

## \$1.7 million wayfinding system downtown funded, set to go

By JOHN CHARLES ROBBINS

How to get from Point A to Point B – wayfinding – is a valuable system to have in a large and growing city.

The Miami Downtown Development Authority has been considering a wayfinding system for the downtown area for nearly a decade, and a company has finally been chosen to make it real.

The funding is in place as well.

At its last meeting before the August break, the city commission approved accepting the bid received June 6 for a construction contract with Florida Engineering and Development Corp. for the Downtown Miami Signage and Wayfinding System for \$1,545,940.50, plus a 10% owner's contingency allowance of \$154,594.05, for a total contract up to \$1,700,534.55.

The City of Miami's procurement department issued the invitation to bid on the wayfinding system April 25.

The only bid received by the deadline of June 6 was from Florida Engineering, and the procurement department recommended awarding the contract to the company.

Several years ago, the DDA and the city received a \$1 million federal grant to design, permit and fabricate more than 200



A feature to be pointed out by the wayfinding system is expected to be the planned linear park Underline.

signs, the core of the wayfinding system plan which aims to unify a maze of more than 2,000 conflicting signs downtown and make it easier for visitors to find their way around.

The wayfinding system has been on the drawing board since 2009.

Because the project has faced multiple delays, mostly relating

to bid issues and permissions needed to place new signs, the project's estimated cost continued to rise.

According to the bid invitation, the work consists of furnishing all materials, labor and equipment needed to install new vehicular, pedestrian and parking wayfinding signs and improve the public right-of-way, such as

removing repetitive and aging signs, and installing gateway and destination signs.

The signage and wayfinding system will extend from the Brickell area north to the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts.

The system will include gateway signs for city entrances and various districts; directional

signs to landmarks, attractions and parking; informational kiosks with "you are here" maps; and pedestrian and bicycle trail signs, all with a consistent visual theme.

Part of the project seeks to limit the jumble of private advertising signs.

Bidders were required to be prequalified by the Florida Department of Transportation, have a current certified Florida general contractor license; and have at least five years of experience, under its current business name, in the construction of roadway/horizontal projects involving public right-of-way, public utilities and maintenance of traffic.

Bidders were also required to have experience as the prime general contractor for the construction of at least three completed roadway/horizontal projects.

In addition, bidders had to have at least one subcontractor prequalified by the state transportation department for the "Roadway Signing" work classification, with a minimum of five years of experience under its current business name, in the manufacture or installation of municipal signage and wayfinding systems, supported by references for at least two completed projects.