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City Commission Approves Construction of Art and Science Museums in Downtown's Museum Park

(Miami, FL) The City of Miami Commission today approved three resolutions that allow the construction of the Miami Art Museum and Miami Science Museum's new facilities to begin as part of the Museum Park Miami project.

"Today is a great day in the City of Miami. Museum Park represents an investment in our city and creates a first-rate cultural and recreational space for future generations to enjoy," said Mayor Manny Diaz. "The Commission has recognized that we must invest in our downtown, and that the addition of the art and science museums and green spaces will breathe new life into the core of our city."

The City Commission unanimously approved the final lease agreement between the City and the museums, as well as the development and remediation agreement, which provides for the environmental site assessment and corresponding site rehabilitation of Bicentennial Park.

"I'm encouraged that today's vote will provide our museums with enough momentum to greatly increase their fundraising abilities. This proves to the public that we are committed to seeing these important cultural institutions thrive within our community," said Commissioner Marc D. Sarnoff.

By allowing MAM and MSM to secure land in downtown Miami, the City has now enabled them to request that Miami-Dade County release the funding from the Miami-Dade County Building Better Communities General Obligation Bonds that has already been allocated for this project. The development agreement provides for the design, development and construction of the project

"A long dreamed about project is one step closer to reality," said Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez. "The new Miami Art Museum and Museum of Science at Museum Park will be world-class facilities with our beautiful Biscayne Bay as a

backdrop. Residents and visitors are sure to enjoy a one-of-a-kind experience that only South Florida can offer.”

Museum Park Miami will be a 40-acre city park designed for both active and passive recreation where visitors and residents alike can visit two first-class museums, the Miami Museum of Science & Planetarium and the Miami Art Museum, in an open setting of lawns, public gardens, fountains, and pools - all fronting Biscayne Bay.

“We are very pleased with the support of the City and its Commissioners with the construction of the new Miami Science Museum,” said Gillian Thomas, President and CEO of the Miami Science Museum. “The Miami Science Museum is truly a museum for the people. The new state-of-the-art green building, its aquarium, multi-media planetarium and exhibit space will not only offer great educational value and enjoyment, but will help create jobs for the community. This entire project is a strong team effort between the County, the City and our Museums.”

Terence Riley, Director of Miami Art Museum, said, “We are deeply grateful to the City of Miami and Miami- Dade County for their support. The new Miami Art Museum, designed by Herzog & de Meuron as a welcoming and sustainable building integrated with the park, will be a symbol of Miami in the 21st century. Museum Park will be a vital public space for educational and cultural exchange, both within our community at the center of the Americas and for the world beyond.”

Thursday’s approval culminated a process that began in 2000 when the commission committed itself to the underutilized Park’s revival, passing a resolution to renew Bicentennial Park as a “premier public park.” During that time, the Miami Museum of Science and the Miami Art Museum completed a multi-year site and funding analysis for the development of new, world-class institutions at Bicentennial Park, adopting joint resolutions establishing the collaborative goal of creating “Museum Park Miami” in Bicentennial Park.

In preparation of Bicentennial Park’s redevelopment as Museum Park, the City Commission in October 2001 proposed a citywide referendum for the \$255 million Homeland Defense/Neighborhood Improvement Bond issue. The bond program specifically includes \$10 million for Bicentennial Park infrastructure improvements and \$3.5 million for each museum as a challenge grant for planning and pre-development costs. The bond referendum was approved by City voters on November 13, 2001.

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