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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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# **City of Miami Receives National Award for Pioneering Zoning Reform**

**Washington, D.C.** – The American Planning Association (APA) has selected the City of Miami to receive the 2011 National Planning Excellence Award for Best Practice for *Miami 21*. For the first time ever in a major U.S. city, *Miami 21* uses a form-based zoning code - a method of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form that improves the relationship between streets and the public realm

The Best Practice award is given for a specific planning element or process that advances the role of planning.

“Miami is to be commended for being the first major city in the nation to use a zoning method that focuses on form and function,” said Marie L. York, FAICP, APA Board member and 2011 National Planning Awards Jury Chair. “At the heart of this ambitious, innovative and comprehensive overhaul of Miami’s zoning code is a desire to improve the long-term quality of life and city livability for Miami today and tomorrow.”

In the past 10 years, Miami has experienced unprecedented growth. The city needed to address its historical sprawl, automobile-dependency and use-segregated communities. The new plan presents a solution for continued growth without infringing upon established neighborhoods, while encouraging walkability and better interaction between the public and private realm.

Strong determination, commitment and leadership helped create Miami 21. Coordination among city departments, significant public engagement and the ability to remain flexible in order to address the many concerns of both residents and businesses were all necessary.

“For us, Miami 21 is not simply the code, but the five-year-long community building process that led up to it. This recognition serves as testament to the great communal will exercised by all Miamians, supporters and detractors; proponents and opponents; participants all in this arduous process which makes possible great aspirations for a new and better Miami,” said Francisco J. Garcia, planning director. “We hope this recognition will provide encouragement to planning agencies nationwide to engage their respective constituencies proactively in an effort to



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better understand their needs and aspirations as well as their fears and concerns.”

The heart of *Miami 21* is the form-based zoning code. The code addresses the relationship between buildings and the public spaces that surround them, the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another, transitions between different types and sizes of buildings, and the scale and types of streets and blocks.

*Miami 21* is also geared to ensure sustainability, predictability and efficiency in development, growth and planning. One of the key strengths of *Miami 21* is its incorporation of responsible environmental stewardship. It also will make neighborhoods more pedestrian-friendly.

**The award for *Miami 21* will be presented at a special luncheon at APA's National Planning Conference in Boston on April 11, 2011.** The plan will also be featured in an upcoming issue of *Planning* magazine, APA's flagship publication.

For a list of all of the APA 2011 National Planning Excellence, Achievement, and Leadership Award recipients, visit [www.planning.org/awards/2011](http://www.planning.org/awards/2011). APA's national awards program, the profession's highest honor, is a proud tradition established more than 50 years ago to recognize outstanding community plans, planning programs and initiatives, public education efforts, and individuals for their leadership on planning issues.

*The American Planning Association is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science and profession of good planning -- physical, economic and social -- so as to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live. Members of APA help create communities of lasting value and encourage civic leaders, business interests and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people's lives. APA has offices in Washington, D.C., and Chicago, Ill. For more information, visit [www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org).*

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