Table of Contents

Walking Audit Overview 3

Objectives and Aims of the Walking Audit 5
   Equity and Inclusion 6
   Objectives and Aims 7

Conducting the Walking Audit and Routes 8

Team Findings and Route Level Discussion 10
   SWOT Analysis 10
   Route 1 11
   Route 2 13

Summary/Recommendations 15
   Short-Term (1-5 years) 16
   Long-Term (5-10 years) 21

Appendices 23
   A – Walking Audit Agenda 23
   B – Waking Audit Presentation 24
   C – Additional Resources 28
   D – Walking Audit Observations and Comments 30
   E – References 32
Walking Audit (WA) Overview

Apart from driving, walking is the most popular mode of transportation in the United States. However, in many cities, towns, and neighborhoods, driving is the default and oftentimes only option because walking is just too dangerous. Miami-Dade County is especially prone to this issue – it is one of the five deadliest counties in the United States for walking and bicycling. This is to the detriment of the City of Miami, a city that is naturally predisposed to be a pedestrian-friendly city. Miami has a number of advantages that make walking and bicycling naturally attractive options – namely, excellent weather for pedestrians, a relatively flat topography, and an increasing variety of booming, independent businesses and unique areas such as Overtown.

Walking audits can be extremely valuable in assessing needs in the physical, built environment toward making changes that can make streets, public spaces, and transportation options safer, more convenient, and more accessible. Such improvements have been associated with improved mental, social, and physical health, access to opportunity including employment and education, economic development, and more equitable communities.

Walking audits can serve a number of purposes, including but not limited to:
- Documenting how walkable a route is
- Identifying walking barriers and benefits in a community
- Bringing community members together to discuss problems and brainstorm solutions
- Quantifying disparities and assessing whether different neighborhoods have walking environments that differ in quality
• Determining problems that can be easily fixed
• Identifying needed improvements to be included in funding asks, plans, and projects
• Engaging elected and appointed officials around a problem and requesting change
• Capturing conditions before and after a street renovation to assess the effects of improvements
• Creating starting points for Safe Routes to School programming

Walking audits are also beneficial because they involve the residents and community in a very direct way, and provide opportunities to:

• Engage residents and stakeholders to take action to improve the physical environment of their community;
• Provide an experiential tool for community members to learn about and assess ongoing issues in their communities, particularly as they relate to the intersection of health, equity, and the built environment;
• And discuss the value and implementation of Complete Streets, what Complete Streets can look like in a specific community, and how to advocate for changes that residents and stakeholders want to see in their communities.
Objectives and Aims of the Walking Audit

A walking audit is a tool to gather information about street conditions, engage community members, and inform planning and traffic safety projects.³ Put simply, the idea behind a walking audit is for residents and stakeholders to walk a specific route, get a feel for the walkability of said route, and identify threats/barriers and opportunities to promote and facilitate walking.⁴ Perhaps the most crucial component of a walking audit is the participation of local residents – it is essential to get the perspective of people who know the area, live and/or work there, know what it is like to walk around the neighborhood, and are deeply invested in seeing improvements and success in their community. Walking Audits have been successfully conducted locally in South Florida. More recently, Little Havana has conducted a walking audit that led to the planting of trees to increase shade and the installation of transit benches to improve experience while waiting for the bus.

A walking audit is particularly beneficial for the Overtown area for several reasons. According to the 2013 Miami-Dade County Community Health Needs Assessment, the combined zip codes of 33136 (Overtown), 33127 (Buena Vista), 33128 (Downtown/East Little Havana), 33147 (Liberty City) and 33150 (Little Haiti) experienced worse-than-average rates of several metrics, including but not limited to:

- 30.8% of residents reporting that they are in fair/poor physical health
- 9.8% of residents reporting that they have been diagnosed with heart disease
- 14.5% of residents who have been told they have high blood pressure or diabetes
• 33.9% of residents who are overweight/obese
• 17.2% of residents reporting fair/poor mental health
• 14.7% of residents who reported that transportation issues hindered them from seeing a doctor in the last year

Additionally, the Community Health Needs Assessment indicates that Overtown residents are more likely on average to say that their neighborhood safety/security is fair or poor. It is apparent that the residents of Overtown are experiencing a decreased quality of life and overall health status relative to other parts of Miami. A growing body of evidence indicates that neighborhood features such as pedestrian and cyclist safety structures are positively associated with physical activity, and the lack of sidewalks is conversely associated with decreased rates of physical activity.\textsuperscript{5,6} Given the importance of neighborhood environment and pedestrian/cyclist safety for overall health status, walking audits are a cost-effective and community-centered way to identify neighborhood environment improvements to be made that can then have significant downstream impacts on the overall health and happiness of Overtown residents.

A walking audit of Overtown was conducted on November 13, 2018. The Walking Audit was an idea that aligned with a Linked and Livable Miami workshop that occurred in April 2018 with 80 Cities. It would not have been possible without the cooperation and assistance of several community partners – we gratefully acknowledge the Overtown Youth Center and the City of Miami’s Overtown Neighborhood Enhancement Team (NET) for supporting the walking audit and ensuring that it was an enjoyable and effective learning experience for residents and stakeholders alike. We also gratefully acknowledge the assistance and financial support of Allegany Franciscan Ministries’ Common Good Initiative, without which none of this would have been possible.

**Equity and Inclusion**

Growing evidence indicates that racial/ethnic and income-based disparities by neighborhood can in turn translate into disparities in neighborhood quality. Local streetscape audits such as walking audits can be an effective way to pinpoint those.\textsuperscript{7} One study found that 90% of high-income communities had good sidewalks, versus 49% of low-income communities. Walking audits can be used to quantify disparities, assessing whether different neighborhoods have walking environments that differ in quality. They can help identify inequities and lead to safer and fairer environments for all.\textsuperscript{8}

Additionally, persons with disabilities (including but not limited to elderly individuals who use walking aids such as canes; individuals in wheelchairs; individuals who utilize service animals; etc.) experience public spaces in very different ways, and their needs can oftentimes go unrecognized.\textsuperscript{9} This can result in significant danger for those persons – in one study of roundabout intersections, researchers found that persons with impaired sight waited three times longer to make a crossing than non-impaired individuals and, even after waiting, still
made more dangerous crossings on average than non-impaired individuals.\textsuperscript{10} A walking audit is an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to acquire the perspective of a person with a disability if one is present. If one is not present, it does still present an opportunity for those involved to assess the walkability of their neighborhood and consider how placement of sidewalk objects, broken sidewalks, and other potential obstacles might limit their fellow residents who deal with disabilities.

**Objectives and Aims**

The Walking Audit community workshop specifically aimed to accomplish the following objectives and generate the following results for participants:

- Develop a shared understanding of how the built environment has impacted the health and well-being of Overtown residents
- Develop a shared understanding of concerns for pedestrians, related to the safety, access, comfort, and convenience of the environment
- Experience the surrounding area as a pedestrian;
- Identify opportunities for a walkable environment
Conducting the Walking Audit and Routes

Twenty-five (25) individuals attended the workshop and participated in the walking audit. Overtown residents were among the attendees, as well as representatives from several community organizations, including City of Miami Police Department, Touching Miami with Love, Catalyst Miami, Venture Cafe, Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Common Good Initiative, Downtown Development Authority, Overtown Children & Youth Coalition, New Horizons Family Safety Net, City of Miami’s NET, and the Office of District 5 Chairman Keon Hardemon.

To begin the day, a presentation was provided to introduce participants to the concept of and objectives behind the day’s walking audit, and provide details about the assigned walking audit tool and routes. The participants separated into two teams, each of which went on one of the preselected routes. Each team had a number of different roles which were filled by the participants. The roles included:

- Walking Audit Facilitator
- Form Recorder
- Map Recorder
- Photographer
- Thermometer Recorder
- TeamObservers
- Time Keeper
The two routes are mapped out in this report and were selected to highlight different areas of Overtown according to a number of characteristics and criteria. A primary element for which the routes were chosen was pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

The 2014 Overtown/Wynwood Bicycle & Pedestrian Mobility Plan indicates several locations within Overtown that were subject to increased rates of crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists. In particular, one of the locations with the highest rates of both pedestrian- and bicyclist-related crashes is the intersection of NW 14th Street and NW 3rd Avenue, which was included in Route 1. Additionally, in terms of general density of crashes per square mile, Route 1 has multiple locations with a significantly increased bicycle and pedestrian density of crashes per square mile – in particular, NW 14th and NW 3rd, NW 14th and NW 1st, and the NW 3rd Avenue corridor more generally. Route 2 had similarly increased densities of crashes per square mile, particularly at the corner of NW 6th Street and NW 2nd Avenue, and NW 8th Street and NW 5th Avenue. All of these locations were included in the walking audit routes.

Apart from crashes, the routes were selected to highlight some of Overtown’s community assets, such as parks, schools, the library, the NET office, local businesses, and the newly established Brightline Station. Other features of Overtown’s neighborhoods that were considered in the route selection included features that impact overall neighborhood livability and walking-friendliness, such as street lighting, the presence of railroads, the 395 and 95 overpasses, green spaces, etc.

The walking audit tool was derived from the Walking Suitability Assessment Form, the CDC-HAN Environmental Audit Tool, and the CDC Built Environment Assessment Tool. It included several sections, designed to elicit not just overall impressions of the route walked, but also specific areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The first section dealt with Physical Conditions of the route, and asked respondents to consider questions such as whether the sidewalk was level or wide enough for a wheelchair or stroller; whether transit stops were clearly marked and accessible; what assets and amenities are present in the area; and whether there are aesthetically pleasant features, graffiti present, etc. The next section dealt with Social Conditions, asking respondents to consider whether there are street lights installed; what aids are present to support wayfinding in the community; whether they felt safe walking through the area, and other such features. Respondents were then asked to rate the overall level of walkability, provide additional comments and observations, and finally, highlight several strengths and weaknesses of the selected route or corridor.
Team Findings and Route Level Discussion

SWOT Analysis

After returning from the walking audit, both groups engaged in a lively discussion during the facilitated conversation and had an opportunity to debrief with workshop organizers and provide feedback on the details about their walking experiences. The full list of observations can be found in Appendix D.

The findings based on walking audit forms and compiled observations were compiled and reviewed using a SWOT analysis format. Briefly, SWOT is an acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, providing an organized and structured evaluation framework with which to approach the observations. Identification of SWOTs as a result of this project is important because it can help with the development of recommendations to improve the walkability of the routes, and identify dangers, hazards and obstacles that must be removed as soon as possible.

SWOT Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th>Characteristics of the walking route that have been identified as assets and are recommended for inspiring replication or building on successful elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weaknesses</strong></td>
<td>Characteristics of the walking route that have been identified to be detrimental to users, including both physical and social elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Aspects of the area that can be further expanded upon, including long-range planning and traffic engineering plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
<td>Obstacles to overcome that are potential detriments to implementing a successful walking route, including hazards that should be immediately resolved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Route 1**

**Strengths**

1. Local parks, such as Gibson Park and local baseball fields, and assets such as the NET Office, local small businesses, and health centers all provide important resources to the community.

2. Local community residents were engaged in socializing with each other and spending time outdoors and were interested in learning more about the audit, indicating interest in seeing neighborhood improvements.

3. Art murals and other aesthetic features were noted on the walking audit and are a welcoming element of the community.

4. There are a number of trees on NW 3rd Avenue providing shade for walking.
5. Most streets had sufficient barriers at train tracks to facilitate pedestrian and vehicular safety.

**Weaknesses**
1. Additional shade is needed throughout the area.
2. Trash cans and recycling bins are needed throughout the community.
3. Unpleasant aesthetic elements such as litter in yards or sidewalks (particularly at NW 17\textsuperscript{th} and NW 2\textsuperscript{nd}) and graffiti were present throughout.

**Opportunities**
1. Need additional features to make the community more friendly and welcoming.
2. New businesses are opening up near the neighborhood.
3. The community needs more bicycle lanes and locations to place bicycles – bicyclists are frequent but use the sidewalk, making it more difficult for pedestrians and especially those with disabilities to also use the sidewalk.
4. The relationship between local community residents and law enforcement can be improved through increased collaboration and cooperation.
5. Crosswalks can be repainted where appropriate to make them stand out more, and a crosswalk needs to be added at the intersection of NW 14\textsuperscript{th} St and NW 2\textsuperscript{nd} Ave.

**Threats**
1. Need significantly more lighting in major areas.
   a. Areas that were specifically mentioned included:
      i. NW 3\textsuperscript{rd} Avenue, from 14\textsuperscript{th} St to 17\textsuperscript{th} St
      ii. Along 17\textsuperscript{th} Street, from 3\textsuperscript{rd} Ave to 1\textsuperscript{st} Ave
      iii. NW 1\textsuperscript{st} Avenue, from 14\textsuperscript{th} St to 17\textsuperscript{th} St
      iv. Along 14\textsuperscript{th} Ave, from 1\textsuperscript{st} Ave to 3\textsuperscript{rd} Avenue
2. Need to reduce vehicle speed.
   a. Aggressive drivers were noted along the walking route
   b. NW 1\textsuperscript{st} Avenue corridor was specifically mentioned
3. The sidewalks are uneven in height at certain points and tree roots have cracked the sidewalks in some portions, making it a trip hazard for those with disabilities.
   a. The intersection of NW 3\textsuperscript{rd} Avenue and NW 14\textsuperscript{th} Street was specifically mentioned, as well as 17\textsuperscript{th} Street between 3\textsuperscript{rd} and 5\textsuperscript{th} Avenue.
4. Water and sewer manhole covers were reported as missing across from the NET office complex, representing a potential trip hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.
Route 2

Strengths
1. There are valuable community resources (such as community organizations; Reeves Park and other open spaces; basketball courts; and health centers) throughout the area.
2. The area has some pleasant aesthetic features, such as the well-maintained Lyric Theatre, local art pieces, and vegetation and trees.

Weaknesses
1. Additional shade is needed throughout the area and especially at transit stops.
2. Additional locations to rest (such as benches at bus stops) are needed throughout the area.
3. Graffiti, litter on the sidewalks, abandoned cars, broken/boarded-up windows, and other unpleasant aesthetic elements were noted on the walk.
4. Trash cans and recycling bins are needed throughout the community.
5. Abandoned construction and unfinished buildings were noted on the NW 6th St corridor near NW 1st Ct.
6. Placement of wayfinding elements was not noted on the walking audit. NW 3rd Court in particular does not have signage.

Opportunities
1. Need more street lighting along several corridors – the NW 6th Street corridor, the NW 5th Avenue corridor, and along NW 1st Court.
2. Need additional features to make the community friendlier and more welcoming, and additional support such as a NET Office may also be valuable.
3. There are very few bicyclists on the streets – bicycle lanes and racks might increase the number of cyclists in the neighborhood.

**Threats**

1. The sidewalks are uneven in many places and oftentimes have deep cracks, especially on NW 2\textsuperscript{nd} Ave. They are also fairly narrow in some locations and, even when wider, have poles and other obstacles making them difficult to navigate for persons with disabilities.
2. Features of the community helpful for persons with disabilities, such as curb ramps, were absent, and construction equipment in the road was noted, a potential safety hazard if left out for persons with disabilities.
3. Crosswalks were noted to be unsafe to cross and at times unclearly marked. Specific locations noted included:
   a. NW 10\textsuperscript{th} St and NW 5\textsuperscript{th} Ave, may be better as a four-way stop;
   b. NW 5\textsuperscript{th} Ave near NW 7\textsuperscript{th} St was noted to have bad crosswalks;
   c. NW 8\textsuperscript{th} St near NW 1\textsuperscript{st} Ct has a dangerous turn.
4. Trees and vegetation are growing into the sidewalk (such as a cactus noted near the intersection of NW 6\textsuperscript{th} St and NW 5\textsuperscript{th} Ave, or a big tree falling over near the Lyric Theatre) and present hazards for pedestrians.
5. Walking audit participants reported feeling unsafe along the route, and reported seeing hostile behavior, pockets of homeless individuals throughout the neighborhood, and open substance abuse.
Summary/Recommendations

There are many strengths of the Overtown community already present to build off of. Most importantly, the residents of the community are active and engaged in their neighborhood and eager to see improvements. Additionally, Overtown is a vibrant community full of life, with its own distinct cultural heritage, public art, and other elements to capitalize on, and with easy access to public transit and a variety of community resources, such as the City of Miami NET Office and the Overtown Youth Center.

Overall, participants felt the walking audit was a success. A post-audit evaluation survey was sent out to participants for feedback, asking them to rate a series of statements with answers from a scale of 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The average of the respondents’ answers for each question are noted below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post Walking Audit Evaluation Results</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I feel my ideas were heard in the event.”</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel my participation was important in the process.”</td>
<td>4.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The material was presented in a way that was easy to understand.”</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The meeting was planned at a convenient location.”</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“The meeting was planned at a convenient time.”</td>
<td>3.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I feel that I experienced the area as a typical pedestrian might.”</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I became aware of how the built environment can impact a community's health.”</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I became aware of barriers to a walkable/bikeable/transit-friendly”</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional comments included in the post-audit survey were positive, including feedback such as:
- “do it more often”
- “longer walking time”

Overall, it is apparent that the walking audit workshop was a positive and educational experience for all involved and provided participants with a powerful opportunity to see the streets from residents’ perspectives and generate valuable recommendations. Based on feedback from the walking audit and analysis of participants’ responses, a number of recommendations have been made below.

**Short-Term (1-5 years)**

1. **Advocate for a railroad crossing by Dorsey Park at NW 17th Street.**
   Railroad crossings, complete with passive devices such as railroad signs, gates, and flashing lights, are an effective mechanism to reduce train injuries.
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami, Brightline/FEC
   - Community Role: Residents and community partners can help highlight the issue by calling or emailing their local elected official (City of Miami Commissioner Hardemon and Miami-Dade County Commissioner Edmonson) and asking for them to work with FEC to increase the number safer railroad crossings.

2. **Advocate for a detailed construction mitigation plan to be part of the 395/SR836/I-95 Project.**
   Construction mitigation plans can help reduce the harm to small businesses and communities by public works projects, raise awareness among the community of the benefits and potential risks of said public works projects, and establish a line of communication and better relations between contractors and business owners.
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: FDOT/MDX
   - Community Role: The local business community including the CRA and residents can come together to ask more questions from FDOT about how construction will impact Overtown. Mitigation requests should be made specific to construction timing and management, transportation, economics, noise/vibration/cleanliness, and social resources and environmental justice.

3. **Build open usable space under the improved 395 Overpass.**
   In recent years, cities have begun to reclaim underpasses, turning them into public spaces. This has the double effect of reducing unpleasant aesthetic elements and spaces for illicit activities, while providing the community with a valuable resource.
4. **Make improvements at bus stops in the area.**
   Many bus stops lacked places to rest, such as benches and shade. This is both uncomfortable for residents generally and a significant disadvantage for older adults’ use of transit.
   - Potential Implementer/Funder: Overtown NET, City of Miami Public Works, Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works
   - Community Role: Residents can call 311 and report a problem at their bus stop. In addition, taking a picture and posting on social media with tags to elected officials, City of Miami, and Miami-Dade Transit can bring awareness and change to the issue.

5. **Engage residents to access local assets including parks and public spaces through tactical urbanism.**
   Tactical urbanism is a community-centric approach using short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions to catalyze long-term change. A classic tactical urbanism project is the use of wayfinding and sidewalk decals or markings to direct residents to access local assets such as parks and public spaces. This is a very cost-effective way to increase residents’ engagement with their neighborhood and community and increase utilization of public spaces overall.
   - Potential Implementer/Funder: Urban Health Partnerships, Public Space Challenge, Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Health Foundation of South Florida, KaBoom
   - Community Role: Residents and community partners can conduct tactical urbanism project on a very small scale for little or no funding. A ton of resources and ideas are available online. In addition, there are funding organizations that have interest in supporting these low cost/high impact projects. Be on the lookout for funding opportunities that community members can apply, i.e. Public Space Challenge.

6. **Install trash and recycling bins.**
   Along both routes a lack of trash and recycling bins was noted. This in turn can lead to unpleasant aesthetic elements that then turn residents away from walking or bicycling in their community.
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: Overtown NET, City of Miami Solid Waste, Miami-Dade County NEAT Streets
7. **Expand and enhance existing community assets (such as public art or open spaces).**
Connect with local community resources and assets to continue outreach to the community, further engage residents, and assist with implementation of changes to the built and social environments. This can include public art beyond just murals and redefining public space into open space.

- **Potential Lead Implementer/Funder:** City of Miami Parks Department, Miami-Dade County NEAT Streets, Overtown NET
- **Community Role:** Residents and community partners are better at knowing what space in their community needs to be redefined or what features are missing. Make sure those ideas are voiced at public meetings, to elected officials and anyone else who will listen. Social media is a great way to promote an idea and get others to help highlight the needed change.

8. **Install ADA ramps and painted crosswalks.**
Designated crosswalks are an essential element of pedestrian safety when interacting with vehicles. Several locations along the two routes could benefit from clearly designated, painted/repainted crosswalks, such as:

- NW 5th Avenue near NW 7th Street
- NW 8th Street near NW 1st Court
- NW 14th Street and NW 2nd Avenue

Additionally, ADA ramps should be installed at all intersections as required.

- **Potential Lead Implementer/Funder:** City of Miami Public Works, Overtown NET
- **Community Role:** Residents can call 311 and report a problem about an unsafe condition crossing a street, including the need for an ADA ramp. In addition, the Overtown NET office is a great resource to reach out to and ask for assistance.

9. **Continue to build relations with Miami-Dade County law enforcement.**
If Overtown is going to thrive, it is essential that local residents feel safe in their neighborhoods. Continue to build on the relationship between local residents and law enforcement, potentially by holding community events and involving law enforcement in day-to-day activities throughout the area. Additionally, the use of Community Policing practices nationally have shown positive effects.

- **Potential Lead Implementer/Funder:** Community partners, City of Miami Police, Commissioner Hardemon and Edmonson’s Office
- **Community Role:** Residents can take part in activities that help build relationships with police. Feel free to voice your opinions and concerns. A complaint about a City of Miami police officer can be provided to Miami Police Department Internal Affairs Division at (305) 835-2000.
10. **Install more trees throughout the community.**
   There are a variety of positive impacts that trees can have on a community. One of the most significant, especially in South Florida is the relief that shade provides for people walking, bicycle, or riding transit. There are other contributions that trees provide, such as helping to beautify a neighborhood, providing traffic calming, and creating a healthier environment.
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Public Works, Miami-Dade County NEAT Streets
   - Community Role: Residents can take advantage of tree giveaways that occur in the City and County to plant more trees on their property and provide shade for the surrounding area. Also, the Overtown NET and Neat Street Miami can be great partners in identify funding and location to plant more trees.

11. **Address maintenance issues.**
   Several locations along the walking routes are in need of sidewalk repairs, crosswalk repainting, the open manhole covers and landscape trimming.
   - Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Public Works, Overtown NET
   - Community Role: Residents can call 311 and report a problem about any maintenance type issues. In addition, social media can be a great platform to highlight concerns and tag partners that can help, such as City of Miami and Commissioner Hardemon.

12. **Work on improving blighted land and buildings.**
   Residents in high-vacancy neighborhoods show that it has a number of detrimental impacts. Notably, residents in such neighborhoods were more likely to perceive efforts to maintain or improve the neighborhood as futile; less likely to have good relations with other neighbors; and more likely to experience negative emotions, such as frustration over their inability to change the neighborhood, and even negative mental states such as depression.¹³
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami, Overtown CRA, Overtown NET
   - Community Role: Residents can connect with Overtown CRA, Overtown NET and Commissioner Hardemon’s office to voice concerns about deteriorated and vacant buildings. There are opportunities to fix up blighted buildings, but in some cases these pieces of land could be reused to become an asset for the neighborhood, such as a community garden or pocket park.

13. **Increase awareness of and improve connections between existing, planned and needed bike infrastructure.**
   Create dedicated, safe and separated spaces for bicyclists, such as bicycle lanes and trails along railroads and through community parks. This will facilitate increased bicycling and relieve sidewalk congestion. Increase bicycle usage by creating safe and separated spaces to ride, such as dedicated bicycle lanes, and a trail along the train tracks and through parks.
Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Public Works and Capital Improvements

Community Role: Residents and community partners interested in increasing and improving bicycling in Overtown should connect with already established bike groups in Miami. Not only are separated bike lanes important, but also multiuse trails can increase bicycling in a community, such as the proposed Heritage and Flagler Trail. In addition, it would be important to bike programming, such as Earn-A-Bike to the community youth to help teach them about maintaining a bike and bike safety.

**Long-Term (5-10 years)**

14. **Install pedestrian lighting along corridors.**
   Street lighting is an essential component of a pedestrian walkway. Without lighting, pedestrians feel unsafe and are more prone to trip hazards such as uneven sidewalks. This particularly affects persons with disabilities such as those with impaired sight who rely more strongly on ambient light. Major areas and corridors that were noted to need more street lighting included:
   - NW 6th Street corridor
   - NW 5th Avenue corridor
   - NW 1st Court corridor
   - NW 3rd Avenue, from 14th St to 17th St
   - Along 17th Street, from 3rd Ave to 1st Ave
   - NW 1st Avenue, from 14th St to 17th St
   - Along 14th Ave, from 1st Ave to 3rd Avenue
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Public Works and Capital Improvements, FDOT

15. **Revitalize vacant land and park space to include other elements that can engage the community.**
   Vacant lots and homes are associated with a number of negative outcomes for the community, ranging from increased crime to increased rates of diabetes, premature mortality, and suicide. As such, revitalization of vacant land and park space is a significant priority for community revitalization. A variety of approaches are available for repurposing vacant land and parks, including temporary urbanism (temporary use projects such as roller discos, art exhibitions, and food festivals – these often have lasting benefits by promoting further use of the land), greening (urban gardening, honey farms, etc.)14,15, and developing new businesses and restaurants.
   - Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Parks Department, Overtown CRA, Overtown NET
16. **Make first and last mile improvements to the Metrorail station and the new Brightline station.**

The first mile/last mile problem in transit occurs when homes and transit destinations are too far away to comfortably walk to transit stops, and additionally, when gaps in the sidewalk network, lack of crosswalks, or absence of bicycle lanes make reaching public transportation difficult or unsafe. Shoring up the sidewalk network and making it safer to walk to and from transit will be valuable for increasing usage of public transit. Additional options for first/last mile improvements include repositioning or adding additional transit routes, and expanding the trolley system already present in Miami to cover a greater area, reducing the amount of distance pedestrians have to cover to effectively and comfortably use transit.

- Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Capital Improvement, Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization, Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works

17. **Create better housing options.**

Based on the walking audit, conversations with local residents, and stakeholder expertise, Overtown could benefit from increased diversity of housing options, particularly for transitional and workforce housing. Increased efforts to promote housing option diversity within Overtown would in turn be well-rewarded. When working households, retirees, and others have options for housing and can sustainably afford their housing options, they in turn are more invested in their community and have more time, money, and energy to put locally toward their neighborhood.

- Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: Overtown CRA, Overtown NET, Commissioner Hardemon and Edmonson

18. **Revitalize historic buildings.**

There are plenty of older buildings that are a part of Overtown’s cultural legacy. Revitalization of these properties, specifically the smaller-scale buildings, would preserve cultural heritage and further develop the neighborhood’s unique characteristics. Additionally, renovation and preservation of these historic elements would give the neighborhood a distinct and pleasant aesthetic. All of these would in turn add to the pedestrian friendliness and sensibility of the neighborhood in a cost-effective way.

- Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami, Overtown CRA, Commissioner Hardemon and Edmonson, Dade Heritage Trust

19. **Promote economic development and support local small businesses.**

There is a strong interconnection between neighborhood walkability and economic development. More walkable streets have been found to be more economically productive, both in terms of tax revenues and home and property values. Likewise, residents of neighborhoods with a central core of shops and services walk nearly three times more often than residents of neighborhoods where shops and services are exclusively located along arterial roadways, and that the number of businesses per acre
is a robust indicator of how likely people are to walk in their neighborhood, indicating the importance of economic development and local businesses for neighborhood walkability.  

- Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: Overtown CRA, Overtown NET, Commissioner Hardemon and Edmonson

20. **Implement more Complete Streets and traffic-calming techniques.**

Utilize traffic-calming measures along the NW 1st Avenue corridor and elsewhere as necessary. There are various options for traffic-calming measures, and the most effective option depends on a number of street characteristics (average speed; whether it is a major corridor; whether emergency services utilize the street; etc.). Some potential options may include converting one of the intersections to a roundabout or mini-roundabout; implementing a road diet to narrow or eliminate one of the lanes; allocating some of the paved space in the corridor to parking spaces; and clearly demarcated raised crosswalks, to name a few. By and large, traffic-calming measures have been shown to be a cost-effective way to decrease average corridor speeds and crash risk, while increasing pedestrian safety. A fuller listing of traffic-calming measures can be found in Appendix C.

- Potential Lead Implementer/Funder: City of Miami Public Works and Capital Improvement, FDOT, Miami-Dade Transportation Planning Organization, Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works
# Appendix A: Walking Audit Agenda

## OVERTOWN WALKING AUDIT

November 13, 2018 from 4:30 pm – 6:30 pm  
Overtown Youth Center, 450 NW 14th St, Miami, FL 33136

### AGENDA

#### Walking Audit Results:
- Shared understanding of how the built environment has impacted the health and well-being of Overtown residents
- Shared understanding of concerns for pedestrians, related to the safety, access, comfort, and convenience of the environment
- Experience surrounding area as a pedestrian and identify opportunities for a walkable environment
- Identify barriers to a walkable/bikeable/transit friendly environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Welcome and Overview</td>
<td>4:30 pm – 4:40 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. History of Overtown</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Health of community</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>II. Impacts of the Built Environment</td>
<td>4:40 pm – 4:50 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Benefits of an improved built environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Complete Streets elements</td>
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<tr>
<td>III. The Details of a Walking Audit</td>
<td>4:50 pm – 5:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Walking routes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Elements of the route</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Observations and tools</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IV. Conduct Walking Audit</td>
<td>5:00 pm – 6:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>V. Compile Input</td>
<td>6:00 pm – 6:20 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>a. Physical conditions of corridor</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. Social conditions of corridor</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Level of Walkability</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d. Additional Observations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Close-out</td>
<td>6:20 pm – 6:30 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Next steps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Walking Audit Presentation

OVERVIEW

Agenda
- Walking Audit Results
  - Shared understanding of how the built environment has impacted the health and well-being of Overtown residents
  - Shared understanding of concerns for pedestrians, related to the safety, access, comfort, and convenience of the environment
  - Experience the surrounding area as a pedestrian and identify opportunities for a walkable environment
- Identify barriers to a walkable/bikeable/transit friendly environment

LINKED AND LIVEABLE

Overtown Immersion Workshop
- Public Space
- Services
- Safety

OVERVIEW

- 1890s - Neighborhood was formed when residents were hired to construct railroad
- 1920s - Vibrant area with schools, churches, and bustling business district
- 1940s - SR 836/I-395 and I-95 were constructed, bisecting the area
- 1970s - Area had the lowest per capita income and the highest poverty rates in Miami
In the 2016 Dangerous by Design Report, developed by Smart Growth America, it states that, "People of color and older adults are overrepresented in pedestrian fatalities. For example, non-white individuals account for 34.9 percent of the national population but make up 46.1 percent of pedestrian deaths."

Source: Overtown/Wynwood Mobility Plan 2014

Social Determinants of Health

Neighborhood and Built Environment

Parks/Open Space

Trees

Complete Streets

Improved Sidewalks

More Bike Lanes

Access to Transportation

Existing Conditions in Overtown

City of Miami Capital Improvement and Transportation Program

Source: Overtown/Wynwood Mobility Plan 2014

Source: City of Miami CITP
WALKING AUDIT

A walking audit is an assessment of the walkability or pedestrian access of the built environment in a community. It helps to identify concerns for pedestrians related to safety, access, comfort, and convenience of the environment.

COMMUNITY VOICE

WALKING ROUTE 1

WALKING ROUTE 2

WALKING ROUTE ELEMENTS
WALKING ROUTE TOOLS
- Walking Audit Form
- Map
- Thermometer
- Team Observers

WALKING ROUTE TEAM ROLES
- Walking Audit Facilitator
- Form Recorder
- Map Recorder
- Photographer
- Thermometer Recorder
- Team Observers
- Time Keeper

(make sure to be looping back by 5:45 pm)

WALKING ROUTE OBSERVATIONS
- Look at the physical conditions of the corridor
- Are there poorly maintained sidewalk sections?
- Look at the social conditions of the corridor
- Are other people visible? What are they doing?
- Review the level of walkability
- Note observations on the map
- Take the temperature of the pavement with and without shade

SEPARATE INTO WALKING AUDIT GROUPS
- Separate into 4 groups
- Choose a role for each person
- 2 groups to take shuttle to start of route
- Always remember to be safe!!

WELCOME BACK
- Complete walking audit form
- Discuss level of walkability and additional observations
- Make notes on large map
- Present back to group

NEXT STEPS
- Compile team observations
- Develop recommendations
- Identify agencies and stakeholders to help implement
Appendix C: Additional Resources

2. The Overtown Greenprint Plan – An initiative to improve the physical, social, and economic quality of life for Overtown residents:
   http://www.miamicra.com/seopwcra/docs/overtown_greenprint_plan1002.pdf
3. 2013 PRC Miami-Dade County Community Health Needs Assessment – Household Survey Report:
   http://assets.thehcn.net/content/sites/miamidade/2013_PRC_Miami_Dade_County_CHNA_Report.pdf
4. For measures and treatments to improve pedestrian safety and mobility:
   http://www.pedbikesafe.org/pedsafe/index.cfm
5. Case studies on revitalization of vacant properties:
   http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.188.9674&rep=rep1&type=pdf
6. Case studies and examples of transforming underpasses into vibrant public spaces:
8. Case studies for promotion of housing diversity:
   http://www.healthyactivebydesign.com.au/design-features/housing-diversity
9. Resources for promoting revitalization of historic buildings:
   a. Smart Growth America, “(Re)Building Downtown: A Guidebook for Revitalization” –
   b. “Creative Uses for Downtown Buildings in Small Towns” –
   c. “Historic District Revitalization Strategies” –
10. Resources for promoting better relations between residents and law enforcement:
    a. “Importance of Police-Community Relationships and Resources for Further Reading” –
       https://www.justice.gov/crs/file/836486/download
    b. National League of Cities, “Building Trust Between Police and the Communities They Serve” –
    c. “Building Trust in Law Enforcement Through Service” –
       https://www.firescience.org/building-trust-in-law-enforcement/
d. Everyday Democracy, “Protecting Communities, Serving the Public” – https://www.everyday-democracy.org/resources/protecting-communities-serving-public#.U_u2wmNW7Zg

11. Resources for promoting tactical urbanism:


15. For resources on traffic-calming measures:
   a. Institute of Transportation Engineers – https://www.ite.org/technical-resources/traffic-calming/traffic-calming-measures/
   b. Project for Public Spaces – https://www.pps.org/article/livememtraffic
Appendix D: Walking Audit Observations and Comments

**Route 1 Additional Comments**
- “Power lines obstructed by trees”
- “Lots of dumping”
- “More mixed-income affordable housing”
- “Pedestrian overpass for train tracks”
- “Historic preservation”
- “14th-17th street (north) 3rd ave, 17th street (3rd ave to 1st ave), 17th-14th (1st ave south), (14th, 1st ave to 3rd) – Brighter lighting is needed”
- “LED lighting overhaul”
- “Roadway improvements”
- “Façade”

**Route 1 Strengths**
- “Well-lit, sidewalks for wheelchairs”
- “Lots of trees on 3rd Ave”
- “murals”
- “Most streets had sufficient barriers at train tracks”
- “Great conversations, people curious about audit”
- “New biz that is only a railroad crossing away”
- “Most have good relationship with law enforcement”

**Route 1 Weaknesses and Changes**
- “More lighting in certain areas”
- “lighting”
- “Traffic signage”
- “Development of underpath”
- “More trash cans and recycling for the public”
- “Clogged drains”
- “Dumping!”
- “More transitional/workforce housing”
- “More shade at bus stops”
- “More events to build relations btwn police and residents”

**Route 2 Additional Comments and Observations**
- “narrow streets, non finished buildings”
- “NW 2 av better sidewalks, 3 av less lights need more”
- “Totem poles (Reeves Park)”
- “Spider webs”
• “No official biker lane”
• “Homeless areas”
• “Trolley”
• “art on crosswalk”
• “poo on sidewalk”
• “Construction in the road”
• “Split tree”
• “Busy section”
• “Unsafe crosswalk (cars still coming)”
• “Cactus growing through gate”
Appendix E - References

2. Linked and Livable Miami Summary Report. 8 80 Cities.