

## SOUTH MIAMI-DADE WATERSHED STUDY AND PLAN

Economic Development Strategies Meeting  
January 31, 2006

---

QUESTION 1: *What are the unique problems facing economic development in South Dade and what policies should be adopted that would help overcome them?*

### RESPONSES:

- National Parks want to dictate what happens outside their boundaries.
- The plan is a land plan and not a watershed plan.
- Industrial development is not feasible – the market is a 90 degree market, i.e. there is only a north south connection to Miami International Airport (MIA).
- Lack of transportation link between Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB) and MIA.
- Slighter cheaper building costs in South Dade as compared to the Doral area are not enough to overcome the logistics problem
- The farmer has no control over his or her destiny – External Forces.
- Tourism – storms and negative press set tourism back.
- Focus on businesses such as boat building that bring in money from outside the local area.
- Look to job creation in industry that will keep people here.
- Capitalize on human resources --- create incentives.
- Offer infrastructure that will attract high paid jobs.
- Lack of a skilled labor force is a problem.
- Most of the jobs in South Dade are in low income sectors such as tourism, retail, and agriculture
- Attracting large-scale businesses requires creation of more land.
- Don't hurt what we've got (our uniqueness) for something unknown.
- Expand the hospitality industry – include medium to large sized hotels and convention centers.
- South Dade has no representative on the Tourist Development Council. The Beacon Council caters to big business
- South Miami-Dade is getting a disproportionate share of bed tax revenues. Redistribute bed tax revenues and impact fees – more to South Miami-Dade. Use local elected officials from cities in South Dade and the local Chamber to approach the county.
- Region-wide agricultural marketing plan is needed – channel funds through Tropical Everglades Visitor Association (TEVA).
- Give the Convention Business Bureau something it can market – think about Napa Valley.

- Brand the Redlands area. Capitalize on the unique heritage left by the early pioneers.
- The Speedway (\$200 M in annual revenue) needs protection from urban encroachment.
- Lack of human resources.
- Antiquated turnpike system.
- Take advantage of assets.
- Redistribution of funds – three current entities: Beacon Council; Perrine/Cutler Ridge Council; Vision Council.
- Turkey Point – big employer.
- Sell the countryside.
- Aquaculture.

DISCUSSION: on the definition of “Economic Development” as it relates to South Miami-Dade County.

- Economic Development in the South Miami-Dade area is based on Tourism + Agriculture + HARB.
- Weather and water are the main draws.
- Small business based economy is the future, e.g., distribution to the keys.

SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS: The group was asked to make specific suggestions and recommendations on how to address the issues previously discussed.

- Use the headhunter method for corporate relocation.
- Inventory the assets that the area has, with an eye toward tying in education – aggressive marketing.
- Consolidate agencies/entities in the area as a group, especially Florida City and Homestead – become a unified voice instead of many squeaky voices.
- Create a data base on tourist dollars spent in South Miami-Dade – track money that is due to the area.
- Create a good inventory of available industrial and commercial lands and pinpoint areas with future potential.
- Create a committee that can deal with the County and FDOT to capture impact fees.
- Plan infrastructure for alternative fuels and adopt water controls in the same corridor.
- Preserve and expand industrial and commercial land to create job centers.
- Develop fishing tourism.
- Joint use of HARB as civilian/military cargo and passenger service to create jobs.
- Do long range planning to save water.
- South Dade needs a designated representative on the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau.
- Funding is key to implementing strategies. South Dade needs are well known.

## Additional Notes

### DISCUSSION

Logistically we are poorly located for distribution except maybe to the Keys  
Building costs are no lower here than in the rest of Miami-Dade we have no advantage there.

Agriculture is still the number one producer for the economy.

The key to promoting Tourism is to keep our uniqueness.

Efforts toward building the economy of South Miami-Dade should be concentrated on businesses that bring in money (sales) from outside the area.

We are looking at growth in almost entirely retail sales. It is not desirable for people to only live here and work elsewhere. This creates a drain on our resources.

The one advantage of more people living in South Miami-Dade is that we will have a larger workforce.

We are lacking in a skilled workforce.

The Air Force Base must be better utilized to bring jobs to the area.

Topical Everglades Visitors Center has over 52,000 walk in visitors a year. These are tourists already in the area. There is no more effective way to capture their business and promote Tourism in the area.

There is an economic opportunity in the Charter Boat business, because of the closing of marinas in the Keys.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

We must concentrate on developing and training a skilled workforce.

The Watershed Plan should ensure that large tracks of land are left for Job Center Development.