

**\$100,000 donation to go to trees; A \$100,000 check given to the city of Miami from the Home Depot Foundation will be used to boost the city's canopy. MIAMI**

BY LAURA MORALES

lmmorales@MiamiHerald.com

419 words

26 July 2007

The Miami Herald

ZN11

7

English

(c) Copyright 2007, The Miami Herald. All Rights Reserved.

Last week at Jungle Island, the subject was trees.

And so was money. The city of Miami received a check for \$100,000 from **The Home Depot Foundation** which could buy hundreds of trees to help fill some of the gaps in the city's skimpy canopy.

City and county officials, as well as representatives from the National Arbor Day Foundation and the Florida Department of Agriculture, gathered at Jungle Island for the "Miami Tree Summit" to talk about how the area's layer of leaves can be plumped up.

"I was shocked to find that our tree canopy is very, very low," City Commissioner Joe Sanchez, who heads the Miami Green Commission, said at the event.

The Green Commission, created in the spring of 2006, brings city and community leaders and experts together to craft Miami's future environmental policies.

"It's one of the best campaigns the city has put forth to protect the future," Sanchez said of the commission. "Our canopy has suffered for many years."

The city recently put together a Tree Master Plan which, through better tree selection, planting and maintenance, aims to increase Miami's canopy cover to 30 percent by the year 2020. "Right now, the canopy cover is less than 10 percent, which is shameful," Sanchez said.

Miami has also set up a Tree Trust Fund, fed mostly by fines levied against property owners who illegally remove or damage trees, which has already paid for several plantings around the city.

Kelly Cafarelli, executive director of the **Home Depot Foundation**, which helped sponsor the planting of 100 trees in Little Havana earlier this year, said the average cost of a tree is about \$150.

At that rate, the foundation's gift could net about 666 of them.

But there are other costs -- a report from the Green Commission recently put the cost for actually planting a tree at between \$700 and \$1,000. "The \$150 figure is just for the tree itself," Sanchez said. "That's why it's important to partner with nonprofit organizations."

He said at the summit that the money will be used for plantings all over the city, particularly in areas that now have about 5 percent canopy coverage. However, he declined to specify which areas those are.