

*Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*  
**1<sup>st</sup> Annual Update**

**Accepted by Miami River Commission  
December 1, 2003**

## **Table of Contents**

Introduction.....	1
Part I. Completed <i>Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan</i> “Implementation Steps” ...	2-3
a. Governance.....	2
b. Investment in the River.....	2
c. River Environment.....	2
d. Transportation.....	3
e. Neighborhood Improvements.....	3
Part II. Ongoing <i>Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan</i> “Implementation Steps” with Significant Progress.....	4-6
a. Planning and Zoning.....	4
b. River Environment.....	4-5
c. Transportation.....	6
d. Neighborhood Improvements.....	6
Part III. Proposed Implementation Step Amendments .....	7-8
Part IV. Updated <i>Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan</i> “Vision for the River – Urban Infill Sites”.....	9-12
a. Lower River.....	9-11
b. Middle River.....	12
c. Upper River.....	12
Part V. Miami River Greenway Update.....	13
Part VI. Miami River Dredging Project Update.....	13
Part VI. Exhibit Updates.....	14-22
a. Expanded Enterprise Zone Boundary Map.....	14
b. Expanded Downtown Development Authority Boundary Map.....	15
c. <i>Miami River Basin Water Quality Improvement Report</i> Action Item Update.....	16-18
d. Miami River Parks Recommendation Update.....	19-22
Part VII. Conclusion.....	23

## **Introduction**

The Miami River Commission (MRC) adopted the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* as a strategic plan to revitalize the River on September 9, 2002. In June 2003, the Infill Plan won an “Award of Excellence” from the Florida Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. The Plan contains 64 “Implementation Steps”, and requires an annual update.

This 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Update classifies 20 of the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*'s Implementation Steps as “Completed” or “Ongoing with Significant Progress”. In only one year since its adoption, the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* has been used by the public and private sectors in planning \$2.65 billion in new planned developments, including over 7,000 planned residential units along the river's shores. In addition, the Plan's recommended improvements to the natural environment, including dredging, clean-up vessels, increased tree canopy and greenspaces have come to fruition. In order to continue soliciting input from local residents, stakeholders, the public and private sectors, during October 2003 the MRC presented a draft of this Annual Update to public hearings in the “Lower River” (Biscayne Bay to the NW 5 ST Bridge), “Middle River” (NW 5 ST Bridge to the NW 22 Ave Bridge) and the “Upper River” (NW 22<sup>nd</sup> Ave Bridge to the Salinity Dam). The MRC thanks all of our public and private sector partners, which have made the current revitalization of the Miami River Urban Infill Corridor a reality.

## **Part I. Completed Implementation Steps**

### **a. Governance**

1. “Request that the Miami River Commission (MRC) adopt the Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan (UIP) as their Strategic Plan.” - The MRC adopted the UIP on September 9, 2002.
3. “Initiate changes to MRC governance necessary to implement the Infill Plan as MRC’s Strategic Plan.” – MRC Urban Infill Working Group made governance changes, including the creation of the 5-year integrated budget, annual UIP update and the Development Technical Review Form.
6. “Request State Legislation to remove MRC sunset clause and appropriate amendments to the MRC enabling legislation in the 2003 State Legislature session.” – Florida Legislature unanimously repealed MRC sunset provision.

### **b. Investment in the River**

10. “Request that the FDOT and Miami-Dade County Public Works invite the participation of City of Miami Planning and Zoning Department, Miami-Dade County Planning and Zoning Department and the public in the design of bridges relative to the aesthetics and pedestrian amenities.” – The Metropolitan Planning Organization’s Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and Transportation Aesthetics Review Committee (TARC) invite the participation of City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, and the public to their monthly publicly noticed meetings, regarding the design of bridges and roadways relative to aesthetics (TARC) and pedestrian amenities (BPAC).
15. “Request the City and County to expand the Enterprise Zone within the Urban Infill boundary as permitted by 2002 State legislation, and utilize available Enterprise Zone economic development incentives to create new and expanding businesses, generating new jobs.” – The Florida Legislature expanded the Enterprise Zone within the MRC targeted Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Boundary. The City Commission adopted a local Enterprise Zone incentive ordinance, including Ad-valorem waivers for new and expanding businesses.

### **c. River Environment**

2. “Request that local governments and agencies re-activate the Miami River Clean-Up Vessel.”  
The Scavenger 2000 de-pollution vessel cost share contract (MRC from SFWMD \$25,000, FEFC \$75,000, City of Miami \$100,000) was approved on May 8, 2003. The Scavenger 2000 is currently removing floatable debris, oil sheens, and oxygenating water at 10,000 gallons per minute in the Miami River, approximately 8 hours per day, 4 days per week.



#### d. Transportation

10. “Request that FDOT, Miami-Dade County and MPO analyze the viability of a tunnel as an alternative to a bridge for future high volume river crossings.” – The *Downtown Transportation Master Plan* prioritizes a downtown River Tunnel, and was adopted by the MPO and City Commission in May 2003. In addition, the MRC contracted economists, which conducted a comparative cost analysis of bridges and tunnels for the NW 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. and NW 27<sup>th</sup> Ave. Bridges. The study found that over a 70-year life cycle, tunnels at these locations would be \$1.46 million less expensive than bridges. The study was forwarded to the FDOT, MPO, City and County.
14. “Request MPO and MDTA extend the hours of operation for all Metro Mover Stations in the Miami River Corridor until midnight.” – Metro Mover commenced operation until midnight in June 2003.
16. “Request MPO and MDTA establish a dedicated revenue source to leverage federal funds to develop a comprehensive transit system that serves the river community.” ½ penny sales tax for transportation approved at referendum, and will be used to leverage federal funds. Portion of the new dedicated transportation tax revenue will be used for Miami River Corridor projects, including the adopted Downtown Transportation Master Plan Tunnel, 24 hour operation of River corridor Metro stations, and increased bus services.

#### e. Neighborhood Improvements

2. “Request that the federal, state and local government provide continued funding for ‘Operation Riverwalk’”. – Governor Bush’s “Operation Riverwalk” completed a successful three-year program focused on illegal drug traffic seizures and creating new economic development. 7,806 pounds of cocaine were seized, and 12 vessels found with illegal drugs were sank to create artificial reefs.



## **II. ONGOING IMPLEMENTATION STEPS WITH SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS**

### **a. Planning and Zoning**

2. "Request the City of Miami Planning Department to pursue appropriate zoning amendments, if deemed applicable upon completion of a Comparative Economic Analysis and Market Study of the Marine Industry." – The following Urban Infill Plan recommended zoning amendments have occurred:
  - 613 & 601 NW 7 ST RD, R-3 to Parks and recreation, (Point Park), 6/27/02
  - 690 SW 1 Ave, Industrial to Restricted Commercial (Lower River, East of I-95), 5/23/02
  - 610 SW 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, Industrial to Restricted Commercial (Lower River, East of I-95), 3/27/03
  - 615 SW 2 Ave, Industrial to Restricted Commercial (Lower River, East of I-95), 3/27/03
  - 501 NW 7 Ave, Special exception to allow a multifamily residential structure of high density equal to R-4, 1/6/03 (Lower River)

### **b. River Environment**

1. "Continue the implementation of the 33 recommendations of the Miami River Commission's Water Quality Improvement Report." – Completed the Little Havana Storm Sewer rebuilding, Downtown Phase I storm sewer rebuilding, and planned the Wagner Creek dredging project.
2. "Request that the MRC pursue additional funding for ongoing environmental education programs." - MRC awarded \$18,972 from County Community Based Organization Grant program in FY 03, and applied again in August 2003 for FY '04. Awarded grant provides free environmental education boat tours to thousands of students annually.
4. "Request that the local and state governments continue programs that remove derelict vessels from the Miami River." – Although the Miami River was derelict ridden, currently there are no derelict vessels on the River. Most recently three derelicts were removed in October 2002, and two additional derelict vessels were removed in March 2003. Officer Frank de la Torre, Florida Fish and Wildlife, has been instrumental in removing the derelict vessels. Continued necessary funding for the derelict removal program is in jeopardy.

**b. River Environment (Continued)**

5. “Request that local and state governments partner to create beautification projects beneath all bridges within the Miami River Corridor.” – The East Little Havana Riverside Garden was created beneath Flagler Bridge. In January 2003 several columns beneath I-395, adjacent to the new Overtown Youth Center, were painted with pastels. In November 2003 the City Commission approved the Athalie Range Park extension in Overtown, beneath I-95.



“Seek continued protection of manatees in the Miami River through monitoring of the Miami-Dade County Manatee Protection Plan.” The Miami-Dade County *Manatee Protection Plan* remains in effect and the manatee population has been rising.

- “Increase the tree canopy by planting shade trees where feasible within the Urban Infill Boundary and recommend that shade trees be required for future developments within the Infill boundary.” – Provided Miami River residents with free trees at the November 2002 Adopt a Tree event held in Curtis Park. In addition, 100 new trees were planted in Rights of Way along N. River Drive and Wagner Creek.



8. “Provide additional green space where feasible within the Urban Infill boundary.” MRC partnered with Hands on Miami, Allapattah and East Little Havana NET Offices, in creating two new pocket parks on Wagner Creek & the East Little Havana Riverside Garden. “Point Park” Zoning and Land Use were amended to Parks and Recreation on June 27, 2002.



**c. Neighborhood Improvements**

4. “Request the MRC to support the City of Miami Mayor’s Office “Clean-Up Miami Campaign”. – MRC participated in, and partially administered, the following volunteer clean-up projects within the Miami River Corridor: October 2002, Miami Circle Clean-Up, November 2002, Sewell Park, Jose Marti Park and Curtis Park Clean-ups, January 2003 Overtown Clean-Up, April 2003, Jose Marti Park, Sewell Park and Curtis Park Clean-Ups and the clean-up/pocket park creations on Wagner Creek in May 2003.



5. “Request the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County and private sector to develop mixed income housing throughout the Miami River Corridor.” – There are over 7,000 new residential units planned along the Miami River, with a total estimated construction cost \$2.65 billion. The housing consists of a mix of affordable projects (River Park Apartments, Jubilee on the River, AguaClara, River Run South, and the Citadel) and market rate projects (NEO Lofts, NEO Vertika, One Miami, Brickell on the River, Terrazas de Miami River, River Place, River House Lofts, etc.).



Neo Lofts (market rate) & Brisas del Mar (affordable housing)

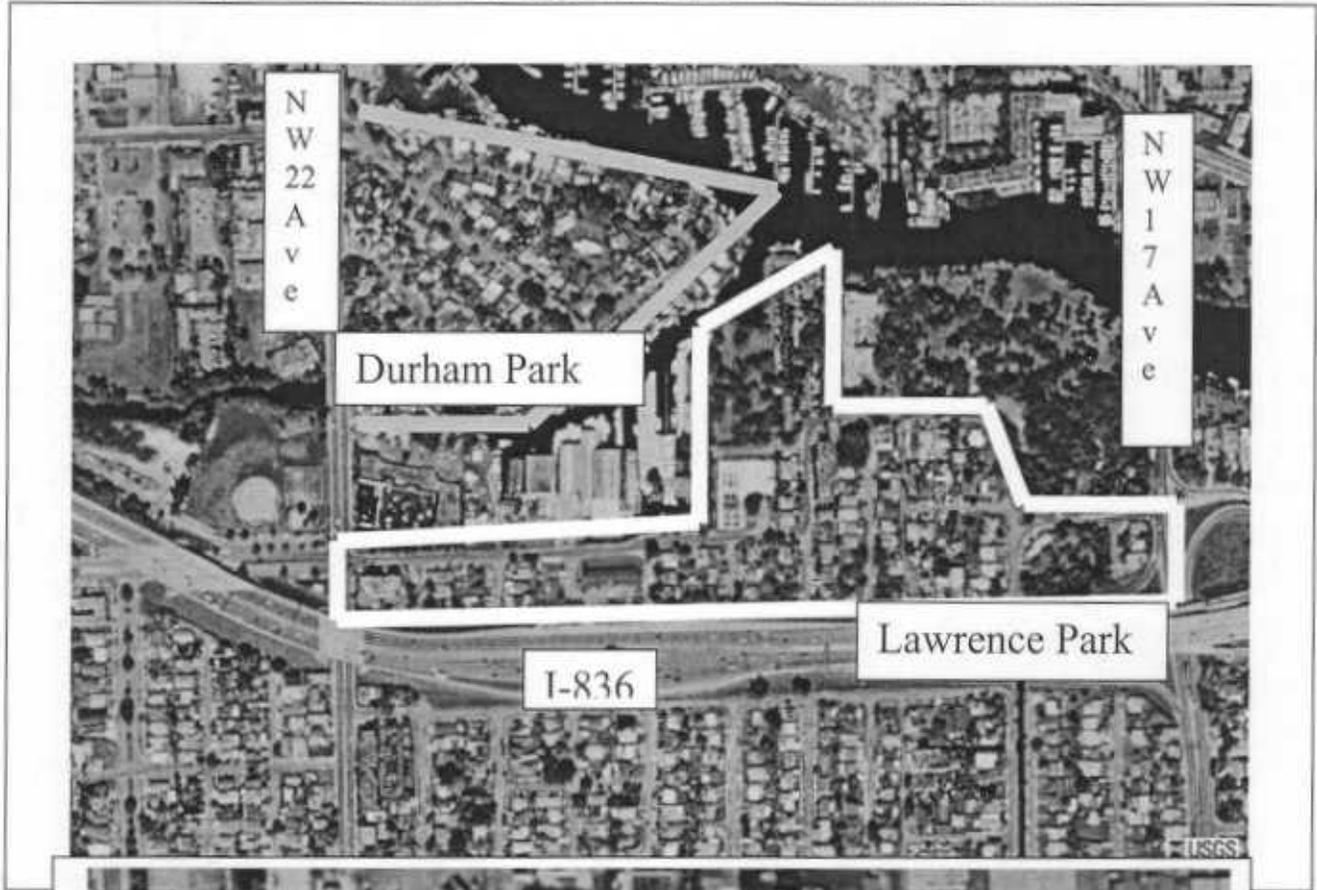
**d. Transportation**

11. “Request that the City and County identify infrastructure, needs and available funding for the Miami River Corridor and incorporate them into the future Capital Improvement Plans.” – Significant Capital Improvement Projects within the Miami River Corridor are funded in the City’s Homeland Defense and Neighborhood Improvement Bond Issue, portions of the County’s Transportation ½ penny sales tax, and FDOT Transportation Improvement Program. These allocations are outlined in the Miami River Commission’s “5-Year Integrated Budget”.

### **Part III. Proposed Implementation Step Amendments**

- Create a new Implementation Step” in the “Neighborhood Improvements” section stating, “Work with the Florida Power and Light (FPL), City of Miami and Miami-Dade County to properly façade and landscape all substations within the Miami River Urban Infill Corridor.”
- Create a new “Implementation Step” in the “Greenway” section stating, “Conduct a Miami River Park Master Plan to integrate existing and proposed public spaces with the Miami River Greenway system.”
- Create a new “Implementation Step” in the “Transportation” section stating, “Assist the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County and Metropolitan Planning Organization in implementing their adopted “Downtown Transportation Master Plan” as it relates to the Miami River Urban Infill Corridor.”
- Create a new “Implementation Step” in the “Transportation” section stating, “Request Metropolitan Planning Organization, City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, and the Florida Department of Transportation to conduct a North and South River Drive Corridor Study, to address the impact of developments, “on-road” Miami River Greenway sections, *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* transportation recommendations, marine industrial site access, dedicated transit loop route, improved signage, noise barriers / buffers, and all plans and projects for transportation impacting North and South River Drives.”
- Create a new “Implementation Step” in the “Planning and Zoning” section stating, “Seek local historical designation and historic national register designation for Grove Park Neighborhood, to protect against inappropriate alterations and demolition.” This new implementation step is directly from page 33, “Vision For The River – Grove Park / East Little Havana”
- Amend the Southern Boundary of the proposed Lummus Park Neighborhood Conservation District (mapped on Page 20) to Flagler Street.
- The draft Miami-Dade County marine industrial overlay ordinance proposes the district to be extended along NW 25 and NW 21 Streets in addition to both sides of the River. As the current *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* limits the recommended marine overlay district to the River, the amendment would consist of the expansion to include the proposed areas along the north sides of the NW 25 (parallel with Palmer Lake) and NW 21 Streets (parallel with the Tamiami Canal).
- Study amending the eastern boundary of the “Middle River” on the south shore from the NW 5 ST Bridge to I-95.

- “Request the City of Miami Planning Department to pursue Neighborhood Conservation Designations for the Spring Garden, Lummus Park, Highland Park and East Little Havana Neighborhoods as described in the Urban Infill Plan.” - Amend to include the following additional Neighborhood Conservation District designations: Durham Park, Grove Park, Lawrence Park, and River Park.



**Part IV. Updated Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan “Vision for the River – Urban Infill Sites”**

The *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*, “Vision for the River – Urban Infill Sites”, pages 41-43, identify opportunity sites within the Miami River Corridor. The following updates the status of the identified opportunity sites:

**a. “Lower River” Opportunity Sites**

1. “One Miami” – The One Miami project broke ground in July 2003.

Location: North bank of Miami River and Biscayne Bay (directly at mouth of river) 205 South Biscayne Blvd

Developer: Related Group of Florida

Architect: Arquitectonica, Bernardo Fort-Brescia

Size/Description: Twin 45 story residential towers, with 896 one, two and three bedroom residences w/parking. Connected to a new \$4.1 million dollar Riverwalk north shore trailhead.

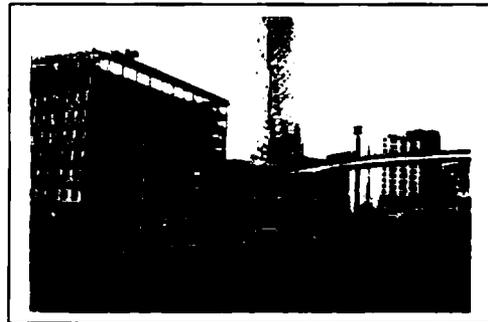


2. “One Riverview Square” - Broke ground in October 2002, and is scheduled for completion in September 2003.

Location: North Bank of River just east of Miami Avenue Bridge

Developer: Miami River Associates & Panther Real Estate Partner

Size/Description: 8 stories, total floor space 166,227 S.F., first floor retail, restaurant connecting to new Riverwalk section; remaining floors office and Immigration Courthouse



3. “Development Opportunity” – A Major Use Special Permit Application for the “Miami River Village” Phase I was submitted to the City of Miami in May 2003.

Location: North bank of River just west of Miami Avenue Bridge

Developer: The Epoch Corporation

Architect: Borges and Associates

Size/Description: Vacant parcel in downtown Miami. Property was part of City of Miami Commission’s approved site for proposed Marlins Baseball Stadium



**a. "Lower River" Opportunity Sites (#3 continued)**

After the stadium development did not occur, Epoch Development purchased the property and it is anticipated that a very special development will be constructed on this site. 4 Phases, 1,300 residential units, 50-foot riverwalk with connecting restaurants and retail.

4. "Charter School" – The recommended Downtown Charter School, located at 400 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, opened in September 2002.

5. "Downtown Proposed Historic District – No change

6. "Flagler Street -Two Way" – The construction documents for the project are complete, funding is allocated (City CIP \$6.5 million for streetscape, FDOT \$2 million, County \$1.25 million) and construction is scheduled to commence in January 2004.

7. "Brickell Key" – The Courts at Brickell Key opened in January 2003

Location: Brickell Key

Developer: Swire Properties

Size/Description: 319 Condominium apartments, 34 stories, priced from \$250-550,000, connected to Riverwalk.

8. "Brickell Shipyards" – The Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan's recommended zoning change from Marine Industrial to SD-7 was approved by the City Commission on March 27, 2003. A Major Use Special Permit for the "River Place" project on this site is being submitted to the City of Miami.

Developer: Miami Riverfront Partners, LLC, Kevin Reilly, Principal

Location: 615 SW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave

Architect: Arquitectonica, Bernardo Fort-Brescia

Size / Description: Mixed-Use project consisting of a 42 story, 455 residential unit building, 22 story office building, 6,150 sq foot café, 3,800 Sq foot bank/retail space and a 5,000 sq. foot retail space on the first floor. Buildings are setback 50-feet from the river, with a publicly accessible riverwalk.

9. "Brickell Park" – Per the Infill Plan recommendation, this public park site is being preserved.

10. "Brickell on the River" – Phase I of this approved Major Use Special Permit broke ground in August 2003.

Location: 25 SE 5<sup>th</sup> Street, south bank of river immediately west of the Customs Office

Developer: Michael Bedzow, Groupe Pacific

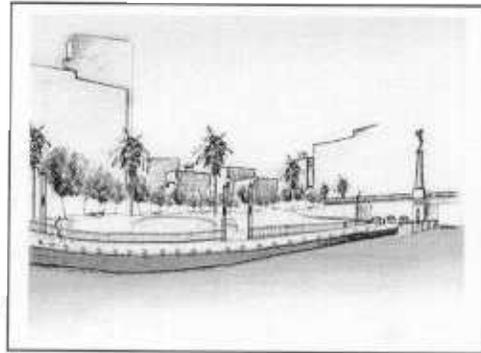
Architect: Stan Cohen, Cohen & Cohen

Size/Description: Twin Residential Towers, 42 stories each, 712 units, connected to a new 50-foot wide Riverwalk section with Café's and fountains.



11. "Mary Brickell Village" The Millennium Partners are completing the 4-seasons development prior to commencing this project.

12. "Miami Circle Greenway Connection" – The Miami River Commission was awarded \$100,000 from Florida Department of Environmental Protection Office of Greenways and Trails and \$25,000 from the City of Miami Homeland Defense and Neighborhood Improvement Bond's Greenway Line item to develop a riverwalk at the Miami Circle site. The Department of State's Circle Planning Group will review potential riverwalk routes at their October 2003 meeting.



13. "Lummus Park – Proposed Conservation District" – City of Miami completed the "Lummus Park Historic District – Designation Report", which will be presented to the City of Miami's Historic and Environmental Preservation Board in January 2004.

14. "Lummus Landing" – The Riverwalk in Lummus Park broke ground in July 2003.



15. "Scottish Rite Temple – Adaptive Reuse" – No change.

16. "Flagler Streetscape Extension" – No Change.

17. "East Little Havana Proposed Conservation District" – No change.

18. "5<sup>th</sup> ST Bridge" – The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) allocated \$43,727,000 in Transportation Improvement Project # 4128081, to replace the NW 5 ST Bridge. The FDOT proposes to build bridge piers in the Federal Navigable Channel, and the United States Coast Guard has replied that they want nothing built in the Federal Navigable Channel, similar to the new NW 2 Ave Bridge.

19. "Ada Merritt School" | This historic school site was rebuilt and re-opened to students in August 2003.

**b. Middle River Sites**

20. "Miami News" – The Major Use Special Permit application for the following proposed mixed-use project for this site is being submitted to the City of Miami:

Project Name: Royal Atlantic

Location: 1001 NW 7 ST

Developer: Edwin Verdezoto, Royal Atlantic Developers, LLC

Architect: Larry Cohan, Britto Cohan

Size Description: Residential/mixed use project consisting of a grand total of 576 residential units in two phases. Phase I is a 26 story building, with the garage facaded along the river with townhomes and 3,500 square feet of retail along NW 7 ST. Phase II is 280 residential units in a 24-story building with the parking garage facaded along the river with townhomes and 4,500 square feet of retail along NW 7 ST. The project provides a 50-foot setback from the Miami River, a publicly accessible 20 foot-wide riverwalk, and a public riverfront greenspace area.

21. "Spring Garden Proposed Conservation District" – Per the required Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) designation process, the Spring Garden Civic Association (local neighborhoods homeowners association) submitted a resolution in support of creating the proposed NCD to the City Planning Department Director in January 2003.

22. "Highland Park – Potential Conservation District" – No change.

23. "River Front Access Opportunity Park" – No change.

24. "Mahi Shrine Site" – No change.

25. "Re-development Opportunity" – No change.

26. "Orange Bowl" – \$732,930 was spent on improvements from the City of Miami's Homeland Defense Neighborhood Improvement Bond \$16,000,000 line item (CIP Project #324002).

27. "Grove Park – Potential Conservation District" – Grove Park Neighborhood Homeowners Association considering NCD and Historic Designation support resolutions.

28. "Infill Housing Opportunity" – No change.

29. "Improved boat access and land access at Sewell Park" – No change.

**c. Upper River Sites:**

30. "Florida Yacht Basin" – No change.

31. "Temporary Dredge Drying Site – Army Corps of Engineers responded to Melrose resident concerns by denying open air drying of the sediments. The Miami River Dredging Project Cooperation Agreement, executed on July 30, 2003, includes this site for staging.

32. "Extend Commercial Zoning" – No Change.

33. "Proposed Water Related Industrial Overlay District" – Miami-Dade County first pursuing the "Proposed Upper River Waterfront Industrial Overlay District" (#35).

34. "Aesthetic Improvements" – No change.

35. "Proposed Upper River Waterfront Industrial Overlay District" – Miami-Dade County consultants drafted County Waterfront Industrial Overlay District ordinance for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners.

36. "MIC Core and Car Rental Facility" – The MIC access road infrastructure improvements broke ground in April 2003.

37. "Potential Associated MIC development" – No change.

38. "Recreation Around Lake" – No change.

### **Part V. Miami River Greenway Update**

The following sections of the Miami River Greenway have been completed or broke ground since the MRC's adoption of the *Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan*:

- North Shore, One Riverview Square developed the Riverwalk from Metro-Mover to Miami Ave Bridge, connecting with riverwalk to the east from Bijan's Seafood Restaurant to the Hyatt Regency Hotel.
- North Shore, the Miami River Center riverwalk was connected to the FPL riverwalk beneath the new 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave Bridge.
- North Shore, "Lummus Landing" riverwalk broke ground in July 2003.



- South Shore, MRC was awarded \$125,000 in grant funding for the riverwalk adjacent to the Miami Circle Site.
  - South Shore, a 20-foot wide section of riverwalk with connecting cafes at "Brickell on the River" broke ground in August 2003.
  - South Shore, beneath I-95 FDOT broke ground on a new riverwalk section in February 2003. The new riverwalk section will connect to the Jose Marti Park riverwalk.
  - Wagner Creek, two pocket parks were created along the Wagner Creek banks.
- Brett Bibeau, MRC Managing Director, authored the "East Allapattah Grenway" and "East Little Havana" grant applications on behalf of the City of Miami. The FDOT is awarding the City of Miami \$2,000,000 for these projects. In addition, the Trust for Public Land hired consultants to create construction documents for the Greenway along both shores from I-95 to the NW 5 ST Bridge.

### **Part VI. Miami River Dredging Update**

The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the local project sponsor, Miami-Dade County, executed the Miami River Dredging "Project Cooperation Agreement" on July 30, 2003. In October 2003 the USACE released the project's Request for Proposals, and the bidding deadline is November 18, 2003. The USACE estimates the Miami River Dredging Project will commence between March and July 2004. Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami have negotiated terms to fund the additional "bank-to-bank" dredging, outside the Federal Navigable Channel.



**Part VII. Exhibit Updates**

a. Expanded Enterprise Zone Boundary Map - (*Miami River Corridor Urban Infill Plan* Page 135). Per the recommendation of the Infill Plan, the Florida Legislature expanded the Enterprise Zone, therefore all shaded areas on the following map is currently a designated Enterprise zone.

**Proposed Miami River Expansion  
to the Enterprise Zone Area**

