



# MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #7b

DATE: SEPTEMBER 8, 2008  
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS  
FROM: STAFF  
SUBJECT: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY ADOPTED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

## Introduction

On July 30, 2008 Council staff received adopted plan amendment package #08D-2 (formerly #07D-1) to the Miami-Dade County Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) for review of consistency with the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida (SRPP)*. The proposed amendment (formerly #07D-1) was reviewed at the September 10, 2007 Council meeting and found to be generally consistent with the *SRPP*. Staff review is undertaken pursuant to the Local Government Comprehensive Planning and Land Development Regulation Act, Chapter 163, Part II, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and Rules 9J-5 and 9J-11, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

## Community Profile

With a 2007 population estimated at 2,462,292, Miami-Dade County is the most populous county in Florida. The County's population has grown by 9.3% since 2000, and is expected to increase by an additional half a million by 2020. The percentage of the population that is of working age or younger is larger in Miami-Dade County than the state average. The County also has higher unemployment rates as well as a higher percent of families with incomes below the poverty level than the state average.

The structure of the County's economy is heavily service and trade oriented, with approximately 57% of total employment in these sectors. The County has established itself as a wholesaling and financial center and major tourist destination. Miami-Dade County ranks ninth in export sales among all metropolitan areas in the country. Almost a quarter of the state's total employment in transportation is located in the County. The Port of Miami is the largest cruise ship port in the world and one of the largest container ports in the southeast. The urbanized portion of the County lies between two national parks, Everglades and Biscayne National Parks. The close relationship of tourism to the preservation of Miami-Dade County's unique native plants and wildlife has been recognized as an economic as well as an environmental issue. In order to manage growth, the County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan establishes an Urban Development Boundary (UDB), which distinguishes the area where urban development may occur from areas where it should not occur.

Additional information regarding the County or the Region may be found on the Council's website at [www.sfrpc.com](http://www.sfrpc.com).

## Summary of Staff Analysis

Adopted amendment package #08D-2 contains text amendments to the Land Use, Capital Improvements (CIE), and Intergovernmental Coordination Elements (ICE) of the Miami-Dade County Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) to allow development at Miami Metrozoo. A corresponding Land Use Plan Map amendment is included in this package.

The general location of Miami-Dade County is shown in Attachment 1 and the Land Use Plan Map amendment is shown as Attachment 2.

Dade County Zoological Park Development of Regional Impact (DRI) was originally approved in 1975. Less than half of the site has been developed as Metrozoo and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum. In 2005, Miami-Dade County as property owner, submitted a Notice of Proposed Change (NOPC) to amend the development order to allow for construction of a privately operated hotel (150,000 square feet), family entertainment center (20 acres), and water theme park (23 acres), along with improvements to the existing Gold Coast Railroad Museum. On June 14, 2005 the South Florida Regional Planning Council issued a letter identifying no regional issues with the NOPC. However, the DRI must be consistent with the CDMP and the existing "Parks and Recreation" land use designation does not permit such commercial activity on public park land. Submittal of the CDMP amendment was delayed by the need for a Countywide Referendum, as required by the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter, to allow commercial development on the Metrozoo property. The referendum was approved by Miami-Dade County voters on November 7, 2006.

### **Text Amendments**

The adopted text amendment to the Land Use Element designates a new land use category "Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area" for tourist and tourist-related attraction and support facilities (including museums, water park attractions, hotels, and theme-related retail uses). The land use designation of the proposed site was changed from "Parks and Recreation" to "Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area".

The adopted text amendment to the ICE identifies Miami Metrozoo and Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area as Facilities of Countywide Significance to ensure that the subject properties remain within the County's jurisdiction even if the surrounding areas are annexed or incorporated in future.

The adopted text amendment to the CIE includes related Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area projects to the Park and Recreation component of the CIP to reflect facility improvements needed to support the project.

### **Map Amendment**

The adopted Land Use Plan Map amendment designates 170 acres within the 1,203 acre DRI as "Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area" land use, as shown on Attachment 2. This area, which is primarily underutilized parking lots, was designated "Parks and Recreation" on the 2015-2025 CDMP Land Use Plan Map.

The adopted amendment package #08D-2 was submitted with additional changes based on the Department of Community Affairs Objections, Recommendations, and Comments (ORC) Report issued October 12, 2007. In response to the ORC report, intensity standards and percentages for the "Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area" CDMP land use category were added. The establishment of these standards ensures new development maintains the existing character of the park, by providing building height and intensity guidelines. These additions include a maximum floor area ratio (F.A.R.) of 0.30 for the water theme park and the Gold Coast Railroad Museum and a F.A.R. of 0.40 for the family

entertainment center and hotels. Percentages for the allowable mix of uses were established at 60 to 99 percent for attractions and recreation, and 1 to 40 percent for accommodations.

Miami-Dade County coordinated with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) to address potential traffic impacts. Various turn lane improvements were incorporated into already committed widening projects, thereby eliminating the need for additional funding.

Concurrent with the DRI Development Order conditions, Miami-Dade County has agreed to use only potable water in the water park to allay potential health concerns, practice water conservation, and reuse. The County also executed an Agreement in Principle with the U.S. Department of the Army to address federal deed restrictions.

Comment

Since the inception of the Miami Metrozoo development, the County has included transit access to the site. The site is currently accessed by the Coral Reef Max bus #252. The various additions to the site, such as the water park, may increase its regional attractiveness. Staff encourages the County to continue their commitment to transit by considering additional transit access and exploring improved pedestrian connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods.

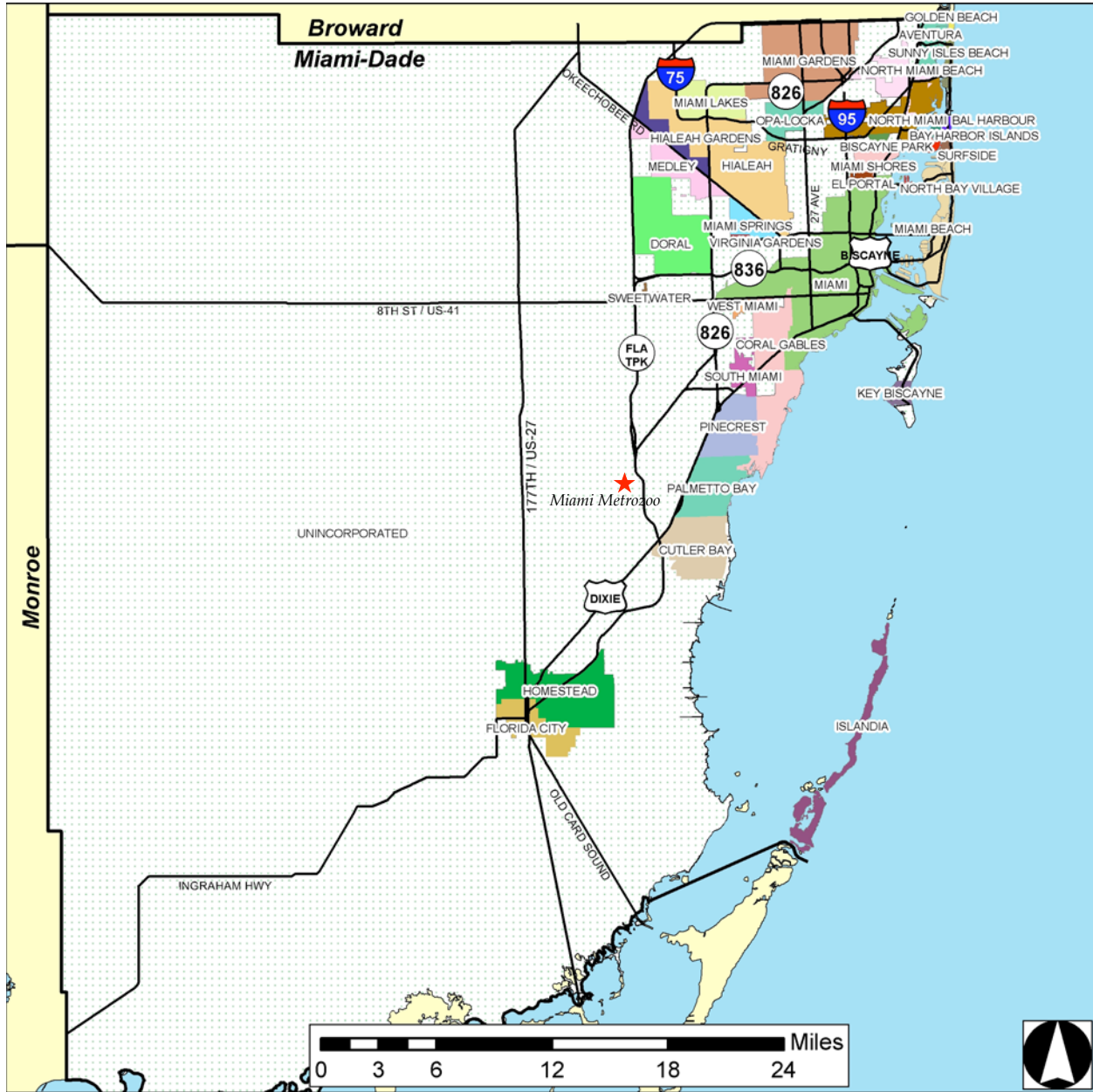
The Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners approved the transmittal of the adopted amendment by a vote of 10-0 at its July 3, 2008 meeting.

Staff analysis confirms that the adopted text and map amendments are compatible with and supportive of the goals and policies of the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*.

Recommendation

Find Miami-Dade County adopted amendment package #08D-2 generally consistent with the *Strategic Regional Policy Plan for South Florida*. Approve this staff report for transmittal to the Florida Department of Community Affairs.

# Attachment 1



## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

### General County Location Map with Miami Metrozoo Site

Miami-Dade County  
Adopted Amendment Package #08D-2

Sources: FDEP, SFWMD, Miami-Dade County, SFRPC.

Note: For planning purposes only. All distances are approximate.



## Attachment 2



### COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

#### Aerial Map

Miami-Dade County  
Adopted Amendment #08D-2

From: "Park and Recreation"  
To: "Miami Metrozoo Entertainment Area"  
170 acres

Sources: FDEP, SFWMD, Miami-Dade County, SFRPC.

Note: For planning purposes only. All distances are approximate.