

Miami sets aside \$3 million to address Brickell flooding

By JACQUELYN WEINER

Responding to Brickell-area business owners' complaints, the City of Miami has allocated \$3 million to address flooding problems near Mary Brickell Village.

The Southwest Ninth and 10th streets area – Brickell Avenue side streets – have the “most dire [flooding] problems,” said Ola Aluko, director of capital improvements.

“The drainage is inadequate,” he said.

Survey work is under way in the area to identify necessary repairs and the total area to be targeted, Mr. Aluko said.

The upgrades are to include new drainage, improvements to existing drainage, street resurfacing and sidewalk revamps, he said.



Photo by Maxine Usdan

Flooding in the Brickell area remains a persistent problem. The city allocated \$3 million to alleviate flooding near Mary Brickell Village.

Construction on the side streets, to be paid for with up to \$3 million in street bonds, is to begin next spring, Mr. Aluko

said. The area's poor drainage is due in part to development, yet can mostly be attributed to an

aged sewer system, he said.

Area residents and business owners joined the Miami Downtown Development Authority in pushing the city's Department of Public Works to fix the flooding. Because it turned out to be a significant undertaking, the project was turned over to the Department of Capital Improvements, Mr. Aluko said.

Alyce Robertson, executive director of the Downtown Development Authority, said the authority has been “shining a light on” the Brickell-area flooding problem through talks with the city, county and the Florida Department of Transportation.

“Working on the infrastructure has been a key part of what I've been trying to do,” Ms. Robertson said. “When things look better ... it's easier to sell an area.”

The development authority has also been pitching in to clean up the Brickell corridor, allocating \$1 million toward Brickell Avenue improvements.

Work is in progress to beautify the medians in the area by filling in bare patches with plants, particularly those holes created as pedestrians cut through the bushes to cross the street, Ms. Robertson said.

Also on the development authority's radar are improvements to South Miami Avenue through the county and ongoing Brickell Avenue changes through the Florida Department of Transportation.

Yet flooding remains a persistent issue, Ms. Robertson said, especially near Southeast 12th and 13th streets on Brickell Avenue.

“I guess that's what people call ‘Lake Brickell,’” she said.