

May 24, 2022

Via Email

Brett Bibeau
Managing Director
Miami River Commission
1407 NW 7th Street # 1
Miami, Florida 33125

Re: Miami River Bridge / 400 SE 2 Avenue, Miami, Florida (Folio No. 01-3137-022-0020) (the “Property”)

Dear Mr. Bibeau:

Our firm represents HRM Owner, LLC (the “**Applicant**”), in connection with the proposed Miami City Charter amendment for the lease extension and redevelopment of the above-referenced Property (collectively, the “**Project**”). On behalf of the Applicant, please accept this correspondence as the Applicant’s request for a recommendation from the Miami River Commission in support of the proposed Project which is seeking to appear before the City of Miami Commission in the near future for consideration of a lease extension and amendment.

I. Property Information

The Property is owned by the City of Miami (the “**City**”) and is currently improved with the James L. Knight Center, the Miami Convention Center, the Miami Conference Center (collectively, the “**JLKC**”) and the Hyatt Regency Hotel, all of which were originally constructed in the late 1970s. The Hyatt Regency Hotel portion of the Property is subject to a long-term lease with approximately four decades remaining. The JLKC portion is owned by the City and operated under a management agreement with a third part entity.



The Property is located along the north bank of the Miami River in the heart of City's Urban Core. The Property fronts SE 2 Avenue to the east, the Miami River to the south, a Comfort Inn & Suites hotel to the west and SE 4 Street to the north. Under Miami 21, the Property is zoned T6-80-O and is located within the Central Business District Residential Density Increase Area. The City's Future Land Use Map designates the Property as Urban Central Business District. The Property is located within a Transit Oriented Development ("TOD") and provides a direct connection to the James L. Knight Center Metromover Station. The Property currently provides a Riverwalk (varying in width) which provides a connection to the existing Riverwalk network to the west and under the SE 2 Avenue/Brickell Avenue bridge to the east.

II. The Project

The Applicant is proposing to amend the City Charter via a referendum to expand the existing lease term for the Hyatt Regency and expand the leased premises to include the JLKC land. In connection with the Charter Amendment, the Applicant proposes to redevelop the Property into a cohesive mixed-use development consisting of new residential, lodging, meeting space, and retail uses. The Applicant will present a complete site plan for the proposed design of the Project to the Miami River Commission and the Urban Infill & Greenways Committee during the site plan approval process following approval of the proposed Charter amendment. The Project will include the following:

1. 50-foot waterfront setback even though the site has a platted 20-foot waterfront walkway and is listed as an exempt site in the City Charter.
2. Accessible Riverwalk in compliance with Section 3.11 of Miami 21 including the applicable Waterfront Design Standards of Appendix B and the Baywalk Riverwalk Design Standards and Guidelines.
3. Signage in compliance with the Miami River Greenway: Wayfinding and Environmental Graphics Specifications.
4. Working Waterfront covenant in compliance with Policy PA-3.1.9 of the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan.

The Project's design will be centered around a proposed New Riverfront for All which will consist of new and inviting public spaces along the Miami River including a new Riverwalk. The Project complies with the Miami City Charter waterfront setback by providing a minimum fifty (50) foot setback along the Miami River. The proposed Riverwalk will enhance the existing connection with the Miami River Greenway to the west and create a new connection underneath the SE 2 Avenue/Brickell Avenue bridge to the east. This proposed connection along the Miami River Greenway will allow cyclists and pedestrians to travel from the South Miami Avenue bridge all the way to Maurice Ferre Park along the Miami River and Biscayne Bay.

The Project will be a signature development that will introduce new uses that will contribute to and support the growth of Downtown Miami. The proposed redevelopment of the Property will be guided by the Lower River design development regulations of both the Miami River Greenway Action Plan and the Miami River Greenway Regulatory Design Standards. The Project will be a major improvement to the Property, the Miami River, and the City at large. The Project will activate this segment of the waterfront and enhance the Miami River's status as a regional economic and recreational hub. The proposed development with a mix of residential hotel, commercial, and meeting space uses is precisely the type of development the Miami Comprehensive Neighborhood Plan's Port of Miami River Sub-Element emphasizes when it lists the economic development of the Miami River through job creation and employment opportunities as one of its goals. The proposed uses will transform this underutilized and outdated Property into a vibrant waterfront mixed-use complex that will create numerous employment opportunities and bring unparalleled opportunities to the area.

III. Miami River Greenway Action Plan

The proposed improvements are in compliance with the stated recommendations and goals of the Miami River Greenway Action Plan (the "**MRGAP**"). Pursuant to the MGRAP, the Property is located in the Lower River section of the Miami River. The MGRAP Lower River Recommendations plan states "[t]he key Greenway design development recommendations for the lower river section are to complete the Miami Riverwalk." The Property is currently fenced off from the existing Riverwalk to the east. The planned improvements at the Property include the creation of an inviting and accessible Riverwalk connection underneath the Brickell Avenue bridge as recommended by the MRGAP.

The MRGAP seeks to create a viable Miami River. The Project meets the stated goals and objectives of the MRGAP. The following describes just a few of the MRGAP goals complied by the proposed improvements at the Property:

- **Goal 1: Improves Access to the River**
 - The proposed public access waterfront walkway and riverwalk at the Property will remove the existing barriers at the site which limit public access to, and enjoyment of, the Miami River. The Project will comply with the applicable Miami Riverwalk standards.
 - The proposed public access waterfront walkway and Riverwalk will provide landscaping, seating, and gathering areas creating an inviting access point for the public to engage with the Miami River.

- **Goal 2: Sustain the “Working River” Industries of the Miami River**
 - The Project will generate significant employment opportunities along this portion of the Miami River by introducing new hotel, retail and meeting uses.

- **Goal 4: Serve as a Destination Landscape for Metro Miami**
 - The proposed Riverwalk provide various access points that will attract visitors and residents to the Miami River. Additionally, the proposed uses at the site will attract many visitors and professionals to the Miami River.
 - The Project will open to the public a section of the Miami River which has been inaccessible for many years.

- **Goal 5: Encourage a Compatible Land Use Vision for the River**
 - The proposed residential, hotel, commercial, and other uses at the Property will further promote diversity of land uses along the Miami River and complement the existing neighboring uses.

The proposed Project will revitalize the Property and provide a unique economic development opportunity to the Miami River and the greater Miami area. We look forward to continuing to work and cooperate with the Miami River Commission on this exciting project. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Thank you for your attention and favorable consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,



Iris V. Escarra