

March 13, 2017



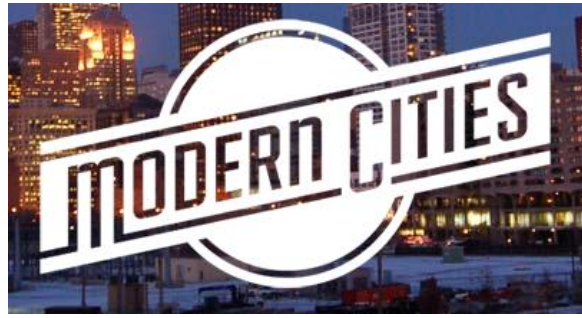
Miami's Giant Pop Up Recreates Downtown Street

Temporary installation is the first attempt to showcase possible improvements that could transform Biscayne Boulevard in Downtown Miami into street rivaling the Embarcadero in San Francisco.



Miami's downtown was the site for a massive urban experiment to kickoff 2017, as the Miami Downtown Development Authority teamed up with the Knight Foundation to test a concept called Biscayne Green. Biscayne Green was a large pop-up park that reimaged three parking lots along busy Biscayne Boulevard and adjacent to Bayfront Park.

Established as a tactical urbanism intervention, Biscayne Green served as a way to start conversations about how to make downtown Miami a walkable neighborhood that can thrive over the long term. The three-week experiment created a temporary promenade along Biscayne Boulevard that featured food trucks, pop-up retail stores, a variety of street furnishings and calendar of daytime and evening programming. The pop up park stretched over three medians in total between SE 2nd Street and NE 1st Street.



Each day, visitors could experience the space as a passive user engaging with a dog park, outdoor lounge, children’s playground or a large flex field. Other users were attracted to Biscayne Green by participating in events ranging from food festivals, concerts, physical fitness classes, outdoor movie nights and coworking and networking events.

Organizers hoped to provide an interactive sneak peek into the future of downtown Miami, a future that features a highly functional, walkable environment that meets the needs of Miami’s Central Business District and waterfront. Instead of Biscayne Boulevard serving as a barrier, downtown stakeholders are interested in improving connectivity by constructing a permanent promenade to serve as a destination for residents, workers and visitors.



This is not the first time that City organizations have collaborated with private stakeholders to help re-imagine Miami’s downtown. We previously featured the [Baywalk pop-up](#), a temporary art installation designed to improve public access to Miami’s urban waterfront.

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Downtown Miami into street rivaling the Embarcadero in San Francisco.

Interview with Christina Crespi, Deputy Director of the Miami Downtown Development Authority, about Biscayne Green.

What are the current traffic counts, capacity and number of parking spaces along Biscayne Blvd?

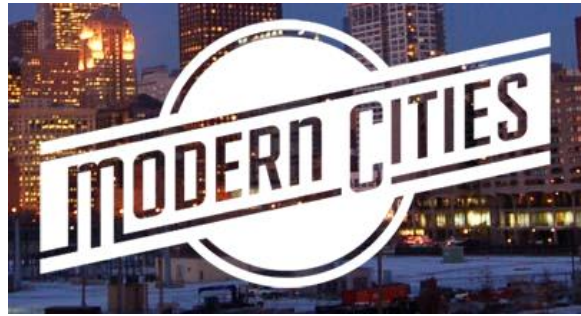
Biscayne Blvd through Downtown Miami CBD currently has a traffic flow that ranges between 30,000 to 42,000 cars per day. The Level of Service for the corridor within Downtown Ranges between LOS A and B.



The amount of parking spaces on the medians along Biscayne Blvd between SE 1st Street and Port Boulevard are approximately around 400 spaces.

How big is and how many parking spaces are located on the municipal parking lot where you’ve recently completed the Biscayne Green pop up?

The Biscayne Green public space intervention occupied 2 parking medians which account for 101 parking spaces. We were able to



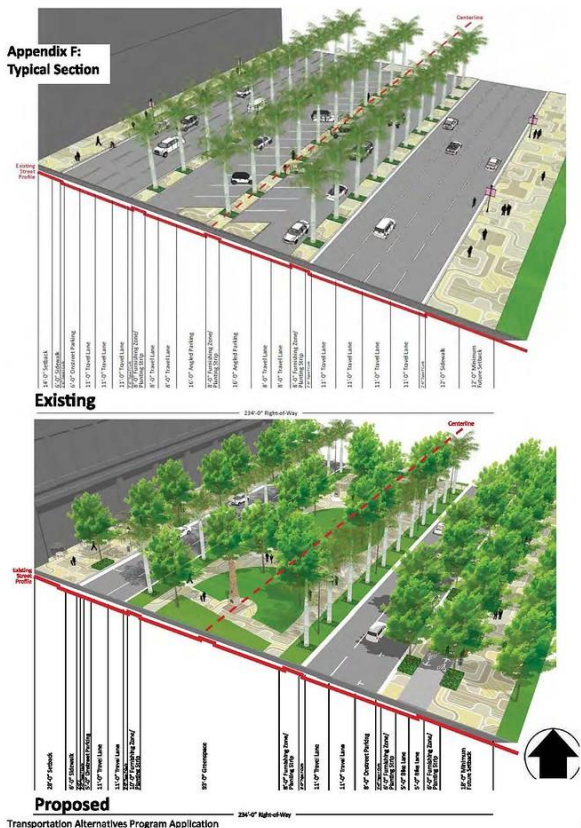
repurpose these parking lots and the space utilized around the Bayfront Park Metromover station into approximately 75,000 sq. ft. of public space.

Biscayne Blvd is a major thoroughfare that brings people in and out of downtown to places like the Bayside Market, Bayfront Park and the arena, but it's also a huge urban barrier that almost separates each side of the street into almost two different neighborhoods. What do you see Biscayne Blvd's changing to meet the needs of a growing downtown and how do you strike a balance in whatever future changes may be

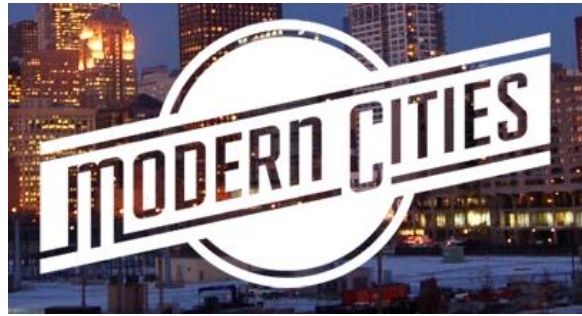
appropriate for the thoroughfare?

The long term vision of Biscayne Green aspires to permanently transform Biscayne Boulevard through Downtown Miami into an urban boulevard that features a pedestrian promenade, emphasizes transit, and also

provides bicycle infrastructure, akin to San Francisco's Embarcadero and Barcelona's Las Ramblas. Part of the objective of Biscayne Green – the temporary public space installation - was to bring awareness of the barrier effect Biscayne Blvd represents to our community and to showcase how these spaces can be turned around into a local destination for green space, entertainment, community & connections. The goal was to elevate the conversation about the importance of transforming our signature thoroughfare from barrier to destination, making downtown a more walkable, accessible, connected and inviting place to be. Allowing people to witness what it means to prioritize people over cars, and to experience the boulevard like they've never done before in order to get a sneak peek of what the future of Downtown could hold was in part a way to influence the change that needs to take place. Being able to see the community response to the public spaces and events planned as part of Biscayne Green are a true reflection of the desires of the local community. Gathering the necessary support from residents and community leaders is key to move the project forward.

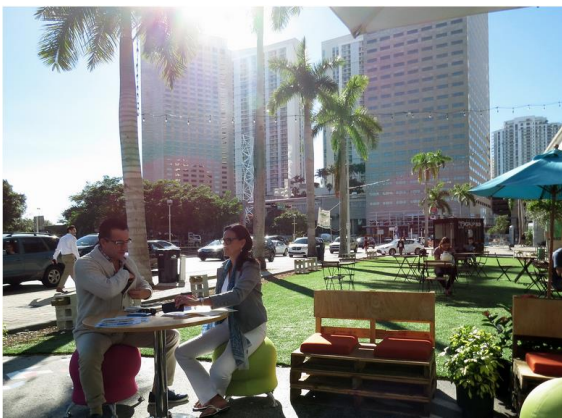


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A look at proposed plans to permanently remake Biscayne Blvd

What were some of the programming features of Biscayne Green that worked really well?



Spanning 20 days and featuring around 35 events, Biscayne Green had something for everyone. Events ranged from daytime fitness classes, meditation, playdates, and meet-me-at-the park programmed activities, to a live concert series on Friday evenings, puppy brunch on Sunday and movies al fresco on Sunday evenings. The Puppy brunch (including the doggy park) and live concert series proved to be very popular events. And although programmed activities were well attended, people utilized the park throughout the day every day of the week as they discovered the pop-up park and the oasis it represented in the center of Downtown.

Completely free and open to the public, Biscayne Green events were not just about entertainment, they were about fostering exchange by getting people out of their cars and onto the street to experience the boulevard in a way that helps them realize the potential of one of Miami's signature corridors. This was, in a big way, about building community and educating citizens about a new way of experiencing their city.

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What kind of lessons did you learn during this pop up trial that you'll definitely want to incorporate into a redesigned Biscayne Blvd?

Lessons learned through this experience based on the community response to the spaces created as part of Biscayne Green include: the desire and need of residents for a dog park. It was also noticeable how people reacted positively to the outdoor plaza environment. From a programmatic standpoint, it was also very telling how people responded to the various community and cultural events that were

offered for free.



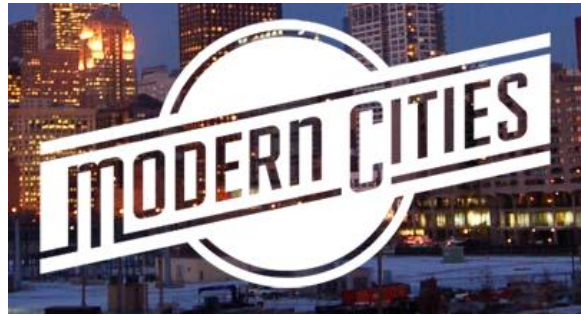
One of the best attributes of tactical urbanism is that you can test out infrastructure changes before you invest major money and start ripping up asphalt. What features did you think would work, that you've had to reexamine on future changes to Biscayne Blvd?

A feature that was incorporated to the temporary installation that is not part of the long term vision is that of a transit lane or a combined bus/bike lane. The positive response of the on-street parking lane in combination of a transit priority lane may be something to consider and evaluate as viable options as the design continues to evolve.



Now that the demonstration project is over, what are your next steps?

Next steps include creating a summary report that reflects the accomplishments of the project as well as the metrics that were collected. We're still inviting people who was able to experience Biscayne Green to take a short survey at <http://www.biscaynegreenmiami.com/survey> - so please help spread the word. In addition to that, in 2017 we will start working on an RFP for the Lane Elimination Analysis so that we can start the



selection process of the firm that will be helping the Miami DDA through that next step.

Downtown Miami has changed pretty dramatically over the last decade. What are some of the things that you've identified as being crucial to keep this momentum going and what role is the DDA playing on implementing these initiatives?



As a relatively young city built on sprawling development patterns, Miami has long been defined by its automobile-oriented environment, bumper to bumper commuter traffic and suburban strip malls. As vertical development continues and demand for urban living grows, Miami's urban growth is in overdrive – but its pedestrian multimodal infrastructure has yet to keep up.

Biscayne Green was an ambitious attempt to demonstrate how smart planning and context sensitive design can help transform this corridor into a quality place.

The Biscayne Green demonstration project may have been temporary, but the ultimate goal was to elevate awareness to consider land use, transportation and infrastructure needs in an integrated manner in order to meet community needs. This transformational vision wants to build infrastructure that fosters an accessible and walkable environment that meets the needs of Downtown residents and businesses in order to stimulate the local economy and elevate Miami to world class city status. As we move forward is crucial to keep the community engaged and excited about what the future holds. As stewards of the public space in Downtown, the Miami DDA is exploring ways to continue hosting community events at key locations to encourage people to get off of their cars to experience their city. Hopefully these initiatives will help sustain the momentum and builds awareness about the direction we need to continue pushing for the future of Downtown.

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Sights and Scenes from Biscayne Green



