Allapattah Collaborative CDC

Preservation Development Strategy

Preserving Community, Building by Building, Block by Block

www.allapattahcdc.org
Thank you!

A special thank you to the Allapattah Collaborative Community Development Corporation Board of Directors, staff and partners for taking the time to help steward this process:

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Our Story

The Allapattah Collaborative CDC (TAC) was founded in 2019 as the outcome of a community engagement process, to advocate for the needs of local small business owners, preserve the character and culture of the Little Santo Domingo community and prioritize the resilience of the greater Allapattah neighborhood.

Mission
The mission of the Allapattah Collaborative CDC is to implement place-making techniques to foster identity, support wealth-building strategies for marginalized communities of color, and advocate for policies and programs that support equitable, comprehensive, and sustainable community development. Some of the strategies we employ include wealth-building, shared equity models (such as Commercial Community Land Trusts), and the Main Street Approach to neighborhood revitalization.

The Main Street approach focuses on economic vitality, organization, promotion, and design to stimulate activity in commercial corridors. As we implement our Allapattah Main Street program, we serve as a commercial development, advocacy, organizing, and technical assistance organization. Additionally, We empower, educate, increase community-based ownership, expand services available and support the fabric that knits the community together.

Our Challenge:
Displacement and lack of opportunity are eradicating Miami’s cultural neighborhoods.

Our Strategy:
Well funded community development strategies that focus on education, engagement, wealth creation and asset building, to preserve community authenticity, sustainability, and legacy.

Our Impact:
Our efforts guarantee stronger economic development practices in disenfranchised communities. Our goal is to revive the local micro-economy, boost our neighborhood commercial districts and preserve the authenticity of our community.

We Invest
We invest in human capital, sweat equity, immigrants’ dreams, cultural identity and community ownership. The authenticity of our neighborhood should be preserved by investing in the elements that make it unique.

We Build
We build key coalitions, frameworks, pathways, assets, community wealth, confidence and pride. Together with community and partners we build a future where real economic justice, inclusiveness, sustainability and upward mobility are attainable.

We Advocate
We advocate vigorously for equitable development, economic inclusion and social justice. From Capitol Hill to our local City Hall, we advocate for low and moderate income communities to ensure they have a seat at the table.
Allapattah at a glance:

- **Total Population**: 43,864
- **Latino**: 80%
- **Black**: 18%
- **Median Rent Increase 2000-2016**: 80%
- **Businesses**: 2,463
- **Employees**: 45,750
- **Per Capita Income**: $12,572
- **Renters**: 80%
- **Median Income**: $26,023

Source: ESRI 2020, US Census Bureau 2021
In 2018, the Allapattah Collaborative CDC created an Equitable Development Action Plan for 17th Avenue in Allapattah. It was created with the guidance of the National Association of Latin Community Asset Builders (NALCAB) and a steering committee, composed of local business owners and stakeholders. This action plan is guiding the development of this feasibility report.

Equitable development refers to a plan that takes all community stakeholders into consideration. It is an outcome-oriented community development process where everyone in the target neighborhood benefits from the goods, amenities, and concessions provided by an initiative - whether it is a lucrative investment, a social impact program, an ordinance, or a government administrative procedure.

By promoting equitable development best practices, the scales can balance so that everyone has a chance to thrive in the neighborhood where they have lived for decades and invested many years of capital and sweat equity.
Allapattah Main Street

Allapattah is the only Main Street neighborhood in Miami and sets an ambitious goal for our organization to work towards.

In Spring of 2021, the Allapattah Collaborative CDC celebrated the State of Florida designation of Allapattah Main Street along the 17th avenue commercial corridor in the City of Miami.

The Main Street America program has succeeded in bringing historic commercial districts back to life, while preserving and strengthening legacy businesses and the rich cultural fabric they provide to our communities.

Their work is centered around the idea that community transformation can be achieved by focusing on economic vitality, design, organization, and promotion as illustrated in the graphic below.

‘The Approach’ - Main Street America’s model for community transformation

Build a diverse economic base | Catalyze smart new investment | Cultivate a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem

Create and inviting, inclusive atmosphere | Celebrate historic character | Foster accessible people-centered public spaces

Build leadership and strong organizational capacity | Ensure broad community engagement | Forge partnerships across sectors

Market district’s defining assets | Communicate unique features through story telling | Support buy-local experience

Florida State University’s Community Real Estate Development program proposed an incubator focused on destination economic development in Little Santo Domingo by leveraging the growth of historic and new businesses.

With funding from JP Morgan Chase and Citi Community Development, Mileyka Burgos partners with SCFDC & NALCAB to produce the Equitable Development Action Plan.

Allapattah Collaborative CDC is founded in the Fall and hits the ground running to secure resources for and advocate on behalf of area businesses.

Allapattah Collaborative CDC is successful in having Allapattah designated as the only Main Street in the City of Miami.

Main Street Proclamation Ceremony Spring 2021. Mileyka Flores-Burgos, our Executive Director is pictured in the center holding the proclamation next to Charles C. Scott III, Outreach Director for Rep, Fredericka Wilson.
Our Strategy

The disproportionate influx of capital is displacing long-term residents and small business owners with rent increases and lack of viable opportunities to own their long-term residences or storefronts.

This gradual displacement is eradicating Miami’s diverse and cultural neighborhoods. One of the main concerns is that community engagement and participation is inadequate in the redevelopment of vulnerable areas, which leaves long-term residents and small business voiceless in the face of decisions that will negatively impact the socio-economics and demographics make up of their neighborhood.

Our Initiative focuses on cultural economic development by building off of the following four guiding principles in order to preserve the rich fabric of our community.
Development

- Build new commercial spaces to support existing and new small businesses, as well as residential units attainable to Allapattah’s working class community.

Recognizing the intense pressure being felt on the ground by businesses and residents alike due to increases in rents, the Allapattah CDC is forging ahead to build an inclusive community. In order to remain in the area and flourish as new more dense buildings and more affluent neighbors come, we recognize that we must be part of that new growth. We plan to do this by working closely with our clients to build the spaces that cater to their needs and build their capacity to take part and benefit from the community’s equitable redevelopment.

Building a Cultural Destination

The Allapattah CDC’s approach is not new. We are following proven best practices from other successful cultural districts around the world. Locally, Miami Beach and Little Havana came back to life by preserving the architectural elements of Art Deco and the vibrant cultural legacy created by the Cuban and larger Hispanic communities in Miami. We want to create the kind of cultural identity you come to expect when you go to a neighborhood like Little Italy or Chinatown.

Place-Based Development

Any real estate development project that we develop will be designed to cater to the needs of the local businesses and residents, while allowing for new residents to the area to find healthy, safe and affordable commercial spaces and housing in a culturally rich and vibrant community.

Baltimore recently created post-COVID design guidelines illustrating how vacant lots and streets can be activated to help businesses remain open and bring more foot traffic to districts.

The pagoda Arch Way is a recognizable icon you see in Chinatown’s around the world.

Signage can help guide visitors and highlight cultural landmarks and also serve to brand the area.

This is an illustration from ‘Design for Distancing’, a guide proposing strategies to activate commercial districts during the pandemic.

The illustration above depicted the now completed redesign of Miracle Mile in Coral Gables to become a more pedestrian and business friendly corridor.
Preservation

TAC will use historic preservation as a tool to maintain legacy small businesses in place, while stabilizing rents and securing ownership of their commercial establishments.

Small businesses are the heart and soul of most communities and particularly for Allapattah. Is the hard work of the small businesses and entrepreneurs that was recognized and applauded by the City of Miami, with its designation of the area as Little Santo Domingo back in 2003. It is a testament to the many hard working Dominicans that made this area their home since their arrival in the 1980s.

Despite the increased speculation and rising rents, the COVID-19 pandemic once again revealed the tenacity and resilience of our community. While many businesses struggled to keep their doors open and several had to shut their doors, The Allapattah Collaborative CDC stepped to the plate to secure emergency funding. It is these types of wrap around services as well as forward-thinking solutions that will help businesses remain in place and allow new ones to flourish.
Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive reuse is the perfect strategy to preserve buildings that have outlived their initial intended use, but bring a certain character to the neighborhood.

Allapattah is home to several historic structures. A building type that is found repeatedly in the area are gas stations, like the one depicted in the picture to the right.

While several of these may still preserve some automotive function, they are a far cry from the full service gas stations of the mid twentieth century.

In 2014, students from the UM School of Architecture reimagined one of these gas stations adaptively reused as a restaurant with a large outdoor gathering and entertainment space. These types of buildings are the ones that give a neighborhood a particular element or flair that becomes characteristic and a defining iconic element for the area.

This gas station at 17th Ave and NW 29th St is one of several characteristic of the area.

The Miami Bakery located on NW 20th st and NW 22nd Ave is an example of one of many former gas stations that has been repurposed for alternative uses and serve as the backdrop for a landmark small business.
Influence

Allapattah Collaborative CDC’s goal is to advocate for the enforcement of existing and new policies that will enable small business owners and residents of the neighborhood to remain in place and prosper as the community redevelops, welcoming new and old residents alike.

Design Guidelines

In 2013, ten years after the area’s original Little Santo Domingo cultural district designation, the City of Miami proposed to enhance the effort by creating design guidelines that would help preserve stylistic elements of the area’s architecture, culture and the general character of the area. While the process was spearheaded, the guidelines were never adopted.

Advocacy

The Allapattah Collaborative CDC was established with the intent of advocating for the Little Santo Domingo small business community. The driving force behind our initiative is to strengthen, preserve and grow the small business community in the area. This is a critical effort as many cultural neighborhoods across the City are at risk of displacement, including Little Havana and Little Haiti for example.

The City of Miami Beach adopted MiMo Design Guidelines. It also adopted the companion Construction Guidelines for MiMo to go along with them.

Design guidelines are a tool that many communities across the country use to ensure that new buildings are built to complement and enhance an area’s character. While there are buildings that have no significant historical significance, there are many that serve as a testament to the area’s history. Below, are a few illustrations of design guidelines and what they may help define.

A unified commercial shopfront design can help brand an area and attract more patrons.

City of Miami’s five Commissioners celebrate the proclamation of Allapattah Mainstreet with Mileyka Burgos-Flores.

The Allapattah CDC has also been leading the charge in ensuring that new developments include community benefits agreements favorable to the area’s residents.

When TAC CDC learned that the Allapattah Library was facing closure, its advocacy resulted in the City of Miami commissioners securing assurance from the developer that a library would be included in the new project.

In June 2021 the Allapattah CDC advocated for a new library to be brought back as part of the newly proposed development project.
Partnerships

The Allapattah Collaborative CDC recognizes that it takes more than a village to achieve its goals. The CDC is proud to partner with strong non-profit, private and public partners. It is through its commitment to the needs of the small businesses that the CDC develops programs that will ultimately benefit its clients and strengthen the Little Santo Domingo brand and community.

For instance, the CDC has worked closely with the South Florida Community Development Coalition which was instrumental in helping connect to other national community and economic development partners.

The CDC is committed to consistent communication with the local authorities from the local City of Miami NET office, to the City, County, State and Congressional offices, ensuring that the community’s needs and voice are heard.

Capacity Building

The Allapattah Collaborative CDC recognizes that its clients are the community’s best asset. The CDC has helped small businesses identify resources or solutions to their daily business operations, ranging from the ability to negotiate leases with their landlords, to securing access to small business resources, naturalization services and access to emergency funding.

In spring of 2021, The Allapattah CDC also launched the Allapattah Community Fellows Program in partnership with Urban Impact Lab.

Their goal was to empower a group of local high school seniors to understand the dynamics of community development so that they can be more informed and more active participants in the revitalization of the neighborhood.

This first group of four fellows was an instrumental force behind advocating to save the Allapattah Library. It was thanks to their commitment and dedication to getting word out about the impending loss and meeting with the local commission district office that ensured the developer’s commitment to incorporating a new library in to the proposed development.

Above: Represented here are some of our partners across the non-profit, public and private sectors

In Spring of 2021 the CDC launched the Allapattah Community Fellows Program.

The Four Miami Jackson High School seniors who took part in the fellowship program are pictured here during a leadership development workshop.
Allapattah Main Street Fund

Our Challenge: Preserving as many existing residents and business owners in Allapattah. Recently constructed and future high end development along the Miami River, Wynwood and the rest of the city is slowly causing displacement of small businesses and residents in the Allapattah community as market forces drive up the cost of commercial and residential rents.

The type of long-term sustainable community economic development that The Allapattah Collaborative seeks to achieve, requires committed and patient capital.

The Allapattah Collaborative CDC’s model seeks to invest in the existing businesses that make the Little Santo Domingo community what it is. It seeks to ensure that legacy businesses are able to secure ownership of their businesses enabling them to take full part of the revitalization of the neighborhood. Ownership gives businesses and residents the ability to build generational wealth.

Residents trained and engaged directly in tenancy and programming

Community-Driven action to preserve, strengthen and grow local businesses & retain residents in place

Commercial CLT Model focusing on Shopfront & Home ownership, long-term leases

Shared Equity Model where market rate units are made affordable to local residents

Generational wealth building through equitable development

One of several local businesses that was successful in figuring out how to navigate new health restrictions and remain open during the pandemic.
Our Opportunity: To attract capital that can support the entrepreneurial spirit of the Allapattah small business community and help them be beneficiaries of the neighborhood’s revitalization.

Following the model of other communities like Atlanta and San Francisco that have created funds dedicated to the specific goals of remediating the scarcity of housing in key areas, the Allapattah Collaborative CDC seeks to create a fund, in partnership with a community lender such as a Community Development Finance Institution or small community-based bank, dedicated to supporting the construction of the pipeline it is cultivating.

The fund can be generated by coupling traditional sources of funding with public subsidies:

- HOME
- SHIP
- CDBG
- County Surtax
- New Markets Tax Credits
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits

It can also be funded from non-traditional funders such as large employers’ home ownership assistance programs, public hospitals, requires to create Community Benefits Agreement, local banks that could create preferential investment programs to favor our efforts or even major local employers who could invest in home-buyer assistance programs that can help their employees secure housing affordable to their income bracket.

www.allapattahcdc.org
Join us in our efforts to preserve Allapattah

For more information about our initiative please contact us

Are you interested in helping the Little Santo Domingo community thrive? Whether you have an aspiration to open a business, to invest in the mission and vision of our organization or support our efforts, please reach out to us.

We have pipelines of brick and mortar projects centered around our three focus areas of development, preservation and adaptive reuse. For additional information about those opportunities please contact Mileyka Burgos-Flores.

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