



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
FEDERAL APPROPRIATIONS REQUEST FORM (FY 2011)
SECOND HALF - 111th CONGRESS

1. NAME OF DEPARTMENT

Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department

2. DEPARTMENT CONTACT PERSONS, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE AND FAX NUMBER(S), & E-MAIL ADDRESS

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3. PROJECT NAME

Safe Routes to Parks and Public Spaces

4. BACKGROUND

Today, more than ever, there is a need to provide options and opportunities for communities concerned about traffic jams, unsafe walking conditions, physically inactive lifestyles and overall quality of life. Bicycling and walking can be viable options for everyday travel. These options are cost-effective, improve our mobility, protect our climate, enhance our energy security and improve public health.

To achieve these goals, Miami-Dade County is making it a priority to build functional networks of bicycle lanes, and boulevards, bicycle paths, shared-use trails and sidewalks, connecting the places where substantial numbers of people live, work, and play. The following proposals will advance the efforts of creating

safe routes to parks and public spaces that will ultimately make Miami-Dade County a more sustainable and more livable community.

This federal appropriations request covers four distinct projects that have the common theme of providing safe routes to parks and public spaces to improve the overall quality of life in Miami-Dade County: Biscayne Trail Segment C, Biscayne Trail Bridge B, Western Greenway Planning, and Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass Project Development & Environment (PD&E) study.

The **Biscayne Trail Segment C** is a 6.4 mile greenway that connects three County parks, a National Park (Biscayne National Park), three non-motorized shared-use trails and one bike lane. It is part of a larger regional system that ultimately connects to 26.7 miles of existing shared-use trail that goes all the way to downtown Miami and Bill Baggs State Park on Key Biscayne. This regional network goes through five municipalities and provides access to numerous local parks and area-wide parks and natural area preserves as well as several of Florida's protected coastal habitats.

The idea for the Biscayne Trail goes back to 1994 and the South Dade Greenway Network Master Plan. The 36.2 mile Biscayne Trail is one of ten trails proposed from the Master Plan that was born out of a community desire to create a comprehensive system of multi-purpose trails in South Miami-Dade County from the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew. The vision was to provide scenic, recreational and utilitarian corridors to be enjoyed by both residents and visitors.

Since 2006, Miami-Dade County has been working with numerous partners to develop a master plan for the **Biscayne-Everglades Greenway** which is a proposed forty-five mile loop shared-use trail that will connect Biscayne National Park to Everglades National Park. The master plan includes a small portion of Biscayne Trail Segment C and all of Biscayne Trail Segment D in the southern route. Being a part of this network is important because it will provide an important framework or spine greenway, linking the eastern and western sides of the County and offering links to nearby adjacent north and south trail systems.

The **Western Greenway** area will provide new fresh water lakes and beaches for canoeing, kayaking, swimming and other passive, recreation-based activities providing a western alternative to long drives to the Atlantic Ocean to the east. It would also create a transition buffer between urban development and the Everglades and support the rural character and agricultural lands of western Miami-Dade County. Furthermore, it would provide a multi-purpose trail corridor that connects to the existing County greenway and trails network (see attachment).

The **Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass** will replace the current sub-standard facility that includes a poorly lit and poorly drained underpass with a series of approach steps that are not handicap accessible. The existing facility does not

meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements or American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) requirements. There is not enough vertical head clearance between the existing Interstate I-95 road bridge and the South Florida Rail Corridor (SFRC) railroad bridge to meet the 8' minimum standard. In addition, the elevation of the existing trail is only a few feet above the Snake Creek Canal so it frequently floods during storm events.

5. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

This funding request will help complete four distinct projects that provide safe routes to parks and public spaces: Biscayne Trail Segment C, Biscayne Trail Bridge B, Western Greenway Planning, and Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study. Each project will help form an interconnected system of greenways and trails that provide transportation alternatives and reduces traffic congestion, creates new recreational opportunities; increases property values; protects natural resources and encourages tourism and business development. Furthermore, these projects will enhance the County's Vision that residents of every neighborhood, urban, suburban, rural, incorporated and unincorporated have equal access to places to walk, to exercise, to socialize and to engage in a healthy active lifestyle.

The Biscayne Trail Segment C project involves completion of the final 3.1 miles of a paved shared-use trail, known as Segment C, at the south end of the trail from Military Canal (theoretical SW 304 St.) to North Canal (SW 328 St.) near the entrance to Biscayne National Park and Homestead Bayfront Park and Marina. See the attached map for details. This project will provide direct non-motorized access from urban populations to the north to the environmentally protected coastal habitats to the south and Biscayne Bay to the east.

Biscayne Trail Bridge B connects 6.4 miles of Biscayne Trail Segment C to 4.0 miles of Biscayne Trail Segment D. Biscayne Trail Segments C and D constitute a 11.9 mile greenway that connects three County parks, a National Park (Biscayne National Park), three non-motorized shared-use trails and one bike lane (see attached map). This project will provide direct non-motorized access from suburban populations in Homestead and Florida City in the west to the environmentally protected coastal habitats and Biscayne Bay to the east.

Western Greenway Planning is a project that involves research and analysis, GIS mapping, and strategic plan development and public involvement for a 1-5 mile wide corridor of conservation and recreation land buffering the Florida Everglades along the L-31N and L-31W Canals that would connect the Lake Belt area to the north and the Southern Glades Wildlife Management Area to the south (see attachment). This planning effort must be done before any acquisition can begin.

Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study will look at the social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with proposed improvement for an east-west connection for the existing Snake Creek Trail crossing eight lanes of traffic over Interstate I-95 and two sets of railroad tracks over the South Florida Rail Corridor. The alternatives developed will be compared based on community and environmental impact, design and construction, engineering inspection, right-of-way acquisition and environmental mitigation. A complete public involvement program will be conducted throughout the study. The PD&E Study must be completed before Preliminary Engineering and Design and Construction funds are encumbered.

6. AMOUNT REQUESTED

\$4,312,500

7. APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE OF JURISDICTION (Please include federal agency of jurisdiction and account)

None

8. RATIONALE FOR FUNDING PROPOSAL (With details of how money will be spent, i.e. programming, administrative cost and expenditures. Also include verification that County has signed necessary cost sharing agreements if applicable)

Current funding for construction of Biscayne Trail Segment C will only cover a portion of Biscayne Trail Segment C leaving an unfunded gap of 3.1 miles (see attached map). Additional funding is needed to complete Biscayne Trail Segment C and provide an important connection to Biscayne National Park and Homestead Bayfront Park. This project is an essential part and critical link of the Biscayne-Everglades Greenway. Biscayne Trail Segment C provides the only viable connection from the northern route of the greenway along the Mowry Canal to Biscayne National Park and Homestead Bayfront Park.

The Biscayne-Everglades Greenway will form the framework for smaller arterial linkages and area bicycle pedestrian projects to link to a major system. Biscayne Trail Segments C is the spine of the system. As result, this will help establish an alternative transportation network by creating connections for people to move about safely for recreation, enjoying the outdoors, shopping or getting to school or work.

The appropriated funds will be utilized on the planning, design or construction of the following four projects:

BUDGET for Biscayne Trail Segment C:

Biscayne Trail Segment C 3.1 Miles **\$ 2,712,500**

BUDGET for Western Greenway Planning:

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Research & Analysis | \$50,000 |
| GIS Mapping | \$ 75,000 |
| Public Involvement | \$ 25,000 |
| Administrative Costs | \$ 50,000 |
| Strategic Plan Development | \$100,000 |
| <u>Preliminary Management Plan</u> | <u>\$100,000</u> |
| TOTAL | \$ 400,000 |

BUDGET for Snake Creek Trail Overpass PD&E Study:

Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass PD&E Study 1 EA **\$300,000**

BUDGET for Biscayne Trail Bridge B:

Bridge B at junction of Biscayne Trail Segment C and D 90 LF **\$900,000**

9. ARE GRANT, FORMULA, OR ENTITLEMENT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT, INITIATIVE, OR ACTIVITY? (If so, please indicate and explain rationale for requesting a separate appropriation earmark, as opposed to accessing other federal funds)

Yes. However, none of these projects have received any Federal discretionary funding. As a result, the rationale is to apply for all potential funds available. The Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department requested \$9.4 million in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on August 8, 2008 for the design and construction of Biscayne Trail Segment C and D, but no funding has been received.

10. INTENDED RECIPIENT(S) OF FUNDING

Miami-Dade County Park and Recreation Department.

11. MATCHING FUNDS (List amount and source. Are Local and State matching funds required for this funding source? If so, please indicate the state or local match, as well as % of federal match required by the Federal Government)

It is anticipated that projects that can leverage funds from other sources will demonstrate a high level of confidence. It is assumed a 20% match will be encouraged for federal funding. Local matching sources are available for Biscayne Trail Segment C and Biscayne Trail Bridge B with \$800,000 available under a General Obligation Bond (GOB) #51. A total of \$1,000,000 has been programmed for Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass under a General Obligation Bond (GOB) #51 which could be used as local matching source for federal funding. No local matching sources are available for Bridge B. There are no local or State matching funds for the Western Greenway Strategic Plan.

12. HISTORY OF FEDERAL FUNDING (List agency funding and amount funded per year over the last 5 years)

\$2,545,000 is programmed for Biscayne Trail Segment C and D under FM #251265-4. This funding includes \$290,000 for Project Development and Environment (FY 05-06), \$510,000 for Preliminary Engineering and Design (FY 09-10), and \$1,745,000 for Construction (FY 11-12). A Local Agency Program agreement has been executed with Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study is underway. No federal funding has been allocated yet for Biscayne Trail Bridge B, Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass PD&E Study and the Western Greenway Planning.

13. HISTORY OF COUNTY FUNDING (List each fiscal year and amount funded)

Miami-Dade County Public Works has spent \$27,200,000 of The People's Transportation Plan (PTP) funds on improvements to SW 328 Street (North Canal Drive) that includes bike lanes, shared-use trails, and wide curb lanes. In addition, \$25,000 was spent on the Development of the Biscayne-Everglades Greenway Master Plan which was funded by the City of Homestead and district funds from Commissioners Dennis C. Moss and Katy Sorenson.

A total of \$800,000 has been programmed for Biscayne Trail Segments C and D under a General Obligation Bond (GOB) #51. A total of \$1,000,000 has been programmed for Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass under a General Obligation Bond (GOB) #51. \$500,000 has been programmed for FY 07-09 and another \$500,000 has been programmed for FY 11-16. No funding has been programmed for Bridge B or the Western Greenway Planning project.

**14. AMOUNT RECOMMENDED IN THIS YEAR'S FEDERAL BUDGET
(include agency funding this item)**

\$4,312,500

**15. IS THERE A DOCUMENTED NEED FOR THE PROJECT: INCLUDING
DEPARTMENT REPORTS OR BCC ACTION? (If so, please provide
documentation)**

Biscayne Trail Segment C is listed in the FY 2010-2014 Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This project is identified as part of the Park and Open Space System Master Plan (POSSMP) adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 2008 and the South Dade Greenway Network Master Plan, also adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 1995.

Biscayne Trail Bridge B is listed in the FY 2010-2014 Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass is not listed in the TIP. The Biscayne Trail and the Snake Creek Trail are identified as part of the POSSMP which was approved by the Board of County Commissioners at a public hearing on February 19, 2008 via Resolution R-171-08. In addition, the Biscayne Trail is part of the South Dade Greenway Network Master Plan, also adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 1995. The Snake Creek Trail is part of the North Dade Greenways Master Plan, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners in 1998.

The Western Greenway is also a component of the POSSMP; please see attachments.

**16. WAS THIS PROJECT HEARD BEFORE A PUBLICLY NOTICED
MEETING OR BODY OF ELECTED OFFICIALS (MUNICIPAL,
COUNTY OR STATE)? (List hearing body or meeting date)**

This project has been heard before numerous publicly noticed meetings and bodies of elected officials. The most recent public meeting was held on July 8, 2009 for the Biscayne Trail Segment C and D Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. In addition, this project was also heard as part of the Biscayne-Everglades Greenway, which covers a portion of Biscayne Trail Segment C and all of Biscayne Trail Segment D. The Biscayne-Everglades Greenway had three public meetings: One community workshop was held on June 22, 2006 and one community workshop was held on March 22, 2007, and one design workshop with the Miami Chapter of the American Institute of Architects was held on March 24, 2007. In addition, the South Dade Greenway Network Master Plan, which includes all of Biscayne Trail Segment C and D, was

endorsed by the following publicly noticed meetings or body of elected officials on the following dates: Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee on June 29, 1994; City of Homestead, July 28, 1994; City of Florida City September 9, 1994.

Biscayne Trail Bridge B was heard through a recent public meeting on July 8, 2009 for the Biscayne Trail Segment C and D Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. Snake Creek Trail I-95 Overpass was heard through three public meetings held for the Snake Creek Trail Planning and Feasibility Study: a workshop on April 6, 2005 and on March 30, 2005, and an open house on June 29, 2005.

The Western Greenway is a component of the Park and Open Space System Master Plan (POSSMP) which was approved by the Board of County Commissioners at a public hearing on February 19, 2008 via Resolution R-171-08.

Throughout the 18-month development of the POSSMP, public participation was extensive. The plan was built on input from more than 100 public meetings and stakeholder interviews, with more than 2,000 total participants. Public meetings ranged from large workshops to smaller meetings across Miami-Dade led by County staff. A unique aspect of the process is that the public meetings eventually evolved into a grassroots movement that built support and consensus for the plan prior to even going to the Commission.

Since BCC approval, the Park and Recreation Department (Department) has conducted over 75 presentations of the POSSMP to community interest groups, stakeholder organizations, professional associations, Community Council meetings and at special events throughout the County. Additionally, the Department holds a Great Parks Summit every two years at Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden in Miami, Florida as a forum for highlighting local, national and international projects and presentations which exemplify POSSMP principles.

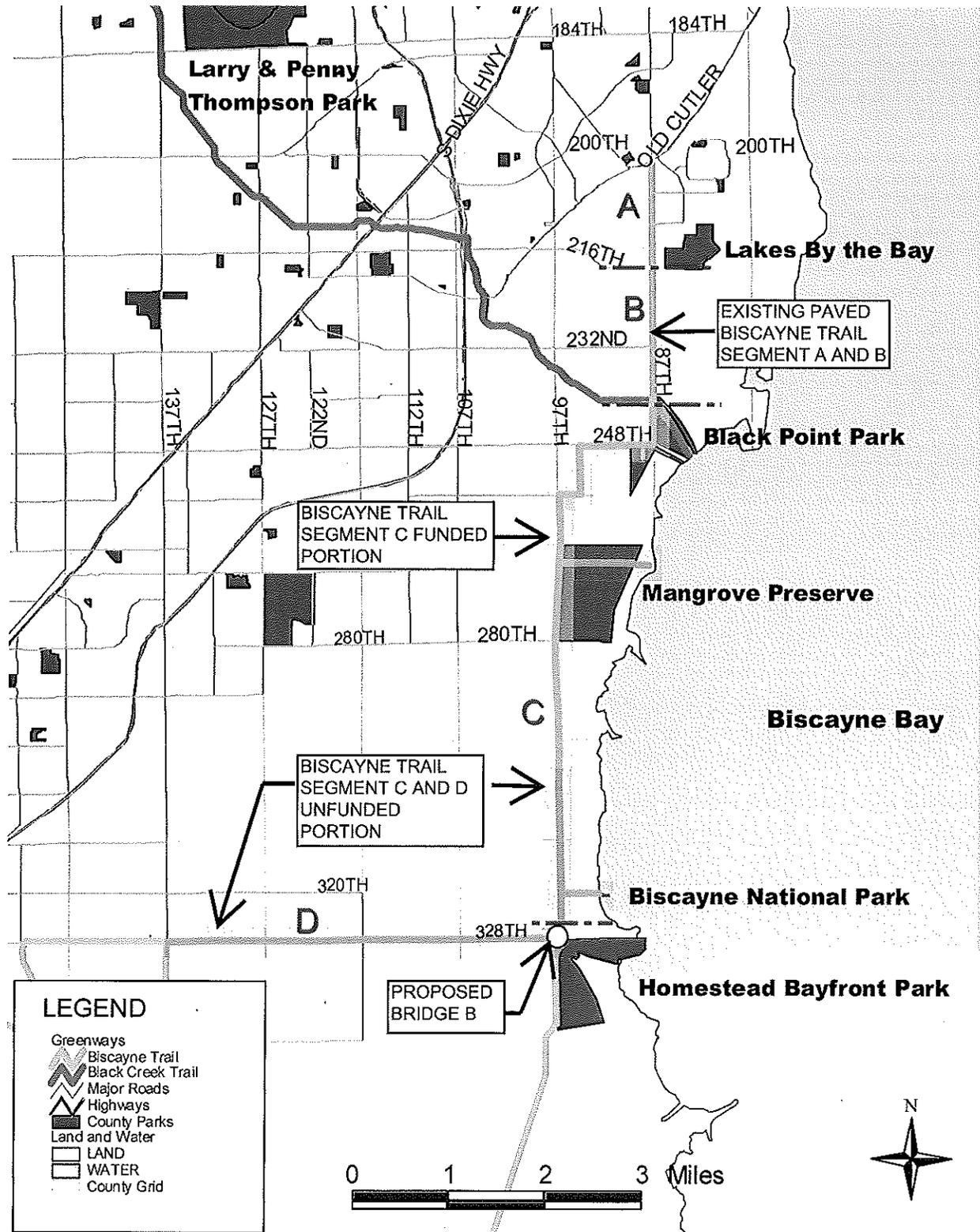
On a local level, the Department has conducted Regional Partnership Summits to foster cooperation between County and neighboring municipal governments, and other organizations in the area and to identify projects which the POSSMP principles can be applied.

17. PRIORITIZE YOUR REQUESTS NUMERICALLY

This project is priority one for the Department.

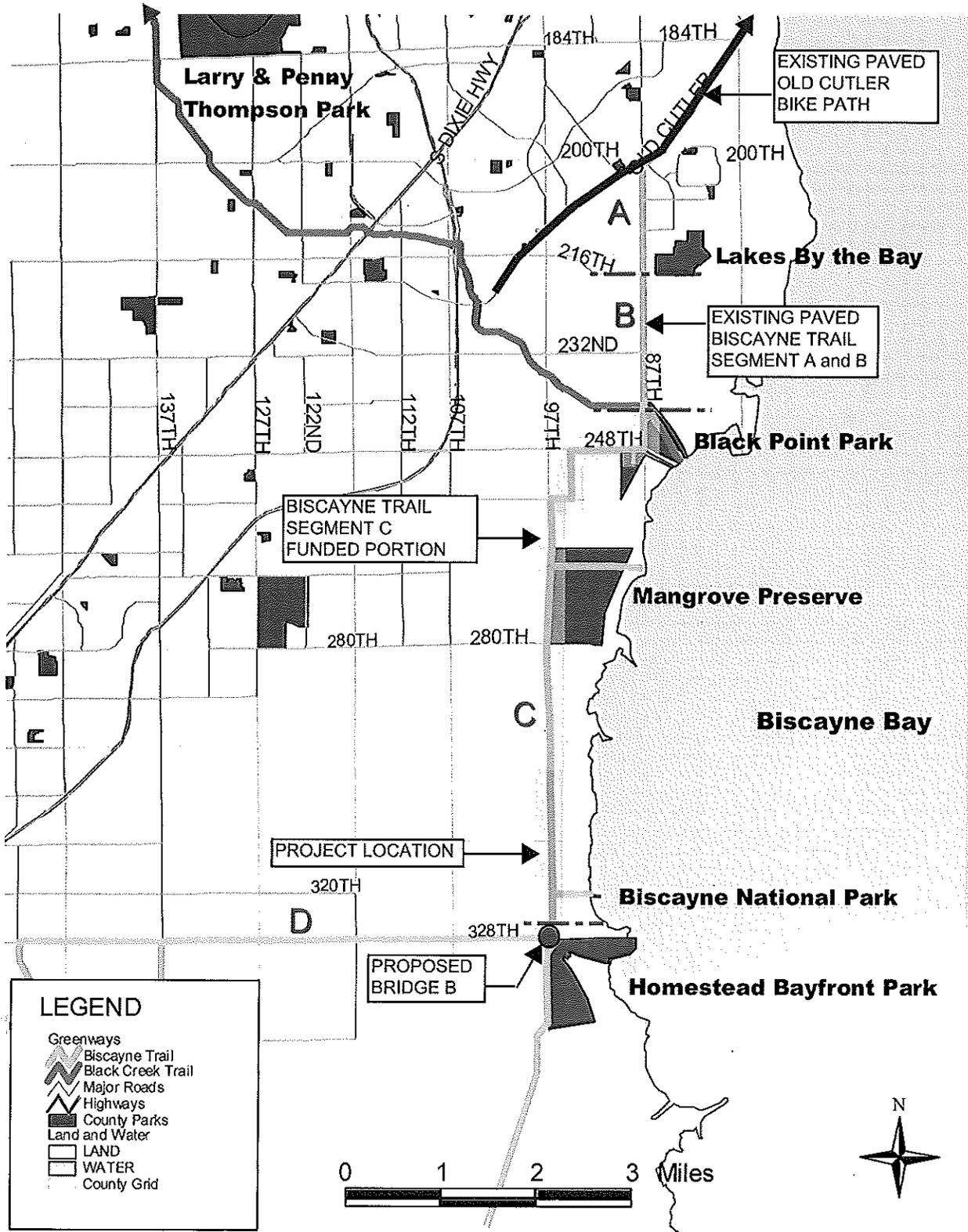


MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARK & RECREATION DEPARTMENT BISCAYNE TRAIL SEGMENT MAP



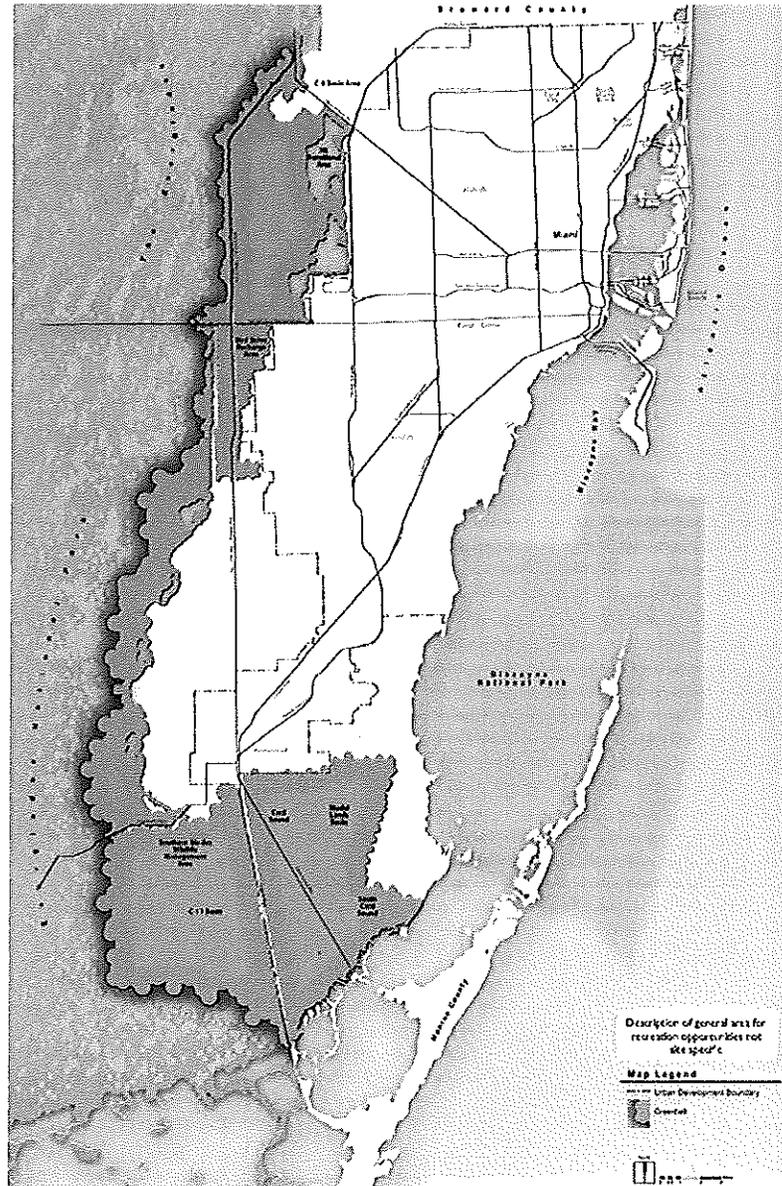


MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARK and RECREATION DEPARTMENT BISCAYNE TRAIL SEGMENT C and BRIDGE B





WESTERN GREENWAY



**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY
PARK AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT**

WESTERN GREENWAY

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I. SETTING: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Miami-Dade County is uniquely situated at the southern tip of the state of Florida. With the Everglades to the west and Biscayne Bay and ultimately, the Atlantic Ocean to the east, areas for human habitation are limited by these natural boundaries. Miami is the only metropolitan area in the United States to be bordered by two national parks, Everglades National Park and Biscayne Bay National Park.



According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 2,431 square miles (6,297 km²), of which, 1,946 square miles, (80.04%) is land and 485 square miles (19.96%) is water, largely Biscayne Bay. With a population of over 2.25 million people and 35 incorporated cities, the County is experiencing continued growth and development.

With a tropical climate, warm temperatures year-round, and its proximity to Latin America, Miami-Dade County sees a continuous growth in residents and a strong tourist economy. While the surge in population brings economic and urban growth, the need for publically accessible open space and recreation facilities increases.

A western greenway provides a transition between the Everglades and agricultural lands and serves to protect the Everglades, support natural water systems which flow throughout the County between the Everglades and Biscayne Bay, preserve the rural and agricultural character of the western part of Miami-Dade County, and provide recreation opportunities.



II. PARK AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM MASTER PLAN (OSMP)

On February 19, 2008 the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners adopted Resolution R-171-08 approving the Miami-Dade County Park and Open Space System Master Plan (OSMP).

The vision for the OSMP is to create an interconnected framework for growth, one that results in a more livable, sustainable community. Consisting of existing and proposed parks, public spaces, natural and cultural places, greenways, trails and streets, the framework will form the foundation or "bone structure" of the County to accommodate growth while also improving the quality of life for residents.

The OSMP is a long term initiative to re-position the County by creating a framework for livability and sustainability that better addresses the issues facing the community. While it is projected that the Vision will require at least 50 years to fully implement, it is important that we recognize every incremental action will provide an opportunity to move one step closer to realizing the overall Vision of an inter-connected framework, and a more livable, sustainable, Miami-Dade County.

1. **GREAT PARKS** are for everyone, and should provide a diverse and balanced system of active and passive recreational opportunities. The County's Vision is that residents of every neighborhood, urban, suburban, rural, incorporated and unincorporated, have equal access to places to walk, to exercise, to socialize and to engage in a healthy, active lifestyle.
2. **GREAT PUBLIC SPACES** often define the great cities of the world. As Miami-Dade County develops more densely, there will be a need for great, attractive, usable public spaces that provide an opportunity for meaningful recreation experiences. These can be anything from neighborhood plazas to great waterfront vistas and promenades.
3. **GREAT NATURAL AND CULTURAL PLACES** can be celebrated in a system of Zones (clusters of Environmentally Endangered Lands and Cultural Resource Centers) that: provide a variety of education activities and programs; elevate the public's appreciation and understanding of the County's natural ecosystems and cultural amenities; engage the surrounding neighborhoods; and link the sites with the other elements of the open space system through streets, greenways, and water trails.
4. **GREAT GREENWAYS, TRAILS, AND WATER TRAILS** can form an interconnected system that: provides transportation alternatives and reduces traffic congestion; creates new recreational opportunities; increases property values; protects natural resources; and encourages tourism and business development. These trails strengthen connections across the County, from Broward to Monroe Counties, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Everglades.

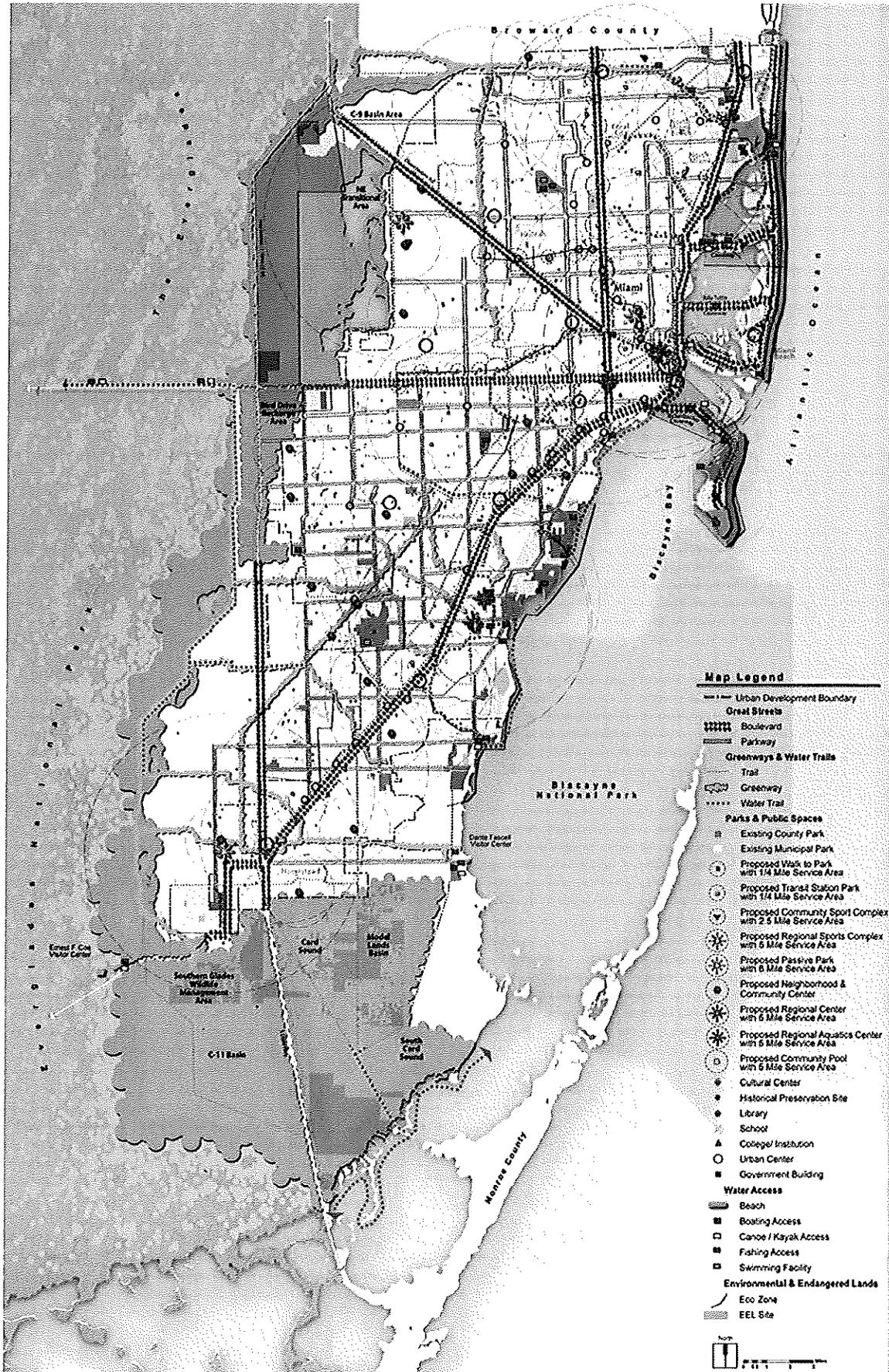
5. **GREAT STREETS** can be created through the redevelopment of existing arterial and collector roads to: create urban form and identity; improve aesthetics; provide for bicycle/pedestrian safety and comfort; and to improve the social, physical and economic environment for land uses along the corridors. To facilitate the creation of great streets, Miami-Dade County must move beyond vehicular performance-based street design and instead design streets that are defined by their role in the community. While all streets should have a minimum level of accessibility to all modes of transportation, not all streets require the same details.

The following guiding principles are applied to all aspects of open space development within the County:

- **EQUITY** – Every resident should be able to enjoy the same quality of public facilities and services regardless of income, age, race, ability or geographic location.
- **ACCESS**- Every resident should be able to safely and comfortably walk, bicycle, drive and/or ride public transit from their home to work, school, parks, libraries, shopping and community facilities.
- **BEAUTY**- Every public space including streets, parks, plazas and civic buildings should be designed to be aesthetically pleasing and complement the natural and cultural landscape.
- **MULTIPLE BENEFITS**- Every single public action should generate multiple benefits to maximize taxpayer dollars.
- **SEAMLESSNESS**– Every element of the County, including neighborhoods, parks, natural areas, streets, schools, civic centers and commercial areas should be connected without regard to jurisdiction.
- **SUSTAINABILITY**- Natural resources, including water, wildlife habitat and open space, must be protected for future generations.



MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN



III. WESTERN GREENWAY: VISION & GOALS

The most ambitious component of the Greenway, Trails, and Water Trails aspect of the OSMP is the establishment of a Western Greenway along the County's western edge. Conceived as a 1-5 mile wide corridor of conservation and recreation land buffering the Florida Everglades, the Western Greenway would:

1. Connect the Lake Belt area to the north and the Southern Glades Wildlife Management Area to the south for both wildlife habitat and recreation.
2. Provide new fresh water lanes and beaches for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, swimming and other passive, resource-based recreation activities, providing a western alternative to long drives to the beach.
3. Provide a multi-purpose trail corridor that connects to the County's greenway and trails network; providing opportunities such as bike trails, hiking trails, equestrian and other forms of non-motorized recreation.
4. Create a transition between urban development and the Everglades.
5. Provide opportunities for the enhanced water quality and treatment of storm water run-off.
6. Preserve natural resources, ecosystem and natural system functions.
7. Support the rural character and agricultural lands of western Miami-Dade County.

Miami-Dade County is bounded by Biscayne Bay to the east and the Florida Everglades to the west. As the population of the County continues to grow and residential areas expand, residential areas will continue to develop in western areas of the County. Establishment of the Western Greenway today will ensure open space, conservation and recreation for future residents.

The Western Greenway will be implemented over a long period of time through land acquisition, Transfer of Development Rights (TRD), conservation and management access agreements, land donations, partnerships between public agencies and other techniques.

Once the land has been acquired or public access secured, a greenway trail providing amenities such as an improved trail, trailheads, rest stops, interpretive kiosks, signage, restrooms, bike racks, canoe and kayak launches and swimming areas will be developed.

Located outside the Urban Development Boundary, the Western Greenway will serve regional, as opposed to local, recreation needs. The Greenway and amenities developed within it will serve as a resource for all residents and visitors of Miami-Dade County.

IV. LAND ACQUISITION STRATEGY – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will entail development of a Western Greenway Strategic Plan (WGSP) to include:

- Establish western greenway area boundary
- Inventory existing land use and parcel ownership through extensive GIS mapping and analysis, field verification
- Establish Land Acquisition Selection Criteria (LASC) for the Western Greenway
- Identification of acquisition target areas and parcel specific priorities
- Identification of lands already under public ownership and other public agency initiatives in the area
- Develop a prioritized acquisition strategy which phases land acquisition based on established criteria
- Identify trail location, public access points and recreation areas
- Preliminary Management Plan

The WGSP will be a tool that will allow for proactive planning and strategic land acquisition for development of a conservation and recreation corridor in western Miami-Dade County. Through the establishment of criteria such as location, accessibility, resources (i.e., ecological, cultural, historical), ownership, site conditions; we will be able to prioritize lands for acquisition or other means of securing public access.

The WGSP will allow us to:

1. Outline how the Western Greenway will develop, over 5-, 10-, and 25-year time frames;
2. Identify the financial resources needed to achieve acquisition/securing of lands and development of recreation facilities;
3. Identify the agencies and entities for potential partnerships,
4. Prioritize outcome-oriented actions and goals.

V. POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

Many of the properties are already under State, Federal, or County ownership. The success of the Greenbelt will depend on partnerships between the County, State and Federal agencies, developers and business associations, community organizations, environmental organizations, government officials, and others.

Potential partnerships include:

- Trust for Public Land
- The Nature Conservancy
- MDC Department of Environmental Resource Management (DERM)
- MDC Water and Sewer Department
- State of Florida – Department of Environmental Protection
- State of Florida – Trust for Internal Improvement Fund
- South Florida Water Management District
- Miami-Dade County Agricultural Board



VI. WESTERN GREENWAY – CONCEPTUAL ILLUSTRATION

Western Greenway

This map illustrates the establishment of a Western Greenway connecting the Lake Belt Area to the north with the Southern Glades Wildlife Management Area to the south. The greenway alignment is conceptual and does not depict specific boundaries.

