parks • public spaces • natural areas • cultural areas • greenways • water trails • streets

The Miami-Dade County
parks and open space system
Master Plan

A 50-Year, unifying vision for a livable, sustainable Miami-Dade County

parks • public spaces • natural areas • cultural areas • greenways • water trails • streets

THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

MASTER PLAN VISION

*A public declaration of principles and goals for a seamless, sustainable system
of great parks, public spaces, natural areas & cultural areas, greenways,
water trails, and streets.*

A 50 YEAR, UNIFYING VISION FOR A LIVABLE, SUSTAINABLE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

"*W*hen we build let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for, and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them."

JOHN RUSKIN

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Broward County

The Everglades

C-9 Basin Area

NE Transitional Area

Hialeah

Miami

North Miami Beach

North Miami

North Bay Causeway

Julia Tuttle Causeway

Miami Beach

Atlantic Ocean

Bird Drive Recharge Area

Coral Gables

Rickenbacker Causeway

Everglades National Park

Kendall

Biscayne Bay

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Dante Fascell Visitor Center

Biscayne National Park

Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center

Southern Glades Wildlife Management Area

Homestead

Card Sound

Model Lands Basin

South Card Sound

C-11 Basin

Monroe County

Map Legend

- ▬▬ Urban Development Boundary
- **Great Streets**
  - Boulevard
  - Parkway
- **Greenways & Water Trails**
  - Trail
  - Greenway
  - Water Trail
- **Parks & Public Spaces**
  - Existing County Park
  - Existing Municipal Park
  - Proposed Walk to Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Transit Station Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Community Sport Complex with 2.5 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Regional Sports Complex with 5 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Passive Park with 6 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Neighborhood & Community Center
  - Proposed Regional Center with 5 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Regional Aquatics Center with 5 Mile Service Area
  - Proposed Community Pool with 5 Mile Service Area
  - Cultural Center
  - Historical Preservation Site
  - Library
  - School
  - College/ Institution
  - Urban Center
  - Government Building
- **Water Access**
  - Beach
  - Boating Access
  - Canoe / Kayak Access
  - Fishing Access
  - Swimming Facility
- **Environmental & Endangered Lands**
  - Eco Zone
  - EEL Site

North

Miles
0 0.5 1 2 3

SEAMLESSNESS BEAUTY ACCESS EQUITY SUSTAINABILITY MULTIPLE BENEFITS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

"*W*e need nature as much in the city as in the countryside. In order to endure we must maintain the bounty of that great cornucopia which is our inheritance. It is clear that we must look deep to the values which we hold. These must be transformed if we are to reap the bounty and create that fine visage for the home of the brave and the land of the free. We need, not only a better view of man and nature, but a working method by which the least of us can ensure that the product of his works is not more despoliation."

IAN MCHARG, Design With Nature, 1969

1 INTRODUCTION
through the parks window

Introduction
Through the Parks Window

Miami-Dade County is facing the same population growth issues as many other metropolitan areas, a diminished quality of life, increased congestion, declining recreation and conservation open space, visual blight, limited transportation options and social inequities. With the population expected to increase by three million residents in the year 2025 and up to 4.5 million by 2060, additional pressure will be placed on an already stressed physical, social, and economic environment.

Florida Projections:
State Issues are County Issues

17.9 — 2005
36.8 — 2060

population in millions

2005
Developed Land

2060
Estimated Developed Land
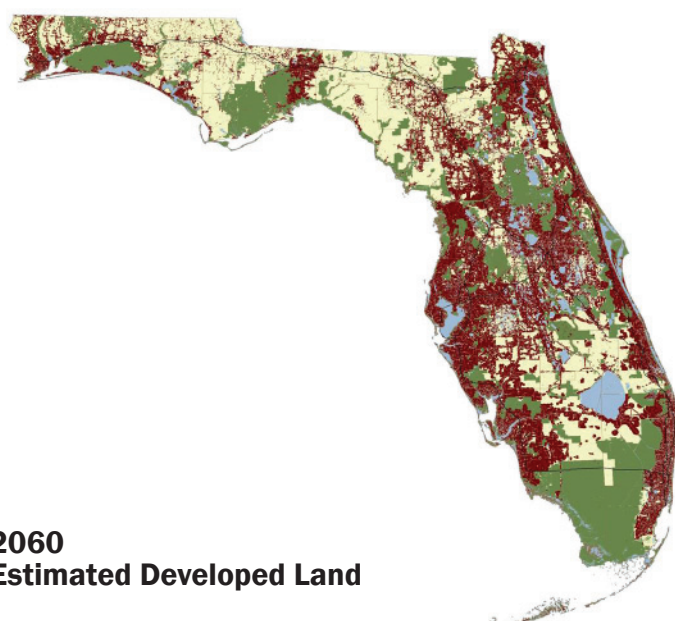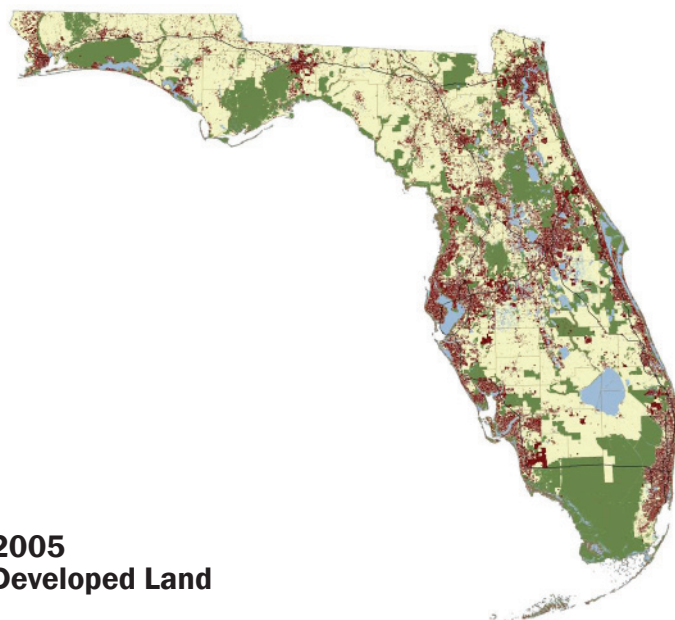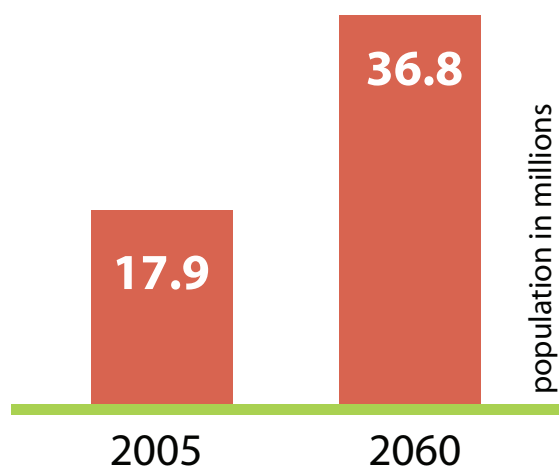
(Source: 1000 Friends of Florida)

Issues Facing Miami-Dade County:

- By the year 2025, the County's population is expected to increase to approximately 3 million residents, including a 30% increase in employment opportunities.

- Automobiles and vehicle trips are expected to increase by 39 percent. Traffic congestion may continue to worsen (South Florida was sixth worst among 85 U.S. metropolitan areas ranked by rush-hour delays), further degrading the quality of life for businesses and residents.

- There is inadequate housing for the anticipated 30,000 new residents moving into the County each year.

- There is only a ten year supply of land available for development within the Urban Development Boundary.

- The lack of available potable water from the Biscayne aquifer may hinder future growth and development.

- The demand for land for affordable, low-density housing may over-ride protections for the County's remaining agricultural lands.

- Encroaching development and increasing stormwater runoff may further imperil the already fragile Everglades and Biscayne Bay.

- The County's middle class may continue to dwindle, further widening the gap between the County's wealthiest and poorest residents (Miami-Dade County is ranked 91st in income; 12th in poverty rate; and 1st in highest rent burden of the 100 largest counties in America).

- Crime may continue to increase and social and economic conditions worsen.

- Educational attainment may continue to drop, further shrinking the work force needed to attract new businesses and higher-paying jobs.

Greynolds Park Circa 1950

"Miami has gone through several roller-coaster cycles: "Paradise" (1800s to 1950s), "Paradise Lost" (1960s to 1980s), "Paradise Re-found" (1990-2000), and "Paradise Lost Again" (2000-present). While some of these changes were due to specific events that either overwhelmed or revived Miami temporarily, none of these changes has been as powerful as the current, steady growth of Miami and the rest of Florida, changing it from a sparsely populated, rural and tourist economy, with cheap land and seeming inexhaustible water and other natural resources, into a place of dense population centers growing at a rate of 1,000 new arrivals every day, a cosmopolitan mix of over 120 ethnicities and nationalities, the largest college in the country, the highest poverty rate of 100 U.S. cities of a similar size, a looming scarcity of drinking water, land prices soaring, traffic congestion, crime and safety not under control, urban sprawl, racial tensions and cynicism about leadership at all levels. Residents say they love living here, but find it increasingly stressful, hopeless, expensive, corrupt, and getting worse each day."

Imagine Miami

This plan is the result of an eighteen-month long Parks and Open Space planning process, involving County staff, residents, agency representatives and elected officials. The goal of the process is to "Create a Seamless, Sustainable System of Park, Recreation and Conservation Open Spaces for this and future generations." Specific objectives include developing:

- A unified, physical vision for a connected regional system
- Guiding principles for a unified physical vision
- Park classifications for a regional system
- A clear role for the County

Howard Gregg, County Parks Department Assistant Director for Planning and Development, summarizes the purpose of the Parks and Open Space System Master Plan:

"A quick glance at the Miami Herald's advertisements for apartments, lofts and condominiums in Downtown, Brickell, Coral Way and some compact developments on the western fringe illustrate the transformation of the County metropolitan region. Increasingly, we are hearing discussions about densifying the urban core, the cost of sprawl, building walkable communities, revitalizing older neighborhoods, promoting active lifestyles, and protecting our environment. More neighborhoods are incorporating; we are divesting our local parks and investing in our regional parks. The Park and Recreation Department is changing. Miami-Dade County is changing.

Road congestion.

"The time is right to develop a new Open Space Master Plan. The current Open Space Master Plan, written and adopted in 1969, has successfully guided the Department in the development of an incredible park system that now totals more than 12,000 acres. A new Open Space Master Plan will help us respond to new park, recreation, and preservation opportunities and challenges. The Plan will serve as a policy document and long-term vision plan to guide future park development and stewardship. It will help us reposition ourselves as a model park system in the 21st century, instill a renewed sense of pride and enthusiasm among our citizens and further our standards of innovation and park excellence."
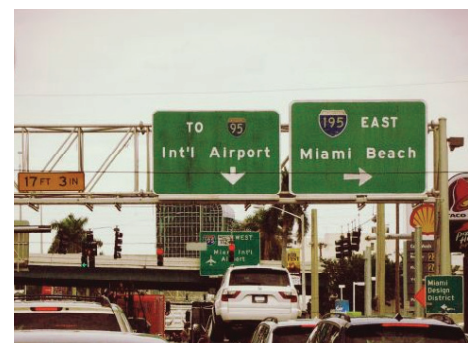
Changing development patterns.

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."

CHIEF SEATTLE

2 A GREEN LEGACY
chronology of the miami-dade parks system 1929 - 2007

A Green Legacy
Chronology of the Miami-Dade Parks System 1929-2007

1920's - 1930's

The Miami-Dade County Parks System began in 1929, when the County Road Beautification Department hired A.D. "Doug" Barnes. It was a time of great anxiety due to the stock market crash of 1929 and the Great Depression of the 1930s. Surprisingly, parks across the country were "beneficiaries" of the grim economic times, as men from the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) were hired to construct shelters, pavilions, and other park structures. Mr. Barnes is credited with having the foresight to acquire many of the County's most cherished heritage parks and overseeing their development, including:

- Matheson Hammock Park (1930)
- Greynolds Park (1933)
- Haulover Park (1935)
- Redland Fruit and Spice Park (1938)
- Fairchild Gardens (1938)
- Homestead Bayfront Park (1938)

A.D. Barnes, Director of the County Road Beautification Department in the 1920s and 1930s

Historic image of Matheson Hammock Park
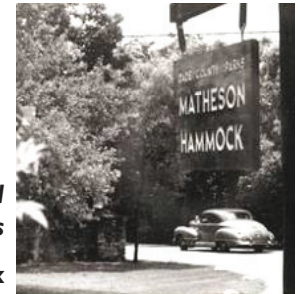
1940's

When the first Park Bond Referendums were passed in 1940 and 1947, five more parks were acquired:

- Virginia Beach (1940)
- Camp Owaissa Bauer (1941)
- Crandon Park / Rickenbacker Causeway (1947)
- Dade County Auditorium (1948)
- Chapman Field (1949)

1950's

In the 1950's Trail Glades Range (1951), Vizcaya (1952), and Elliot Key (1953) joined the system. By 1957, the County adopted its Home Rule Charter, and began providing municipal services to the unincorporated areas--this marked the County's entree into Neighborhood Parks beginning with Carol, Myrtle Grove, Norwood, Westwood, and Continental Parks.

1960's

As the Neighborhood Park system continued to grow, large parks such as Castellow Hammock (1962), Tamiami Park (1962), Amelia Earhart (1964), and the Palmetto Golf Course (1967) were acquired. The County entered into a joint use agreement with the Dade County School District in 1969, providing for the joint development, maintenance and use of school/park properties, and the County's first (and most recent) Open Space and Recreation Master Plan was completed in 1969.

At that time, the total County population was approximately 1,200,000 and the County's Parks and Open Space System included approximately 7,256 acres including:

- 4 "Mini-parks" (4 acres)
- 33 Neighborhood Parks (164 acres)
- 4 Community Parks (118 acres)
- 11 Metropolitan Parks (4,742 acres)
- 3 Nature Preserves (899 acres)
- 7 Wayside Parks (37 acres)
- 10 Ornamental Areas (16 acres)
- 13 Special Activity Areas (1161 acres)
- 41 Undeveloped and Undesignated Open Space Land (115)
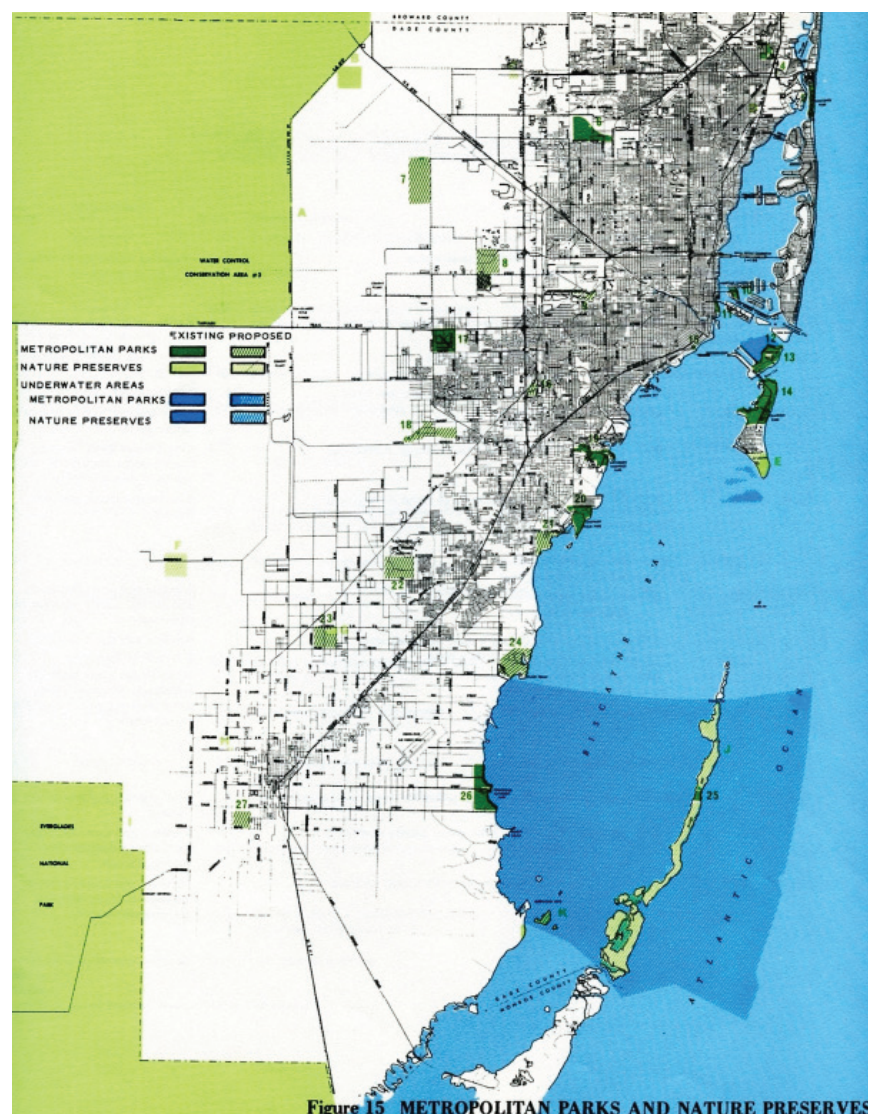
Figure 15 METROPOLITAN PARKS AND NATURE PRESERVES

The 1969 Miami-Dade Parks System

1970's

The 1969 Plan established an aggressive agenda for the continued growth of the Parks System to keep up with increasing demand. In 1972, County residents approved The Decade of Progress Bond Referendum. Bond monies were used to acquire and improve the Metrozoo, Tropical Park, Amelia Earhart Park, Black Point Marina, and multiple Neighborhood Parks.

1980's

The 1980's was a decade of very slow growth and reduced operating and capital budgets. The Parks Department moved aggressively into revenue enterprise operations and public/private partnerships to offset funding cuts. Although growth opportunities were limited, the County in partnership with the State of Florida, was still able to acquire one of the crown jewels of the Parks System, the Charles Deering Estate (1985).

1990's

The 1990's was a decade of both great progress and tremendous setbacks. The County passed its first Park Impact Fee Ordinance in 1990, generating much needed funds for new park development. The County also initiated its Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL) Program in 1990 to secure and protect remnants of the County's important natural areas. Hurricane Andrew struck in 1992, however, causing devastating destruction to many of the County's parks. The "Save Our Parks" County Charter Amendment in 1993 and the Safe Neighborhood Parks Bond Referendum in 1996 provided protection and resources to renovate and repair many of the County's facilities, as well as providing for additional parkland acquisition and development. Projects included the Metrozoo Aviary, West Kendall District Park Acquisition, Homestead Air Reserve Park Acquisition, Crandon Park Nature Center and Beach Cabanas, and the restoration of Camp Owaissa Bauer and the Deering Estate.

2000's

The current decade has been one of looking back to see where the County has been since 1929, making plans for the next generation of growth, and developing new tools and strategies for getting there. Recent and new initiatives include the Quality Neighborhood Initiatives Program; the Building Better Communities Bond Referendum (2004); celebration of the Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation Department's 75th anniversary; preparation of the Park History Book to document and commemorate the growth and development of the County's Park System; and the creation of this, the Parks and Open Space Master Plan.

Today approximately 11.5 million visitors come to Miami-Dade County each year, and the total population continues to grow. The County's park system has grown as well, becoming the largest and most diverse urban park system in the nation, with:

- Over 250 parks comprising 12,727 acres (almost double the acreage in 1969)
- 15,780 acres of Environmentally Endangered Lands (EELs)
- An operating budget exceeding $100 million plus natural lands management
- 2 National Parks on its boarders

Design Legacy

The existing Miami-Dade parks system has a design legacy that goes back to the beginning of the landscape architecture design profession. William Lyman Phillips, a purveyor of the Olmstead philosophy, designed many of Miami-Dade County's important parks including, Grenoylds, Matheson Hammock, and Cradon Parks. The design legacy that he left draws upon significant historic precedents and emphasized harmony, variety and contrast. These principles continue to guide the development of parks today.

"*W*hen we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched
to everything else in the universe."

JOHN MUIR

3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES
for a sustainable future

Guiding Principles:
To Create a Model Park System

SEAMLESSNESS
Every element of the County, including neighborhoods, parks, natural areas, streets, civic centers and commercial areas, should be connected without regard to jurisdiction.

BEAUTY
Every public space, including streets, parks, plazas and civic buildings, should be designed to be as aesthetically pleasing as possible, and to compliment the natural and cultural landscape.

ACCESS
Every resident should be able to safely and comfortably walk, bicycle, drive and/or ride transit from their home to work, school, parks, shopping and community facilities.

EQUITY
Every resident should be able to enjoy the same quality of public facilities and services regardless of income, age, race, ability or geographic location.

SUSTAINABILITY
Every action and improvement of the Park System, including facilities, programs, operations and management, should contribute to the economic, social and environmental prosperity of the County.

MULTIPLE BENEFITS
Every single public action should generate multiple public benefits to maximize taxpayer dollars.

Goals

- Every resident in the County can walk (within 5 minutes) to a central neighborhood park or civic space for picnics, special events, informal play and socialization.

- Every resident can safely and comfortably walk, bicycle, or take transit to community parks, recreation centers and special use/ sports facilities.

- A balance of active and passive recreation opportunities are available to all residents.

- The County Parks Department works with State and Federal Agencies, every municipality and the School District to provide public access to schools, parks, and recreation areas.

- Public access is provided to lakes, beaches, forests and other major natural areas. The County's significant cultural and historical sites are protected, maintained, and promoted.

- Conservation areas and critical habitats are protected from over-use and negative impacts.

- An interconnected network of shaded and safe bikeways and trails connect to parks, neighborhoods, schools, employment centers, civic buildings, and other community destinations.

- Existing streets are transformed into tree-lined boulevards and parkways that define the County's urban form.

- Transit is provided to parks and civic sites.

- Public art, signage and cultural/ historical exhibits are integrated into park and public realm infrastructure projects to "tell the County's story" and to create a sense of pride and place.

- Park improvements are used to create a sense of place for neighborhood stabilization and/or redevelopment.

- Parks are designed to reduce energy and water consumption, and to serve as models for sustainable development County-wide.

- Parks are designed to be flexible in order to accommodate ever-changing recreation trends and demographics.

- Residents of surrounding neighborhoods are engaged in the planning, design and stewardship of each park.

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"*M*ake no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will themselves not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will not die."

DANIEL BURNHAM, Architect and Urban Planner

4 VISION

for a seamless, sustainable parks and open space system

Vision
For A Seamless, Sustainable Parks and Open Space System

"Our cities, our communities and the places we inhabit have an immense impact on how we think and act as human beings. The quality of our built environment has the power to define community identity, transform our public spaces and create a meaningful sense of place. Major public infrastructure, like transportation systems, public works projects and parks, offer the opportunity to shape neighborhoods, landscapes, and cities. With this master planning process, we have an opportunity to articulate a land use agenda that promotes a more livable, attractive, efficient and environmentally aware community. We can create memorable places and images that transform the commonplace into the extraordinary by applying unconventional approaches to design that broaden the palette of traditional responses to urban form and function. We are engaged in and proposing nothing less than a cultural shift in how we think about our approach to community and park planning and the uses of materials, processes and systems for civic infrastructure."

Vivian Donnell Rodriguez
Miami-Dade County Parks and Recreation
2006 Great Parks Summit

The vision for the Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System is to create a ***new, interconnected framework*** for growth, one that results in a more a livable, sustainable community. Consisting of existing and proposed parks, public spaces, natural and cultural places, greenways, trails and streets, the framework will form the foundation or "bone structure" of the County to accommodate growth while also improving the quality of life for residents. The new framework will encourage the revitalization of neighborhoods; allow for the orderly redevelopment of existing land uses in response to changing markets and demographics; and ensure greater environmental protection. It will also improve the social fabric of the County, providing equitable access to parks and open spaces, and providing more opportunities for residents to meet, socialize and connect with one another.

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

The vision for the Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space system includes the following components:

1. GREAT PARKS are for everyone, and should provide a diverse and balanced system of active and passive recreational opportunities. The County's Vision is that residents of every neighborhood, urban, suburban, rural, incorporated and unincorporated, have equal access to places to walk, to exercise, to socialize and to engage in a healthy, active lifestyle.

2. GREAT PUBLIC SPACES often define the great cities of the world. As Miami-Dade County develops more densely, there will be a need for great, attractive, usable public spaces that provide an opportunity for meaningful recreation experiences. These can be anything from neighborhood plazas to great waterfront vistas and promenades.

3. GREAT NATURAL AND CULTURAL PLACES can be celebrated in a system of Zones (clusters of Environmentally Endangered Lands and Cultural Resource Centers) that: provide a variety of education activities and programs; elevate the public's appreciation and understanding of the County's natural ecosystems and cultural amenities; engage the surrounding neighborhoods; and link the sites with the other elements of the open space system through streets, greenways, and water trails.

4. GREAT GREENWAYS, TRAILS, AND WATER TRAILS can form an interconnected system that: provides transportation alternatives and reduces traffic congestion; creates new recreational opportunities; increases property values; protects natural resources; and encourages tourism and business development. These trails strengthen connections across the County, from Broward to Monroe Counties, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Everglades.

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

The Vision

This map illustrates the 50 year framework created by an interconnected system of great, public spaces, natural and cultural places, greenways, trails, water trails and streets.

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

	Urban Development Boundary

Great Streets

	Boulevard
	Parkway

Greenways & Water Trails

	Trail
	Greenway
	Water Trail

Parks & Public Spaces

	Existing County Park
	Existing Municipal Park
	Proposed Walk to Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Transit Station Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Community Sport Com with 2.5 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Regional Sports Comp with 5 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Passive Park with 6 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Neighborhood & Community Center
	Proposed Regional Center with 5 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Regional Aquatics Cen with 5 Mile Service Area
	Proposed Community Pool with 5 Mile Service Area
	Cultural Center
	Historical Preservation Site
	Library
	School
	College/ Institution
	Urban Center
	Government Building

Water Access

	Beach
	Boating Access
	Canoe / Kayak Access
	Fishing Access
	Swimming Facility

Environmental & Endangered Lan

	Eco Zone
	EEL Site

North

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

1 GREAT PARKS

"Considering that (the American parks movement) has occurred simultaneously with a great enlargement of towns and development of urban habits, is it not reasonable to regard it is a self-preserving instinct of civilization?"

Frederick Law Olmsted

Great Parks Vision

The first "layer" of the Vision is a great parks system. Great cities have great park systems with beautiful parks, public plazas, and outstanding natural features. Because human beings have a basic need for parks and open space, to re-connect with nature. Communities without adequate open space are dreary and depressing, socially, aesthetically, and economically. While parks systems in the past were thought of as "amenities", communities across the country now realize just how much value these park systems bring to their locales.

Miami-Dade County is changing. The Vision for Great Parks acknowledges that in order for the system to be relevant it needs to be responsive to the new issues the community is facing. A great Parks System:
- Stimulates the physical, mental, and spiritual potential of individuals
- Fosters good schools, jobs, housing, public transportation, clean air, and safety
- Encourages a harmonious relationship between man and nature
- Helps conserve energy and natural resources
- Brings quality to the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment
- Provides balanced and diverse recreational opportunities
- Takes advantage of its unique features, climate, geography, population, history, industry, and express them through design
- Understands a community's roots
- Involves people in the planning and use of projects

To position the department for the future, the Miami-Dade Parks System needs to be flexible across a wide range of contexts and based on delivering services rather than just on acreage and population. The current model for parks that is based on a sub-urban development context primarily automobile dependent and assumes the availability of large tracks of land for parks development. This model will not work in a County that is experiencing much of its growth through redevelopment and increased density. The new model for parks acknowledges that the need for parks varies widely across the County depending on the development context and the demographics and lifestyles of a particular area. To this end, the criteria developed for the new parks system is based on recreation needs and experiences in a particular location within the rural to urban context. The diagram below illustrates the range of habitats that parks need to be integrated into. Chapter six further describes how the transect works and provides hypothetical case study examples of how the vision for parks and open space can be applied along the rural to urban continuum.

This neighborhood context planning approach replaces the conventional typologies for parks and simplifies the definition of park types to the basic classifications of "Programmed" and "At Will" recreation. Programmed activities are the traditional types of active recreational activities that are scheduled at specific times and for specific activities. 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. People are increasingly interested in activities like walking and biking that do not require them to meet an exact schedule or to be organized with large numbers of other people.

How the transect works
- The Transect is an ecologically based ordering system for classifying and arranging the human habitat.
- The Transect is a framework that identifies a continuous range of habitats from the most natural to the most urban.
- The continuum of the Transect, explains the different levels of density in a community
- These levels of density inform and guide the design and development of parks.

RURAL |||||||||||||||||||||||||||||TRANSECT||||||||||||||||||||||||||||||URBAN

| T1 NATURAL ZONE | T2 RURAL ZONE | T3 SUBURBAN ZONE | T4 GENERAL URBAN ZONE | T5 URBAN CENTER ZONE | T6 URBAN CORE ZONE | DA ASSIGNED DISTRICT |
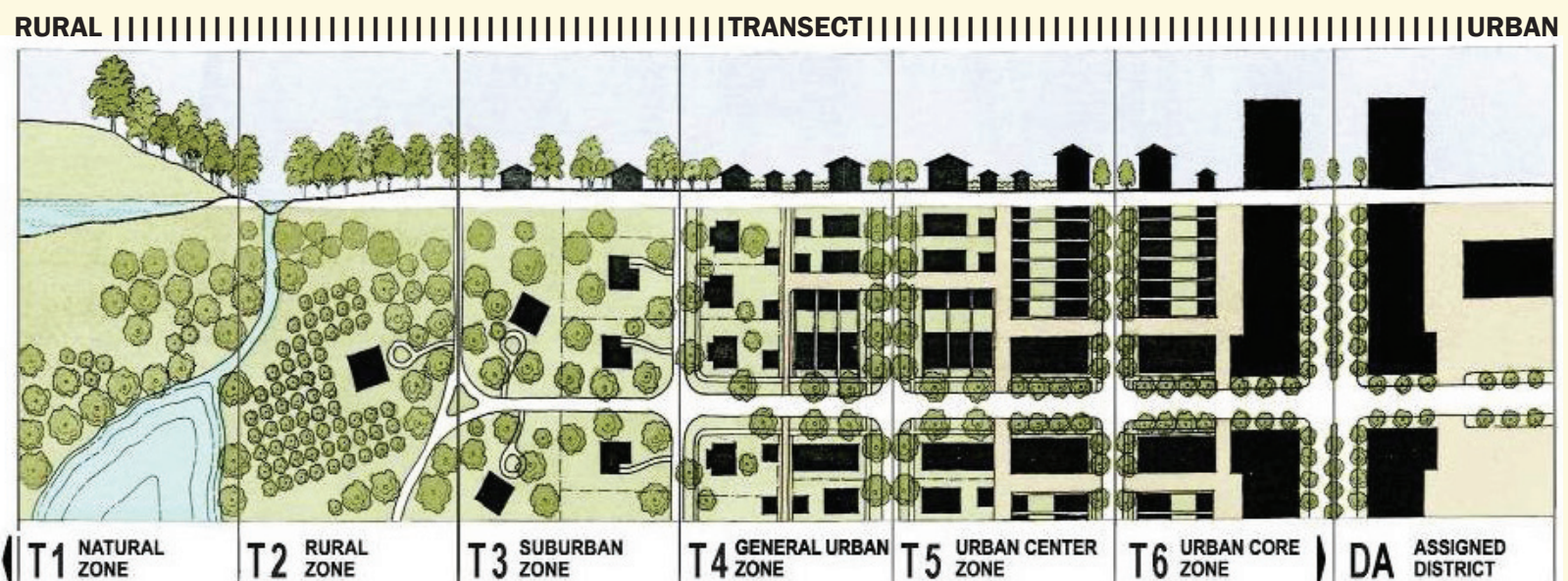
DPZ&Co., inc.

Great Parks Vision

This map illustrates the approximate locations of new parks and open spaces within the Urban Development Boundary to achieve "Equitable Access" to parks and open spaces in accordance with the new "Public Parks and Open Space Activity Criteria". (next page)

Broward County

The Everglades

Everglades National Park

Monroe County

Biscayne National Park

Biscayne Bay

Atlantic Ocean

Miami

Hialeah

Coral Gables

Kendall

Homestead

Ernest F. Coe Visitor Center

Dante Fascell Visitor Center

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

— · — · Urban Development Boundary

Parks & Public Spaces

Existing County Parks

Existing Municipal Parks

Proposed Walk to Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area

Proposed Community Sport Complex with 2.5 Mile Service Area

Proposed Regional Sports Complex with 5 Mile Service Area

Proposed Passive Park with 6 Mile Service Area

Proposed Neighborhood & Community Center

Proposed Regional Center with 5 Mile Service Area

Proposed Regional Aquatics Center with 5 Mile Service Area

Proposed Community Pool with 5 Mile Service Area

Water Access

Beach

Boating Access

Canoe / Kayak Access

Fishing Access

Swimming Facilities

A STRATEGY FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS AND DISTRIBUTION

Public Parks and Open Space Activity Criteria

As discussed previously, Miami-Dade County has a great existing Parks System, currently comprised of over 250 parks and over 12,000 acres of land. Additionally, the County's 35 municipalities also own and manage hundreds of other parks and recreation areas. As the County and municipalities have grown, however, the location of these facilities has resulted, in part, in an inequitable distribution of facilities and programs throughout the County. Some residents can walk or bicycle to a nearby park or community center, for example, while others have to drive for miles to get to a similar facility. The Vision for the County's Parks System emphasizes *equitable access for every resident,* rather than the traditional measure of a certain number of County-wide park acres or facilities per County resident.

The first measure of "equitable access" is the absence of barriers to existing parks and recreation facilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment and transportation. To this end Miami-Dade County must continually evaluate each of its existing park and recreation facilities to identify and address any "deficiencies" or barriers to access. This evaluation also includes the presence or absence of sidewalks, bicycle paths or lanes and transit service to each park and facility; many residents cannot drive, or do not have access to an automobile. Additionally, a reduced dependency on automobiles is a key element of the Vision for a more sustainable community.

The second measure of equitable access is the distance people have to walk, bicycle or drive to participate in the daily or weekly activities generally associated with *local (neighborhood) parks and open space*. Residents should be able to safely participate in the following activities close to home:

- Walk for fun or exercise
- Walk the dog
- Ride a bike for fun or exercise
- Sit outside to read, contemplate or meet friends
- Play with other kids on a playground
- Play a game of catch or Frisbee
- Picnic and/or sun bathe on a lawn
- Play pick-up sports or practice baseball, soccer, football, skateboard, basketball, tennis, racquetball or other sports
- Exercise, attend classes, lectures, social functions
- Swim

The Parks and Open Space Vision proposes that every resident has equitable access to these basic activities, and that every neighborhood within the County in time should be upgraded if necessary – to meet residents' needs. The type of facilities required to meet these needs may vary according to context. A resident living in a high rise condominium in an urban area may walk on local streets an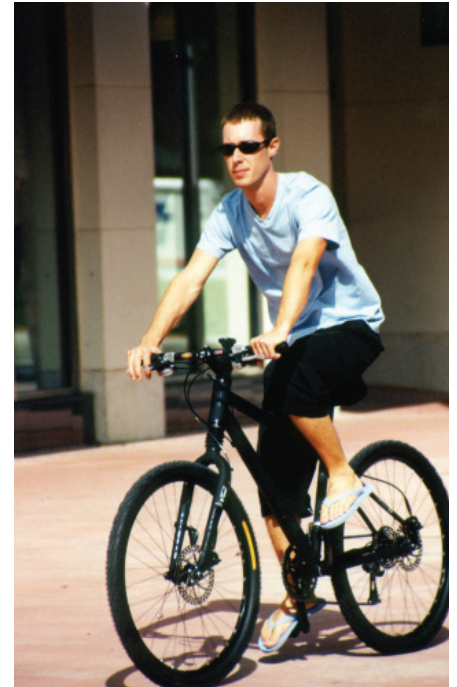d sidewalks, for example, while a resident in suburban Miami-Dade County may walk on a trail at a nearby Community Park. Similarly, a rural resident may play catch in someone's large rural yard, while an urban resident will walk to a nearby neighborhood green or square. The "Activity-Based Parks and Open Space Criteria" on the next page outlines criteria for evaluating existing and proposed neighborhoods in Miami-Dade County, as well as potential improvements to ensure equitable local access.

The "Public Parks and Open Space Activity Criteria" also outlines the third measure of equitable access, the distance people have to walk, bicycle or drive to participate in the *area-wide recreational activities* generally found outside of people's neighborhoods such as:

- Swimming recreationally or competitively in a public pool
- Fishing from land or a boat
- Paddling a canoe or kayak
- Observing nature and wildlife
- Motor boating
- Attending festivals, concerts or special outdoor events
- Playing in organized competition sports
- Participating in exercise classes, lectures, social functions

Generally the types of facilities needed to accommodate these activities require either
1. a major natural resource,
2. a large facility that generates noise and traffic, and is incompatible with residential land uses,
3. a facility that cannot be supported by a single neighborhood.

Therefore these facilities are generally located along major collector or arterial roads, away from residential uses. The Parks and Open Space Vision proposes that these area-wide facilities should be distributed equitably throughout the County, based on the "Public Parks and Open Space Activity Criteria ", to ensure that every resident has equal opportunity to participate in the activities outlined above, and to reduce dependency on automobile access. Transit and bicycle access are particularly critical to ensure access to these facilities.

Public Parks and Open Space Activity Criteria

ACTIVITY	PARK OR OPEN SPACE TYPE			EQUITY ACCESS CRITERIA	
Every resident should be able to:	*This activity takes place in:*				
NEIGHBORHOOD				*Measured by walking Distance/access from every household*	
AT WILL ACTIVITIES					
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	ACCESS MEASUREMENT
WALKING	Sidewalks, Nearby Park or Waterfront, Promenade, and Public Spaces	Sidewalks, Trails, Nearby Parks	Roads and Trails	All residents, regardless of location, should be able to safely and comfortably walk around their neighborhood, connecting to a safe, wide, shaded sidewalk system.	URBAN: Immediately accessible SUBURBAN: Immediately accessible RURAL: Immediately accessible
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
WALKING THE DOG	Sidewalks, Private Amenity Areas, Nearby Parks	Streets, Sidewalks, Private Amenity Areas, Nearby Neighborhood/ Regional Park	Sidewalks, Private Amenity Areas, Nearby Parks	All residents, regardless of location, should be able to safely walk their dog around their neighborhood and at parks designated for dog use.	URBAN: Immediately accessible SUBURBAN: Immediately accessible RURAL: Immediately accessible
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
RIDE A BIKE	Bike Lanes(on-street), Bike Paths (off-streets), Nearby Parks	Bike Lanes, Nearby Parks	Nearby Parks, Bike Lanes (on-street)	All residents should be able to safely ride their bicycle from urban to rural areas using a combination of on-street/off-street bike lanes. Additionally they should be able to enjoy recreational bicycle rides inside large parks, accessible by transit or greenway network.	URBAN: Immediately accessible SUBURBAN: Immediately accessible RURAL: Immediately accessible
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
SITTING OUTSIDE, READING, CONTEMPLATING, MEETING FRIENDS	Nearby Parks, Public Spaces, Waterfront Promenade	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 5-10 minutes SUBURBAN: 10-15 minutes RURAL: n/a
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
GOING TO A PLAYGROUND	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	Nearby Park and Public Spaces	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 5-10 minutes SUBURBAN: 10-15 minutes RURAL: n/a
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
PLAYING CATCH, FRISBEE, PICNICKING, SUN BATHING	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	Nearby Parks and Public Spaces	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 5-10 minutes SUBURBAN: 10-15 minutes RURAL: n/a
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
PLAYING "PICK-UP SPORTS"	Nearby Parks and Schools	Nearby Parks and School	Parks and Schools	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 15-20 minutes SUBURBAN: 15-20 minutes RURAL: n/a
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
RECREATIONAL SWIMMING, FAMILY FUN	Nearby Parks and Schools	Nearby Parks and School	Parks and Schools	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 15-20 minutes SUBURBAN: 15-20 minutes RURAL: n/a
PROGRAMMED ACTIVITIES					
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
LEARNING TO PLAY A SPORT, SPORTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM	Nearby Parks and Schools	Nearby Parks and Schools	Parks and Schools	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 15-20 minutes SUBURBAN: 15-20 minutes RURAL: n/a
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
LEARN TO SWIM	Nearby Parks and Schools	Nearby Parks and Schools	Parks and Schools	All resident should be able to safely and comfortably, walk, ride or take transit to a nearby park or public space	URBAN: 15-20 minutes SUBURBAN: 15-20 minutes RURAL: n/a
REGIONAL				*Measured by Transit Distance/access from every household*	
AT WILL ACTIVITIES					
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
RECREATIONAL SWIMMING, LEARN TO SWIM, FAMILY FUN	Parks and Schools	Parks and Schools	Parks and Schools	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 15-20 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 15-20 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) RURAL: 15-20 (5 miles drive/transit)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
SHORELINE FISHING	Public Access Dock/Pier/Shoreline/Causeway/Bridge	Public Access Dock/Pier/Shoreline/Causeway/Bridge	Public Access Dock/Pier/Shoreline/Causeway/Bridge	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 15-20 minutes (2 miles bike/drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 15-20 minutes (2 miles bike/drive/transit) RURAL: 15-20 (2 miles bike ride/drive/transit)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
CANOEING OR KAYAKING	Public Access to Launch Area, Water Trails	Public Access to Launch Area, Water Trails	Public Access to Launch Area, Water Trails	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 30 minutes (10 miles drive) SUBURBAN: 30 minutes (10 miles drive) RURAL: 30 minutes (10 miles drive)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
OBSERVING WILDLIFE, ENJOYING NATURE	Waterfronts, Promenades, Parks, Public Spaces, Natural Areas, Greenways, Water Trails	Waterfronts, Promenades, Parks, Public Spaces, Natural Areas, Greenways, Water Trails	Waterfronts, Promenades, Parks, Public Spaces, Natural Areas, Greenways, Water Trails	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 30 minutes (10 miles drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 30 minutes (10 miles drive/transit) RURAL: 30 minutes (10 miles drive/transit)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
MOTOR BOATING OR SAILING	Water trails, Launch Areas/Marinas, Facilities that Allow Water Access, Docks	Water Trails, Launch Areas/Marinas, Facilities that Allow Water Access, Docks	Water Trails, Launch Areas/Marinas, Facilities that Allow Water Access, Docks	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 30 minutes (10 miles drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 30 minutes (10 miles drive/transit) RURAL: 30 minutes (10 miles drive/transit)
PROGRAMMED ACTIVITIES					
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
ATTENDING FAIRS, FESTIVALS, CONCERTS, MARKETS OR OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS	Waterfront Promenade, Neighborhood Park, Streets, Public Spaces	Waterfront Promenade, Neighborhood Park, Streets, Public Spaces	Waterfront Promenade, Neighborhood Park, Streets, Public Spaces	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 5 minutes (bike ride/transit) SUBURBAN: 10-15 minutes (bike ride) RURAL: 30 minutes (drive)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
PARTICIPATING IN ORGANIZED OUTDOOR COMPETITION SPORTS	Parks (sports complex), Schools	Parks (sports complex), Schools	Parks (sports complex), Schools	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) RURAL: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
PARTICIPATING IN ORGANIZED INDOOR COMPETITION SPORTS	Parks (sports complex), Schools	Parks (sports complex), Schools	Parks (sports complex), Schools	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) RURAL: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit)
	URBAN	SUBURBAN	RURAL	ACCESS	
EXERCISE, ATTEND CLASSES/ LECTURES/ SOCIAL FUNCTIONS	Parks, Public Spaces, Natural Areas (nature center)	Parks, Public Spaces, Natural Areas (nature center)	Parks, Public Spaces, Natural Areas (nature center)	All residents should be able to safely and comfortably drive, ride transit to a park	URBAN: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) SUBURBAN: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit) RURAL: 15 minutes (5 miles drive/transit)

Elements of a Great Park: *Park Planning and Design Principles*

In addition to providing equitable access to parks and open spaces throughout the County, every park should be designed to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the surrounding neighborhood and community. Parks cannot be planned and designed as independent "recreation islands"; they must respond to the context of adjacent streets and land uses as well.

Key attributes include:

- Native shade trees that are planted to reduce heat; provide shaded walks, parking lots and recreation facilities; provide wildlife habitat; reduce dependency on irrigation; and improve aesthetics

- Park pathways and sidewalks that are connected to a regional bicycle/pedestrian network to provide access to and from transit, neighborhoods, schools, work places and commercial activity centers

- Public art and interpretive displays that are incorporated into the park design to provide a sense of place, based on the local culture, environment and history

- Residential and commercial development located across the street, should face the park (rather than backing up to the park) to provide for increased security and "eyes on the park"; to incorporate the public street, sidewalk and street trees into the park design; to better delineate the line between public and private realms; and to enhance the value of the properties fronting the park

- On-street parking that is provided to calm traffic, provide a buffer between the park and street, and to reduce the need for land-consuming, expensive and hot off-street parking lots

- Sports fields that are clustered to maximize their use for multiple activities and events, and to reduce maintenance costs

- Nearby or adjacent schools that are connected to the park through wide sidewalks and cross walks to maximize opportunities for the joint use of meeting space, playgrounds, sports fields and other common park/ school facilities

- Multiple access points from surrounding neighborhood to the park

- Park signage that is minimized to avoid clutter, and is integrated with the County's public art and sign/ wayfinding programs

- Park management that emphasizes sustainable best management practices such as the use of native plants, xeriscaping and reclaimed irrigation water; use of green building materials; and minimal use of pesticides and fertilizers

Design Principles

- Shade parking to reduce glare and heat build up
- Secure pick-up/drop-off area
- Integrate parks with regional greenways
- Provide 50% tree canopy and incorporate best management practices for ecological sustainability
- Shade walkways
- Provide shade structures
- Incorporate environmental art
- Plan parks with schools
- Allow on-street parking

- Plan transit connections
- Zone housing to face park for security
- Bound parks with perimeter roads to eliminate in holdings
- Shared use parking
- Minimize signage and visual clutter
- Plan connections to area-wide activities for parks and open spaces
- School frontage on collector street
- Acknowledge historic and cultural significance of the area

The Economics of Great Parks

- In Philadelphia, a study of neighborhood values in the impoverished, urban neighborhood of New Kensington found that adjacency to vacant land decreases neighborhood values by 18 percent, while tree plantings increased values by 14 percent and being within one-quarter mile from a park increased values by ten percent. In the vicinity of the city's 1,300 acre Pennypack Park, property values correlate significantly with proximity to the park. In 1974, the park accounted for 33 percent of the value of a plot of land when the land was located 40 feet away from the park, nine percent when located 1,000 feet away, and 4.2 percent at a distance of 2,500 feet.

- A 2003 study of almost 7,000 single family homes in Leon County, Florida showed that homes within 200 feet of a park were worth an estimated $6,015 increase in value. Homes between 200 and 1,320 feet of the park increased in value by an average of $1,773. In more densely populated areas (over 2,500 people per square mile) the premiums for property within 200 feet of the park rose to approximately $14,000.

- In Tallahassee, Florida homes within 200 feet of Myers Park, a 47-acre natural park, sold for $24,600 more than comparable homes farther away. Homes bordering Maclay State Gardens Park had a premium of $47,000. Those within 200 feet showed a premium of $21,000. The total properties within 200 miles of Maclay State Gardens Park added over $6 million to the property tax base.

- Within two years of the reopening of Manhattan's Bryant Park, neighboring Sixth Avenue saw a 60 percent increase in leasing activity on 60 percent over the prior year. Area brokers referred to the park as the "deal-clincher." Between 1990 and 2000, rents for commercial office space near the park increased between 115 and 225 percent, compared with increases of between 41 percent and 73 percent in the surrounding submarkets, according to a study conducted by Ernst & Young. The same study, which analyzed 36 neighborhood parks in all five boroughs of New York City, concluded that "commercial asking rents, residential sale prices, and assessed values for properties near a well-improved park generally exceeded rents in surrounding submarkets."
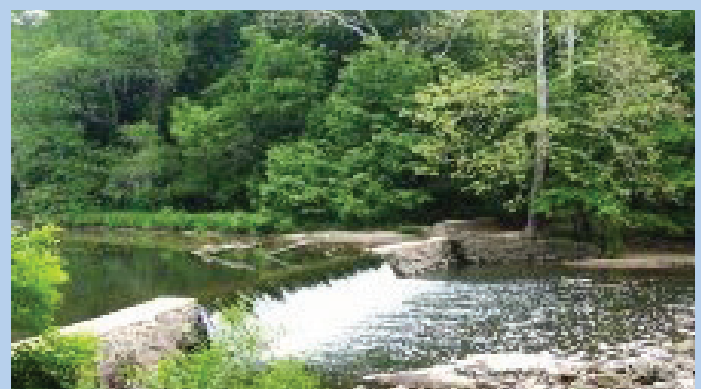
Neighborhood Park Revitalization

Conversion of a vacant lot into a neighborhood park can be a catalyst for the redevelopment of surrounding properties and the creation of higher density, affordable homes.
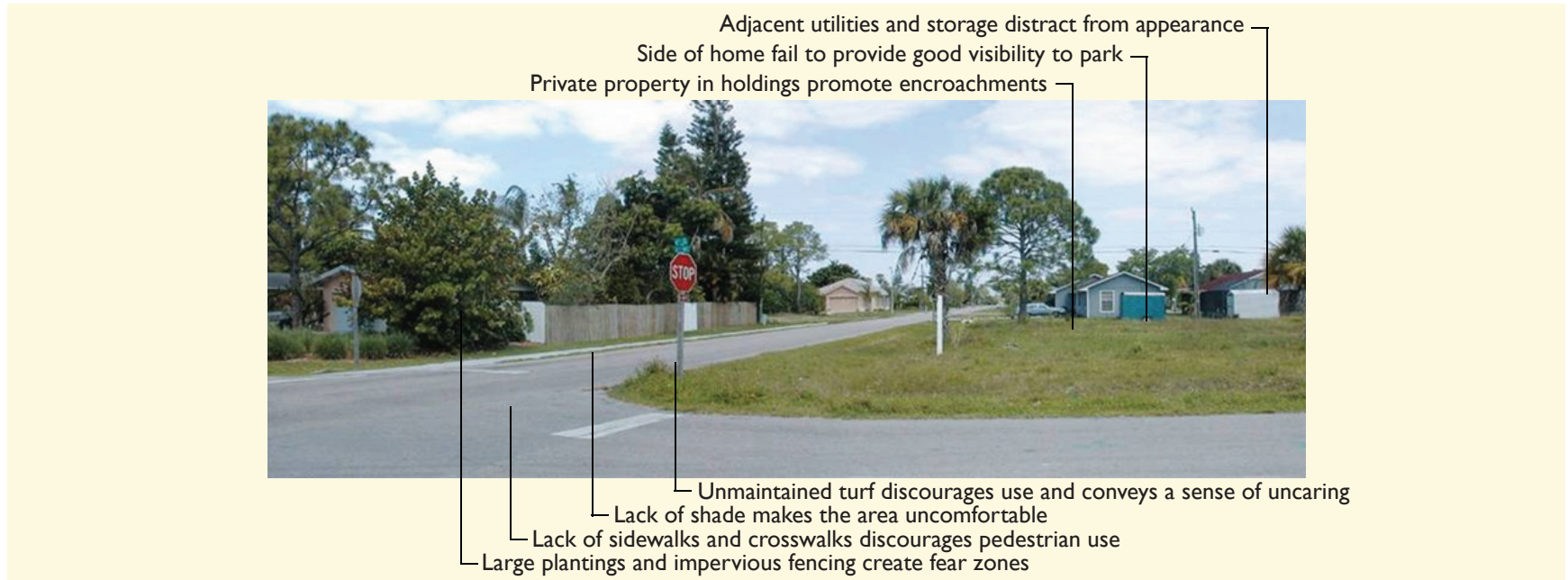

Adjacent utilities and storage distract from appearance
Side of home fail to provide good visibility to park
Private property in holdings promote encroachments

Unmaintained turf discourages use and conveys a sense of uncaring
Lack of shade makes the area uncomfortable
Lack of sidewalks and crosswalks discourages pedestrian use
Large plantings and impervious fencing create fear zones

Adjacent homes facing park promote activity and natural safety by providing eyes on the park
Neighborhood scale, public open space provides outdoor recreation for mixed use, integrated development

Image by:
Dover Kohl & Partners

Shade and seating promote passive use
Walks connect to neighborhood
Perimeter streets delineate park, eliminate encroachments and minimize conflicts

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) summarizes the benefits of parks in its recently published report The Benefits of Parks: **Why American Needs More City Parks and Open Space**:

"Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they exercise more. Regular physical activity has been shown to increase health and reduce the risk of a wide range of diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes. Physical activity also relives symptoms of depression and anxiety, improves mood, and enhances psychological well-being. Beyond the benefits of exercise, a growing body of research shows that contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health. Despite the importance of exercise, only 25 percent of American adults engage in the recommended levels of physical activity, and 29 percent engage in no leisure-time physical activity. The sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy diet of Americans have produced an epidemic of obesity. The Centers for Disease Control Prevention has called for the creation of more parks and playgrounds to help fight this epidemic. Numerous studies have shown that parks and open space increase the value of neighboring residential property. Growing evidence points to a similar benefit on commercial property value. The availability of park and recreation facilities is an important quality-of-life factor for corporations choosing where to locate facilities and for well-educated individuals choosing a place to live. City parks such as San Antonio's Riverwalk Park often become important tourism draws, contributing heavily to local business.

Green space in urban areas provides substantial environmental benefits. Trees reduce air pollution and water pollution, they help keep cities cooler, and they are a more effective and less expensive way to manage stormwater runoff than building systems of concrete sewer and drainage ditches. City parks also produce important social and community development benefits. They make inner-city neighborhoods more livable; they offer recreational opportunities for at-risk youth, low-income children, and low-income families; and they provide places in low-income neighborhoods where people can feel a sense of community. Access to public parks and recreational facilities has been strongly linked to reductions in crime and in particular to reduced juvenile delinquency."

2 GREAT PUBLIC SPACES

"These are the places we remember most vividly, the places where serendipitous things happen, the places we tell stories about."

Project for Public Spaces, 2006

In addition to a Great Parks System, the Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Vision includes a system of great Public Spaces. Libraries, museums, schools, government buildings, transit stations and other civic/ institutional places offer numerous opportunities to create new public spaces for festivals, arts and crafts shows, green markets and other civic activities that bring communities together.

Libraries have become the centers of civic activity in many neighborhoods throughout Miami-Dade County, primarily because of the success of the branch library system concept. Residents no longer have to drive downtown to a central downtown library, but can access all of the services of the library system from their local branch. Many branch libraries have replaced the local elementary schools as the centers of local community life, and are ideal locations for the creation of new outdoor Public Spaces such as plazas, fountains and civic greens.

Museums also provide opportunities for great Public Spaces. Many museums host group field trips and special events in addition to their daily programs and activities, and are natural places for residents to congregate. Similar to libraries, museums are ideal locations for outdoor concerts, performances, exhibits, arts and crafts shows, green markets and other civic events.

Schools were traditionally used as public spaces throughout Miami-Dade County and the rest of the United States, but liability and security concerns have forced many schools to severely limit public access. With forethought and good joint school-park planning, school grounds can still function well as public spaces. Playgrounds, multi-use fields, plazas and courtyards can all be designed to accommodate civic events; liability and security concerns can be addressed through the thoughtful location of these spaces, as well as the strategic location of fencing to ensure security while still allowing public access.

Government Buildings such as City Halls, County Buildings and Administration Centers can also serve as settings for great Public Spaces, particularly for the public employees who work there. Well-designed, comfortable and shady plazas, courtyards and gardens can provide great spaces for lunch or quiet reflection, as well as opportunities for outside meetings and retreats. These spaces can also be used for green markets, arts and crafts shows and other civic events.

Transit Stations provide one of the most exciting opportunities for Public Spaces in Miami-Dade County. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is focused on the creation of compact, walkable communities centered on a well-designed transportation station. Generally the surrounding communities are higher density and mixed-use to encourage transit ridership and provide a pleasant walking environment. As one gets farther from the station, intensity of land use typically steps down. Ultimately, TODs are intended to promote organized, directed growth along nodes and corridors rather than amorphous sprawl.

In a country where riding the train or bus is not ingrained in the culture, a major component of success for TODs is to make alternative transportation attractive. Designing for passenger comfort is essential to encourage people to utilize transit options. Stations need safe, attractive pedestrian access; comfortable places to wait; ample lighting; and effective information signage that displays fares, transit schedules and other information. They also need to be woven into the fabric of a the community through solid connections to other modes of transportation, but also visually connected. Instead of an immense parking lot that discourages people from going to the station, a station park can attract people to the area and also provide a greater feeling of safety and serenity. For a station park or plaza, a 1/4 mile service area, a short walk, is generally accepted.

The Great Public Spaces map shows the potential for about fifty new public spaces that would serve as the central gathering places. These public spaces would have a potentially smaller service area radius of about one quarter of a mile, and serve local residents' needs for walking, meeting, informal play, and special events.

Transit station parks can become the heart of revitalized, redeveloped neighborhoods.

Community Stations serve areas larger than their immediate surroundings. These station areas may provide moderate to high levels of new development or redevelopment potential. Community Stations will be accessed by kiss-and-ride and park-and-ride users and local buses. Walk-up use may also be significant.

Great Public Spaces Vision

This map illustrates the known locations of new public spaces throughout Miami-Dade County including libraries, museums, schools, government buildings and transit stations. Many other locations exist as well, particularly within the municipalities and downtown areas.

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

- ▬▬ Urban Development Boundary
- ⊙ Proposed Transit Station Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
- ⬟ Library
- ◼ School
- ▲ College/ Institution
- ○ Urban Center
- ■ Government Building
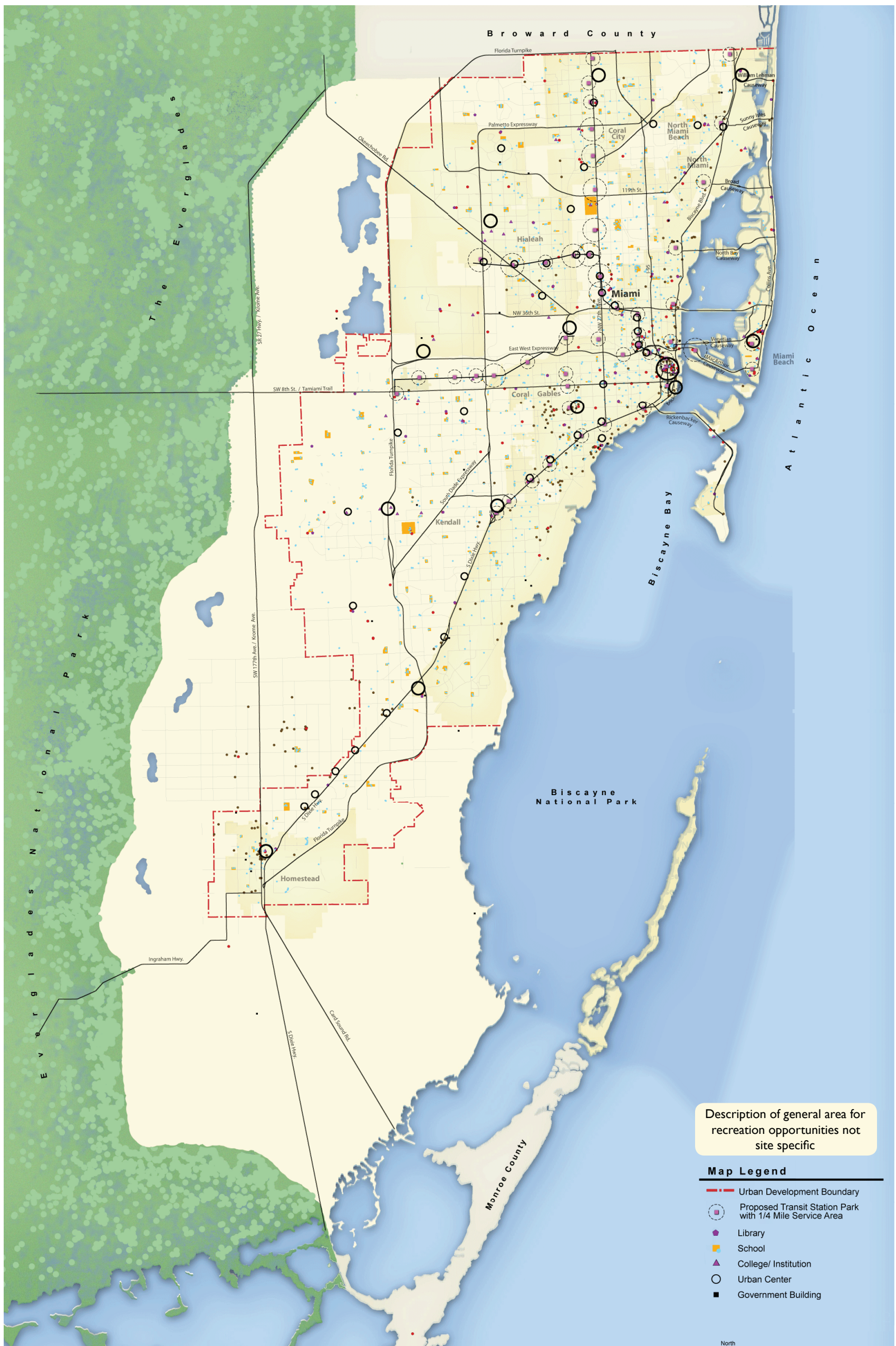
Great Public Spaces Vision

The Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a national leader in creating and promoting quality places, has found that successful public places have four key qualities: "they are accessible; people are engaged in activities there; the space is comfortable and has a good image; and finally, it is a sociable place: one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit." PPS further expands on these four important qualities:

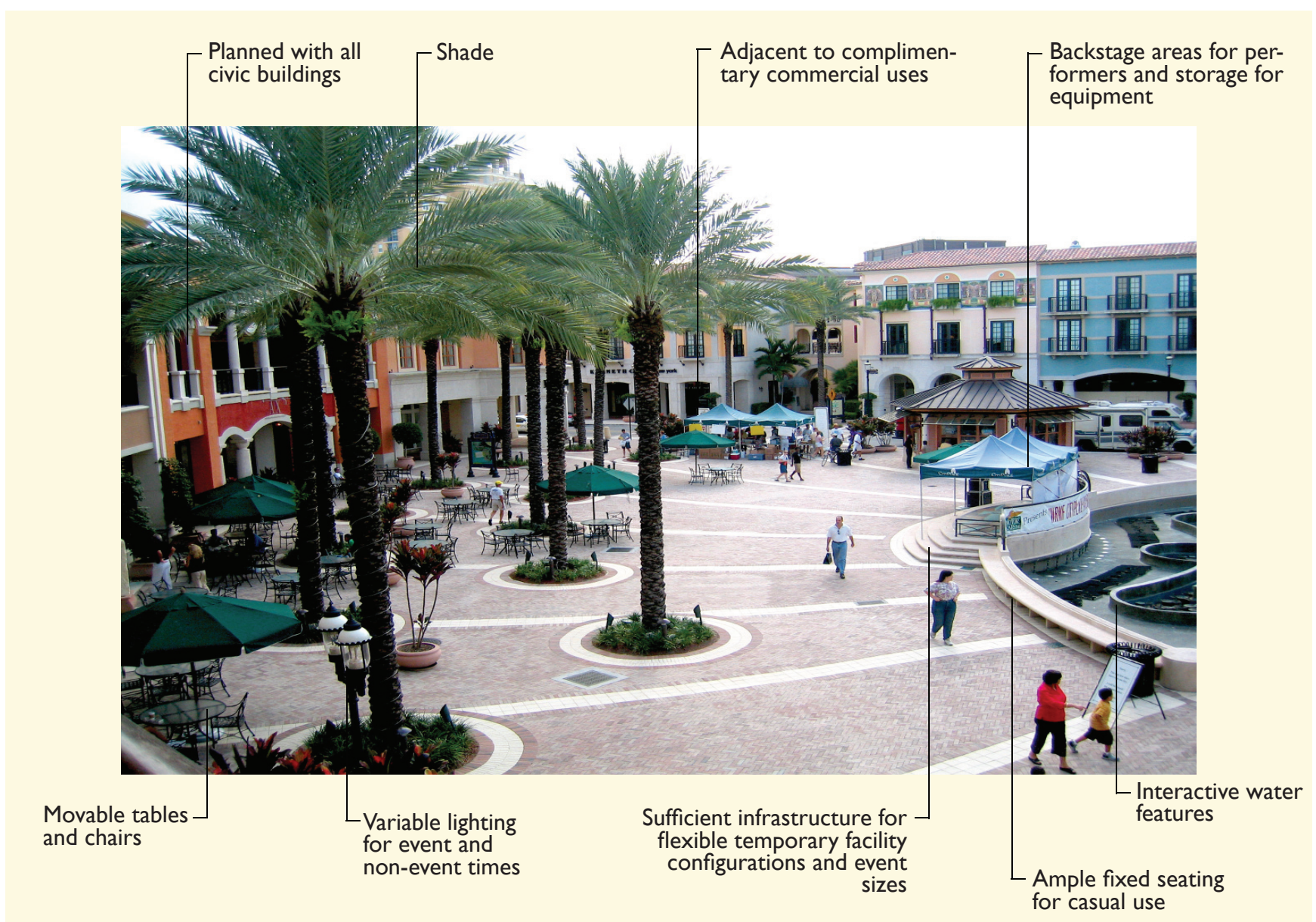**ACCESS** and **LINKAGES**: You can judge the accessibility of place by its connections to its surroundings, both visual and physical. A successful public space is easy to get to and get through; it is visible both from a distance and up close. The edges of a space are important as well: for instance, a row of shops along a street is more interesting and generally safer to walk by than a blank wall or empty lot. Accessible spaces have a high parking turnover and, ideally, are convenient to public transit.

COMFORT and **IMAGE**: Whether a space is comfortable and presents itself well, has a good image, is key to its success. Comfort includes perceptions about safety, cleanliness, and the availability of places to sit. The importance of giving people the choice to sit where they want is generally underestimated.

USES and **ACTIVITIES**: Activities are the basic building blocks of a place. Having something to do gives people a reason to come to a place, and return. When there is nothing to do, a space will be empty and that generally means that something is wrong.

SOCIABILITY: This is a difficult quality for a place to achieve, but once attained it becomes an unmistakable feature. When people see friends, meet and greet their neighbors, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers, they tend to feel a stronger sense of place or attachment to their community, and to the place that fosters these types of social activities.

Planned with all civic buildings

Shade

Adjacent to complimentary commercial uses

Backstage areas for performers and storage for equipment

Movable tables and chairs

Variable lighting for event and non-event times

Sufficient infrastructure for flexible temporary facility configurations and event sizes

Ample fixed seating for casual use

Interactive water features

The Economics of Great Public Spaces

The creation of great parks in urban areas can spur development and revitalization of entire cities and states. Research shows that proximity to neighborhood parks can lead to increases in property values for lots and houses adjacent to or near the parks. Spending by the parks department and community involvement can create lasting social impact in communities as well.

CASE STUDY: Campus Martius Park - Detroit, Michigan

In 2001, Detroit 300 a civic organization was created to celebrate the City of Detroit's 300th birthday. Detroit 300 raised $25 million to create a park to rejuvenate downtown. Bob Gregory, a former General Motors executive who was instrumental in the development of Campus Martius said, "Going back 300 years Campus Martius had always been Detroit's gathering spot...We put this green dot in the center of our plans to revitalize downtown. It changes the image of Detroit in everyone's mind. They see the square on TV, hear about what's happening there and they see Detroit differently."

Inspired by urban parks such as Rockefeller Center and Bryant Park in New York, Detroit 300 worked with non-profit group, Project for Public Space (PPS) to create a lively space. Says Gregory, "We wanted a place that was green and that was the center of activity for downtown, but we didn't want a place that was tranquil and beautiful, but there was nothing to do. Over the last year the park has delivered on its promise to be a gathering spot for everybody. People call it 'beautiful' and say it looks like 'a real city.'"

Over 200 events were held over the summer and an ice-skating rink keeps visitors coming year-round. The space attracts people from a range of backgrounds and is even drawing people from the suburbs. Gregory says that the support of local officials, especially the mayor made it possible to reroute several downtown streets to create a pedestrian-friendly environment near the park. Of the mayor, Gregory remarks "We had his support over the objection of transportation people who said you can't change the traffic patterns. They always have all these studies and standards that quoted about why rearranging streets couldn't be done. But the mayor's office was solid and we did get it done."

Since the restoration of Campus Martius was announced, over $500 million dollars of new investment has been drawn to the surrounding area. New retail, urban condominiums, and new office buildings have contributed to the area's improvement. Compuware, a large computer company relocated 4,000 from a suburban headquarters to a nearby tower. Gregory said, "Compuware would not have come downtown without the park. They didn't want just a building. They wanted a lively district, where their workers would have things to do."

3 GREAT NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE AREAS

"Historic places tell a community where it came from what previous generations achieved what they believed, what they hoped to be. By protecting these reminders of the past, preservation also builds the present and the future."

National Trust for Historic Preservation

In 2002, a British study found that children could more easily identify the characters of the Pokemon cartoon than an otter, beetle, or oak tree. But it's not just children who lack contact to nature, many adults who grew up building forts in the woods no longer find the time to leave the city or suburbia and get into nature. In some cases, access to nature is too just far away or too unappealing to make the effort.

While many people are not getting enough nature, many natural lands are not getting enough appreciation. Land conservation programs do help the environment, but there is a perception that their only function is an ecological one. This is unfortunate given that more and more research points to the positive effects that open lands have on the well-being of people. Psychologically, just viewing open space reduces stress levels. Direct interaction with nature, such as on an eco-tour or a casual walk through a protected area, yields many more benefits, especially in the development of children. Conserving lands can truly have dual benefits: for nature and for people, and reinforcing the relationship between them.

Before

After

Source: Dover Kohl

Environmentally endangered lands can create an identity and sense of place for adjacent neighborhoods.

Environmental Zones Mission and Vision

An Eco-zone is a group of protected natural areas that are connected through greenways, blueways and biotic corridors that provide the community with experience that inspire, educate and foster stewardship of the natural environment of South Florida. Within an Eco-zone there shall be a series of connected Eco-hubs that provide resource-based education and recreation.

The Vision for Miami-Dade is a system of Environmental "Zones" (clusters of environmentally endangered lands) that provide a variety of environmental education activities and programs; elevate the public's appreciate and understanding of the County's natural ecosystems; demonstrate the proper management of natural resources; engage the surrounding neighborhoods in the use and management of the sites; and link environmental sites with other elements of the open space system, through streets, greenways, trails and blueways.

The concept promotes access and appreciation with responsible environmental stewardship. Over time, many of the existing EEL sites can be clustered into critical masses by acquiring neighboring lands. The vision for the environmental zones does not propose a radical amount of acquisition and physical change; instead, it is much more of a change in branding, marketing, and management, in short, repackaging what natural and cultural areas are and getting the word out about what makes it unique.

Environmental Zones Characteristics

A high quality Environmental Zones would emphasize different priorities: those where resource conservation is the priority, and those where resource conservation education is the priority. The first type would have very limited public access; the second would serve as areas for interpretive installments, nature centers and other visitor facilities, and have opportunities for passive recreation such as hiking or birdwatching.

In planning for all types of zones it is important that natural area functions should not be substantially compromised by recreation objectives. All construction should meet green standards, and buildings should compliment the natural landscape and use compatible materials. Areas that are more environmentally sensitive can be kept off-limits or have minimal public access, whereas adjacent areas with less sensitivity can support educational activities and greater traffic. The hands-on educational component is crucial, as is interpreting the ecological heritage of the area to help garner support for conservation practices. Environmental areas are great opportunities to provide passive, resource-based recreation that overly programmed neighborhood and community parks may lack. A secondary benefit of conserving environmental lands and providing access is the possibility of ecotourism, a potential source of revenue.

Environmental Hub Characteristics:

- An Eco-hub is a site connected to an eco-zone that includes property suitable for development of recreation and educational opportunities

- An Eco-hub must balance recreational and educational access with conservation through the following conservation, design and programing criteria

- An Eco-hub must restore and protect the natural environment and function to connect all components of existing ecosystems

- An Eco-hub must be designed to reflect the natural character of the site; all infrastructure and land conservation methods must be developed and maintained with the principles of sustainability and work harmoniously with the environment

- An Eco-Hub must be programmed to include a range of educational, recreational and volunteer programs to inspire, educate and foster stewardship of South Florida communities.
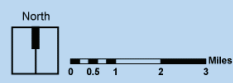
Great Natural and Cultural Areas Vision
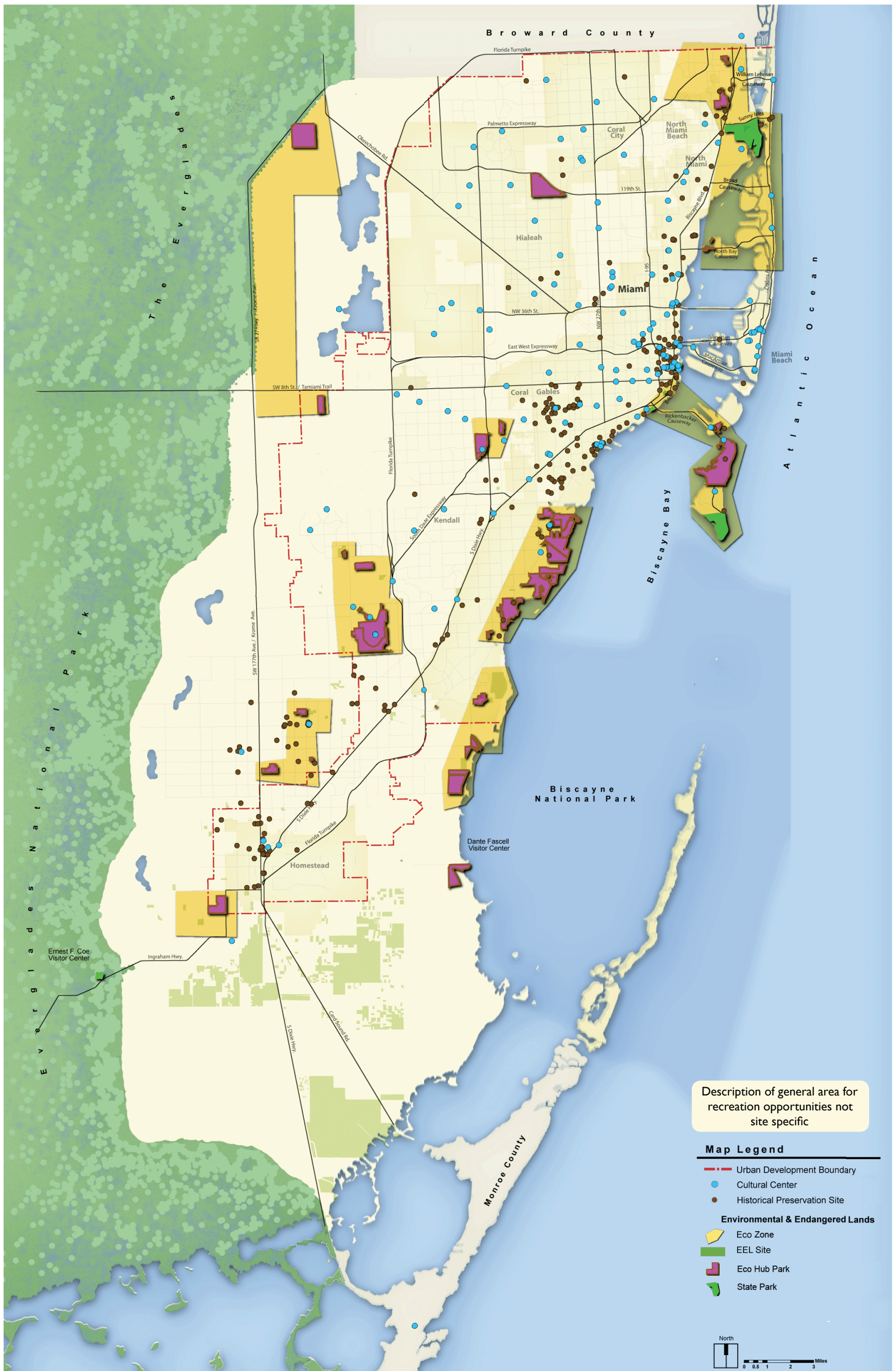
Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

- —·— Urban Development Boundary
- ● Cultural Center
- ● Historical Preservation Site

Environmental & Endangered Lands

- Eco Zone
- EEL Site
- Eco Hub Park
- State Park

North

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

The experience of a natural area would also differ depending on what part of the transect of the urban environment they are located in. Example characteristics are:

Urban Zone
- Green building practices design construction facilities
- Good signage: educational, interpretive, well-designed
- Rollerblading, hiking, biking trails -- paved, multi-purpose trail in areas where there will be no degradation to the adjacent resource
- Environmental centers that are safe -- provide security through structured environmental programs
- See urban wildlife - provide community gardens for butterflies
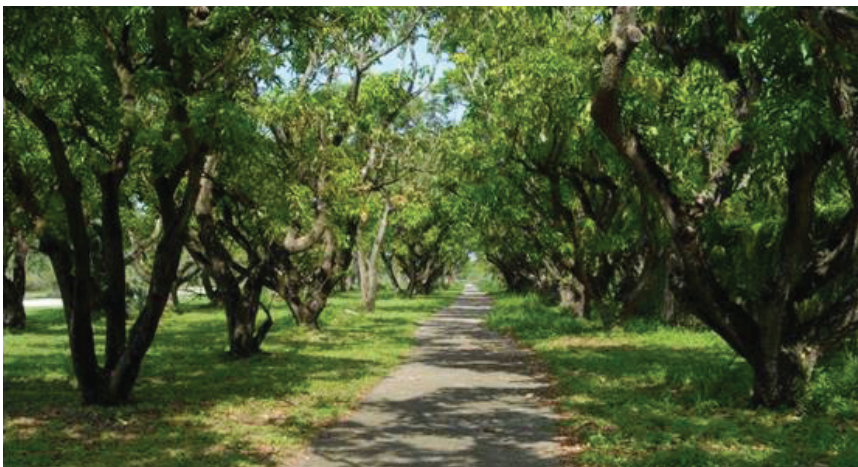
Sub-Urban Zone
- Green building practices design construction facilities
- Good signage: educational, interpretive, well-designed
- Rollerblading, hiking, biking trails -- paved, multi-purpose trail in areas where there will be no degradation to the adjacent resource
- Butterfly gardens - provide community gardens for butterflies
- Environmental centers that are safe - provide security through structured environmental programs
- Picnicking with family -- provide tables, trash removal

Rural Zone
- Green building practices design construction facilities
- Good signage: educational, interpretive, well-designed
- Co-op gardens use existing agricultural lands
- Equestrian, hiking, biking trails - unpaved, multi-purpose trails in areas where there will be no degradation to the adjacent resource
- Camping - provide well-drained, campsites as compatible with resource conservation
- Environmental centers that are safe - provide security through structured environmental programs
- Provide trailhead facilities at regular locations throughout the County. Facilities should include parking, bike racks, shade structures, seating, water and information kiosks. Larger trailheads may also include bike maintenance, repair facilities, concession stands and amenities for group activities.

Natural Zone
- Green building practices design construction facilities
- Good signage: educational, interpretive, well-designed
- Kayaking - provide free launch sites
- Camping - provide well-drained (or platforms on wetland areas), primitive campsites as compatible with resource conservation
- Fishing - provide shoreline access, and maintain existing facilities for launching.
- Resource-based recreation - provide low-impact access
- Expanded, free boat launches and marinas - improve existing facilities
- Provide trailhead facilities at regular locations throughout the County. Facilities should include parking, bike racks, shade structures, seating, water and information kiosks. Larger trailheads may also include bike maintenance, repair facilities, concession stands and amenities for group activities.

Great Cultural Heritage Areas

During World War II, the military brought thousands of troops to Miami-Dade for training; when the war was over, many of the soldiers returned to South Florida with their families to settle down permanently. Population growth continued throughout the second half of the twentieth century, boosted especially from emigration from Latin American nations such as Cuba and Haiti. Today, Miami-Dade is an international melting pot of the tropics and the United States' gateway to Latin America.

Historic sites, galleries, and cultural centers, these are the places that illustrate the history and the people of Miami-Dade County. Some, such as the hotels of Miami Beach or the neighborhoods of Overtown, provide a physical link to the area's past. Others, like the County's great museums and galleries are on the cutting edge of art. Still others, like the cultural centers that celebrate the region's diversity, provide a meeting place for both.

### Great Cultural Heritage Areas Vision

The vision for great Cultural Zones is similar to that of the Environmental Zones: to thematically cluster cultural and historical sites that provide a variety of heritage education activities and programs; elevate the public's appreciation and understanding of the County's history and culture; and to engage the surrounding communities in the stewardship of the sites. In fact, many of the hubs contain both environmental and cultural/historical elements, such as the archeological and natural attractions of Biscayne Bay. These clusters of heritage sites, both cultural and environmental, provide unique opportunities to celebrate the qualities that make Miami-Dade an interesting, diverse place to discover.

Miami-Dade's cultural areas tell the story of the County: a unique subtropical environment that is like nowhere else in the country. Hundreds of years ago it was a battleground between competing European nations, and the major form of income was "wrecking:" pillaging shipwrecked vessels that had sailed too close to the coral reefs. Settlement was sparse until the arrival of Henry Flagler's railroad in 1896. Gradually the area was drained and more land became available for development; by the 1920s a large real estate boom sparked great interest in South Florida, and many of the County's most beautiful historic landmarks hark from this era.
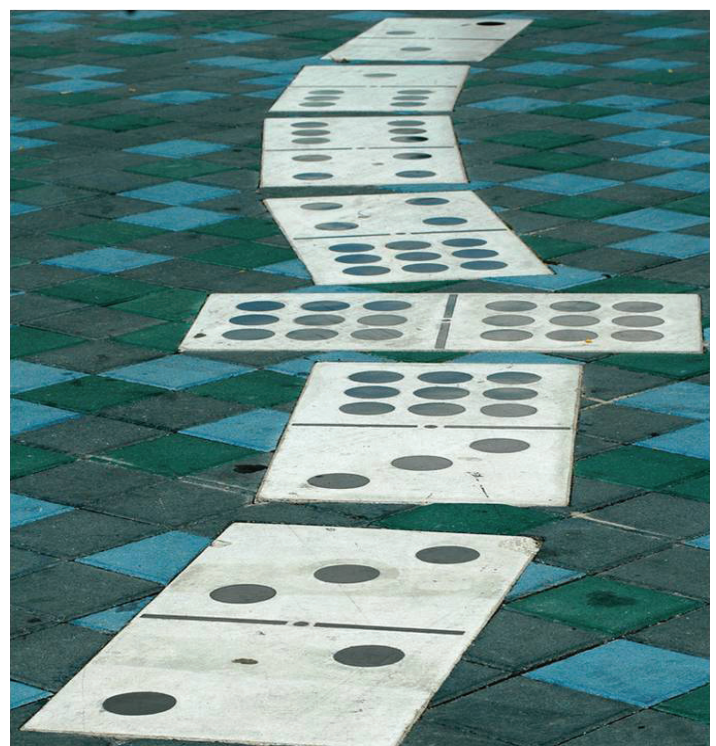
Strong communities need great cultural areas. The benefits are many:

- **Education** – Cultural areas educate residents and visitors about the history and present of the Miami-Dade, and what makes the County unique.
- **Community Connections** – Organizations and special events provide forums to bring together different communities and strengthen relationships.
- **Beauty** – Cultural and historic sites often provide a beautiful and unique aesthetic to the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Economics** – Cultural organizations have been shown to have positive economic impacts far beyond their costs through providing local jobs and attracting heritage tourists.
- **Sustainability** – Cultural areas provide a record of time and continuity for future generations. Also, the rehabilitation of historic buildings for new purposes embraces the sustainability principle of "recycling" existing resources and using them for future generations.
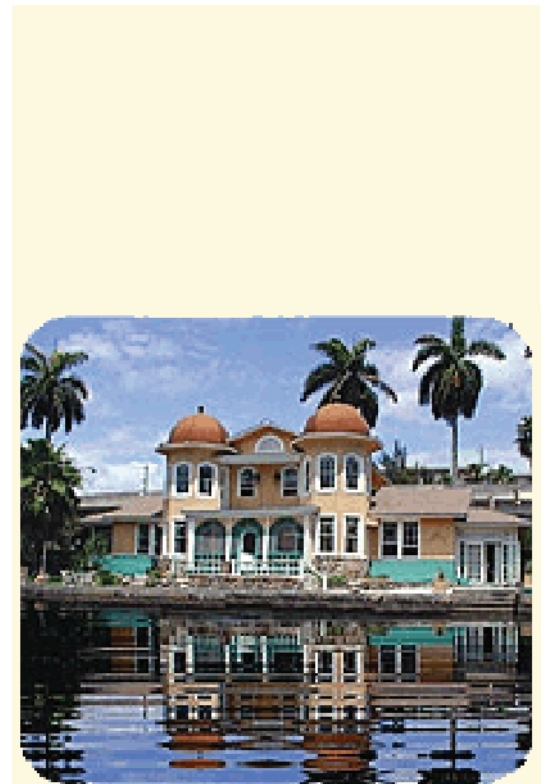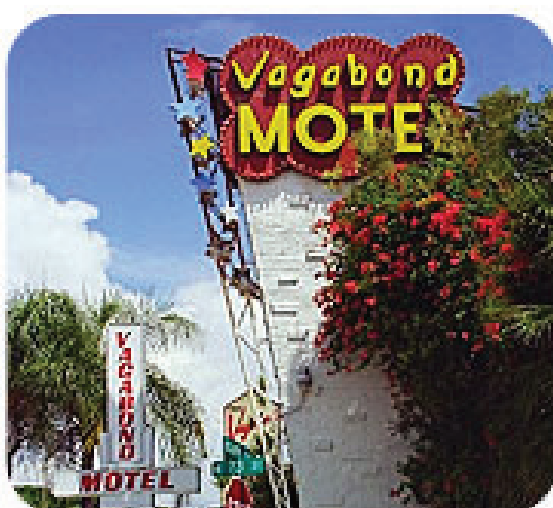
Great cultural and historic places not only benefit residents, but encourage heritage tourism. Heritage tourism is defined as "traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes historic, cultural and natural resources." (National Trust for Historic Preservation). These are the travelers that seek out museums, are attracted to historic sites, and want to have new, unique experiences. They also tend to spend more time and more money at their destinations: a heritage tourist spends an average of $631 per trip and stays 4.7 nights, compared a typical vacationer that spends an average of $457 per trip and stays 3.4 nights.

The Economics of Great Natural and Cultural Areas

Centralized locations such as trailheads and outdoor education centers can be a draw for residents and a way to encourage residents and tourists to utilize other parks, trails, and outdoor recreation facilities. Similarly, being located near an open space that is appreciated or patronized by residents and tourists allows businesses and education centers to capture that audience. Having specific locations and activities associated with open spaces can maximize usage and support and create a mutually beneficial relationship for all facilities and organizations involved.

CASE STUDY: International Wolf Center - Ely, Minnesota

Ely, Minnesota, serves as a gateway to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA) recreation areas. The International Wolf Center (IWC) opened in the Superior National Forest in 1993 as a 17,000 square-foot nature center, seeking to educate the public on wolves and their ecosystems. While the area's waters and parks continue to be the primary driver for Ely's tourism industry, a 1996 study showed the impact and draw of this education center was having a positive and significant effect on the area.

The IWC draws almost 50,000 annual visitors, approximately 20 to 30 percent of all Ely tourists. 24 percent of all IWC visitors report that the Wolf Center had a great influence on their decision to visit Ely, resulting in approximately 12,000 new visitors who would not have visited Ely if not for the IWC. An additional 27 percent of respondents said that the IWC had some influence on their choice of destination. While half of all Ely tourists reported a previous visit to Ely since 1993, only one quarter of IWC-influenced tourists reported a previous visit. This implies that IWC is introducing new visitors to the area.

For all IWC visitors surveyed, 19 percent of respondents cited the Wolf Center as their main reason for visiting Ely (tied with canoeing for second place after fishing). An additional 14 percent listed it as the second most important reason for their visit to Ely, and 15 percent listed it as third. In just three years of activity, the IWC has become one of the area's largest draws and has increased tourism to the area.

Although IWC-influenced tourists spend less money over fewer nights than the typical Ely tourist, the impact of these tourists is still significant. In 1995, the average group expenditure of IWC visitors was $185, resulting in an estimated influx of $655,000 to the Ely area. Combined with an additional $70,000 spent by the 20 percent of IWC visitors who extended their vacation, a total of $725,000 worth of tourist expenditures in Ely were directly attributable to the International Wolf Center.

The University of Minnesota study estimates that additional tourist expenditures in restaurants, retail shops and lodging establishments have generated approximately 20 new jobs in the region. Regional spending could result in an additional 16 more jobs. Through employment, purchasing, and contractors, total economic impacts from the IWC are about $1.5 million, twice their annual operating budget. Using the IMPLAN Model of economic impacts, the 1996 study anticipates that, including employment, approximately $3 million in annual economic activity and as many as 66 new jobs are associated with the International Wolf Center.

The IWC continues to be successful. An expanded theatre space and viewing area was added in 1998. In 2003, the museum saw attendance of around 40,000. In 2004 the museum posted revenues of almost $1.2 million, an increase of around $226,000 from the prior year.

4 GREAT GREENWAYS, TRAILS AND WATER TRAILS

"Greenways are really links in a chain of opportunities that begin in our own backyards. These opportunities begin by our recognizing the potential in each and every piece of open land."

Edward T. McMahon, Director, American Greenways Program, 1993

Greenways are about connections: they connect people and wildlife to places, to nature, and to each other. In a time where urban open space is a rarity, new recreational opportunities may only exist in linear patterns- along utility easements, roadways and other transportation corridors and waterfronts. These paths make it possible to connect people to parks, but also make connections in grander ways. They create more recreational opportunities for residents and visitors; provide an alternative means of transportation; protect natural resources; increase property values; and encourage tourism and business development.

There are several "looks" of a greenway and trails system: trails, pathways, boardwalks, bike paths and bike lanes. As a greenway transitions from the suburbs to the city, it may change from a dirt path, to an asphalt trail, to a bike lane that is part of the existing roadway. All of these segments are part of the same greenway, and some of the most interesting and successful greenways traverse a number of landscapes. Water Trails add a distinct element to a Greenways system: they add visual interest to a corridor and provide opportunities for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and in some cases swimming. A Water Trail can be any linear body of water such as a river or stream, but the most prevalent forms in South Florida are canals and levees.

Existing greenway and water trail conditions in Miami-Dade.

Greenways, Trails and Water Trails Vision

The Miami Dade Greenways, Trails and Water Trails Vision is for an inter-connected system that provides transportation alternatives and reduces traffic congestion; creates new recreational opportunities; increases property values; protects natural resources; and encourages tourism and business development. These paths strengthen connections across the County, from Broward to Monroe Counties, from the Atlantic Ocean to the Everglades.

The Vision builds upon the corridors described by the North Dade and South Dade County Greenways Plans, and goes farther in linking these green fingers into a holistic, seamless system. Its corridors weave through new parks, tie into bike lanes, and act as verdant channels that draw people into natural resource areas. Water Trails that have already been identified by previous plans are incorporated into the Vision, but greatly expanded upon: all major canals and waterways are accessible for recreation and strengthen physical and visual connections between the east and west edges of the County. Canals and levees managed by the South Florida Water Management District are converted into greenways and trails corridors, and provide an opportunity for public education on Everglades Restoration.

Key elements of the Great Greenways, Trails and Water Trails Vision include:

- Consistent, upgraded trail footings throughout the entire System
- Water Access points that are conducive to small craft launching with parking and neighborhood access
- A Greenways and Water Trails Signage/Graphics/Marker System that establishes an identity for the System; informs users and passers-by regarding trail names, access points, locations and distances; and reduces conflicts by informing both trail users and motorists regarding trail crossings
- A continuous canopy of large shade trees to provide opportunities for users to escape the hot sun
- Safe, well-marked roadway crossings throughout the System to insure connectivity across major roads
- Picnic shelters, rest areas, drinking water stations, map kiosks and other amenities throughout the system to enhance the quality of users' experiences
- Increased levels of trails maintenance and law enforcement to help ensure the quality of the greenways and water trails user experience
- Increased user participation and voluntaryism in trail improvements and maintenance

Ultimately, it is a vision of accessibility: no matter where someone lives in the County, he or she is no more than a fifteen-minute trip away from a Greenway or Water Trails.

Great Greenways, Trails and Water Trails Vision

This map illustrates interconnected network of greenways, trails and water trails throughout the County.

Broward County

The Everglades

C-9 Basin Area

NE Transitional Area

Palmetto Expressway

Coral City

North Miami Beach

North Miami

119th St.

Hialeah

Miami

NW 36th St.

East West Expressway

Coral Gables

Miami Beach

Atlantic Ocean

Bird Drive Recharge Area

Rickenbacker Causeway

Everglades National Park

Biscayne Bay

Kendall

Biscayne National Park

Biscayne Everglades Greenway

Homestead

Card Sound

Model Lands Basin

Southern Glades Wildlife Management Area

C-11 Basin

South Card Sound

Monroe County

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

- Urban Development Boundary

Greenways & Water Trails

- Trails
- Greenways
- Water Trails

North

Miles
0 0.5 1   2   3

SNAKE CREEK CANAL

Existing

Proposed

The Snake Creek Canal is a South Florida Water Management District waterway that winds it way into the City of North Miami Beach. As part of the City's new Urban Design Plan, the Canal will became a public waterfront near the densest commercial area. As one travels west and the land use becomes more residential, the treatment of the area around the Canal decreases in intensity and provides a place for community recreation.

BISCAYNE EVERGLADES TRAIL

Existing

Proposed

The new Biscayne Everglades Trail is comprised of 49 miles of greenways and multi-purpose paths. It is the only trail in the United States that connects two National Parks. What makes it particularly unique, however, is that the trail travels through the community, creating opportunities for tourism and greater visitation to the parks.

Benefits of Greenways and Water Trails

Transportation Alternatives
Greenways can give people options other than driving. Whether it's going to work or doing a quick errand, the decreased dependence on cars improves air quality, alleviates road congestion, and provides a safe environment for children to walk or bike to school.

New Recreational Opportunities
A recent trend in recreation is that people are more interested than ever in "linear" forms of exercise: jogging, biking, rollerblading, kayaking, etc. These forms of recreation thrive in corridors and pathways, and encourage healthy lifestyles through easy access to the resource.

Higher Property Values
Numerous studies have shown that homes near greenways and trails are worth more money and thus increase the tax base. For example, the estimated premium of a property along the Santa Ana River Corridor in California is estimated to be $139 to $201 million in property values.

Protection and Celebration of Natural Resources
Greenways and Water Trails not only connect people to nature, but can also be pivotal corridors for the movement of wildlife. Greenways also provide buffers against harsh views, filter non point source pollution sediment and help to control runoff into streams and rivers.

**Opportunity for Tourism and Business Development**
Greenways and Water Trails have the ability to connect places of interest that may be thematically linked but not geographically adjacent. The aesthetics of greenways and its recreation opportunities also contribute greatly to quality of life, which in turn enhances the ability of Miami-Dade County to attract more business and jobs.

The Economics of Great Greenways, Trails, and Water Trails

Research of trails, greenways, and blueways show that the introduction of these features to a community can spur a variety of positive economic and social benefits. These benefits, discussed below, include increased property values, tourism growth, desirability for corporate relocation, and improved communities.

CASE STUDY: Maryland's Greenways and Blueways
To date, Maryland has over 1,500 miles of protected greenway corridors, including over 600 miles of land trails and over 350 miles of water trails. Maryland's Northern Central Railroad Trail (NCRT) extends 20 miles, stretching from Hunt Valley, a Baltimore suburb, to the Maryland-Pennsylvania state line and receives over 1,000,000 visitors per year. The Greenways and Blueways Services Division of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources reports that in 1993, the budget for The Northern Central Rail Trail (NCRT) in Maryland was $191,893 and the direct economic inputs to the State via tax revenue were $303,750. The value of goods purchased because of the NCRT for 1993 was estimated to total more than $3,380,000. The trail received 10,000 visitors annually in 1984 and grew to over 450,000 in 1992, a compound annual attendance growth rate of 53 percent per year.
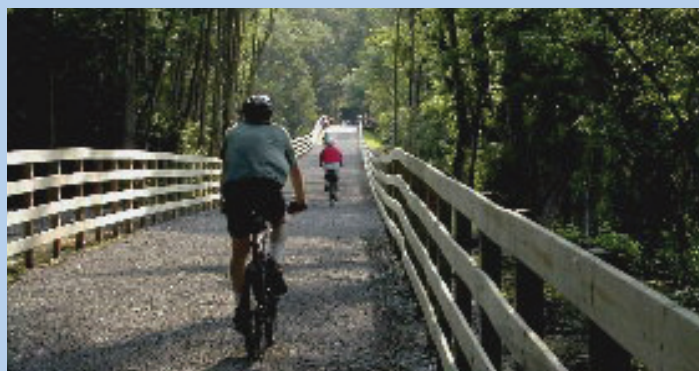
In a survey of community residents, two-thirds of respondents liked greenways better than traditional, more confined parks. Almost 94 percent of survey respondents felt the trail is a good use of state funds. Over 95 percent of respondents view the trail as an asset to their community. Almost two-thirds of those surveyed liked greenways better than traditional parks and felt that the trail enhanced nearby property values. Almost two-thirds of users report that, if buying a new home, they would consider proximity to a similar trail a factor.

While the Northern Central Rail Trail was primarily used by locals in its early years, the emergence of tourist related businesses from the very beginning showed that the trail's tourism market had potential to grow. Before it was a greenway, it was a well-known area for illegal dumping, vandalism, and general ill behavior. According to a 1994 study for the Maryland Greenways Commission by PKF Consulting, the once derelict corridor was once a popular location for nuisance crimes such as underage drinking, illegal car dumping, illegal car and motorcycle racing, and vandalism. Since its conversion to a trail, residents have taken ownership of the trail and police the area, and, "reports of crime and vandalism along the corridor have dropped appreciably."

Trail users who had purchased goods for use on the trail spent an average of $203 in 1993. Similarly, users who purchased soft goods such as food before or after using the Trail spent an average of $6.30 per visit. A number of races, walkathons, and community events have taken place on the trail.

A 2000 initiative among states bordering the Chesapeake Bay led to Maryland's creation of a Blueways program, to increase public access to the water. Lisa Gutierrez, Director of Greenways and Blueways Services Division of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, reports that it is often challenging purchasing public access points to water, because waterfront real estate is at a premium. However, they have been supported by Maryland's land preservation department that works with the Blueways division to acquire new property. Gutierrez reports that all signs (increases in boat sales, traffic at access points, and tourism reports) have pointed to the program being a great success.

OTHER EXAMPLES
- *Along the Santa Ana River Corridor, in Santa Ana, California, a partially completed trail was estimated to have a positive effect on property values within one-eighth of a mile of the trail. Based on similar studies of premiums next to parks and trails, a premium of 6.5 percent was estimated for property along the proposed trail extension. Counting only private properties on 6,050 acres in Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, total property values were estimated between $2.15 billion (low estimate) to $3.1 billion (high estimate), yielding an increase of $139 to $201 million.*

- *The Virginia Creeper Trail runs 35 miles through Southwestern Virginia to the North Carolina State Line. According to University of Georgia researcher John Bergstrom, Virginia's Creeper Trail, "… generates, conservatively, $670,000 worth of local income. In terms of industry, there is a significant economic impact to this community. It's a clean industry. People who use the trail are good visitors. They don't leave a lot of trash and they don't cost local government a lot of money. It's low-impact. It's also sustainable. As use of the trail grows, the economic impacts will grow as well."*

- *The Monon Rail Trail a 15 mile trail through Indianapolis and Carmel, Indiana has been a major economic catalyst for the area. The trail now receives 1.2 million visitors per year. A 2001 survey conducted by Indiana University showed trail users view the trail as an important part of their active lifestyle. 82 percent of users reported that they walk, run, cycle, or skate more because they have trail access. The Indianapolis Parks Department has counted at least 20 new businesses that have located along the trail since 2001, including eight of which are named after the trail. According to a 2003 study by the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment at Indiana University, each of the 9,000 homes within one-half mile of the trail receive an estimated $13,059 sales premium, totaling a $116 million increase in property values due to the presence of the trail.*
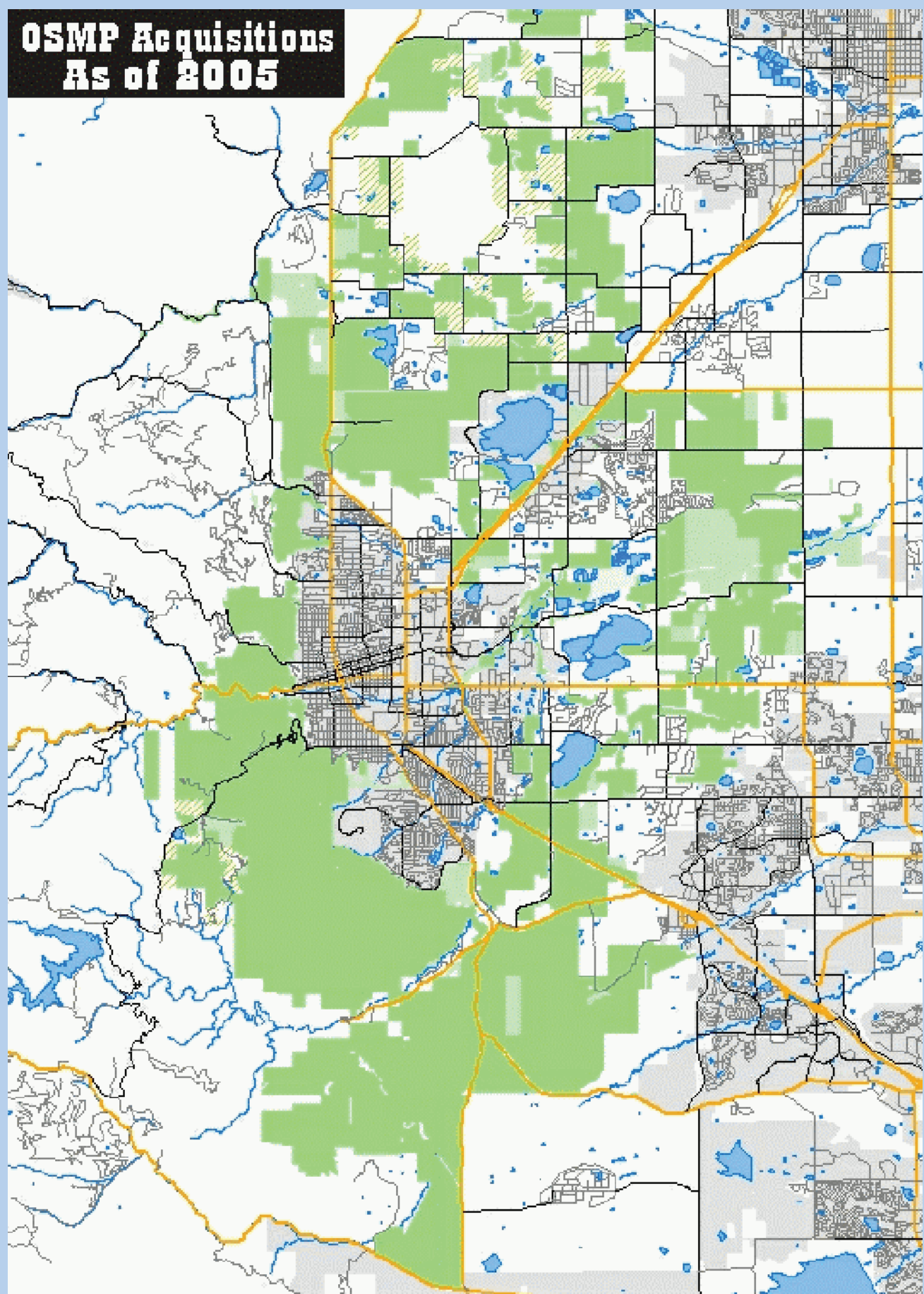
Western Greenway

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

- Connect the Lake Belt area to the north and the Southern Glades Wildlife Management Area to the south for both wildlife habitat and recreation

- Provide new fresh water lakes and beaches for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, swimming and other passive, resource-base recreation facilities and activities, providing a western alternative to long drives to the beach

- Provide a 40-mile multi-purpose trail corridor that connects to the County's greenways and trails network

- Enhance the rural character of the Redland and other rural areas

- Create a transition between farmland and the Everglades

- Provide opportunities for the enhanced treatment of stormwater run-off from the east

Like much of the Parks and Open Space Vision, the Western Greenway can be implemented over a long period of time through development agreements, recreation and conservation easements, land donations, conservation and recreation lands acquisition and other techniques.
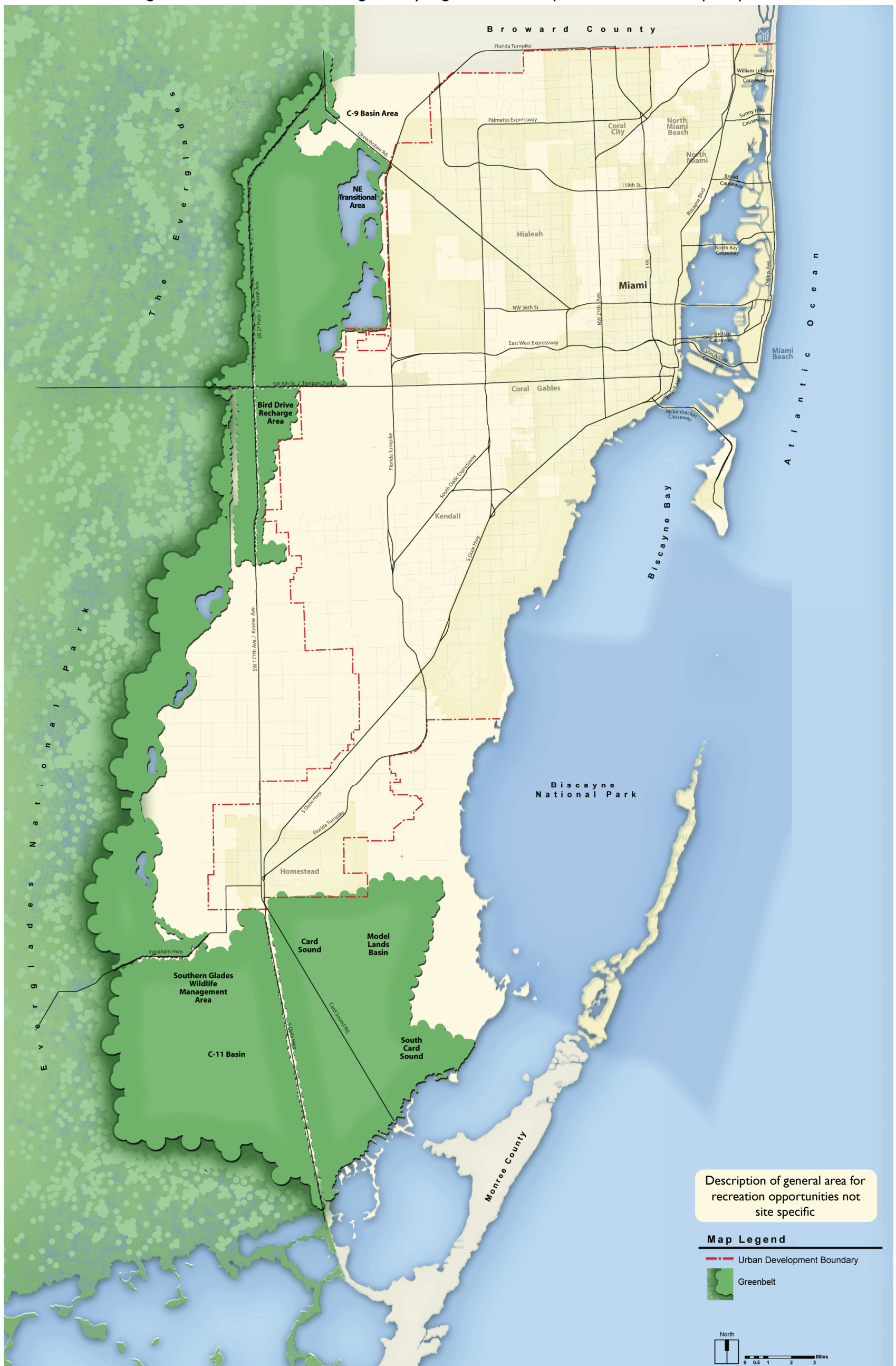
CASE STUDY:
Boulder, Colorado
Greenbelt

The City of Boulder is a fast-growing community outside of Denver, Colorado. Since the 1800's, the City has been steadily acquiring land to form a Greenbelt. Using The Open Space Acquisitions and Management Plan 2005-2011 to guide the process, the City has a long-term target of acquiring an additional 11,000 acres. Though some of the land is under easement, most is purchased at market price by the City for fee simple ownership. Funded by sales tax dollars (.88%), Boulder continues to successfully build its buffer that provides identity to the community, a scenic entry to the city, and a tangible framework for guiding development.

OSMP Acquisitions As of 2005

Western Greenway

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

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

— · — · — Urban Development Boundary

Greenbelt

5 GREAT STREETS

"In the age of the metropolis, with villages, towns, neighborhoods and districts aggregated in unprecedented quantity, the most universally used public spaces are the corridors that serve connection and mobility."

Peter Kattz, The New Urbanism, 1994

Great Streets Vision

For centuries, towns and cities were built for people: who walked, bicycled, took a trolley or a carriage to get around. In the 1940s, this all changed when the automobile transitioned from being a luxury item to an object within the reach of many household budgets. Soon cities were no longer built with the pedestrian in mind, but the car: streets were larger and made for speed, distances could be greater between destinations, and sidewalks were perceived to be unnecessary. The legacy of this revolution is a harsh one: six-lane thoroughfares that even adults hesitate to cross, no shade trees, and one curb cut after another. The cars that enabled our cities to grow have also enabled our cities to grow more hostile. The good news is that it is possible to build pleasant, effective streets for many different modes of travel. In fact, the Miami-Dade Parks Department began as a street beatification agency. By returning to its roots, the County can serve as inspiration for creating a great street approach to vision-based planning and design.

Focused on the redevelopment of existing arterial and collector roads, the Great Streets Vision promotes urban form and identity, improves aesthetics, provides for bicycle and pedestrian safety and comfort and enhances the social, physical and economic environment for land uses along the corridors. To achieve this vision, Miami-Dade must look beyond performance-based street designs oriented to vehicle carrying capacity and consider the larger role that streets have in the public realm. Certainly it is difficult to give a precise definition of what makes a street 'great,' but we recognize when a street makes a broad and meaningful contribution to the quality of our urban environment, for movement as well as for placemaking.

Great Streets Planning Principles

The Institute of Transportation Engineers and Congress for New Urbanism are working on developing context-sensitive street design standards for urban thoroughfares. A design guidebook titled Context Sensitive Solutions in Designing Major Urban Thoroughfares for Walkable Communities has been drafted and is currently in the adoption process. Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) is a collaborative, multidisciplinary, and holistic approach to transportation planning that results in the development of transportation projects that serve all users and are compatible with the surroundings and environment, that integrate and balance community, aesthetic, historic, and environmental values along with transportation safety, maintenance and performance goals. The guidebook offers guidance on selecting appropriate thoroughfare types and corresponding design parameters and criteria for selecting of design elements for various land use contexts. The CSS process places a huge emphasis on pedestrian oriented planning and design within urban areas.
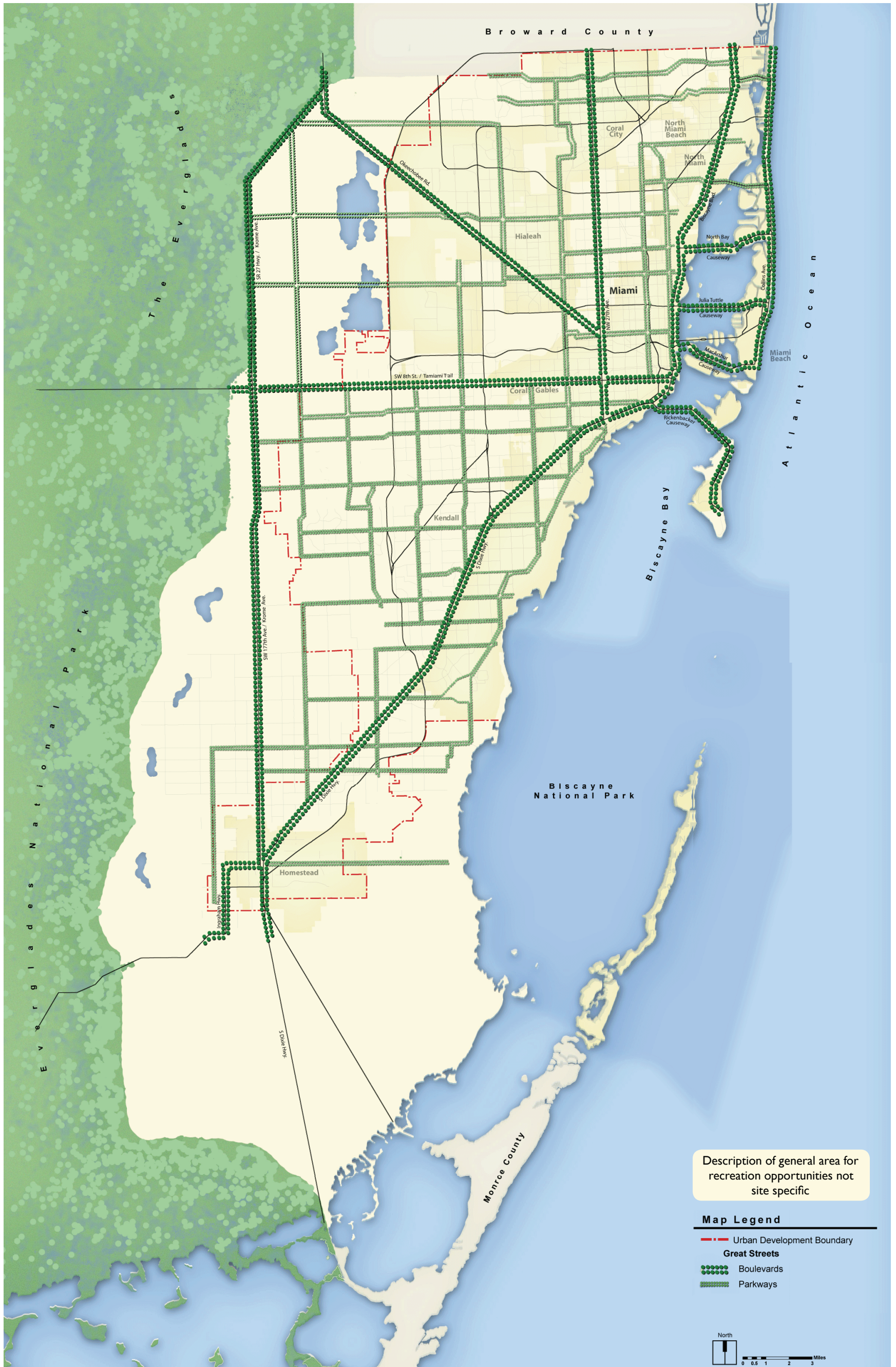
Miami-Dade County has the opportunity to embrace new design philosophies that integrate both transportation planning/engineering and land use planning principles to develop street designs that accommodate all users of a roadway. By creating a context for both design criteria and land use interaction for streets, improvement projects must consider how people move and interact within the street space and not just how vehicles travel between points in the network. Creating Miami-Dade's great streets with the combined philosophies of multimodalism and context-sensitive design can lead to streets:

- that function well within the context of adjacent land uses;
- that serve multiple functions;
- that serve users of all modes of transportation;
- that support a high mobility index, not just high level-of-service for vehicles;
- that are walkable and livable; and
- that are complete in their form and function.

The underlying philosophy is that the same roadway when passing though different land uses should take on different characteristics based on the adjacent land use. For example, a roadway segment that passes through a town center should be different from another segment that passes through an industrial district even though they are segments of the same roadway.

Great Streets Vision

Within the map:

Broward County

The Everglades

Everglades National Park

Oloochobee Rd

SR 27 Hwy / Krome Ave

SW 17th Ave. / Krome Ave.

Coral City

North Miami Beach

North Miami

Hialeah

Miami

North Bay Causeway

Julia Tuttle Causeway

MacArthur Causeway

Collins Ave.

Miami Beach

Atlantic Ocean

SW 8th St. / Tamiami Trail

Coral Gables

Rickenbacker Causeway

NW 27th Ave.

Biscayne Bay

Kendall

S Dixie Hwy

Biscayne National Park

Homestead

S Dixie Hwy

Monroe County

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

‒ · ‒ · Urban Development Boundary

Great Streets

Boulevards

Parkways

North

0 0.5 1 2 3 Miles

45

Great Streets Design Guidelines

Comfortable walking room. Before streets were moving cars, they were moving people. This function continues today, though modern street design has relegated the pedestrian to a smaller portion of the street, if this portion has been retained at all. Pedestrians need ample room to move in groups, to pass one another and to be clear of buildings.

'Comfort' in the walking space also refers to protection from the elements and moving vehicle traffic. Trees and landscaping not only provide shade for pedestrians, they also buffer pedestrians from moving vehicles and give a sense of comfort in the walking experience.

> *Design elements*
> - ***Sidewalks*** *of a width that responds to expected pedestrian volumes. In neighborhoods, this is likely to be less than immediately around schools, by parks and civic buildings, and, most notably, along commercial streets.*
> - ***Clearly defined crosswalks*** *that not only provide ample width for pedestrians but that are also visible to motorists. Sometimes, depending on the context of the built environment, these crosswalks can be raised above the surface on speed tables to calm traffic and further raise motorist awareness to the need for pedestrians to cross.*
> - ***Signalization*** *that recognizes pedestrian activity and treats it as movement through street intersections just as vehicles. Pedestrian signals in urban areas should not be activated but should reflect an understanding that pedestrians should always be given protection of movement when crossing. They should also accommodate sight-impaired pedestrians in giving an audible signal of when it is safe to cross a street.*

Trees and landscaping. As implied previously, street trees give pedestrians shade and comfort and buffer them from the moving vehicles of the street. But perhaps more importantly, they reinforce the street's purpose as a public space and resource by enriching aesthetics. They 'soften' what can sometimes be a stark landscape of hard surfaces and buildings and give streets a connection to nature.

Safe passage and accommodation of all moving conveyances. Even aside from the pedestrian, streets carry more than cars. Well-designed streets allow bicyclists to feel comfortable close to moving traffic, whether through the addition of a designated bicycle lane or through other design characteristics that slow vehicle speeds and allow cyclists to safely mix with automobile traffic. They also support transit use, both in terms of physical dimensions of the traveled way that fit transit vehicles and through adjacent land uses that allow pedestrian access to transit.

> *Design elements*
> - ***Bicycle lanes*** *that give the cyclist adequate buffering from moving vehicles and from parked cars.*
> - ***Special bus lanes*** *when transit use is high enough to justify them or when the nature of transit vehicles (buses for rapid transit, light rail cars) requires a dedication portion of the street for normal operations*
> - ***Design streets*** *that fit the environment.*

To be sure, some streets have the responsibility of carrying heavy vehicle traffic. Though the rise of automobile-based street design has often emphasized vehicular carrying capacity at the expense of other street elements, great streets can certainly be designed to carry large volumes of cars. The key to this is to base the design on the conditions and needs of the built environment: streets serving urban areas with high pedestrian activity should control vehicle speeds with such elements as trees and smaller cross-section dimensions. Yet in these same environments the primacy of pedestrian access to buildings and destinations means that driveways, left turns into properties and other complications to traffic flow may not be needed as often, allowing high vehicle traffic loads to move along streets (even if at slower speeds that improve pedestrian safety conditions).

> *Design elements*
> - ***Medians*** *not only separate the two directions of travel, they also provide space for additional landscaping (which can aid the street trees on the sides of the traveled way in slowing travel speeds) and potentially a refuge for pedestrians crossing the street.*
> - ***Narrower lanes*** *and a generally 'tighter' street cross section creates a psychological sensation of relative enclosure that encourage motorists to drive more slowly and responsively to their environments.*
> - ***On-street parking*** *to serve the land uses along streets (especially businesses) and minimize the need for on-site parking in land development, thus improving the efficiency and return on urban land.*

Defined edges. Streets are one of the fundamental public spaces in cities and towns and as such need to have clear definitions of where their public space ends and adjacent private space begins. In dense urban areas these edges are usually provided by the placement of buildings along the public right-of-way edge, though the edges can still be defined by landscaping, yards and fences.

As the moving vehicle assumed prominence among users of streets and consequently became the primary driver of decisions on their design, attention to these different elements of the street has declined. The Great Streets Vision is based on an understanding of all of these elements having a place in Miami-Dade's streets, adding to the sense of place and quality of the built environment and balancing the transportation system.

Great Streets Hierarchy

Imagine a system where a street's character is defined by its role in the community rather than its function and capacity in moving vehicles. While all streets should have a minimum level of accessibility to all modes of transportation, not all streets require the same finishes. A hierarchy helps to determine the level of effort required to retrofit existing streets and guide new street development; it also helps to establish funding mechanisms and priorities for creating an entire network of great streets.

GATEWAY STREETS

Streets that are historically significant and may trace back to the original settlement patterns of the Miami-Dade area; those that have become regionally significant throughout the county and beyond; and those that house premium transit. Access to these streets should not be limited, but development along these corridors should reduce driveway cuts and provide access from perpendicular streets.

Examples of Gateway Streets in Miami-Dade

- Sunset & Tamiami-Trail (US 441)
- US 1
- US 27 – Okeechobee Road
- 27th Avenue
- Krome Avenue
- 88th Street (Kendall)

Tamiami Trail - Existing

Tamiami Trail - Proposed

CIVIC STREETS

Streets that provide access to recreational and civic facilities, as well as to pedestrian-oriented shopping and entertainment districts.

Examples of Civic Streets in Miami-Dade

- SW 137th Avenue
- Miracle Mile
- Washington Avenue
- Alton Road
- Broad Causeway

SW 137th Avenue - Existing

SW 137th Avenue - Proposed

HERITAGE/SCENIC STREETS

The streets that provide access to heritage sites, historic or cultural districts, or are historic corridors. Additionally, these streets may also provide access to scenic natural resources or significant archeological sites.
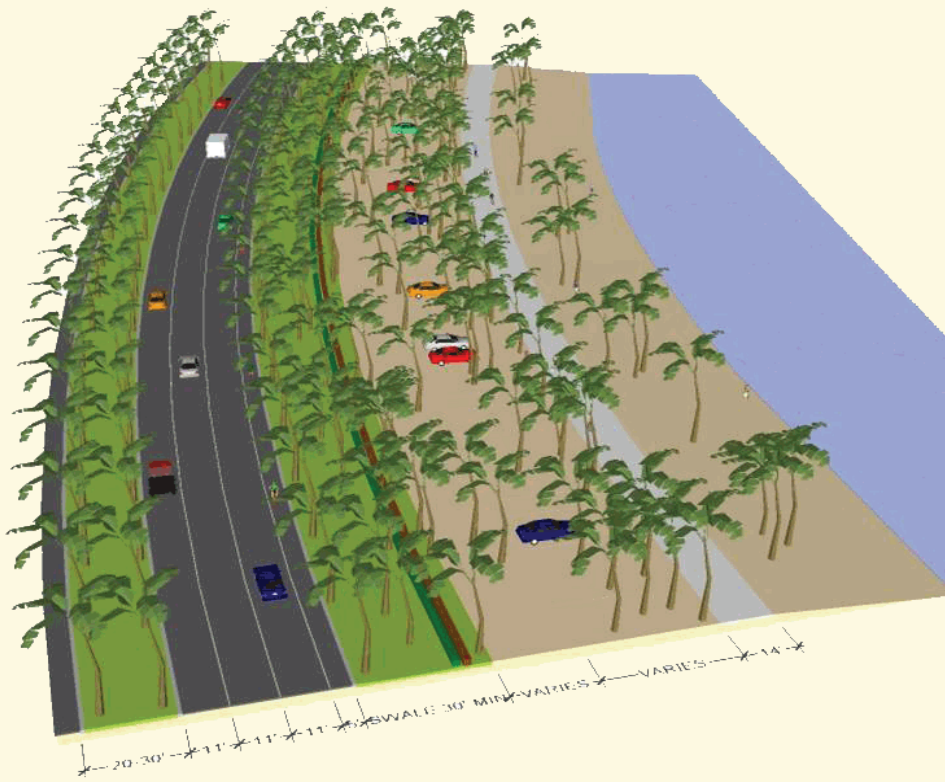

Examples of Heritage/Scenic Streets in Miami-Dade

- Ocean Drive
- Collins Avenue (A1A)
- Old Cutler Road
- Coral Way
- Rickenbacker Causeway/ Commodore Trail

Rickenbacker Causeway - Existing

Rickenbacker Causeway - Proposed

NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS

Local residential streets, and streets within a ten-minute walk, or approximately a half-mile, of an existing and future park, school or civic facility.

*Existing*

Proposed

The Economics of Great Streets

Great Streets often create economic impact through the linking of other park and recreation features such as trails, trailheads, and waterfront communities. The addition of a cohesive feature to create a destination area benefits existing parks and communities, and creates an opportunity for businesses, residents, and services in the surrounding areas to benefit from these attractions as well.

CASE STUDY: Welland Canals Parkway - Lake Ontario area, Canada

The Welland Canals Parkway will serve as a connection between the many strong and growing trail systems on the Lake Ontario region in Southern Canada, adjacent to Niagara Falls. Plans call for a parkway featuring lanes for automobile traffic surrounded by bicycle, pedestrian, and equestrian trails. It will follow the Welland Canal, and also pass through historic downtowns along the way. The construction is being completed in phases, with the accompanying trails completed first. Figure 1 shows the vision for the completed parkway.

George Nicholson of the Ontario Regional Planning Office reports that the original idea was to provide a service to the over 15 million tourists to the Niagara region, in the hopes of lengthening their stay, increasing spending, and spreading the wealth amongst the communities. In addition, industrial employment in the area has suffered in recent years, causing political officials to look elsewhere for employment. With Niagara Falls and a burgeoning wine region, tourism looked like a good candidate to focus municipal dollars. Nicholson reports that the preventative aspect of providing recreation to improve the health of residents was a strong selling point with area officials who were willing to "pay now" on outdoor recreation facilities instead of "pay later" on healthcare. Also, the urban areas nearby are growing in density, and officials hoped that outdoor space would draw urban dwellers for day getaways.

Almost $200 million per year is expected in tourist spending. This is anticipated to support over 7,600 jobs and create almost $14 million in local sales tax revenue. The combined economic impact from the construction and operation of the Welland Canals Parkway will grow from about $40 million in Year One to over $200 million by Year 15.
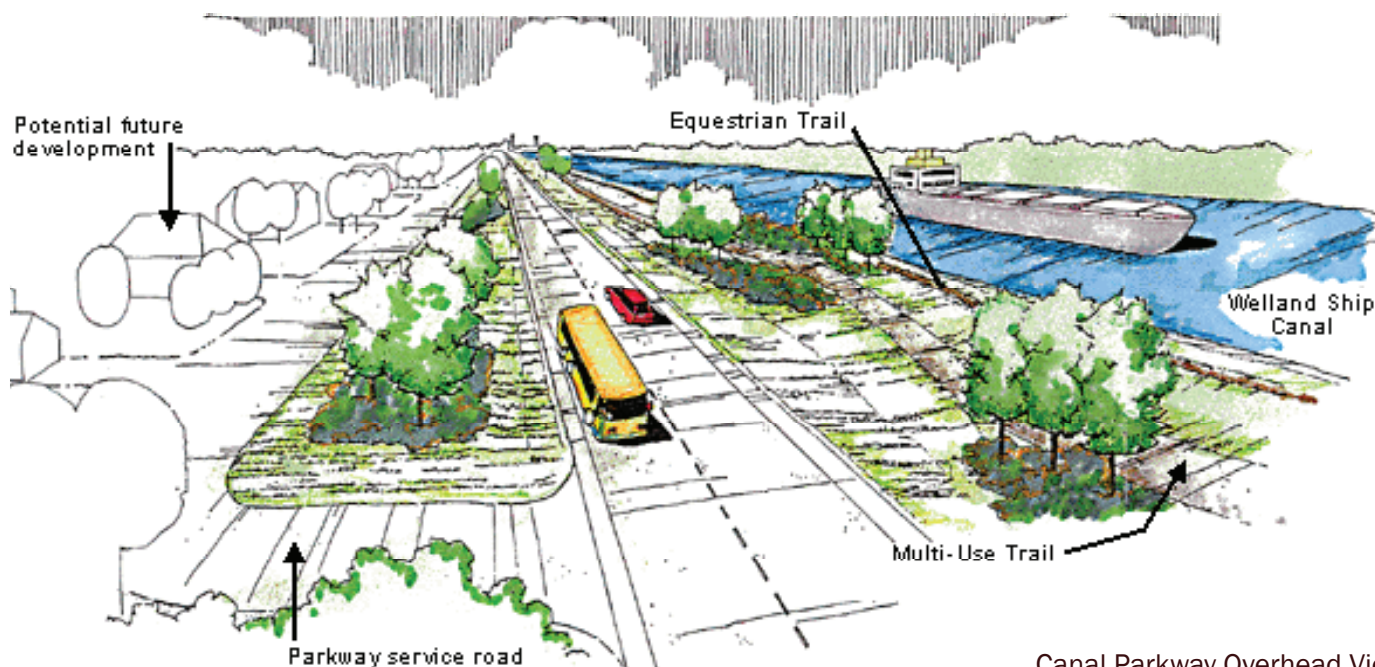
Canal Parkway Overhead View
Source: Regional Municipality of Niagara, Welland Canals Parkway and Trails Plan

OTHER EXAMPLES

- *In urban Trenton, New Jersey, the state's Department of Transportation spent $150 million on the new 6.5 acre Riverwalk deck over a highway, linking the city to the Delaware River, spurring an increase in sales of local properties. One lot, valued at $120,000 prior to the park's construction, was developed with six housing units that sold for $200,000 each. The addition of the park was also instrumental in the construction of a new 82-unit residential building.*

- *The U.S. Department of Transportation reports that in 1988, one month's traveler-generated spending on the Blue Ridge Parkway in rural Page County, Virginia (90 miles from Washington, D.C.) was $10,845,600 or $471,500 per highway mile, despite the fact that this portion of the highway has few commercial establishments.*

- *A 1990 study reported that in 1987 "in North Carolina, approximately 77 percent of the lodging jobs are supported by Blue Ridge Parkway visitors' expenditures, as are 48 percent of the restaurant jobs, 51 percent of the jobs in miscellaneous retail establishments, 41 percent in amusement and recreational services, 31 percent in gasoline service stations, and 9 percent in food stores." In all, the analysis suggests that 17,287 jobs in counties contiguous to the Parkway were supported by Parkway visitors' expenditures. This total comprised 6.6 percent of all the jobs in these counties.*

"Now, I truly believe, that we in this generation, must come to terms with nature, and I think we're challenged as mankind has never been challenged before to prove our maturity and our mastery, not of nature, but of ourselves."

RACHEL CARSON
Biologist, Writer, Ecologist 1907-1964

5 IMPLEMENTATION

Program and Policy Initiatives

This Parks and Open Space Master Plan is a call to the elected officials, staff, developers, business leaders and residents of Miami-Dade County to change the current form and character of development in the County and to re-examine how we are planning and designing our community. This involves all County departments that plan, design, develop and program the public realm. Specifically the Master Plan recommends that the County:

- Provide an Open Space system that:
  - *embraces growth,*
  - *contributes to livability and sustainability,*
  - *creates a green infrastructure that is integrated into the community fabric*

- Anticipate a future where there is/are:
  - *more people*
  - *new development patterns*
  - *less opportunity for expanding system acreage*

- Realign Current Policies, Ordinances and Codes with the Vision

- Establish County Role(s) - Vision Keeper, Facilitator, Provider

- Develop a Charter for a Seamless, Sustainable Parks and Open Space System (see next section)

- Establish a County-wide Framework of Great Streets

- Establish a County-wide Framework of Trails, Greenways and Blueways

- Establish County-wide Criteria for Equitable Access to Parks and Recreation Facilities

- Establish a County-wide System of Regional Environmental Hubs

- Use Parks as a Catalyst to Focus on Creating Compact, Livable Neighborhoods

- Coordinate Park Development with Streets, Transit, Redevelopment, Libraries, Schools, and Civic Buildings

- Evaluate Opportunities for Affordable Housing with Park Land Acquisition

- Plan and Design Areas Surrounding Parks to Create Compact Neighborhoods, Affordable Housing

- Coordinate Park Development with Other Public | Private Agencies

- Reduce Water and Energy Consumption in Parks Through Water Conservation Practices

- Co-locate Greenway and Trail Corridors with Resource Water Lines

Planning and design initiatives needed to implement these recommendations include:

- Expand the County's current neighborhood planning initiatives in order to evaluate every Miami-Dade County neighborhood – using the new Neighborhood-based Parks and Open Space Criteria

- Evaluate the County's open space standards to determine if they are adequate to meet future needs

- Establish design guidelines for new parks and open spaces

- Develop a graphic, signage and way-finding system for the County's park sites

- Develop management plans for the County's heritage parks and preserves to protect them from over-development

- Initiate the County's Great Streets Program, beginning with the review and evaluation of current roadway design standards

- Identify potential parks and open space as "Thematic Resource Districts" throughout the County. i.e. areas that could create a sense of place and identity based on existing resources such a preserve, park or historic site

- Evaluate lands adjacent to existing parks to determine if changes should be made to street networks, land uses or other potential neighborhood livability improvements

- Evaluate existing and proposed wastewater treatment plant pipeline corridors, storm drainage corridors and utility corridors to determine opportunities for greenway and trail development

- Develop design guidelines for land uses adjacent to existing and proposed greenways, trails and scenic roadway corridors

- Identify pilot program opportunities for affordable and workforce housing projects in conjunction with park expansion or development

South Florida Parks Coalition
A Coalition of City, County, State and Federal Parks in Miami-Dade County

A Vision as ambitious as the Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System can only be accomplished through the seamless collaboration of City, County, State, and Federal Park agencies working together to create a more livable Miami-Dade County through a vision that includes great parks, public spaces, natural and cultural areas, greenways, water trails and streets.

The Charter

Preamble:

The South Florida Parks Coalition is created to foster a seamless, connected, and sustainable parks system for the South Florida community. The Coalition will meet, collaborate, share knowledge and professional expertise regarding park, recreation and conservation open spaces.

Our work is rooted in the fundamental values of recreation opportunity and environmental stewardship. It is dedicated to building a model park system that will promote a greener, healthier, and more livable South Florida community.

We believe that a model park system consists of parks and public spaces, recreation facilities, greenways, blueways, great streets and conservation lands.

We believe that a sustainable, model Park System must be planned and created with an eye to its impact on the neighborhood, city, county and region as a whole. It must be effective, efficient, fair and balanced. It must work with other public and private agencies; and it must enhance the health, safety, happiness and well-being of all residents and visitors to South Florida, now and in the future.

We believe that a model park system is integral to social, environmental and economic sustainability; it must become a vital part of everyday human experience; it must be connected spiritually and physically; and it must provide accessibility for people of all means and abilities. The model Park System must raise the standard of living for the region and inspire generations of people to care for and contribute to their communities.

Based on these beliefs, we assert that the Model Park System shall:

- *Ensure an accessible, diverse and balanced system of passive and active recreation opportunities that promote safety, security and healthy lifestyles.*
- *Ensure the preservation, protection and enhancement of ecological resources to sustain and preserve biodiversity and the environmental health of the region.*
- *Ensure the preservation, protection and enhancement of cultural resources to sustain landscapes and their historical and heritage features.*
- *Ensure that park, recreation and conservation open spaces guide the shape of urban form.*
- *Ensure that there is no net loss of park, recreation or conservation lands and mandate replacement of land of equal value, context and significance.*
- *Ensure community stewardship of park, recreation, and conservation open spaces by fostering educational and recreational programming, civic art, volunteerism and support of philanthropic and grassroots organizations.*
- *Ensure the continual enhancement of economic development and quality of life in the region by partnering and collaborating with the business community.*
- *Ensure the equitable distribution of park, recreation and conservation open spaces for all communities in the region.*
- *Ensure and support responsible growth to conserve environmental and cultural resources, promote economic investment, and support neighborhood stability, while reclaiming marginal and abandoned areas.*
- *Ensure the support and development of an interconnected framework of transportation alternatives such as transit, pedestrian, bicycle and waterway systems that link parks, recreation and conservation open spaces to each other and to communities.*
- *Ensure high standards of design excellence, innovation and beauty to support economic, social and environmental sustainability of the region.*

"*W*e believe that the place to start … is in our communities. Americans living together and joining in associations across the country – this is where the tremendous strength and vision of our people will be tapped. We recommend a prairie fire of local action to sweep the nation, encouraging investment in outdoor recreation opportunities and rededication to the protection of our great natural heritage."

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON AMERICANS OUTDOORS,
Americans and the Outdoors, 1987

6 NEIGHBORHOOD VISION

CASE STUDIES

**defining a common language for
a sustainable neighborhood**

Neighborhood Vision
Applying the Vision in the Rural-to-Urban Transect

"The City is organized complexity."
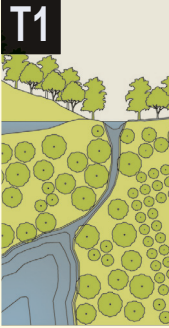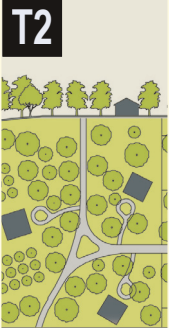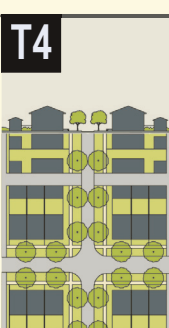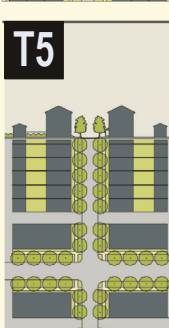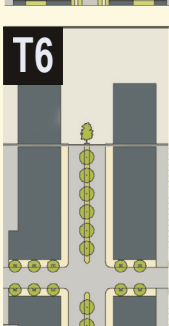   Jane Jacobs

A transect, in its origins (Van Humboldt 1790), is a geographical cross-section of a region used to reveal a sequence of environments. Originally, it was used to analyze natural ecologies, showing varying characteristics through different zones such as shores, wetlands, plains, and uplands. For human environments, such a cross-section can be used to identify a set of habitats that vary by their level and intensity of urban character, a continuum that ranges from rural to urban. In Transect Planning, this range of environments is the basis for organizing the components of urbanization: building, lot, land use, street, and all of the other physical elements of the human habitat.

One of the key objectives of Transect planning is the creation of immersive environments. Successful immersive environments are based on the selection and arrangement of all the components that contribute to a particular type of environment. Each environment, or Transect Zone (T-Zone), is comprised of elements that support and intensify its locational character. Through the Transect, planners are able to specify different urban contexts that have the function and intensity appropriate to their locations. For instance, a ranch house would undermine that immersive quality of a neighborhood center, whereas an apartment building would not. Wide roads and open swales find a place on the Transect in more rural areas, while narrow streets and raised curbs are appropriate for urban areas. Based on local practices, most elements can be locally calibrated to contribute to the regional character of a given place.

In Transect Planning, the essential task is to find the main qualities of the local environments. Once those are determined, Transect principles are applied to rectify the inappropriate intermixing of rural and urban character. Finding the proper balance between rural and urban elements results in places appropriate to every point of the spectrum, countermanding sprawl conditions.

The Transect is evident in two ways: (1) it exists as place, and (2) it evolves over time. As place, the six T-Zones display more-or-less fixed identifiable characteristics. Yet the evolution of communities over time is the unseen element in urbanism. A hamlet may evolve into a village and then into a town, its t-zones increasing in density and intensity over a period of many years.

TRANSECT ZONE DESCRIPTIONS. The following are general descriptions of the character of each Transect Zone. They may be interpreted as a constituent part of the Intent of this Code.

T1 — T-1 NATURAL

General Character:	Natural landscape with some agricultural use
Building Placement:	Not applicable
Frontage Types:	Not applicable
Typical Building Height:	Not applicable
Type of Civic Space:	Parks, Greenways

T2 — T-2 RURAL

General Character:	Primarily agricultural with woodland & wetland and scattered buildings
Building Placement:	Variable Setbacks
Frontage Types:	Not applicable
Typical Building Height:	1- to 2-Story
Type of Civic Space:	Parks, Greenways

T3 — T-3 SUB-URBAN

General Character:	Lawns, and landscaped yards surrounding detached single-family houses; pedestrians occasionally
Building Placement:	Large and variable front and side yard Setbacks
Frontage Types:	Porches, fences, naturalistic tree planting
Typical Building Height:	1- to 2-Story with some 3-Story
Type of Civic Space:	Parks, Greenways

T4 — T-4 GENERAL URBAN

General Character:	Mix of Houses, Townhouses & small Apartment buildings, with scattered Commercial activity; balance between landscape and buildings; presence of pedestrians
Building Placement:	Shallow to medium front and side yard Setbacks
Frontage Types:	Porches, fences, Dooryards
Typical Building Height:	2- to 3-Story with a few taller Mixed Use buildings
Type of Civic Space:	Squares, Greens

T5 — T-5 URBAN CENTER

General Character:	Shops mixed with Townhouses, larger Apartment houses, Offices, workplace, and Civic buildings; predominantly attached buildings; trees within the public right-of-way; substantial pedestrian activity
Building Placement:	Shallow Setbacks or none; buildings oriented to street defining a street wall
Frontage Types:	Stoops, Shopfronts, Galleries
Typical Building Height:	3- to 5-Story with some variation
Type of Civic Space:	Parks, Plazas and Squares, median landscaping

T6 — T-6 URBAN CORE

General Character:	Medium to high-Density Mixed Use buildings, entertainment, Civic and cultural uses. Attached buildings forming a continuous street wall; trees within the public right-of-way; highest pedestrian and transit activity
Building Placement:	Shallow Setbacks or none; buildings oriented to street, defining a street wall
Frontage Types:	Stoops, Dooryards, Forecourts, Shopfronts, Galleries, and Arcades
Typical Building Height:	4-plus Story with a few shorter buildings
Type of Civic Space:	Parks, Plazas and Squares; median landscaping

DPZ&Co, inc.
Adapted from "SmartCode, Version 9.0"

HYPOTHETICAL URBAN CORE CASE STUDY
## Prototypical redevelopment opportunity

Existing Conditions

Context

- Established regional activity center with new multi-story mixed-use buildings under construction. This area is becoming a new downtown.

- Served by transit: two Metrorail stations, the South Dade Busway, and numerous regular bus routes.

- The convergence of three major vehicular arterials.

- Recently adopted development regulations which require aggregation of open spaces between properties in the form of greens and plazas.

- A Canal runs through the middle of the neighborhood.

- Regional Destination Mall.

What works well here?

- New development bringing households to what was before a commercial-only zone.

- Public open squares and pedestrian oriented streetscape and building design will serve as a good example for other redeveloping areas in the County.

- New residents are attracted to the urban lifestyle growing in the area. Many of residents' daily needs will be within walking distance of their homes.
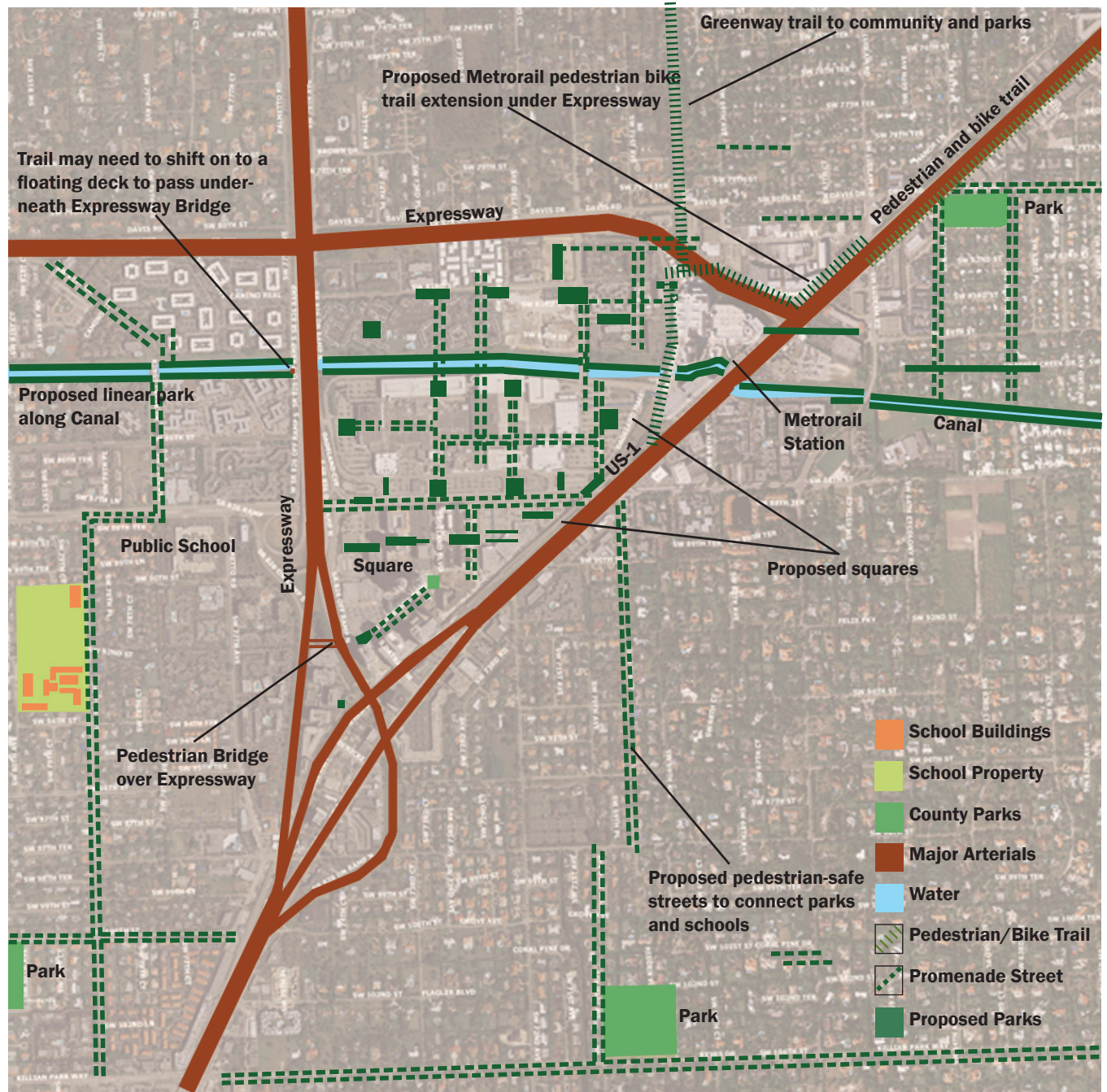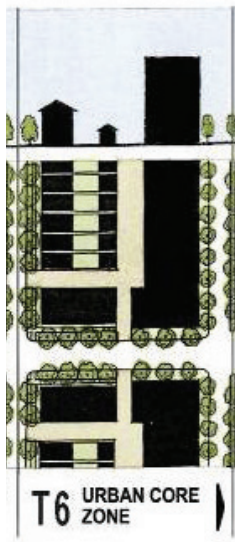
Transect Location

T6 URBAN CORE ZONE

Suggested Improvements

What is needed for this to be part of a seamless system of open space?

- Incorporate indoor community center space into new residential/commercial development.
- Create new/small pocket parks/civic plazas/squares into new development.
- Connect parks and public spaces with shaded sidewalks using existing street network.
- Connect neighborhood to existing schools, parks, public spaces, institutions outside neighborhood with shaded sidewalks and bikelanes using existing street network.
- Connect to regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Orient development efforts as a focal point in community, maximizing its potential recreational opportunities.

HYPOTHETICAL URBAN CORE CASE STUDY
Prototypical redevelopment opportunity

Buildings fronting the canal are not tall enough to have a view of water

Vast facades of parking structures detract from the scenic landscape

Cobra head lanterns are scaled for high-speed driving and not for pedestrians

Existing Conditions

Bridge is utilitarian and boring

Shrubs and palms do not shade the sidewalk and form a barrier for those wishing to view the canal.

The canal, like all urban green areas, should be lined by buildings tall enough to provide a sense of spatial enclosure.

Native trees should be spaced regularly to shade street.

Buildings with abundant doors and windows can line the existing garages to make the street look and function as a safe and normal downtown street.

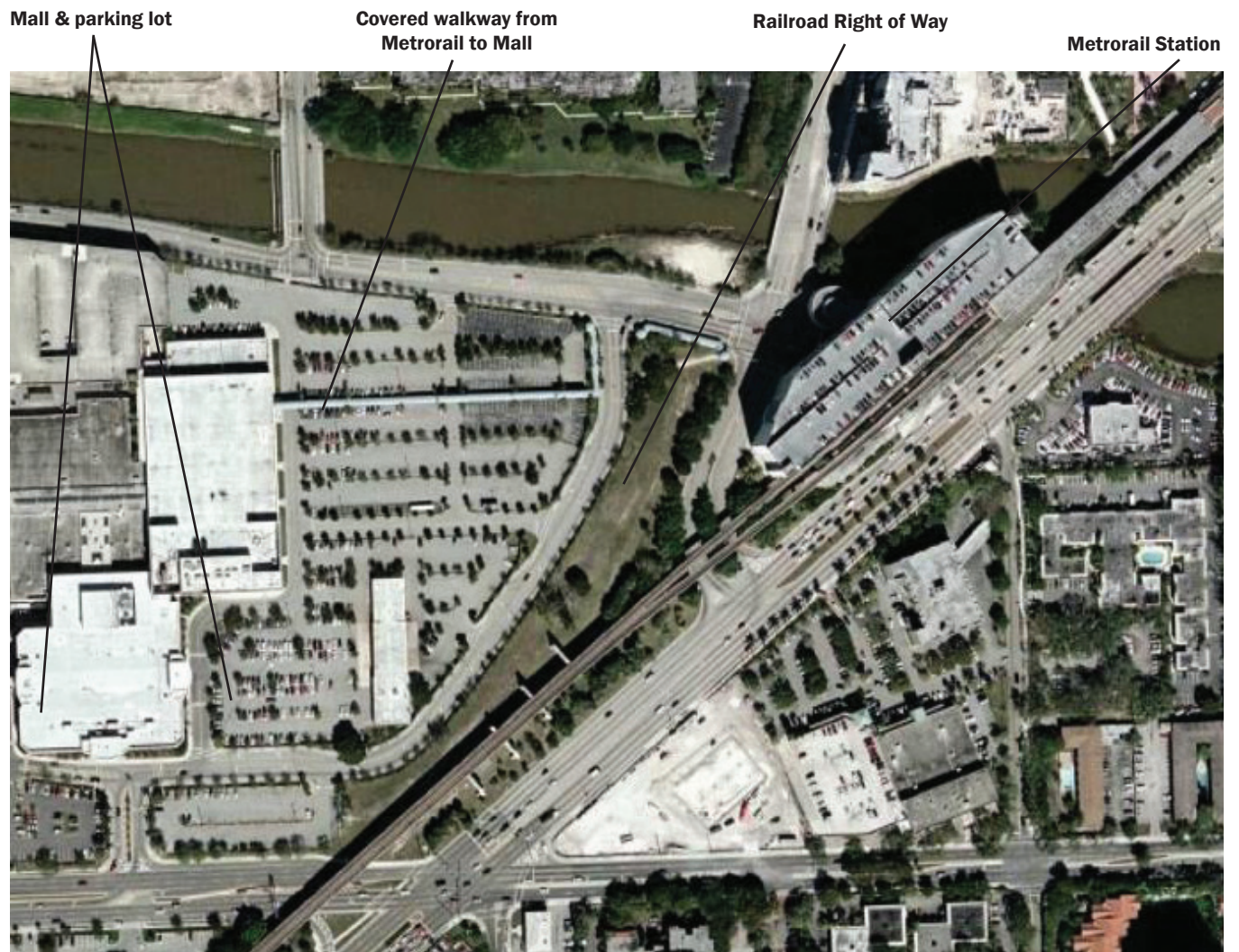
Suggested Improvements

Pedestrian bridge is designed as a graceful arch.

Stairways to water's edge for recreational access.

Wider walkways along the canal will attract pedestrians for walking and jogging.

Mall & parking lot   Covered walkway from   Railroad Right of Way   Metrorail Station
   Metrorail to Mall

Existing Conditions near Railroad Right-of-Way

The edges of the canal can have trails/paths and improved landscaping for informal recreational use.

Private health clubs may provide residents with many of their recreational needs for exercise. One could be within a new infill development on the transit station site

Hypothetical infill development wrapping around the Metrorail parking garage providing an liner building of usable inhabitable space making the building not look like a parking garage.
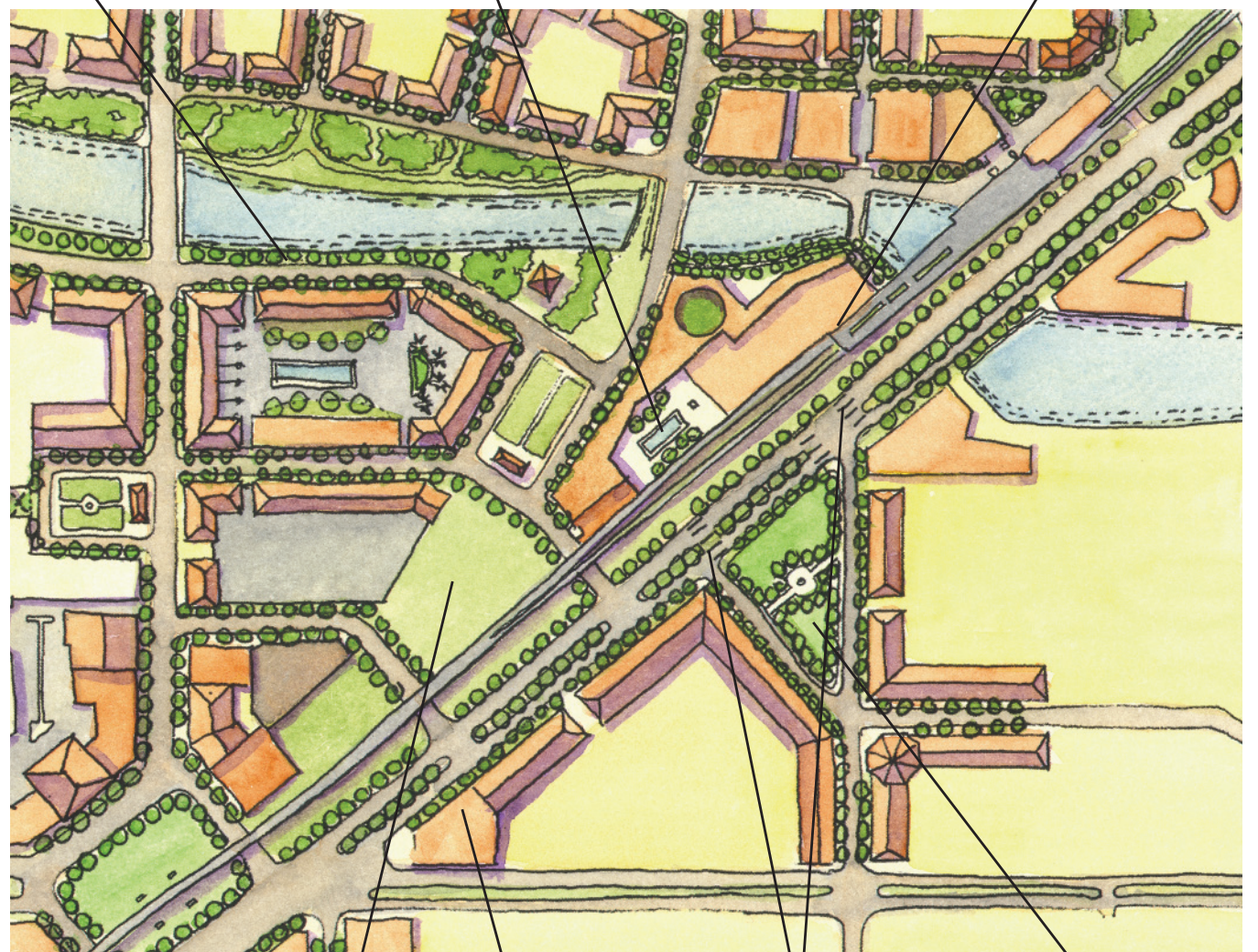
Suggested Improvements

Small informal recreational field could occur here. Basketball, tennis, or racketball courts could be positioned under the Metrorail's elevated tracks

Buildings illustrated like this show hypothetical future redevelopment or future infill development

Signalized pedestrian crossing at US1 and the suggested green space for a better pedestrian access

Green space or plaza associated with Metrorail Station

HYPOTHETICAL URBAN CENTER CASE STUDY
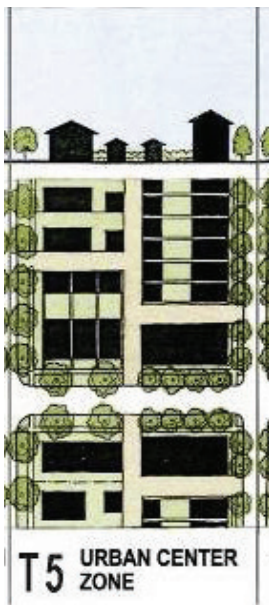## Prototypical redevelopment opportunity

Existing Conditions

Context

- Coral Way Road was one of the first projects of the parks department in the 1920s.

- Coral Way Road is an older corridor that has been adapting as Miami has grown and is a good example to study those changes over time.

- With new multi-story condominiums recently built and under construction, it is typical of what the other major corridors in Miami-Dade County will become as the county grows further.

What works well here

- The canopy of banyan trees in the center median spans the entire street, offers shade to pedestrians and reduces the urban heat effect considerably, thus making the street more comfortable.

- The sunlight filtering through the banyon trees and interesting tree trunks offer a unique and attractive visual character to the entire street.

- Residents in the tall buildings or within the houses a few blocks away are able to satisfy many of their daily needs with a reduced dependency on motor vehicles because they can walk to shops, places of worship, restaurants, grocery stores, and health clubs.

- The older street oriented buildings and on-street parking spaces have kept the corridor from loosing its pedestrian orientation. Improvement is needed in those parts where parking lots are between the buildings and the sidewalks

T5 URBAN CENTER ZONE

Legend:
- School Buildings
- School Property
- County Parks
- Major Arterials
- Community Services
- Give-way Streets
- Promenade Streets
- Proposed Parks

Suggested Improvements

What is needed for this to be part of a seamless system of open space?

- Incorporate indoor community center space into new residential/commercial development.
- Create new/small pocket parks/civic plazas/squares into new development that can serve a diverse community.
- Connect parks and public spaces with shaded sidewalks using existing street network.
- Connect neighborhood to existing schools, parks, public spaces, institutions outside neighborhood with shaded sidewalks and bikelanes using existing street network.
- Connect to regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Orient development efforts as a focal point in community, maximizing its potential recreational opportunities.
- Provide directional signage

HYPOTHETICAL URBAN CENTER CASE STUDY
Prototypical redevelopment opportunity

- **New Development Pattern**
- **Traditional Development Pattern**
- **Suburban Development Pattern**
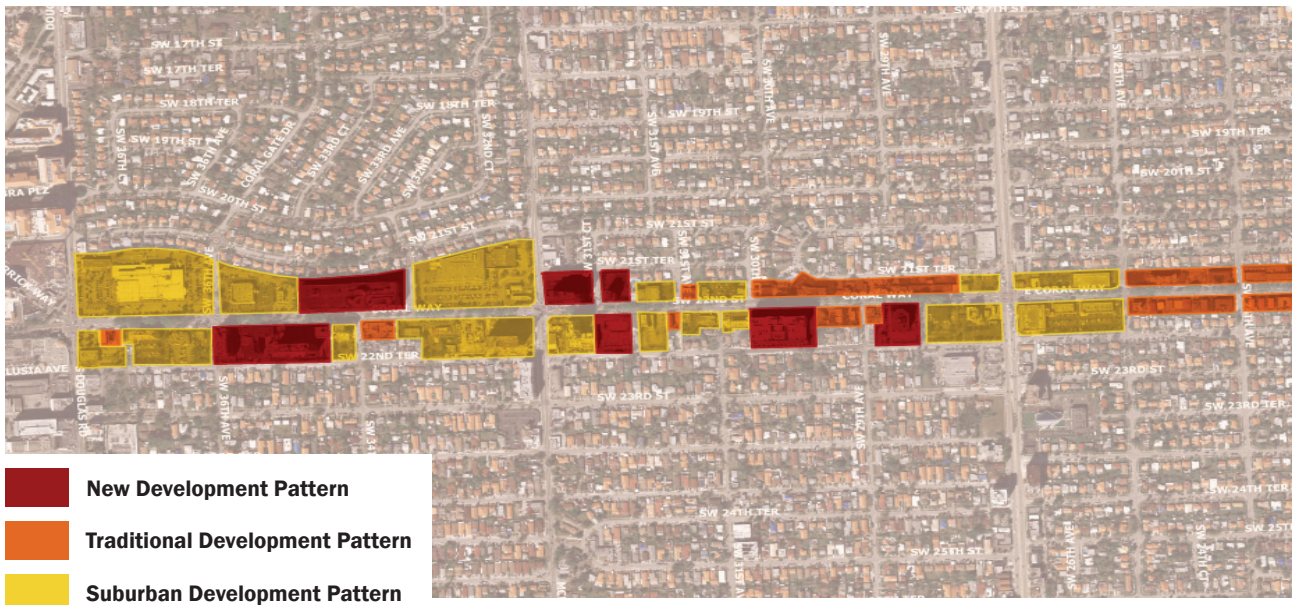
In the diagram above, **New Development Pattern** shows where new taller residential buildings recently have been or are now being constructed.

Traditional Development Pattern shows where the older one and two story traditional shopfront buildings still exist today. Most of these buildings contain neighborhood serving retail and offices. These were constructed on smaller lots and very dependent upon on-street parking.

Suburban Development Pattern shows where auto-oriented businesses, mostly gas stations and national chain stores and restaurants, have eroded the street's edges with parking lots, detracting from the pedestrian environment.

Historic tree canopy has been eliminated from the median at important intersections. In order to accommodate turning bays intersection trees with small root base should be planted.

Blank walls eliminate the possibility of natural surveillance (i.e., there are less eyes watching and monitoring the street to keep it safe)

Stadium-style floodlights are harsh and unwelcoming

Exposed parking structure creates unpleasant streetscape and reduces natural surveillance

Outparcels are unrelated to other structures
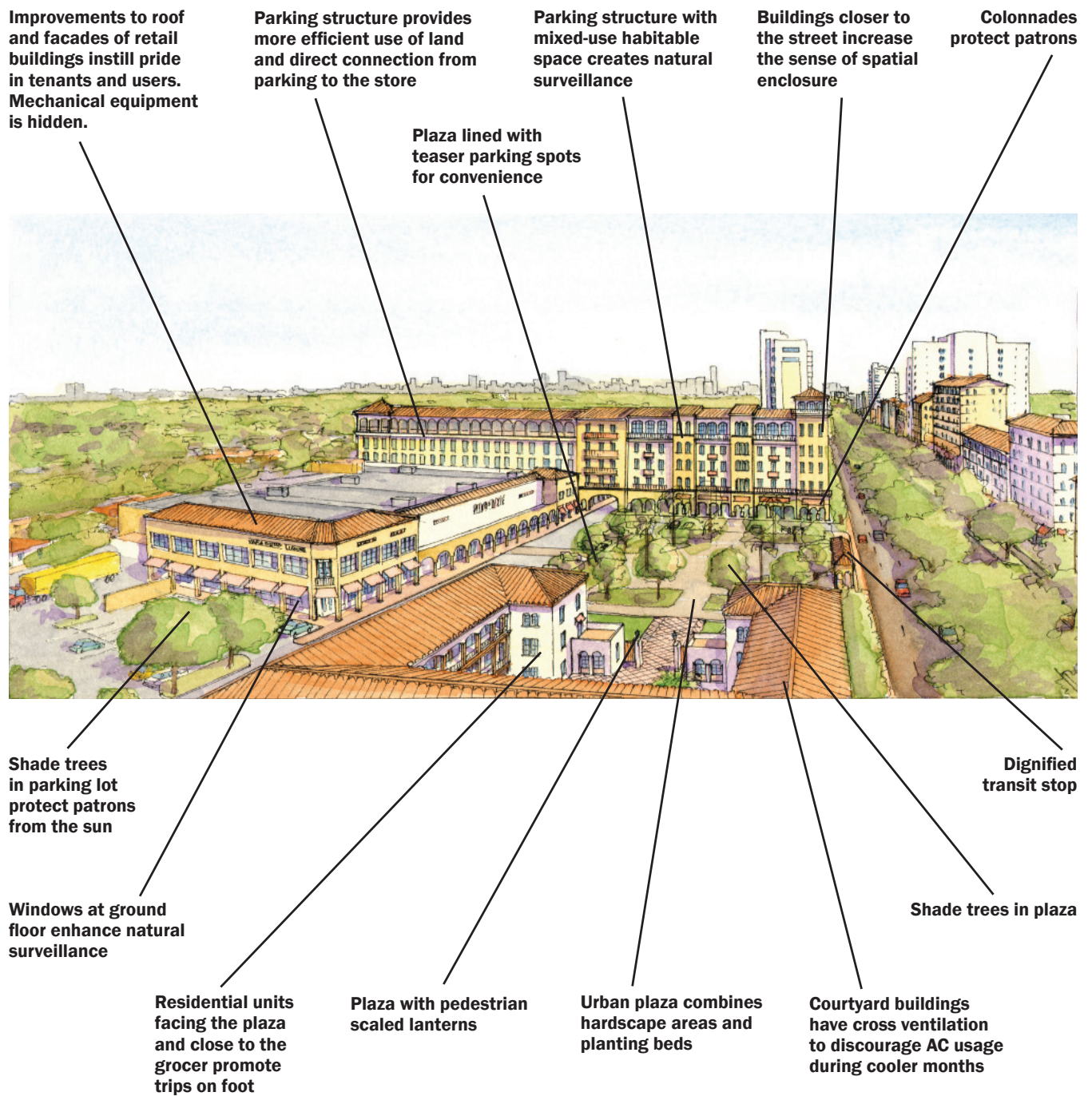

Existing View from 6th Floor

Eliminate widely spaced exotic palm trees which do not provide shade

Parking lot is unusable as a gathering space when empty

Placing parking lots in front of buildings violates the historic pattern (which places parking to the rear of the building)

Lack of prominent transit stop activity node

63

Improvements to roof and facades of retail buildings instill pride in tenants and users. Mechanical equipment is hidden.

Parking structure provides more efficient use of land and direct connection from parking to the store

Parking structure with mixed-use habitable space creates natural surveillance

Buildings closer to the street increase the sense of spatial enclosure

Colonnades protect patrons

Plaza lined with teaser parking spots for convenience

Shade trees in parking lot protect patrons from the sun

Dignified transit stop

Windows at ground floor enhance natural surveillance

Shade trees in plaza

Residential units facing the plaza and close to the grocer promote trips on foot

Plaza with pedestrian scaled lanterns

Urban plaza combines hardscape areas and planting beds

Courtyard buildings have cross ventilation to discourage AC usage during cooler months

Once land values have risen enough to justify it, redevelop strip mall as multi-story mixed-use building. This type of building would provide more natural surveillance and sense of spatial enclosure than a single use one-story strip mall.

HYPOTHETICAL URBAN CENTER CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity
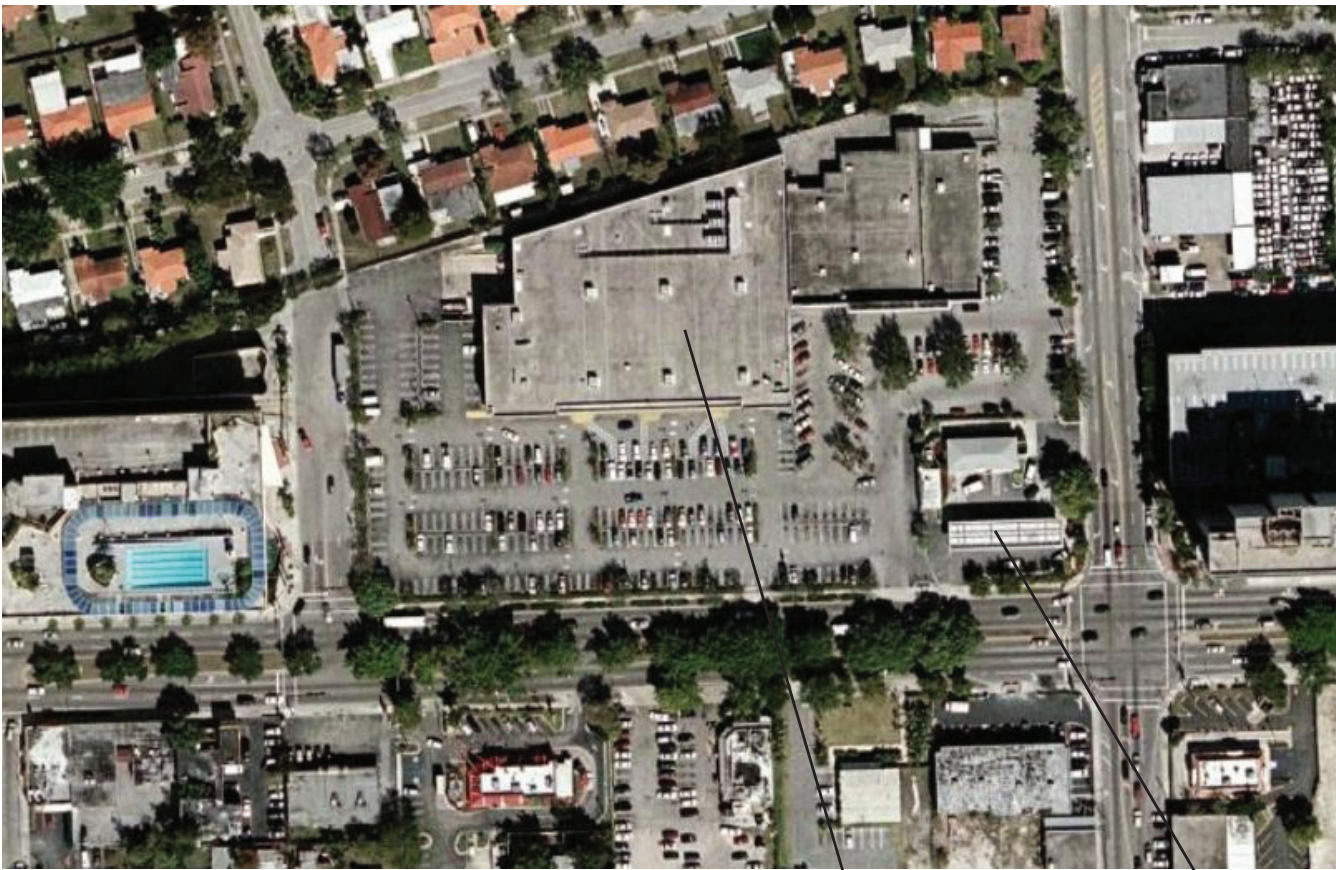
Existing Conditions

grocery store

gas station

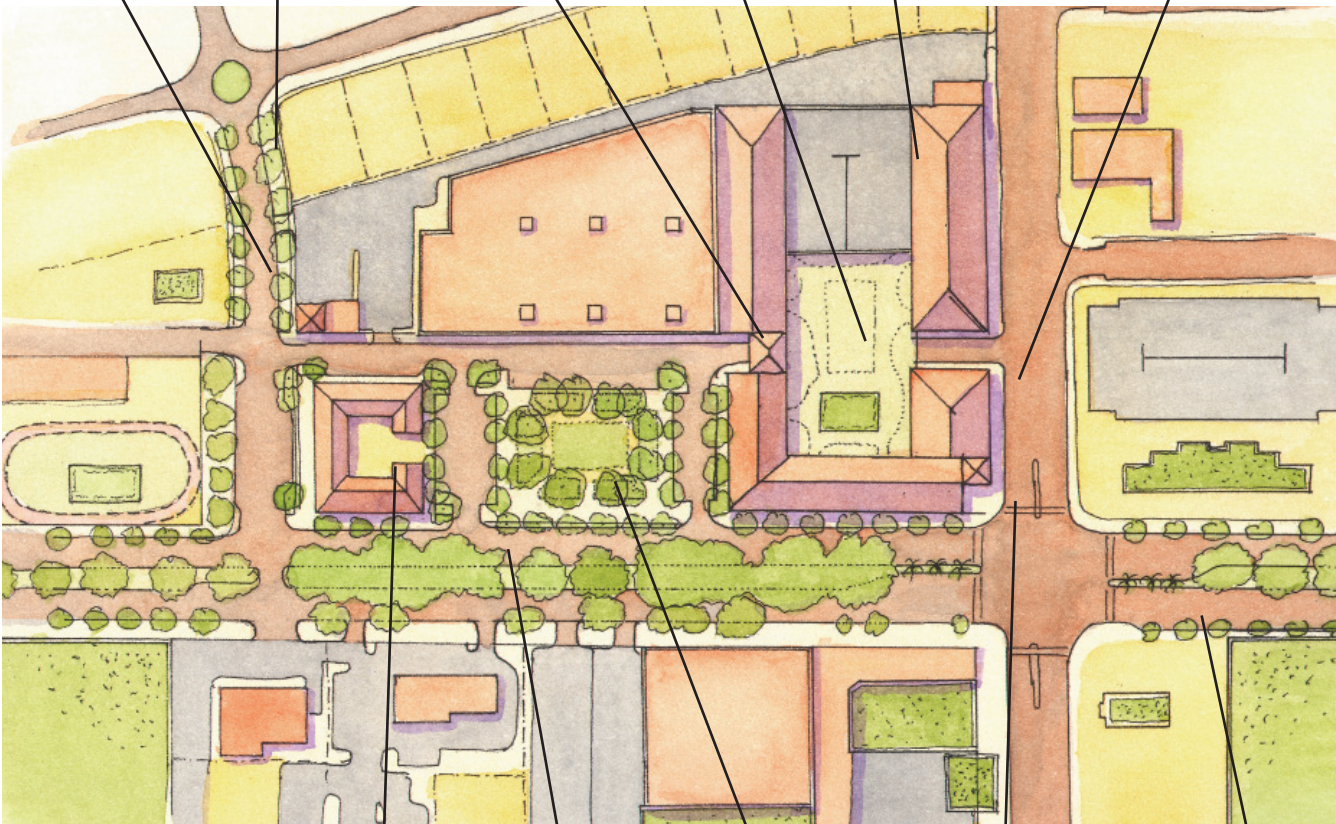**Vehicular barrier to neighborhood is removed**

Shade trees to make the walk comfortable

Parking structure is lined with habitable space

Amenity deck on top of parking structure

Multi-story parking structure

A new narrow street improves traffic circulation and removes pressure from larger intersections

Suggested Improvements

Courtyard building increases amount of views to the plaza

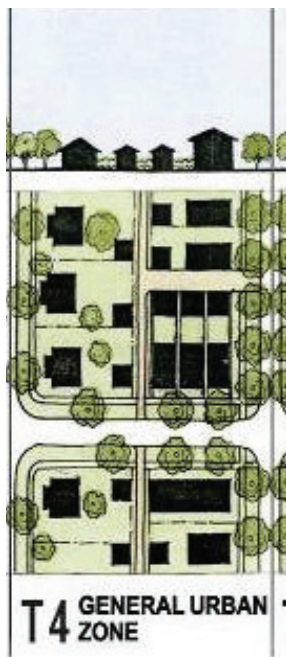**Transit stop can animate plaza and is connected to retail space**

Urban plaza

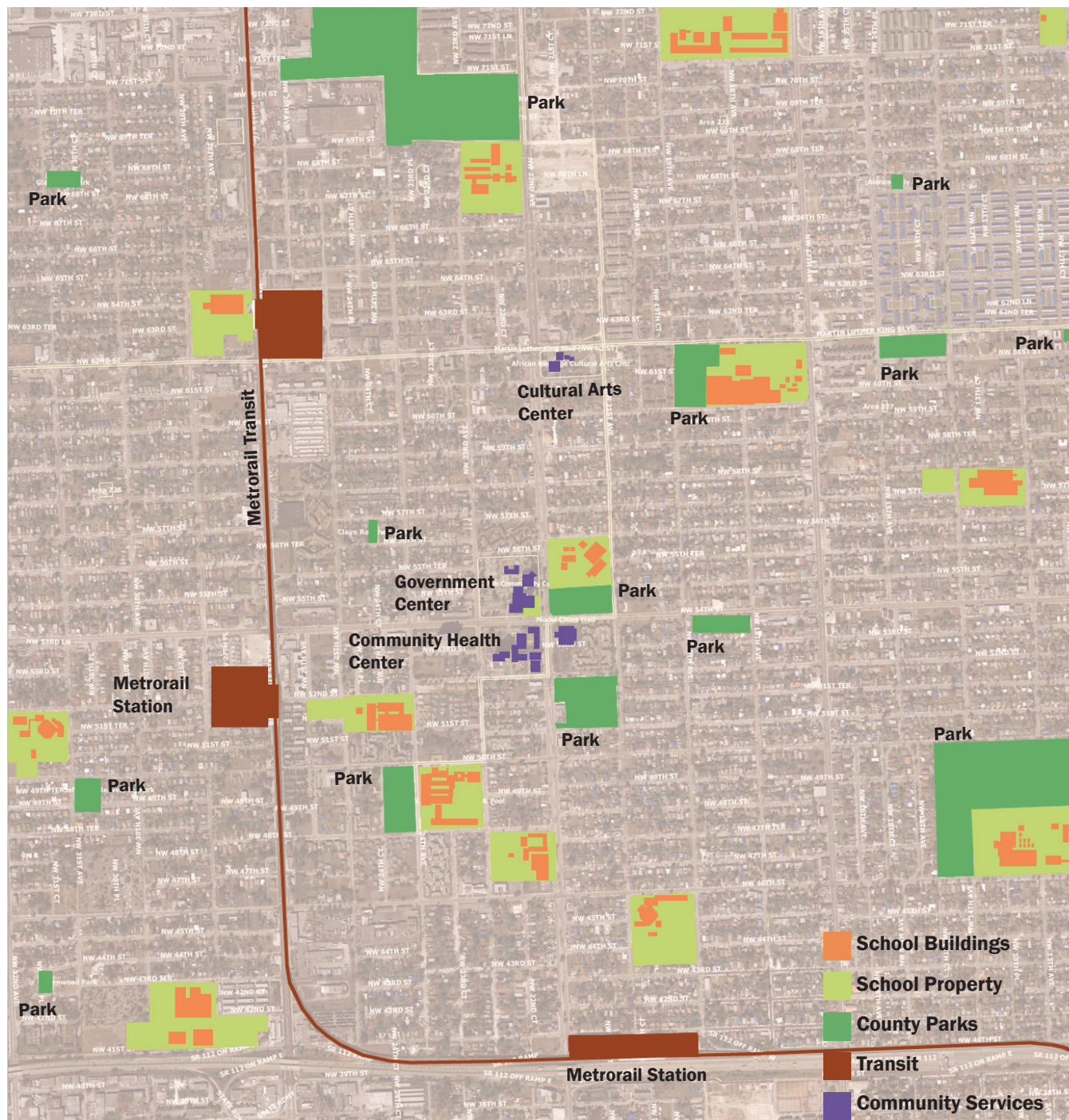**Towers at prominent corners serve as landmarks and assist way finding**

Trees installed on narrow portions of median

HYPOTHETICAL GENERAL URBAN CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity

Transect Location

T4 GENERAL URBAN ZONE

Legend:
- School Buildings
- School Property
- County Parks
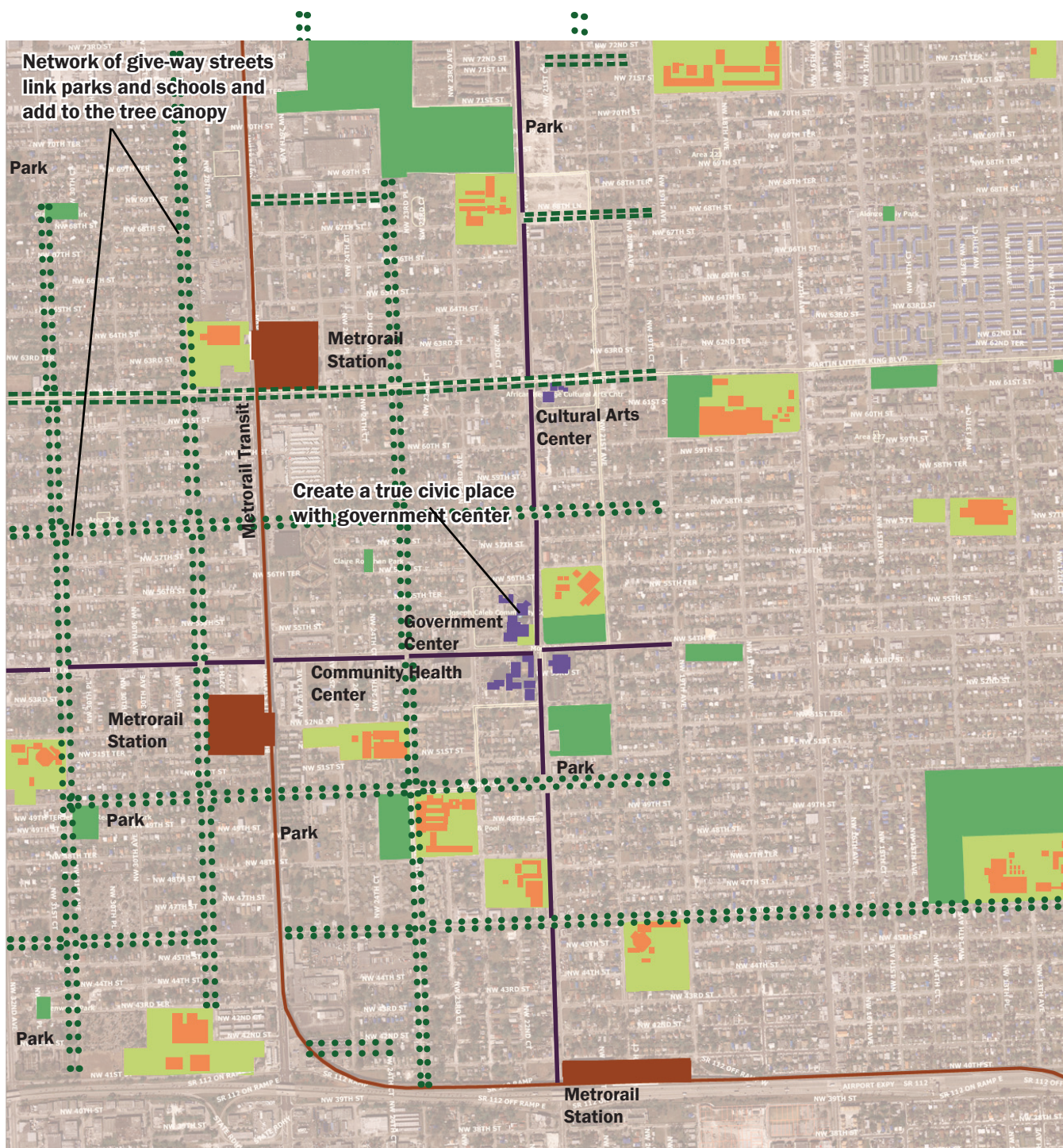- Transit
- Community Services

Existing Conditions

Context

- The area is an example of a "first ring" suburb that was developed in the 1940s as more houses were spreading outward from the core of Miami. The streets are configured in a typical grid pattern.

- The area has many schools and parks within walkable distances of homes.

- The area has received much public investment in physical improvements, infrastructure, and social services; however it appears to need more.

- The area around the Government Center is a good study area because of the government offices and services, a health clinic, and a park are on different corners of the same intersection.
- The interconnected network of streets makes better pedestrian connections possible.

- The number of schools and parks within close proximity

What works well here?

- Close proximity between services and homes
- Parks are adjacent to schools

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Map labels:

Network of give-way streets link parks and schools and add to the tree canopy

Park

Park

Metrorail Transit

Metrorail Station

Park

Cultural Arts Center

Create a true civic place with government center

Government Center

Community Health Center

Metrorail Station

Park

Park

Park

Park

Metrorail Station

Suggested Improvements

What is needed for this to be part of a seamless system of open space?

- Connect parks and public spaces with shaded sidewalks using existing street network.
- Connect neighborhood to existing schools, parks, public spaces, institutions outside neighborhood with shaded sidewalks and bikelanes using existing street network.
- Connect to regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.

# HYPOTHETICAL GENERAL URBAN CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity
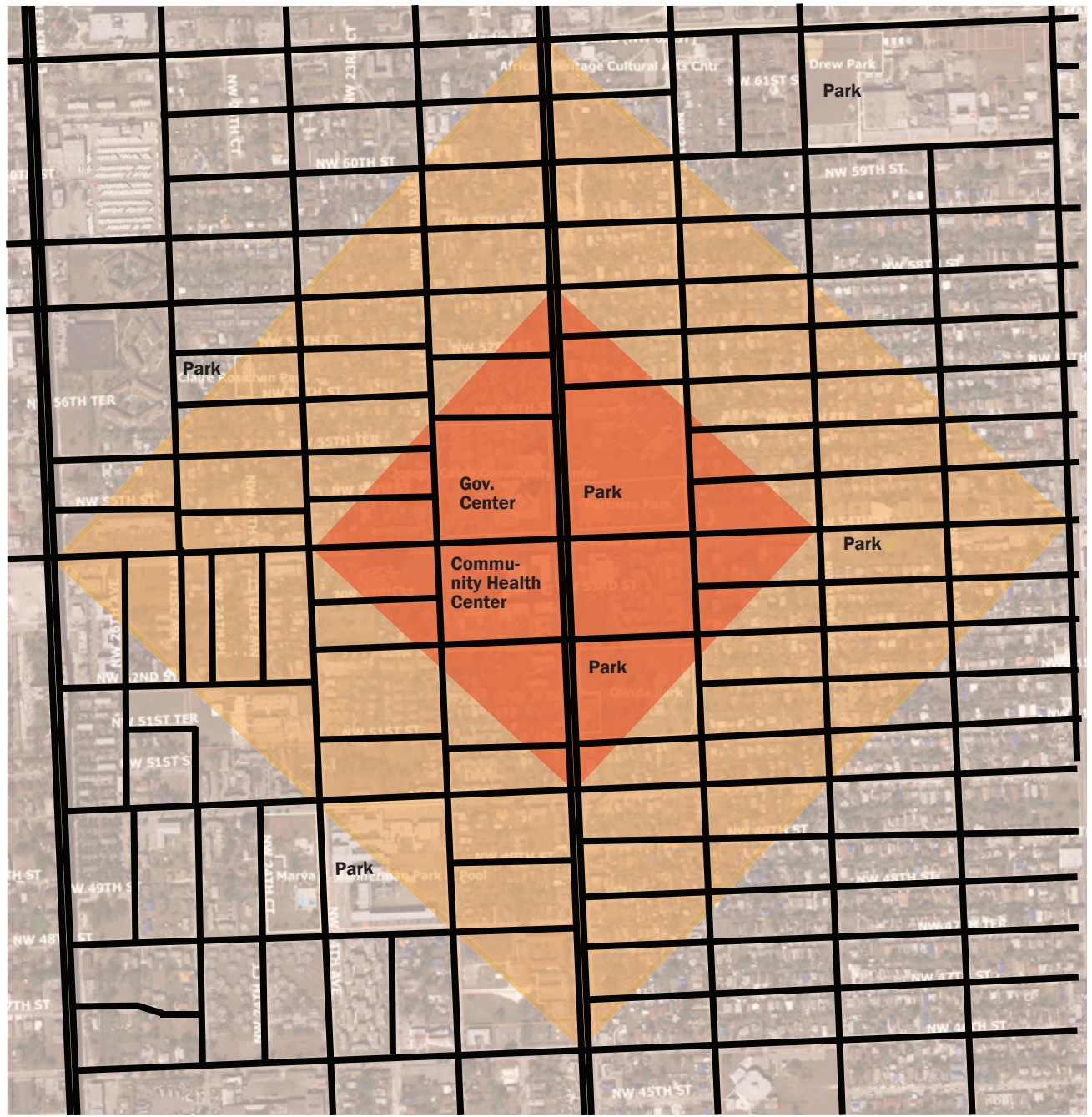
This diagram shows the area within a ten and five minute walk to the Government Center. A five-minute walk is the distance most people are willing to walk when given an option. A ten-minute walk is about the distance people will walk only if conditions are made very comfortable.

- 5 minute walk
- 10 minute walk
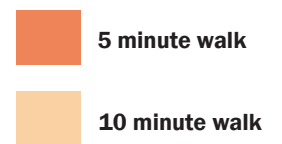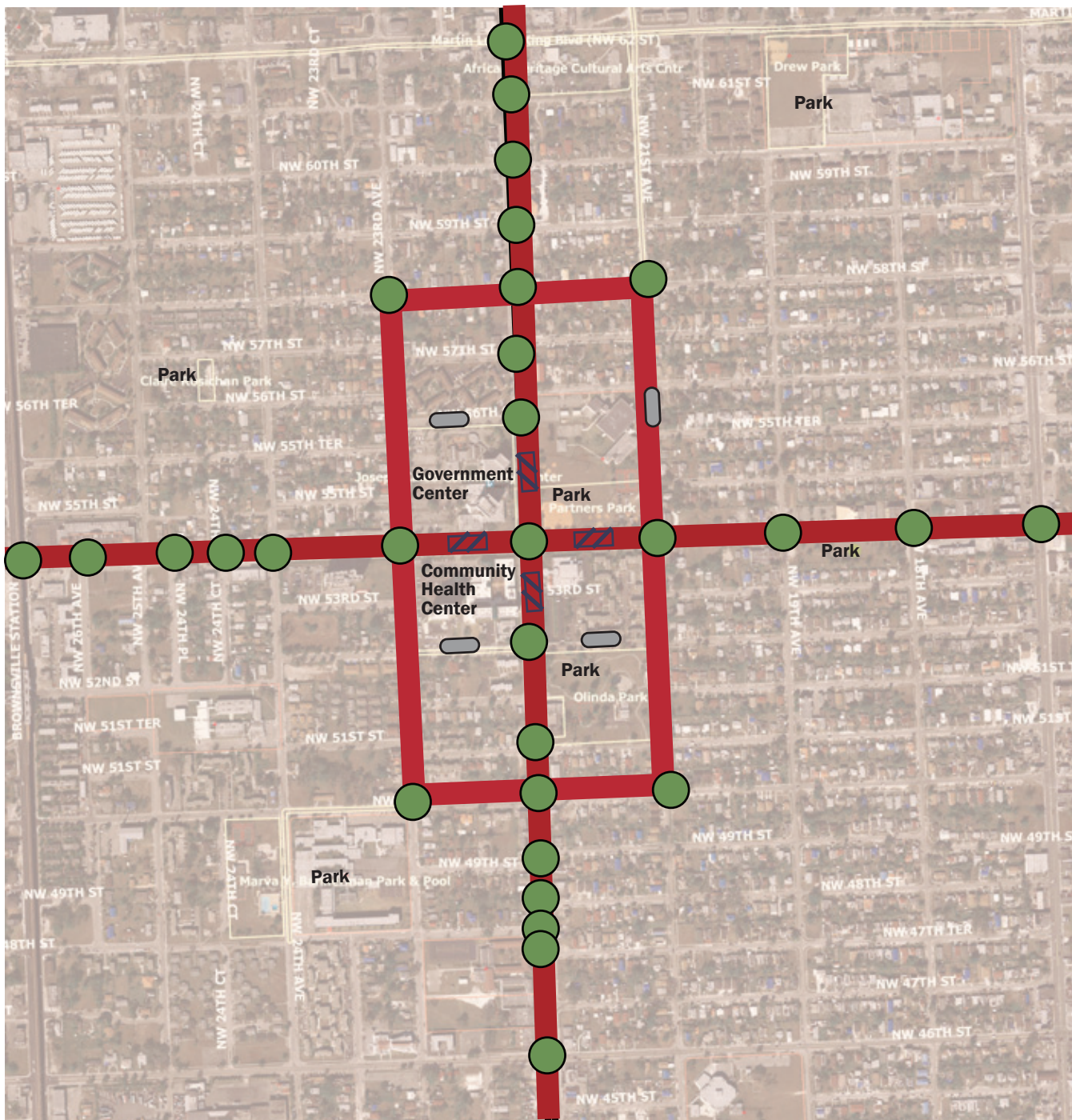
This diagram shows some of the modifications that can be done to improve pedestrian mobility within the neighborhood. Pinched intersections are those where the travel lanes and turning lanes are narrowed to slow vehicles. Mid-block crossings are striped or perhaps signalized. Speed humps or speed tables are positioned near to the neighborhood's community destinations. The red lines shows where sidewalk improvements may need to be made for the pedestrian circulation to be successful.

- 🟢 Pinched Intersection
- ▨ Mid-block Crossing
- ⬭ Speed Hump
- 🟥 Sidewalk

HYPOTHETICAL GENERAL URBAN CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity

Public School

Park

Unsightly chain link fencing for ball field is up against the street.

Government Center

Inaccessible open space is "lost" between buildings and their streets. If combined in a concentrated way, these "left over" spaces can become usable open spaces either public or private.

Existing Conditions

Ball field is configured so that fences may be removed

Mixed-use buildings line the bottom floor of the Government Center and contribute to a 24 hour environment

Create a public plaza at the corner

Buildings at different corners create a sense of spatial enclosure

Mid-block cross walks

Suggested Improvements

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HYPOTHETICAL SUB-URBAN CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity

Existing Conditions

Transect Location

Context

- The twisted pattern of streets and long blocks of this 1970s and 80s suburb shows how the street pattern greatly affects pedestrian and bicycle accessibility.
- A Park shows how the physical design of the streets and homes surrounding the park can play a role in enhancement of the appearance and usability of the park.

What works well here?

- The park is well used by nearby residents and others for spontaneous and organized sports.
- Access is generally good, by public streets.
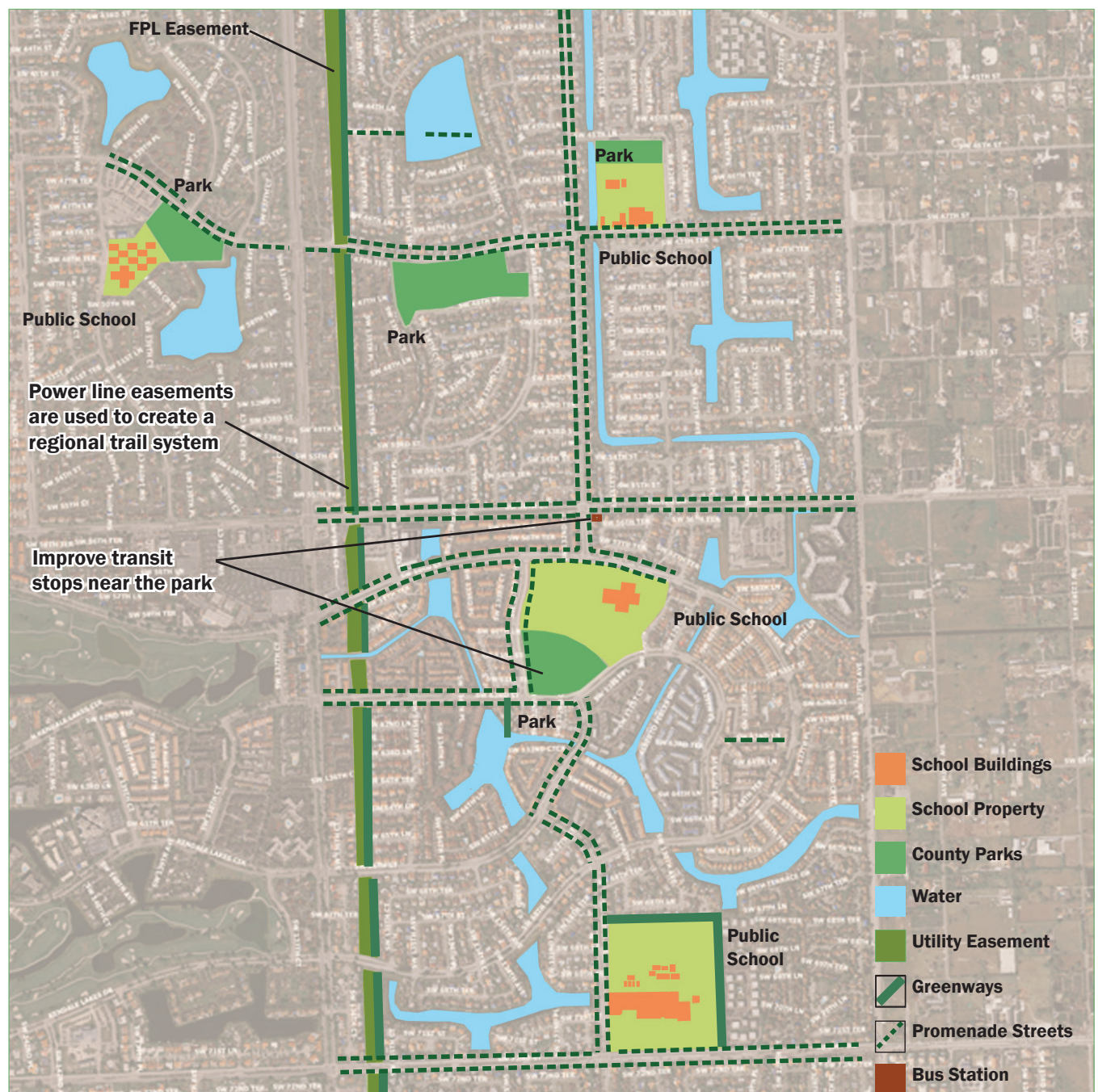
Suggested Improvements

What is needed for this to be part of a seamless system of open space?

- Place on-street parking where possible.
- Construct new development facing the public realm to provide pedestrian activity and natural surveillance.
- Connect parks and public spaces with shaded sidewalks using existing street network.
- Connect neighborhood to existing schools, parks, public spaces, institutions outside neighborhood with shaded sidewalks and bikelanes using existing street network.
- Connect to regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Construct new buildings close to the street edges to maximize open space within the parks.

HYPOTHETICAL SUB-URBAN CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity

Lack of tree canopy in park and street median

Extremely wide street right-of-way

Narrow sidewalk and no shade for pedestrians

Existing Conditions

Chain link fences are unsightly and encourage blight

Striped bike lane on northbound side of street but not on the southbound side

Street signage interrupts pedestrian paths

Poor visibility of street from residences

Increased tree canopy in park and on the street median

Sheltered bus stop also serves as a landmark

Raised crosswalk discourages speeding

Sidewalk is widened and shade provided with trees planted in the landscaping strip

Suggested Improvements

Park entrance marked by arbor gateway

Street signage in the landscape strip, not in pedestrian's path

Striped on-street parking spaces reduce perceived travel lane width

Privacy walls can have openings that will allow the resident to control privacy and at the same time offer some surveillance of the street from the ground floor. Second floor views to the park remain.

Suggested Improvements - Wider Sidewalk and Narrow Median

All the residential buildings surrounding the park either have their backs to the park or their sides. Fronting the park is better for natural surveillance

School

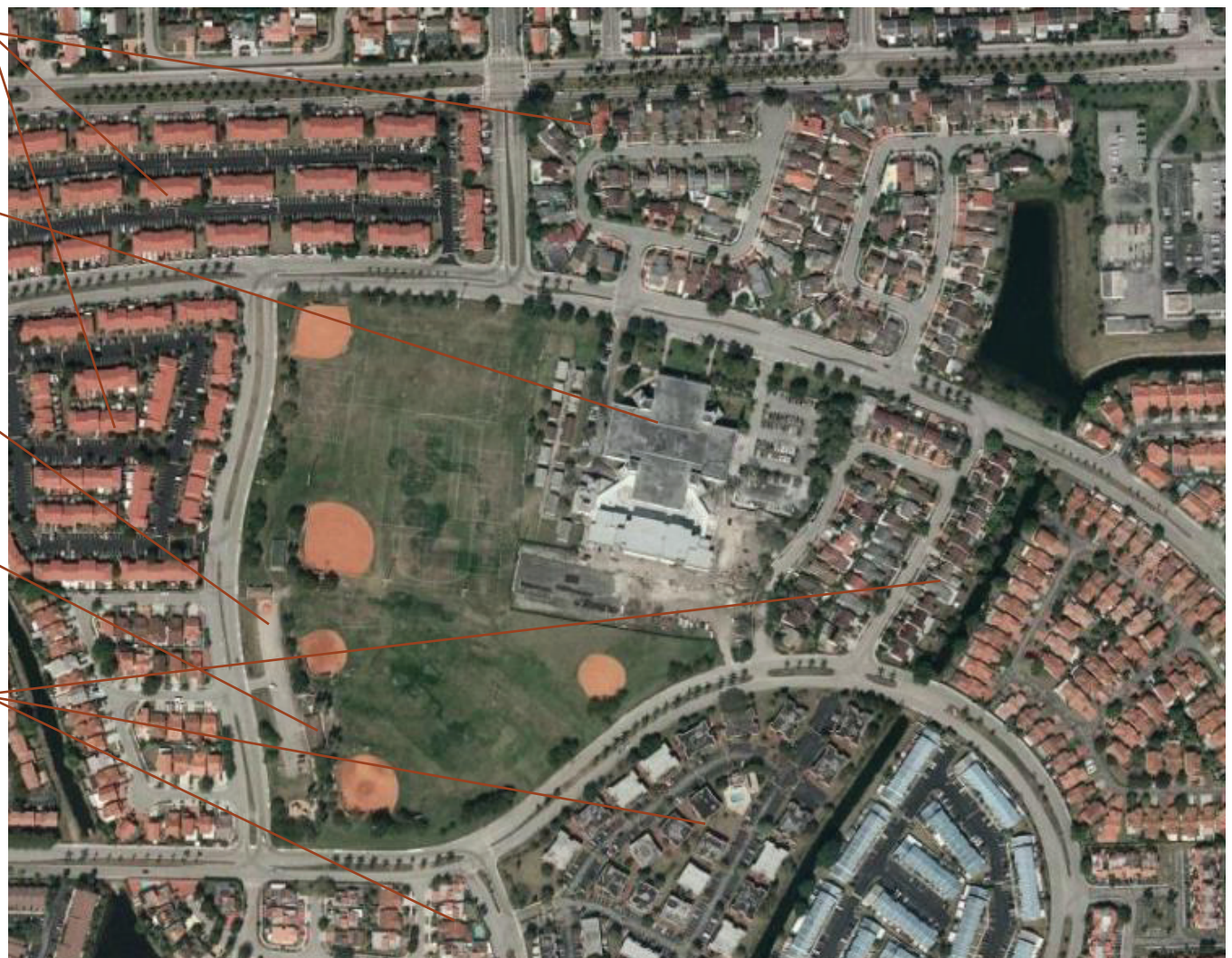Existing parking lot

Existing park building

All the residential buildings surrounding the park either have their backs to the park or their sides. Fronting the park is better for natural surveillance

Existing Conditions

Line both sides of street with shade trees

Demolish existing park building and create green space

Picnic areas are added

Future park building site located along the edge of the park

Diagonal parking along park edges provide more than 200 spaces

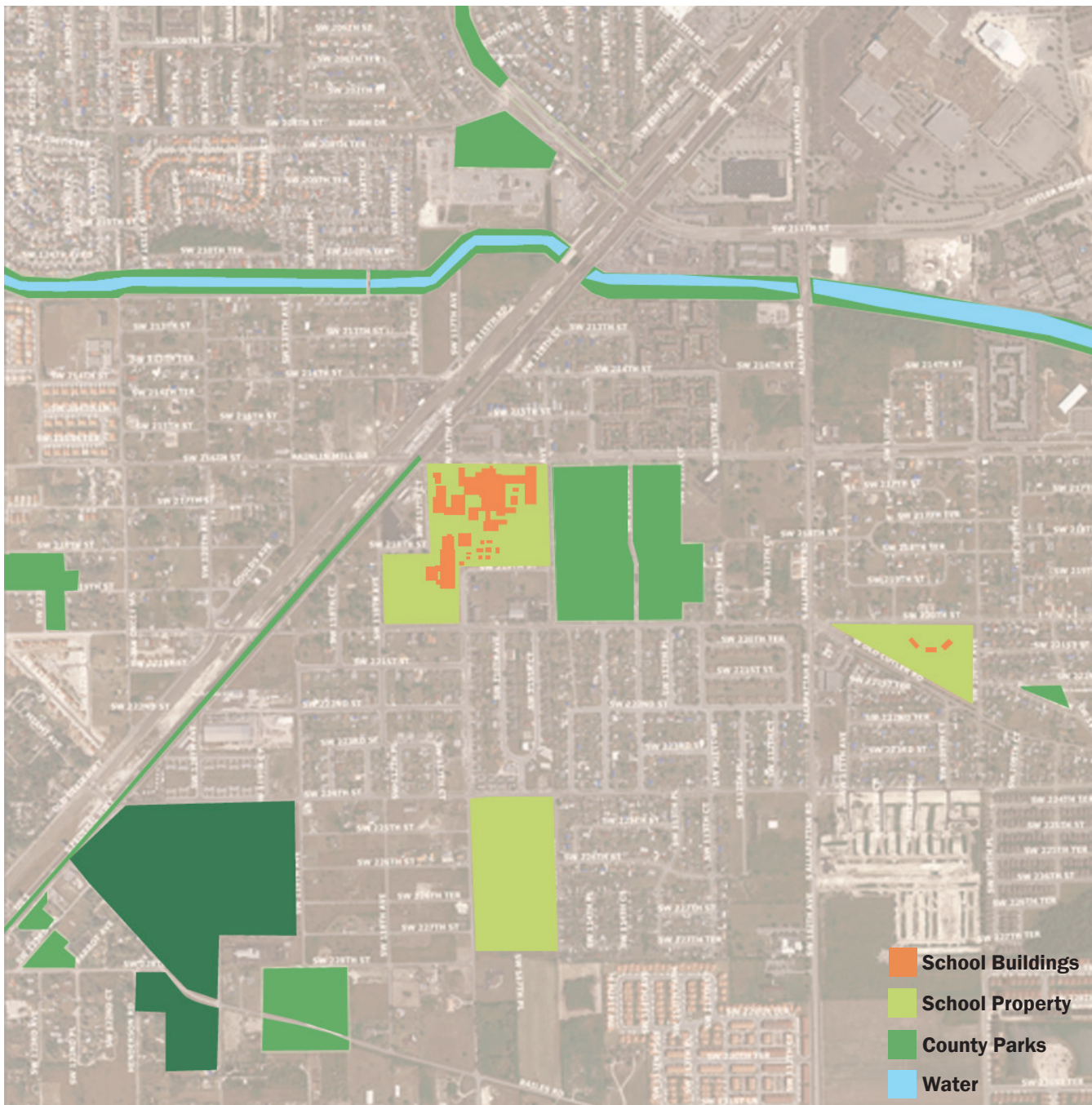Reconstruct park facilities in mixed-use buildings at the corner

Views from approaching streets should be of the park, not of parked cars

Suggested Improvements

HYPOTHETICAL RURAL/SUB-URBAN CASE STUDY
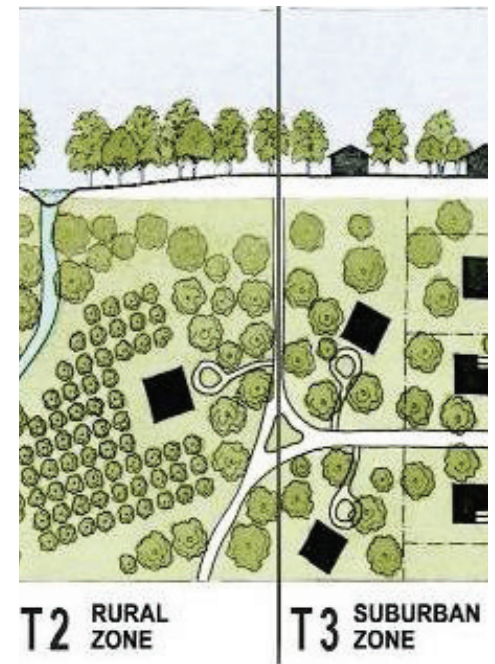## Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity

School Buildings
School Property
County Parks
Water

Existing Conditions

T2 RURAL ZONE   T3 SUBURBAN ZONE

Transect Location

Context

- This area studied has a combination of features that include: EEL property purchased by the county, the South Dade Busway and its bicycle trail, existing parks and schools and churches adjacent to each other.

- Canal is nearby and has the potential to be a recreational amenity.

What works well here?

- The close proximity for residents to a variety of parks and open spaces.

Suggested Improvements

Legend:
- School Buildings
- School Property
- County Parks
- Water
- Proposed Greenways
- Give-way Streets
- Promenade Streets
- EEL Sites
- Proposed Paths

Map labels:
- Proposed Connection to existing links
- Suggested Trail along the Canal
- Greenway expanded along Busway
- Proposed pedestrian safe streets to connect parks and schools
- Park
- Public School
- EEL Sites

What is needed for this to be part of a seamless system of open space?

- Construct new development facing the public realm to provide pedestrian activity and natural surveillance.
- Connect parks and public spaces with shaded sidewalks using existing street network.
- Connect neighborhood to existing schools, parks, public spaces, institutions outside neighborhood with shaded sidewalks and bikelanes using existing street network.
- Connect to regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.

HYPOTHETICAL RURAL/SUB-URBAN CASE STUDY
Prototypical Redevelopment Opportunity
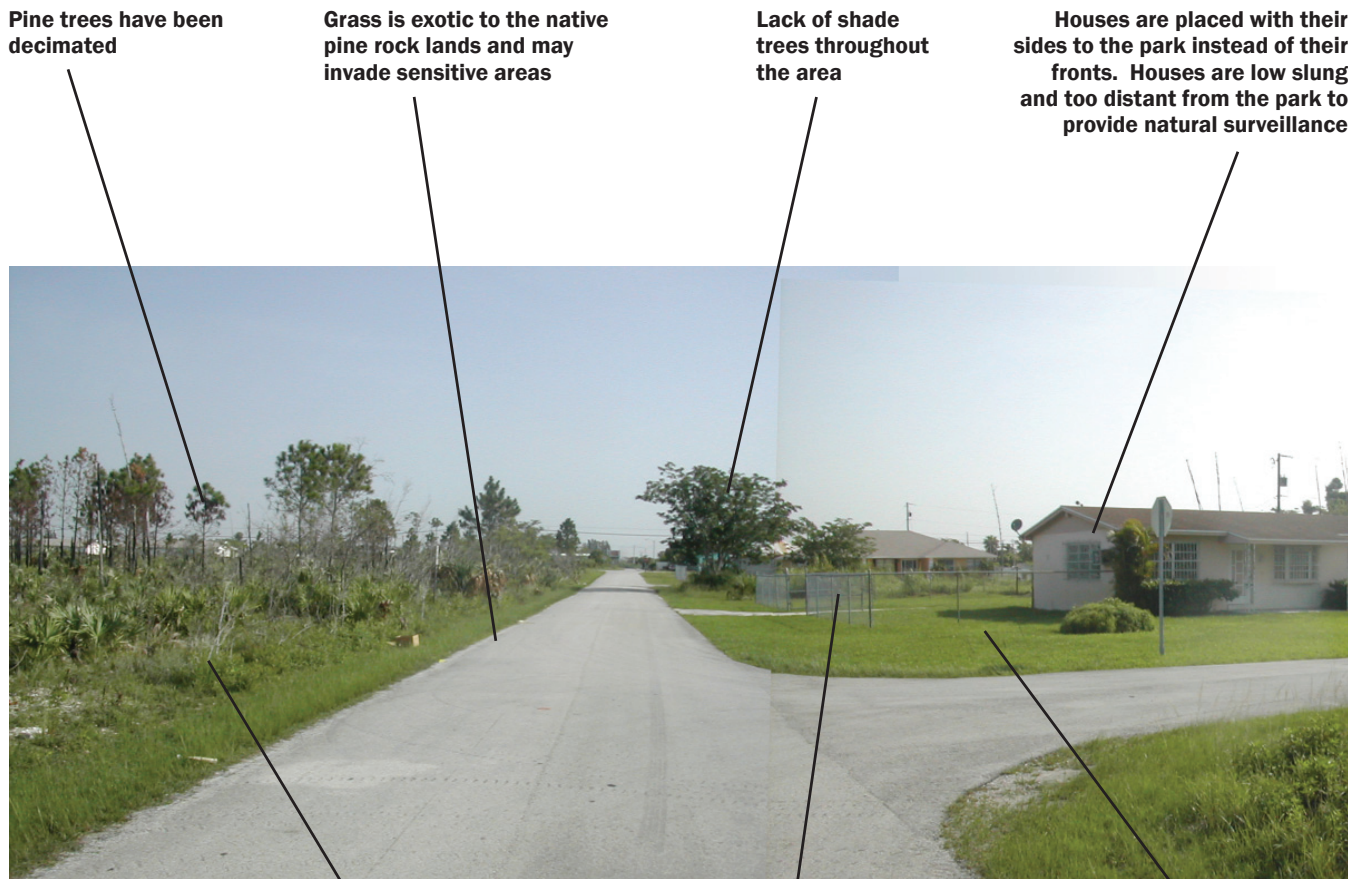
Pine trees have been decimated

Grass is exotic to the native pine rock lands and may invade sensitive areas

Lack of shade trees throughout the area

Houses are placed with their sides to the park instead of their fronts. Houses are low slung and too distant from the park to provide natural surveillance

Existing Conditions

Park access is lacking for the neighborhood. Designated paths are preferred to grant access and preserve natural ground cover off the paths

Chain link fences along streets are unsightly and induce blight

Lack of sidewalks is fine in a rural area, but as new residences are constructed, sidewalks will be needed
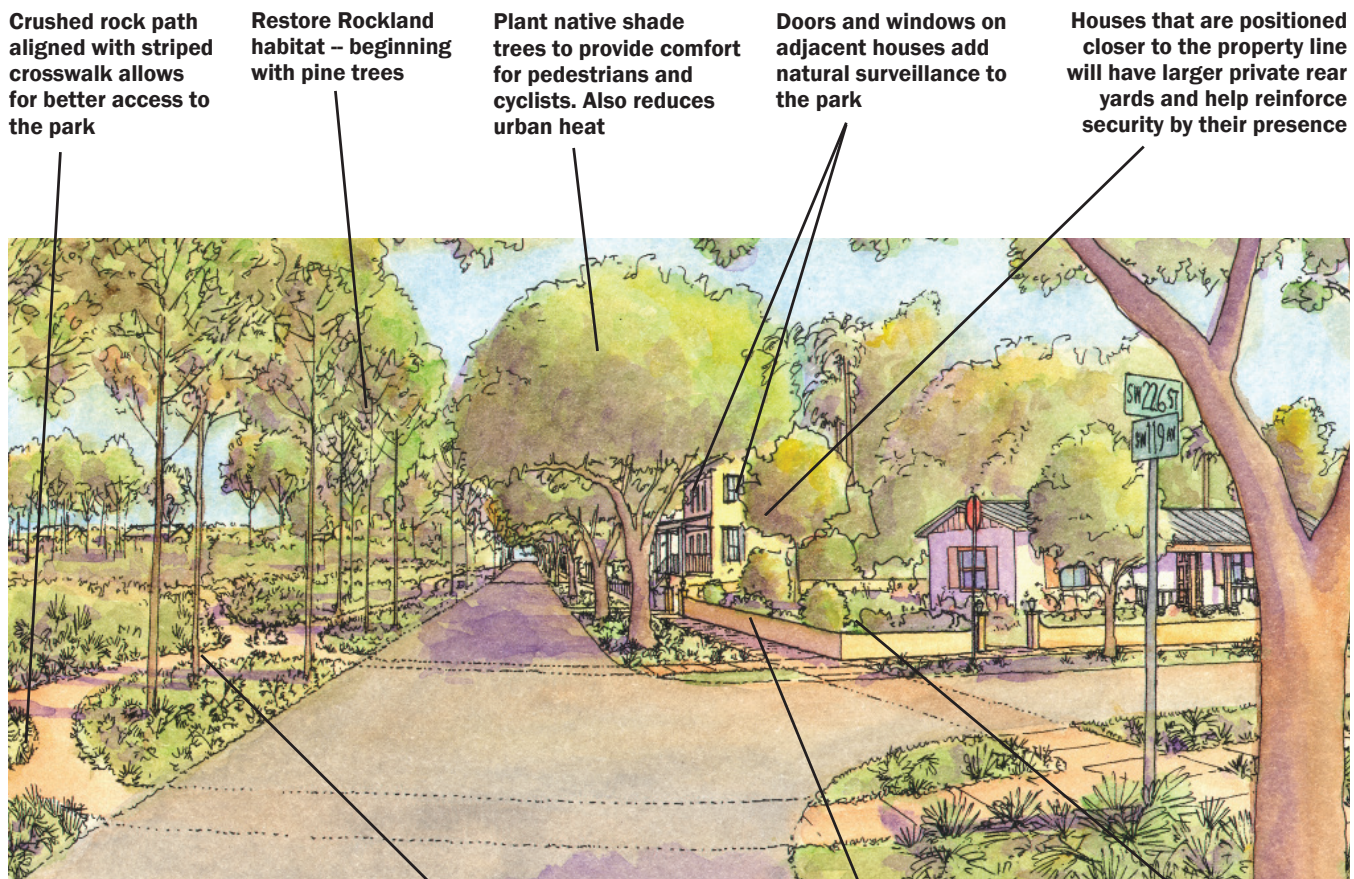
Crushed rock path aligned with striped crosswalk allows for better access to the park

Restore Rockland habitat -- beginning with pine trees

Plant native shade trees to provide comfort for pedestrians and cyclists. Also reduces urban heat

Doors and windows on adjacent houses add natural surveillance to the park

Houses that are positioned closer to the property line will have larger private rear yards and help reinforce security by their presence
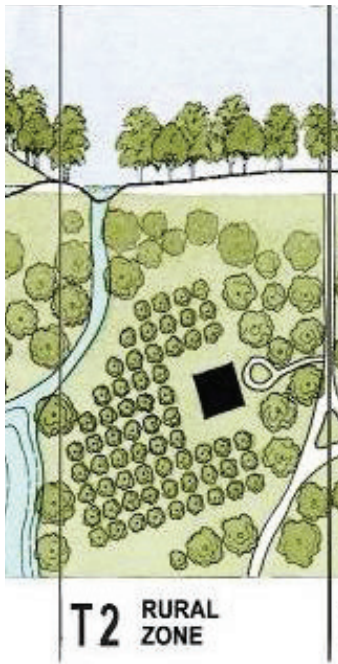
Suggested Improvements

Restore pines and saw palmettos at streets edges to discourage parking in undesignated parking areas

Add sidewalks to increase walkability in the neighborhood

Define edges of the properties with low garden walls, fences, or hedges for privacy that does not sacrifice visibility

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HYPOTHETICAL RURAL CASE STUDY
Prototypical Development Opportunity

T2 **RURAL ZONE**

Transect Location

Preserve

Park

Community Health Center

Community Association

Park

■ County Parks
■ Community Services
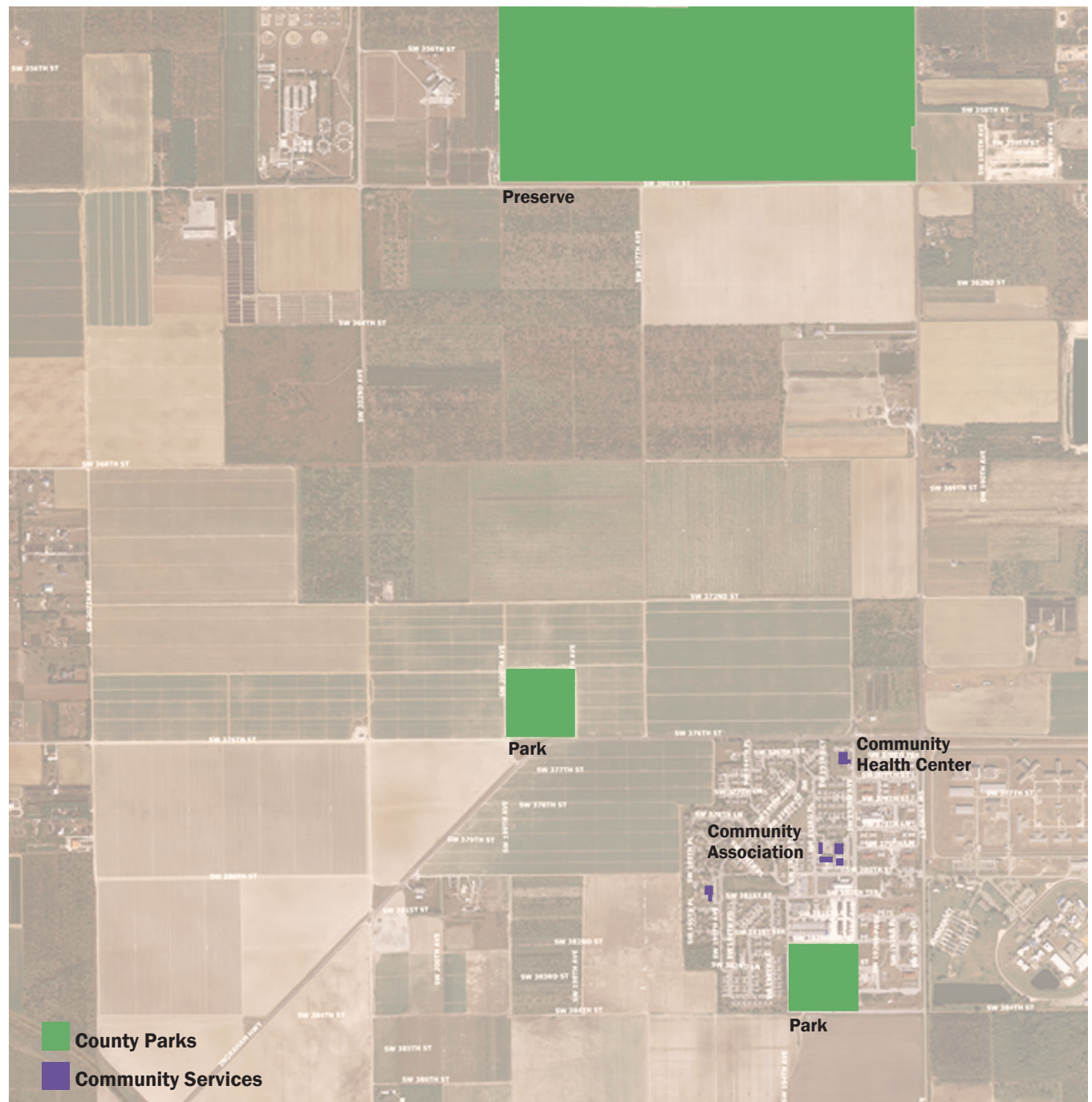
Existing Conditions

Context

- This is a rural location in Miami Dade County.
- Everyone drives to arrive at this park, no one lives nearby.
- The park is used by local residents and migrant workers from the area's farms.

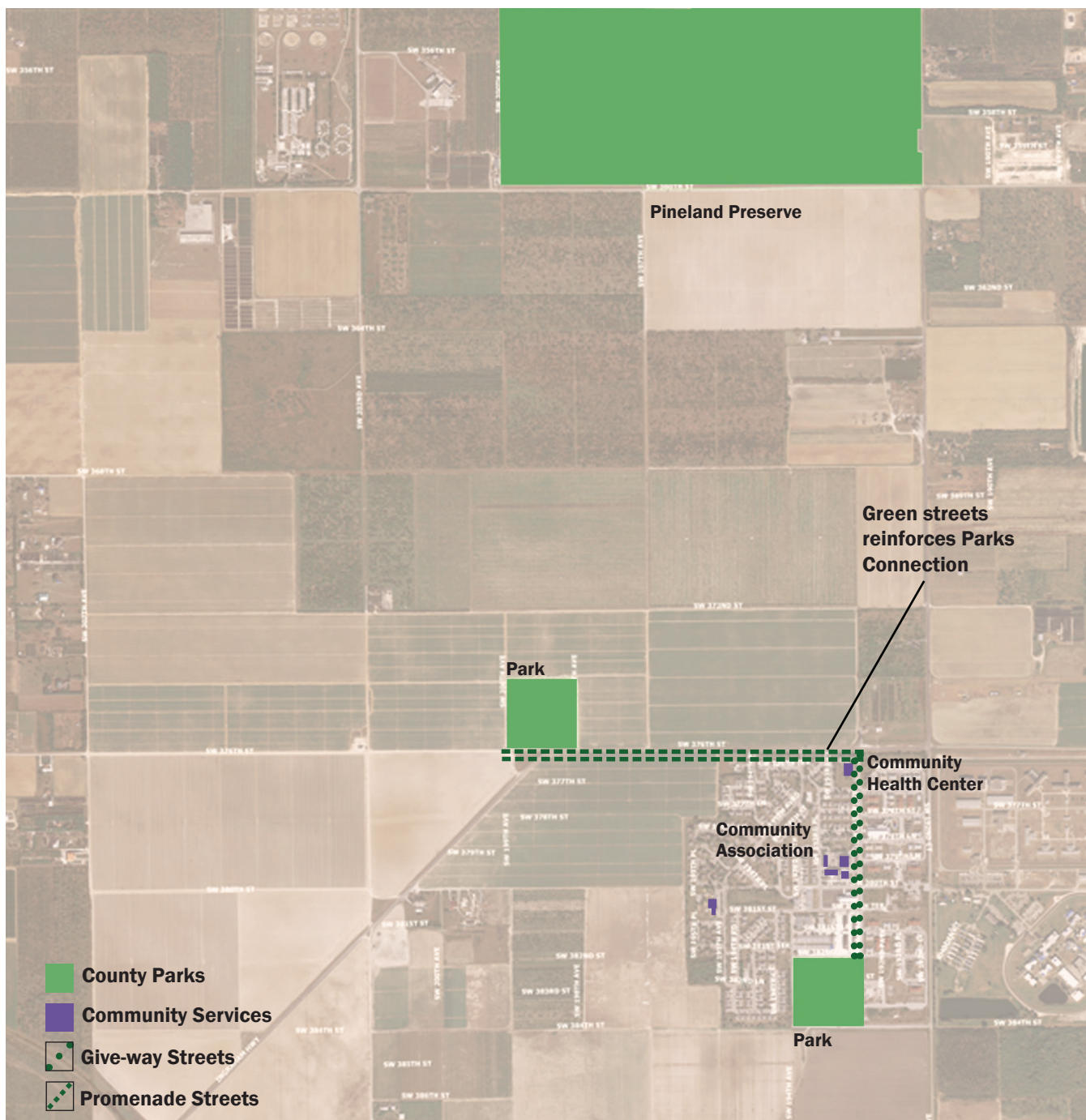**Suggested Improvements**
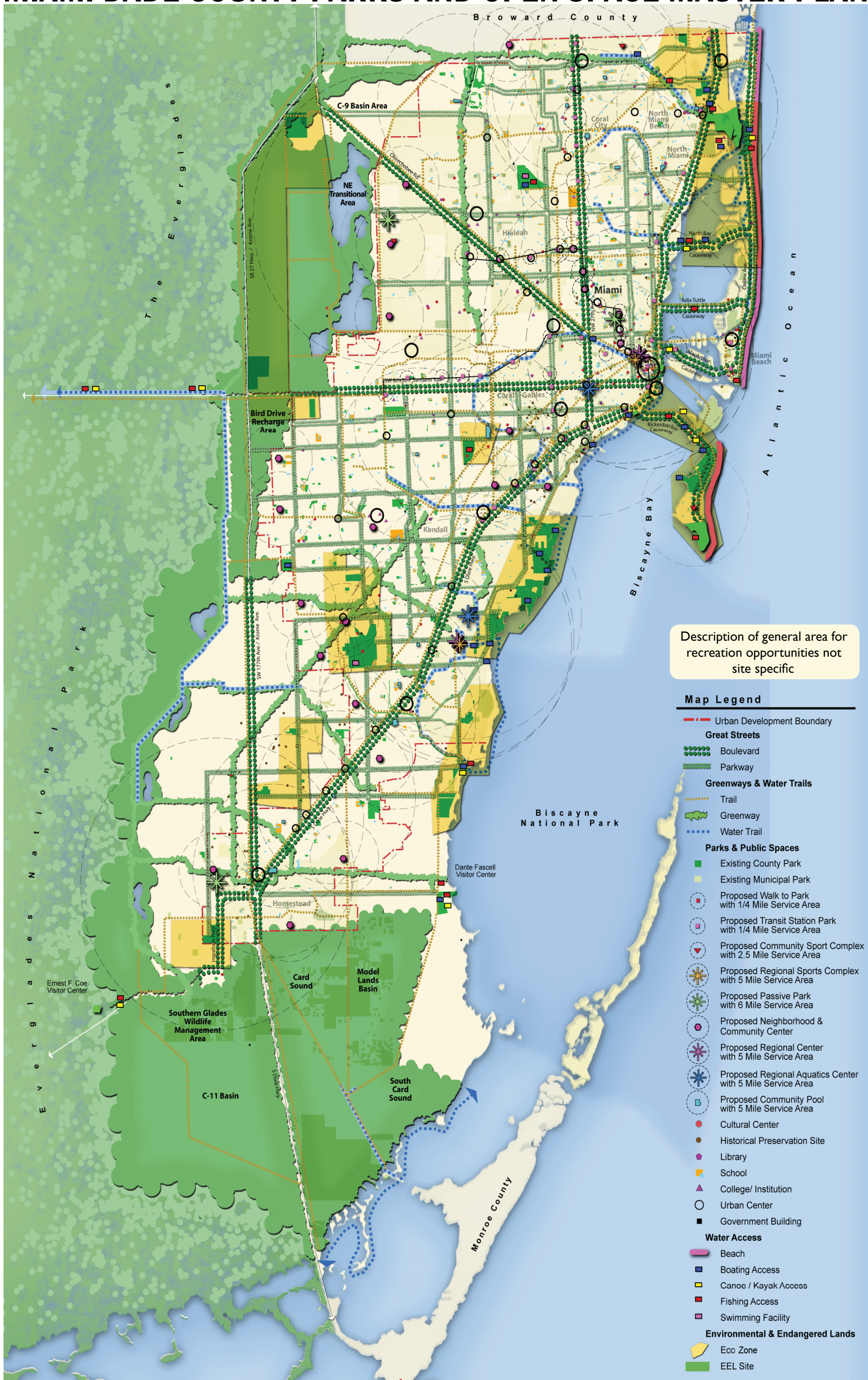
What is needed for this to be part of a seamless system of open space?

- Connect parks and public spaces with shaded sidewalks using existing street network.
- Connect neighborhood to existing schools, parks, public spaces, institutions outside neighborhood with shaded sidewalks and bikelanes using existing street network.
- Connect to regional trails for bicyclists and pedestrians.

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY PARKS AND OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN

Description of general area for recreation opportunities not site specific

Map Legend

- — ·· — Urban Development Boundary

Great Streets
- Boulevard
- Parkway

Greenways & Water Trails
- Trail
- Greenway
- Water Trail

Parks & Public Spaces
- Existing County Park
- Existing Municipal Park
- Proposed Walk to Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Transit Station Park with 1/4 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Community Sport Complex with 2.5 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Regional Sports Complex with 5 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Passive Park with 6 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Neighborhood & Community Center
- Proposed Regional Center with 5 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Regional Aquatics Center with 5 Mile Service Area
- Proposed Community Pool with 5 Mile Service Area
- Cultural Center
- Historical Preservation Site
- Library
- School
- College/ Institution
- Urban Center
- Government Building

Water Access
- Beach
- Boating Access
- Canoe / Kayak Access
- Fishing Access
- Swimming Facility

Environmental & Endangered Lands
- Eco Zone
- EEL Site

SEAMLESSNESS   BEAUTY   ACCESS   EQUITY   SUSTAINABILITY   MULTIPLE BENEFITS

ERA

"*T*he vision that we're striving for is to really help protect and create a nationwide system of parks and open space that spans the American landscape. We don't think our work will be finished until America has a magnificent, comprehensive and connected tapestry of gardens, parks, forests, farms and ranches, wilderness and wild places that stretches from inner city to wilderness."

WILL ROGERS
President, Trust for Public Land