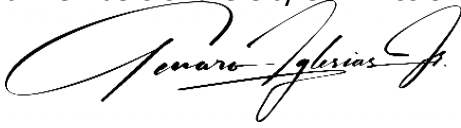




**CITY OF SOUTH MIAMI
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**

TO: The Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Members of the City Commission
FROM: Genaro “Chip” Iglesias, City Manager 
DATE: November 4, 2025
SUBJECT: Draft Ordinance Adopting Passive Design Elements to Promote Energy-Efficient Home Building

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the City Commission consider the attached draft ordinance, proposing the adoption of passive design elements to promote energy-efficient homebuilding; providing for the promotion of sustainable construction practices; and incentivizing design elements that improve energy efficiency, increase climate resilience, and conserve natural resources. Staff requests the City Commission provide their preliminary comments prior to the ordinance proceeding to the Planning Board and formal readings before the City Commission.

BACKGROUND: The City of South Miami has long demonstrated leadership in environmental sustainability and green building practices. As climate conditions in South Florida continue to intensify, the City recognizes the need to incorporate **passive design strategies**—techniques that leverage natural light, airflow, shading, and insulation—to enhance home energy performance while reducing dependence on mechanical heating and cooling systems.

The draft ordinance promotes **energy-efficient and sustainable homebuilding** by encouraging design elements such as:

- Passive solar design and natural ventilation;
- The strategic use of shading, landscaping, and tree preservation;
- The use of sustainable, high thermal mass, or locally sourced materials;
- The installation of cool or green roofs;
- Solar panel readiness and bird-safe glazing; and
- On-site rainwater harvesting and stormwater management.

The ordinance proposes the establishment of **incentives**, including building permit fee reductions of up to 35%, for projects incorporating multiple energy-efficient and sustainable design features. It also introduces a **discretionary waiver process** to allow flexibility in setbacks, lot coverage, or building envelope requirements where such flexibility enables the preservation of existing canopy trees.



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This initiative aligns with the City's commitment to reduce energy consumption, conserve natural resources, and improve environmental resilience through thoughtful design. By integrating these passive strategies, South Miami can continue to serve as a regional model for climate-conscious urban development.

The draft ordinance was reviewed by the City's Green Task Force which provided comments.

FUNDING: NO DIRECT FUNDING IMPACT IS ANTICIPATED. PERMIT FEE REDUCTIONS WILL BE ABSORBED WITHIN EXISTING ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS.

ATTACHMENTS: Draft Ordinance: *Adopting Passive Design Elements to Promote Energy-Efficient Home Building*