

CRANDON PARK

Recent Best Practices

ADAPTING TO SHIFTS IN COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

VOL. 6



The Crandon Park: A Call for Change report is comprised of an *Executive Summary* and the following *Research Volumes*:

- Vol. 1 Introduction
- Vol. 2 Crandon Park Today | Part 1 - Site Analysis
Crandon Park Today | Part 2 - Specific Area Analysis
- Vol. 3 Relevant History
- Vol. 4 Master Plan Evolution
- Vol. 5 Park Governance & Funding
- Vol. 6 [Recent Best Practices](#)
- Vol. 7 Park Precedents
- Vol. 8 Historic Documentation

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Crandon Park: A Call for Change
Research & Analysis Report

Volume 6

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Prepared for
Citizens for Park Improvement (CPI)

Elaborated by
West 8 urban design and landscape architecture

CRANDON PARK

VOLUME 6 | RECENT BEST PRACTICES



6 Recent Best Practices

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6 Recent Best Practices

Adapting the Shifts in Community, Culture and the Environment

*The growth of Crandon Park has been significantly shaped by its relationship to the community, to culture and to the environment. Since its conception, the Park has by and large responded to a variety of changes or shifts within each of these strong influences. Following the Master Plan's publication in 2000, however, **the Park has yet to incorporate some of the most significant advancements in "best practices" of park design that have emerged over the past 25 years** (since the Master Plan was originally authored in 1993). Specifically, societal values and demands have called upon parks to highlight their culture and heritage, and also to come to grips with pressing climate-related issues affecting the park, such as sea-level rise.*

Today, changes in community, culture and environment register great impact on a park's character and design — forming a formidable triad. For Crandon Park to cement its status as "a cherished natural treasure . . . to be carefully sustained as an inheritance for our children and our children's children, in perpetuity," it must implement best practices relating to these three forces — best practices that have evolved considerably over a quarter-century.

6.1 Three Key Forces that Impact Crandon Park

Community, Culture and the Environment

All parks are created by society for a purpose, which has varied, across time and geography. Each park emerged within a particular societal ethos and organization. Over time, as the institution matured, different ideas of value came forward and some of these resulted in lasting landscape and management change.¹

– *Tourism in National Parks and Protected Areas: Planning and Management (2002)*

As forces relating to community, culture and the environment change, Crandon Park must also evolve. As time passes, it is part of every park's natural cycle to adapt to meet the temper and spirit of the times.

This research volume illustrates how **community**, **culture** and the **environment** have influenced and impacted Crandon Park, and highlights areas from each that have shifted or changed in the last 25 years – changes that will continue to shape its future. In the following sections, “Community” refers to social forces that affect park programming; “Culture” relates to a new focus on heritage sites, landscapes, cultural landscape preservation and archaeological sites; and “Environment” refers to changes in climate, sea-level rise, hurricanes and other forces of nature, as well as shifts in attitudes toward land preservation, resilience and sustainability.

As forces relating to community, culture and the environment change, Crandon Park must also evolve. As time passes, it is part of every park's natural cycle to adapt to meet the temper and spirit of the times. Acceptance of these changes have led to advancements and new “best practices” in the planning, design and execution of public spaces. These advancements arise from changes in public opinion and perception, advancements in technology and science, and other global forces that continuously change the landscape of our physical and social worlds.

1. Paul F.J. Fagles, Stephen F McCool, Elizabeth A. Halpenny, and R. Neil Moisey, *Tourism in National Parks and Protected Areas: Planning and Management* (London, UK: CABI International, 2002), p. 1.



Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center's Seagrass Adventure educates children and Crandon Park visitors about the barrier island.

Community



Miami-Dade County has set a vision for an Open Space Master Plan and established a set of criteria and goals for a great parks system.



Miami-Dade County's Open Space Master Plan (2007)

This section identifies how Crandon Park's community has changed over the past quarter-century, in their demographics, lifestyle, and expectations for what a public park should offer and perform.

Since authorship of the *Crandon Park Master Plan*, which started in 1993, the needs and desires of the local community have changed, and universal advancements in the practice of urban planning have changed the public park's role within the community.

Over the past 25 years, Miami-Dade County has taken admirable steps to prepare for the "next generation of growth, and developing new tools and strategies for getting there."² These measures include such initiatives as the Quality Neighborhood Initiatives Program; the Building Better Communities Bond Referendum (2004); the preparation of the *County Park History Book*; and the creation of a *Parks Open Space Master Plan* (2007), which offers a 50-year unifying vision for a livable, sustainable Miami-Dade County.

Described below, Shift #1 and 2 address changes in community demographics and lifestyles. Shifts #3 through #5 represent a distillation of attitudinal shifts and emerging best practices cited in the *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* issued in 2007, and other sources.

2. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 13.

3. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 25.

4. Miami Matters, "2020 Demographics | County: Miami-Dade," accessed June 13, 2020, <http://www.miamidadematters.org/demographicdata>.

Shift 1: Miami-Dade County is more populous and diverse

As the Parks and Open Space System Master Plan (2007) notes, "Miami-Dade is an international melting pot of the tropics and the gateway to Latin America."³

Miami-Dade County's demographics have changed significantly in recent years. From 2010 to 2020 alone, its population increased by 15%.⁴ The racial make-up of the area is more diverse: the Hispanic/Latino population has grown, as has the presence of African-American and Asian residents. Immigrants now account for 26 percent of all persons moving to Florida; in the 1950s, they accounted for only seven percent.⁵ About half of the people living in Miami-Dade today are foreign-born, and about 66% speak Spanish.⁶

Parks should respond to these changing demographics and evolving cultures.

Non-hispanic/Latino
822,035 (29%)



Hispanic/Latino
2,012,317 (71%)

Population by Ethnicity for Miami-Dade County. (Source: Claritas, 2020. www.miamidadematters.org)

5. Stanley, Smith. *Florida Population Growth: Past, Present and Future*. University of Florida. 2005. https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/sites/default/files/FloridaPop2005_0.pdf

6. "2020 Demographics" Miami Matters (2020): <http://www.miamidadematters.org/demographicdata?id=414>



Mural illustrating Miami's Hispanic community, with the words "Long live our race!"



Previous baseball fields in the North Parking Lot.

Shift 2: Crandon Park is no longer providing for its local community needs and desires

Currently Crandon Park is not serving the hundreds of thousands of people who live in close proximity to it. The local community is voting with their feet - suggesting that the park is not offering them a reason or incentive to frequent the park. While the Park enjoys a busy marina and full beach and picnic area during the weekends when city-dwellers and tourists flock to the key, the Park is notably underused during the week. The 44% increase of cars coming onto the key during the weekend also supports this qualitative observation of week-day emptiness in the park.

In contrast, Cape Florida State Park is more expensive to enter and a further drive from the mainland. However, its facilities and spaces have demonstrated far more popular than those of Crandon Park as it is choking on dysfunctional regulation

Notably, there is a lack of available recreation space in the community, particularly ball fields. This issue is a result of land-use planning decisions that were made by the county prior to Key Biscayne's incorporation. The problem continues today due to the 1993 Settlement agreement between the County and the Matheson family, which resulted in the removal of baseball fields in Crandon Park.

Since the removal of the ballfields, Key Biscayne continues to struggle to find recreational space to serve their community. In fact, the problem has been compounded by an increase in families living in the village. In 2000, the President of the Key Biscayne Athletic Club, cited that the Athletic Club's youth league participation had growth between ten and twenty percent annually since the town's incorporation in 1992, due to "increasing number of young families who have moved to the village since it incorporated, attracted by the Key's appealing small-town ambiance."⁷

In 2006, a Community Attitude & Interest Survey was conducted by independent contractor Leisure Vision. This survey, which interviewed 404 residents, confirmed that there was an unmet need for outdoor athletic fields, among other recreational needs such as access to walking and biking trails.⁸ Supporting this finding, the Master Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report identified "Lack of playing/sporting fields" and "Poor maintenance of community public facilities" as key weaknesses of the community.⁹

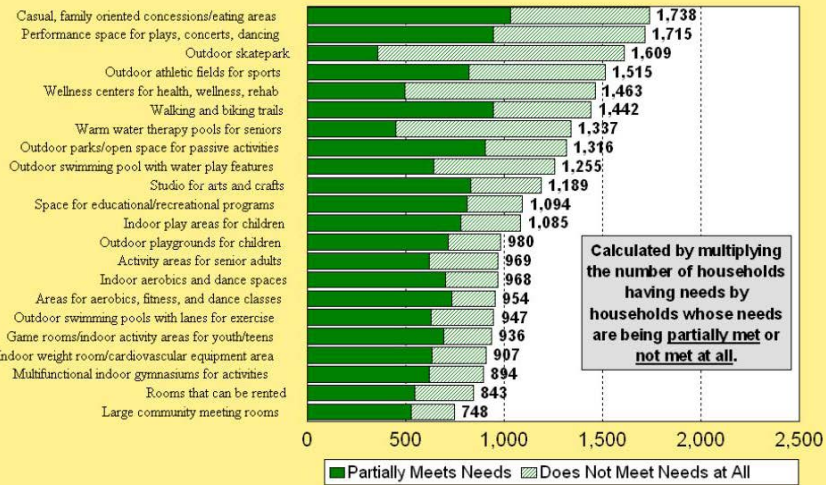
7. Victor Cruz, "Play Ball!," *Miami New Times*, October 19, 2000, <https://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/miami-beach-towing-companies-say-city-owes-18-million-11640066>

8. Leisure Vision, and Village of Key Biscayne. "Community Attitude and Interest Survey: Executive Summary of Citizen Survey Results," November 2006. [http://keybiscayne.fl.gov/Clientuploads/Parks & Recreation/Surveys/VKB_RecNeedsAssessSurveyESNov2006_LeisureVision.Pdf](http://keybiscayne.fl.gov/Clientuploads/Parks%20&%20Recreation/Surveys/VKB_RecNeedsAssessSurveyESNov2006_LeisureVision.Pdf)

9. Village of Key Biscayne and Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC, "Master Plan Evaluation and Appraisal Report," n.d., [http://keybiscayne.fl.gov/clientuploads/Building, Zoning Planning & Public Works/Planning Division/Comprehensive Master Plan - EAR/EAR_revised8-20-2007.pdf](http://keybiscayne.fl.gov/clientuploads/Building,%20Zoning%20Planning%20&%20Public%20Works/Planning%20Division/Comprehensive%20Master%20Plan%20-%20EAR/EAR_revised8-20-2007.pdf)

Q1. Estimated Number of Households in the Village of Key Biscayne Whose Needs for Parks and Recreation Facilities Are Only Being Partially Met or Not Met at All

by number of households based on 4,259 households in the Village of Key Biscayne (Source 2000 US Census)

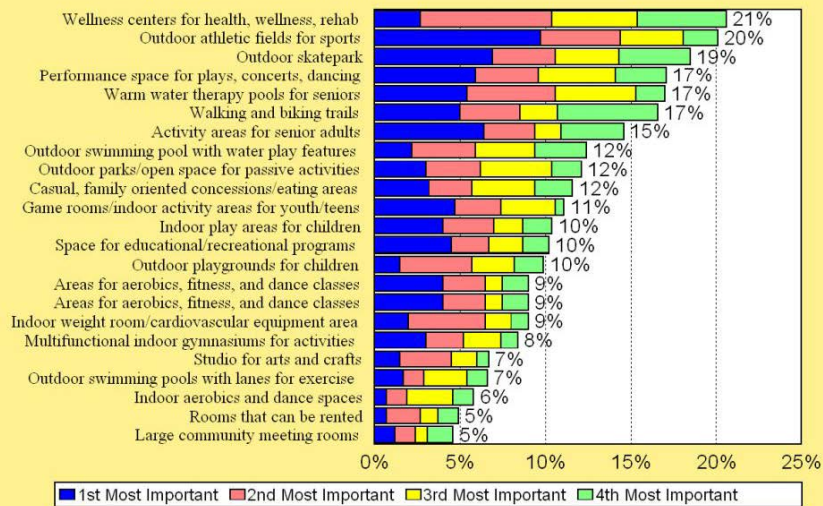


Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2006)

The Village of Key Biscayne conducted a Community Attitude & Interest Survey that illustrates the facilities that only partially meet or not at all the community's needs. Source: Leisure Vision ETC Institute November 2006.

Q2. What New Facilities Respondent Households Feel Would be the Most Important to Develop

by percentage of respondents who selected the item as one of their top four choices



Source: Leisure Vision/ETC Institute (November 2006)

The Village of Key Biscayne conducted a Community Attitude & Interest Survey that there was 20% interest in outdoor athletic fields for sports and a 19% interest in an outdoor skate park. Source: Leisure Vision ETC Institute November 2006



GreenPrint (2010)



Fitness Zone in Gwen Cherry Park, Miami.

10. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 22.

11. Miami-Dade County, *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* (Miami-Dade County, FL: 2010): p. 51.

12. Miami-Dade County, *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* (Miami-Dade County, FL: 2010): p. 51.

Shift 3: People desire parks to adapt to their ever-changing lifestyles and preferences

As cities become denser, and as open park space becomes scarcer, public parks and green spaces must adapt to the community's evolving preferences and lifestyles. The County's 2007 document lists three ways to strengthen community connections and nurture stewardship in parks:

- Parks should do more to tailor their design to local needs:** Park design should reflect "the development context and the demographics and lifestyles of a particular area." Criteria developed for an effective parks system should be "based on recreation needs and experiences in a particular location within the rural to urban context."¹⁰

Similarly, the County's 2010 document titled *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* summons parks to "support existing communities and value neighborhoods"¹¹ by establishing "additional meaningful open space and recreation areas through cooperative land use and joint-development programs with school, libraries, cultural areas, and other civic/institutional places."¹²

- Today's parks need to nurture local stewardship:** The *Parks Open Space Master Plan* (2007) and the 2007 Planning Report both assert that open space that is cared for by residents, and frequented by tourists, allows surrounding businesses and education centers to benefit from these audiences. "Having locations and activities associated with open spaces can maximize usage and support and create a mutually beneficial relationship for all facilities and organizations involved"¹³
- Parks need to solicit community input into the planning process:** Parks should augment their efforts to involve people in planning and programming.

In contrast to rigorously organized programming, the County's 2007 plan found that "people are increasingly interested in activities ... that do not require them to meet an exact schedule or to be organized with large numbers of other people."¹⁴ Providing this "at-will" recreation, in both active and passive formats, provides greater flexibility and helps parks adapt to new activity and recreational trends.

Shift 4: Communities better appreciate the role of public parks in public health, and as places of protest

Parks have long been recognized for their contributions to public health. They have also historically been the backdrops and forums of public debate and celebration taking the form of protests, marches and parades. Now, amid the onset of COVID-19 and the recent social and environmental movements (Women's March, Climate March, and Black Lives Matter Movement), the global community has a fresh appreciation for these public park functions.¹⁵ Together with these shifts in societal mind-sets and values, is an urgent call to shift public park design approaches.

13. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 37.

14. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 22..

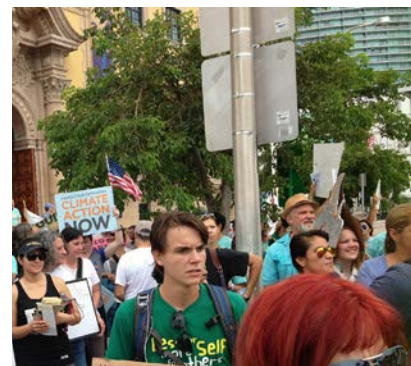
15. Andy Olin, "In the COVID-19 Era, a Renewed Appreciation of Our Parks and Open Spaces," *The Kinder Institute for Urban Research*, April 10, 2020, <https://kinder.rice.edu/urbanedge/2020/04/10/covid-19-era-renewed-appreciation-our-parks-and-open-spaces>



Black Lives Matter George Flood protests in Miami on May 31, 2020.



Women's March in Miami. Source: <https://www.womensmarchfl.org/who-we-are.html>



Climate March in downtown Miami. Source: <https://www.wlrn.org/post/peoples-climate-march-takes-miami#stream/0>



ADA accessible beaches. (Source: <https://spintheglobe.net/dir/2019/08/28/the-best-wheelchair-accessible-beaches-in-florida/>)



Snake Creek Trail in south east Florida (Source: <https://www.railstotrails.org/trailblog/2015/november/17/florida-s-snake-creek-trail/>)

16. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 24.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

Shift 5: Communities expect equitable park access

In the past, the overall scale of Miami-Dade County parkland had essentially been determined on the basis of a simple acres-per-resident ratio. Turning away from simple density-related calculations, the 2007 document set forth a new emphasis on three ways parks need to ensure “equitable access for every resident.”¹⁶

- The County's parks must take stronger action to eliminate “barriers to existing parks and recreation facilities”:** The 2007 document states “the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment and transportation...Miami-Dade County must continually evaluate each of its existing park and recreation facilities to identify and address any ‘deficiencies’ or barriers to access. This evaluation also includes the presence or absence of sidewalks, bicycle paths or lanes and transit service to each park and facility; many residents cannot drive, or do not have access to an automobile. Additionally, a reduced dependency on automobiles is a key element for a more sustainable community.”¹⁷
- The County's parks must ensure equitable access to neighborhood parks and open space:** The 2007 document states “the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment and transportation...Miami-Dade County must continually evaluate each of its existing park and recreation facilities to identify and address any ‘deficiencies’ or barriers to access. This evaluation also includes the presence or absence of sidewalks, bicycle paths or lanes and transit service to each park and facility; many residents cannot drive, or do not have access to an automobile. Additionally, a reduced dependency on automobiles is a key element for a more sustainable community.”¹⁸
- The County's parks must ensure equitable access to walk, bicycle or drive to participate in area-wide recreational activities:** Parks must provide access to activities that would be generally found outside of people's neighborhoods, such as “swimming recreationally or competitively in a public pool; fishing from land or a boat; paddling a canoe or kayak; observing nature and wildlife; motor boating; attending festivals, concerts or special outdoor events; playing in organized competition sports; participating in exercise classes, lectures, social functions.”¹⁹

Shift 6: Mobility trends are increasingly less reliant on traditional automobiles

In 2014, a study determined that transit ridership in Miami-Dade County had grown by more than one million monthly trips since 2004 from 8.6 to 9.6 million. The combination of increased bicycling activity and transit ridership in Miami-Dade County has corresponded to more attention given to accommodate these modes from the County planning agencies.²¹

Miami-Dade County has identified a goal of enhancing non-motorized transportation mobility and accessibility as a means of connecting its cities, neighborhoods, and surrounding facilities. By promoting walking and bicycling, the County aims to enhance sustainability, elevate public health, and expand recreational opportunities. The County declares that parks can achieve these goals by creating “great streets” that “function well within the context of adjacent land uses; serve multiple functions; serve users of all modes of transportation; support a high mobility index, not just high level-of-service for vehicles; are walkable and livable; and are complete in their form and function.”²²

In the last five years, the idea of “multi-mobility” has expanded, specifically in Miami. In 2017, Key Biscayne became the first American city to team up with the bicycle-sharing app LimeBike, which has expanded to the greater Miami area, and now also offers scooter rentals. This expansion of mobility options will continue to evolve rapidly, with talk of self-driving vehicles on the horizon.



Bike-shares such as LimeBike.
<https://venturebeat.com/2017/09/17/limebike-rolls-out-dockless-bike-sharing-across-u-s-cities/>

20. David A. King, “3 Big Challenges for Planning Multi-Modal Cities,” Bloomberg.com, October 09, 2014,, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2014-10-09/3-big-challenges-for-planning-multi-modal-cities>

21. Kimley Horn, *Miami-Dade 2040 Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan*. MPO GPC V7. Miami: Miami-Dade County. <http://www.miamidadetpo.org/library/plans/miami-dade-2040-bicycle-pedestrian-plan.pdf>

22. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 44.

Cities of all sizes are reorienting their transportation priorities toward people over cars. Rebranding streets as “complete,” “shared,” or “great” reflects a turn away from automobility as the only choice for urban travel. Local transportation officials and planners now place a larger focus on offering many modes of travel and consider quality-of-life rather than simply encouraging driving everywhere. Though cars are still dominant, the era of automobility seems to have peaked.”²⁰

– *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007)

Culture



Marjory Stoneman Douglas Biscayne Nature Center exhibition of Tequesta Indian artifacts and small aquarium.
Source: <https://fyccn.org/Crandon%20Park>

At least in American society, interest in the cultural heritage of the nation has grown dramatically in the 20th century. As citizens have become more aware of their past, they have pressured Congress to establish more historical parks (as part of the National Park System) and sites, and have increased their visitation to them. Culturally-based tourism is now recognized as a major tourism segment.

– *Tourism in National Parks and Protected Areas: Planning and Management p.58*

23. "Spaces for Protest, Places for Peace," Agency Landscape Planning, 2017, <https://agencylp.com/projects/protest/>

Shift 1: There is renewed interest in supporting cultural events, celebration and democratic protest

Public spaces have always served as places for communities to gather, practice traditions, celebrate and protest. But in recent years, and especially in recent months, their role in this regard has been elevated. As a result, planners and communities alike have begun to rethink how parks and public spaces can better facilitate parades, marches, cultural celebrations and other events such as marathons. In 1995, parks such as Crandon Park were not designed to accommodate these temporal cultural events. Today, it is a critical function of a public space, and must be designed as such.



Miami-Dade's Meet Me at the Park Program runs through the summer and offers residents to meet park staff.



Climate Ready Meeting at Elizabeth Virrick Park in Miami.

In a thriving democracy, the need for protest shapes our public realm and vice versa. The design of our public realm informs the way we collectively bear witness to conflict and make our voices heard. The design of our streets, in particular, needs to accommodate a huge range of uses — from the activities of our most pedestrian of days to the influx of millions during extraordinary times.²³

— Spaces for Protest, Places for Peace (2017)



Love-In Music Festival at Greynolds Park.
Source: <http://eyeonmiami.blogspot.com/2013/05/rock-and-roll-at-greynolds-park-may-5th.html>

Shift 2: Today's park's are expected to more clearly identify and highlight their cultural heritage areas

24. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p.22.

25. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p.26.

26. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p.17.

27. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p.17.

28. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p.35.

29. "Heritage Tourism" National Trust for Historic Preservation (2015): <https://savingplaces.org/stories/preservation-glossary-todays-word-heritage-tourism>

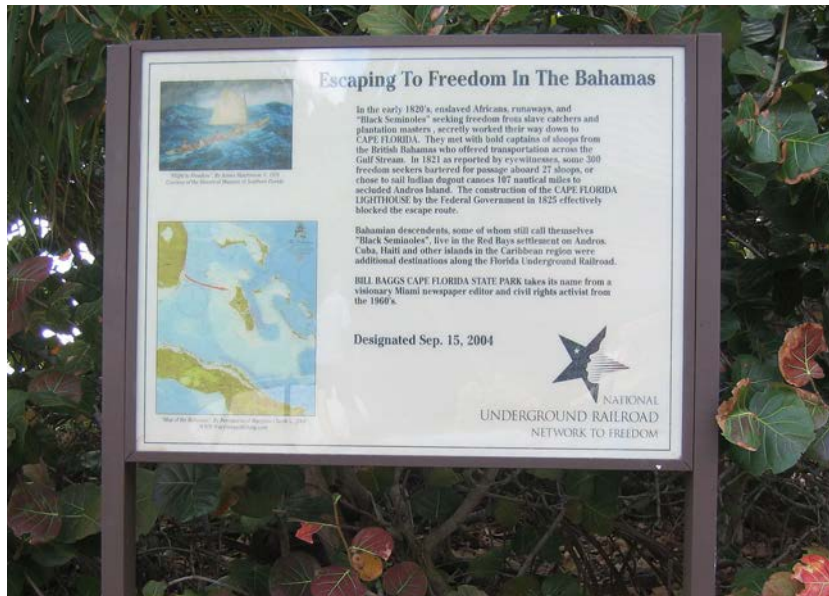
30. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p.17.

According to the *Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), one of the qualities of a great park is that it "understands a community's roots"²⁴ and "acknowledges the historic and cultural significance of the area."²⁵ Park improvements can also help "to create a sense of place for neighborhood stabilization and/or redevelopment."²⁶ As the National Trust for Historic Preservation states, "historic places tell a community where it came from, what previous generations achieved, what they believed, what they hoped to be. By protecting these reminders of the past, preservation also builds the present and the future."²⁷

The *Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007) also seeks to "thematically cluster cultural and historical sites that provide a variety of heritage education activities and programs; elevate the public's appreciation and understanding of the County's history and culture; and to engage the surrounding community in the stewardship of the sites."²⁸ Such efforts not only benefit residents, but encourage heritage tourism, which the National Trust for Historic Preservation defines as "traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes historic, cultural and natural resources."²⁹



The Dade Heritage Trust organize different architectural, environmental, and cultural heritage on-site tours for K-12 students. (Source: <https://dadeheritagetrust.org/education/>)



National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Signage at Bill Baggs State Park. Source: https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Bill_Baggs_Cape_Florida_State_Park

Shift 3: The use of art and interpretive signage is a widely embraced best practice

Pursuant to the County's 2007 Master Plan, elements such as public art, signage and cultural/historical exhibits need to be properly integrated into "park and public realm infrastructure projects to 'tell the County's story' and create a sense of pride and place."³⁰ Crandon Park should implement this practice.



Archaeological remains of a boat used to carry fugitive slaves to freedom in the Bahamas during the Seminole Wars. Source: <https://julietetelandresen.com/key-biscayne-island-paradise-exploring-miami/>

31. History of Cultural Landscape Preservation in the United States" *National Parks Service*. 1 November 2016. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/ctimeline.htm>

32. History of Cultural Landscape Preservation in the United States" *National Parks Service*. 1 November 2016. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/ctimeline.htm>

33. History of Cultural Landscape Preservation in the United States" *National Parks Service*. 1 November 2016. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/ctimeline.htm>

34. History of Cultural Landscape Preservation in the United States" *National Parks Service*. 1 November 2016. <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/culturallandscapes/ctimeline.htm>

35. Florida Sea Grant Extension Program, The Department of Landscape Architecture College of Architecture University of Florida, The Department of Park Administration and Landscape Architecture Texas Tech University, *Crandon Park: The Next Fifty Years* (14 November 1989), p. 1. A Preliminary Planning & Analysis Report Prepared for the Dade County Metro Recreation and Parks Department.

Shift 4: Phillips's role in creating and promoting tropical cultural landscapes is recognized more today

The term "cultural landscape" was officially first defined in 1981 by the National Park Service³¹ and gained international traction in the 1990s. Guidelines for "best practices" for preserving designed and vernacular landscapes were first published and applied during this time. Non-profit organizations composed of educators and professionals -- such as The Cultural Landscape Foundation -- began assembling databases, inventories and documentation of existing cultural landscapes.³² Non-profit organizations composed of educators and professionals -- such as The Cultural Landscape Foundation -- began assembling databases, inventories and documentation of existing cultural landscapes.³³ The assembly of this vital knowledge base has helped park planners better define best practices in promoting stewardship of these sites.³⁴

Leveraging the momentum initiated by the historic and cultural landscape movements unfolding locally and nationally, the interdisciplinary team of authors of the *Crandon Park: The Next Fifty Years* (1989) was the first to recognize the visionary planning efforts of the Phillips design legacy at Crandon Park, stating that "The integrity, quality and historic value of this plan must be preserved in future planning for the park."³⁵

Miami- Dade County itself now more fully recognizes the design legacy of "William Lyman Phillips, a purveyor of the Olmsted philosophy, who designed many of Miami-Dade County's important parks including, Greynolds, Matheson, and Crandon Parks. The design legacy that he left draws upon significant precedents and emphasized harmony, variety and contrast. These principles continue to guide the

development of Miami-Dade's parks today."³⁶ Today, however, there is no indication on site, even through means of interpretive signage, that expresses Crandon Park's significance in his oeuvre. The Cultural Landscape Foundation categorizes Crandon Park as a "Designed Landscape," which are "landscapes that were consciously design or laid out by a landscape architect, master gardener, architect, or horticulturist according to design principles, or by an amateur gardener working in a recognized style or tradition."³⁷ In particular, it follows the Picturesque style, which "sought to evoke 'natural' landscape appearance of rougher terrain and dramatic asymmetric composition in contrast to the axial geometry of earlier Renaissance and Baroque landscapes."³⁸ To this day, no criteria have been established to evaluate ways that future changes to the Park might impact its historic design layout – nor have planners devised ways to reveal the "bones" of Phillips's design to today's audiences.

36. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 13.

37. The Cultural Landscape Foundation, "Crandon Park" (2001-2020): <https://tclf.org/landscapes/crandon-park?destination=search-results>

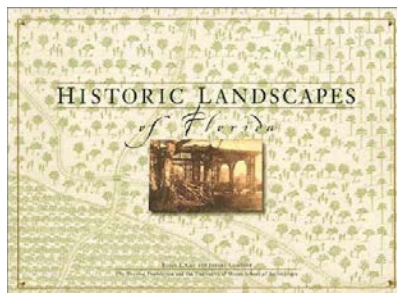
38. The Cultural Landscape Foundation, "Picturesque" (2001-2020): <https://tclf.org/category/designed-landscape-style/picturesque>

39. Rocco J. Ceo, Joanna Lombard, and Steven Brooke, *Building Eden the Beginning of Miami-Dade County's Visionary Park System* (Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press, 2017)

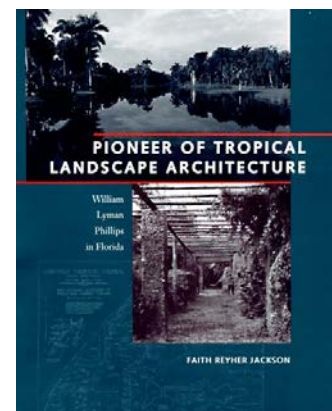
The following publications have further elevated recognition of Phillips's contributions to the Florida landscape:



Building Eden: The Beginning of Miami-Dade County's Visionary Park System is a concise and evocative introduction to the two men, A.D. Barnes and William L. Phillips, two pivotal figures most responsible for the development of South Florida's earliest parks.³⁹



Essays by editor Rocco Ceo and Joanna Lombard, authors of ***Historic Landscapes of Florida***, give context to the era and motivations of the county's first parks director, A.D. Barnes, and William L. Phillips.



Faith Jackson's ***Pioneer of Tropical Landscape Architecture: William Lyman Phillips in Florida*** is an in-depth bibliography of Phillips' seminal role in the landscaping of Florida and in the history of landscape architecture

Environment



In 2017, Hurricane Irma hit the City of Miami with winds stronger than 100 mph (Source: <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2018-04-05/2018-hurricane-season-predicted-to-be-similar-to-2017s>)

40. United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). "Models, Tools, and Databases for Climate Change Research" (2020): <https://www.epa.gov/climate-research/models-tools-and-databases-climate-change-research>

41. Christina Nunez, "Sea Level Rise, Explained," February 27, 2019, (<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/sea-level-rise/#close>)

42. SeaLevelRise.org, "Florida's Sea Level Is Rising," Sea Level Rise.Org, (<https://sealevelrise.org/states/florida/#:~:text=In the last decade, the,rise by another 6 inches>)

43. NOAA, "NOAA Tides & Currents," Tides & Currents, [PAGE], accessed June 22, 2020, (<https://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/faq2.html>) f768428a39aa4035ae55b2aaff372617/sustainability-survey-report.pdf).

Over the quarter-century since development of Crandon Park's current master plan, issues of sustainability and climate change have emerged as matters of major global concern. The Park faces a level of climate vulnerability not recognized in the mid-90s, when the bulk of the current Master Plan was being written.



Bill Baggs Park after Hurricane Andrew in 1992. Source: <https://www.miamirealestateguy.com/history-of-bill-baggs-cape-florida-state-park-on-key-biscayne/>

Shift 1: Crandon Park and South Florida face challenges associated with climate change

Thanks to technological resources not available 25 years ago, experts, researchers and scientists can today analyze vast quantities of scientific databases and run complex climate model simulations.⁴⁰ Growing public awareness has shifted attitudes and action in the realms of development, policy, design trends, and how we value and treat coastal ecologies.

In the early '90s, as global warming began gaining currency as a matter of popular concern, researchers started to explore the possible ramifications of a warming climate. Among the predictions were warnings of severe heat waves, droughts and more powerful hurricanes fueled by rising sea surface temperatures.

Rising sea levels are a matter of growing urgency in South Florida. "The sea level around Virginia Key, Florida, has risen by 8 inches since 1950," says SeaLevelRise.org. "Its speed of rise has accelerated over the last ten years and it's now rising by 1 inch every 3 years."⁴² Scientists know this because sea levels are measured every six minutes using satellites, floating buoys, and tidal gauges to measure sea level change."⁴³

As stated above, the effects of climate change are accelerating in the Miami area. This is partially due to rapid development trends and lifestyles. Since 1992, Miami-Dade County's population has grown by 700,000 people; the footprint of the urban downtown has also grown (United States Census Bureau). These factors have put extra pressure on the open space that is left to perform and provide climate change mitigation services such as retain and clean storm water, restoring ecosystems such as mangrove and wetlands that "absorb" the impact of storms.⁴⁴

As a barrier island, Crandon Park is at particular risk of being adversely affected by rising seas. Crandon Park's Current Master Plan does not include adaptive or resilient measures or recommendations that address these risks. These were not relevant realities at the time it was authored.

It is beyond dispute that Crandon Park must reshape and update its strategies for long-term sustainability and resilience.

"The most recent special report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says we can expect the oceans to rise between 10 and 30 inches by 2100 with temperatures warming 1.5 °C," National Geographic reported in 2019. "Another analysis based on NASA and European data skewed toward the higher end of that range, predicting a rise of 26 inches by the end of this century if the current trajectory continues."⁴¹

44. NPRA. *Park and Recreation Sustainability Practices*. 2017. <https://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/>

Shift 2: Local and state agencies recognize the threat of climate change, and are ready to adapt

The immediate need for protection against storm surges and sea-level rise are at the forefront of Florida's regional, municipal and local constituents today.



Southeast Florida (SEFL) Regional Climate Change Compact Unified Sea Level Rise Projection (2019)

At a regional level, the Southeast Florida (SEFL) Regional Climate Change Compact (founded in 2010) has organized key municipal leaders and teams of experts to tackle the issues of climate change on a regional scale. SEFL is a partnership between Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe and Palm Counties to “coordinate mitigation and activities across county lines.”⁴⁵ Together this regional governance body has cooperatively developed annual legislative programs, conducted research for recommendation on mitigation and adaptation strategies, and organized a series of Leadership Summits. Most recently, the SFEL Climate Compact has issued the *2019 Compact Unified Sea Level Rise Projection*,⁴⁶ a 2019 Policy Platform,⁴⁷ the *2015 Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory: Transportation and Stationary Energy*,⁴⁸ among many other reports and list of resources. More recently, in 2019, Resilient 305 was established, which was a Resilience Strategy that included regional actions to build resilience in all 35 municipalities.

At a municipal level, Miami-Dade County has understood for the past fifty years the urgency in taking measures to protect those communities most vulnerable to climate change.⁴⁹ Considering that the County's key economic drivers — tourism and agriculture — are weather-dependent, and that it has an increasingly large, dense, population put it at high risk to sea-level rise and storm surges from hurricanes. As a result, Miami-Dade County has tackled this priority through various initiatives from the *GreenPrint* (2010) community plan to guide the creation of a mayoral Sustainability Advisory Board (founded in 2009) to a Climate Change Advisory Task Force (CCATF) (founded in 2006). While authors of the *Crandon Park Master Plan* (1995) could not have predicted some of these major environmental concerns, it is imperative more than ever for the sustainability of the Park on all levels — environmental, social and economic — to protect its irreplaceable assets.

Since 1966, Miami-Dade County has sought to address severe beach erosion along the County's shoreline, and the associated economic and social impacts on the community.⁵⁰ However, Crandon Park is

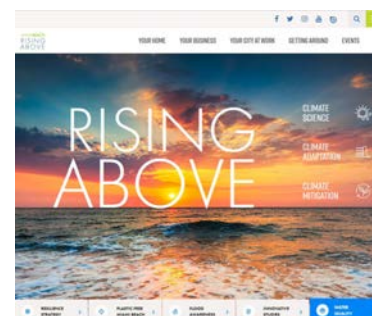
45. Southeast Florida Regional Compact. "What is the Compact?" (Southeast Florida Regional Compact, 2020): <https://southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/about-us/what-is-the-compact/>

46. Southeast Florida Regional Compact Climate Change Compact's Sea Level Rise Ad Hoc Work Group (Compact), *Unified Sea Level Rise Projection Southeast Florida* (February 2020). A document prepared for the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact Climate Leadership Committee. https://southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Sea-Level-Rise-Projection-Guidance-Report_FINAL_02212020.pdf

47. Southeast Florida Regional Compact Climate Change Compact's Sea Level Rise Ad Hoc Work Group (Compact), "Policy Platform" (2019) <https://southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/>

not categorized as an erosional hot spot, even though it is only one of two natural dune systems left in the County (the other being Bill Baggs).⁵¹ In 2015, the South Florida Mayor's Beach Alliance was created, uniting mayors of Miami-Dade's County's five coastal municipalities: Miami Beach, Surfside, Sunny Isles, Beach, Key Biscayne and Bal Harbour. "Beach nourishment is critical in maintaining the city's first line of defense against storms and the environmental benefits provided by beaches, including habitat for threatened and endangered species. This includes collaboration between the City of Miami Beach, Miami Dade County and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE). Similarly, it promotes the recreational and tourism opportunities which Miami Beach is best known for."⁵²

Within the last few years, major efforts to set standards and launch pilot projects for beach restoration within the City of Miami and Dade-County. For instance, the *GreenPrint's* (2010) environment initiatives entail: "protect, enhance, and restore our natural resources," which includes identifying "dedicated funding sources for beach renourishment projects to maintain quality beach and minimize the negative impacts of storm events."⁵³ In addition, the *Strategic Plan through the Lens of Resilience* (2019) for Miami Beach offers an exemplary current approach to resilient beach design. This strategy was developed as a cooperative effort between community and management input from Miami Beach stakeholders and the Greater Miami and the Beach teams. "It is estimated that over 80 percent of the economic benefits from beach renourishment are from storm damage reduction. During Hurricane Andrew in 1992, the project prevented more than \$20 million in storm damage, based on U.S. Army Corps of Engineers computer models."⁵⁴



Miami Beach created "Miami Beach Rising Above" website that features detailed sections on the city's storm water management plan, land use development regulations, provides sustainable transportation options, and expands conservation and efficiency resources for residents and business.

policy-platform/

48. Southeast Florida Regional Compact Climate Change Compact's Sea Level Rise Ad Hoc Work Group (Compact), *Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory: Transportation and Stationary Energy* (2015). <https://southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Regional-Greenhouse-Gas-Inventory-Methodology-Report-1.pdf>



Miami Beach Erosion Management Plan. (Source: <https://www.theverge.com/2016/11/17/13660014/miami-beach-sand-erosion-nourishment-climate-change>)

49. Miami-Dade County, *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* (Miami-Dade County, FL: 2010): p. 9.

50. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Beach Erosion Control Master Plan* (2010): <https://www.miamidade.gov/environment/library/reports/beach-renourishment-doc.pdf>

51. Metro-Dade County Park & Recreation Department, The Nature Conservancy, and Fairchild Tropical Garden. *Crandon Park Natural Areas Protection Plan* (1 October 1991), p. 21.

52. Miami Beach Rising Above. "Beach Nourishment" (2020): <http://www.mbrisingabove.com/climate-mitigation/natural-resources/beaches/renourishment/>

53. Miami-Dade County, *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* (Miami-Dade County, FL: 2010): p. 42.

54. Miami-Dade County, *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* (Miami-Dade County, FL: 2010): p. 43.

55. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 24.

56. *Ibid.* p. 22.

57. *Ibid.* p. 34.

Miami-Dade County has gone as far as to set contemporary standards and benchmarks for their public parks, such as Crandon Park, in order to adapt and become more ecologically resilient. According to the Parks and Open Space System Master Plan (2007), Crandon Park is classified as an Environmental-Hub Park,⁵⁵ which is characterized as below

- An Eco-hub is a site connected to an eco-zone that includes property suitable for development of recreation and educational opportunities;
- An Eco-hub must balance recreational and educational access with conservation through the following conservation, design and programing criteria;
- An Eco-hub must be designed to reflect the natural character of the site; all infrastructure and land conservation methods must be developed and maintained with the principles of sustainability and work harmoniously with the environment; and,
- An Eco-hub must be programmed to include a range of educational, recreational and volunteer programs to inspire, educate and foster stewardship of South Florida communities.



Sustainability



Multiple Benefits

According to the Parks and Open Space System Master Plan (2007), a Great Park System⁵⁶

- Stimulates the physical, mental, and spiritual potential of individuals
- Fosters good schools, jobs, housing, public transportation, clean air, and safety
- Encourages a harmonious relationship between man and nature
- Helps conserve energy and natural resources
- Brings Quality to the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment
- Provides balances and diverse recreational opportunities
- Takes advantage of its unique features, climate, geography, population, history, industry, and express them through design
- Understands a community's roots
- Involves people in the planning and use of projects.

Guidelines, such as those above also help define what it means for Crandon Park to be in a Natural Zone⁵⁷

- Green building practices design construction facilities
- Good signage: educational, interpretive, well-designed
- Kayaking - provide free launch sites
- Camping - provide well-drained campsites as compatible with resource conservation
- Fishing - provide shoreline access, and maintain existing facilities for launching
- Resource-based recreation - provide low impact access
- Expanded, free boat launches and marinas - improve existing facilities
- Provide trail head facilities at regular locations throughout the County. Facilities should include parking, bike racks, shade structures, seating, water and information kiosks. Larger trail heads may also include bike maintenance, repair facilities, repair facilities, concession stands and amenities for group activities.



Seamlessness



Seamlessness



Access



Equality

Shift 3: Active stewardship is embraced as a conservation strategy

Efforts to preserve County parks, like Crandon Park, have made great strides over the last 30 years, especially on the frontier of protecting its natural systems and habits while also raising awareness about the park's unique fossilized reef and remarkable coastal ecology. Since 1990, Miami-Dade County has "acquired and preserved more than 23,000 acres of environmentally endangered lands and restored more than 450 acres of degraded coastal ecosystem. In addition, the state and federal governments have preserved 80,000 acres within Miami-Dade County."⁵⁸ However, a very delicate balance needs to be struck between that is sensitive to both needs of preservation and the needs of the surrounding constituencies of the Park. The *Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007) states well this tension:

While many people are not getting enough nature, many natural lands are not getting enough appreciation. Land conservation programs do help the environment, but there is a perception that their only function is an ecological one. This is unfortunate given that more and more research points to the positive effects that open lands have on the well-being of people.⁵⁹

Whereas Preservation seeks "protection of nature from use," Conservation seeks "the proper use of nature"⁶⁰ according to the National Park Service. Although there are still instances, such as in the case of Yellowstone National Park, where a preservationist approach is considered an appropriate measure (and even in some more extreme cases where re-wilding could be applied), a conservationist approach in open spaces and park lands that are closer to human development and activity could help Crandon Park work to balance both nature and humans. Today there are state-of-art computer models and maps developed using Geographic Information System software (GIS) and services like the Trust for Public Land's GreenPrinting service that can "help communities make informed decisions about how to grow while preserving character, opportunities for recreation, clean water, environmental benefits, and quality of life."⁶¹ Such technological advances assist parks such as Crandon Park to both protect and share its natural resources with the community - enabling stewardship efforts and opportunities.

58. Miami-Dade County, *GreenPrint: Our Design for A Sustainable Future* (Miami-Dade County, FL: 2010): p. 39.

59. Miami-Dade County, *Miami-Dade County Parks and Open Space System Master Plan* (2007), p. 32

60. "Conservation vs Preservation and the National Park Service. National Park Service (2019): <https://www.nps.gov/teachers/classrooms/conservation-preservation-and-the-national-park-service.htm>
61. Trust for Public Land. "Greenprinting" (2018): <https://www.tpl.org/how-we-work/plan/greenprinting>

62. Richardson, *Crandon Park Master Plan* (1995), p. 2, fn. 4.



Coconut Palm Trees

6.5 Crandon Park Today

Frozen in 2000

The 1995 *Crandon Park Master Plan* remains the guiding document for the future of Crandon Park. In the intervening quarter century since it was authored, however, much has changed locally and globally that profoundly affects the Park's ability to fulfill its original mission as declared in the Matheson Family Deed in 1940 to "be perpetually used and maintained for public park purposes only."⁶² While the study team is fully appreciative of the desire to prevent commercial exploitation of the Park, the extreme remedies against exploitation in this Plan have essentially reduced the number of people who will enjoy the land to a very few.

The present master plan does not allow for the community's enjoyment of a "park for the people" in a properly inclusive and equitable way. Robust community engagement would do much to expand and maximize the influence of the park's constituency and advocates. This fortified constituency would also help deliver new and significant fundraising power.

61. Trust for Public Land. "Greenprinting" (2018): <https://www.tpl.org/how-we-work/plan/greenprinting>

62. Richardson, *Crandon Park Master Plan* (1995), p. 2, fn. 4.

Even more critical to the park's fate, however, the existing Master Plan prohibits the park from taking vital ameliorative measures that would help protect it from rising sea levels and other climate-related threats to its survival.



Former pool of Crandon Park Zoo



Credits

Prepared for

Citizens for Park Improvement (CPI)

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