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Jose Marti Park Project Receives First WEDG® (Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines) Verification in the State of Florida from Waterfront Alliance

First Project in Florida to Meet the Standard for Excellence in Waterfront Design

New York, NY—The Waterfront Alliance announced today that the Jose Marti Park project has achieved WEDG® (Waterfront Edge Design Guidelines) Verification. An award-winning rating system and set of guidelines, WEDG is the gold standard for waterfront design in resilience, ecology, and accessibility. Jose Marti Park is the first project in the state of Florida, second outside of New York, and twelfth nationally to meet the standard for excellence in waterfront design.

Project Overview. Rendering credit: CURTIS+ROGERS DESIGN STUDIO

Jose Marti Park is a 13-acre multi-use recreational space located along the Miami River, a 5.5-mile working river, within the vibrant neighborhood of Little Havana in Miami, Florida. In 2019, Commissioner Joe Carollo of District 3 for the City of Miami, sponsored the Jose Marti Park Adaptive Redesign Project to develop a visionary and implementable climate adaptive design solution for the park. The redesign of Jose Marti Park is part of the Miami Forever Bond, a $400 million program intended to build a stronger, more resilient future for Miami in response to climate change. The City has committed $940,000 to the study and design of Jose Marti Park, which will provide sea-level rise mitigation and flood prevention. Construction of Jose Marti Park is expected to begin in early 2024 and project completion is anticipated for 2027.

“We are excited to announce that Jose Marti Park has achieved WEDG Verification, going above and beyond in waterfront resilience and risk reduction," said **Waterfront Alliance President and CEO, Cortney Koenig Worrall**. "This outstanding undertaking embodies the commitment the City of Miami and the design team have for WEDG's rigorous standards for climate resilience, ecology, and accessibility at the water's edge. We recognize the project's commitment to innovation in waterfront design in the face of climate change. As the first site in the state of Florida to earn WEDG Verification, we are thrilled Jose Marti Park will be an excellent model for future waterfront projects to come.”

WEDG Verification is only awarded for projects that successfully pass a technical review of the project’s design against the WEDG standards. Each project is assessed by engineers, landscape architects, and other professionals coordinated by Waterfront Alliance. WEDG has also been incorporated into the City of Miami Zoning Code, Appendix B - Waterfront Design Guidelines, which encourages new developments to consider WEDG participation.

Jose Marti Park’s climate-adaptive redesign will create an area of public access that provides storm and flood protection, with a focus on shoreline stabilization and drainage improvements, for its surrounding communities. The design elements of the project employ hybrid forms of infrastructure to adapt to the water's edge. Key components include retrofitting existing seawalls in some areas, constructing new seawalls in others, implementing living shorelines/living seawalls in remaining spaces, creating a floating boardwalk with viewing platforms, developing a Riverwalk with pervious pavement and underground water retention infrastructure, sculpting uplands to incorporate bioswales, rain gardens, exfiltration trenches, and raised berms, as well as integrating native tree canopy and appropriate groundcovers to maximize water capture and filtration into the river and water table.

“Jose Marti Park, located in my district and within the Little Havana neighborhood, is one of the most beloved parks in Miami, not only because of the amenities it has to offer, but because of its location on the river and its stunning views. Few parks in the City are on the water’s edge, and keeping a commodity such as this protected is a top priority of mine. As such, developing innovative ideas for the design plan, which addresses climate adaptive solutions through waterfront resilience and risk reduction, will ensure the Park’s continued enjoyment by visitors for many more years to come. I am proud the Jose Marti Park Adaptive Redesign Project was recognized by the WEDG Verification

program for excellence in waterfront design and to be the first in the State of Florida to achieve this prestigious recognition." said **Miami City District 3 Commissioner, Joe Carollo**.

Curtis + Rogers Design Studio, the lead landscape architects, introduced WEDG to the project, recognizing its value not only for designers but also for developers, risk and finance professionals, and local governments. "The potential impact of WEDG on transforming the perception of waterfronts in South Florida was too compelling to ignore," said **Founding Principal of Curtis + Rogers Design Studio, Aida Curtis**. "With WEDG, we can confidently create waterfront environments that not only withstand the challenges of climate change but also enhance public enjoyment and foster a harmonious relationship with nature."

In developing the Park's redesign, the project team identified surrounding communities that are at a particularly high risk of climate change related disasters. The team held a robust stakeholder engagement process, including participatory workshops, outreach activities, and community context assessments and multiple meetings with stakeholders and users throughout the design process. As a result, community input was used to inform the design process.

Jose Marti Park is a result of the extensive collaboration and coordination with the design team, which included Cummins Cederberg, Inc. as coastal and marine engineers, and E Sciences, Inc. (now RES) as civil and stormwater engineers. The City's Office of Capital Improvements (OCI), Parks & Recreation Department, Planning & Zoning Department, and Office of Resilience & Sustainability (ORS) also provided consistent guidance and support throughout the design process. The Van Alen Institute played a critical role in selecting and supporting the design team to redesign Jose Marti Park and in providing opportunities for community engagement.

"The successful implementation of the Jose Marti Park project will ultimately result in a model that is replicable throughout the City of Miami and the region. The City of Miami is proud to offer leadership on waterfront projects" said **City of Miami Mayor, Francis Suarez.**

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The Waterfront Alliance builds, transforms, revitalizes, and protects accessible waterfronts for all communities, together.