

# RECREATION & OPEN SPACE ELEMENT

## Introduction

The Recreation and Open Space Element specifically addresses open spaces and facilities which provide recreational opportunities as their primary function (recreation open space). Miami-Dade County contains many open spaces that serve a primary purpose other than active public recreation and while these open spaces have a significant recreational and aesthetic value, they are not addressed in this Element. Those open spaces, including such examples as the National and State parks and preserves as well as State Water Conservation Areas and other wetlands which have critical environmental and wildlife value, are addressed in the Conservation, Aquifer Recharge and Drainage, Coastal Management and Land Use Elements. Other open spaces such as the agricultural areas and open lands are addressed in the Land Use Element.

On February 19, 2008, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) approved the *Miami-Dade County Park and Open Space System Master Plan*, also known as the Open Space Master Plan (OSMP), as an update to the 1969 Recreation Open Space Master Plan. The Open Space Master Plan creates a long term vision for a new, 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 complete streets, the framework for parks and open space will form the foundation for the County to accommodate growth while also improving the quality of life for residents. The guiding principles of the Open Space Master Plan, as well as the vision for a seamless, sustainable parks and open space system are incorporated into the goal, objectives and policies of this element. Realization of the vision will occur over time requiring completion of the efforts described in the Goal, Objectives and Policies of the Recreation & Open Space Element.

Currently, all recreation open spaces addressed by this Element, which make up our two-tier park system, are categorized as either areawide or local. Areawide recreation open spaces meet the diverse recreational needs of Miami-Dade County residents and visitors on a countywide basis, and are classified as metropolitan parks, natural area preserves, special activity areas, district and greenways. Local recreation open spaces meet the close-to-home recreational needs of the residents of specific areas within the County, and are classified as mini-parks, neighborhood, single-purpose, or community parks. In addition, local recreation open spaces include designated public school and college playfields and portions of private recreation open space. Miami-Dade County is responsible for the provision of areawide recreation open space throughout the County, and of local recreation open space to unincorporated areas.

Service areas for local recreation open spaces and park classifications are the primary criteria used to determine future park locations and conduct capacity evaluations. The Miami-Dade Park and Recreation Department determines service areas for local parks that serve unincorporated areas. These service areas are based on park size, existing or planned facilities, and public recreation demand. Table 1 summarizes Miami-Dade County's park classification criteria and service areas:

In addition to the park service areas, the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department strives to provide equitable access to all residents of the County in order to

provide the opportunity to participate in at-will<sup>1</sup> and/or programmed physical activities. The criteria established in the Equity Access Criteria Chart<sup>2</sup> is developed to make Miami-Dade County a more livable and sustainable community where residents should have access to parks within their neighborhood and be able to walk or bike to a park within ½ mile from their home. In addition, residents should have access to regional parks and the recreation opportunities therein within 2-3 miles biking or driving distance from their home.

The following Equity Access Criteria is provided for the two-tier park system:

- 1) Local parks serve residents in unincorporated areas with access to open space, play areas, playgrounds and other at-will<sup>1</sup> types of recreational opportunities. Access criteria for local parks are ¼ - ½ mile walking distance.
- 2) Areawide parks serve the entire County, including residents who live in both unincorporated and municipal areas. For the purpose of describing the opportunities for recreation activities, areawide parks are further characterized as population-based or resource based.
  - i) Population-based parks provide competition level sports facilities and large-scale recreational opportunities required to serve the entire population of the County. Access criteria for population-based regional parks is 2-3 miles biking or driving distance.
  - ii) Resource-based parks are based on a natural, historical or cultural resource and provide a specific type of recreational opportunity or experience. Access criteria for resource-based regional parks do not exist as these parks are located at the site of the resource. Residents and visitors in Miami-Dade County will travel to the parks to experience the resource or program offered on site.

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of “at will” activities encompasses the types of activities that had previously been referred to as “passive” recreation, but recognizes that more and more people are looking for activities, both active and passive, that can be done at the user’s will. As opposed to “programmed” recreational activities that are scheduled at specific times and for specific activities.

<sup>2</sup> Equity Access Criteria refers to the spatial distribution of parks and recreation programs.

<b>EQUITY ACCESS CRITERIA<sup>3</sup></b>		
<b>RESOURCE-BASED</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	
<b>NATURAL/CULTURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION</b>	All residents shall have opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, motor boating, fishing, observing wildlife, and experience a natural area.	Areawide
<b>POPULATION-BASED</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	
<b>RADIUS</b>		
<b>FOOTBALL</b>	All residents should be able to access competition level football facilities.	2 - 3 MILES
<b>SOCCER</b>	All residents should be able to access competition level soccer facilities.	2 - 3 MILES
<b>SOFTBALL/ YOUTH BASEBALL</b>	All residents should be able to access competition level softball and youth baseball facilities.	2 - 3 MILES
<b>TENNIS</b>	All residents should be able to access competition level tennis facilities.	2 - 3 MILES
<b>AQUATICS</b>	All residents should be able to access aquatic facilities such as a pool or splash playground.	2 - 3 MILES
<b>LOCAL (UMSA) AT WILL</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	<b>RADIUS</b>
<b>OPEN PLAY/ PLAYGROUNDS</b>	All residents, regardless of location, should be able to access open play areas, tot lots and playgrounds.	1/4 - 1/2 MILE
<b>FOOTBALL</b>	All residents should be able to access football fields.	1/4 - 1/2 MILE
<b>SOCCER</b>	All residents should be able to access soccer fields.	1/4 - 1/2 MILE
<b>SOFTBALL/ YOUTH BASEBALL</b>	All residents should be able to access softball and youth baseball fields.	1/4 - 1/2 MILE
<b>TENNIS</b>	All residents should be able to access tennis facilities.	1/4 - 1/2 MILE
<b>BASKETBALL</b>	All residents should be able to access basketball facilities.	1/4 - 1/2 MILE
<b>PROGRAMMED</b>		
<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>ACCESS</b>	
<b>OUT OF SCHOOL/ SUMMER CAMP</b>	All youth residents should be able to participate in an out of school or summer camp programs.	2 - 3 MILES

Note: These equity access criteria for at-will and programmed activities are used only as broad guidelines for use in addition to Level of Service (LOS) standards, but are not adopted as LOS for the purpose of concurrency.

<sup>3</sup> Equity Access Criteria refers to the spatial distribution of parks and recreation programs.

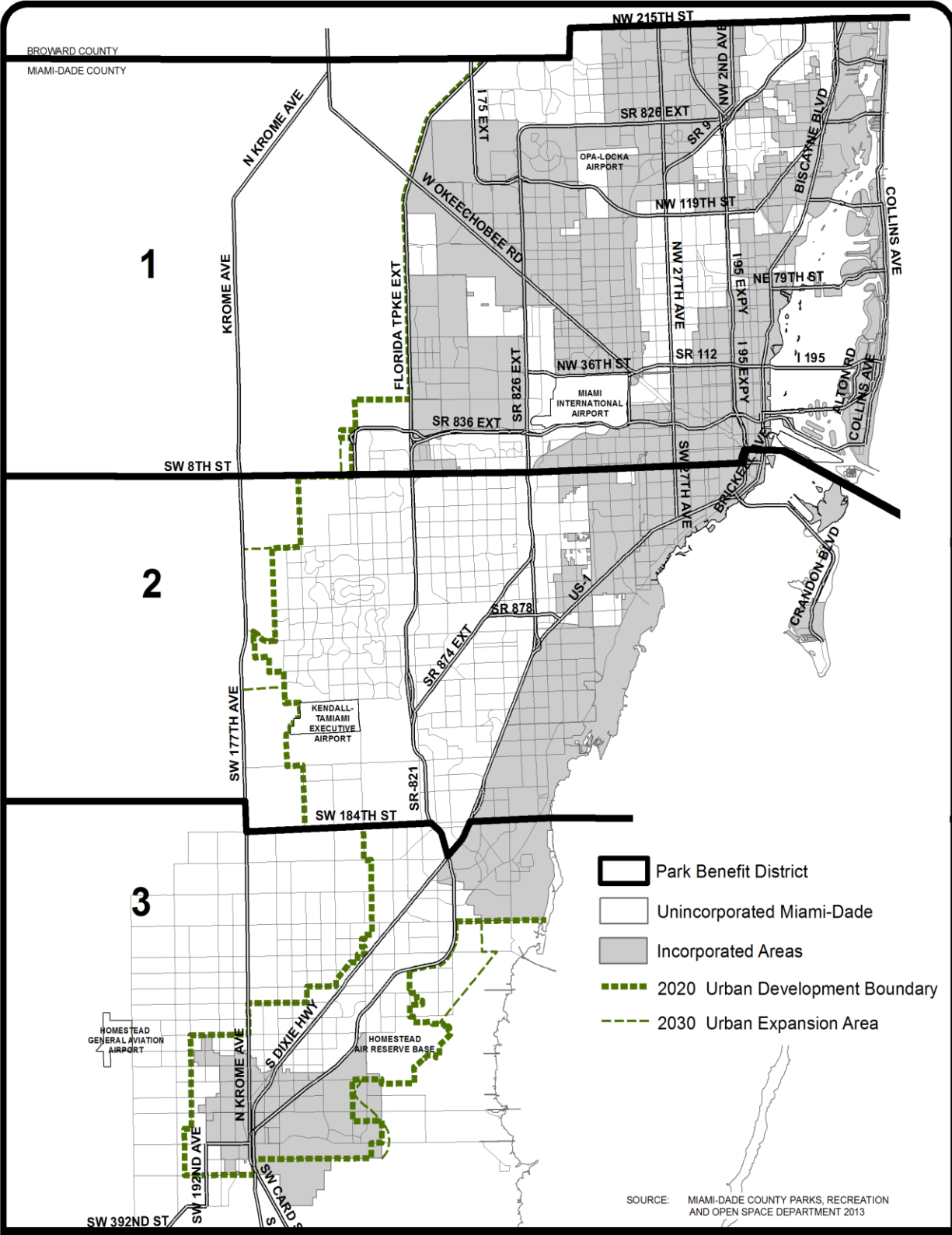
**Table 1**  
**Park Classification Criteria and Service Areas**

<b>Classification</b>	<b>Primary Use</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Programming</b>	<b>Acreege</b>	<b>Service Area</b>
<b>Areawide</b>					
Metropolitan	Resource	Yes	Yes	200+	Countywide
Natural Area Preserve	Resource	No	No	2+	Countywide
Special Activity Area	Resource	Yes	Yes	n/a	Countywide
District	User	Yes	Yes	100-200	5 miles
Greenways	User	No	No	n/a	Countywide
<b>Local</b>					
Community	User	Yes	Yes	30-100	3.5 miles
Single-Purpose	User	No	Yes	5+	3 miles
Neighborhood	User	No	No	5-10	1 mile
Mini-Parks	User	No	No	<=1	.5 mile

Source: Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department

In order to provide an optimum balance of local recreation open space throughout unincorporated areas, the County has identified the following benchmarks as desirable: the provision of five acres of neighborhood recreation open space per 5,500 unincorporated area residents; the provision of 30 acres of community recreation open space per 50,000 unincorporated area residents; and, the provision of 200 acres of district recreation open space per 220,000 unincorporated area residents. These benchmarks are used only as broad guidelines, and are not adopted as Level of Service (LOS) standards.

The Adopted Components of this Element contain the Recreation and Open Space Goal, Objectives and Policies including the map of Park Benefit Districts (PBDs), and procedures for monitoring and evaluating progress toward Plan implementation. The Adopted *2010 Evaluation and Appraisal Report and the Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* contain inventory data and analysis of existing and future needs and the policy framework within which this Element was formulated.



**Figure 1**  
**PARK BENEFIT DISTRICTS 2030**

SOURCE: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE DEPARTMENT 2013



**DEPARTMENT OF REGULATORY AND ECONOMIC RESOURCES**

## GOAL

**DEVELOP, PROGRAM, AND MAINTAIN A COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL OPEN SPACES OFFERING QUALITY AND DIVERSITY IN RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES WHILE PRESERVING AND PROTECTING VALUABLE NATURAL, HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, UNIMPAIRED, FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS.**

### Objective ROS-1

**Provide a comprehensive system of public and private sites for recreation, including but limited to public spaces, natural preserve and cultural areas, greenways, trails, playgrounds, parkways, beaches and public access to beaches, open space, waterways, and other recreational facilities and programs serving the entire County; and local parks and recreation programs adequately meeting the needs of Miami-Dade County's unincorporated population, through 2017.**

### Policies

- ROS-1A. Areawide park and recreation open spaces shall be provided to meet the diverse needs of all Miami-Dade residents and visitors. They shall continue to be established on the presence or development of regionally significant natural, historic, cultural, or tourism resources. Areawide park and recreation open spaces include Metropolitan Parks, Natural Area Preserves, Special Activity Areas, District Parks and Greenways. Areawide parks may include areas owned by other public agencies but managed by the County for passive public recreational purposes. The County shall be responsible for providing areawide park and recreation open spaces to all Miami-Dade County residents and visitors.
- ROS-1B. Local parks and recreation programs serve the close-to-home recreation needs of unincorporated residential areas. In unincorporated areas, local recreation open spaces shall consist of the following: 1) County-provided local parks consisting of mini-parks, neighborhood parks, community parks, single-purpose parks, and areawide and district parks used as local recreation open space and similarly designated in the facility inventory maintained by the Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department<sup>4</sup>; 2) public school and public college playfields that are used as local recreation open space or that are included under the Joint Parks-School Agreement between the County and the Miami-Dade County School Board or public college or university boards of trustees; and, 3) fifty percent of the private recreation open space and facilities<sup>5</sup> located inside the Urban Development Boundary (UDB).

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<sup>4</sup> Those portions of areawide and district parks which: 1) contain facilities commonly associated with local parks including but not limited to tot lots, multipurpose courts, and athletic fields, and 2) service a neighborhood or group of neighborhoods.

<sup>5</sup> Private Recreation Open Space and facilities means privately owned areas and facilities which serve local recreational or open space needs of the residents of a subdivision, condominium building or rental apartment building. This shall include only those areas where assurance is provided in a manner suitable to the County, that the areas and facilities will be maintained to serve these needs. This does not include building setbacks or open space required by the Miami-Dade County Zoning Code, steep slopes, canals, lakes, water courses, beaches, golf courses, wetlands, facilities for the circulation of pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles, parking lots of private recreation open spaces serving 10 or fewer dwelling units.

- ROS-1C. Miami-Dade County shall be responsible for providing local recreation open space only to the unincorporated areas. However, the County may provide local recreation open space for a municipality through interlocal governmental operating agreements or other means.
- ROS-1D. In cases of annexation or incorporation efforts, the County shall employ the following guidelines on a case-by-case basis:
- i.) The County shall not transfer either the operation and maintenance or title of any district park, metropolitan park, natural area preserve, special activity area, or greenway to a municipality;
  - ii.) The County shall not allow proposed municipal boundaries to create multiple jurisdictions within any one areawide park;
  - iii.) The County shall retain ownership of County-owned local parks encompassed by municipal annexation or incorporation areas if the majority of park program participants are residents of unincorporated areas;
  - iv.) At its discretion, the County may retain County-owned local parks encompassed by municipal annexation or incorporation areas in its inventory of County local recreation open space measured for service concurrency purposes if their transfer disrupts the coordination of the system or may create or worsen a projected near-term or long-term Level of Service (LOS) deficiency within Park Benefit District (PBD);
  - v.) At its discretion, the County may transfer the operation and maintenance of one or more County mini-parks, neighborhood parks, single-purpose parks and community parks to a municipality through intergovernmental operating agreements if the following conditions are met: 1) the park and recreation area will be operated and maintained in a manner equal to or better than Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department standards; 2) the majority of park program participants are residents of the municipality; and, 3) the municipality will not discriminate against county residents in program registration and pricing; and
  - vi.) At its discretion, the County can divest itself of mini-parks, neighborhood parks, single-purpose parks and community parks by transferring title to a municipality, subject to the applicable provisions of Article 7 of the Home Rule Charter and the conditions listed in Paragraph v., above.

## **Objective ROS-2**

**Require the availability of adequate local recreation open space as a condition for the approval of residential development orders, and maintain an adequate inventory of recreational areas and facilities through 2017.**

### **Policies**

- ROS-2A. Miami-Dade County's minimum Level of Service (LOS) standard for the provision of recreation open space shall be the following:

- i.) 2.75 acres of local recreation open space per 1,000 permanent residents in unincorporated areas;
- ii.) A County-provided, or an annexed or incorporated, local recreation open space of 5 acres or larger must exist within a 3 mile distance from the residential development;
- iii.) The acreage/population measure of the Level of Service Standard will be calculated for each Park Benefit District (PBD) identified in Figure 1;
- iv.) For purposes of issuing residential development orders, the minimum LOS standard shall not apply to rural and agricultural residences outside the Urban Development Boundary (UDB); and
- v.) For purposes of issuing residential development orders, a PBD is considered below standard if the projected deficiency is greater than five acres. This does not relieve applicants for development orders from applicable requirements for contributions or impact fees.

ROS-2B. Local recreation open space counted when measuring level of service shall include: 1) public local parks which exist or are committed by covenant; 2) public school and college playfields; 3) portions of private recreation open space; and, 4) County-owned or operated parks that have been incorporated or annexed into municipalities but in which a majority of park program participants are unincorporated area residents.

ROS-2C. In order to supply local parks to meet public demands, the County will maintain at 70% its 2010 proportionate share of the total local recreation open space required and strive to increase pursuant to Policy ROS-2A.i. to 80% of the LOS standard by 2017.

ROS-2D. The County will periodically research, review, and modify the LOS standard as necessary to ensure that it accurately reflects public recreational demand within unincorporated Miami-Dade County. LOS standard updates shall reflect the expressed recreational demand of residents, and the facilities necessary to serve the demand, measured by the minimum amount of land required to support these facilities.

ROS-2E. The County shall maintain an updated inventory of County and municipal recreation open spaces serving public recreational demand. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall maintain information on designated public and private recreation open space and facilities necessary for accurate and regular measurements of levels of service and administration of concurrency requirements.

ROS-2F. The County will work with developers of residential land uses within the Ludlam Trail Corridor District to encourage the dedication of park land, improvements, maintenance, or some combination thereof that adequately meets the developer's obligation to provide local recreation open space.



### **Objective ROS-3**

**Access to parks and recreational facilities will be improved in Miami-Dade County by 2017.**

#### **Policies**

- ROS-3A. The County shall continue to improve motorized access to parks and recreation open spaces on roads and mass transit routes for autos and public transport through the joint efforts of the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department, the Public Works and Waste Management Department, The Florida Department of Transportation, and the Miami-Dade Transit Agency, as well as other concerned County agencies where deemed necessary by the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department.
- ROS-3B. The County shall improve and promote non-motorized access to existing park and recreation open spaces by implementing the North Miami-Dade Greenways Master Plan and South Miami-Dade Greenway Network Master Plan, as well as improved sidewalks and trails, to improve connectivity between parks and residences, schools, activity centers, and transportation nodes.
- ROS-3C. The Miami-Dade Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall continue to provide improved access for persons with disabilities by removing architectural barriers to program participation. Actions include retrofitting existing building components to comply with the 1991 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- ROS-3D. Through its park and recreation programs and all other available means, Miami-Dade County shall preserve and protect beaches and shores, water views and maximize public ownership of these coastal resources. The County shall improve the maintenance of existing public park and recreation entrances and shall, where feasible, provide additional access points at waterfront and coastal locations.
- ROS-3E. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall seek to increase public awareness of available recreation opportunities through education and information programs and signage on roadways, at park entrances, and within large parks.

### **Objective ROS-4**

**The County shall maintain a capital financing plan to enable provision of park and recreation open spaces and facilities through a variety of public and private sources and partnerships.**

#### **Policies**

- ROS-4A. The County shall maintain and periodically update the established Park Impact Fee Ordinance and Procedures Manual requiring: 1) public local parkland dedication; 2) construction of public recreation facilities; 3) fees-in-lieu or 4) a combination thereof for approval of all residential development, regardless of size. Priorities of the Director of the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department may include local recreation open space acquisition, the initiation of new development, or completion of development of existing local park sites. This Ordinance shall also maintain

definitions and standards for the provision of recreation open space as required by Chapter 163, F.S.

- i.) The County will retain and adjust, as needed, the Impact Fee Schedule to account for changes in the cost of land acquisition, improvements, administration, and credits, and the proportionate share in levels of service.
- ii.) The Impact Fee will be based on local parks proportionate share of the LOS standard as measured by demand.
- iii.) The County will continue to work with local developers to ensure that provisions within the Impact Fee Ordinance remain attractive for the donation of land, improvement or some combination that adequately meets the developer's obligation to provide the prescribed local open space.
- iv.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department Director shall retain authority to accept or reject land or improvements or fees-in-lieu on case-by-case basis.

ROS-4B. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall seek to improve the Joint Park/School Agreement to increase the benefits to residents by: 1) negotiating with the School Board for the use of school facilities by programming providers after normal school hours; 2) working closely with School Board planners, designers, and construction staff to ensure that park-school facilities are better designed to maximize open space and support community use; and, 3) improving co-located sites and shared-use facilities on both park and school sites for the benefit of the community.

ROS-4C. The County shall seek cooperative agreements such as the following with non-governmental organizations to provide additional resources for park acquisition, improvement, and programming priorities.

- i.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department, through Special Taxing Districts, shall seek cooperative agreements with homeowner associations and civic groups for the long-term provision and maintenance of local recreation open spaces and facilities within unincorporated residential areas.
- ii.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall continue to work with community based organizations, non-profit youth service organizations, foundations, facility support societies and other special interest groups to expand opportunities for private, non-profit investment in park improvements and recreational programming.
- iii.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall continue to foster the growth and development of non-profit foundations that are dedicated to increasing the accessibility of recreation opportunity and open spaces to disadvantaged populations, and which can expand opportunities for facility improvements and recreation programming.

ROS-4D. The County shall continue to explore the use of special taxing districts and other dedicated funding mechanisms for the long-term provision and management of park and recreation open space and facilities, especially where they offer economic advantages to the County and residents.

- ROS-4E The County shall seek Federal, State and private grants, such as the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program, to assist with the acquisition and improvement of parkland.
- ROS-4F. The County shall continue implementation of capital projects funded by 2004 Building Better Communities General Obligation Bond and 2000-2008 Quality Neighborhood Improvement Bond proceeds available for the acquisition, renovation, restoration, and development of recreation open spaces and facilities, and that these activities can be accomplished in a timely fashion. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will continue to explore both fee-simple and less-than-fee-simple mechanisms for the establishment of open space *conservation* areas and will seek additional funds in any future bond issue that the County may propose.
- ROS-4G. The Parks, Recreation and Open spaces Department will collaborate with County agencies that oversee funding programs and accounts related to horticulture, arboriculture, environmental mitigation, hazard mitigation, transportation, crime prevention, tourist development, and community and economic development, which can potentially benefit local residents through the enhancement of parks and recreation programs, should assist with the implementation of the policies in this Element by participating in inter-agency partnerships to address, for example, the following:
- i.) Acquisition of parkland through leases and management agreements, forfeitures of land, and developer dedications or conveyances;
  - ii.) Landscaping maintenance and continued resource management of parkland and natural areas such as through the use of regulatory fines collected by the Public Works and Waste Management Department or the Division of Environmental Resources Management of the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources;
  - iii.) Designation of park sites as off-site mitigation areas for environmental restoration;
  - iv.) Restoration of natural areas in parks by investing regulatory fines for environmental infractions;
  - v.) Improvements to physical access to parks and recreation facilities and special events through public transportation programs;
  - vi.) Support of crime prevention in parks through the use of law enforcement and judicial assistance funds;
  - vii.) Dedication of a portion of tourism development funds to support the maintenance, management, and improvement of park beaches and public tourist attractions;
  - viii.) Expansion of the use of youth and conservation service corps to assist with the repair and maintenance of parks and;
  - ix.) The application of tax increment finance districts, transfer of development rights, community redevelopment districts, and overlay zoning districts as a means to accelerate and assist development of recreation facilities.

## Objective ROS-5

**Maintain a formal capital improvements planning program that improves and expands the park and recreation system through the acquisition of land, the renovation and restoration of facilities and natural areas, the development of new park and recreation open space and facilities, and the linking of parks and other public spaces.**

### Policies

- ROS-5A. The County shall prioritize capital improvement expenditures in accordance with the following criteria: 1) Acquire local parkland to maintain the adopted LOS standard for local recreation open space by correcting existing deficiencies and addressing future needs, and acquire countywide parkland suitable for compatible outdoor recreation while preserving natural, historical, and cultural resources; 2) renovate, restore, and upgrade existing recreation open spaces and facilities; and, 3) develop new recreation open spaces and facilities within undeveloped or incomplete parks.
- ROS-5B. The County shall, whenever possible, use a combination of fee simple, shared fee and non-fee simple methods to cost-effectively acquire public recreation open space, with consideration for the following:
- i.) In selecting recreation and open space sites for public acquisition, the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall consider demands for local recreation open space that are not met by dedications from the private sector and supported by statistical areas analyses of LOS distribution and park classifications to prioritize the acquisition of parkland.
  - ii.) In evaluating recreation and open space sites for public acquisition equity access criteria<sup>6</sup> shall be included for local park service areas in unincorporated Miami-Dade County at  $\frac{1}{4}$  -  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile walking distance. Regional park service areas will be included in the site selection process at 2-3 miles biking distance.
  - iii.) In order to achieve greater economy and efficiency of operations, and to deliver the range of recreation services desired by the public, 30 acres is the preferred minimum size park desired by the County to purchase new local parks. However, five acres is the minimum size needed to establish new County-provided local parks within unincorporated areas. Smaller sites will be considered: 1) within "Traditional Neighborhood Developments" and other planned communities where residential homeowner maintenance fees or special taxing districts cover the maintenance costs; or, 2) where the County determines that acquisition will preserve unique natural, historical, or cultural features, provide needed close-to-home recreation open space, or otherwise meet the recreation needs of a specific neighborhood.
  - iv.) In areas planned for development inside the UDB where heavy parcelization has occurred and where there is limited potential for the dedication of usable land, the County shall place high priority on early site acquisition to reserve adequate recreation open space to address future needs. If sufficient and appropriate sites cannot be obtained from willing sellers, the County shall consider the condemnation of land for this purpose if public benefit can be established.

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<sup>6</sup> Equity Access Criteria refers to the spatial distribution of parks and recreation programs.

- v.) In areas outside the UDB but inside the Urban Expansion Area (UEA) or contiguous to the UDB, the County may acquire and “bank” land for future use as recreation open space. Sites not contiguous to the UDB and not directly accessible by roadways wholly located inside or contiguous to the UDB shall not be developed as local recreation open space.
- vi.) The County shall continue to acquire recreation open space for public use by non-fee means through intergovernmental agreements in the form of federal land leases, State leases and management agreements, School Board joint-use agreements, and intergovernmental operating permits.
- vii.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall expand the use of conservation partnerships with land acquisition organizations that specialize in the purchase of urban open space for both areawide and local recreation open spaces.
- viii.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall continue to acquire countywide park and recreation open space having high resource values and capable of providing compatible outdoor recreation. Acquisition priorities for such areas shall be as follows: 1) shoreline over non-shoreline; 2) compatible outdoor recreation over preservation-only; 3) multi-purpose use over single-purpose use; 4) locations in areas more vulnerable to development over low-density, non-vulnerable areas; 5) sites that are contiguous or linked to an existing recreation open space over non-contiguous or non-linked sites; and, 6) acquisition cost-shared between agencies over a site in which the County bears the entire cost.
- ix.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall update the land acquisition strategic plan to guide the analysis and evaluation of lands and to determine suitability of sites for acquisition as part of the County park system.

- ROS-5C. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall, as funds are available, renovate, restore, and upgrade County facilities following the guidelines of the Miami-Dade County Park Structure and Landscape Pattern Book “Pattern Book” to enhance park aesthetics and ensure that the public can safely and securely enjoy recreational opportunities, and that the County can cost-effectively extend the useful life of existing facilities. Expenditures for the renovation, restoration and upgrade of existing parks and recreation facilities are prioritized as follows: 1) repairs and projects increasing visitor safety; 2) hazard reduction; 3) facility upgrade and resource management; 4) accessibility improvements in compliance with ADA; and, 5) energy efficiency improvements. The County shall implement projects and activities including but not limited to the following in order to address these priorities:
- i.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will repair facilities, equipment, and grounds that have the potential to be unsafe for public use, and install adequate security measures to protect visitors and facilities.
  - ii.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will remove known hazards existing within its facilities. Provisions will be made to remove or abate asbestos within buildings, remove or mitigate materials containing lead, and provide storm protection to walls, windows, and doors.
  - iii.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will redevelop facilities that are no longer functional, whose use has changed, or that require building

code upgrades. Park sites containing important natural, historic, or archaeological resources will be developed and managed for the long-term sustainability and integrity of the resource and where appropriate considered for designation as Heritage Parks.

- iv.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall continue to provide improved access for persons of all ages including persons with disabilities by removing architectural, communication and program barriers to participation in compliance with ADA as may be amended from time to time.
- v.) The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department will design with sustainability Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) principles and will install energy efficient equipment within its facilities that measurably: 1) decreases water consumption and treatment within restrooms and irrigation systems; 2) increases the use of more energy efficient cooling, refrigeration, and lighting equipment, including solar powered lighting; 3) increases the use of fuel-efficient park maintenance vehicles; and, 4) increases the use of automated equipment to filter and monitor swimming pools.

ROS-5D. The County will continue developing new parks that are located in more recently established residential areas. Priorities for capital improvement expenditures shall be in accordance with the following criteria: 1) installing access control in new parks to limit vehicular access, restrict unregulated dumping, and minimize required maintenance; 2) provide basic improvements in the form of grass, trees, signage, playground equipment, courts and pathways that will make the park usable; 3) design improvements consistent with the Miami-Dade County Park Structure and Landscape Pattern Book "Pattern Book" and principles of the Parks and Open Space System Master Plan, with an emphasis on beauty and sustainability; and, 4) complete facility construction according to an approved or adopted Park General Plan.

ROS-5E. To ensure that parkland contributing to the LOS standard is effectively meeting recreational demands, the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall develop and implement strategies to reduce the number of undeveloped and underdeveloped park sites by the next Evaluation and Appraisal Report, with the exception of natural area preserves and other resource areas.

ROS-5F. Continue to implement and consider expansion of segments of the North Miami-Dade Greenways Master Plan and South Miami-Dade Greenway Network Master Plan that provide recreation and environmental benefits while improving connectivity to parks, natural areas, and other recreational facilities.

#### **Objective ROS-6**

**Maintain and continue to implement the comprehensive resource management program for the acquisition and site-specific management of environmentally sensitive lands, coastal areas and historic sites within Miami-Dade County parks consistent with the Natural Areas Management Plan as the primary guide for the management and restoration of natural areas.**

## **Policies**

- ROS-6A. The County shall maintain information on all environmentally sensitive land, coastal areas, historic places and archaeological sites under public and private ownership that provide public interpretive and recreational opportunities.
- ROS-6B. Those portions of park properties containing important natural, historic, or archaeological resources will be developed to enhance the historical and cultural resources and managed for long-term viability and integrity of the resource. Miami-Dade County shall use all practical means to assure that land in the vicinity of such park properties is developed for a use that is compatible with the protection of the natural, historic or archaeological resources. Through its park and recreation programs the County shall, wherever feasible, acquire and reuse historic buildings and sites to benefit the public and designate certain sites as Heritage Parks. Opportunities for public access to the resource will be developed in a manner consistent with the conservation or preservation of the resource.
- ROS-6C. At natural resource sites, park design programs shall incorporate resource management plans for resource maintenance, restoration, and enhancement, into the design plan for park development or redevelopment.
- ROS-6D. The use of native plant materials for park landscaping shall be increased where appropriate and shall be used in developing and maintaining environmentally sensitive parklands.

## **Objective ROS-7**

**Maintain and improve communications between Park providers and visitors to ensure that the population's expressed needs and desires are considered in the further development and operation of the park system.**

## **Policies**

- ROS-7A. The Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department shall conduct a community needs assessment and leisure interest survey of County residents and tourists to assess participation patterns and identify priorities for the delivery of services. By the next Evaluation and Appraisal Report an updated leisure interest survey should be completed to reevaluate changes in recreation demand and participation patterns.
- ROS-7B. Public participation in all aspects of site planning, facility construction, and park operations shall continue through the use of new technology, such as social media and web postings; public workshops and presentations, focus group interviews, citizen advisory boards, and public hearings.
- ROS-7C. The County will increase public awareness of available recreational opportunities through increasingly sophisticated public information techniques.

## Objective ROS-8

**The Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan (OSMP), through a 50-year planning horizon, shall guide the creation of an interconnected framework of parks, public spaces, natural and cultural areas, greenways, trails, and streets that promote sustainable communities, the health and wellness of County residents, and that serve the diverse local, national, and international communities.**

### Policies

- ROS-8A. Miami-Dade County shall conduct, on an on-going basis, a countywide evaluation of neighborhoods for access to recreation and open space areas, using the “Public Parks and Open Space Activity Criteria” and the neighborhood context planning approach as described in the *Miami-Dade Parks and Open Space System Master Plan*. The neighborhood evaluation shall consider the parks and open space needs of communities in the urban, suburban, rural and natural areas of the County, assure equitable access to recreation, open spaces, natural resources, and social/cultural venues, and facilitate neighborhood stability and redevelopment.
- ROS-8B. By 2014, the County shall develop an implementation strategy to achieve the Access and Equity Criteria<sup>7</sup> for parks and recreational open spaces that are intended to encourage equitable access to local (neighborhood) parks and open space as well as area-wide recreational activities for all County residents.
- ROS-8C. Miami-Dade County shall utilize the Parks and Open Space Design Criteria or “Pattern Book”, to guide the development of the public realm. The public realm includes new and existing parks, public spaces, natural and cultural areas, greenways, trails, street corridors, and private spaces that are open to the public. The criteria shall promote beauty, community character and connectivity and include standards to assure compatibility with adjoining uses, conservation and energy efficiency, as well as signage and way-finding requirements.
- ROS-8D. Miami-Dade County shall update the *Miami-Dade Urban Design Manual*, the *Standard Details of the Public Works Manual*, and other relevant county plans and regulations to incorporate where appropriate, the “Great Streets Planning Principles” contained in the *Miami-Dade Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* and incorporation of “Complete Streets” components, where feasible. Changes to be incorporated include a hierarchy of street types and designs (gateway streets, civic streets, heritage streets, and neighborhood streets), and complete street measures such as provision of sidewalks and bicycle facilities, pedestrian friendly design, adequate landscaping and street furniture, on-street parking, bus lanes and transit facilities, and clearly defined crosswalks and signalization to provide safe routes to parks.
- ROS-8E. By 2014, Miami-Dade County shall develop a greenways prioritization plan to prioritize areas to be designated for greenways, trails, and bicycle lanes, and update the North Miami-Dade Greenway Master Plan and South Miami-Dade Greenway Network Master Plan and the CDMP to include such greenways. The update shall include the designation of the Western Greenway and implementation

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<sup>7</sup> Equity Access Criteria refers to the spatial distribution of parks and recreation programs.



of the Miami-Dade County Trail Design Guidelines and Standards. On an on-going basis, Miami-Dade County shall coordinate with State, regional, federal, and local government agencies to establish a countywide interconnected system of non-motorized pathways that link neighborhoods, parks, natural areas, civic centers, schools, and commercial areas to achieve goals and objectives through a diverse combination of financing methods, partnerships, and interagency coordination.

ROS-8F. By 2014, Miami-Dade County shall develop a plan for protecting and preserving its natural and historic resources, while assuring that such resources provide access and educational opportunities to the public. The plan shall consider the designation of Environmental Zones (Eco Zones) and Cultural Zones. Eco Zones represent a cluster of natural areas connected together to provide a variety of environmental and educational activities. The Cultural Zones are thematically clustered cultural and historic sites that provide a variety of heritage education activities and programs.

ROS-8G. Miami-Dade County shall implement Urban Design guidelines and standards by incorporating meaningful public spaces in the planning and development of libraries, museums, schools, government buildings, transit stations within Transit-Oriented Developments (TOD) and stand-alone transit stations, and other civic/institutional places.

### **Monitoring Program**

Successful implementation of level of service standards and requirements that services be available at the time of development requires the maintenance or enhancement of monitoring and reporting programs. This section of the Element outlines the substantive components of Miami-Dade County's monitoring program pertinent to the objectives, policies and parameters referenced in this Element.

#### **Monitoring Requirements**

The following measures will be used to monitor the achievement of the objectives in the Recreation and Open Space Element for the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR):

##### **Objective ROS-1.**

- A comparison of the areawide park acreage in 2010, at the date of EAR report, and projected for the year 2017.
- A comparison of the local recreation open space LOS at the date of EAR report, and projected for the year 2017.

##### **Objective ROS-2.**

- Achievement of the LOS standard.
- A comparison of the proportionate share of the LOS standard comprised of public parkland at the date of the last Evaluation and Appraisal Report adoption and time of preparation of next Evaluation and Appraisal Report. [2017]

**Objective ROS-3.**

- The amount of funds expended for and number of capital projects improving on-site access for automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, and mass transit to Miami-Dade County's recreation and open space facilities between 2010 and 2017.
- The number of projects and amount of funds expended for improving the handicapped accessibility of Miami-Dade County's recreation and open space facilities between 2010 and 2017.
- The number of projects and amount of funds expended for the acquisition and protection of Miami-Dade County's beaches for preservation and increased public access.

**Objective ROS-4.**

- The on-going implementation and status of evaluations of the Park Impact Fee.
- The implementation status of any efforts to adjust the Park Impact Fee Schedule in response to changes in land costs, improvement credits and levels of service.
- The number of partnerships entered into between the County and community based organizations, special interest groups, and other outside agencies for facility improvements and recreational programs.
- The implementation status of strategies to: improve and expand the function of joint Park-School agreements; cooperative agreements entered into with homeowner associations or community groups for the provision and maintenance of recreation open space facilities, and the creation of special taxing districts and/or alternative dedicated funding mechanisms for the provision and maintenance of recreation open space and facilities.
- The implementation status of priority recreation open space capital improvement projects funded through bond issues.
- The number of interagency partnerships entered into between the Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Department and other County agencies since 2010 that: 1) provide for landscaping maintenance and resource management in parks and natural areas through the use of regulatory fines collected by the Public Works and Waste Management Department and the Division of Environmental Resources Management of the Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources; 2) designate park sites as mitigation areas for environmental restoration; 3) restore natural areas through the investment of regulatory fines for environmental infractions; 4) improve physical access to recreational facilities and special events through public transportation programs; 5) support crime prevention in parks through the use of law enforcement and judicial assistance funds; 6) dedicate a portion of tourism development funds to support the maintenance, management, and improvement of park beaches and public attractions; 7) expand the use of youth and conservation service corps to assist with the repair and maintenance of parks, or; 8) other similar initiatives.

**Objective ROS-5.**

- A comparison of capital expenditures since 2010 with the capital expenditures priorities set in Policy ROS-5A.
- The number of recreation open space acres acquired by the County since 2010 through a combination of fee simple, shared fee, and non-fee simple methods.

- The implementation status of efforts to use a statistical analysis of LOS distribution to prioritize the acquisition of parkland and other land acquisition criteria.
- The number of park sites less than five acres in size and greater than 30 acres in size acquired by the County since the date of the last Evaluation and Appraisal Report adoption.
- The total park acreage acquired through early site acquisition in areas planned for development inside the UDB in which heavy parcelization has occurred since the date of adoption.
- The number of conservation partnerships entered into between the County and land acquisition organizations specializing in the purchase of urban open space for recreational use since the date of the last Evaluation and Appraisal Report adoption.
- A comparison of the parklands acquired by the County since the date of the last EAR adoption with the acquisitions priorities set in Policy ROS-5B.ix.
- A comparison of capital expenditures for park repairs and upgrades since the date of the last EAR adoption with the priorities set in Policy ROS-5C.
- The number of projects and amount of funds expended for the following capital improvements since 2010: 1) repairs and projects increasing visitor safety; 2) hazard reduction; 3) facility upgrades and resource management; 4) accessibility improvements in compliance with ADA, and; 5) energy efficiency improvements.
- The number of new parks developed in recently established residential areas.
- The implementation status of strategies to reduce the number of undeveloped and underdeveloped park sites.

**Objective ROS-6.**

- The percentage of natural resource areas located in Miami-Dade County parks for which comprehensive resource management plans have been developed and the number of parks designated as Heritage Parks, or parks recognized for cultural or archaeological or historic significance.
- The number of comprehensive resource management programs that have been developed for designated natural resource areas in Miami-Dade County parks since 2010.

**Objective ROS-7.**

- The implementation status of strategies to maintain and increase public participation in park planning, construction, and operational issues, and to increase the public's awareness of recreational opportunities.

**Objective ROS-8**

- Miami-Dade County shall annually log and report in subsequent Evaluation and Appraisal Reports (EAR) specific activities related to implementing seamlessness, access, beauty, sustainability, equity and multiple benefits in unincorporated Miami-Dade County parks and open spaces as described in the *Parks and Open Space System Master Plan*.
- Miami-Dade County shall report in subsequent EARs the number of projects and amount of funds expended to improve the County's parks and open space system.

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