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## Message from our Director



Dr. Howard A. Frank  
Professor and Chair of Public Administration  
Director, Metropolitan Center  
Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting & Financial Management, FIU

America is often characterized as a nation of problem solvers. Whether it's inhabiting the wilderness, splitting the atom, integrating major league baseball, or landing on the moon, America prides itself on rolling up sleeves and tackling the issues. Over the last 18 years, the Metropolitan Center has been improving the quality of life in South Florida through applied social science problem solving. Decision-makers from the public, nonprofit, and private sectors come to us for answers to tough problems.

How can local governments encourage development of workforce housing?

How can neighborhoods be revitalized in equitable, sustainable ways?

How can workforce skills be upgraded through timely, cost-effective training?

How can organizations learn to act strategically and build workable performance metrics?

Providing answers to these and other policy questions is a significant undertaking for which off-the-shelf answers seldom exist. On the contrary, our policy answers are tailored with state-of-the-art, interdisciplinary methods and tools. Our domicile at FIU affords enormous intellectual bench strength across a variety of disciplines. Our commitment to nonpartisan, best-practice research builds trust in the community and facilitates solutions to complex public policy problems.

In addition to solving tough problems, the Metropolitan Center adds value to the community by training the next generation of problem solvers. This year, the Center provided assistantships to graduate students from Public Administration and Global Governance. Involving students in critical research problems hones their textbook training in real-world settings. More importantly, this intellectual residency will make these students better decision-makers as they move on to leadership roles in their careers.

During the past year, the MC was involved with over 20 projects and training sessions. Focus projects included:

**The Washington Mandela Fellows/Young African Leadership Initiative:** For the second year, Metropolitan Center provided 25 visitors from Africa with six weeks of public management training designed and delivered by Center experts and FIU Faculty. I served as Academic Advisor for the project. My Center colleague, Dr. Maria Ilcheva, was one of four mentors for the Fellows. This innovative training, funded by the U.S. Department of State, has received high grades from participants and outside evaluators.

**Progress and Unmet Challenges:** We prepared an update of the 2005 *Brookings* report on the Haitian community in Miami-Dade County. The report commissioned by the *Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center*, offers a detailed statistical look at the ups, downs and challenges experienced by the community between the years 2000 and 2013, and serves as updated source material for policy makers, community organizations, and community leaders.

The **City of Fort Lauderdale Affordable Housing and Economic Analysis** provides a current market perspective on the key demand and supply factors impacting the production and availability of affordable housing in the City of Fort Lauderdale and its neighborhood areas. An understanding of the shifting demands for housing is critical for the creation of effective housing policies and strategies.

We also joined forces with the University of Miami's Office of Civic and Community Engagement in forming the ***South Florida Housing Studies Consortium (SFHSC)*** to further research and develop data-driven strategies that promote affordable housing for low and moderate-income residents and young professionals who have been forced to move away from expensive employment centers.

This report conveys only a small part of Center research and training in 2015. Meanwhile, the Great Recession's aftermath of stagnating wages and downsized public and nonprofit agencies has left a myriad of economic development and organizational development issues ripe for Center research and training. Our research skills and training repertoire will be put to use for solving problems and building organizations in South Florida and beyond. Visit our [website](#) and connect with us on [Facebook](#) to keep up with Center developments.

Sincerely,

Dr. Howard A. Frank, Director

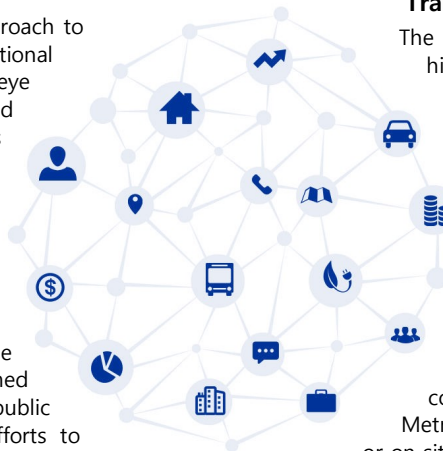
## Core Areas

### Economic and Housing Market Analysis:

The Metropolitan Center employs a holistic approach to economic development that integrates traditional concerns for economic base expansion with an eye to affordable housing, human capital and organizational capacity. Our research links critical indicators that connect jobs, transportation, land use, affordable housing and environmental resiliency.

### Survey and Opinion Research

The Metropolitan Center conducts quantitative and qualitative public opinion research, including surveys, focus groups, one-on-one interviews and mystery shops. These services aimed to provide a better understanding of general public policy issues and to assist our partners in efforts to improve customer service and satisfaction.



### Training and Organizational Development:

The Training Institute is committed to providing high quality training programs at reasonable cost to state agencies, local government, non-profit organizations and business enterprises in South Florida. For the past two years, the Metropolitan Center has provided training to many agencies and municipalities locally over the past ten years in topics as diverse as essential customer service skills to creating organizational performance measures. Training programs are customized to the specific needs of the client and are conducted either at the training facilities at the Metropolitan Center location in downtown Miami or on site for the sponsoring agency.

# Project Review

## Economic Development Research

Concern in recent years with preserving and enhancing "quality of life" has stimulated the development of indicators beyond the traditional community and economic indicators to try to measure a broader and more holistic concept of quality of life. The overarching goal of FIU Metropolitan Center's economic studies is to identify the factors and issues most critical to creating and maintaining a sustainable local economy and establishing the important linkages that can effectively gauge a community's progress in attaining desired outcomes.



### The State of the Industrial Market in Miami-Dade County

The Commercial Industrial Association of South Florida (CIASF) contracted the Metropolitan Center to provide an objective overview of the market and explore the impact of various capital improvement and infrastructure projects on warehouse occupancy. The first major project with the potential to affect the logistics sector and industrial real estate market is the expansion of the Panama Canal due to be completed in 2016. The Metropolitan Center designed a scope of services for the research and analysis of the impact of these projects on the logistics sector and commercial real estate market.

Progress and Unmet Challenges:  
Sant La's Profile of The Haitian Community  
of Miami-Dade, 2010-2015



### Progress and Unmet Challenges: Sant La's Profile of The Haitian Community of Miami-Dade, 2010-2015

The Haitian population in Miami-Dade County has experienced significant changes across a number of areas in the 2000 to 2013 study timeframe. The present report provides a statistical view of how the community is progressing on various issues. The resulting profile and various trends are intended to serve as a resource to planners, community groups and other policy- and decision-makers. The study encompasses the following topics: households, education, financial stability, healthcare, transportation and vulnerabilities.

### Hallandale Beach Community Redevelopment Agency Strategic Planning Retreat

The objective of the Strategic Planning Session was to provide an informed decision making process which 1) provided an external perspective on new trends, opportunities, and issues facing Hallandale Beach, and; 2) provided a vehicle to sharpen and clarify the CRA's goals and strategies to improve the Agency's overall effectiveness and responsiveness to its constituents.

- Miami-Dade County Prosperity Initiatives Feasibility Study
- Liberty City Economic Analysis and Opportunities Report
- Miami Dade Annexation and Feasibility Study
- Miami Dade Advocacy Trust Annual Report
- Deerfield Beach Citywide Economic Development Strategy

More information: [metropolitan.fiu.edu/economicdevelopment](http://metropolitan.fiu.edu/economicdevelopment)

# Project Review

## Housing Market Research



The need to preserve and create an adequate supply of workforce affordable housing is a growing community and economic development challenge in all of South Florida. Since 2004 the FIU Metropolitan Center has been a principal player in the South Florida Region with its ongoing participation with private/public partnerships and city governments concerning the needs and demand of housing. The methodology used by the FIU Metropolitan Center in the research and preparation of multiple housing needs assessment was to assess current market data and conditions to determine changes in existing and future housing demand with an emphasis on working households in each income category.

### City of Fort Lauderdale Affordable Housing and Economic Analysis

The City-funded study was prepared to assist the City with creating an affordable housing policy. The study centered on understanding how housing choice and opportunity, the local economy and transportation costs all play a role in determining housing affordability in Fort Lauderdale. The study provides several layers of population, economic and housing analysis based on population trends, employment and housing supply and demand. The study was conducted in two parts, including a City-wide analysis with Broward County comparisons followed by a two-phase neighborhood analysis that identified areas where there exists the greatest affordable housing need in the City.



### City of Marathon Workforce/Affordable Housing Assessment & Action Study

The City-funded study provides an assessment of current housing market conditions and an action plan for addressing the City of Marathon's short and long term workforce housing needs. The study addressed the growing concerns of Marathon citizens who believe there is a critical need for affordable housing and the cost of housing has risen to such a degree that individuals and families making low- to moderate-incomes are not able to purchase homes or even find a place to rent at an affordable rate. The Study concluded that the shortage of workforce housing is having a deleterious impact on the Island's economy.



### Broward County Housing Linkage Fee Nexus Study Update

The County-funded housing linkage fee nexus study provides an update to a 2007 study prepared on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners, Broward County by the FIU Metropolitan Center. The study update focused on a "Microeconomic Jobs Housing Analysis" and a "Total Housing Nexus Costs Analysis" to determine whether there exists a reasonable connection (linkage) between the construction of large commercial buildings in the County and the demand for housing by the new employees. The analysis found a substantial relationship or linkage between new workplace buildings and the estimated number of worker households by income category that will be employed and calculated the total nexus cost of producing various housing types at an affordable price level according to category of household income.

## Forthcoming Projects

- Liberty City Economic and Market Analysis

More information: [metropolitan.fiu.edu/housing](http://metropolitan.fiu.edu/housing)

# Project Review

## Survey and Opinion Research

Government agencies, nonprofit organizations and businesses alike rely on an understanding of the needs, perceptions and attitudes of their customers. The most reliable and efficient way for customer-oriented organizations to gain knowledge about their audience is to go directly to the source. Surveys, personal interviews and focus groups conducted by an impartial and trustworthy organization with expertise in applied research guarantee that the information will be statistically sound, action-oriented and insightful.



### Quality Assurance Shops: 211 Switchboard/the Children's Trust Helpline

The assessments simulate real-time customer experience by presenting the 211 call agents with inquiries and scenarios which they are likely to encounter in their daily work at the Switchboard. Each annual assessment examines the referral services provided by Switchboard of Miami across key issues influencing service satisfaction. The FIU/MC collaborated with 211 Switchboard and Children's Trust staff in designing an evaluation instrument which covers basic customer service requirements as well as specific standards established by the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems. Each month the research team conducted 50 calls, placing two calls



### Miami-Dade County IT Employee Survey

This report examines ITD employee satisfaction in 2015, and compares the results to the 2013 round of surveys. The Metropolitan Center's management of all data collection activities ensured that ITD's employees would provide genuine responses to sensitive questions without concern for negative career effects. The survey included questions in four category groups: talent/skill utilization, workplace environment, supervisor/ management team satisfaction and overall ITD satisfaction. All employees were provided a copy of the questionnaire via email and were asked to complete it within the survey timeframe.

### Florida Hurricane Mitigation

The 2015 Hurricane Mitigation Study Report focuses on the issue of hurricane insurance. The report examines the hurricane risk estimates, loss prevention, and insurance regulations and enforcement. Additionally, the report includes the results of the annual hurricane mitigation poll which showed that the majority of Floridians (78%) have experienced tropical storm or hurricane and have a plan what to do. The survey also asked if respondents believed sea level rise is happening and if they will be affected. Approximately a third do not believe sea level rise is happening, and 18.4% do not know.

## Forthcoming Projects

- Miami-Dade Transit Department Employee Survey
- Florida Hurricane Mitigation and Preparedness 2016 Study
- Assessment of Service Delivery for People with Developmental Disability
- Deerfield Beach Resident Survey

More information: [metropolitan.fiu.edu/surveys](http://metropolitan.fiu.edu/surveys)

# Project Review

## Training Programs

The Metropolitan Center at Florida International University (FIU) promotes good governance practices through training programs, technical assistance and applied research to state and local governments, along with helping employees develop their potential and enhance the professional and leadership skills that support their success and career development. The customized training programs are tailored to meet the specific organizational needs of local governments, nonprofits and business enterprises.



### Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) 2015

The Metropolitan Center hosted this selected group of students in June 2015. With Dr. Frank's leadership, the Center developed the curriculum for the program, which included lectures from the [Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs](#), the [School of Environment, Arts and Society](#), and the [African and African Diaspora Studies Program](#). Moreover, this year the Metropolitan Center added one more optional workshop about Open Street Maps. Thanks to the great development and success of the program, FIU was selected to host the 2016 group this following summer.

### 2015 Transportation Summit

The Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust (CITT), in conjunction with Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez, the Board of County Commissioners, the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and the Miami-Dade County League of Cities, presented the 2015 Transportation Summit: Advancing the Community's Vision for Public Transportation.

This Summit followed a very successful 2013 Summit the goal of which was to stimulate discussion of the next major transportation projects in the community and focus on the future of public transportation in Miami-Dade County. The 2015 Summit sought to continue to build support for additional major transportation improvements. It marked the next step in the process of engaging the public and other stakeholders in charting the course of local transportation development.

Discussions among more than 500 participants at the Summit demonstrated widespread demand and support for increased investment in mass transportation throughout Miami-Dade County. The Metropolitan Center prepared the [Report on Proceedings](#). We are currently planning for the 2017 Transportation Summit.



### Grant Writing Certification Program

This detailed training presents an in-depth explanation of the grant development process from start to finish.

The workshop format features both lecture sessions and group activities. Participants attend several group sessions enabling them to meet and interact with others who have similar interests and needs. To receive certification, upon completion, participants are required to successfully complete an exam.

This seminar addresses both practical and conceptual aspects that are important to the proposal-writing process.

## Forthcoming Programs

- Apr. 18&19: Performance Measurement and Balance Score-Carding
- Apr. 20: Finding Solutions through Data Visualization and GIS: Visualizing Information Interactively

More information: [metropolitan.fiu.edu/trainings](http://metropolitan.fiu.edu/trainings)

# Event Review:

## Upcoming Events :

### May 22: Fifth Annual State of the South Florida Economy MetroForum

April 18 & 19: Performance Measurement and Balance Score-Carding: From Performance Measurement to Strategic Management.

April 20: Finding Solutions through Data Visualization and GIS: Visualizing Information Interactively.

April 25 & 26: Records Management Certification Program: The Business and Legal Benefits of Establishing Records.

April 27: Technical Writing: Writing Made Easy: The Secrets of Successful Technical Writing.

May 10 & 11: Public Speaking and Presentation Skills: High Impact Presentations.

May 25: Preventing and Handling Workplace Violence: Tips, Tidbits & Tactics: Evading Hostility in the Workplace.

## Attended Events :

June 6: State of the Map Conference at the United Nations.

Aug. 12: Florida League of Cities Summer Research Symposium

Sep. 9: Florida American Planning Association Conference

Sep. 17: Annual Networking Expo, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce

Oct. 2: American Bar Association (ABA) Commission on Homelessness & Poverty's Anti-Poverty Roundtable

Oct. 5: Measuring What Counts: Harnessing Data to Improve Miami's Communities

Oct 8: South Florida GIS expo at Palm Beach 2015

Oct. 14: Palm Beach County Planning Congress: Planning Challenges

## Hosted Events:

Jan. 22: CITT Transportation Summit 2015

Feb. 24: 4th Annual State of the South Florida Economy MetroForum

Apr. 1-16: Grant Writing Workshop: 101 & 201

Jun. 24: Hurricane Resilience, Vulnerability and Risk Awareness Forum

Aug. 26: Local Economic Development Course (LED)

For more information: [metropolitan.fiu.edu/events](http://metropolitan.fiu.edu/events)



# Periodic Publications

## Economic Currents

*Economic Currents* provides an overview of the South Florida regional economy. The report presents current employment, economic and real estate market data using key indicators to measure growth and stability in the regional economy. Local governments, businesses and community-based organizations can use the economic indicators to establish benchmarks, prioritize resources, target markets and apply for funding. This report focuses on measurable indicators for five drivers of economic sustainability – employment and economic growth, household purchasing power, residential real estate stability and commercial/office market activity.

Volume 5, Issue 1

Volume 5, Issue 2

## The Center in the News

Click the image to access the articles

