A photograph of a sunset over a body of water, likely a bay or ocean. In the foreground, the silhouettes of several palm trees are visible against the bright sky. The water is calm with gentle waves. In the distance, a city skyline is visible across the water.

Creating a dialog between government and citizens in Miami-Dade County

Code for America and Miami-Dade County
End of Year Report | November 2015

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Executive Summary

Miami-Dade County approached Code for America wanting to improve the customer service experience and transparency. The managers at the Regulatory and Economic Resources department knew that customers were frustrated with some of their regulatory processes, especially those surrounding permits and inspections, but were only hearing of a limited range of customer experiences.

Meanwhile, the County was in the early stages of migrating to a new permitting and land management system for the department, which complicated the prospect of intervening in the underlying processes. After doing research and interviewing members of the community and government staff, our Fellowship team discovered that the current process for gathering feedback and understanding that feedback left a lot to be desired in terms of establishing a transparent and effective dialog between the government and the public.

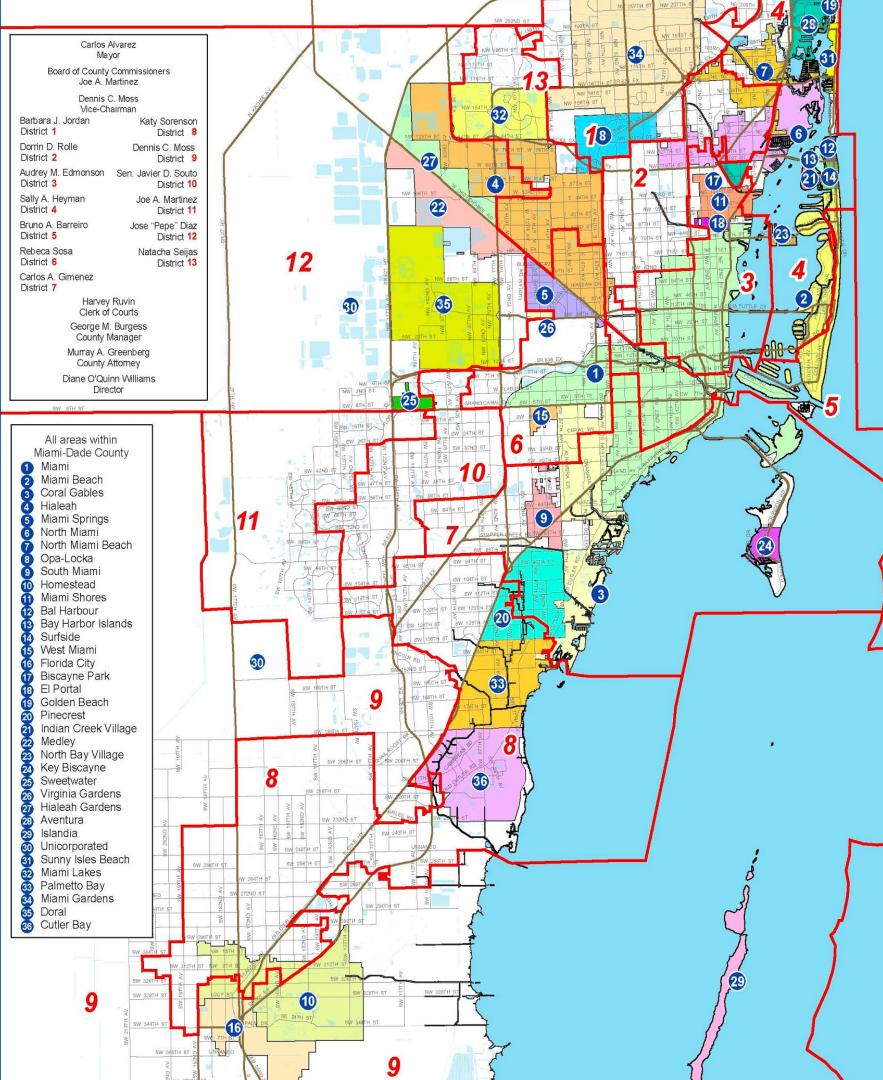
Background

About Miami-Dade County

“Living in Miami is great because it’s so closed to the United States.” It’s different from the rest of the country, with large numbers of immigrants from South America, the Caribbean, and, in the winter, New York. The region’s growth and development has been fast, ballooning from a thousand residents to over 5.5 million between 1896–2006, earning Miami the moniker “The Magic City.”

More than half of its residents speak Spanish as their primary language, and a third are not comfortable speaking English. As a result, creating clear channels of communication between the County and its citizens is complex, and overall civic engagement in the County is relatively low.

The climate and geography of Miami present unique challenges to sustaining this growth. Between the Everglades, rising sea levels, the threat of hurricanes and the area’s shallow water table, building and development are a challenge. Despite these limitations, Miami continues to receive large amounts of investment and is well-positioned as a major port for trade, cruise ships and tourism. In order to diversify its economy fill its skills gap, Miami is also aiming to position itself as technology hub for the Southeastern U.S.



Miami-Dade County at a glance

- 34 municipalities
- More than 2.5 million people
- 52% of the population is in the Unincorporated Municipal Services Area (UMSA)
- One-third of Miami-Dade County's physical area is in Everglades National Park

Miami-Dade County's Tech Landscape

Miami-Dade County is eager to become the next Silicon Valley. Given its population and status as a Latin American financial hub, capital is abundant, but expertise less so. There are a large number of young, educated and eager people graduating from Miami-Dade College, University of Miami, Florida International University, and the bootcamps and learning labs that continue to grow.

Miami-Dade County's strongest asset may be its entrepreneurial ethic. However, this has not yet led to a stable base of local tech companies. The developing sector struggles to keep talent local, as stronger tech hubs offer better salaries and amenities elsewhere. Efforts to create a stronger tech environment include Urban.Us' Smart City Startups Conference, startups like Wyncode, CodeAcademy Labs and LaunchCode, Miami-Dade College's Idea Lab, and coworking spaces like Microsoft's Innovation Center, Venture Hive and Lab Miami.

Miami has an active Brigade with leadership from the tech community. It has the advantage of meeting at Lab Miami, a tech-oriented co-working space, but attendance is inconsistent, and the talent leans more toward design than development. As connections with local governments continue to grow, so will the impact on civic technology. Brigade has already partnered with the County on projects and has helped draft the County's Open Data legislation.

2015 Fellowship Team



Sophia Dengo

2015 Code for America Fellow
Designer and Front End Developer



Mathias Gibson

2015 Code for America Fellow
Product Manager and Researcher



Ernie Hsiung

2015 Code for America Fellow
Full Stack Developer



Michael Sarasti (City partner)

Program Manager,
Communications Department



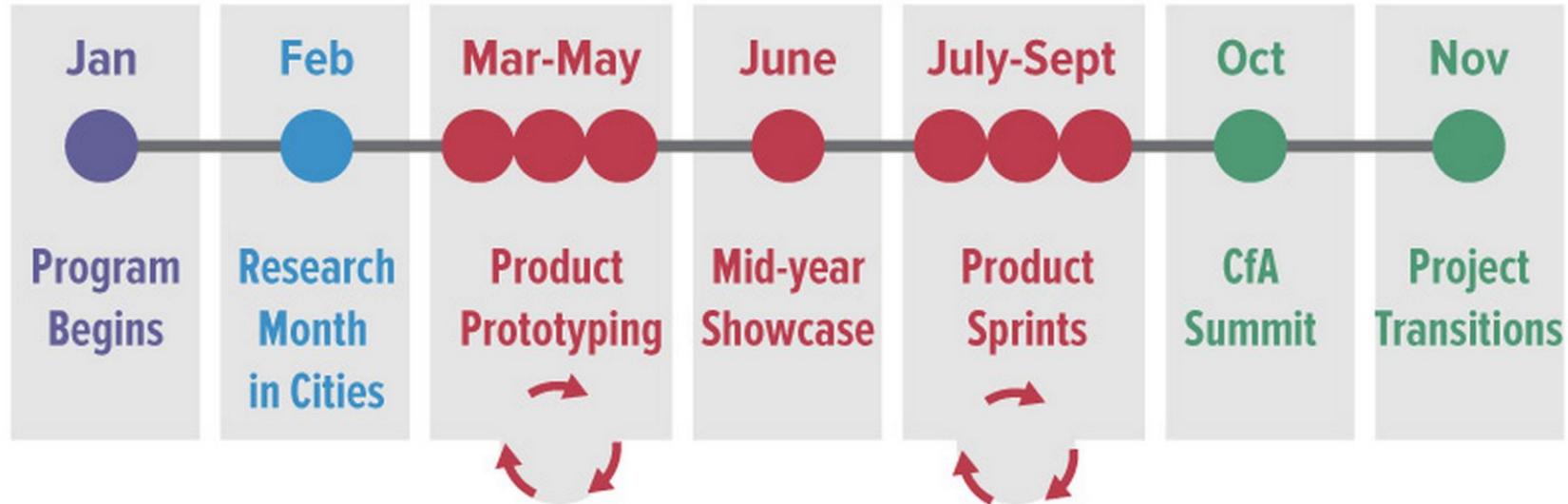
Christa Erml-Martinez (City partner)

Assistant Director, Regulatory & Economic
Resources Department

Community Partners



2015 Fellowship Timeline



2015 Tools

Project Management

The Fellowship team used [Trello](#) for retrospectives and [Github](#) and [Waffle.io](#) for planning meetings and task management.

Surveys

The web survey front end uses [Typeform.com](#), its API [Typeform.io](#).

The SMS surveys are built using [Twilio](#) and [Textit.in](#).

Code

The front end uses jQuery and the CSS framework [Skeleton](#). Charts were built with ChartsJS. The back end is written in Python 2.4 ([Flask](#)). It uses [Postgres](#) for the database and Bower to manage dependencies. In production, the project uses Celery with Redis as a broker to handle backgrounding various tasks.

Code Repositories

- <https://github.com/codeforamerica/mdc-inspectors>
- <https://github.com/codeforamerica/mdc-inspectors-dashboard>
- <https://github.com/codeforamerica/mdc-feedback>
- <https://github.com/codeforamerica/mdc-step-wizard>
- <https://github.com/codeforamerica/mdc-municipality-geo-api>
- <https://github.com/codeforamerica/amiinmiami>

Research

In February, the Fellowship team reviewed the project proposed in the County's application. Since a recent procurement made permit process interventions unsustainable, the Fellows broadened their research to all twelve agencies within the **Regulatory and Economic Resources Department**. Through their partnership with the County, they scheduled, interviewed, and learned from managers and community managers as they sought to pinpoint where services were falling short of their intended goals.



It was key to get diverse perspectives on where perceived problems exist, so that the Fellows could draw a comprehensive picture of where accessing and using County services was difficult, and where the understanding of those issues diverged.



The permitting process was a primary concern for our County partners, so the Fellows spent a good portion of February residency at a service hub called The Permit and Inspection Center. They found a maze of services with representatives from every department involved in the building process, and customers ranging from the neighbor trying to resolve a violation on an unpermitted fence to permit consultants for major developers. The Fellows decided that this would be an ideal place to listen to what residents had to say about the processes and services, in return for gift cards and coffee.





County executives had mentioned that they had received a large number of complaints regarding building inspectors, so the Fellows went on ride-alongs to understand how the service was delivered and to uncover potential interventions.

After talking with representatives from each department involved in the permitting process, the Fellows realized that there was information missing from the resources provided to the public, and internal confusion and disagreement on how the process itself.

The Fellows needed to get everyone involved in the processes in one room. They held a half-day process mapping session with representatives from each department, and had them talk through the process as they understood it. There was a great deal of debate on the steps, but clarity was reached and new across-department connections were made. Everyone gained a new appreciation for others' roles in the complex process.



When the Fellows returned to Code for America headquarters in March, they developed a spreadsheet of more than 50 projects to explore, evaluate, and prototype.

Description (Green = Go, Yellow = Bench, Blue = Light Lift)	Category	measurable impact? (-1: No, 0: neutral, 1: yes)	On a scale of 1-10, how badly does Ernie want to work on it?	On a scale of 1-10, how badly does Mathias want to work on it?	On a scale of 1-10, how badly does Sophia want to work on it?	minimal gov meet gov resistance? (-1: No, 0: neutral, 1:yes)	Can we get (or do we have) the data? (-1: No, 0: neutral, 1:yes)	rearchitecting of an existing MDC product? (-1: No, 0: neutral, 1:yes)	Is it scalable to other cities? (-1: No, 0: neutral, 1:yes)	redeploy of previous project? (-1: No, 0: neutral, 1:yes)
Am I in Las Vegas redeploy for MDC/Incorporated or UMSA	Civic	1	10	10	10	1	1	0	1	1
Consolidated events calendar (Help people know more about advisory/commission meetings and public hearings (not much transparency or communication on when they happen))	Civic	1	5	10	10	1	1	1	1	-1
App that allows people to be notified when their inspector is coming and provide feedback/review on inspector (Christa favorite)	Permits	1	8	5	8	-1	0	-1	0	0
Can we create a visual map that maps different types of public transit together? integrated transit map. brand transit as one system and one name, with different colored lines for the different modes	Transit	1	10	10	8	0	1	0	-1	-1
Create online feedback tools on their experiences at the PIC / how can public see that their feedback is being acted upon, how can we make feedback useful for departments? digitize feedback forms and make it easy for hard copy information to be digitized	Permits	1	7	8	8	1	1	-1	1	-1
redeploy text to bus shelter to find nearest computers program set up by Code for SF	Social Services	1	8	7	5	0	1	-1	1	1
Hernandez' posting of the mayor's remarks -- can we streamline that interface	Internal	0	1	5	1	1	1	1	-1	-1
create a way for departments to maintain an email list of citizens that they can send updates to, without that list being subject to sunshine or public records request	Civic	1	1	9	1	-1	0	-1	1	-1
Resources for Starting a Business - incentives (central hub on the backend, by incentive providers), econ dev zones with planning and zoning dept, inventory of county owned resources so that people could petition to change their use or be aware when they come up for auction	Economic Development	1	5	7	10	1	1	0	0	1
Tree permitting app (do I need a permit -> apply for a permit), allow people to plant a replacement tree if they want to remove a protected tree	Permits	1	5	9	8	1	0	1	0	1

Ideation & Prototyping

IFICATION

Schoolhouse
Rock
for MDC
legislation

CELEBRITY
& GLAMOUR
ENDORSEMENTS

Re-deploy
national scale
tools for voter
info

digitize feedback
data w/
the results
PUBLICLY

In March and April, the Fellowship team narrowed the spreadsheet of the potential projects to a handful of ideas that they could pursue. The Fellows needed to research these ideas further, and determine which potential projects had the most promise to meet Miami-Dade County's needs. This period involved many colored Post-It notes and time-boxing to help consolidate research, further brainstorm, and include guests' thoughts for external perspective.

SHOW
EXAMPLES
THAT ARE
NOT
CORRUPT

"SHOW
HOW GOV'T
WORKS
FOR YOU!"

Fun video
on how the
gov't BCC
works

Show the
people how
you're using
their feedback

Allow digital
comments on
agenda items

More accurate
meeting agenda

EDIT THE
"MIAMI
DADE
MINUTE"

make public
works capital
improvement plan
more transparent
so people know
where it's going

Design public
meetings for the
public

MORE
DETAILED
INFO ON
CANDIDATES
& ISSUES

Re-allocate
305biz/fit/tv
to engagement
that is effective

BLOG
COMMENTS
ON ALL
Gov
DOCUMENTS

Too many
weird sites
showing public
meeting records

Rustic
stats on
dropdown

MAP OUT
DEVELOP POINTS
(Miami CalFresh)

FUNNELS
(MAP IT)

Pipeline
launch code

into 17P

Improve
existing voter
program

PLATFORM
FOR
PROGRAMS

Real Estate
complaint
records

Professional
Dev
Pathways

UBER +
FOR
TRANSITED
WORKERS

Push users/
lift through
by process

Get people
to training
and jobs

Consulting

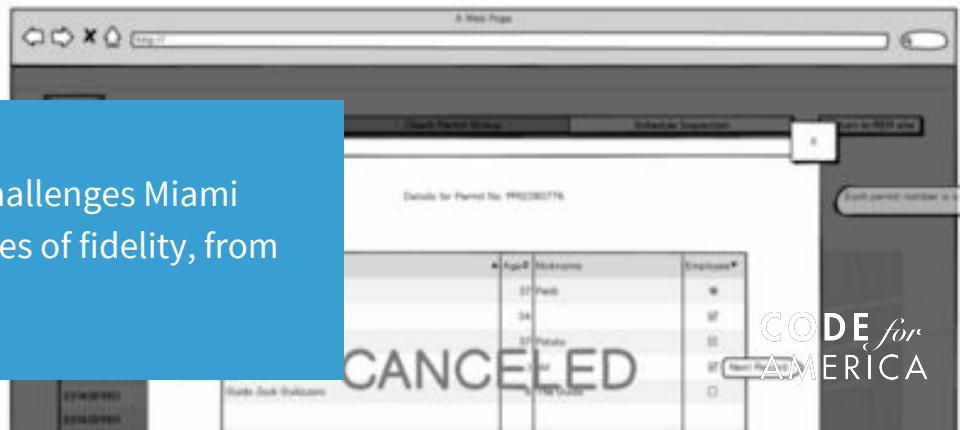
"Country" Park
at University
Miami-Dade

PUSH TO
INCREASE
EMPLOYER
SUPPLY

SMS
"NEW GIG"
ALERTS

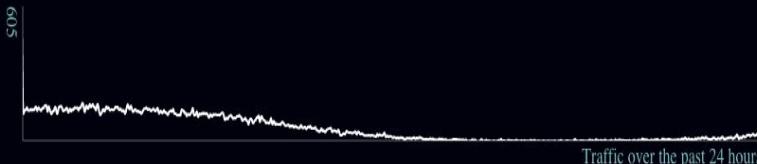
Special
permitting
for food carts
trucks

CODE for
AMERICA



585

visitors online



Live search

property appraiser miami dade

miami-dade property appraiser

miami cruise port

miami dade county tax collector

city of miami boat slip rentals

asd

asd

miami dade corrections

asd

trip planner miami dade transit

florida homestead rebate

miami-dade county

Active pages

Phone Numbers
via: google

Metrobus
via: google

MIA Metrorail Station
via: yahoo

Tax Collector

Information
via: google

Miami-Dade Parks celebrates the 30th anniversary of Parks and Recreation
via: bing

Health
via: google

Office of the Mayor
via: google

Last Page

Most popular pages

Property Search Landing Page - Miami-Dade County
visits: 1210

Property Search Application - Miami-Dade County
visits: 605

Miami-Dade Transit Mobile Services
visits: 577

MDT - Metrobus
visits: 520

MDT - Select Bus Route
visits: 420

Miami-Dade County Portal
visits: 392

MDT - Select Bus Route
visits: 313

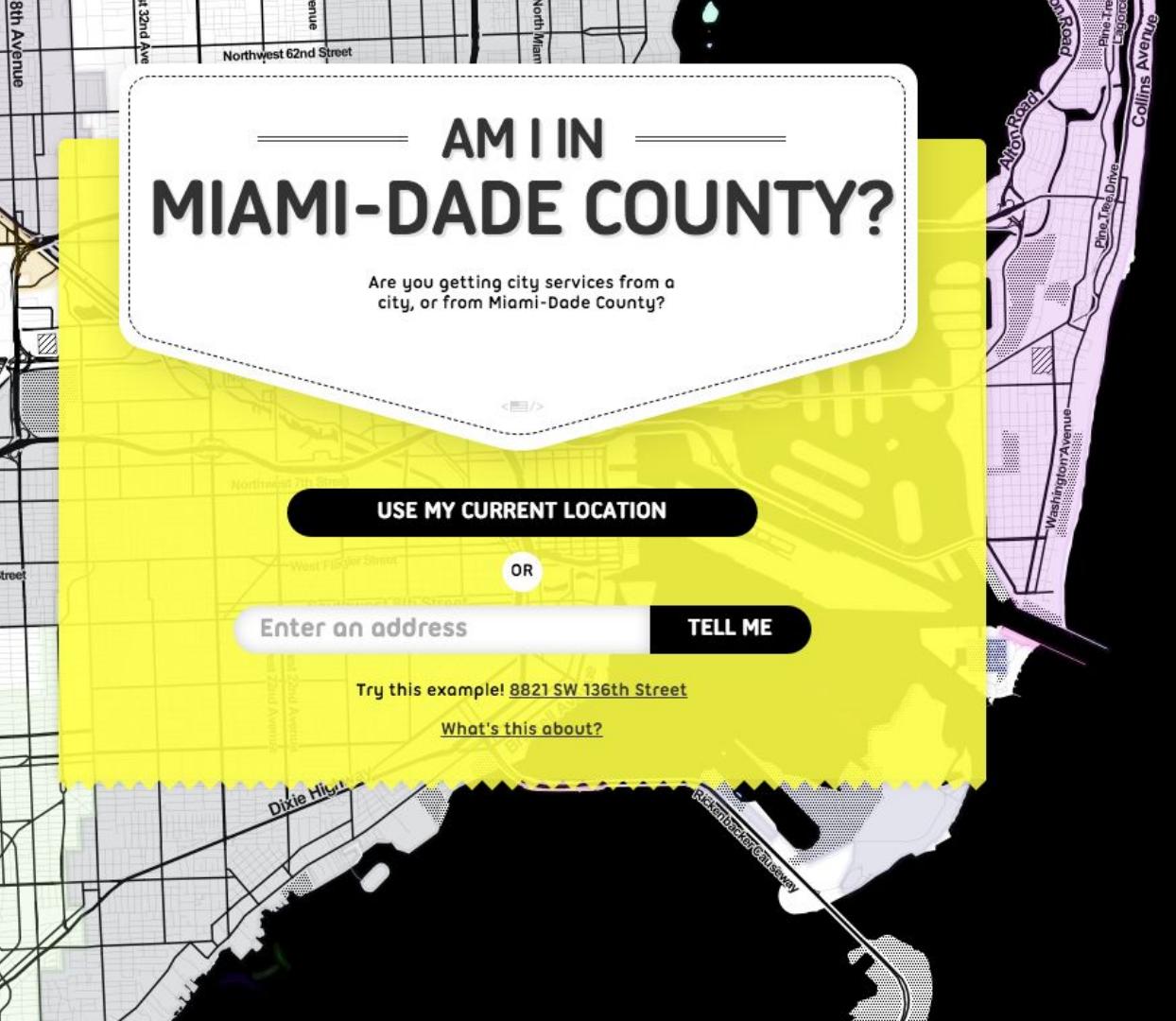
Property Appraiser - Miami-Dade County
visits: 222

Welcome to eNet brought to you by Miami-Dade

Analytics Dashboard

The first prototype was a redeployment of the City Analytics Dashboard built by Code for America's tech team.

This application used data from the County's Google Analytics account, and provided a window into the activity of their website's visitors. The information is updated live, and we have encouraged the County to post it on a screen in a highly trafficked area in County Hall.



Am I in Miami-Dade County?

Miami-Dade County is home to 34 municipalities and a patchwork of unincorporated territory that provides municipal services to over half its population. The public is often confused as to where services come from, and which jurisdiction they live in.

There was a goal to have origin of municipal services displayed in addition to displaying which jurisdiction an address belonged to, but service information is not tracked and updated in a single location, so we could not import it into the app.

Miami-Dade County Municipality API

This is a geospatial APIs that will retrieve the municipality within Miami-Dade County, given a latitude and a longitude. If no municipality is returned, this means that the latitude and longitude may be in unincorporated Miami-Dade County, an area which provides city services to 2.1 million people so long as the location is within county borders.

This project is a fork of a the US Census Area API, a Code for America project that allows simple geospatial APIs. [Fork this original repository on Github.](#)

With this API, you can:

- [Download the original datasource as a ZIP file.](#)
- [Search areas covering a single point.](#)
- [Select features by attribute values.](#)

Is there another Miami-Dade County geospatial API available?

There is!

Shortly after this repo was localized, we were notified that [Miami-Dade County offers web services](#) which return metadata - including municipality names - given a particular address in the county. The county web services have some differences compared to this API, including SOAP services, XML formats and X and Y return coordinates rather than latitudes and longitudes. Use the web service that works the best for you!



This code base was originally written by [Michal Migurski](#) with [Andy Hull](#), then localized for Miami-Dade County by Ernie Hsiung. © 2013-2015 Code for America.

Miami-Dade County Municipality API

This Application Programming Interface (API) was created to support [Am I in Miami-Dade County?](#) (AIIM). By exposing the data that runs AIIM, the API also makes it available for other developers to use in their own applications.



Miami-Dade AgendaBot



Miami-Dade AgendaBot
@agendabot305
Hi! I help publicize recent Miami-Dade County meetings here:
miamidade.gov/wps/portal/Mai...

 Miami-Dade County

 [Tweet to Miami-Dade Agen...](#)

 7 Followers you know



TWEETS 225 **FOLLOWERS** 25

Tweets [Tweets & replies](#)

 **Miami-Dade AgendaBot** @agendabot305 · 4h
Public Health Trust Board of Trustees - Nov 23, 2015: ift.tt/1P41pkX

 **Miami-Dade AgendaBot** @agendabot305 · 5h
Public Health Trust Board of Trustees - Nov 23, 2015: ift.tt/1R1J1bM

 **Miami-Dade AgendaBot** @agendabot305 · Nov 20
Homeless Trust Board - Nov 20, 2015: ift.tt/1MsHU1F

 **Miami-Dade AgendaBot** @agendabot305 · Nov 20
Homeless Trust Board - Nov 20, 2015: ift.tt/1PEAbI

The team explored improving the transparency of and access to legislative meetings. They talked with community groups and engaged citizens, who mentioned the difficulty of trying to attend meetings due to last-minute schedule changes, work schedules or the ominous Miami traffic.

While exploring solutions, the Fellows found that County meeting agendas have an RSS feed. They increased the exposure of these meetings by simply hooking the agenda to a Twitter feed. Since Miamians are famous Twitter users, this could bring the information directly to the people.

Get your Short-Term Event Permit!

Welcome to Miami-Dade County's short-term event permitting wizard.

Any event that lasts 45 days or less where temporary structures and facilities are required is a Short Term Event.

These events can be for revivals, carnivals, assemblies, circuses, sporting tournaments and for the sale of items such as sparklers, Christmas trees, pumpkins, stuffed animals and/or flowers.

Use this tool to help you get ready to apply for a short-term event permit (STEP): know who to call & when!

Will your event be open to the general public?

YES

NO

Is your event being held in a county park?

YES

NO

We need to know where your event will be held.

Do you know the address of where you'll have the event?

YES

NO

START OVER

Have feedback? Talk to us at miami-dade@codeforamerica.org

Built by Team Miami-Dade at [Code for America](#) in partnership with the [Department of Economic and Regulatory Resources](#) in Miami-Dade County.

Short Term Event Permit Wizard

This application resulted from the process mapping session held with County staff involved in the permitting process. This was our first prototype for the year. We took the information gleaned from the session, combined with public materials, and built this wizard as an alternative to all the PDFs, websites, and phone numbers that were required to obtain a short term permit.

We were unable to get everyone from the original session together for another meeting to discuss how to sustain this application. This serves as an example of how a government service can look once you have all of the information.

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AMERICA

Feedback Dashboard

Product Summary

The primary application is a feedback collection, delivery, and display system titled “The MDC Dashboard.” When a customer wishes to leave feedback, they can do so via a web or text survey in English or Spanish. The platform is advertised at the physical location of service, and on related notices mailed to customer’s homes.

The survey content was changed to optimize for clarity, brevity, process over personnel evaluation, quantitative data that could be aggregated, and contextual questions to help categorize and understand aggregate feedback in more detail.

The Fellows also created a public-facing dashboard where this aggregated, daily updated data is publicly available, closing the previously-open feedback loop. They added more tools for government staff to act upon feedback: monthly reports sent out to department executives, automatic sending of each survey that requests follow-up or leaves open ended comments to the appropriate...

Product Links

[MDC PIC Feedback Dashboard](#)

[MDC Inspectors Feedback Dashboard](#)

[MDC Survey Subscription](#)

[Permit Inspection Center Web Survey](#)

[Inspection Web Survey](#)

Product Summary (cont'd)

...section head on the day it's received, and allowing government staff to download a .csv file of historical feedback data for the timeframe that they choose.

By improving accessibility, asking the right questions, and giving the County the tools to respond to feedback in a timely manner, Miami-Dade County can increase dialog between various departments and the public, while helping democratize the complaints addressed.

Product Links

[MDC PIC Feedback Dashboard](#)

[MDC Inspectors Feedback Dashboard](#)

[MDC Survey Subscription](#)

[Permit Inspection Center Web Survey](#)

[Inspection Web Survey](#)

Of all of the projects explored, improving the feedback system at the Permit Inspection Center had the most buy-in from the County. The project addressed priorities of key stakeholders, could be completed in beta form by November, and had potential to scale.

While the County's building department has a reputation for being the most competent in the region, the Fellows heard from many customers who were lost, confused, and angry with the process of getting their work properly permitted and approved. Our research highlighted a difference in perspective of how well the process was designed, communicated, and executed. What the Fellows saw was a communication system in need of repair.

complain.”

“I don’t want to get people in trouble.”

During user interviews, the Fellows heard from a variety of visitors to the Permit Inspection Center. There was a Haitian minister struggling for three years to get permits to do work on his dilapidated church, and a mother/daughter team that wanted to start a car-washing business on a vacant lot, but could not secure County approval, and others.

The Fellows wanted to understand the obstacles in people’s ways. People saw the existing system as a channel for complaints. They didn’t want to complain; they wanted to move forward. Some were afraid of damaging relationships with front desk staff, which they felt were key to quick service. The hypothesis was that the combination of cultural attitudes and questions geared toward employee performance evaluation made feedback personal, rather than process-oriented, which was only valuable to regulars who thought that glowing reviews would make someone go the extra mile on their next visit.

“Even an automated response would be better than nothing.”

“It goes into a hole.”

Another weakness in the current system was that by not closing the feedback loop, the County was effectively discouraging participation. Those to whom we spoke who had previously filled out feedback forms with critical or constructive feedback were quick to share the lesson they learned: there's no point, because nothing happens.

“People have ideas, either they don’t think the County is listening or don’t know how to communicate.”
“As a citizen I deserve to be listened

to.”

In hearing users' attitudes toward the existing system, the County saw a missed opportunity to capture valuable insight about the way programs were operating, from the perspective of those who actually had to use them. This insight is something that the Fellows wanted to encourage customers to share and make readily available for County staff at all levels.

Addressing Accessibility

How was your visit today?

We want to hear from you!



TEXT

Text 001 to 305-770-6575



ONLINE

<http://c4a.me/picsurvey>

Standard messaging rates apply.

CODE for
AMERICA



Permitting and Inspection Center

¿Como fue su visita hoy?

¡Queremos saber de usted!



SMS

Envie el texto 002 a
305-770-6575



POR INTERNET

<http://c4a.me/picsurvey>

Cargos adicionales por mensajería
podrían ser aplicados.

CODE for
AMERICA

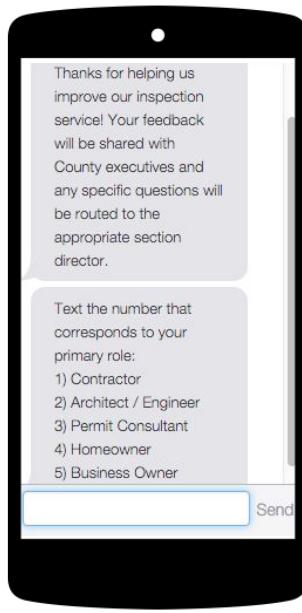
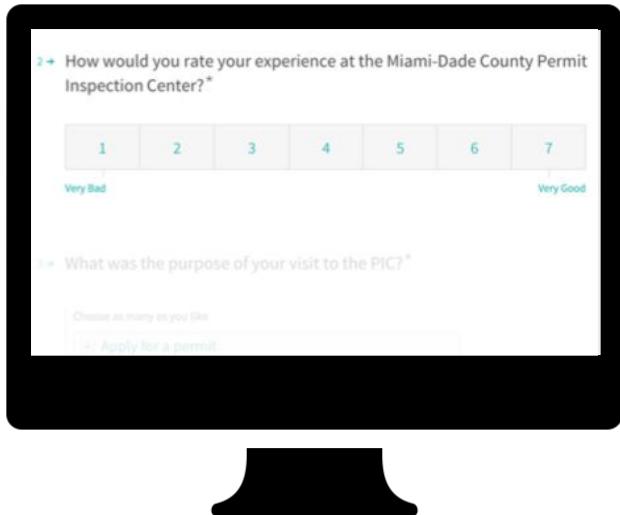


Permitting and Inspection Center

The fellows first addressed this challenge by reviewing the accessibility of the feedback surveys. For the customer, this meant having the surveys available on multiple devices, in multiple locations, and in multiple languages.

The accessibility of these responses was also important for County staff to see and take action, if needed.

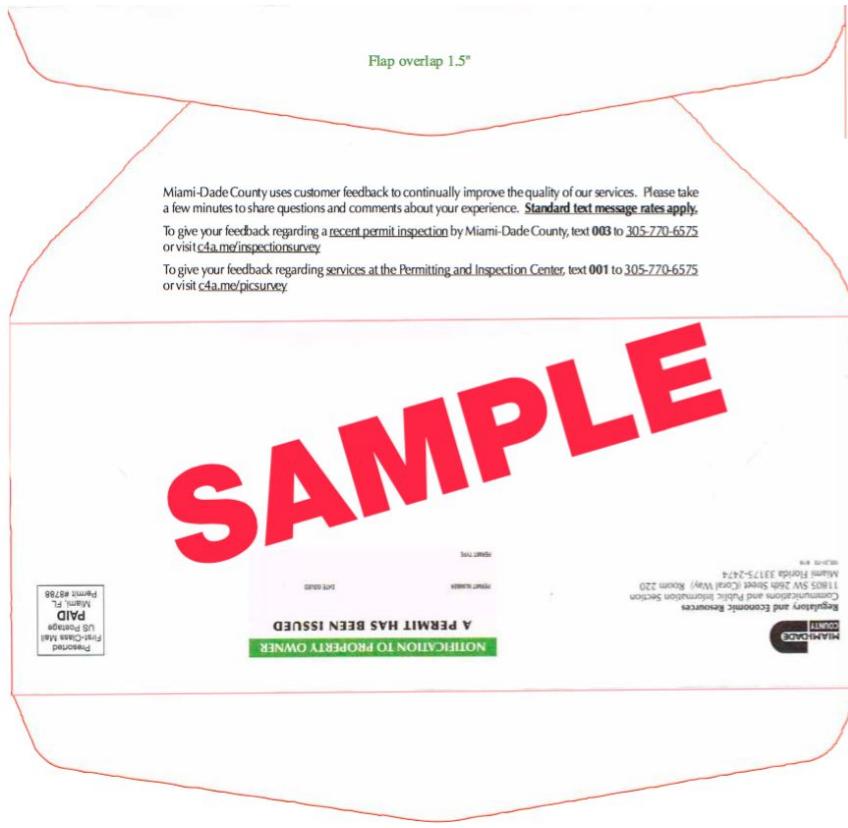
CODE for
AMERICA



Digitizing the survey submissions also allowed surveys to be quickly updated.

Given the availability of public computers and the prevalence of mobile phones, customers could submit their surveys while standing in line, and receive confirmation that their feedback was received. This addressed concerns about legibility or staff availability for data entry.

Raising Awareness



Almost half of the customers we spoke with were not aware that there was an existing survey, so raising awareness was the Fellowship team's next priority.

The Fellows had links to new surveys posted on the County website, on mailers sent out to customers after they submitted a permit application, and on bi-lingual flyers next to each customer window at the Permit Inspection Center.

The fellows also updated the posters to inform people walking by that they could submit feedback on the go. These posters were published in English and Spanish.

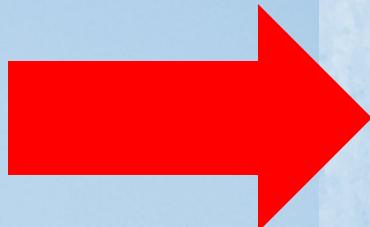
**Give us
your input.**

Please help us by
filling out
our survey.

Your input will help us to provide you
with the best possible service.

Thank you.

Delivering Excellence Every Day



**Help us improve
service at the PIC**

Ayúdenos a mejorar el servicio en el PIC



Send us feedback
in a 2-minute
text survey

English:
text 001 to
305-770-6575

Envíenos
comentarios en una
encuesta por texto
que tarda 2 minutos

Español:
envíe el texto 002 al
305-770-6575

**CODE for
AMERICA**

Your privacy is important to us.
We won't sell or share your contact information.
Standard messaging rates apply.

Su privacidad es importante para nosotros.
No vendremos o compartiremos su información
de contacto con terceros.
Cargos adicionales por mensajería podrían ser aplicados.



The Value

Improved accessibility and awareness don't have value if the resulting data isn't enough to drive decisions for County staff.

The Fellows sought to add more context to the questions being asked, so that the data could be understood better and be analyzed in different dimensions.

The Fellows also wanted to move the survey away from being a staff performance evaluation to emphasizing the customer's experience as they made their way through the process.

**Miami-Dade County Customer Service Survey
PERMITTING AND INSPECTION CENTER**

Complete and place in the drop-box.

PLEASE COMPLETE A SEPARATE FORM FOR EACH DEPARTMENT OR SECTION VISITED

DEPARTMENT (Check One)

Building & Neighborhood Compliance
Planning and Zoning
DERM
Fire Rescue
Water and Sewer
Public Works
Health Department

SECTION (Check One)

Cashiers	Information Center (Lobby)	Plan Review
Certificates of Use	Information Center (1st fl. Plan Review Area)	Product Control
Concurrency	Information Center (2nd fl. Neighborhood Compliance Receptionist Area)	Public Works Paving and Drainage
Contractor Licensing	Inspectors	D.O.H. Septic Tank Program/Water Well
Impact Fees	WASD New Business Section	
	Permit Section Application Intake	

Date and Time Visited: _____
Reason for your Visit: _____

Please score one, 1, (poor service) to five, 5, (excellent service).

GREETING

1. I was greeted in a professional and courteous manner.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

2. Service was prompt.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

REQUEST/SERVICE (Provide employee name, if available)

3. Employee listened and gave full attention.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

4. Employee was knowledgeable.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

5. Employee had access to necessary tools to meet request.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

6. I received the service/information I needed.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

7. Employee went the extra mile to address my request.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

OVERALL SERVICE

8. Overall office employees' behavior and appearance were professional.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

9. The surroundings were clean and well maintained.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

10. The overall impression of my visit was positive.

1 Poor Service	2	3	4	5 Excellent Service
----------------	---	---	---	---------------------

Any comments?

Idea for better service: _____

IF, you would like us to contact you, please provide your name and contact information here

Name: _____ Tel: _____ Email: _____

Thank you for your participation!

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

English/Ingles Spanish/Español

How would you rate your experience at the Miami-Dade County Permit Inspection Center?*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very Bad Very Good

What was the purpose of your visit to the PIC?*

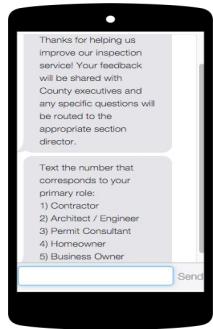
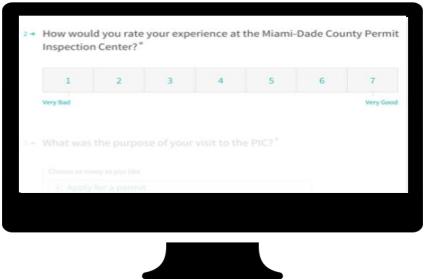
Choose as many as you like

Apply for a permit
 Meet with an Inspector
 Meet with a Plan Reviewer

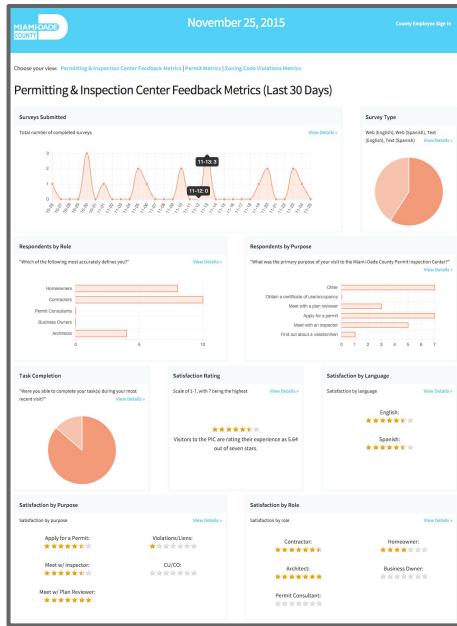
11% completed

The Solution

Digital Surveys



Transparent Metrics



Staff Notifications

New feedback has been posted from the Permitting Inspection Center!

Hello!

A user has submitted a survey response that requires attention from the Building / Roofing / Structural division of the Permit Inspection Center.

Below are the details of the survey response. Please follow up with the user within 30 days if contact information is provided.

- Survey Date: 2015-11-13 14:21:16
- Language: English
- Input: Website
- Would you like to be followed-up with: Yes
- Contact Information:
- Comments:
- Role: Contractor
- Purpose: Obtain a certificate of use and/or occupancy
- Experience Rating: 7 / 7
- Were you able to complete your tasks? Yes
- Best Experience: ex. Finishing tasks quickly
- Worst Experience: ex. Long wait time
- Improvement Suggestion: Some department need more people to costumer service

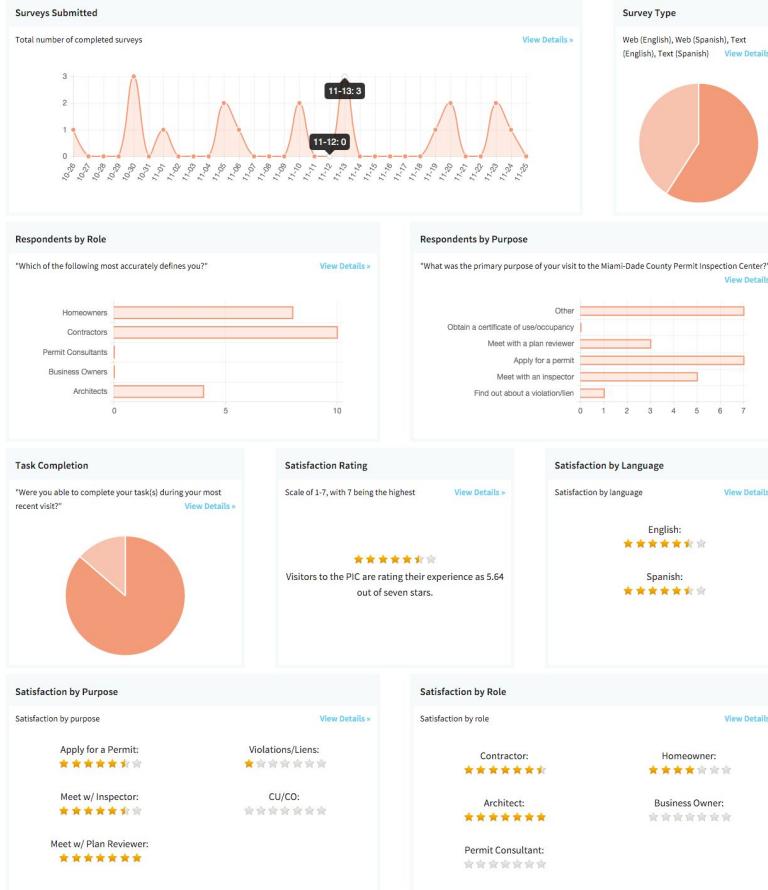
Thank you,

Miami-Dade County RER & Communications Departments

You have received this mail because you have been listed as a stakeholder of the Building / Structural Section in the MDC Feedback Tool. If you believe this is incorrect, please [let us know](#).

Choose your view: [Permitting & Inspection Center Feedback Metrics](#) | [Permit Metrics](#) | [Zoning Code Violations Metrics](#)

Permitting & Inspection Center Feedback Metrics (Last 30 Days)



Home Page - Feedback Metrics

All of the data collected needed a home, and the Fellowship team wanted to add transparency to a fairly opaque process in order to encourage participation.

They made the data summary publicly available, and shared the link after a user submits a survey. Some information is not shared publicly, due to the possibility of revealing private contact information, and the difficulty of summarizing it programmatically.

From this page, a user can also visit the metrics for two other datasets we were able to expose, Zoning Code Violations and Permits. Two additional pages that can be accessed are user management (requires login) and the full details of each survey.

All Survey Responses

Not seeing your comment? If you're not logged in as a Miami-Dade County employee, some data has been obscured in order to protect your privacy and personal information.

Pro tip: Click the table headers to sort each column.

DATE	METHOD	LANGUAGE	RATING	ROLE	ROUTE	FOLLOWUP?
24 Nov 2015 9:49PM	Web	English	2	Contractor	Contractor Licensing	Yes
23 Nov 2015 8:45PM	Web	English	1	Homeowner	Code Violations	Yes
23 Nov 2015 3:36PM	Web	English	7	Homeowner	Building / Roofing / Structural	No
20 Nov 2015 7:23PM	Text	English	1	Homeowner	Building / Roofing / Structural	Yes
20 Nov 2015 12:32AM	Web	English	7	Contractor	Building / Roofing / Structural	No
19 Nov 2015 5:00PM	Text	English	7	Contractor	Plumbing	No
DATE	METHOD	LANGUAGE	RATING	ROLE	ROUTE	FOLLOWUP?
13 Nov 2015 3:20PM	Text	English	5	Contractor	Building / Roofing / Structural	Yes
13 Nov 2015 2:21PM	Web	English	7	Contractor	Building / Roofing / Structural	Yes
10 Nov 2015 1:52PM	Text	English	7	Contractor	Plumbing	No
10 Nov 2015 2:03AM	Web	English	7	Contractor	Building / Roofing / Structural	No
6 Nov 2015 3:12PM	Web	English	7	Contractor	Building / Roofing / Structural	Yes
5 Nov 2015 5:26PM	Text	English	3	Homeowner	Permit Application Intake and Information	No
5 Nov 2015 4:17PM	Web	English	7	Architect / Engineer	Permit Application Intake and Information	No
1 Nov 2015 4:35PM	Web	English	7	Architect / Engineer	Electrical	Yes
30 Oct 2015 6:28PM	Text	English	7	Contractor	Code Violations	No
30 Oct 2015 3:21PM	Text	English	7	Homeowner	Health Department (HRS)	Yes
30 Oct 2015 2:30PM	Web	English	7	Homeowner	Microfilm	Yes
26 Oct 2015 4:04PM	Text	English	7	Architect / Engineer	Mechanical	Yes
15 Oct 2015 2:01PM	Text	English	1	Homeowner	Building / Roofing / Structural	No
9 Oct 2015 7:46PM	Web	English	6	Homeowner	Cashier	No
8 Oct 2015 11:49AM	Web	English	7	Contractor	Building / Roofing / Structural	Yes

View Details - All Survey Responses

The “view details” link takes users to each respondent's answers to all of the closed-ended survey questions, highlighting responses where the user indicated that they would like followed-up.

When County staff are logged in, they are able to see the open-ended responses as well, allowing them to view a user's response to the following questions:

- What was the best part about your experience?
- What was the worst part about your experience?
- How could your experience be improved?
- Any other questions or comments?

Choose your view: [Permitting & Inspection Center Feedback Metrics](#) | [Permit Metrics](#) | [Zoning Code Violations Metrics](#)

Permit Metrics

Master building permits opened per month

A master permit is the main permit on a project and receives a Certificate of Occupancy/Use when closed.



Trade permits, issued same-day v. total issued



Time to issuance for commercial permits

*Includes time required for plan revisions and resubmissions and as well as time awaiting action from the applicant. "Commercial Permits" are defined as permits pulled on parcels zoned "Commercial" per the zoning code. See <http://www.miamidade.gov/zoning/code.asp> for more information.

New commercial construction and additions:

- 313 days on average
- 66 days min.
- 724 days max.

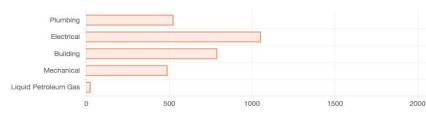
Renovations, alterations or repairs:

- 135 days on average
- 13 days min.
- 1189 days max.

Signs (Non-Electric):

- 39 days on average

Permits & sub-permits issued by type, Last 30 Days



Master Permits Issued, Last 30 Days

A master permit is the main permit on a project and receives a Certificate of Occupancy/Use when closed. This is for building permits ranging from fence construction to major construction, excluding roofing.

915

Versus the same period a year ago: Down -15.04%

Permit Metrics

This is a series of visualizations that allow County staff and citizens to better understand the data from the permitting system. It shows how open data can be used, but also helps expose the fields that would allow the County to be part of emerging open data standard efforts for permitting. The data source for this page can be found at:

<https://opendata.miamidade.gov/Building/Building-Permits-Issued-by-Miami-Dade-County-Jan-2/kw55-e2d1>

Choose your view: [Permitting & Inspection Center Feedback Metrics](#) | [Permit Metrics](#) | [Zoning Code Violations Metrics](#)

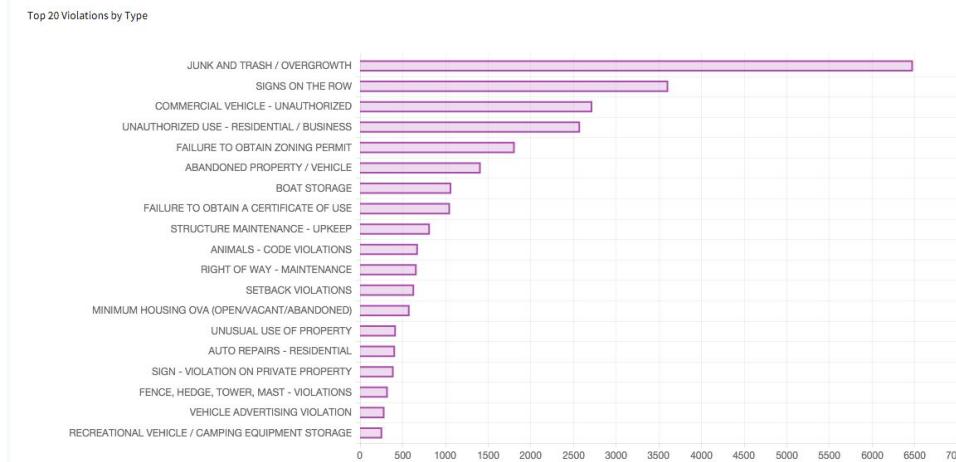
Zoning Code Violations Metrics

Complaints & violations cases opened, per month

Violations of the Miami-Dade Zoning Code (not including building code violations). See <http://www.miamidade.gov/building/neighborhood-compliance.asp> for more information.



Top 20 Violations by Type, to date in 2015



Zoning Code Violations Metrics

The Fellowship team also exposed zoning code violations data in order to educate the public and provide quick at-a-glance views for County staff.

Opening up this data allows important questions to be asked and data quality concerns to be addressed, such as what fields might have been mislabeled or missing from the dataset. This was another important step in getting the County to understand and appreciate the information at its disposal. This data source can be found at:

<https://opendata.miamidade.gov/Building/Neighborhood-and-Zoning-Code-Violations/tzia-umkx>

“I get enough metrics. They don’t tell me anything. I want to hear what our customers are saying.”

The initial goal was to combine data from call centers, building code violations, zoning code violations, permit processing, permit applications tracking and the building website analytics, and add it all to a master dashboard of customizable visualizations. However, extracting data from legacy systems proved to be a slow process, and were only able to gain access to two of these datasets. The Fellows thought that this data might be interesting for both the users and the public to see alongside feedback results. After testing early versions with top-level staff, they learned that the priority was hearing the public voice, rather than making these datasets readily understandable. The County officials were multiple levels removed from the citizens, and yet they would occasionally hear complaints that made their way up the ladder. They stressed the need to have a closer connection to the user.

“Ain’t nobody gonna give you that for free.”

County staff wanted to prioritize access to feedback data over process data, but what did the customers at the Permit Inspection Center think? The Fellows found an even split in preference between the web and SMS versions of the survey, but there was a critical risk with relying on elective participation for data points rather than tracking behavior in the process. During user testing, the Fellows posed the question “What would motivate you to fill out this survey?”

One response that really stood out was the quote above. People need to feel like they are getting something in return for their time; they need to see value in the experience. In this instance, test users received a gift card. However, in a more sustainable system, they would see their problems addressed. If these surveys were established as a trusted method of solving frustrating problems, maybe the County would see more earnest and sustained participation. The Fellowship team discussed this as a potential game-changing solution that would make both the County staff and citizens more involved in a dialog about improving the process.

You're looking at: Manage Users

[Jump to Reporting E-mail Management](#) | [Jump to Monthly E-mail Recipients](#)[Go back to: Dashboard](#)

Manage your users.

NAME	EMAIL	PERMISSIONS	ACTIONS
Ernie S. Hsiung	[REDACTED]	admin	EDIT USER DELETE USER
Sophia Dengo	[REDACTED]	admin	EDIT USER DELETE USER
Mathias Gibson	[REDACTED]	admin	EDIT USER DELETE USER

[ADD A NEW USER](#)

Set who receives e-mail.

Here you can determine who receives daily e-mail updates from the dashboard system. You may separate multiple e-mail addresses with a comma.

o Building / Roofing / Structural:
 [REDACTED]

o Cashier:
 [REDACTED]

o Code Violations:
 [REDACTED]

o Contractor Licensing:
 [REDACTED]

o Electrical:
 [REDACTED]

o Environmental Resources Management (DERM):
 [REDACTED]

o Fire Department:
 [REDACTED]

o Health Department (HRS):
 [REDACTED]

o Microfilm:
 [REDACTED]

o Mechanical:
 [REDACTED]

o Permit Application Intake and Information:
 [REDACTED]

o Plumbing:
 [REDACTED]

o Water and Sewer Department (WASD):
 [REDACTED]

o Zoning / Impact Fees / Public Works:
 [REDACTED]

[SAVE CHANGES](#)

Set who receives monthly status reports.

Separate multiple e-mail addresses with a comma.

User Management

The team proposed a survey routing system that would send responses directly to the relevant section director (e.g. building, electrical, plumbing), with the trigger being a “Yes” response to the question: “Would you like someone to follow-up with you?”

They also created a way for County staff to manage the parties subscribed to these notifications, in addition to a subscription list for a more thoroughly monthly report, delivered as a link to a web-hosted PDF.

Below is the message that customers see at the beginning of the survey, which underscores that their feedback is being viewed and acted upon if necessary. The hope is that this message will help contribute to users leaving more meaningful and honest feedback.

“Thanks for helping us improve our Permit Inspection Center service! Your feedback will be shared with County executives and any specific questions will be routed to the appropriate section director.”

You're looking at:

Go back to:

[CLICK TO PRINT THIS REPORT](#)

If you're using Chrome, Firefox or Safari, you can also save a PDF of this report from the print dialog.

Report for November, 2015

Overall

	Role	Best
Respondents 16	Contractor: 8 (50.00%) Architect/Engineer: 3 (18.75%) Permit Consultant: 0 (0.00%) Homeowner: 5 (31.25%) Business owner: 0 (0.00%)	ex. Getting questions answered and explained: 3 (18.75%) ex. Finishing tasks quickly: 3 (18.75%) ex. Courteous staff: 5 (31.25%) Other: 1 (6.25%)
Satisfaction 5.5625 / 7 (mean) [0] / 7 (median)		
Follow-up Requested Yes: 7 (43.75%) No: 9 (56.25%)	Purpose Apply for a permit: 5 (31.25%) Meet with an inspector: 4 (25.00%) Meet with a plan reviewer: 2 (12.50%) Violations or Liens: 1 (6.25%) Obtain a CU/CO: 0 (0.00%)	Worst ex. Long wait time: 4 (25.00%) ex. Repeated visits for the same issue: 2 (12.50%) ex. Not being familiar with how the process works: 3 (18.75%) Other: 2 (12.50%)
Language English: 16 (100.00%) Spanish: 0 (0.00%)		
Survey Type via web: 11 (68.75%) via phone: 5 (31.25%)		
Task Completion Yes: 14 No: 2		

By Section

SECTION	RESPONDENTS	SATISFACTION	TASK COMPLETION	REQUESTED FOLLOW-UP
Building / Roofing / Structural	8	6.0/7.0	8 / 8	4 / 8
Cashier	0	--	--	--
Code Violations	1	1.0/7.0	0 / 1	1 / 1
Contractor Licensing	1	2.0/7.0	0 / 1	1 / 1
Electrical	1	7.0/7.0	1 / 1	1 / 1
Environmental Resources Management (DERM)	0	--	--	--
Fire Department	1	7.0/7.0	1 / 1	0 / 1
Health Department (HRS)	0	--	--	--
Microfilm	0	--	--	--
Mechanical	0	--	--	--
Permit Application Intake and Information	2	5.0/7.0	2 / 2	0 / 2
Plumbing	2	7.0/7.0	2 / 2	0 / 2
Water and Sewer Department (WASD)	0	--	--	--
Zoning / Impact Fees / Public Works	0	--	--	--

Monthly Report

This is an example of the monthly report that is sent out to County managers. Not shown are the results from the open comments fields.

Hello!

A user has submitted a survey response that requires attention from the Building / Roofing / Structural division of the Permit Inspection Center.

Below are the details of the survey response. Please follow up with the user within 30 days if contact information is provided.

- Survey Date: 2015-11-13 14:21:16
- Language: English
- Input: Website
- Would you like to be followed-up with: Yes
- Contact Information:
- Comments:
- Role: Contractor
- Purpose: Obtain a certificate of use and/or occupancy
- Experience Rating: 7 / 7
- Were you able to complete your tasks? Yes
- Best Experience: ex. Finishing tasks quickly
- Worst Experience: ex. Long wait time
- Improvement Suggestion: Some department need more people to costumer service

Thank you,

Miami-Dade County RER & Communications Departments

Follow-up Email Notification

This e-mail is effectively a light-weight customer experience management tool. It delivers all of the details to the staff's inbox, so that staff never need to log into the system except for user management and to review historical data.

Miami-Dade County Inspector Feedback

This is a pilot program that allows homeowners and contractors to give constructive feedback to Miami-Dade County inspectors.

[Learn more »](#)

We'd like to give you a way for you to give feedback when you go through your upcoming inspections.

Each time you are visited by a Miami-Dade County Inspector, you will be given a link to a feedback survey about his/her performance via e-mail or text message.

This feedback will be aggregated and sent to management about inspector performance.

Registration Form

Miami-Dade County Permit or Process Number

Email address (optional)

Phone number to get SMS updates (optional)

[Sign me up!](#)

Survey Subscription

The Fellows also prototyped a survey subscription system that would allow a user to provide feedback about their inspections processes, via automated micro-surveys. This is in addition to the permitting surveys.

These surveys are activated by a change in the system database and are sent to a user via e-mail or SMS, depending on which channel the user selects at sign-up.

This system not only provides timely surveys to a user soon after completing a process, but it also allows for relevant information for the specific permit or process to be pre-filled in the survey.

The Impact

Goal: Increase Miami-Dade County's ability to iteratively improve services in response to user feedback

Realized Impact for MDC Feedback Dashboard

- Staff time savings
 - Data entry of surveys
 - Analysis and aggregation of data
 - Routing of surveys requesting follow-up
 - Cost of printing paper forms
 - Users don't have to find the forms or be at the PIC to provide feedback
- Increased actionable feedback
- Increased staff follow-up
- Increased participation by non-professionals and non-English speakers

Other Effects

- Mayor considering creation of internal innovation office
- Open Data Policy legislation is moving forward
- Closer ties between County government and Code for Miami brigade

Measuring Future Impact

Survey Usage

- Number of surveys submitted
- Number of Spanish surveys submitted
- Percentage of surveys submitted with comments
- Percentage of surveys submitted with request for follow-up

Dashboard Usage

- Number of visits to dashboard
- Length of visits to Dashboard

Scalability

- Number of redeployments
- Number of forks on Github

Sustainability Plans

The MDC PIC and Inspector Dashboard applications will be maintained by the Miami-Dade Communications Department (formerly Community Information and Outreach).

Specifically, the hosting for the platform will be transitioning from Heroku to Amazon Web Services, which will allow more flexibility and stability for anticipated increases in web traffic. Miami-Dade's web team has also dedicated an engineer familiar with the Python programming language to maintain the back end of the application.

The staff of the Permit Inspection Center will manage the users who receive follow-up email notifications and monthly reports of survey activity.

Recommendations for the County

- Dedicate staff position to managing open data program
- Make announcement when publishing a dataset
- Continue to work on improving data quality and metadata
- Work with municipalities to make 311 available for all city services across the County
- Encourage cross-departmental collaboration
- Avoid large enterprise procurement contracts and waterfall processes in favor of more nimble and iterative procurements
- Create central database on which services the County provides to all 34 municipalities
- Create opportunities for all departments to connect directly with their users

Other Efforts



Check out Miami-Dade County's new open data portal!

Promoting the County's transparency efforts was ongoing throughout the Fellowship, starting with the Mayor's public launch of the [Miami-Dade County Open Data Portal](#) at CodeAcross 2015. In addition to educating people on the value of open data and assisting with drafting proposed legislation of an open data policy, the Fellowship team also built the first applications off of the County's open datasets and opened up two additional datasets. We also worked with two data standard efforts in the permitting space, [Openpermit.org](#) and [Permitdata.org](#), to make sure that the data released was compatible with these early standardization efforts.



Events

- CodeAcross
- Designers and Drafts hosted by The New Tropic
- Code for Miami at The Lab Miami
- Meet Knight breakfast series
- Waffle Wednesdays hosted by Live Ninja
- Smart City Startups hosted by Urban.us
- Emerge Americas
- Miami-Dade County IT Expo
- Emerge Miami's We Love the Underline Ride
- Code for America Summit

Code Across



Designers and Drafts



Code for Miami Meeting





CODE FOR AMERICA



County IT Expo

CODE for AMERICA **SUMMIT**



Thank you!

Special thanks to everyone who helped the fellowship team along the way:

- Adam Schachner
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- Syed Abbas



