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## **Press Release**

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### **U.S. Deputy Secretary of Interior Recognizes City of Miami for Historic Preservation Efforts**

**Caption:** City of Miami Mayor Manny Diaz, Deputy Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett, and City Manager Pete Hernandez

(Miami, FL.)-- Deputy Secretary of the Interior Lynn Scarlett joined Miami Mayor Manny Diaz and City Manager Pete Hernandez today to celebrate the Preserve America Community designation awarded to Miami, Florida. Scarlett presented a designation certificate signed by First Lady Laura Bush, Honorary Chair of *Preserve America*, in recognition of the community's work to preserve, protect and celebrate the unique history and heritage it contains.

"I am delighted to be in Miami to recognize the importance of heritage tourism and preservation, and the lessons of history that are made authentic and accessible through those efforts," said Scarlett. "I'm also excited to note the designation by Secretary Dirk Kempthorne a week ago of the Freedom Tower as a National Historic Landmark. As we know, memories of Freedom Tower remain etched in the minds of many Cuban Americans who came to America and found support in the building."

“In the City of Miami, we know how important it is to recognize and preserve our many historic treasures,” said Mayor Diaz. “We know that by identifying and designating properties of major significance, we encourage the preservation and protection of Miami's important historic, architectural, and archeological resources. We are very proud of our historic preservation efforts, and this prestigious designation is an acknowledgement of these efforts.”

Designation as a *Preserve America* Community provides national recognition for what the community has achieved, while also enhancing the contribution of heritage tourism and other economic development strategies. This designation indicates that the community is working to preserve and use its heritage assets as building blocks for the future. Miami joins Coral Gables, Daytona Beach, Deland, Dunedin, Fort Myers, Key West, Kissimmee, Sanford, Sarasota, St. Augustine and St. Petersburg as designated communities in Florida.

Miami, Florida (population 362,000) was incorporated as a city in 1896. From its beginnings as a sunny resort town, the city has grown into an international metropolis. Miami was home to the Tequesta peoples more than 10,000 years ago. It was “rediscovered” by the Spanish in the 16th century, became a refuge for Seminole and Miccosukee Indians in the 19th century and then a magnet for pioneers and entrepreneurs in the 19th to early 20th centuries. Today, its strong ties to Caribbean nations have made Miami one of the most diverse cities in the United States.

Miami's history and continued diversity are reflected in Miami Circle (Tequesta), the shops along Calle Ocho (Cuban) and the Caribbean Market (Haitian). In Miami, grand palaces such as Vizcaya and the Deering Estate coexist with more modest buildings, such as the pioneer homes in Coconut Grove, Miami's historic Bahamian community. Cutting-edge architects attracted to the city have interpreted Miami's style through Art Deco, Mediterranean Revival, and Miami Modern (MiMo) constructions.

Miami is home to eight historic districts, several archaeological zones and more than 109 individual historic sites. The city recently created the Biscayne Boulevard Historic District, which encompasses 65 historic structures, many of them motels built in the Miami Modern style that flourished between 1945 and the late 1960s.

Each year, Dade Heritage Days celebrates Miami-Dade County's architectural, environmental, and cultural heritage during eight weeks of events such as open houses, tours, historic exhibits, lectures, concerts, and special programs at historic landmarks. The downtown Historical Museum of Southern Florida features permanent and changing exhibits on the region's rich history.

**About *Preserve America*:** *Preserve America* is a White House initiative to encourage and support community efforts for the preservation and enjoyment of our priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the initiative include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets and support for the economic vitality of our communities. For more information on the *Preserve America* initiative, visit [www.PreserveAmerica.gov](http://www.PreserveAmerica.gov).

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