



MDEAT

**MIAMI-DADE
ECONOMIC ADVOCACY TRUST**

Working Together for Economic Prosperity



Miami Dade Economic Advocacy Trust
“Understanding Inequalities... Discovering Opportunities”
(Assessing the Disparities that we know exist)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

10 Year Update - DISPARITY STUDY

September, 2023



Prepared by:
**CMA Enterprise Incorporated in partnership with
E.L. Waters and Company LLC**



Table of Contents

	<u>Exhibits</u>	<u>Pages</u>
Acknowledgement		3
Introduction		4
Who is Miami Dade Economic Advocacy (MDEAT)?		5
TUA Communities in Miami Dade County	Exhibit 1	6
Historical Perspectives of Black Miami		7
• Historical Timeline	Exhibit 2	8
Executive Summary		12
Engagement Background Information		15
• Engagement Workplan		
Summary of Community Feedback		17
Summary of TUA Site Reviews		28
Summary of Findings and Consultants' Recommendations		40

A special thanks to the Business and Community Leaders and Representatives of Miami Dade County for your historical perspectives.

Acknowledgements

On behalf of the Miami Dade Economic Advocacy Trust, thank you for your commitment to building a better quality of life in Targeted Urban Areas.

A special thanks to...

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INTRODUCTION

The modern day chapter of this continuing saga started with “Perfect Storm” on May 17, 1980 when Arthur McDuffie was beaten to death by four (4) Caucasian Police Officers. The subsequent chain of events which lasted three (3) days and resulted in 18 dead, businesses decimated, never to be reopened and neighborhoods forever damaged. The damage was estimated at \$100 million. Israel Aragon Bravo, an alumnus of the University of Miami and writer composed an op ed for the Sun Sentinel (May 25, 2022, page 21) entitled “*42 years after the McDuffie Riots, disparities,*” provides an excellent synopsis of how far the Black communities of Overtown, Liberty City and Brownsville have come since that date. The article summarized “how far these communities have come since this fateful day. The answer is short... Not very far. As Mr. Bravo notes, “While Miami grew, the predominantly Black neighborhoods of Overtown, Liberty City and others were stagnant.”

Mr. Bravo notes that 1980 showed tremendous economic growth for Miami Dade but this growth proved detrimental to the Black Communities, who saw urban sprawl shrink their communities in the expansion of I95 expressway and extensions through neighborhoods. Downtown and skyscrapers replaced residential apartments and homes... communities once claimed by Black residents and businesses. And according to the Census, Black unemployment was 9.5%, double the county rate. And the growing Cuban population was gaining political and economic traction while the Black Communities were more disenfranchised.

Mr. Bravo likewise noted that the comparisons of 1980 and today’s environment “should be distressing for us all.” The author closes his comments by issuing a challenge of sorts that “...there is still much work that needs to be done for our long-forsaken communities.”

Study Overview ...The Mandate

Miami-Dade County (the “County”), as represented by the Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT), engaged the services of a consultant to conduct a disparity study for further submission to the Board of County Commissioners.

County Code of Ordinances, Article XLVIII, Section 2-506(f) dictates “The Trust shall conduct a disparity study that examines the present economic conditions of Blacks in Miami-Dade County. This study shall be conducted every ten (10) years and submitted to the Board”.

Who is
MDEAT?

MDEAT’s approach to Community and Economic Development is structured to address reducing the disparities Targeted Urban Areas, specifically Black and Black diaspora Communities in Miami Dade. The categories include...

- Employment
- Safety
- Education
- Sustainability/Equality (Business Creation and Growth)
- Entrepreneurship
- Access and Opportunity
- Economic Justice
- Reciprocal Benefit of tax incentives
- Tax Base development/enhancement
- Healthcare and Wellness
- Youth Development and Retention

Miami Dade County (MDC) Target Urban Areas (TUAs) & TUA Corridors

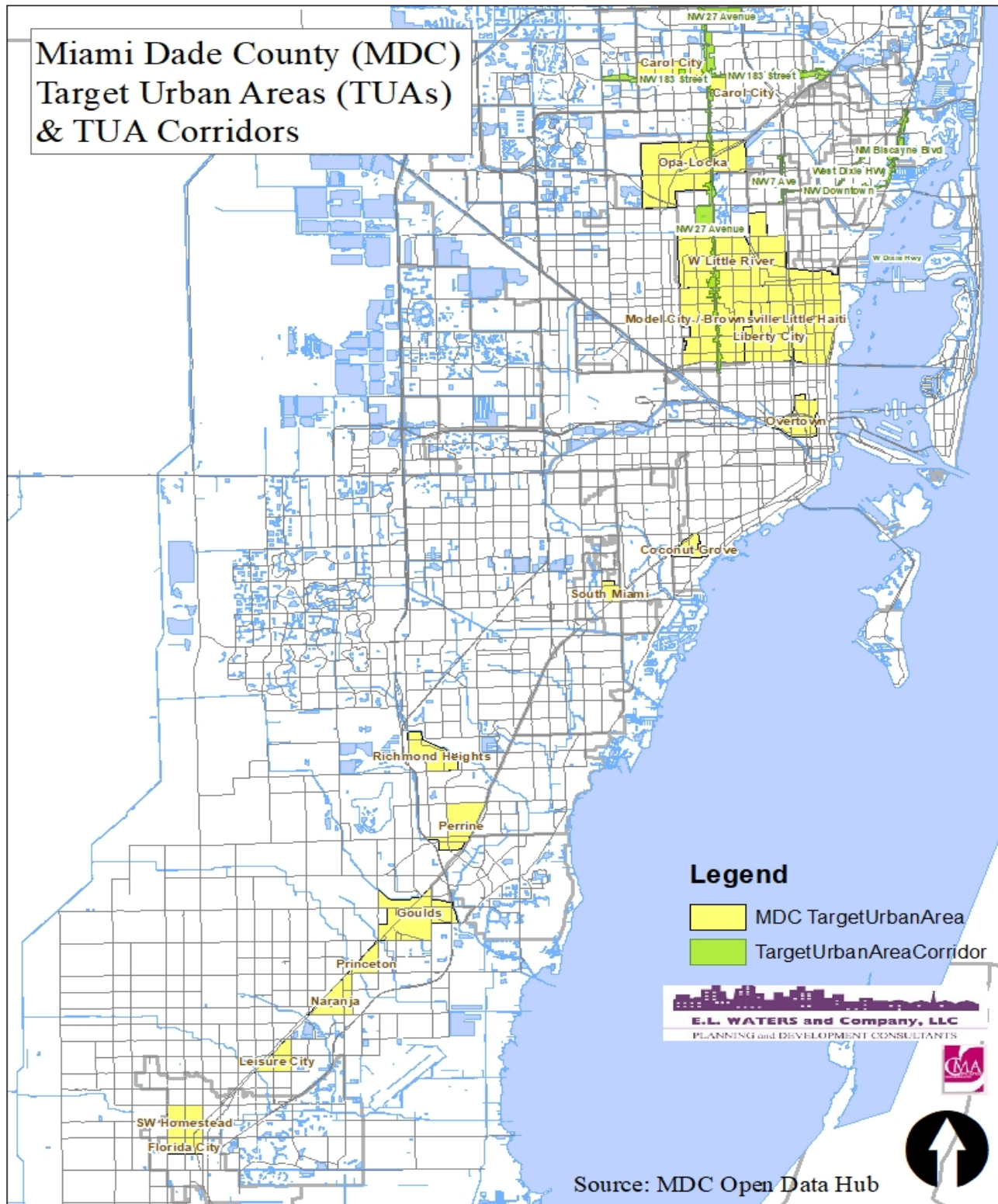


Exhibit 1 - TUA Communities and Corridors

HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF Miami Dade's Black Community

Ronald Frazier, Retired Architect/Urban Planner and Chairman of the BAC Funding Corporation raised the thought of making sure that we know from whence we've come so that we truly can move forward to mitigate. An excerpt of the timeline created by Mr. Frazier in his questionnaire is provided for the reader's benefit.

Mr. Frazier's response to the CMA/ELW Team was truly a history lesson of events and the "Cast of Distinguished Characters" who played a role in assuring that the Black Communities of Miami Dade thrived in spite of the challenges, restrictions and abuse endured. The history lesson lays the foundation of the journey to build a level playing field for Blacks in Miami Dade County. And the message received is we need to understand our history before we can strategize our future. Specifically, the "rules of engagement" that were established by the founding business and community leaders of Miami Dade.

Examples of key Black Community Pioneers included in Mr. Frazier's narrative...

Black Pioneers and Community Leaders

Dana Albert ("DA") Dorsey

Once owned Fisher Island; Real Estate developer; First African American millionaire in Florida

Alexander C. Lightbourne, Sr.

Instrumental in helping to achieve the incorporation of the City of Miami and Overtown; represented Dade County at 1896 State Republican convention; a founder of Greater Bethel A.M.E. Church

Modern day champions noted by Mr. Frazier who facilitated progress and coalitions for Blacks in the City of Miami and Miami Dade included but are not limited to...

Athalie Range

Bernard McGriff

Joseph Caleb

Eufala Frazier

Neil Adams

Bernie Dyer

Carrie Meek

Mrs. Dillard

Horace Morris

Israel Milton

Dewey Knight

Howard Gary

The excerpts of Mr. Frazier's response are included with his permissions granted.

Historical view of Black Miami Advocacy

The diagram below reflects some of the key milestones in the history of Miami and its impact on Black Community and Economic development by the region's founders. Additional details on the history of Black Miami follow this diagram.

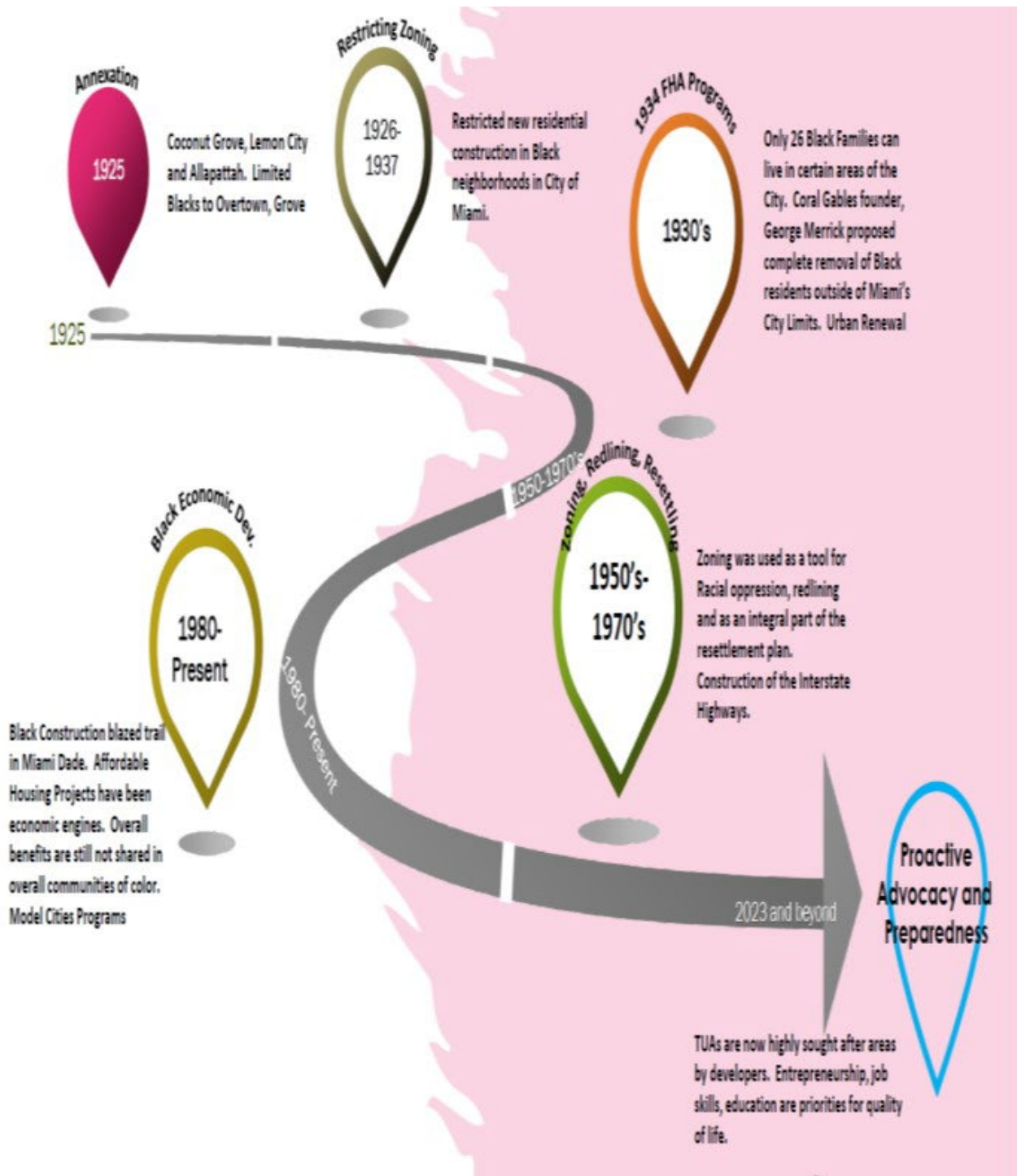


Exhibit 2 Referenced from Historical Summary prepared by Ronald Frazier, retired Architect

HISTORICAL TIMELINE OF Miami Dade's Black Community

	<u>Events</u>	<u>Results</u>
1925	<i>Annexation of (3) White Settlements (Coconut Grove, Lemon City and Allapattah)</i>	Established Greater Miami. Limited Blacks to Overtown, Brownsville and the West Grove (Black Grove).
1926	<i>Restrictive Zoning Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co.</i>	Supreme Court ruled in favor of Euclid stating that zoning regulations were justified use of governmental power to restrict land use in the Black neighborhoods. City of Miami circumvented the ruling by designating Overtown as "Industrial" in the 1920s. This aided in restricting new residential construction in the area and preserve the "color line." Thus enforcing racial segregation through land use regulations without directly instating racial separation into law.
1935	<i>Security Maps - Redlining</i>	and the ultimate destruction of
1937	<i>Negro Resettlement Plan</i>	Overtown, Brownsville and Liberty City.
1980s to 2020	<i>Lessons from Model Cities Program</i>	Communities, but no spinoff of economic benefits. Rentals and affordable housing project were owned and managed by outsiders.
1900-1960	<i>Jim Crow Era, The Impact of Zoning, Redlining and The Negro Resettling Plan</i>	Accompanied by violence from whites, Black Schools vandalized/destroyed, Black citizens attached, tortured, and lynched. Zoning used as a tool for Racial Oppression, Redlining and the resettlement Plan prohibited growth in the Black Grove and Overtown as a result of political governmental policies.
1930s	<i>1934 Federal Housing Administration (FHA)</i>	In 1930's Miami, only 26 Blacks could only live in certain pockets of the city. The restrictions also triggered the Dade Planning Board and Coral Gables founder, George Merrick to propose the complete removal of Black residents outside of Miami's city limits.

	<u>Events</u>	<u>Results</u>
1880-1920	<i>The White Coconut Grove/The West Grove (a.k.a Black Grove)</i>	The White Grove was afforded all of the socio-economic opportunities, while the Black Grove was subjected to Jim Crow era laws.
1896-1930	<i>Overtown – City of Miami</i>	Arrival of the FEC Railroad separated “Colored Town” and the City of Miami. Despite the separation, residents became self - sufficient with businesses, entertainment districts and other services to compensate for the conditions. Lyric Theater was opened in 1913; Migrants from the Caribbean, North Florida, other southern states and countries chose the community to settle in.
1930's	<i>Urban Renewal</i>	The Negro Resettlement Plan is realized as a result of the City of Miami not having investment to upgrade the deteriorated Black Communities. The latter's conditions were due to zoning restrictions and redlining policies governing development in the Black communities. Liberty Square Housing project opened with 753 units of public housing in 1934.
1950's	<i>Construction of Interstate Highways</i>	I-95 (north/south expressway), the Dolphin Expressway, and Midtown Interchange
1960's and 1970's	<i>Federal Model Cities Program</i>	A citizen's administrative board chaired by Black Business and Community Leaders and guided by Blacks in government, served as a “watchdog” coalition of community organizations that yielded success in housing.
1980's to 2020	<i>Black Economic Development</i>	Black construction led the way in economic development for the Miami Dade Black Community. Successes include: Otis Pitts TEDC, MLK Office Plaza, Liberty City Entrepreneurial Center, Northwestern High School. The MLK Transit Office Building and Garage Development is the only all Black development team which is a partnership with BAC Funding Corp. and MLK Joint Venture.

	<u>Events</u>	<u>Results</u>
2010-2020	<i>Affordable Housing Projects as Economic Engines</i>	• While the Affordable Housing industry intended to resolve the housing and economic disparities in the Black Communities and for Black Contractors and Vendors. Frazier notes that the housing was accomplished, but the economic benefit has yet to be realized. • Economic opportunities in mixed use projects are still vacant to business tenants. • Except for Urban League and TEDC projects, Black partners have been excluded from ownership. Examples include... • Brownsville Transit Station Housing Project • Audrey Edmonson Transit Center Development • Okeechobee Transit Station Housing Development • Liberty Square Project • 79 Street and I95 Affordable Housing



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



E.L. WATERS and Company, LLC
PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

Background Engagement Information

Miami-Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) engaged CMA Enterprise Incorporated, a South Florida consulting firm in August 2023 to performed the 10 year Disparity Study update for the agency. The engagement was facilitated in collaboration with E.L. Waters and Company LLC, an Urban Planning and Engineering firm also located in South Florida.

One of the primary objective was to assist MDEAT in fulfilling its mandate as published by Miami Dade County. The other is to track improvements (or ongoing deterioration) within the TUAs that the agency has been assigned. For the reader's benefit, TUA stands for Targeted Urban Areas.

The findings and recommendations generated will be used to create the Agency's

The Consulting Collaborative...



As a boutique Performance and Process Improvement Consulting Firm headquartered in Davie, Florida our clients receive a personal touch when it comes to service.

CMA is a Minority and Woman owned Business established in 1990.



Provides consulting planning, zoning, and development services for public and private clients in Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties and Atlanta, GA.

ELW is a Minority owned business headquartered in Miami, Florida.

Our Engagement Work Plan – Phase Two

The CMA/ELW Team has established a standard, but fluid model for implementing this type of engagement. The diagram below provides our approach and methodology.

Phase One



Mobilize the Engagement

- Mobilize the CMA/ELW team and engage client to confirm and clarify expectations and scope
- Confirm the locations for the Public Engagement Listening Sessions and assigned facilitators
- Provide outreach assistance to County Staff in identifying agencies and organizations in the Focus Group targeted areas.

Phase Two and Three



Facilitation of Community Focus Groups

- Facilitate up to seven (7) focus groups including a Youth Summit
- Stakeholder virtual surveys were distributed to business and industry, community stakeholders, students and interested parties.
- 1 on 1 interviews were also held with Influencers across the county

Phase Four



Presentation of the Summary of Findings to County Project Staff

- Finalize and submit Master Summary of Findings and Recommendations
- Present the Final Report to MDEAT Stakeholders and Board
- Conduct a round two of up to five (5) regional “Sharing and Listening” sessions for community participants
- Present Final Report to County Project Staff and BCC for approval

Note: Segment three is the Implementation Phase is to be negotiated with MDEAT. This Segment was proposed in the initial scope of work submission.

It should be noted that recommendations and findings found in this study are based on the following investigations by the CMA/ELW Team...

- Review of historical studies, Scorecards, and industry reports requested and received from MDEAT at the time of the submission
- Independent research conducted by the CMA/ELW Team
- Public Meetings scheduled by MDEAT with TUA communities throughout Miami Dade County
- Anonymous community surveys for residents, businesses, service providers as well as MDEAT staff and current board members.
- One On One interviews with key stakeholders and Community Leaders
- Review of industry articles and commissioned studies



Summary of Community Feedback

Stakeholder Interviews: Elected Officials

Elected Officials who have oversight of several of the TUAs were interviewed during the Consultant's investigation phase. Responses ran the spectrum of past and present officials. Additionally, positions of apathy and indifference were also expressed when addressing the Black Community's level of engagement and commitment for change in their quality of life. Officials were polled with the same questions and provided feedback as summarized below.

- Lack of knowledge of previous MDEAT Study Progress initiatives
 - Need for updated study to drive the decision making and planning process for investments in the TUAs in an ongoing manner instead of every 10 years.
 - MDEAT has not presented a clear message of the disparities in a proactive manner to verify and/or validate if conditions have gotten worse.
- Disparities are not being shared by constituents, but willingness to hear from colleagues who want to share.
- Continues to be a lack of quality of life resources in TUAs
- Affordable transportation
- Resources for Business and Job Related Training
- "Big Box" Businesses are taking over Black communities, replacing
- Housing (rental and ownership) is an issue... inventory shortages
- Need "INFLUENCERS" AT THE COUNTY LEVEL
- Community resource bank for residents and entrepreneurs
- Concerns of how crime is being addressed or not. The advocacy component is missing
- What is the "Roadmap" for the future, and who will be tasked with its implementation
- Job Training is not enough. Need to have training with a purpose of immediate job creation
- Community apathy. There is a complacency among Black voters
- Crime has impacted residents and resulted in greater

Public Administrators

Public Administrators were interviewed during the study and comprised government, public and educational sectors.

Noteworthy is that some are partners with MDEAT while proved to be potential alliances going forward. Feedback included their “needs, wants and desires” for a stronger relationship with MDEAT going forward. Comments are provided for the reader’s benefit. However, MDEAT become more intentional in its strategies for advocacy of the assigned TUAs.

- Returning to that “go to” voice for Black Equity in Miami Dade County by being present “at the table” when plans are made and decisions for implementation are confirmed.
- Provide a more robust plan for affordable and workforce housing in the TUAs
- There is a fear by Black in the TUAs that they are being “pushed into the sea.”
- Blacks have been excluded from the economic boom in Miami Dade County.
- Business owners noted that there needs to be written Race Based contracting in order to compete
- Develop Poinciana Industrial Site reserving it for Black Contracting collaboratives. This will create ownership in the community.
- Educate the community on how to advocate for themselves will be critical to achieving sustainable success.
- MDEAT will need to be more proactive about what is wanted by and/or needed in the TUA communities in which they are tasked to advocate.
- Engage the philanthropic community locally, regionally and nationally. This will also require a sound strategy for programmatic empowerment to advocate for.

Community Development

Interviewees shared insights into their experiences when attempting to serve their constituents. Many focused on gun violence in the community and much needed resources of their constituents as well as their own organizations. Highlights of the feedback is below with more details contained in later sections of this study.

- Lack of funding for the local agencies in the TUAs
- Code enforcement is a problem in the communities.
- Project and Property Management teams are not focused on the quality of life of the communities served.
- Community needs to better understand how Government works.
- Getting potential homeowners to understand how to effectively work through the process of homeownership.
- Witnessing more disparities in Black economic development, education, criminal justice and youth violence.
- Impact of Ryskamp Order issued by U.S. Southern District has caused increased disenfranchisement for Black Businesses in the procurement of goods and services at Miami Dade County
- The development and retention of Black youth and the “brain drain” caused by the lack of job opportunities for young Black Adults and a preference for Spanish speaking candidates has created a perpetual disparity in Miami Dade.
- Gun violence is on the rise with the recent laws for open carry without permits.

Business and Economic Development

Important to the Sustainable future of the Black Business Community in Miami Dade will be the integration into the “mainstream” economics of the County’s Master Plan. Recent discussions with leadership at the **Beacon Council** provided an overall vision for inclusion. Key to addressing many of the disparities will be contingent upon successful collaborations with the agencies that provide the Socio-Economic Services and Technical Assistance to residents and/or businesses in the TUAs impacted by the disparities noted in this study.

Feedback from individuals and service providers in Miami Dade are summarized below and throughout in this section.

- Economic equity in procurement is needed for African American Businesses
- MDEAT can advocate for Congress and State Legislation to promote inclusive business practices, equitable access to contracts and procurement opportunities, and access to capital.
- Share respective networks to connect businesses with opportunities in public and private sectors
- Entertain mandatory goals for African American Businesses.
- The wants and needs are more contracts and dollars expended with black businesses comparable to the population (20%) in Miami Dade.
- More robust mentor/protégé programs, and micro loans to support project capacity.
- Better engagement with financing opportunities through partners like regional and national affiliate financial institutions to support Black owned businesses.
- Services to help businesses go green and become more environmentally friendly and save costs will assist with their competitiveness.
- Collaborative marketing and promoting for Black owned businesses with all stakeholders should be a priority.
- Assessing the readiness of the Black Business Community in its ability to service Business and Industry efficiently and effectively was also raised by service providers polled.

Business and Economic Development: Access to Capital Providers

CMA/ELW polled providers of capital to learn more about the barriers to access that they are experiencing in operating their own organizations as well as those businesses that they serve.

- Service Providers are directly experiencing disparities in their own operations as well as witnessing same in their client's businesses.
- Business owners understand how to do the services, but not the knowledge of the administrative components are missing.
 - i.e., financial statements. A complete package.
 - Hiring procedures and Human Resource Administration Cycle
 - Contracts and Project Management Administration
- Disparities stem from lack of capital to pay (allocated) for the services that the businesses need. Also, first generation business owners.
- Credit is a major barrier. Poor credit histories are too common with minority applicants. **Financial literacy** is greatly needed.
- Collateral can be managed. But too often, applicants do not have sufficient collateral.
- Not able to show re-payment ability and/or history of paying people.
- Industry disparities – Minority Agencies tasked with providing access to capital are often underfunded. Not received well by the grants and investments communities. Tend to get less from these sources.
- Industry disparities - Boards are not as diverse as it could be. Representation is not as strong. Networks tend to be limited.

- **Industry disparities** – Minority Agencies tasked with providing access to capital are often underfunded. Not received well by the grants and investments communities. Tend to get less from these sources than other non-minority run agencies.
 - The CDFI industry that report the top assets are in areas led by non-minorities and/or predominantly white males.
 - Boards are not as diverse as it could be. Representation is not as strong. Networks tend to be limited.

Transformation strategies shared include...

- Technical assistance... Financial Literacy program (personal and business)
 - Round Table meetings (monthly)
 - Networking
- Financial ...
 - Several Loan funds
 - Tailor products to adhere to industries and financing
 - Specialized technical assistance
 - Commercial real estate products for entrepreneur

Community Development affiliate... **Black Business Dev. Corp.** (501C3 organization).

The Agency is creating a Legacy fund to provide grant capital for residential home improvement and small businesses. Currently, the initiative exists in East Tampa and supports the following...

- Community Facilities
- National Entrepreneur Centers to come into the community

Other comments

Building strategies for the agency going into their next chapter is essential in being able to service their clients and their own sustainable success. Demographics were also shared of the clients served. **Black Business applicants comprise 75-80% of the business portfolio intake.** The remainder are Caucasian and Hispanic. **Actual lending clients are 85% Black Businesses with the remainder being Hispanic and/or other.**

Agency representatives shared in closing that in spite of the myths that are shared about Black Businesses and minorities being “bad risks,” the **agency maintains an overall 4-5% default rate.** Much lower than industry standards of **11-13% in traditional institutions.**

Criminal Justice Reform

As this reporting, criminal justice stakeholders contacted had not responded. Commentary is generated from the July 2018 article from the ACLU's report on Miami Dade Criminal Justice Conditions.

- Arrests and Sentencing is significantly higher in Black and Black Diaspora communities
- Over-Policing in Black communities has a much more significant presence than in other communities in Miami Dade.
- Black Hispanics and Blacks are more likely to be charged harsher than their White Hispanic and Non-Hispanic counterparts
- Youth are receiving harsher disciplinary actions than their other ethnic counterparts within the school system of Miami Dade per the youth public meeting attendees.
- Gun violence with youth and young adults is on the TUAs is on the rise.

Education

Education Providers were the most vocal of the stakeholders interviewed. These professionals are at the forefront of managing the concerns that surround the disparities that are shared through many of the other categories noted.

Input below incorporates feedback from elementary, secondary and higher education providers as well as students in the Miami Dade County areas examined.

- Food and shelter are more of a critical basic need for students of all ages.
- Students/Families (Education staff) are living in their cars because apartments and other living accommodations are too expensive.
- Mental wellness has become more of a concern.
 - Patience and lack of tolerance after covid “lock down” is evident.
 - Lack of civility is on the rise.
- Carefully balancing the political environment without sacrificing the quality of education
 - Developing scholarships for targeted underserved populations
 - Engaging in conversations on the possibilities of higher education
 - Building stronger support systems for students and advisors/counselors to ensure a productive education journey.
- The dropout rate is rising because children in many of these communities do not have access to the tools or resources for success.
- Assessing the readiness of the Black Business Community in its ability to service Business and Industry efficiently and effectively was also raised by service providers polled.

- The disparities continue to grow in TUA communities. This is due to the economic status of families in community.
 - CREATES A FEELING OF HELPLESSNESS BECAUSE I AM NOT ABLE TO ASSIST.
 - SCHOOL IS IN MOST CASES THE REFUGE FOR THE KIDS FOR AFFECTION AND THE FOUNDATION OF SUPPORT IS MISSING.
 - KIDS ARE IN ABUSIVE SITUATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN WITNESSED BY EDUCATORS.
 - Kids are latch key. Many are at the early care programs at 7:45am and are still there at 6pm
 - Educators can't meet some of the basic needs that the kids seek because of the lack of available funding for resources
 - Many educators are wondering... ***"what is my purpose"***.
- The rising violence in the environment proves to be a big problem for Administration and senior level executives. Current trends leave staff in a constant flux of whether they will need to press the "emergency button."
 - ORGANIZATIONS ARE NOW EDUCATING STAFF AND FACULTY ON HOW TO IDENTIFY AND/OR RESPOND TO SITUATIONS THAT REQUIRE CAUTION.

Other comments

- Interviewees also expressed an interest in the alternative strategies for "certificate learning" Comments are as follows...
- A heightened interest in the industry exists for vocational certificates.
- Offering continuing education for residents who need to learn working English and the skills that are needed for gainful employment
- Greater emphasis on an "Idea or Innovation" Center for Entrepreneurship
- The school system needs to be more equitable in the distribution of how resources are shared.
- Priorities of parents need to change. Many students are living in toxic environments.
 - Also educating parents on advocacy for their children at PTSA and school board meetings.

Survey results

Community responses were low in terms of physical count, but were consistent with responses from the other inquiries made by the CMA/ELW Team. Feedback is highlighted below.

- Conditions ranged from good to difficult.
- Resources are insufficient to assist residents and businesses in a competitive quality of life.
- Residents identified affordable housing (rental as well as homeownership).
- Excessive inequality in procurement transactions in Miami Dade County and the area municipalities that exist within the boundaries.
- Safety in the communities, schools and business districts.
- Funding for a quality education is insufficient in the TUA schools.
- Hiring and/or retention of qualified staff is difficult.



TUA Site Reviews

TUA Site Reviews

The consulting team reviewed all assigned TUAs with the intent of identifying improvements and/or deterioration in the communities. Based on the site reviews, it can be concluded that ongoing deterioration was observed in the target areas. A brief summary is below.

- With the purpose of understanding ongoing disparities, verifications included...
- Housing conditions warrant improvements and/or upgrades
- Roadway conditions (damaged streets, driveways, sidewalks, etc.)
- Infrastructure upgrades are needed (sewers, lighting, streetscapes, etc.)
- Education facilities (all levels)
- Lack of robust Business corridors
- Transportation corridors
- Community enhancements (Commercial and residential façade treatments)

Observations are summarized for the reader's benefit.

- Majority of TUAs were “bedroom communities
- Boarded housing and empty lots were present
- No major businesses located in the TUAs
- Most had business corridors on the external boundaries of the TUAs
- Several TUAs have higher priced housing now located in the area, thus excluding current residents.
- Main corridors appear to be “pass throughs” versus destinations for traffic.
- Highways and/or Rapid transit systems run through core neighborhoods
- Most TUAs were designated Brownfield areas
- Food deserts were more prevalent in the more rural South Dade TUA versus the urban areas in Northern Dade County.

Additional details are contained in later sections in this study.

Princeton

- Residential properties exhibit significant signs of neglect, including boarded up windows or shutters placed on windows
- Cracked sidewalks and driveways are prevalent
- Presence of littering is prevalent.
- Poorly maintained landscaping

West Dixie Hwy

- Unkempt and Empty lots with trash
- Broken and rusty chain-link fences
- Poorly maintained commercial properties
- Some abandoned commercial structures
- Broken sidewalks and curbs

Richmond Heights

- Residential units exhibit significant sign of neglect, including boarded up windows or shutters placed on windows
- The fences of properties are in poor condition including broken or rusted
- The borders of the sidewalks are cracked
- Drive ways either fully cracked, having many potholes or some properties don't have driveway and there has been a continuous deteriorated path created by cars
- Properties have roofs that are starting to decay or noticeably have repairs need to be or in the process of being done

West Little River

- Many broken and rusty chain-link fences, low concrete walls, and wooden fencing
- Deteriorating siding, paint, canopies, and in some cases, roofing
- Some houses lack driveways
- Some homes abandoned entirely
- Abandoned shopping carts
- Piles of yard trash/demolition and remodeling waste

South Miami

- The wooden houses are exhibiting signs of significant decay, and the structural stability of these buildings is questionable.
- Street and landscape areas near the sidewalk are exhibiting multiple potholes
- Several apartments and houses appear abandoned with boarded-up windows and doors
- Some apartment walls are suffering from severe paint delamination and peeling
- The electrical wiring within many apartments is poorly installed, with visible wires wrapping around the outside of buildings
- The fences surrounding the properties are poorly maintained, with many of them broken, rusted, or falling apart, posing security and safety risks.
- Certain sidewalks are cluttered with trash
- The sidewalks and tree protection borders exhibit significant cracking
- Missing covers from car canopy

Model Cities/Brownsville

- There is graffiti on the walls, and numerous windows are boarded up or broken.
- The fences surrounding the properties are poorly maintained, with many of them broken, rusted, or falling apart, posing security and safety risks.
- The walls of the buildings are exhibiting extensive paint delamination and peeling.
- Shopping carts and trash are abandoned throughout the sidewalks.
- The bus stops in the area are poorly maintained, with graffiti, deteriorating walls, and broken electrical boxes.
- Many of the homes in the area exhibit significant signs of neglect, with various elements of the structures and components in need of repair or replacement,
 - The HVAC systems in the buildings are deteriorating and in a state of disrepair
 - Boarded windows
 - Broken windows

North Miami / Biscayne BLVD.

- The fences surrounding the properties are in poor condition, with many of them broken, rusted, or falling apart.
- The borders of the sidewalks exhibit numerous cracks.
- Some signage has fallen or been broken/snapped.
- There is graffiti on signage, electrical boxes, and commercial units.
- The landscape of many properties is not maintained.
- Electrical components are left exposed due to improper grounding.
- Random car parts can be seen on the sides of the road.

North 7th Avenue

- The streets and parking areas exhibit multiple potholes and severe concrete cracking.
- The fences surrounding the properties are poorly maintained, with many of them broken, rusted, or falling apart, posing security and safety risks.
- There is graffiti on a lot of walls, and several windows are boarded up or broken.
- Tree roots are breaking through multiple sidewalks.
- The borders of many sidewalks are cracked.

Little Haiti

- Mostly abandoned and vandalized commercial along 7th Ave
- As well as Multi-family and single-family housing
- Broken and rusty chain-link fences
- Unkempt and abandoned commercial properties.
- Unkempt and abandoned residential properties.
- Poor structural conditions for some residential properties.
- Trash on streets, sidewalks, and empty lots.
- Unkempt empty lots
- Broken sidewalks/curbs

Naranja

- Mostly single-family housing
- Some multi-family housing that was partially abandoned
- Broken and rusty chain-link fences
- A lot of unkempt residential properties
- Some abandoned residential properties
- Poor structural conditions for some residential properties
- A lot of trash on streets, sidewalks and empty lots
- Piles of trash in front of residencies
- Unkempt empty lots

NW 27th Avenue

- Mostly empty lots, small commercial plazas and some warehouses – with a few small single-family homes throughout
- Large concrete parking with no shade or vegetation
- Many broken and rusty chain-link fences
- Shopping centers in disrepair – deteriorating siding, paint, signage, canopies, and in some cases, roofing
- Deteriorated paint on houses
- Some houses lack driveways – park on the grass, and gravel generating dust
- Abandoned shopping carts were witnessed throughout

SW Homestead

- Residential units exhibit significant sign of neglect, including boarded up windows or shutters placed on windows.
- The fences of properties are in poor condition including broken or rusted.
- The borders of the sidewalks are cracked.
- Many potholes collect water puddles.
- Abandoned shopping carts and litter can be found on the sidewalks.
- Some signage has fallen or been broken/snapped.
- Construction that has not been finished along the sides of roads could cause many hazards.
- Graffiti on walls and posts
- Driveways/side of main roads either fully cracked, having many potholes or some properties driveways are just driven over grass creating continuous deteriorated paths created by cars.
- Loitering
- Poorly taken care of grass areas
- Deteriorating walls of apartment complexes

Liberty City

- Mostly abandoned and vandalized commercial along 7th Ave
- As well as Multi-family and single-family housing
- Broken and rusty chain-link fences
- Unkempt and abandoned commercial.
- Unkempt and abandoned residential.
- Poor structural conditions for some residential
- Trash all over streets, sidewalks and empty lots
- Unkempt empty lots
- Broken curbs

Leisure City

- Deteriorating walls of apartment complexes
- Sidewalks that lead to nowhere with cracks and lifted areas
- Dead ends and random areas that have been loaded with trash.
- Graffiti on walls and posts
- Signage and fences have fallen or broken
- Residential units exhibit significant signs of neglect, including boarded-up windows or shutters placed on windows
- Driveways either fully cracked, have many potholes, or some properties don't have driveways and there has been a continuously deteriorated path created by cars

Goulds

- Abandoned shopping carts and litter can be found on the sidewalks
- Some signage has fallen or been broken/snapped
- Construction that has not been finished along the sides of roads could cause many hazards
- Noticeable holes in the frontage of buildings
- Residential units exhibit significant signs of neglect, including boarded-up windows or shutters placed on windows
- Vacant parcels not kept up
- Fences around the area broken

Coconut Grove

- The roofing materials on a significant number of buildings are deteriorating.
- There is graffiti on a lot of existing walls.
- Evidence of broken and boarded-up windows was common.
- Numerous broken sidewalks in the area were observed.
- Both streets and grass areas near the sidewalk exhibit multiple potholes
- Many of the homes in the area exhibit significant signs of neglect and are in a state of disrepair, with various elements of the structures and components in need of repair or replacement.
- The fences surrounding a significant number of properties are poorly maintained, with many of them broken, rusted, or falling apart, posing security and safety risks

Richmond Heights

- Residential units exhibit significant sign of neglect, including boarded up windows or shutters placed on windows
- The fences of properties are in poor condition including broken or rusted
- The borders of the sidewalks are cracked
- Drive-ways either fully cracked, having many potholes or some properties don't have driveway and there has been a continuous deteriorated path created by cars
- Properties have roofs that are starting to decay or noticeably have repairs need to be or in the process of being done
- There were strip centers located on 152nd Street east and west of the turnpike

West Perrine

- Mostly single-family housing
- Some multi-family housing that was partially abandoned
- A lot of unkempt residential properties
- Some abandoned residential properties
- Poor structural conditions for some residential properties
- A lot of trash on streets, sidewalks and empty lots
- Unkempt empty lots

CMA/ELW's Research and Facilitation Teams conducted outreach to key influencers in Miami Dade County to obtain an update on the state of the black community from the perspective in which they "sit".

Noteworthy is that regardless of the stakeholder's industry, the concerns had common threads for the interviewees.

Stakeholder Interviews

- Affordable housing for underserved communities and workforce
- Food deserts and insecurities in select urban areas
- Rising crime in communities served and workplace settings (more violent situations)
- Increasing mental health concerns reaching into the working class
- Employment opportunities (lack of)
- Preparedness of businesses and residents for economic opportunities
- Shrinking communities due to gentrification called Community Revitalization
- Land Banking opportunities are not being leveraged by those in position to acquire available properties.
- Financial Literacy is still an important skill set for the Underserved Areas of Miami Dade.
- Better technical assistance and/or access to capital for Black and Black Diaspora businesses.

Those interviewed represent the following sectors of business and industry.

- Mental Health
- Elementary/Secondary/Higher Education and Administration
- Tourism
- Community Development
- Youth Development
- Elected Officials (past and present)
- Community Historians/Leaders
- Business and Economic Development
- Criminal Justice

Listening Tours Rounds 1 and 2

Listening tours were conducted throughout the County covering the designated TUAs assigned to the agency. Attendance varied from one attendee to 25-30 residents, business owners and area youth.

All sessions incorporated the same presentation and attendees were asked the following questions.

- What disparities are you experiencing/ witnessing in the Communities/Organizations that you serve?
- What disparities are you experiencing in your own organization/community?
- Youth Voices
- What can you do to own the Transformation from Inequality to Sustainability

Round 1 – MDEAT Transformation 305 Listening Tour

Responses regardless of the regions were consistent with regard to the disparities and the associated transformation requirements shared.

Common themes of disparities included feedback from all categories and ages of residents, business owners and service providers...

- Lack of Affordable and Workforce Housing (rental and homeowner)
- Increasing Homelessness of seniors
- Urban Development is excluding current residents and businesses
- Crime (Gun and Gang Violence) in the communities and schools
- Equitable education opportunities
- Equity in disciplinary actions for Black Students
- Equitable afterschool programs
- Convenient transit routes
- Job and Internship opportunities for youth and young adults
- Skills and Trade Training Programs and Mentor/Intern/Apprentice programs
- Senior Housing (affordable)
- Living Wages

Round 2 – MDEAT Transformation 305 Sharing/Listening Tour

As of this reporting, the second round of sharing /listening sessions provided CMA/ELW Teams with the opportunity to share the feedback from MDEAT's Round 1 Listening Tour and to obtain any additional insights that the agency needs to be aware of.

These sessions were conducted on a regional level and were scheduled at the following locations.

- North Dade Regional Library (Miami Gardens, North Miami Dade)
- South Dade Regional Library (Richmond Heights, Goulds, Princeton, SW Homestead, Florida City)
- Little Haiti Cultural (Little Haiti, North Miami)
- Arcola Regional Library (Liberty City, Overtown, Brownsville, Model Cities)

Attendee feedback:

While attendance was light in the sessions, feedback was abundant. Comments supported the input that had been shared in Round One with the following additions.

- MDEAT will need to improve its connection with the community that it is task with advocating
- The Young Professional community in Miami Dade is seeking ways to get involved and improve the status of the Black Community but needs to know the "HOW DO WE CONNECT."
- Establishing a reliable resource base is important
- Strengthening collaborations with other areas agencies to serve as one voice in advocacy efforts



Summary of Findings and Consultants' Recommendations



E.L. WATERS and Company, LLC
PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

Consultant Recommendations

Miami Dade economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) is a relatively young organization based on its staff tenure. But it is a seasoned institution having been in existence since the early 1980's. While this study is meant to impact the community served by MDEAT, the agency also has an obligation to manage the disparities that exist in its own quarters.

The report identifies existing conditions of each Targeted Urban Area (TUA), which to this day creates a challenge for neighborhood improvements. Because of these conditions, the CMA/ELW Team proposes the following strategies to mitigate/improve the conditions within each TUA. Hence, recommendations that MDEAT take a leading role in the following neighborhood improvement strategies to enhance the livability and well-being of the communities in Miami Dade County for neighborhood. Implementation of these strategies will greatly enhance not only the agency's relevancy for the TUAs, but the overall quality of life of the residents and businesses therein.

Recommendations and Observations include...

Miami Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT):

- A comprehensive orientation for staff to be (re-) introduced to the history of the relevancy of Miami Dade Economic Advocacy Trust (MDEAT) and the importance of the Disparity study to the agency's existence and the inclusion of the Black Community's inclusion in the economic success of Miami Dade should occur within the next fiscal year for all staff and board members
- MDEAT will need to decide if it will be a program provider or an advocate for those residents and businesses in the TUAs it is assigned. The feedback received revealed that this is not clear in the communities and also with key stakeholders interviewed.

Housing (Homeownership/Renter Population):

- Establish advocacy/legislative initiatives for Senior housing (or lack thereof).
- MDEAT to embark on collaborative advocacy with other organizations in a similar genres that include affordable housing from the perspectives of ownership opportunities and most important rental.
- Increased affordable housing initiatives are necessary. The county should continue to develop and maintain affordable and workforce housing options through incentives, subsidies, or inclusionary zoning policies to ensure diverse inclusion in neighborhoods.
- Monitor/Support the Miami Dade County "HOMES Plan" to provide relief to residents across the targeted communities that populate extremely low to middle income residents. The Plan provides relief to homeowners and renters and creates more housing that people can afford by bringing new units online in the short term, building new units, and preserving or enhancing existing affordable/workforce housing.

Community Development:

- Partner with local agencies who offer programs to address Financial Literacy for individuals and business owners in the TUAs
- While it is recognized that the County provides green spaces and parks throughout the community gatherings, this can involve creating new parks, revitalizing existing ones and ensuring equitable distribution of green spaces.
- Neighborhood revitalization should focus on targeted revitalization efforts in these distressed areas, including façade improvements, small business/economic support, infrastructure upgrades and investment in public amenities.
- Community engagement – MDEAT needs to foster stronger community engagement by promoting participation and collaboration among residents, businesses and community organizations. An extensive data base was prepared as part of the scope of this study.
 - The CM/ELW Team encourages periodic community meetings, establishment of neighborhood associations, and other platforms for open dialogue, decision making and advocacy.

Business and Economic Development:

- Partner with local agencies who facilitate “Business Readiness” services is an area that MDEAT will need to be pursue and advocate for. Part of access to capital and/or contracts entails having the business preparedness to provide the products and services that are needed by business and industry. Most important, how to pose the “Value Proposition.”

Youth Development:

- MDEAT will need to Partner with local agencies who council and provide education and development skills for area youth to broaden its scope of advocacy for youth development and retention.
- Youth retention advocacy after High School and/or Post High School strategies need to be considered in collaboration with business and industry as well as community influencers and elected officials.

Education:

- Advocacy for equitable education in the Tuas as it relates to resources, education (pre-, during, and after school programs), Internships / Mentorships, for example.
- Partner with local agencies regarding the disparity in equitable disciplinary practices for Black students in the Miami Dade Public School System.

TUA Site Reviews:

- Better transportation options for certain TUA districts. Current routes are not close to metro areas

- Heightened and/or inclusive Public Works and/or Community Improvement Plan .
Specifically, maintenance of infrastructure(parks and public restrooms, bus stop shelters, metro rail stations, libraries, sidewalks, public amenities, etc.).
- Better access to resources for small businesses to maintain their commercial properties
- Through the County’s urban design principles and policies established workability and complete street plans are needed to improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, walkable neighborhoods, and implement complete street policies in conjunction with local governments to prioritize the safety and accessibility of non-motorized transportation.

Crime Prevention and Safety:

- Implement crime prevention measures such as increased neighborhood watch programs, improved lighting initiatives, security cameras, shot spotters identification campaigns, and stronger partnerships with County and local government law enforcement agencies to help improve neighborhood safety.

Community Collaboration:

- MDEAT has been deficient in its ongoing partnerships with agencies and/or organizations that are meant to be the “boots on the ground” in the communities served. Through the data base that was created for this engagement, it is highly recommended that stronger alliances be made with incentives to enhance the overall quality of life for the constituents served. It should be inclusive of the categories that were examined in this study. Specifically, Health and Wellness, Community Development, Economic and Business Development, Affordable Housing, Criminal Justice Reform, and Education.

MDEAT Board/Advisory Committees:

- MDEAT Board and Advisory Members will need to be provided with a comprehensive orientation of the history of the origins of the agency as well as their roles as Lead Advocates and Ambassadors for their constituents served.
- Board Committees need to be expanded to include... Education, Health and Wellness, Community Development. This will provide the opportunity for MDEAT to provide universal advocacy as opposed to selected initiatives.