

## Downtown Development:

### A Plan for Downtown Miami – At Last

By Rochelle Broder-Singer



The master plan calls for Miami to capitalize on its waterfront with more attractions such as the Bayside Marketplace downtown.

After several years of trying, Miami is on the verge of finalizing a huge downtown master plan that encompasses seven major projects in 12 subdistricts along with a mobility strategy.

The plan — which the Downtown Development Authority is expected to approve as soon as next month — calls for the city to define itself by its waterfront and its position as the capital of the Americas. The plan envisions a pedestrian-friendly, inviting environment along the Biscayne Bay and Miami River waterfronts — part of an overall strategy of improving streetscapes, open spaces and parks with trees, attractive sidewalks, benches and bike racks. Included are a streetcar and trolley bus system through downtown and surrounding neighborhoods.



The plan also calls for major improvements along Flagler Street, including wider sidewalks and streetcars.

The Downtown Development Authority will consolidate various city plans into one succinct master strategy and several action blueprints. The authority's proposals are consistent with recommendations from a Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce task force. The authority's final master plan should go to its board for approval in June, says authority Executive Director Alyce Robertson. If the board approves it, it goes on to the city for a vote.

It's all very ambitious, acknowledges Javier Betancourt, the authority's urban planning and transportation manager. "I don't know that any master plan or vision plan of this complexity is ever fully realized," he says. "The important thing is to decide what you want to be as a community and work toward that."