

MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(3)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

DATE: June 14, 2022

FROM: Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

SUBJECT: Resolution directing the County
Mayor to develop and implement
a comprehensive plan relating to
urban tree canopy, to provide a
report setting forth the plan and
reports on progress in
implementing the plan, to
identify funding for the plan, and
to compile data

Resolution No. R-588-22

The accompanying resolution was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Eileen Higgins.



Geri Bonzon-Keenan
County Attorney

GBK/uw



MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

TO: Honorable Chairman Jose "Pepe" Diaz
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

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Please note any items checked.

- ☐ "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- ☐ 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- ☐ 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- ☐ Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- ☐ Budget required
- ☐ Statement of fiscal impact required
- ☐ Statement of social equity required
- ☐ Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- ☒ No committee review
- ☐ Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present ____, 2/3 membership ____, 3/5's ____, unanimous ____, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) ____, or CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c)(2) ____ to approve
- ☐ Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved _____ Mayor
Veto _____
Override _____

Agenda Item No. 11(A)(3)
6-14-22

RESOLUTION NO. _____ R-588-22

RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN RELATING TO URBAN TREE CANOPY, TO PROVIDE A REPORT SETTING FORTH THE PLAN AND REPORTS ON PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN, TO IDENTIFY FUNDING FOR THE PLAN, AND TO COMPILE DATA

WHEREAS, in 2016, Miami-Dade County (the "County"), through Neat Streets Miami-Dade, released the Urban Tree Canopy Assessment Report ("2016 Report") compiled as a result of a partnership with American Forests and Bank of America; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Report focused on the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of the urban tree canopy within the Urban Development Boundary ("UDB") of the County, and also established baseline data on the extent and function of the existing urban forest; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Report also provided a resource to guide future community forest management and reforestation efforts; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 Report found that overall tree canopy within the county UDB was 19.9 percent; and

WHEREAS, in October 2021, the County through Neat Streets Miami-Dade released an updated Urban Tree Canopy Assessment Report ("2021 Report") created in partnership with American Forests, University of Florida, and Florida International University; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Report found that the overall tree canopy within the county UDB was 20.1 percent and that no statistically significant difference from the 2016 Report was measured, demonstrating that the overall tree canopy has not significantly changed for the study area as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the 2021 Report found that the existing tree canopy in unincorporated areas of Miami-Dade County (“UMSA”) declined by over 3 percent and now stands at 16 percent coverage; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the 2021 Report found that half of the 34 municipalities in the County experienced a decrease in existing urban tree canopy coverage and that many of those localities already had an urban tree canopy of less than 15 percent; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2021 Report, increases in surface temperature could be observed from 2016 to 2020 at locations where tree canopy was replaced by pervious or impervious surfaces, or where pervious surfaces were replaced by impervious surfaces; and

WHEREAS, according to American Forests, a nonprofit partner in the compilation of the urban tree canopy reports, trees are an important resource in absorbing storm water, which prevents flooding; and

WHEREAS, additionally, the 2021 Report found that census block groups with higher median household incomes tend to have more existing tree canopy coverage, and conversely, lower-income census blocks tend to have lower levels of tree canopy; and

WHEREAS, this trend is especially pronounced in low-income Hispanic census blocks, and noticeable tree canopy decline occurred in several majority black communities throughout the County; and

WHEREAS, according to the 2021 Report, zip codes with a higher percentage of existing urban tree canopy tend to have fewer respiratory-related illnesses and overall hospitalization rates; and

WHEREAS, the goal of 30 percent tree canopy is incorporated into the County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan, Climate Action Strategy, and Street Tree Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, in 2006, the County adopted the Street Tree Master Plan, which provided the framework to design and implement street tree plantings, and was further used to create countywide minimum standards in order to enhance the County tree canopy to a minimum of 30 percent coverage, which would lead to a greener, more walkable, and livable community; and

WHEREAS, the goals of the Street Tree Master Plan include planting of quality trees in public rights of way, developing and executing a tree management plan to craft sustainable tree structure, promoting the design of urban spaces that adequately fit trees, encouraging local growers to produce the quality and species of trees used in public rights-of-way, and educating policy makers and the public on the importance of adequate tree canopy; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, this Board amended chapter 18 of the Miami-Dade County Code, which regulates landscaping, to apply Florida friendly landscaping principles to requirements for private land and rights-of-way, permits for tree removal, the minimum number of trees per lot or acre, and restrictions on palms being counted to meet minimum tree requirements; and

WHEREAS, the County faces many challenges in meeting this goal, including increased development, damage from storms, lack of maintenance of existing trees, trees planted in inadequate and inappropriate locations, and the recent enactment of Florida Statutes section 163.045, which lowers the standard required of homeowners to lawfully remove trees from their property; and

WHEREAS, other large public entities impact the level of tree canopy in the County, including the Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Power and Light, Miami-Dade County Public Schools, the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority, and various municipalities; and

WHEREAS, according to the Climate and Heat Health Task Force, 80 percent of current tree canopy is on privately owned land; and

WHEREAS, various County departments and divisions have jurisdiction over planting, maintenance, donation, regulation, and permitting of trees on both public and private property for new developments and existing locations, including the Parks Recreation and Open Spaces Department, the Department of Transportation and Public Works, the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, and the Internal Services Department; and

WHEREAS, multiple departments and divisions measure the numbers of trees planted, removed, and maintained in different ways and also have access to multiple funding sources including grants, corporate donations, the County general fund, and trust funds; and

WHEREAS, within the County, the Resilient 305 program's Climate and Heat Health Task Force is leading a community collaboration to examine ways to reduce heat, address structural inequities in historically marginalized communities, and increase resilience through the planting of trees, including at green bus stops, on public rights-of-way, and on private property; and

WHEREAS, the Resilient 305 program's Climate and Heat Health Task Force has identified best practices and strategies to achieve 30 percent tree canopy including improving data and analysis of heat islands, counting trees as assets on the County's balance sheet, updating and aligning landscape and public work manuals, conducting outreach at the neighborhood level to promote and facilitate tree adoption, licensing tree trimmers, increasing landscape regulation

compliance for developers, hiring arborists to review site plans for right tree in right place, identifying incentives to plant and maintain trees on private property, prioritizing acquisition of environmentally endangered lands within low canopy neighborhoods, and identifying tree planting potential on all County properties within the low canopy areas; and

WHEREAS, current funding levels are not adequate to achieve the County’s stated goals, and additional funding needs to be identified, especially for maintenance, the hiring of arborists and outside experts, funds for community groups for education and outreach, support of local growers, and the purchasing of trees especially larger trees, which have a greater impact in a shorter amount of time; and

WHEREAS, this Board wishes to increase and enhance the urban tree canopy throughout the County,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA, that this Board:

Section 1. Directs the County Mayor or County Mayor’s designee to develop and implement a comprehensive plan (the “plan”) to achieve 30 percent urban tree canopy across Miami-Dade County by 2032, and to ensure that the 2026 Urban Tree Canopy Assessment demonstrates an increase in tree canopy in areas that the 2021 Report indicated as having 10 percent or less of tree canopy. The plan shall, at a minimum; (a) address inequities in urban tree canopy coverage currently experienced in low-income communities as identified in the 2021 Report, prioritizing those communities within UMSA and county-controlled land; (b) include strategies to collaborate with non-government entities; and (c) identify legally available funding sources, including possible grant funding, and include in the proposed budget for FY 2022-23 and future fiscal years sufficient funds to implement the plan and achieve the canopy goals by 2026

and 2032. The County Mayor or County Mayor’s designee shall provide a report setting forth the plan to this Board within 120 days of the effective date of this resolution and place the completed report on an agenda of the full Board without committee review, pursuant to Ordinance No. 14-65.

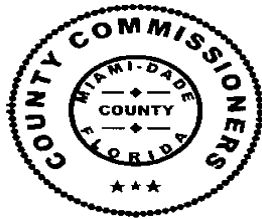
Section 2. Directs the County Mayor or County Mayor’s designee to compile data on the County’s progress in implementing the plan across all departments and divisions involved in planting, maintenance, or removal of trees and to develop a mechanism to compile uniform, consistent, and trackable data that allows the County to measure progress.

Section 3. Directs the County Mayor or County Mayor’s designee to provide reports on the County’s progress in implementing the plan. The progress reports shall be prepared annually and should include progress on coordination efforts across County departments and with state, local, and private sector stakeholders, budgetary requirements, and other resources necessary to make progress and to begin implementing this plan within the next budget cycle. Each such report shall be placed on an agenda of the full Board without committee review, pursuant to Ordinance No. 14-65.

The Prime Sponsor of the foregoing resolution is Commissioner Eileen Higgins. It was offered by Commissioner **Rebeca Sosa**, who moved its adoption. The motion was seconded by Commissioner **Eileen Higgins** and upon being put to a vote, the vote was as follows:

	Jose “Pepe” Diaz, Chairman	aye	
	Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Vice-Chairman	absent	
Sen. René García	aye	Keon Hardemon	absent
Sally A. Heyman	aye	Danielle Cohen Higgins	aye
Eileen Higgins	aye	Joe A. Martinez	aye
Kionne L. McGhee	absent	Jean Monestime	absent
Raquel A. Regalado	aye	Rebeca Sosa	aye
Sen. Javier D. Souto	aye		

The Chairperson thereupon declared this resolution duly passed and adopted this 14th day of June, 2022. This resolution shall become effective upon the earlier of (1) 10 days after the date of its adoption unless vetoed by the County Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board, or (2) approval by the County Mayor of this resolution and the filing of this approval with the Clerk of the Board.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BY ITS BOARD OF
COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

HARVEY RUVIN, CLERK

By: **Basia Pruna**
Deputy Clerk

Approved by County Attorney as
to form and legal sufficiency.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "mjs", is written over a horizontal line.

Melanie J. Spencer
Cristina M. Rabionet