

# PUBLIC LAND FOR PUBLIC GOOD

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## STATEMENT OF VALUES

The cost and availability of land is frequently identified as a barrier to affordable housing and community development. Meanwhile, housing costs in Miami-Dade County continue to increase, making it unaffordable for close to half of its residents. Small businesses, non-profits, as well as community amenities and services are also affected by the increasing cost of living and diminishing disposable income for the majority of Miami-Dade County residents. Communities often feel as if they are reacting to new development and displacement pressures on a case-by-case basis. This is particularly of concern in low-income and communities of color, which have long been shut out of opportunities for meaningful, community-led economic development. A recent study entitled, “The Color of Wealth in Miami,” points out that “racial wealth disparities are enormous and persistent, rooted from the country’s inception with profound intergenerational effects.” The Ohio State University, Duke University, and the Insight Center for Community Economic Development, *The Color of Wealth in Miami* (February 2019). This study underscores the importance of community investment and identifying a long-term strategy for the use of publicly-owned vacant or underused land for the benefit of the community.

The recent unveiling of LAND: The Land Access for Neighborhood Development, a tool developed by the University of Miami’s Office of Civic and Community

tool developed by the University of Miami's Office of Civic and Community Engagement, demonstrated that there is approximately 500 million square feet of publicly-owned vacant or underused land scattered throughout Miami-Dade County. LAND: Land Access for Neighborhood Development, <http://land.ccs.miami.edu/explore/parcels>. The LAND tool presents a unique opportunity for entities to coordinate public resources for the benefit of the community. This tool has become available as our communities face an unprecedented and growing threat of displacement from various fronts. Residents feel the burden of unaffordability ever more acutely when Opportunity Zones are ushering in new incentives for speculation, sea level rise is shifting the real estate market, and the demographics of cultural neighborhoods are changing drastically. In the face of these pressures, the disposition of publicly-owned land should be guided by the following core values:

### **Housing:**

- Public land should be used, in part, to address the affordability crisis. It should be targeted to those most cost-burdened, from extremely low income to moderate income households. (Those living at or below 30% AMI up to 80% AMI. Miami-Dade County Public Housing and Community Development: Income Limits, <https://www8.miamidade.gov/global/housing/income-limits.page>; Statistical Atlas data based on 2010 US Census & 2015-16 American Community Survey.)
- Public land should be used to minimize displacement and ensure residents have the right to remain, if they so choose, in the communities they built. This includes incentivizing models that ensure permanent and long-term affordability, such as Community Land Trusts and other equitable development strategies.
- Public land use should balance the need for increased density and the preservation of unique characteristics of our neighborhoods.
- Public land use should aid in the research and development of techniques and technologies that make construction more affordable.

### **Resiliency & Strategic Locations:**

- Public land use must take into account rising seas and the urgent need to build a more climate-resilient county. The New York Times, Detailed Maps Show How Neighborhoods Shape Children for Life, October 1, 2018. The resiliency and

environmental sustainability of new or rehabilitated structures should be a core concern.

- Use of public land for green space and flood mitigation, public gardens, and parks should be prioritized and considered in conjunction with community development plans.
- Land disposition and use should prevent climate gentrification, the displacement of small businesses and low-income residents from high-ground neighborhoods to less climate-resilient areas. Zoning rules and other local laws should be crafted to enable this objective.
- Disposition should encourage transit-oriented development by coordinating resources between the County and nearby municipalities, by facilitating the increase in density, (where appropriate) and by developing at or near areas of opportunity to leverage access to transit, jobs, green space, schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, and health clinics.

### **Community Engagement:**

- Community stakeholders, including home-owners, renters, and small business owners, must be at the table.
- Implement an authentic community education process so that communities can determine what they want in their backyards and craft a community-informed plan for land use with pilot/implementation steps;
- Community benefit policies must be incorporated into disposition processes to ensure equity and that all parts of our community can thrive.

### **Systemic Interventions:**

- Engage in inter-governmental and inter-institutional collaboration for assemblage of land that benefits low-income communities and communities of color.
- Provide a transparent, equitable and accountable process for the conveyance of land, including set-asides of certain parcels for non-profit and mission-aligned developers whose projects are community-led and meet the needs of the community.
- <sup>i</sup> Improve the permitting process to lower the cost of construction and speed up

development timelines.

- Invest in community control, economic sustainability, ownership and generational wealth for low-income communities and communities of color.

In order to support these values, we urge the prioritization of legislation focused on equitable development, environmental justice and a systematic restorative rights framework. We ask for more consistent and strategic public land disposition processes, as outlined above, which we believe will better serve all our communities while reducing vacancy and blight, and adding to our tax rolls.

SIGN THE STATEMENT OF VALUES HERE

## WHO HAS SIGNED SO FAR?

- [Carrfour Supportive Housing](#)
- [Catalyst Miami](#)
- [Centro Campesino](#)
- [Collective Empowerment Group of South Florida \("C.E.G."\)](#)
- [Community Justice Project](#)
- [Community Reinvestment Alliance of South Florida](#)
- [Engage Miami](#)
- [Haitian American Community Development Corporation](#)
- [Miami Homes For All, Inc.](#)
- [Miami Workers Center](#)
- Mitchoun Alusma with [Man Handy Handy Man](#)
- [My Seester, Inc.](#)
- [Neighborhood Housing Services of South Florida](#)
-  [new Urban Development, LLC](#)
- [Opa-locka Community Development Corporation](#)

- PACT - People Acting for Community Together
- Social Venture Partners
- South Florida AFL-CIO
- South Florida Community Development Coalition
- South Florida Community Land Trust
- Struggle for Miami's Affordable and Sustainable Housing ("SMASH")
- The Allapattah Collaborative, CDC
- The CLEO Institute
- The New Florida Majority
- The South Florida Building and Construction Trades Council
- University of Miami Office of Civic & Community Engagement
- Urban Impact Lab
- Urban League of Greater Miami
- Urban Philanthropies, Inc.