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**Journal**

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## The Economic Impact of Parks and Recreation Services

### The Benefits of Physical Activity

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Town of Miami Lakes  
Parks and Recreation Department

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# Parks & Recreation Facilities

Compiled and written by Mary Lou Jay



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# Town of Miami Lakes Parks and Recreation Department

**Director:** Tony Lopez, CPRP  
**Project:** Royal Oaks Park Community Center  
**Cost:** \$2.2 million  
**Size:** 8,000 sq. ft.  
**Architect:** McHarry and Associates Inc., Coral Gables  
**Engineering:** Kimley-Horn and Associates, Ft. Lauderdale  
**Contractor:** Portland Construction LLC, Miami

The Royal Oaks Park Community Center provides a much-needed air-conditioned, multi-purpose space for residents of the community while serving as a model for sustainable building design.

The 8,000-square-foot center is expected to be the first LEED® Certified building in the town, achieving a gold-level certification. The project designers controlled construction pollution and recycled 75 percent of construction waste. They minimized the building footprint and hardscape features while maximizing planted areas with native, drought-tolerant species that support insects and other pollinators.

Built with high performance insulation and high-performance glass with low-e coatings, the

building exceeds the Florida Building Code's envelope performance requirements. The town realized an annual 46 percent savings in energy consumption (\$7,000 based on FPL's current rates) by including highly efficient air conditioning units and light fixtures. The lights were placed on photo and occupancy sensors so they turn off when rooms are not occupied. Building materials were selected for their recycled content and local origin, and finish materials were chosen for their low chemical emission qualities.

The community has embraced its new center, which is used to capacity year-round for community meetings, programs and events.

**11** – The concrete used for the sidewalks, building foundations, columns and beams of the Royal Oaks Park Community Center was specified with 25 percent recycled content. The building's high albedo clay roof tiles reflect solar heat, reducing internal cooling loads.



**12** – Photo and occupancy sensors control the high efficiency lighting fixtures so that the lights are turned off when the room is not in use.

**13** – To improve indoor air quality, interior finishes (paints, carpet and linoleum) and furnishings (built-in cabinets) were chosen for their low chemical emissions qualities.