

GENERALIZED

LAND USE PLAN

CONCLUSIONS AND  
RECOMMENDATIONS

## SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the land-use plan is to identify the major functions of the community and, with due regard for practical limitations, to determine the location, character, and extent of corresponding "functional areas" that individually and collectively will serve the community's future needs in a satisfactory way.

### II. BASIC PRINCIPLES

Ten principal kinds of functional areas are employed. Each has its own inherent and distinctive requirements and its own peculiar effects on other components of the plan.

Three types of residential areas are recommended, distinguished by density specifications relating to housing and population.

Miami's present development covers approximately 90% of the City, much of it being quite recent. It is not surprising then that no more than 30% of the total area can be counted as "possibly subject to change", comprising a few large vacant tracts, three locations needing redevelopment, and some areas of heavily mixed use.

Along with the limitations of practical possibility, three other factors have been considered -- Miami's future needs, the adaptability of sites, and land-use priorities, when a choice is possible. Economic aspects, public and private, have been given special consideration as the basis for land-use recommendations.

### III. THE LAND-USE PLAN

#### A. MAJOR BUSINESS CENTERS.

1. Out of Miami's present scattered business distribution, 63 recognizable "centers" appear. On the average, they have more stores of nearly every type than modern, planned centers have.
2. The downtown business center is small in area for a City of Miami's size. In the foreseeable future the downtown functions will not change appreciably and the normal trend would be for a slight growth in area. But if accessibility is improved through expressways and better transit and circulation, the growth could be substantial and beneficial to the City.
3. Only six other "major" business centers have been identified on or within Miami's city limits. They are Little River - Biscayne Plaza, Edison Center, Allapattah, and Coral Gate - Miracle Mile,

Coconut Grove, and Central Shopping Plaza. There is no conclusive evidence that additional "major" centers are in prospect, or will be required.

4. Though many of the lesser centers can be justified for local convenience, the facts suggest strongly that overdevelopment of shopping facilities exists in some sections.
5. Public policy should encourage expansion of the downtown business area as shown on the plan. Business district circulation should be improved by a "loop" system of peripheral streets tied in with the expressway.
6. The municipality should provide the lead in improving the design and qualities of the 6 outlying business centers. Technical planning, bypass routes for through traffic, improved traffic control, aid in establishing off-street parking areas by public financing and appropriate land-use regulations .....these are among the available methods.



B. GENERAL BUSINESS AREAS.

1. The 1953 land-use survey depicted general retail business occupying approximately 70 miles of frontage along Miami's main streets. This amounted to about 1/8 of the city's area that was in actual use. Though this was far higher than most cities, that fact can be justified, now and in the future, since statistics tend to show that suburban growth results in an increase in the central city's business. However, Miami seems also to be following a national trend toward fewer, but bigger, business establishments. This requires careful reappraisal of city planning policies, resulting in a tentative conclusion that Miami needs not more business land, but a better distribution of what it has.
  
2. The objectives of policy should be
  - a. Encouragement of larger-scale enterprises to locate or to remain within Miami.
  
  - b. Consolidation of business development at the most favorable locations.
  
  - c. Gradual elimination of excessive and marginal business locations and developments.

3. The Generalized Land-Use Plan proposes that a preponderant share of Miami's future retail business be restricted to the 7 major shopping centers and to frontage along some 50 miles of 20 important thoroughfares. Other retail business should usually be limited to minor concentrations, properly distributed for purely local convenience.
4. Public policy should strive for improvement in the conditions attending business operations at the selected locations. Attention should be given to traffic and parking, and to removal of obstacles to site expansion. The various kinds of business use are reclassified by the new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, with a view to attaining a higher degree of integration among related uses and better balance and design in shopping areas.

C. WHOLESALE, WAREHOUSE, LIGHT AND MEDIUM INDUSTRIAL AREAS.

1. All signs point to a doubling of current employment in manufacturing and wholesale trade, as the metropolitan population passes the million mark. Assuming a propensity for industrial employment in Miami to keep pace with that of the region, the level within the city would ultimately approach

40,000 workers. This figure can be translated into an aggregate demand for 1,200 acres of land, about 7% of Miami's net area. This was just double the amount of industrial use shown in the 1953 land-use survey.

2. Areas where existing industrial uses are numerous enough to have fixed the patterns of the future can provide the needed 1,200 acres, if fully developed with industry. It is proposed that new industrial growth be limited to these areas, as shown on the base plan.
3. Consolidation of industrial development will require more than mere zoning. Industry will not be induced by zoning alone to locate in areas where site costs are high and there are serious problems of land assembly. Urban redevelopment practices involving public acquisition of blighted areas to provide sites for private commercial or industrial enterprises do not now seem possible without an amendment to the State Constitution. However, there are other legal aids that ought not be overlooked.

4. Beyond such aids, the provision of needed public improvements and appropriate tax policies, so far as legally permissible, should tend to encourage new industrial developments.
  
5. Since the Miami area is "the fastest growing industrial area in the United States", the new comprehensive zoning Ordinance should replace old-style rigid listings of permissible uses to modern "performance standards," as inducement to industry and protection to the public. Allowable coverage of the land by buildings should be reduced in some areas and the requirements of parking and loading facilities on a variable scale should be reviewed and refined.

D. TRANSPORTATION LAND USE.

1. With the necessity and urgency of relocating Miami's downtown railway terminal there is not, and cannot be, any dissent from any quarter. The proposed new terminal at Buena Vista, having all the aspects of an accomplished fact and not being seriously at odds with other parts of the general plan, is accepted by the Planning Board.



2. The present municipal port facilities do not now meet the standards of a modern terminal. Ocean trade has not kept pace with other developments and there seems to be no reason for believing the trend will be reversed unless an adequate terminal is established to meet the future volume of shipping.
3. The Planning Board believes the land where the present municipal piers are located could be used advantageously to a "higher and better use" with the removal and relocating of the present facilities.
4. The Planning Board endorses the Dodge Islands Plan as a sound proposal and as not being in conflict with the land use principles set forth in this generalized plan.

E. HIGH-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

1. Although nearly all of Miami's living areas contain some multiple-residence use, very few substantial concentrations of such housing exist. And many multi-family land uses are not really apartment houses at all, but comprise conversions from large single houses, rooming houses, and the renting of backyard cottages and garage apartments.

2. Miami's policy regarding high-density areas should include:
  - a. Permitting and encouraging as much of the metropolitan growth in multiple-housing as would logically tend to locate in the central city and to the extent that the city can reasonably provide the sites;
  - b. Promoting acceptable development of such housing at selected locations, properly designed for high population density. Miami is now substantially all built up and can compete for new housing with the suburbs only on a restricted basis. This means multiple housing, the trend toward which has already set in.
3. However, owing to the scarcity of land, the present rate of apartment building cannot continue for more than a few more years unless accompanied by considerable demolition of existing structures, by a trend toward higher buildings, or by increased encroachment upon areas in which one and two-family homes are predominant.
4. The Planning Board proposes that more than seven-eighths of Miami's future multiple housing be

concentrated in approximately 1,660 gross acres around the city's main business center and that this area be eventually almost entirely in multiple-housing. This area, if developed as proposed, would contribute 18% of Miami's ultimate population. Public policies should be adopted with these objectives in mind.

5. The city should make a housing market analysis to determine the economic feasibility of a joint public and private renewal program in areas characterized by many obsolete dwellings.
6. Quality must be stressed in the gradual transformation of the designated areas to high-density. No great city can afford to tolerate slums, least of all one that purports to be a paradise.
7. In order to assure acceptable practices in the arrangement of new buildings on the land and in reasonable distribution of population, the improved density standards included herewith should be adopted accompanied by practical, enforceable regulations of occupancy, to avoid subsequent overcrowding.

8. The Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance provides for elimination of objectionable and incompatible land uses in residential areas, after due allowance of time for amortization of capital investment.
9. The "neighborhood principle" (see appendix B) should be adopted as the basis of policies respecting public influence and control over future developments in residential areas.

F. MEDIUM-DENSITY AND LOW-DENSITY RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

1. Most of the areas adaptable to, and planned for, these types of uses are not readily subject to change from their present status and composition.
2. The Planning Board proposes that about 7100 acres, gross, be allocated to low-density residence and 6100 acres to medium-density. If these areas were to be fully developed as proposed, there would be no appreciable net increase in the present number of one-family and two-family houses. The continued building of these structures would have the long-term effect of replacing the older structures that give way to multiple-housing, commercial, industrial, and other developments.



3. If all of the plan's residential areas were fully developed as proposed, Miami's ultimate population would probably not exceed 390,000.
4. Most of the medium and low-density areas should be classified as "conservation areas". In such places the objective should be to preserve and enhance existing values through application of appropriate policies, including the "neighborhood principle".

G. MAJOR OPEN SPACES AND PUBLIC AND SEMI-PUBLIC FUNCTIONS.

1. These categories according to the 1953 land-use survey accounted, in toto, for only about 5% of Miami's area, a figure that is very low in comparison with other cities. However, there are reasons why such a comparison is not conclusive of a state of deficiency in Miami.
2. For a city whose status depends heavily on its qualities of good living, Miami does have serious deficiencies in its public recreation system. Details of needs and proposals will be the subject matter of a future Planning Board report.
3. The Board recommends the establishment of a major inland park on the so-called "Blue Lagoon" area, south of International Airport. Acquisition,

development and maintenance should be by the County Park Department.

4. The Board recommends that a portion of Virginia Key be developed as a municipal golf course and public beach facilities.
5. An "edgewater" park drive is proposed along Biscayne Bay from just north of Venetian Causeway to 36th Street. The purpose is to eliminate the dead-end status of 18 streets east of Biscayne Boulevard and to provide small parks along a scenic waterfront for an area that faces increasing building and population density.
6. The Board wholeheartedly endorses the use of the city-owned Le Jeune Road tract as a municipal golf course.
7. The proposed civic center on the Country Club site has been incorporated in the plan.
8. Convention space in the City of Miami is quite inadequate; a larger auditorium and more exhibition space are needed, with possible additional use for cultural and sports events. There is also need for art, science and natural history museums. The

Planning Board recommends the use of a portion of the area now occupied by the municipal piers and the P & O property for needed convention - etc. space.