



Public Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement Process

Appendix C



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1. Public Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement

In total, more than 2,000 individuals were directly engaged to help the development of the Zero Waste Master Plan



Miami-Dade County's Zero Waste Master Plan was developed in collaboration with residents, businesses, government leaders, and key stakeholders, ensuring broad consensus on the final Zero Waste Strategies.

The Public Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement team engaged with county department staff, external stakeholders, and the public through listening sessions, focus groups, public workshops, community events, municipal working groups, and a multilingual public survey. The final approach was laid out in the Public Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Engagement Plan).

Over 750 community members and stakeholders were engaged across **84 outreach activities** from August 28, 2025, through May 7, 2026, to review and provide feedback on the proposed policies, programs, and infrastructure strategies in the Zero Waste Master Plan.

A total of 1,448 people responded to a community survey, providing information about how they manage waste, recycling habits, and related preferences at home and at work.

The response and feedback helped the project team identify participants' most favored Zero Waste Strategies for the Implementation Plan for the county.

The main elements of the Engagement Plan are the following:

1. Stakeholder mapping
2. County department listening sessions
3. Stakeholder listening sessions
4. Municipality working groups
5. Focus groups
6. Public workshops
7. Community events
8. Community survey
9. Outreach resources

1.1 Stakeholder Mapping

When an inclusive, representative group of stakeholders are engaged early in the development of a Zero Waste Master Plan, the results satisfy the widest possible swath of the community. Besides identifying annual community events to attend, the stakeholder mapping exercise helped identify the county and city staff, businesses, non-profit organizations, community organizations, and individuals that would be invited to participate in the following:

1. County department listening sessions
2. Stakeholder listening sessions
3. Focus groups
4. Municipality working groups
5. Public workshops



1.2 County Department Listening Sessions

Listening sessions or interviews take place in-person or virtually. The Engagement Plan included participation from several county departments to identify opportunities and barriers to reducing waste, coordinate reuse programs, promote low-impact procurement, and improve on-site collection systems for clean, low-contaminated waste streams. While each department operates under distinct circumstances, acknowledging interdepartmental connections and implementing suitable organizational strategies can yield significant benefits in waste reduction, operational efficiencies, and buying power.

The following departments were selected to “Lead by Example,” and they collaborated with WSP to assess their operations and identify opportunities to implement Zero Waste Strategies (Table C-1). The findings and waste reduction projects can be found in Appendix A. WSP recommends that the county's Zero Waste Master Plan contract manager continue engaging the departments and staff members as the Zero Waste Master Plan is implemented.

Table C-1: County Departments to Lead by Example

Department
1. Environmental Resources Management
2. Strategic Procurement
3. Libraries
4. Aviation
5. People & Internal Operations
6. Parks, Recreation, and Open Spaces
7. Office of the Mayor
8. Housing and Community Development
9. Solid Waste Management



1.3 Stakeholder Listening Sessions

Stakeholder listening sessions were designed to involve interested parties from various backgrounds and viewpoints. The engagement team conducted over 20 stakeholder listening sessions or one-on-one interviews with various organizations, stakeholders, and interested parties from August 28, 2025, to February 18, 2026 (Table C-2). The team identified participants in a variety of ways, including but not limited to referrals from other public listening sessions, word-of-mouth, or tapping into the engagement team and the county’s existing network.

This segment of engagement included meetings and interviews with businesses pursuing waste reduction or recovery initiatives, such as takeback programs for transport packaging. It also included organizations focused on recovering and recycling hard-to-recycle materials, such as product packaging, single-use foodware, and textiles that are typically generated in large volumes throughout daily life. These discussions provided insight into practical opportunities and challenges for advancing Zero Waste Strategies across specialized material waste streams by identifying where waste reduction initiatives may be most feasible, where implementation barriers remain, and which waste materials may require targeted solutions.

Table C-2: Stakeholder Listening Sessions Completed

Organization
Debris Free Oceans
Ascendance
Mohawk Flooring
Plastic Free 305
VolunteerCleanUp.Org
Environmental Organizations

Organization
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Miami Carnival
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Coastal Waste & Recycling for Waste Hauling
Coastal Waste & Recycling
Hard Rock Stadium (session 1)
Waste Management
The Things Lab
Everglades Earth Cycle
Habits of Waste
Agricultural Practices Advisory Board Focus Group
Hard Rock Stadium and FIFA (session 2)
Compost4Life
Greater Miami Beach Chambers of Commerce, Resilience Committee

1.4 Focus Groups

While the original Engagement Plan set an original target of eight focus groups, WSP held 21 focus groups with organizations working in similar fields between October 2025 and April 2026 (Table C-3). The focus groups were held to share experiences and gather feedback on zero waste. These discussions centered on identifying the potential opportunities and obstacles associated with zero waste, specifically as they pertain to the group's operational environment.

Table C-3: Focus Groups Completed

Group/Organization
Environmental Organizations
K-12 Schools
Faith-Based Organizations
Higher Education

Group/Organization**Chambers of Commerce****Stadiums/Live Events****Tourism and Hospitality****Homeowner Associations and Neighborhood Groups****Municipal Sustainability Leads**

1.5 Public Workshops

At the public workshops, attendees were educated on all the proposed zero waste policies, programs, and infrastructure, and they had an opportunity to have their questions answered and share their thoughts with other attendees (The aim was to involve constituents from all 13 districts in north, south, east, west, and central parts of Miami-Dade County. WSP collaborated with the Department of Solid Waste Management, the Public Library System, and local municipalities to host in-person workshops. The Office of the Mayor along with the Communication and Information Technology Department helped to promote the public workshops. Additionally, WSP and its teaming partner for local outreach, Catalyst Miami, held virtual workshops to reach a wider geographic audience. Multilingual interpreters were available at each event for participants who preferred Spanish or Haitian Creole.



Table C-4). After discussing the strategies with others, participants voted for their top three preferred strategies in each category: policies, programs, and infrastructure. When selecting their preferred strategies, participants considered factors such as which policies could most effectively reduce waste, which programs could improve community quality of life, and what types of infrastructure would be most beneficial. Each participant's top-ranked strategy received 3 points, the second-ranked strategy received 2 points, and the third-ranked strategy received 1 point. The Project Team then tallied the votes and applied a weighted average to identify and highlight the Public Favorites in the Zero Waste Master Plan.

Workshops were held weekday evenings from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. over a three-month period between November 2025 and February 2026, attracting 253 attendees.

The aim was to involve constituents from all 13 districts in north, south, east, west, and central parts of Miami-Dade County. WSP collaborated with the Department of Solid Waste Management, the Public Library System, and local municipalities to host in-person workshops. The Office of the Mayor along with the Communication and Information Technology Department helped to promote the public workshops. Additionally, WSP and its teaming partner for local outreach, Catalyst Miami, held virtual workshops to reach a wider geographic audience. Multilingual interpreters were available at each event for participants who preferred Spanish or Haitian Creole.

Table C-4: Public Workshops Completed

Location	Region
Westchester Library	West
North Dade Regional Library	North
Virtual 1	Countywide
Cutler Bay Community Center	South
Virtual 2	Countywide
Naranja Library	Central
Virtual 3	Countywide
Virtual 4	Countywide
Hialeah JFK Library	Central
Coral Gables Library	South
TOTAL	



1.6 Community Events

Engaging with the public at community events provided opportunities to interact directly and collect feedback on the proposed Zero Waste Strategies. At the following events, the strategies were displayed on poster boards in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole. Participants also had an opportunity to have their questions answered and vote for the programs that they would most like to see in the communities (Table C-5).

Table C-5: Tabling Events Completed

Event	Location
Recycle Right at Food Truck Friday	Miami, Tropical Park
Miami-Dade Innovation Authority, Innovation Challenge	Old South Dade Landfill
Wild About Recycling at the Miami Zoo	Miami Zoo
Catalyst Resource Fair	Dunn's Overtown Farm
Florida International University Sustainability Fair	Deuxieme Maison Plaza
Miami Our Way End of Year Celebration	Little Haiti Cultural Complex
Children's Holiday at North Miami Dade College	North Miami Dade College
Legion Park Farmers Market	Legion Park
Reuse-A-Palooza	Dennis C. Moss Cultural Arts Center
University of Miami Zero Waste Classroom	University of Miami
Youth Fair	Tamiami Fairgrounds
Climate Leaders Annual Gala	Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science
Night at the Lab	Frost Science Museum
Baynanza	Haulover Park
Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association Sustainability Event	Biltmore Hotel



1.7 Municipality Working Groups

City representatives (e.g., public works, solid waste, sustainability or resilience staff) from each of the 34 municipalities played a pivotal role in identifying waste reduction opportunities and challenges at the local level. The Engagement Plan organized the municipalities into seven working groups to meet twice between December 2025 and March 2026. The groupings were designed to assemble municipalities with shared experiences. In certain instances, municipalities were classified under multiple groups, allowing city representatives to select which session they wished to attend.

WSP created email templates with graphics characterizing the zero waste project and the date, time, and hyperlink for the meeting. The Office of the Mayor supported the outreach effort by making municipalities aware of the meetings and forwarding calendar invitations to key municipal staff. In the first round, one week before the scheduled meeting, each attendee received a list of draft initiatives with three to five questions per waste reduction strategy for them to complete and submit before the second-round meetings. In the second round, each attendee received a list of the proposed zero waste reduction strategies for review one week in advance of the scheduled meeting for discussion. Input from the city representatives informed the short-term, medium-term, and long-term waste reduction strategies in the final Zero Waste Master Plan as well as the level of support needed by the municipalities from the county.

Department of Solid Waste Management-Serviced Municipalities with Garbage and Recycling

Aventura	Miami Lakes	Sunny Isles Beach	Sunset (Unincorporated)
Cutler Bay	Opa-Locka	Sweetwater	Westchester (Unincorporated)
Doral	Palmetto Bay	Fisher Island (Unincorporated)	
Miami Gardens	Pinecrest	Kendall (Unincorporated)	

Department of Solid Waste Management-Serviced Municipalities with only Recycling

El Portal	Miami Beach	South Miami
Florida City	Miami Springs	Virginia Gardens

Medley

North Bay Village

West Miami

Self-Serviced Municipalities

Bal Harbour	Medley	North Miami	Virginia Gardens
Coral Gables	Miami	North Miami Beach	West Miami
Golden Beach	Miami Shores Village	South Miami	
Homestead	Miami Springs	Surfside	

Privately Serviced Municipalities

Bay Harbor Islands	Florida City	Indian Creek Village
Biscayne Park	Hialeah	Key Biscayne
El Portal	Hialeah Gardens	Miami Beach

North Shoreline Municipalities

Aventura	Miami Beach
Bal Harbour	North Bay Village
Surfside	North Miami
Bay Harbor Islands	North Miami Beach
Miami	Miami Shores

South Shoreline Municipalities

Homestead	Pinecrest
Key Biscayne	Palmetto Bay
Coral Gables	Pinecrest
Cutler Bay	Palmetto Bay
Homestead	Pinecrest

Municipalities with Sustainability Plans

Biscayne Park	Miami Beach	Palmetto Bay
Cutler Bay	Miami Shores	Pinecrest
Doral	North Bay Village	Surfside
El Portal	North Miami	
Key Biscayne	North Miami Beach	

1.8 Community Survey

1,448 surveys were received between November 7, 2025, and June 26, 2026. The survey gathered information on current barriers and opportunities to zero waste, including feedback on possible new waste reduction strategies. Participants were also able to leave comments. The survey was prepared in three languages (English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole) and entered into an online tool (SurveyMonkey® and Qualtrics). The county promoted the survey through email blasts, social media, and in-person at outreach events, where staff assisted community members with completing the survey.

The survey revealed several important findings regarding waste management and recycling behaviors among respondents. Most respondents already recycle, but access remains a barrier for those who do not, and composting participation is currently very low despite strong interest in compost collection services. The results also suggest that many households may need more recycling capacity, as recycling carts are more likely than garbage carts to be full on collection day.

The survey found that most respondents already participate in recycling, with 84% reporting access to a recycling collection program. Among those who do not recycle, the main reason was lack of access to recycling services.

The survey also found that most respondents do not compost—70% do not compost food scraps and 98% do not compost yard trimmings—and many are not aware of composting services. Even so, 82% said they would consider participating if compost collection were available.

Additionally, 66% of respondents have only one recycling cart, and 62% said that their cart is full or overflowing on collection day. For garbage, 59% place their carts out twice per week, but only 27% said their garbage carts are full or overflowing at the time of collection.

1.9 Outreach Resources

WSP created program collateral with branding concepts, graphics, presentation slide decks, email templates, social media graphics, and community survey announcements to use for outreach to the public and key stakeholders.

A clear and attractive program identity is key to delivering an effective public involvement and stakeholder engagement campaign. The goal is to make the Miami-Dade County Zero Waste Master Plan instantly recognizable and easy for people to understand how to participate. Effective branding ensures that the waste reduction strategies are not merely seen as chores, but as an opportunity to participate in a countywide movement, one community at a time.

1.10 Key Findings

The Public Involvement and Stakeholder Engagement Process demonstrated broad interest in Miami-Dade County's Zero Waste Master Plan and provided meaningful input from residents, municipalities, county departments, businesses, community organizations, schools, institutions, and other key stakeholders. Across listening sessions, focus groups, public workshops, community events, municipal working groups, and the multilingual community survey, participants helped identify the strategies most likely to reduce waste, improve recycling and organics recovery, expand reuse, and support long-term implementation.

- Engagement reached a broad cross section of the community, with more than 750 participants engaged through 84 outreach activities and 1,448 survey responses collected to inform the final Zero Waste Strategies.

- Participants expressed strong interest in expanding waste reduction programs that are practical, visible, and easy to use, particularly strategies related to recycling access, compost collection, reuse, education, and community-based implementation.
- Survey results indicate that many residents already recycle, but barriers remain for households without convenient access to recycling services or adequate recycling capacity. The finding that recycling carts are more likely than garbage carts to be full suggests an opportunity to evaluate service levels and improve recycling infrastructure.
- Composting represents a major opportunity for future diversion. Although current participation in food scrap and yard trimming composting is low, a substantial share of survey respondents indicated they would consider participating if collection services were available.
- Stakeholders emphasized the importance of clear communication, consistent public education, and multilingual outreach to help residents and businesses understand how to participate in zero waste programs and reduce recycling contamination.
- Municipalities and County departments identified operational needs, coordination opportunities, and implementation barriers that should be addressed as the county advances short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies.
- The engagement process helped build awareness, validate community priorities, and identify public favorites that can guide implementation of the Zero Waste Master Plan in a way that reflects local needs and stakeholder input.