

Miami River Commission

Annual Report 2011

In 2011, the historic and mixed-use Miami River Corridor continued its progression into a world class waterfront.

The Miami River Greenway, a public pedestrian & bicycle pathway featuring new landscaping, decorative lights, way-finding signage, historic markers, informational kiosks, benches, artwork and other amenities, remains under construction. This year another section of the Greenway was constructed, and in 2012 another 2 fully funded and designed sections of the Greenway will be built, finishing 5.25 miles of the planned 10-mile Miami River Greenway. These sections of the public Miami River Greenway were co-funded by federal grants, authored by the Miami River Commission (MRC), and awarded to the City of Miami.

The Wagner Creek & Seybold Canal Maintenance Dredging and Environmental Cleanup project received its final permit. Efforts continue to identify funding for this project. The MRC thanks the Florida Inland Navigation District for awarding the City of Miami a \$1 million cost share for the long awaited project, which will significantly improve the economy and natural environment. Maintaining navigable depths will save commercial fishing and recreational boatyard businesses and the jobs they generate.



*COVER: Looking east at Flagler Bridge and Miami River skyline from Lummus Park.
INSET: Spring Garden historic neighborhood, NW 12th Ave. Bridge and Marlow Merrill Stevens.*



HORACIO STUART AGUIRRE

Chair's Report

As a long time riverfront homeowner and resident, I was honored when the Miami River Commission (MRC) elected me Chairman. Over the past decade I have personally witnessed and participated in the successful public and private partnerships which have significantly rejuvenated the Miami River corridor. Highlights include the successful completion of the Miami River Maintenance Dredging and Environmental Cleanup Project (2003-2008), continued construction of the public Miami River Greenway, Annual Miami Riverday, and so much more. On behalf of the MRC, many thanks are due to Eric Buermann, whose dedicated service as the MRC's Chairman from 2007 – February 2011 shepered these major accomplishments.

The Miami River corridor's local public sector support is stronger than ever, under the leadership of the City of Miami Mayor Tomas Regalado, Miami-Dade County Mayor Gimenez, City and County Commissions. The MRC thanks

the South Florida Water Management District, Florida Inland Navigation District, Florida Legislature and Dade Congressional Delegation for their continued support of the Miami River.

IN ADDITION, SIGNIFICANT private sector investments were made along the Miami River in 2011. The acquisition, improvement, and continued operations of the job generating Marlow Merrill-Stevens yacht yard, Swire Property's approved Citi-Center mixed-use development, and the Big Fish Restaurant and Café / Lounge, both of which are scheduled for construction in 2012, on the River's South shore, just west of South Miami Ave.

The MRC thanks the sponsors of the 16th Annual Miami Riverday, 9th Annual Miami River Map and Guide, and 1st Annual Miami River Calendar. Furthermore, many thanks to the over 1,000 volunteers from the University of Miami, MIRA USA, Florida International University's Lend a Hand Student Organization, Cornell Alumni Association, and all individual volunteers who participated in the monthly Miami River Greenway Beautification events in 2011, at various locations along the River, featuring thousands of plantings, painting murals, tending the free vegetable and fruit garden, picking up litter, pulling weeds and spreading mulch made from recycled wood.

Yesterday's River visions became reality, so please join us in bringing planned river improvements to fruition today.

– *Horacio Stuart Aguirre,
Chairman
Miami River Commission*

Awards

- “**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 Bagué – 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



Recently renovated 5th Street Marina.



View of Miami Marlins stadium from Miami River.



New seawall construction at future Big Fish Restaurant Cafe & Lounge.



Casablanca Seafood Bar & Grill and Garcia's Seafood Grille & Fish Market.



Grove Park neighborhood, 17th Ave. Bridge and Terrazas River Park Village.

“ Testimonials

“Marlow Merrill-Stevens is grateful for the Miami River Commission’s professional assistance and support, which played a role in my purchasing the historic Merrill-Stevens site in 2011, which will remain a working and job generating recreational boatyard.”
– David Marlow, Owner and President of Marlow Merrill-Stevens

“When Sewell Park needed attention, adjacent to the new Terrazas River Park Village and River Oaks Marina and Tower, we contacted the Miami River Commission (MRC). The MRC funded volunteers, who picked up litter along the shoreline, and restored Sewell Park’s pathways.”
– Denise Castro, Terrazas River Park Village and River Oaks Marina and Tower

“The ‘Big Fish’ sincerely appreciates the Miami River Commission’s advisory recommendation for approval of the planned new riverfront restaurant and café/lounge, featuring a publicly accessible riverwalk.”
– Dean Lewis, DB Lewis Architect



Subcommittee Reports

MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY

Dr. Ernest Martin, Chair

THE MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY REMAINS UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

Publicly accessible riverwalks have successfully improved waterfronts around the world. *The Miami River Greenway Action Plan* was unanimously adopted in 2001 by the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, and the Miami River Commission. The MRC appreciates the mutual efforts to implement the plan, and the cost shares provided to date from multiple public and private funding sources including Congress, Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Inland Navigation District, City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, and numerous private sector developments. The Miami River Greenway is a significant enhancement, which in part stimulates our local economy, evidenced by the new riverfront restaurants, retail, and residential projects. In addition, the public riverwalk improves the natural environment by replacing the antiquated stormwater system, providing shoreline restoration and new landscaping which improves air quality. Riverwalk usage reduces vehicular congestion, gas consumption, carbon emissions, and provides a safe area for physical exercise which improves personal health and quality of life. The Miami River Greenway is a destination landscape, connecting the River's multicultural neighborhoods and providing residents and tourists alike with direct access to riverfront parks, businesses, mass transit, homes, and much more.

STORM WATER

Sallye Jude, Chair

THE ANTIQUATED STORM-WATER 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 water from this area drains into the Miami River through over one hundred outfalls.

The Storm Water subcommittee's highest priority is the City of Miami's Wagner Creek and Seybold Canal Maintenance Dredging and Environmental Cleanup project. In 2011, the project received its final permits, and the MRC thanks FIND for awarding a cost share for the project. The MRC supports the City's efforts to secure the remaining funding needed to construct the long awaited and widely supported project. In addition, the MRC supports efforts to implement the action items identified in the *2010 Wagner Creek Walk the Waterbody Identification (WBID)*, and the *Miami River Basin Water Quality Improvement Report*. The environmental regulatory agencies responsible to implement these important plans provide the MRC's public Stormwater Subcommittee with quarterly progress reports.

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.

For example, the MRC thanks Miami-Dade County for recently restriping NW 17 Ave as it approaches the 17 Ave Bridge, creating an additional northbound vehicular lane, and the private sector will commence a Water Bus service in 2012, both recommendations from the *Miami River Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Plan*. Over the past decade, 7,082 new riverfront residential units have been constructed, and another 7,254 units were approved. There are 15 operating riverfront restaurants, and 11 additional restaurant sites are available for operators.



Public riverwalk in Point Park.



View of public riverwalks, Metro-Mover, One Riverview Square, Wind, Ivy and Mint.

VOLUNTARY IMPROVEMENT

Jay Carmichael, Chair

THE MIAMI RIVER VOLUNTARY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (VIP) identifies and addresses private sector riverfront projects and riverfront issues which are critical to operations on the River, the quality of the River, and the River as a destination for residents, businesses. In 2011 alone, the Miami River Commission in securing funding for the purchase of vessels, replacement of a crane and removal of illegal dumping, and graffiti along several miles of the River. The Miami River Commission is a Dade County, City of Miami initiative in the private sector for their attention to river improvements.

UPPER RIVER

Shipping and Marine Industrial Zone: Center of the river's trade and industry. The Miami Intermodal Center will link rail, air, freight, transit, pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

MIDDLE RIVER

Residential / Mixed Use Zone: Connecting marine-industrial zone to residential areas.



MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY'S TIMELINE

1897

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

1910

Lummus Park created on Miami River

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

In partnership 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 Miami River Greenway constructed

2003

Sections of Miami River Greenway constructed

IT PLAN

UNTARY IMPROVEMENT

and encourages public and parcels to address various are potentially detrimental River, the environmental the River's attraction as a tourists and businesses. Miami River "VIP" assisted the removal of 4 derelict collapsed seawall & dock, dumping, invasive species, all sections of the Miami Commission thanks Miami-mi, FIND, and the private to these recommended



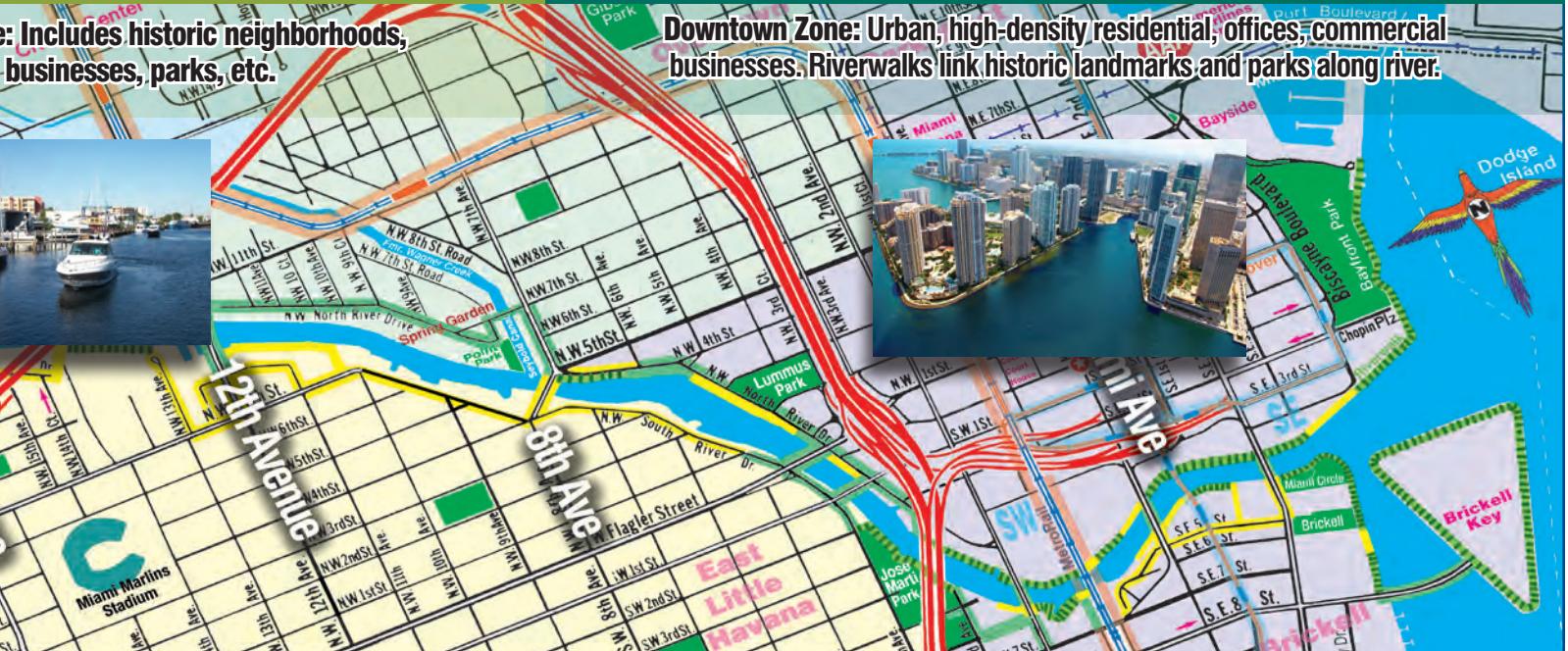
Two international shipping vessels under tow in the maintenance-dredged, federal navigable channel.

LE RIVER

Includes historic neighborhoods, businesses, parks, etc.

LOWER RIVER

Downtown Zone: Urban, high-density residential, offices, commercial businesses. Riverwalks link historic landmarks and parks along river.



Map © 2001 Richard Troutner. All rights reserved.

2002

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2004

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

2010-2011

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2003

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed

2005

Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed



MIRA USA, UM and FIU volunteers beautifying the Miami River Greenway .

Get Involved!

The Miami River Commission invites groups and individuals from the community to get involved in improving our working river, 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. You can also call us at 305-644-0544, or email us at miamiriver@bellsouth.net. We're at 1407 NW 7th Street, Suite D.

The Miami River Commission thanks the over 1,000 volunteers of all ages and walks of life who created parks and greenways along the river through a series of monthly volunteer Miami River beautification events. 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.

The 16th Annual Miami Riverday Festival is scheduled April 14, 2012, at Lummus Park (250 NW North River Drive) from 11 am to 4 pm. Just like the 15th annual festival, held April 2, 2011, Miami Riverday features free river boat tours, live music, environmental education, marine expo, historic re-enactors, children’s activities and much more.

All MRC and subcommittee meetings are publicly noticed. Public participation is encouraged. The full MRC meets on the first Monday of every month at noon, usually at the meeting room to the right of the MRC office.

MRC thanks volunteers and sponsors:

- South Florida Water Management District**
- Miami-Dade County**
- City of Miami**
- University of Miami**
- MIRA USA**
- Florida International University**
- Miami-Dade Coastal Cleanup**
- Florida Wood Recycling**
- Budget Rent-A-Car**
- Florida Drawbridge**



Little Havana’s public riverwalk, Jose Marti Park, Neo Lofts and a recreational boat.

Miami River Commission Members

Learn more about the river's history, view records of our meetings, see all our major reports on our web site at www.miamirivercommission.org a great resource for what's happening on and near the river.



Free boat rides at Miami Riverday.

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

Vice Chair: JAY CARMICHAEL, Esq.
Member-at-Large appointed by the Governor

Florida Gov. RICK SCOTT
Designee: **MS. PATRICIA "PATTY" HARRIS**

State Rep. CARLOS LOPEZ-CANTERA
Chair, Miami-Dade Delegation
Designee: **SEN. MIGUEL DIAZ DE LA PORTILLA**

Mayor CARLOS GIMENEZ
Miami-Dade County Mayor
Designee: **MR. FRANK BALZEBRE**

Mayor TOMÁS REGALADO
Mayor of the City of Miami

Commissioner BRUNO BARREIRO
Miami-Dade County Commissioner
Designee: **MS. MARLENE AVALO**

Commissioner FRANK CAROLLO
City of Miami Commissioner

KATHERINE FERNANDEZ-RUNDLE, Esq.
Miami-Dade State Attorney
Designee: **GARY WINSTON, ESQ.**

Mr. JOE COLLINS
South Florida Water Management
Designee: **MS. SANDY BATCHELOR**

Mr. RICHARD DUBIN
Chair, Miami River Marine Group
Designee: **MR. ORIN BLACK**

Ms. ALYCE ROBERTSON
Downtown Development Authority
Designee: **MR. JAVIER BETANCOURT**

Mr. BARRY JOHNSON
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce
Designee: **MS. MEGAN KELLY**

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: **MS. JANE CAPORELLI**

MR. PHIL EVERINGHAM
Designee of: **ED SWAKON,**
Chair of Marine Council

Ms. SARA C. BABUN
Member-at-Large appointed by the Miami-Dade County Commission
Designee: **MR. CHRISTIAN LARACH**

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

Ex-Officio Members:
CONGRESSWOMAN ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Designee: **MS. DEBBIE ZIMMERMAN**

CAPT. CHRIS SCRABA, USCG
Captain of the Port of Miami

Managing Director: **Mr. BRETT BIBEAU**

Designed by: **Toni Kirkland Graphics**

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