

Miami River Commission Annual Report 2015



**HORACIO
STUART
AGUIRRE**

Chair's Report

THE STATE OF THE HISTORIC MIXED-USE MIAMI RIVER IS STRONGER THAN EVER. The river is the birthplace of our vibrant dynamic community, evidenced from the Tequesta Indian's 2,000 year old Miami Circle (a designated National Historic Landmark), to Mary Brickell, Julia Tuttle and Henry Flagler. Today the Miami River remains a crucial part of our City's present and future.

THE RIVER IS ALIVE AND WELL! Environmental agencies recently inspected the Miami River, discovered and remediated a source of contamination to improve the Miami River's water quality in the recently maintenance dredged 15-foot deep federal navigable channel. The river is used daily by international shipping vessels, yachts, manatees, dolphins, marlins, and other marine life. The Miami River's shorelines feature public riverwalks, parks, over 7,500 new residential units (additional 3,280 approved units), major hotels (additional 3 planned hotels), 19 operating restaurants (additional 18 planned restaurants), 16 historic sites, and job-generating marine industrial businesses operating along the "Port of 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 MIAMI RIVER IS THE AORTA in the heart of the City of Miami, and its beautiful 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, playgrounds,

barbeques, 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 2016 funding providers: State of Florida (\$150,000), Miami-Dade County (\$35,000), City of Miami (\$30,000), and private sector advertisers in the MRC's 13th Annual Miami River Map and Guide, 5th Annual Miami River Calendar, and 20th Annual Miami Riverday. 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. The MRC thanks the City of Miami, Florida Inland Navigation District, and State of Florida for funding the fully permitted, long awaited and widely supported Wagner Creek and Seybold Canal Maintenance Dredging and Environmental Cleanup Project, which will benefit the natural environment and local economy. The City of Miami advertised the project's RFP in 2015, and dredging commences in Spring 2016.

I INVITE YOU TO BRING your loved ones 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 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

2015 was a headline year for the exciting mixed-use Miami River District, which received significant positive national and local press. Highlights included approvals of 3,280 high-density residential units, 550 hotel rooms, and 6 restaurants, all featuring additional sections of the public riverwalk and waterborne transportation in Miami's downtown "Lower River", 11 new single family homes were approved and a new recreational boatyard opened for business in the "Middle River", 2 new restaurants opened and 2 more commenced construction, the historic Miami River Inn is being restored, 3 new sections of the public Riverwalk were constructed, and more.

The Miami River Commission (MRC) thanks the State of Florida for renewing their \$150,000 appropriation to continue providing needed services along the historic Miami River.

Subcommittee Reports

MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY *Dr. Ernest Martin, Chair*

IN 2015, 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. The MRC thanks Miami-Dade County for constructing 2 new sections of public riverwalk on both shores beneath Metrorail, and granting an additional \$1.5 million to design and construct a future section of the public riverwalk. We thank the City of Miami for constructing a new greenway section from the NW 5 ST Bridge to Seaspice. In 2016, another 10 fully funded and designed sections of the Riverwalk will be built by the public and private sectors. Over half of the 10-mile public Miami River Greenway has been constructed.

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.

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 Stormwater subcommittee's highest priority is the City of Miami's fully funded and permitted Wagner Creek and Seybold Canal Maintenance Dredging and Environmental Cleanup Project. The MRC thanks the City of Miami, FIND and the State of Florida for appropriating \$20 million for the project. This long-awaited and widely supported project, will start construction in 2016 and significantly improve the environment and economy.

The MRC appreciates all the agencies which in 2015 inspected the Miami River for 3 days searching for sources of contamination, which were then remediated. This inspection generated a list of action items which will be conducted to improve water quality.

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

THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & COMMERCE SUBCOMMITTEE

supported the Miami-Dade School Board's resolution to create marine industrial vocational classes, and is assisting in the creation of a curriculum. The subcommittee commenced efforts to create a more detailed *Miami River Property and Business Database*, and thanks

Miami-Dade County Tax Appraiser Pedro Garcia for his assistance. In 2015 a new boatyard opened, 2 new riverfront restaurants opened and 2 more commenced construction, an office building was constructed, the historic Miami River Inn is under renovations, 3,280 new residential units, 550 hotel rooms and 6 new riverfront restaurants were approved. Therefore the Miami River District is ripe with mixed-use economic development and commerce.



Offices under construction.



Miami River Yacht Club under construction.



Public Riverwalk at Neo Vertika, American Social, Latitude on the River and FPL.



New public Riverwalk beneath Metrorail, co-funded by the Florida Inland Navigation District (FIND) and Miami-Dade County.

TESTIMONIALS

“The approved One River Point will commence construction in 2016 of over 400 luxury residential units, 20 hotel rooms, restaurant and nightclub. We strongly support and appreciate the partnership with the Miami River Commission, which is determined to make the public Riverwalk a world class attraction. The Miami River Commission's tireless persistence, supported by the private sector, is achieving the mutual goal of significantly improving the Miami River District.”
- *Shahab Karmely, Kar Properties*

“Apex Marine, a yacht service facility, recently relocated to the South Fork of the Miami River. During our search for a new home, I met with members of the MRC, who provided me with information on various sites that should be considered. Apex Marine is pleased to be now fully operational at a site that has featured marine businesses since 1954. Apex employs highly-skilled technicians that earn well above the County average, and we look forward to additional growth in the future. We thank the MRC for their valuable assistance.”
- *Issy Perera, Apex Marine*

“The Miami River Commission (MRC) is doing a fantastic job to support and promote thoughtful development along our treasured riverfront. Their efforts and vision is one reason why our group purchased and is making a big investment in the restoration of the Miami River Inn. As a resource, the MRC has been invaluable in helping us better understand the investment opportunities along the Miami River.”
- *Avra Jain, Miami River Inn*

“Three years ago when we started the public process of planning the approved Miami River Special Area Plan, featuring 1,678 residential units, 330 hotel rooms, restaurants, retail, over \$21 million in public benefits and \$23 million in impact fees, we turned to the Miami River Commission which provided tremendous assistance and support. The MRC has advocated for what is in the best interest of the entire community along the public Riverwalk, which is also what is in the best interest of our Development and future Miami River District residents.”
- *Ari Pearl, Developer CG Florida Properties, LLC*



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

VOLUNTARY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Jay Carmichael, 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 2015 alone, the Miami River "VIP" resulted in the removal of 5 derelict vessels, 24 Miami River Greenway Beautification volunteer events featuring plantings, removal of illegal dumping, invasive species, and graffiti along several sections of the Miami River, 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.



Public riverwalk at Miami Circle Park, a national historic landmark, Epic and One Miami.



MIAMI RIVER GREENWAY'S TIMELINE																
<p>1897</p> <p>Henry Flagler opens six-story Royal Palm Hotel, including first greenway</p>	<p>1910</p> <p>Lummas Park created on Miami River</p>	<p>1972</p> <p>Parks For People bond issue passed by voters, funds portions of the Miami River Greenway</p>	<p>1980s</p> <p>Miami River Greenway section constructed along north shore from Biscayne Bay to NW 2 Avenue</p>	<p>1980s</p> <p>Miami River Greenway section constructed along north shore from Biscayne Bay to NW 2 Avenue</p>	<p>1998</p> <p>Florida Legislature creates Miami River Commission as a watchdog, advocate and clearinghouse for the river. Miami Circle site discovered</p>	<p>2000</p> <p>Florida Legislature passes Miami River Improvement Act</p>	<p>2001</p> <p>With the Trust for Public Land, the MRC, City of Miami and Miami-Dade County unanimously approve Miami River Greenway Action Plan</p>	<p>2002</p> <p>Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed</p>	<p>2003</p> <p>Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed</p>	<p>2004</p> <p>Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed</p>	<p>2005</p> <p>Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed</p>	<p>2006</p> <p>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</p>	<p>2007</p> <p>Miami River Corridor Multi-Modal Transportation Plan created by Metropolitan Planning Organization and MRC recommending completion of the Miami River Greenway • Greenway construction continues</p>	<p>2008</p> <p>Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed</p>	<p>2009</p> <p>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</p>	<p>2010-2015</p> <p>Sections of the Miami River Greenway constructed</p>

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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 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, painted murals, picked up litter, removed invasive plants and spread recycled mulch along the riverwalk through 24 volunteer beautification events in 2015. 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 20th Annual Miami Riverday Festival is scheduled April 2, 2016, in Lummus Park, 250 NW North River Drive. Just like the 19th annual festival, held April 11, 2015, 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 usually meets on the first Monday of the month at noon, in the conference room to the right of the MRC office.

MRC thanks volunteers and sponsors:

- State of Florida
- Miami-Dade County
- City of Miami
- Downtown Development Authority
- One River Point
- Miami Marlins
- HNTB
- University of Miami
- Hands On Miami
- Florida International University
- Miami Dade College
- Florida Wood Recycling
- Florida Drawbridge
- St. Thomas University
- Touch Miami with Love



One River Point’s approved public riverwalk.

Miami River Commission Members

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

Senator ANITERE FLORES
Chair, Miami-Dade Delegation
Designee: Rep. DAVID RICHARDSON

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. DANIEL O’KEEFE
South Florida Water Management
Designee: Ms. SANDY BATCHELOR

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

Ms. ALYCE ROBERTSON
Downtown Development Authority
Designee: Mr. ERIC RIEL

Mr. BARRY JOHNSON
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

Mr. PHILIP 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. DUBER LAZARDO

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

Ex-Officio Members:

CONGRESSWOMAN ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Designee: MS. DEBBIE ZIMMERMAN

CAPTAIN AUSTIN J. GOULD
United States Coast Guard
Captain of the Port of Miami

Managing Director: **Mr. BRETT BIBEAU**

Designed by: Toni Kirkland Graphics

MIAMI RIVER COMMISSION
c/o Robert King High
1407 NW 7 ST, Suite D,
Miami, FL 33125
Ph: 305-644-0544

www.miamirivercommission.org



P&L Towing tug boat basin.