



MIAMI BEACH

Mooring Field Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Why did the City request a feasibility study in the specific proposed area?

The City has received complaints from residents and neighborhoods about the unregulated anchorage west of Maurice Gibb Park and south of the Venetian Causeway along Miami Beach. Concerns have also been raised about the impact of unregulated anchoring and potential waste discharge from some of these vessels on the Biscayne Bay environment.

Why is a regulated mooring field important?

The mooring field prevents unregulated vessel anchoring in this area of Biscayne Bay. Boaters must use the mooring balls and will not be permitted to anchor in the mooring field area unless permission is obtained. Boaters must follow the mooring field's rules and regulations, which include regularly pumping out sewage. There will also be support facilities for access via dinghies or possibly a shuttle boat. The managed mooring field will also reduce the number of derelict vessels in the area and improve the Marine Patrol's enforcement capabilities.

How were the potential areas selected for feasibility study?

There is a history and growth of unregulated anchored vessels in this area. In addition, the City owns a portion of the submerged lands near Maurice Gibb Park, which could make permitting easier. Based on their experience, the City's Marine Patrol provided feedback. The city's consultants met with permitting agencies, who recommended one-time permitting rather than an area-by-area approach.

What are environmental benefits of a regulated mooring field?

According to reports from state and local environmental agencies, there has been a significant loss of seagrass habitat. This project will protect the seagrass beds by preventing unregulated and/or random anchoring, as well as anchor dragging. Additionally, the mooring field will have enforceable rules/regulations prohibiting the discharge of sewage, gas, oil, or other waste, which will improve water quality in Biscayne Bay. The mooring field will also address abandoned or derelict vessels, which can drag or wash ashore during storms.

How will the facilities be managed?

The facilities will be managed in accordance with the Management Plan, which will be approved by the appropriate local, state, and federal agencies. The Management Plan outlines specific requirements and rules/regulations for mooring field operations. The City will conduct a formal procurement process to select a marine operator vendor who meets the minimum requirements in terms of personnel, operations experience, and a track record of managing/operating similar facilities in Florida. Minimum requirements for



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environmental regulatory permitting include a dinghy dock and a sewage pump out system. Other upland support facilities would be considered amenities but are not required by environmental agencies.

Where will the revenue go? What will the fees be?

The revenue will be used to pay for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the mooring field as well as environmental compliance. The fees have not been determined yet.

How will the City pursue unregulated anchoring, following the establishment of a mooring field?

The feasibility and planning of a managed mooring field is in part a response to neighborhood and resident concerns about the increase in unregulated anchoring along the City's shoreline in this area. The City will permit the entire mooring field area and build the anchors/mooring balls as needed, but the entire area will be under City control even if no anchors are installed. As a result, the Marine Patrol can enforce any unauthorized mooring.

Florida Statute 327.4108 allows local governments to establish Anchoring Limitation Areas (ALAs) within their jurisdictions for the purpose of managing and regulating vessel anchoring. These limitation areas are typically designated in specific waterways or zones to address various concerns, such as safety, environmental protection, and navigation. The City will work with Miami-Dade County to establish ALAs in accordance with County policy to limit the spread of anchorage to other areas of the City.

How will the regulated mooring field impact navigational channels and property buffers?

The mooring field layout takes into account avoiding anchoring near private residences and navigational channels. The current design includes a 185-foot buffer from all private property but excludes the Meloy Channel. The City will work with Miami-Dade County to establish ALAs in accordance with County policy to limit the spread of anchorage to other areas of the City.

Which city person is assigned to contact and update the public about mooring field progress?

Kevin Pulido, Neighborhood Affairs Division Director

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What federal, state, and county agencies are involved? Are there any that are NOT on-board with this proposal?

The City held preliminary meetings with the US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). During those discussions, each agency expressed support for the project. We will meet with each agency again after the public input has been incorporated into the conceptual layout to seek additional input. Regulatory agencies may have recommendations or impose requirements during the design and permitting phases.

Is there any state legislation required?

Although no State legislation is required, the regulated mooring field must obtain all necessary permits from Federal, State, and County agencies.

Has the city officially expanded the mooring field all the way to MacArthur Causeway?

Yes, it is expanded all the way to MacArthur Causeway as shown on the layout.

Will the design include a second (northern) upland facilities area?

It is the intent of the City to provide an upland facility(s) with laundry facilities, restrooms, and showers. The location(s) of the upland facility(s) have yet to be determined. However, the only requirements for permitting process are a sewage pumpout (which can be mobile) and a dinghy dock for shore access.

What is total cost and where will the total funding come from? Will we need external funding or grants to make this happen? If yes, have we applied?

An opinion of probable cost developed in 2022 estimated the costs to be on the order of \$2.3 million for Area 1 (50 slips). Grants for design and permitting have been applied for and received. Construction estimates will be updated at each stage of the design process.

Who will decide the rules of the mooring field?

The rules are being established by the City within the management plan of the mooring field, a draft of the management plan is in the development process. The management plan is being developed/drafted considering templates that have been approved and are currently in use for mooring fields in other Florida cities/counties.



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Can these rules be included?

- Require regular 'Mobile Pump-out Boat Service' with a set schedule.
- Require mandatory 'Pump-out Log' which can be checked by any Marine Patrol Officer.
- Ensure that a boater is in compliance.
- Mandate regular 'sweeps' of the bay to ensure that boats are in compliance and seaworthy - in other words, not falling into the category of 'derelict' vessel

These proposed rules are being considered with the development of the regulated mooring field management plan.

How many vessels can be accommodated in the current proposed mooring field?

Depending on the final approved design, the city intends to construct a facility capable of housing 150 vessels. Not all mooring balls will be deployed, depending on demand and market conditions. Mooring balls, along with their associated down lines, are removed on a regular basis for maintenance and storage. The City, on the other hand, has the authority to regulate the mooring field's established boundaries.

Which environmental agencies have jurisdiction over managed mooring fields in Florida?

Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Miami-Dade County RER DERM will need to issue permits for the project. Each agency will have public comment periods.

Are there other managed mooring fields in Miami-Dade County?

City of Miami and Miami-Dade County currently operate managed mooring fields. These include Dinner Key, Pelican Harbor and others.