

Miami River Commission Annual Report 2020

A photograph of a Miami River scene. In the foreground, a white tugboat with a black hull and a red stripe is moving through the water, leaving a wake. The tugboat has "CAPT. BABUN" and "MIAMI, FL." written on its side. In the background, a dense city skyline is visible, featuring several tall skyscrapers, including one with a curved facade and another with "WELLS FARGO" signage. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The overall scene is bright and clear.

In 2020 evidence of the continuing revitalization of the Miami River District was found in construction of another 5 sections of the public Miami River Greenway at “River Landing” featuring 420,000 square feet of retail and 506 residential units, “Aston Martin Residences” featuring 384 residential units, “Waterline Miami River” featuring 698 residential units, the 1st Street Bridge, and the expansion of Fern Isle Park. In addition, renovations finished at RMK Merrill-Stevens Boatyard, including a new seawall, infrastructure and ship lift.

The Miami River Commission approved the mixed use “River Parc” development featuring the public riverwalk, 2,500 new affordable, workforce and market rate residential units, riverfront restaurant and retail spaces in Little Havana.



**HORACIO
STUART
AGUIRRE**

Chair's Report

KEEPING THE BALANCE of uses along the historic mixed-use Miami River District is amongst the most important and challenging successes of the Miami River Commission. The proof is in the numbers. The Miami River's shorelines feature public riverwalks, 9 major parks, over 11,910 new residential units (additional 6,667 approved units), 5 major hotels (additional 5 planned hotels with 1,200 new rooms), 25 operating restaurants (additional 22 planned restaurants), 16 historic sites, 25 boatyards and marinas, over a dozen International Shipping Terminals, and other job-generating marine industrial businesses operating along "Port Miami River". International Shipping Terminals provide vital international trade to our neighbors in the Caribbean and Central America. Recreational boatyards, marinas, commercial fishing and tug boat basins are highly active. The river is used daily by international shipping vessels, yachts, manatees, dolphins, marlins, and other marine life. This critical balance of uses makes the beautiful Miami River the ideal place to live, work and play in the heart of the City of Miami.

THE MIAMI RIVER DISTRICT features wonderful multi-cultural neighborhoods in Downtown, Little Havana, Spring Garden, Overtown, Grove Park, Allapattah, Durham Park, etc. The Miami River District's nine major parks offer every type of recreation including a boat ramp, kayak and paddleboard launch, pools, new playgrounds, barbecues, picnic tables, basketball, tennis and racquetball courts, baseball diamonds, football stadium, track, weights, gym, community centers, riverwalks for running,

walking, biking and fishing, and historic sites such as the 2,000 year old Miami Circle, 1844 Fort Dallas, and the oldest standing home in Miami-Dade County, the 1856 Wagner Homestead.

THE MRC THANKS THE FOLLOWING Fiscal Year 2021 funding providers: Miami-Dade County (\$200,000), City of Miami (\$50,000), and private sector advertisers in the MRC's 18th Annual Miami River Map and Guide and the 10th Annual Miami River Calendar. This funding allows the broad based MRC to continue its work partnering with the public and private sectors to bring significant improvements to the Miami River District. In addition, the MRC thanks board members Mayor Carlos Gimenez, Frank Balzebre, Commissioner Willy Gort, Representative Joe Geller, Representative Anthony Rodriguez and Alyce Robertson for their years of volunteer service. The MRC welcomes our newest volunteer board members: Miami-Dade Delegation Chairwoman Senator Anna Maria Rodriguez, Senator Ileana Garcia, Miami Dade Mayor Daniela Levine Cava, City of Miami Commissioner Alex Diaz de la Portilla, Alex Barrera and Christina Crespi, Director of the Miami Downtown Development Authority.

I INVITE YOU TO BRING family and friends to the Miami River District and enjoy the experience. The Miami River Commission promises that regardless of your individual interests, age, gender, race, or income level, you will find something special to enjoy.

Horacio Stuart Aguirre
Chairman, Miami River Commission

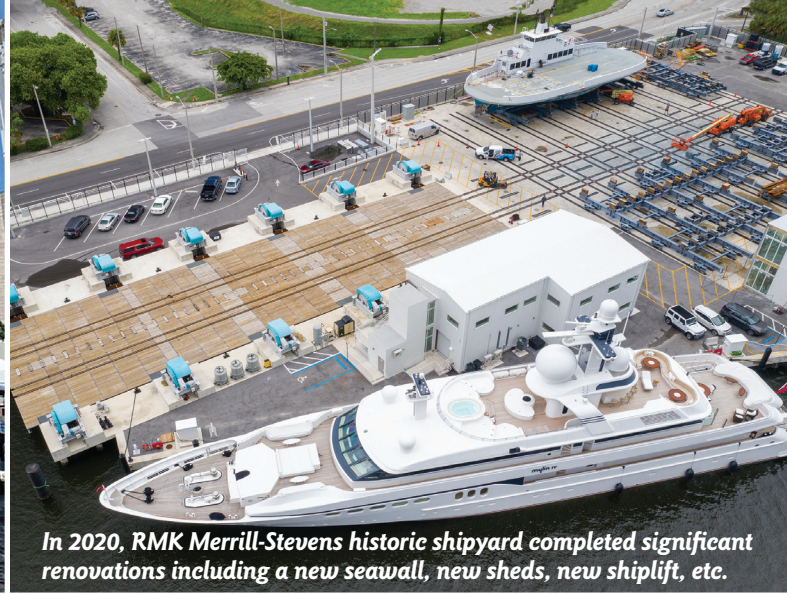
Awards

- "BEST OF MIAMI 2016" awarded to MRC Managing Director Brett Bibeau – Miami Today
- "BEST OF MIAMI 2015" awarded to MRC Urban Infill Subcommittee Chairman Jim Murley –Miami Today
- "BEST OF MIAMI 2014–UNsung HERO" awarded to MRC Member Ernie Martin –Miami Today
- "PROCLAMATION OF APPRECIATION" for volunteer Miami River Greenway beautification events– City of Miami, 2013
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- "PROCLAMATION OF APPRECIATION" for volunteer Miami River Greenway beautification events – City of Miami, 2011
- "BEST OF MIAMI 2011 – TURNING GREEN" awarded to MRC member Sandy Batchelor–Miami Today
- "BEST OF MIAMI 2011–VISIONARY" awarded to MRC Managing Director Brett Bibeau –Miami Today
- "SUSTAINABLE SOUTH FLORIDA AWARDS, GREEN EDUCATION & OUTREACH AWARD" 2011 FINALIST –Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
- "PROCLAMATION OF APPRECIATION" for volunteer Miami River Greenway beautification events –City of Miami, 2010

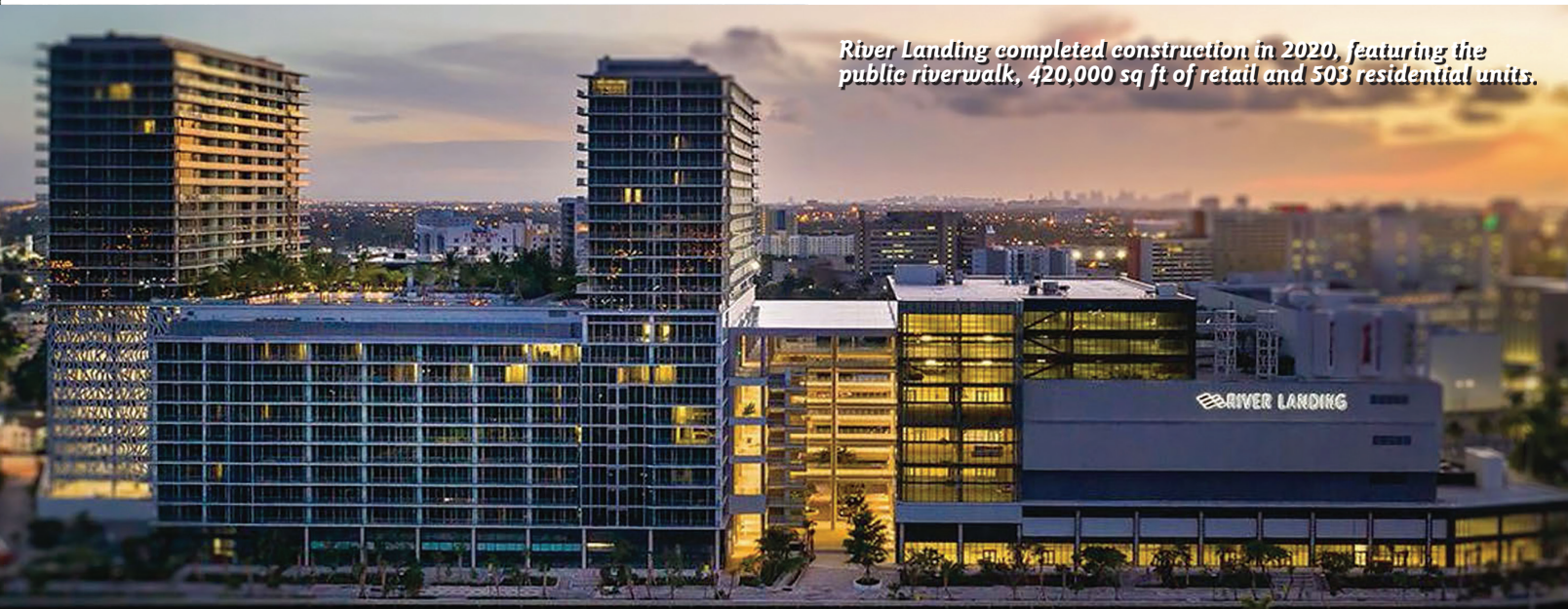
- "BEST OF MIAMI – BUILDING INFRASTRUCTURE" awarded to Eric Buermann and Brett Bibeau –Miami Today, 2008
- "AWARD OF MERIT" awarded to the MRC for its Multimodal Transportation Plan – American Planning Association, 2007
- "THE NEWSMAKER" awarded to MRC Chair Eric Buermann –Miami Today, 2007
- "BEST BACKSTAGE LEADER" awarded to MRC Managing Director Brett Bibeau who was then included in the "Book of Leaders" –Miami Today, 2007
- MIAMI IMAGE AWARD OF 2006 awarded to MRC Managing Director Brett Bibeau –Realtor Association of Greater Miami and the Beaches
- "BEST OF MIAMI – IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE" awarded to former MRC Chair Irela Bague –Miami Today, 2006
- "THE ACHIEVER – MIAMI RIVER'S RENAISSANCE MAN" awarded to MRC Managing Director Brett Bibeau – Miami Today, 2006
- "COMMUNITY STEWARD AWARD" awarded to MRC–1,000 Friends of Florida, 2005
- "BEST NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION" awarded to MRC –Miami Today, 2004
- "MOST POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT" for the Miami River Greenway, Urban Environment League, 2004
- EXCELLENCE AWARD for the Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan, American Landscape Architects, 2003



Aston Martin Residences under construction, featuring the public riverwalk.



In 2020, RMK Merrill-Stevens historic shipyard completed significant renovations including a new seawall, new sheds, new shiplift, etc.



River Landing completed construction in 2020, featuring the public riverwalk, 420,000 sq ft of retail and 503 residential units.

TESTIMONIALS

“Related Urban appreciates the ongoing partnership with Miami Dade County, and the Miami River Commission’s support for “River Parc”, which is currently under construction. This significant public-private partnership is constructing the public Riverwalk, 2,500 new affordable and market rates residential units, riverfront restaurants and retail. The MRC’s public meeting was a helpful venue for positive communication with the Miami River District’s surrounding residents and businesses.” - Alberto Milo, Jr. Related Urban

“Following the Miami River Commission’s (MRC) advisory recommendation of approval, I’m happy to commence construction in 2021 of a waterfront restaurant featuring the public Riverwalk, and a new headquarters for NuMarine Yachts in Little Havana. The MRC always goes above and beyond to improve the exciting mixed-use Miami River District, for example contracting the Scavenger Water De-Contamination Vessel, pressure washing the Miami River Greenway, landscaping, painting over graffiti, picking up litter, etc.” - Arturo Ortega

“In 2020 RMK-Merrill Stevens was proud to have successfully completed a \$35 million modernization of the historic 100-year old boatyard, featuring a new seawall, infrastructure and ship lift. Now we are hiring 200 new additional employees in various full time jobs that pay above the County average. RMK-Merrill Stevens applauds the Miami River Commission’s direct support for the Miami River, such as cleaning up the natural environment, marketing via the Annual Miami River Map and Guide, Miami River Calendar, and much more.” - Greg Cox, CEO RMK-Merrill Stevens

“Mast Capital commends the Miami River Commission for its decades of successful efforts improving the Miami River District, which in part attracted Mast Capital to the area. In 2020, we were pleased to have completed construction of Waterline Miami River, featuring enhancements to the public Riverwalk and 346 residential units on a riverfront site in Little Havana which previously sat vacant for over 20 years. We feel this project plays a key role in the revitalization of the Miami River, and look forward to Phase 2, which breaks ground in 2021 and will deliver 342 additional units.” - Camilo Miguel Jr., CEO of Mast Capital

Subcommittee Reports

MAMI RIVER GREENWAY *Dr. Ernest Martin, Chair*

IN 2020 THE MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY continued construction, featuring a public pedestrian & bicycle pathway, landscaping, decorative lights, way-finding signage, historic markers, informational kiosks, benches, art installations, and other amenities. In 2020, another 5 sections of the public Riverwalk were under construction by the private and public sectors. Over 6.75 miles of the public Miami River Greenway have been constructed, with an additional planned 3.25 miles to complete.

The MRC appreciates the mutual efforts to implement the Miami River Greenway Action Plan, and the cost shares provided to date from multiple public and private funding sources including Congress, State of Florida, Florida Department of Transportation, South Florida Water Management District, Florida Inland Navigation District, City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, Downtown Development Authority, and numerous private sector developments.

The MRC thanks the City of Miami and its residents for voting to include the Miami River Greenway in the approved Miami Forever Bond Issue, redevelopment of the “Miami Riverside Center,” and “The Wharf”.

STORMWATER *Sallye Jude, Chair*

THE STORMWATER SYSTEM is the leading source of pollution into the Miami River. The Miami River water basin includes a 69-square-mile area of the most densely populated neighborhoods in the State of Florida. All stormwater from this area drains into the Miami River through over one hundred outfalls. The Miami River Commission appreciates Commissioner Eileen Higgins and the Board of County Commissioners for renewing \$140,000 for the Scavenger Water DeContamination vessel's services in the Miami River. In addition to removing floating debris and hazards to navigation, the Scavenger Vessel significantly improves water quality by decontaminating 600,000 gallons of water per hour and injecting 150,000 liters of oxygen per hour into the Miami River.

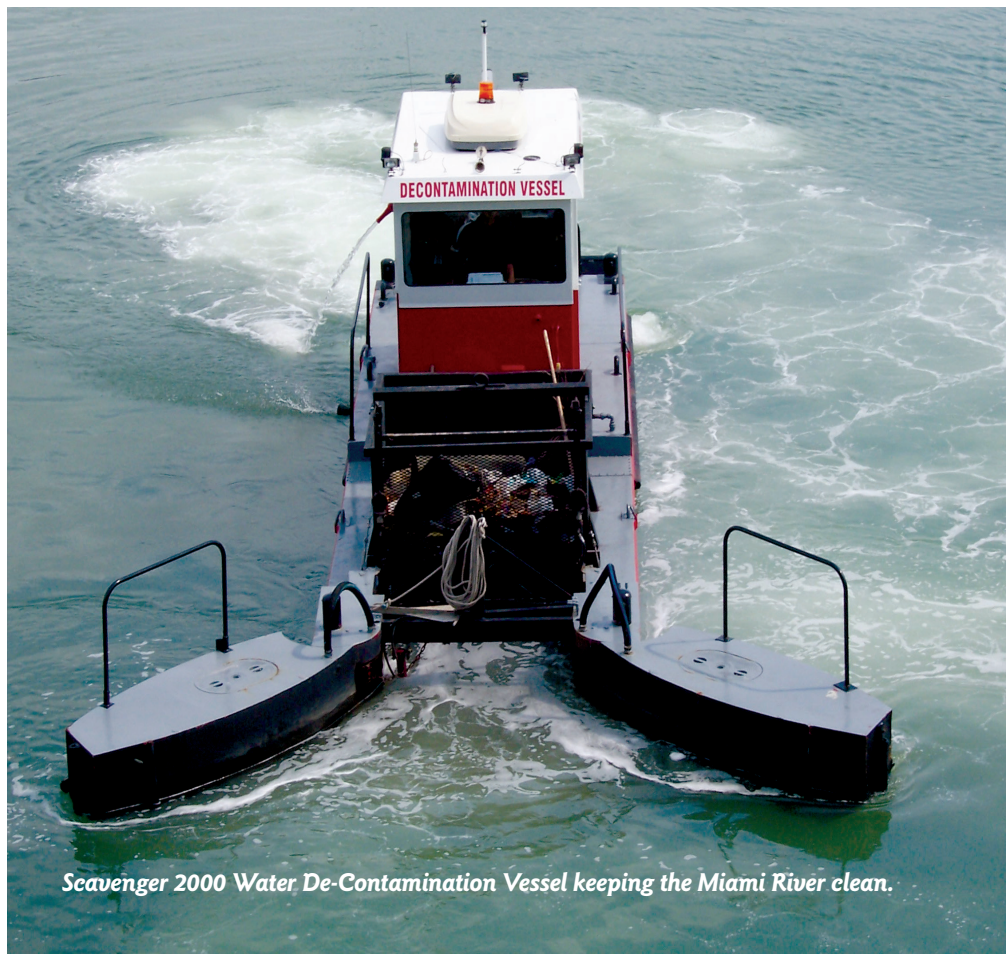
URBAN INFILL *James Murley, Chair*

THE MRC'S URBAN INFILL SUBCOMMITTEE continued efforts to assist implementing various adopted and award-winning plans, including the Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan, Miami River Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Plan, Miami River Greenway Action Plan and others, all available for downloading at www.miamirivercommission.org.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & COMMERCE

Philip Everingham, Chair

IN 2020, CONSTRUCTION COMPLETED at River Landing featuring 420,000 square feet of retail, 506 residential units and the public riverwalk, Waterline Miami River featuring 346 residential units and the public riverwalk and renovations at RMK Merrill-Stevens shipyard, featuring a new seawall, infrastructure and ship lift. In 2021 construction continues at Aston Martin Residences featuring 384 residential units and Waterline Miami River Phase 2 featuring 342 units, both featuring the public riverwalk. Therefore the Miami River District is ripe with mixed-use economic development, commerce and jobs.



Scavenger 2000 Water De-Contamination Vessel keeping the Miami River clean.



Antillean Marine international shipping vessel.

VOLUNTARY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Frank Balzebr, Chair

THE MIAMI RIVER VOLUNTARY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (VIP) identifies and encourages public and private sector riverfront parcels to address various riverfront issues which are potentially detrimental to operations on the River, the environmental quality of the River, and the River's attraction as a destination for residents, tourists and businesses. In 2020 alone, the Miami River "VIP" resulted in 10 Miami River Greenway Beautification volunteer events featuring plantings, removal of illegal dumping, invasive species, and graffiti along several sections of the Miami River, removing derelict vessels, repairing Riverwalk lights, unclogging stormwater drains, removing a floating hazard to navigation and oil sheen, found and corrected sources of contamination etc. The MRC thanks Miami-Dade County, City of Miami, FIND, FDOT, private sector, and the fantastic volunteers for their hard work bringing these River improvements to fruition.



"Waterline Miami River" Phase I, featuring public riverwalk.

UPPER RIVER

MIDDLE RIVER

LOWER RIVER

Shipping and Marine Industrial Zone: Center of Port Miami River's trade and industry. The Miami Intermodal Center links rail, air, freight, transit, pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

Residential / Mixed Use Zone: Includes River Landing historic neighborhoods, marine-industrial businesses, parks, etc.

Downtown Zone: High-density residential, offices and restaurants. Riverwalks link historic landmarks and parks along river.



MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY'S TIMELINE

Map © 2001 Richard Troutner. All rights reserved.

1897

Henry Flagler opens six-story Royal Palm Hotel, including first greenway

1972

Parks For People bond issue passed by voters, funds portions of the Miami River Greenway

1980s

Miami River Greenway section constructed along north shore from Biscayne Bay to NW 2 Avenue

1998

Florida Legislature creates Miami River Commission as a watchdog, advocate and clearinghouse for the river. Miami Circle site discovered

2000

Florida Legislature passes Miami River Improvement Act

2001

With the Trust for Public Land, the MRC, City of Miami and Miami-Dade County unanimously approve Miami River Greenway Action Plan

2002

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2003

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2004

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2005

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2006

City of Miami adopts "A Vision for Miami's 21st Century Parks & Public Spaces" recommending completion of the Miami River Greenway • MRC hosts Greenways summit • Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2007

Miami River Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Plan created by Metropolitan Planning Organization and MRC recommending completion of the Miami River Greenway • Greenway construction continues

2008

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2009

City Bicycle Master Plan adopted recommending completion of the Miami River Greenway • Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed and additional sections funded and designed for construction in 2010-2011

2010-2020

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

1910

Lummus Park created on Miami River



Volunteers along the public riverwalk.

Get Involved!

The Miami River Commission invites groups and individuals from the community to get involved in improving your Miami River District, and the private sector to help us as sponsors of events. To learn more about what you can do, visit our website at www.miamirivercommission.org for updates.

The Miami River Commission thanks all of the incredible volunteers of all ages and walks of life who planted and picked up litter along the riverwalk during 10 volunteer beautification events in 2020. The MRC is thankful to our growing list of sponsors, partially listed at right, who contributed volunteers, supplies and funding to the “greening” of the river, and removed an estimated 250,000 pounds of garbage.

All MRC and subcommittee meetings are publicly noticed. Public participation is encouraged.

MRC thanks volunteers and sponsors:

[Miami-Dade County](#)

[City of Miami](#)

[Florida Department of Transportation](#)

[Florida Department of State
Downtown Development Authority](#)

[RMK Merrill-Stevens](#)

[Epic Marina](#)

[Sightseeing Cruises](#)

[Hands On Miami](#)

[Florida Drawbridge](#)



Left to right: Marlins Ballpark, Sewell Park, Terrazas, Hurricane Cove Marina and Boatyard, Pier 19, Apex Marine and Durham Park neighborhood.

Learn more about the Miami River's past, present and future, view reports, plans, public meeting minutes, agendas and more at the informative www.miamirivercommission.org

Miami River Commission Members

Chair: HORACIO STUART AGUIRRE
Representative from environmental or civic organization appointed by the Governor

Florida Governor: RON DeSANTIS
Designee: Ms. PATRICIA "PATTY" HARRIS

Mr. LUIS GARCIA
Member-at-Large Appointed by the Governor
Designee: Mr. JOHN MICHAEL CORNELL

SENATOR ANNA MARIA RODRIGUEZ
Chair, Miami-Dade Delegation
Designee: Senator Ileana Garcia

Mayor DANIELA LEVINE CAVA
Mayor of Miami-Dade County

Mayor FRANCIS X. SUAREZ
Mayor of the City of Miami
Designee: Ms. MEGAN KELLY

Commissioner EILEEN HIGGINS
Miami-Dade County Commissioner
Designee: Ms. MAGGIE FERNANDEZ

Commissioner ALEX DIAZ de la PORTILLA
City of Miami Commissioner
Designee: Mr. ALEX BARRERA

KATHERINE FERNANDEZ-RUNDLE, Esq.
Miami-Dade State Attorney
Designee: Mr. DAVID MAER, Esq.

Mr. CHAUNCEY GOSS
Chair, South Florida Water Management District
Designee: Mr. SCOTT WAGNER, Esq.

Mr. BRUCE BROWN
Chair, Miami River Marine Group
Designee: Mr. RICHARD DUBIN

Ms. CHRISTINA CRESPI
Downtown Development Authority
Designee: Mr. NEAL SCHAFERS

Mr. ALFRED SANCHEZ
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Designee: Ms. SANDY O'NEIL

Dr. ERNEST MARTIN
Neighborhood Representative appointed by the City of Miami Commission
Designee: Mr. THOMAS KIMEN III

Ms. SALLYE JUDE
Neighborhood Representative appointed by the Miami-Dade County Commission
Designee: MR. MIKE SIMPSON

Mr. PHILIP EVERINGHAM
Designee of: MICHAEL KARCHER,
Chair of Marine Council

Ms. SARA C. BABUN
Member-at-Large appointed by the Miami-Dade County Commission
Designee: Ms. ROSELVIC NOGUERA

Mr. MANNY PRIEGUEZ
Member-at-Large appointed by the City of Miami Commission

Ex-Officio Members:

**CONGRESSWOMAN
MARIA ELVIRA SALAZAR**

CAPTAIN JO-ANN BURDIAN
United States Coast Guard
Captain of the Port of Miami

**Managing Director:
Mr. BRETT BIBEAU**

Designed by: Toni Kirkland LLC

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