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PRESS RELEASE

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## North Shore Park's Oceanfront Senior Center Breaks Ground

**Miami Beach, FL** – The City of Miami Beach and UNIDAD of Miami Beach will celebrate a groundbreaking ceremony for the new North Beach Oceanfront Center at North Shore Park. The center will be the new home of the UNIDAD Senior Center. The event will take place Wednesday, July 21 at 6:00 p.m. on the site at 7251 Collins Avenue.

Miami Beach City Manager Jorge M. Gonzalez said, "With the new senior center and the renovations to the band shell and the rest of North Shore Park on the ocean, we are creating a lively central gathering space that will benefit the entire Miami Beach community."

The new center, designed by local architect Rene Gonzalez, replaces the original building, built in 1942 as a life saving and comfort station which later became a community center. The facility was closed in 2005 following damage caused by severe weather. Construction expands the existing single-story building into a two-story, multi-functional building, with large program rooms for a variety of activities, a catering kitchen, offices and new public restrooms with access from the beach. The distinctive architecture takes advantage of the seaside location with over 7,500 square feet of open terraces and walkways on the first floor, and over 3,000 square feet of usable outdoor space on the second floor. In total, the building will be enlarged to encompass nearly 19,000 square feet. The new building will also be ADA accessible. Construction is estimated to take less than a year, with an anticipated opening in the spring of 2011.

The band shell at North Shore Park will undergo renovation concurrently with the senior center, part of an overall park rehabilitation project. In order to compliment the array of programming at the outdoor amphitheater, the City's Office of Capital Improvement Projects is overseeing the structural refurbishment of the facility, including the distinctively "MiMo" concrete canopies, soaring pylons and terrazzo floor. Special *acoustic* enhancement, theatrical lighting and an expanded stage will make it possible for performances and other entertainment day or night, year-round. The band shell is expected to re-open by the spring of 2011.

Next year, the oceanfront park will also get a facelift. As part of the North Beach Oceanfront Parks Master Plan, North Shore Park will get reconfigured walkways, new irrigation, new accent

lighting and an Art in Public Places installation. The goal is to create a public space that reflects the vibrant and dynamic North Beach community. The plan calls for a comfortable and safe environment for people of all ages to enjoy the park all year long.

The funding for the rehabilitation of North Shore Park comes from the Miami-Dade County Building Better Communities GO Bond and funding for the band shell comes from the Quality of Life Tax Fund and the Miami-Dade County Safe Neighborhood Bond.

The UNIDAD Senior Center project is supported by the Building Better Communities Bond Program and the Mayor & Board of County Commissioners of Miami-Dade County. Other funding sources include a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant, obtained through the City of Miami Beach Office of Real Estate, Housing and Community Development and the Miami Dade County Department of Housing and Community Development.

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