

# COMMUNITY HEALTH AND DESIGN ELEMENT

## Introduction

The purpose of the Community Health and Design Element is to provide the framework for building communities that promote healthier lifestyles. The linkage between design and health has been well documented by numerous sources. Public and private organizations across the disciplines of planning and public health have conducted studies confirming the benefits pedestrian friendly development patterns can have in supporting health-sustaining activities, increasing physical activity and creating environments that are conducive to better health across generations. This research has been the foundation and reference for the goals, objectives and policies advanced within this element.

### GOAL

**TO DEVELOP SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES THROUGH DESIGN AND FOOD ACCESS POLICIES THAT IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF ALL RESIDENTS BY INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, ASSURING SAFETY, PROVIDING A NUTRITIONAL FOOD ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECTING NATURAL SYSTEMS.**

### Objective CHD-1

**Miami-Dade County shall apply design standards to the public domain to encourage physical activity across generations.**

### Policies

- CHD-1A. Miami-Dade County shall create a network of sidewalks, trails, accessible parks and recreation facilities that establishes a pedestrian-friendly and bicyclist-friendly environment, which encourages physical activity and links destinations, such as restaurants, shops, work places and neighborhood-based retail to each other and residential areas.
- CHD-1B. Encourage all citizens to participate in physical activity by designing public space to universal access standards (ability of all people to have equal opportunity and access to services).
- CHD-1C. Design and develop neighborhoods that provide a comfortable and safe environment conducive for programs that integrate physical activity in the daily lives of children and adults.
- CHD-1D. Design communities to support the daily routines of its residents, particularly children and older adults, by establishing proximity among uses (e.g. schools, daycare, senior and/or community centers, recreation facilities, open space, etc.).
- CHD-1E. Designate locations for carpooling and bus stops that encourage residents to maintain a daily level of walking as part of their commute, and are designed in a manner that reflects the character of the community or district where the stops are located.
- CHD-1F. Adopt and implement by 2014 high-quality streetscape design standards and facade treatments to reflect the character of the community to attract pedestrian activity.

- CHD-1G. Promote coordination between jurisdictions in the planning and implementation of bicycle, trail, transit, pedestrian and other alternative transportation modes to establish continuous networks that support healthy communities.
- CHD-1H. Adopt and implement by 2014 a signage and way-finding program within the public realm that is an aesthetic enhancement to the community. It should clearly inform residents and visitors of key locations, corridors and pedestrian/bicycle routes to destinations and amenities.
- CHD-1I. Create walkable environments between tourist destinations through design guidelines that take measures to enhance the public realm and encourage pedestrian/bicycle activity.
- CHD-1J. Apply guidelines from the Aesthetic Master Plan and Urban Design Manual to new and existing gateways, corridors and civic facilities.

### **Objective CHD-2**

**Miami-Dade County shall apply design standards to private development projects to encourage physical activity across generations.**

#### **Policies**

- CHD-2A. Miami-Dade County will encourage land development to incorporate community design principles that encourage physical activity through the promotion of strategies, when appropriate, but not limited to:
1. Utilization of non-motorized transportation modes;
  2. Location of public facilities accessible by multiple transportation modes;
  3. Availability and maintenance of quality pedestrian paths or sidewalks;
  4. Provision of street furniture and lighting enhancements;
  5. Provision of civic and recreational facilities;
  6. Establishment of interconnectivity between similar development projects through vehicular and/or pedestrian/bicycle cross access; and
  7. Provision of pedestrian and bicycle linkages between existing residential and non-residential land uses.
- CHD-2B. Encourage well-designed infill and redevelopment to reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve air quality, and support an outdoor environment that is suitable for safe physical activity.
- CHD-2C. Continue to conduct Area Plan studies and urban center rezonings that concentrate new population growth in areas with a mix of land uses, adequate infrastructure services and higher densities as a means of promoting healthy communities.

### **Objective CHD-3**

**Institute safety measures through urban design and material standards.**

## **Policies**

- CHD-3A. Design and develop neighborhoods that can facilitate children walking safely to Miami-Dade County Schools.
- CHD-3B. Encourage walking and bicycle riding as a means of transportation to and from school, by implementing capital projects that support the development of safe routes to school.
- CHD-3C. Prepare design standards for lighting as a pedestrian safety measure along streets, paths, crosswalks and other points of vehicular conflict, as well as within public spaces.
- CHD-3D. Update street design standards to incorporate traffic-calming measures, such as special paved crosswalks at key intersections and/or mid-block crossings, where applicable to promote pedestrian safety.
- CHD-3E. Miami-Dade County shall consider the use of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies in site design by integrating CPTED strategies into the zoning code and Urban Design Manual.
- CHD-3F. Miami-Dade County shall consider the use of CPTED strategies to address the safety of pedestrians in parking lots, transit terminals, parks and other public areas.

## **Objective CHD-4**

**Promote local food production and improve access to healthy food products for all residents of Miami-Dade County.**

## **Policies**

- CHD-4A. Promote increased production and expand the availability of agricultural goods and other food products produced in Miami-Dade County.
- CHD-4B. Promote the local sale and consumption of agricultural goods and other food products produced in Florida and specifically Miami-Dade County.
- CHD-4C. Promote opportunities to obtain fresh foods in Miami-Dade County neighborhoods by encouraging the development of community gardens; fresh produce stands, farmer markets, mobile food markets, small businesses such as vegetable and fruit markets, butcher shops, fish markets; and grocery markets by providing flexibility in the zoning code and other regulations.
- CHD-4D. Ensure that all neighborhoods have multi-modal access to fresh food products, and support and promote programs that increase or provide access to food products such as the County's Meals for the Elderly and Meals on Wheels programs.
- CHD-4E. Encourage the establishment of farm-to-school initiatives and community supported agriculture programs.

## **Objective CHD-5**

**Enhance natural systems through performance criteria for capital improvements.**

### **Policies**

- CHD-5A. The County shall investigate onsite stormwater management alternatives, such as bio-swales and green roofs, which reuse stormwater and reduce the rate of runoff from impervious surfaces.
- CHD-5B. Enhance street cross section design standards to incorporate planting strips for both stormwater percolation and tree planting to provide shade.
- CHD-5C. Implement and maintain the Miami-Dade Street Tree Master Plan to ensure an adequate urban forest and street tree coverage to reduce localized heat island effect.
- CHD-5D. Encourage parking structures and increase tree plantings in surface parking lots to reduce the heat island effect attributable to exposed, impervious surfaces.

### **Monitoring Program**

In order to enable the preparation of the periodic evaluation and appraisal of the comprehensive plan as required by Section 163.3191, F.S., the comprehensive plan should contain adopted procedures for monitoring and evaluating the Plan and its implementation. There are no Level of Service standards for this element. This section outlines the substantive features of Miami-Dade County's monitoring program pertinent to the objectives, policies, and parameters referenced in this Element. It should be understood that the monitoring program might be refined over time, as more experience is gained. Undoubtedly, by the time that the next evaluation and appraisal of the comprehensive plan is conducted, which would include this Element, the measures and procedures outlined herein will have been modified somewhat to reflect practical considerations. For the purpose of evaluating and assessing the implementation of the Community Health and Design Element in approximately Year 2017, each objective will be reviewed as follows to monitor the degree to which it has been reached.

**Objective CHD-1: Miami-Dade County shall apply design standards to the public domain to encourage physical activity across generations.**

Mode split between car trips and other forms of transportation.

Florida Environmental Public Health Tracking: "Percent of the population that live within a ten-minute walk (½ mile) of an off-street trail system."

Florida Environmental Public Health Tracking- Community Access Data- "Percent of population who live within ½ mile of a park."

American Community Survey: "Means of Transportation to Work: Walking."

American Community Survey: "Means of Transportation to Work: Bicycling."

**Objective CHD-2: Miami-Dade County shall apply design standards to private development projects to encourage physical activity.**

Shift in development density patterns to infill areas, transit-oriented developments, and overall vehicle miles travelled per-capita.

**Objective CHD-3: Institute safety measures through urban design and material standards.**

Vehicular/pedestrian accidents – ratio compared to population.

Bicyclist/pedestrian accidents – ratio compared to population.

**Objective CHD-4: Promote local food production and improve access to healthy food products for all residents of Miami-Dade County.**

Percentage of locally grown products consumed in Miami-Dade County.

Number of markets within walking distance to residential development.

Florida Environmental Public Health Tracking: Community Access Data- “Percent of population who live within ½ mile of a healthy food source.”

USDA Food Environmental Atlas: “Percent of Population with Low Access to Grocery Store.”

**Objective CHD-5: Enhance natural systems through performance criteria for capital improvements.**

Number of trees planted.

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