolis of 2.5 million people, and growth is projected at 30,000 per year. We have benefited from our unique global position and extraordinary environment. Known as the “Gateway to the Americas,” Miami-Dade County hosts one of the busiest international seaports and airports in the United States.

We are home to two renowned national parks, Everglades and Biscayne Bay, as well as miles of beaches and hundreds of thousands of acres of wetlands and environmentally sensitive lands. We minimize damage from development to our environment through regulatory, restoration and acquisition programs. Our hydrology is unique. A man-made drainage system is critical for stormwater management and is linked to a porous aquifer that supplies excellent quality drinking water. The Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan is a major federal project underway to restore the ecological function of the ”River of Grass.”

Our beaches, populated by luxury hotels and homes, require vigilant renourishment. Our beautiful weather is also intense with heat, hurricanes, floods, and droughts. We survived and rebuilt after Hurricane Andrew, the second most destructive hurricane in U.S. history. As a result, our building codes are now the nation’s most stringent for wind-resistant construction. While we benefit from excellent air quality courtesy of our location and wind patterns, carbon emissions from our homes and vehicles travel to neighboring counties and impact those with sensitive health.

Miami-Dade County has a fairly well diversified economy. The economy is not overly dependent upon a few industries. Its largest industry groups are finance, insurance and real estate which together account for 26 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), followed by commerce, which accounts for 20 percent of GDP and is comprised of wholesale trade, retail trade, and transportation and warehousing services. Professional and business services produce 12 percent of the County’s GDP. Goods-producing sectors, such as manufacturing and construction, and education and healthcare each account for eight percent of the economy. Hotel accommodations, food service and leisure businesses, which are significantly affected by overnight visitors, together represent seven percent of the County’s economy (Dr. Robert Cruz, Miami-Dade County Chief Economist). Agriculture is important, providing an economic impact of over $2.57 billion to the local and state economy (Dade County Farm Bureau).

Similarly, the County has a diverse employer base that is not dominated by a few large employers. Eighty-one (81) percent of the private business establishments have fewer than 10 employees, while 18 percent have 10 to 249 employees. Approximately 84 percent of payroll employment in the County is found in the private sector, while state, local and federal agencies employ approximately 16 percent of the workforce.
"Sustainability means staying in business forever, whatever your business is. If you run a ski resort, that means you have to address climate change while also cultivating your business in many ways. If you’re in the business of parenting, to keep that practice viable forever means ensuring clean water, a healthy environment for your children to grow up in, financial security, stable climate and lots more."

Auden Schendler, Getting Green Done

Why should we be concerned about climate change?

Miami-Dade County is progressive and resilient, but is also one of America’s communities most vulnerable to climate change. We are a coastal community at sea level, located at the tip of the Florida peninsula with many low-lying areas. We have a large, dense population. Key economic drivers, tourism and agriculture, are weather dependent. Our population growth could be exacerbated at any time by a segment of mass migration. According to a recent study by the National Academy of Sciences, “As many as 7 million Mexicans could migrate to the U.S. by 2080 as climate change reduces agricultural production in Mexico” (Gorman). Could Miami-Dade County be host to climate refugees given our international positioning and immigration history?

Now is the time to focus as a community on how to turn science into action. The Climate Change Action Plan contained within GreenPrint charts the steps necessary to do this.

A “new normal”

The recent downturn in the economy has the hidden benefit of creating a positive impact in individual household sustainability. Residents and businesses are focused on cutting costs. We are producing less solid waste, lower fuel emissions, and less water use. A tougher economy has also forced behavioral changes: less consumption only what we need, recycle more and conserve water and energy?

These are the questions GreenPrint seeks to address and our community is called to answer.

**Aspirational Goals**

- Create the next generation of green leaders
  - Work with the more than 100 GreenPrint partners to integrate sustainability into local, regional and national strategic decision-making, policies and operations.

- Use less water and energy
  - Reduce per capita non-renewable energy use to 20 percent below 2007 baseline by 2015. Reduce water consumption by 1.5 million gallons a day. Reduce government electricity use by 20 percent from 2007 to 2014 in accordance with Board of County Commissioners legislation.

- Maintain exceptional quality of air, drinking water, and coastal waters used for recreation
  - Continue to achieve the best air quality rating at least 90 percent of the year and exceed drinking water quality standards.
  - Prevent degradation of our outstanding Florida waters.

- Protect and enhance Biscayne Bay, the Everglades, and vital ecosystems
  - Restore and enhance more than 500 acres of coastal habitats and wetlands, and preserve more than 24,000 acres of environmentally endangered lands.

- Reinvent our solid waste system
  - Reduce or divert 75 percent of our solid waste from landfills by 2020 through reuse, recycling, and generating electricity.

- Use our land wisely, creating and connecting strong sustainable neighborhoods
  - Develop 15 urban center area plans and six multi-modal corridor master plans. Create four transit-oriented developments (TODs) on heavy rail and bus corridors. Develop level of service metrics to identify resident accessibility to parks and open space areas. Improve access through an interconnected network of shaded and safe bikeways and trails connected to neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, civic buildings, and other community destinations.

- Provide more transportation options, reducing the time we spend in our cars
  - Add 10 million boardings to our public transportation system through increased services, and enhancing convenience, comfort, and timely service. Increase the percentage of total trips taken by walking or bicycling from 10 percent to 15 percent of all travel trips. Increase resident satisfaction with the availability of sidewalks for pedestrians to 65 percent or more and add 40 miles of bicycle trails and lanes.

- Create green jobs
  - Cultivate an innovative and sustainable economic infrastructure that creates 20,000 green jobs by 2020 while building on our economic strengths and adding to our competitiveness in the global economy.

- Build on our international reputation to become a green enterprise destination
  - Increase the percentage of green hotels, eco-tourism, and hospitality-related businesses.

- Raise awareness that sustainable living is healthy
  - Decrease our community’s lifestyle disease rates such as diabetes and heart disease through healthy eating and exercise. Provide access to fresh, local and/or organic food in all neighborhoods through grocery stores, farmers markets and community gardens supported by local agriculture. Increase the number of short walking and biking trips through safety and other programs. Reduce barriers for disabled and elderly residents.

- Plant more Florida-friendly and native trees and landscapes
  - Plant half a million trees by 2015 to achieve a 30 percent tree canopy by 2020 and encourage native, drought-tolerant landscaping to cool our communities, capture greenhouse gas emissions, beautify our neighborhoods, and provide wildlife habitat.

- Understand and respond to current and future climate change impacts
  - Integrate local climate change indicators with existing emergency management, storm water planning, and infrastructure planning.
  - Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
    - Reduce GHG emissions by 10 percent by 2015, working towards 80 percent reduction by 2050 to advance the Cool Counties Program commitment.