



# City of Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Staff Report

Applicant: City of Coral Gables

Application: **Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay**

Properties: 1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway

Public Hearing: Planning and Zoning Board

**Date & Time:** **December 10, 2025; 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Location: City Commission Chambers, City Hall,  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

## 1. APPLICATION REQUEST

The City of Coral Gables is requesting review and consideration of the following:

*An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, granting approval of proposed amendments to the text of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to expedited state review procedures (S. 163.3184, Florida Statutes) and Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," to modify the required mix of uses when developed within the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay," to allow a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.5, and to provide for policies to implement the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay;" providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.*

## 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On September 3, 2025, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners adopted an ordinance creating the "Gables/University Station Subzone" within the County's Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ). As adopted, the County RTZ Subzone establishes County regulatory jurisdiction over designated parcels within a quarter-mile of the University Metrorail Station and supersedes the City of Coral Gables' Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code for those properties. The ordinance provides its own set of development standards, allowed uses, design guidelines, and review procedures to be administered exclusively at the County level.

In response to the County's ongoing RTZ expansion and its implications for local land use control, the City initiated its own regulatory framework to ensure that development adjacent to the University Metrorail Station remains consistent with community expectations, established planning principles, and Coral Gables' long-standing architectural and urban design standards.

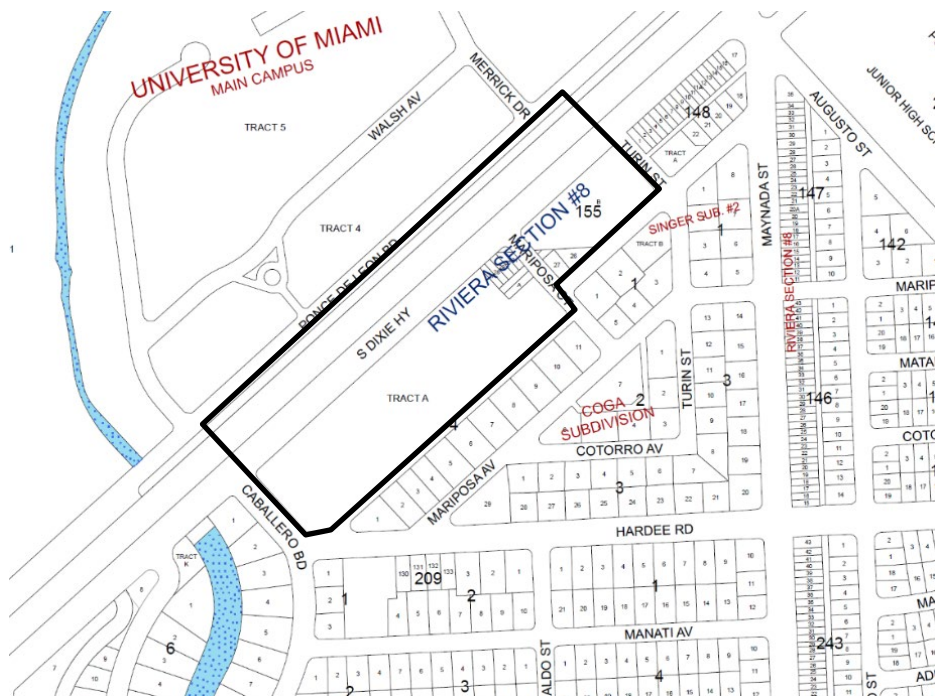
The City's Overlay District is intended to serve as a local regulatory mechanism that complements transit-supportive land use patterns while maintaining the character and aesthetic identity of Coral Gables. The

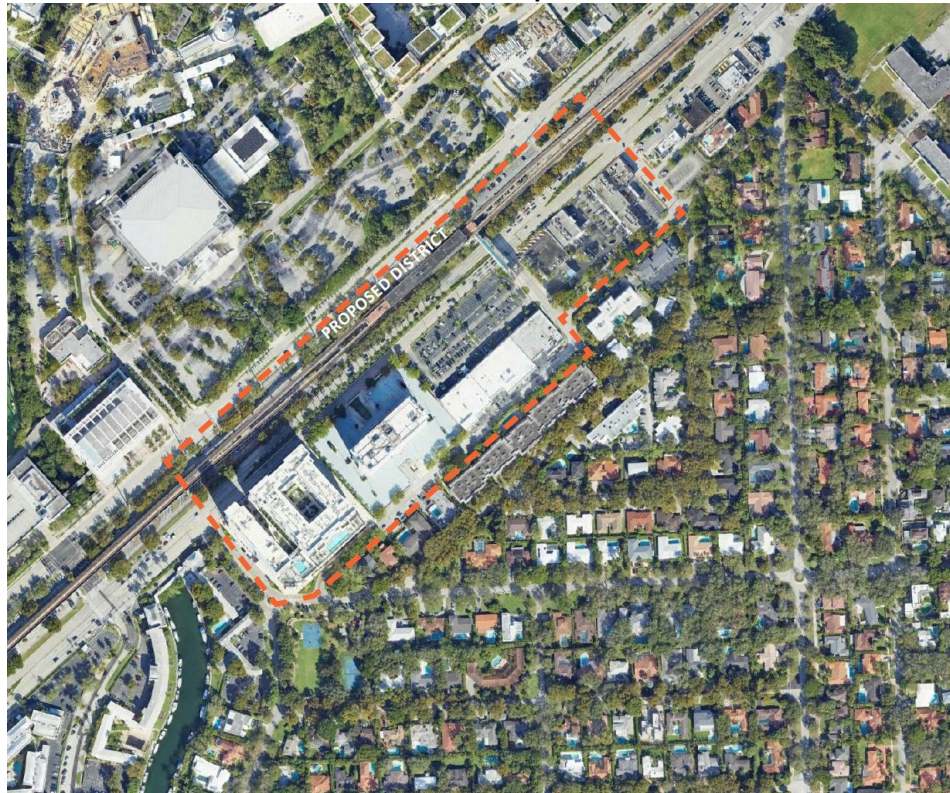
The City’s proposed “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” was presented to the Planning and Zoning Board on July 2, 2025, when the Board recommended approval for the Comprehensive Plan map and text amendments and the Zoning Code text and map amendments related to the proposed overlay. The draft ordinances for the proposed amendments were later revised multiple times and approved on First Reading by the City Commission on October 28, 2025. At First Reading, the Commission discussed concerns for the potential redevelopment project, formerly known as ‘The Mark,’ continuing with the County’s development path. The Commission therefore voted to select the Mayor, along with the City Manager, to meet and negotiate with the project’s representatives.

Upon meeting with the representatives and to support the regulatory framework contemplated in the proposed overlay, the City is now advancing a related Comprehensive Plan text amendment. This amendment adds a new Comprehensive Plan policy establishing the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay and outlines the land use, transit-oriented development, mixed-use, community engagement, and multimodal mobility objectives that will guide development within the district. Additionally, the amendment introduces a simplified mix of allowable uses and establishes a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.5 for properties within the future overlay district. The proposed Comprehensive Plan changes are therefore intended to ensure consistency with the anticipated overlay district and to align City policy with Miami-Dade County's recently adopted Coral Gables/University Station Subzone to provide an alternative development path.

**District Location.** Context information exhibited below.

### ***Lot, Subdivision, and Plat Map***



**Aerial Map**

**Site Data and Surrounding Uses.** The following tables provide the subject property's designations and surrounding land uses:

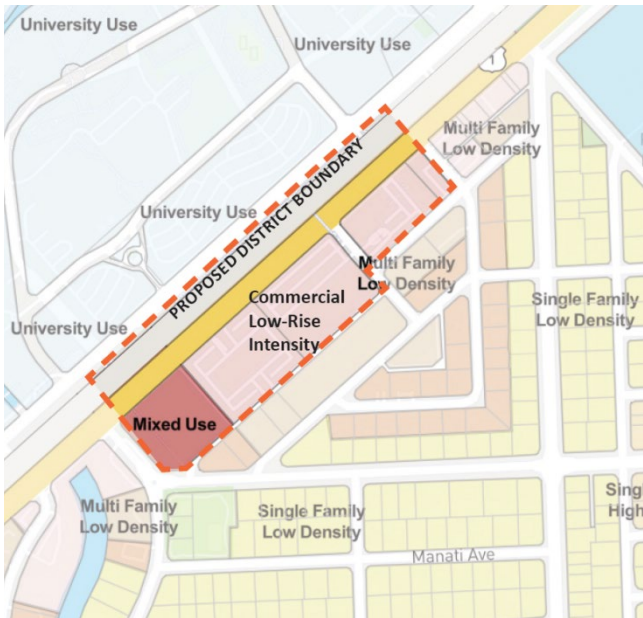
**Existing Property Designations**

Future Land Use Map designation	1150, 1190, 1250, and 1320 South Dixie Highway: <u>Commercial Low-Rise Intensity</u> 1350 South Dixie Highway: <u>Mixed Use</u>
Zoning Map designation	1150, 1190, 1250, and 1320 South Dixie Highway: <u>Mixed-Use 1 District</u> 1350 South Dixie Highway: <u>Mixed-Use 3 District</u>
Coral Gables Redevelopment Infill District	Yes

**Surrounding Land Uses**

LOCATION	EXISTING LAND USES	FLUM DESIGNATIONS	ZONING DESIGNATIONS
Northwest	University of Miami	University	University Campus District (UCD)
Northeast	Mixed-Use	Commercial Low Rise Intensity;	Mixed Use 1 (MX1) District
Southwest	Gables Waterway Offices and Apartments;	Commercial Low Rise Intensity; Multi Family Low Density;	Mixed Use 1 (MX1) District; Multi-Family 3(MF3);
Southeast	Apartment Buildings, Duplex, and Park	Multi Family Low Density; Multi Family Duplex Density; Park and Recreational Use;	Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1); Multi-Family 3 (MF3); Special Use (S);

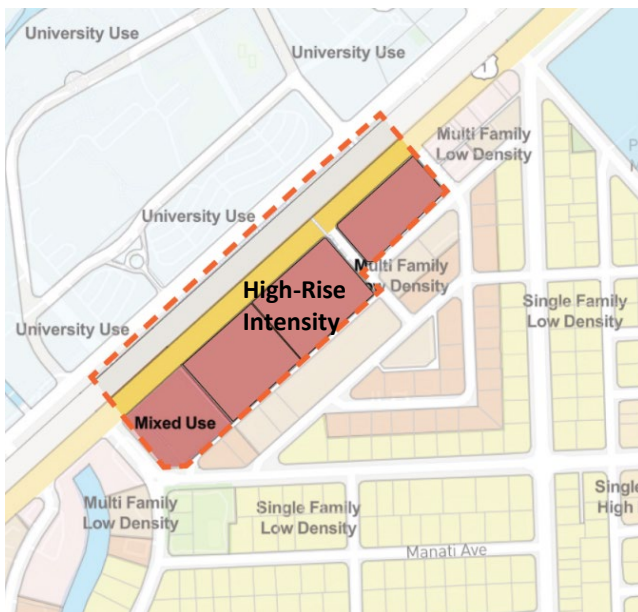
**Existing Future Land Use Map**



**Existing Zoning Map**



**Proposed Overlay District Future Land Use Map**



**Proposed Overlay District Zoning Map**



### 3. PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENTS

The proposed Comprehensive Plan text amendment is provided below in ~~strike through~~ / underline format.

## FUTURE LAND USE ELEMENT

### Policy FLU-1.1.2

Residential land use classifications are as follows (Land use descriptions provided herein are general descriptions, refer to underlying/assigned Zoning Classification for the list of permitted uses):

Table FLU-1. Residential Land Uses.			
Classification	Description	Density / Intensity	Height
Single-Family Low Density.	Single-family detached homes.	Maximum 6 units/acre.	Per the Zoning Code.
Single-Family High Density.	Single-family detached and attached homes, including townhouses.	Maximum 9 units/acre.	Per the Zoning Code.
Multi-Family Duplex Density.	Duplex homes, including townhouses.	Maximum <del>9 units/acre</del> <u>per the Zoning Code.</u>	Per the Zoning Code.
Multi-Family Low Density.	Multi-family residential of low height and density.	Maximum 20 units/acre, or 25 units/acre with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.	Up to 50' maximum (no limitation on floors), or up to 77' maximum (with a maximum of 2 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.
Multi-Family Medium Density.	Multi-family residential of medium height and density.	Maximum 40 units/acre, or 50 units/acre with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.  If developed pursuant to Residential Infill Regulations (bounded by: Douglas Rd, LeJeune Rd, SW 8th St & Navarre Ave): Maximum 75 units/acre, or 100 units/acre with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.	Up to 70' maximum (no limitation on floors), or up to 97' maximum (with a maximum 2 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.  If developed pursuant to Residential Infill Regulations (bounded by: Douglas Rd, LeJeune Rd, SW 8th St & Navarre Ave): Up to 100' maximum with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.
Multi-Family High Density.	Multi-family residential of high height and density.	Maximum 60 units/acre, or 75 units/acre with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.	Up to 150' maximum (no limitation on floors), or 190.5' maximum (with a maximum 3 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.

**Policy FLU-1.1.3.**

Commercial land use classifications are as follows (Land use descriptions provided herein are general descriptions, refer to underlying/assigned Zoning Classification for the list of permitted uses):

**Table FLU-2. Commercial Land Uses.**

<b>Table FLU-2. Commercial Land Uses.</b>			
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Density / Intensity</b>	<b>Height</b>
Commercial Low-Rise Intensity.	This category is oriented to low intensity pedestrian and neighborhood commercial uses, including residential, retail, services, office, and mixed use.	<p>Maximum F.A.R. of 3.0, or 3.5 with architectural incentives. Up to an additional 25% F.A.R. may be granted for properties qualifying as receiving sites for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).</p> <p>Residential use shall only be permitted as part of a mixed-use development as provided herein with maximum of 125 units/acre. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>Within a Mediterranean Village development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. residential use shall be permitted, and</li> <li>2. the intensity of the project shall be regulated by a maximum F.A.R. of four (4.0), and shall be controlled by an approved Mediterranean Village PAD Plan</li> </ol>	<p>Up to 50' maximum (no limitation on floors), or up to 77' maximum (with a maximum of 2 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p> <p>If developed pursuant to Design &amp; Innovation District regulations: Up to 120' maximum (limitation of 10 floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p>
Commercial Mid-Rise Intensity.	This category is oriented to medium intensity pedestrian and neighborhood commercial uses, including residential, retail, services, office, and mixed use.	<p>Maximum F.A.R. of 3.0, or 3.5 with architectural incentives. Up to an additional 25% F.A.R. may be granted for properties qualifying as receiving sites for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).</p> <p>Residential use shall only be permitted as part of a mixed-use development as provided herein with maximum of 125 units/acre. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>Within a Mediterranean Village development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. residential use shall be permitted, and</li> </ol>	<p>Up to 70' maximum (no limitation on floors), or up to 97' maximum (with a maximum 2 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p> <p>If developed pursuant to Design &amp; Innovation District regulations: Up to 120' maximum (limitation of 10 floors) with architectural incentives and up to 137.5' maximum with parks incentives per the Zoning Code.</p>

		2. the intensity of the project shall be regulated by a maximum F.A.R. of four (4.0), and shall be controlled by an approved Mediterranean Village PAD Plan	
Commercial High-Rise Intensity.	This category is oriented to the highest intensity commercial uses, including residential, retail, services, office, and mixed use.	<p>Maximum F.A.R. of 3.0, or 3.5 with architectural incentives, <u>or 3.5 if developed pursuant to University Rapid Transit District Overlay</u>. Up to an additional 25% F.A.R. may be granted for properties qualifying as receiving sites for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).</p> <p>Residential use shall only be permitted as part of a mixed-use development as provided herein with maximum of 125 units/acre. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>Within a Mediterranean Village development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. residential use shall be permitted, and</li> <li>2. the intensity of the project shall be regulated by a maximum Floor Area Ratio ("F.A.R.") of four (4.0), and shall be controlled by an approved Mediterranean Village Planned Area Development ("PAD") Plan, and</li> <li>3. additional height may be granted for specified uses or provide architectural embellishment</li> </ol>	<p>Up to 150' maximum (no limitation on floors), or 190.5' maximum (with a maximum 3 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p> <p>If developed pursuant to an approved PAD, within the Central Business District (CBD) and limiting density to 100 units/acre: Up to 205.5' maximum with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p>

\*\*\*

**Policy FLU-1.1.5.**

Mixed-Use land use classifications are as follows (Land use descriptions provided herein are general descriptions, refer to underlying/assigned Zoning Classification for the list of permitted uses):

Table FLU-4. Mixed-Use land use.	
Classification	Description
MXD, Mixed-Use or MXOD, Mixed-Use Overlay Districts ( <u>MXOD</u> ).	Mixed uses are permitted to varying degrees in the multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial land use categories, pursuant to underlying land use regulations and applicable Zoning Code provisions.
	The general intent of the MXD is to promote a multi-faceted pedestrian friendly environment comprised of an assortment of uses, including the following:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential;</li> <li>• Retail/Commercial;</li> <li>• Office;</li> <li>• Industrial; and</li> <li>• Public Open Spaces.</li> </ul> <p>No single use may comprise more than eighty-five (85%) percent of the MXD floor area ratio. <u>However, if developed pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, a minimum of two (2) uses shall be included, with no minimum or maximum percentage thresholds.</u></p> <p>A maximum of 125 units/acre shall be allowed. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>The proportionate mix of uses shall be reviewed per development application. The following table establishes minimum and maximum thresholds based upon the FAR of the <u>Mixed-use</u> building. <i>See Table FLU-4.1 below</i></p> <p>Additional MXD or Mixed Use Overlay District (MXOD) development standards, including maximum intensities, and height, are provided in the Zoning Code.</p>
MXOD, Mixed-Use Overlay Districts ( <u>MXOD</u> ).	<p>An MXOD may be permitted as an overlay in the Multi-Family Medium Density, Commercial and Industrial land use categories (see FLU-2: Mixed-Use Overlay District Map).</p> <p>Properties within the MXOD have the option of developing their property in accordance with the underlying land use.</p>

\*\*\*

**Policy FLU-1.9.5.**

Establish and implement a University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, which should include:

1. A boundary for the District, adopted on the Future Land Use Map.
2. Zoning regulations that would locate higher density and intensity development near the University Station MetroRail Station to encourage housing and other compatible uses that are supportive of pedestrian activities on the ground level of mixed-use buildings.
3. Mixed-use development along the US-1 corridor that is consistent with the goals of the Miami-Dade County's Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) plan to promote increased ridership of the rapid transit system.
4. Expedited development opportunity that serves as an alternative, compatible development path under the City's review authority and jurisdiction, with greater opportunities for community engagement.
5. Development strategies that provide greater mixed-use and housing opportunities in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions, and promote and encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor.

#### 4. REVIEW TIMELINE / PUBLIC NOTICE

##### City Review Timeline

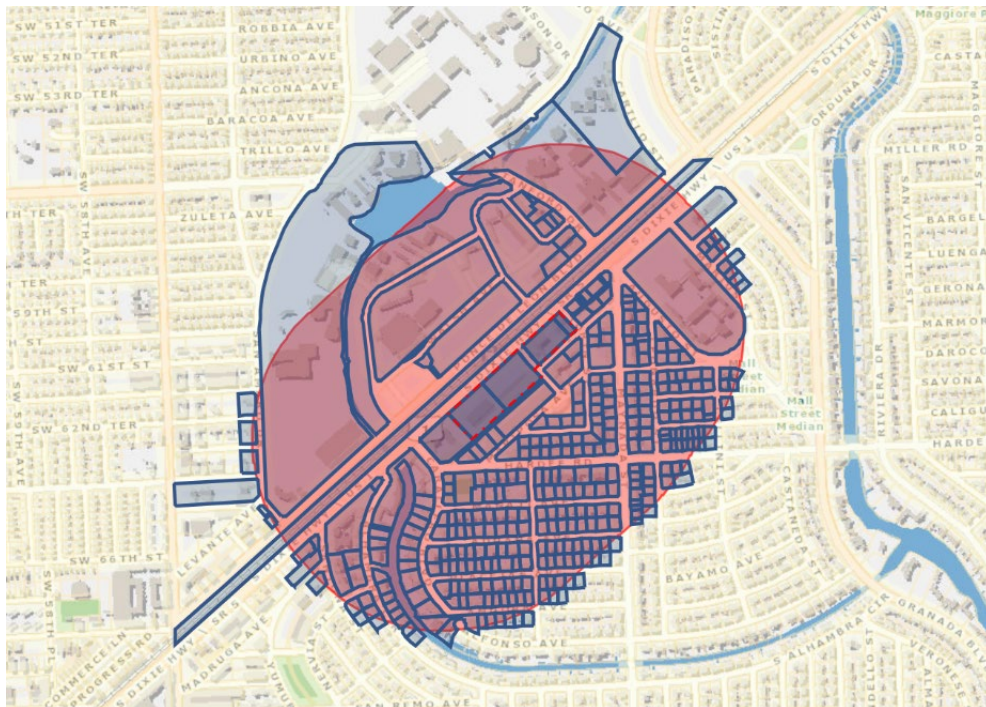
The submitted applications have undergone the following City reviews:

REVIEW COMMITTEES AND BOARDS	DATE
Planning and Zoning Board	12.10.25
City Commission – 1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	TBD
City Commission – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	TBD

##### Public Notification and Comments

Article 15, “Notices,” Section 15-100 of the Zoning Code requires notification be provided to all property owners within 1,500 feet of the property. The notification was sent on November 25, 2025 to notify property owners of the December 10, 2025 Planning and Zoning Board meeting. The notice indicates the following: applications filed; public hearing dates/time/location; where the application files can be reviewed; and provides for an opportunity to submit comments. There were 1,129 notices mailed. A copy of the legal advertisement and notice are provided as Attachment D. A map of the notice radius is provided below.

**Notification Radius Map**



The following has been completed to solicit input and provide notice of the Application:

PUBLIC NOTICE	DATE
Mailed notice within 1,500 feet of proposed district	11.25.25
Legal advertisement	11.26.25
Posted agenda and Staff report on City web page/City Hall	12.05.25

## 5. FINDINGS OF FACT

This section of the report presents City Staff’s evaluation of the Application and Findings of Fact. The City’s responsibility is to review the Application for consistency with the City’s Comprehensive Plan (CP) Goals, Objectives, and Policies, compliance with the Zoning Code, and compliance with other applicable portions of the City Code.

Zoning Code Section 14-213.6 provides review standards for Comprehensive Plan amendments:

Standard	Staff Evaluation
1. Whether it specifically advances any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	The proposed amendment of establishing a maximum FAR of 3.5 and permitting a simplified mix of uses within the future ‘University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay’ advances several Goals, Objectives, and Policies to encourage compact development patterns and multimodal mobility. The proposed policy for the Overlay District further advances several Goals and Objectives of the City’s Comprehensive Plan by creating a regulatory structure for higher-intensity mixed-use development near the University Metrorail Station.
2. Whether it is internally consistent with Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	The proposed FAR and mixed-use flexibility amendments are internally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as it supports the established vision of directing higher-density development to areas with existing multimodal transportation infrastructure and are appropriate for a station-area district. The proposed policy integrates with existing mobility, land use, and urban design policies.
3. Its effect on the level of service of public infrastructure.	The proposed amendment is not expected to reduce the level of service of public infrastructure below adopted Comprehensive Plan standards. The University Station area is already served by high-frequency transit, and the amendment is intended to direct development to locations where infrastructure capacity—particularly transit, water, sewer, and roadway systems—is already available. Future projects will also undergo concurrency review at the development stage, ensuring that any incremental demand for public infrastructure is adequately addressed consistent with the City’s concurrency requirements.
4. Its effect on environmental resources.	No adverse impacts to environmental resources are anticipated as the amendment supports redevelopment within an already urbanized corridor and encourages development near existing transit facilities to reduce development pressure in less urban areas. By supporting multimodal mobility and reducing automobile dependence, the amendment indirectly contributes to greenhouse gas reduction and promotes a more sustainable development pattern.
5. Its effect on the availability of	The amendment may encourage additional residential

housing that is affordable to people who live or work in the City of Coral Gables.	development opportunities within walking distance of transit and employment centers and therefore support the production of multifamily housing types that can diversify the City's housing inventory. While the amendment does not directly mandate affordable housing, increasing overall housing supply in a transit-served area enhances opportunities for both workforce and mixed-income housing consistent with the City's housing goals.
6. Any other effect that the City determines is relevant to the City Commission's decision on the application.	The amendment provides an essential policy foundation for the City's proposed University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, which is intended to serve as a local regulatory alternative to Miami-Dade County's recently adopted Gables/University Station RTZ Subzone. By codifying the City's proposed Overlay District into the Comprehensive Plan, the amendment strengthens the City's ability to guide development with appropriate scale transitions, pedestrian-oriented design features, and architectural standards consistent with Coral Gables' character. The amendment enhances regulatory predictability, supports intergovernmental coordination, and ensures that future development within the station area reflects community expectations and locally adopted planning principles.

Based upon the Findings of Facts provided herein, Staff finds the Application satisfies the provisions of the Zoning Code for the proposed Comprehensive Plan text amendment. The amendment includes long-standing planning objectives that align with regional transit development and provides a policy basis for the companion overlay district to guide future growth in a manner consistent with community character and expectations.

### Consistency Evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan (CP) Goals, Objectives and Policies

This section provides those CP Goals, Objectives and Policies applicable to the Application and the determination of consistency:

REF. NO.	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOAL, OBJECTIVE AND POLICY	STAFF REVIEW
1	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.1.</b> Promote mixed use development to provide housing and commercial services near employment centers, thereby reducing the need to drive.	Complies
2	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.2.</b> Encourage land use decisions that encourage infill, redevelopment and reuse of vacant or underutilized parcels that support walking, bicycling and public transit use.	Complies
3	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.3.</b> Locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations.	Complies
4	<b>Goal FLU-1.</b> Protect, strengthen, and enhance the City of Coral Gables as a vibrant community ensuring that its neighborhoods, business opportunities, shopping, employment centers, cultural activities, historic value, desirable housing, open spaces,	Complies

REF. NO.	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOAL, OBJECTIVE AND POLICY	STAFF REVIEW
	and natural resources make the City a very desirable place to work, live, and play.	
5	<b>Objective FLU-1.1.</b> Preserve Coral Gables as a “placemaker” where the balance of existing and future uses is maintained to achieve a high quality living environment by encouraging compatible land uses, restoring and protecting the natural environment, and providing facilities and services which meet or exceed the minimum Level of Service (LOS) standards and meet the social and economic needs of the community through the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Classifications and Map (see FLU-1: Future Land Use Map).	Complies
6	<b>Objective FLU-1.2.</b> Efforts shall continue to be made to control blighting influences, and redevelopment shall continue to be encouraged in areas experiencing deterioration.	Complies
7	<b>Policy FLU-1.10.2.</b> The City shall continue to maintain regulations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan which regulate the use and development of land in a manner which, at a minimum, provides for land use consistent with the Future Land Use Plan map series, interpretive text and Land Use Element goal, objectives and policies; regulate the subdivision of land; regulate signage; regulate development and use in areas subject to seasonal or periodic flooding, provide for stormwater management; open space and regulate on-site traffic flow and parking.	Complies
8	<b>Policy FLU-1.11.1.</b> Maintain and enforce effective development and maintenance regulations through site plan review, code enforcement, and design review boards and committees.	Complies
9	<b>Goal GOV-2.</b> Intergovernmental coordination shall be maintained as a major means of achieving consistency among all government agencies implementing plans and programs affecting the City of Coral Gables.	Complies
10	<b>Objective GOV-2.1.</b> Coordinate and cooperate City Comprehensive Plan activities with other jurisdictions and agencies at all levels and functions of government to achieve mutually beneficial goals and objectives.	Complies
11	<b>Policy HOU-1.5.1.</b> Encourage the development of diverse housing types such as smaller, more affordable units within the downtown area and mixed use development overlay area.	Complies
12	<b>Objective GOV-2.2.</b> Continue and improve coordination activities among government agencies with planning and impact assessment duties affecting the City, with other units of local government providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of land, and with the comprehensive plans of adjacent municipalities, the county, and adjacent counties.	Complies
13	<b>Objective GOV-2.3.</b> Maintain and strengthen intergovernmental coordination and establish a leadership role on local, regional and state issues.	Complies

Based upon the Findings of Fact provided herein, Staff finds that the application satisfies the provisions of the Zoning Code for the proposed request. Furthermore, the proposed text amendment is consistent with multiple objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan that encourage infill and redevelopment in underutilized parcels, especially compact development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations. The proposed policy further advances several goals and objectives by creating a specific regulatory structure for site plan review of potential higher-intensity mixed-use development near the University Metrorail Station. The proposed amendments are also consistent with the City’s Mobility Element’s Vision to provide

progressive direction for a multi-modal transportation system, and its development principles as outlined in Policy MOB-1.1.1, Policy MOB-1.1.2, and Policy MOB-1.1.3.

Staff finds that all five of these criteria are **satisfied**.

## 6. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Zoning Division recommends **approval**.

## 7. ATTACHMENTS

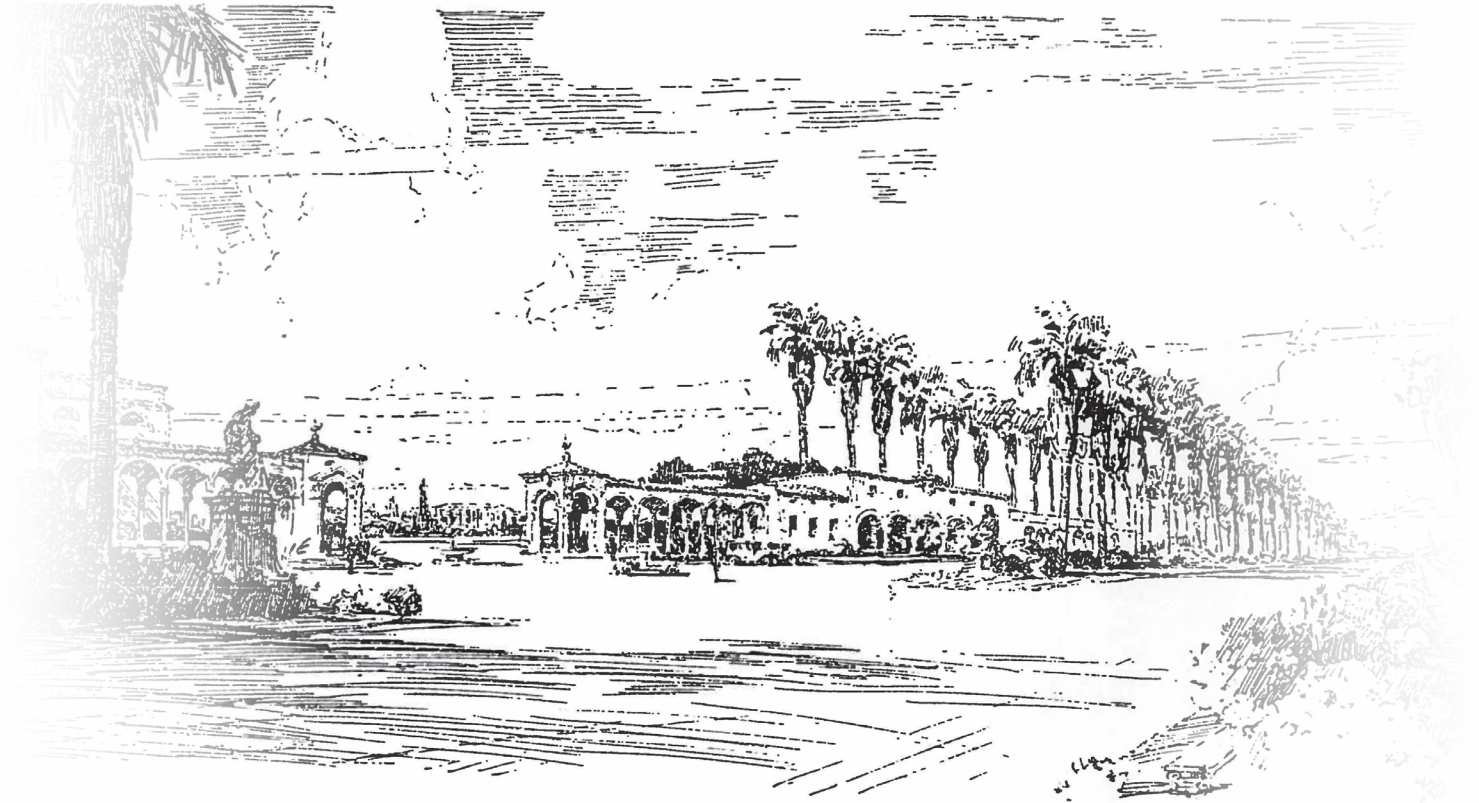
- A. Revised University Station District Overlay.
- B. 10 28 25 City Commission Draft Ordinance - Comprehensive Plan Map.
- C. 10 28 25 City Commission Draft Ordinance - Zoning Code and Map.
- D. Excerpt of 10 28 25 City Commission Meeting Minutes.
- E. 09 03 25 Miami-Dade County Ordinance and Floor Amendment.
- F. 07 02 25 PZB Staff Report.
- G. 07 02 25 PZB Meeting Minutes.
- H. Mailed notice.
- I. PowerPoint Presentation.

Please visit the City's webpage at [www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com) to view all Application plans and materials, notices, applicable public comments, minutes, etc. The complete Application and all background information also is on file and available for examination during business hours at the Planning and Zoning Division, 427 Biltmore Way, Suite 201, Coral Gables, Florida 33134.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Garcia, AICP, CNU-A  
Assistant Director of Development Services  
for Planning and Zoning  
City of Coral Gables, Florida



*Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse*

# UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

## Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Zoning Code Map & Text Amendments

*Zoning regulations to improve housing opportunities near the University Metrorail Station  
and to encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities.*

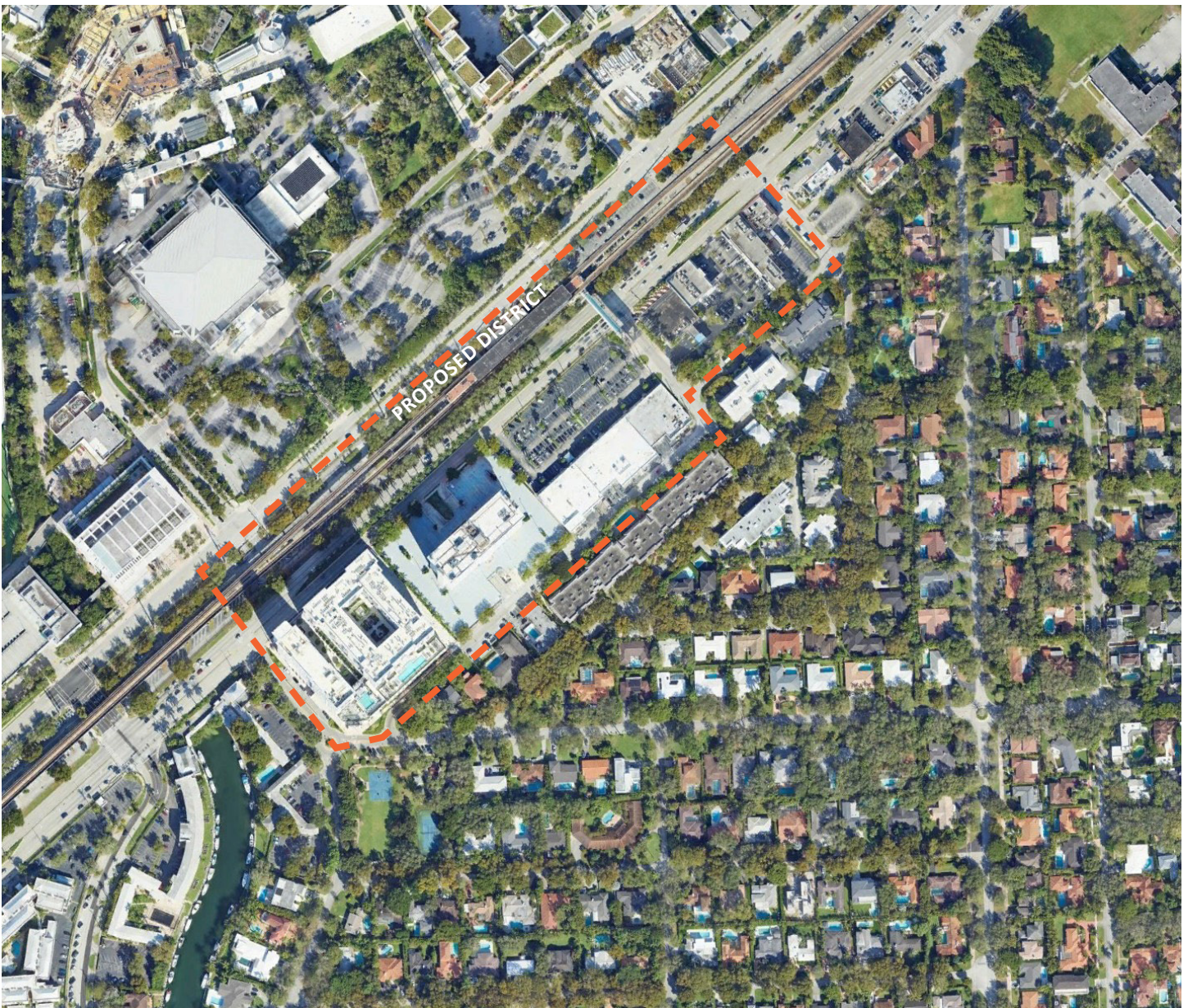
Prepared by City of Coral Gables Planning Division Staff  
DRAFT December 2025

---

## *Planning for a Rapid Transit Street On US-1*

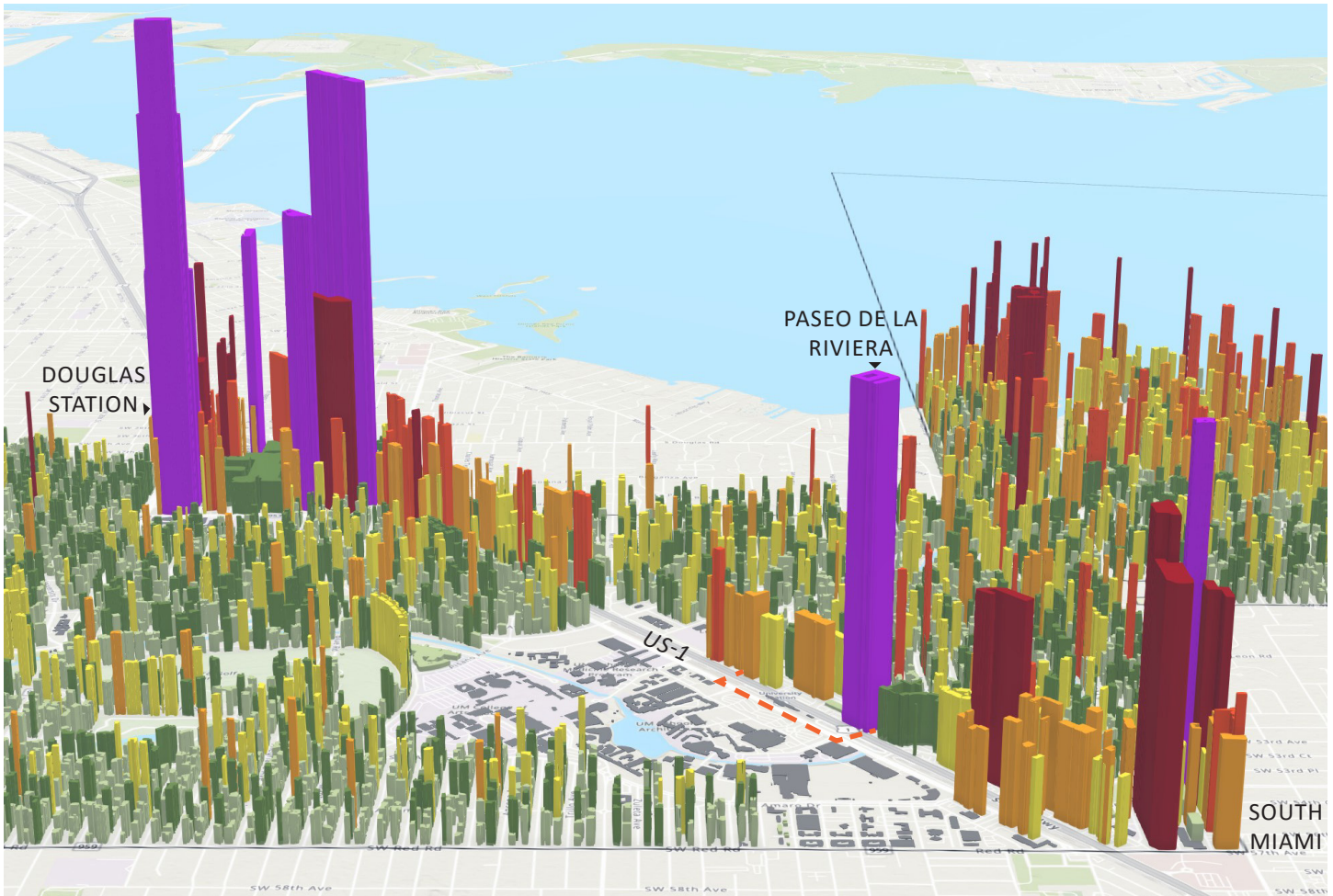
The US-1 corridor within the City of Coral Gables is a quickly developing commercial corridor. Buildings along the southeast side of US-1 include a mix of older, single-story retail development and strip malls, with the tallest building on US-1, Gables One Tower, that sits on a parking level surrounded by a wall, and The Paseo de la Riviera, a recently constructed mixed-use building.

The University Metrorail Station is located on the University of Miami (UM) campus side of US-1 and is connected to the south by a pedestrian bridge. The area is planned for parks, a greenway, bikeways, and popup retail with soon-to-be-constructed Underline. The UM campus frontage is dominated by a parking lot screened by shrubs and fencing.



---

## Revenue Model



To the southeast of these commercial developments are multiple blocks of low density multi-family and duplexes. Immediately south is the established residential Riviera neighborhood.

Redevelopment along US-1 has occurred primarily near the Douglas Doad Metrorail Station and the City of South Miami. The only recent redevelopment on the corridor between those two development nodes is the Paseo de la Riviera development. This recently-constructed mixed-use development shows significant revenue in this immediate area on a 2024 revenue model diagram. While the diagram illustrates that many existing

development patterns have proven to grow value over time and provide for a high quality of life and welfare for the community, this segment of US-1 provides relatively low revenue and value in the city.

This segment of US-1 is also designated to be a “Community Urban Center” on the Miami-Dade County’s SMART Corridor plan. As such, a Coral Gables / University Station Sub-Zone has been recently adopted by the County and will preempt the City’s Zoning regulations and processes.

# Mixed-Use Districts (Zoning Map)



## LEGEND

--- Proposed District Boundary

Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)

Mixed-Use 2 (MX2)

Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)

Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1)

Multi-Family 2 (MF2)

Multi-Family 3 (MF3)

■

■

■

■

■

■

Multi-Family 4 (MF4)

Preservation (P)

Single-Family Residential (SFR)

Special Use (S)

University Campus District (UCD)

■

■

■

■

■

■

■

# Commercial Intensities (Future Land Use Map)



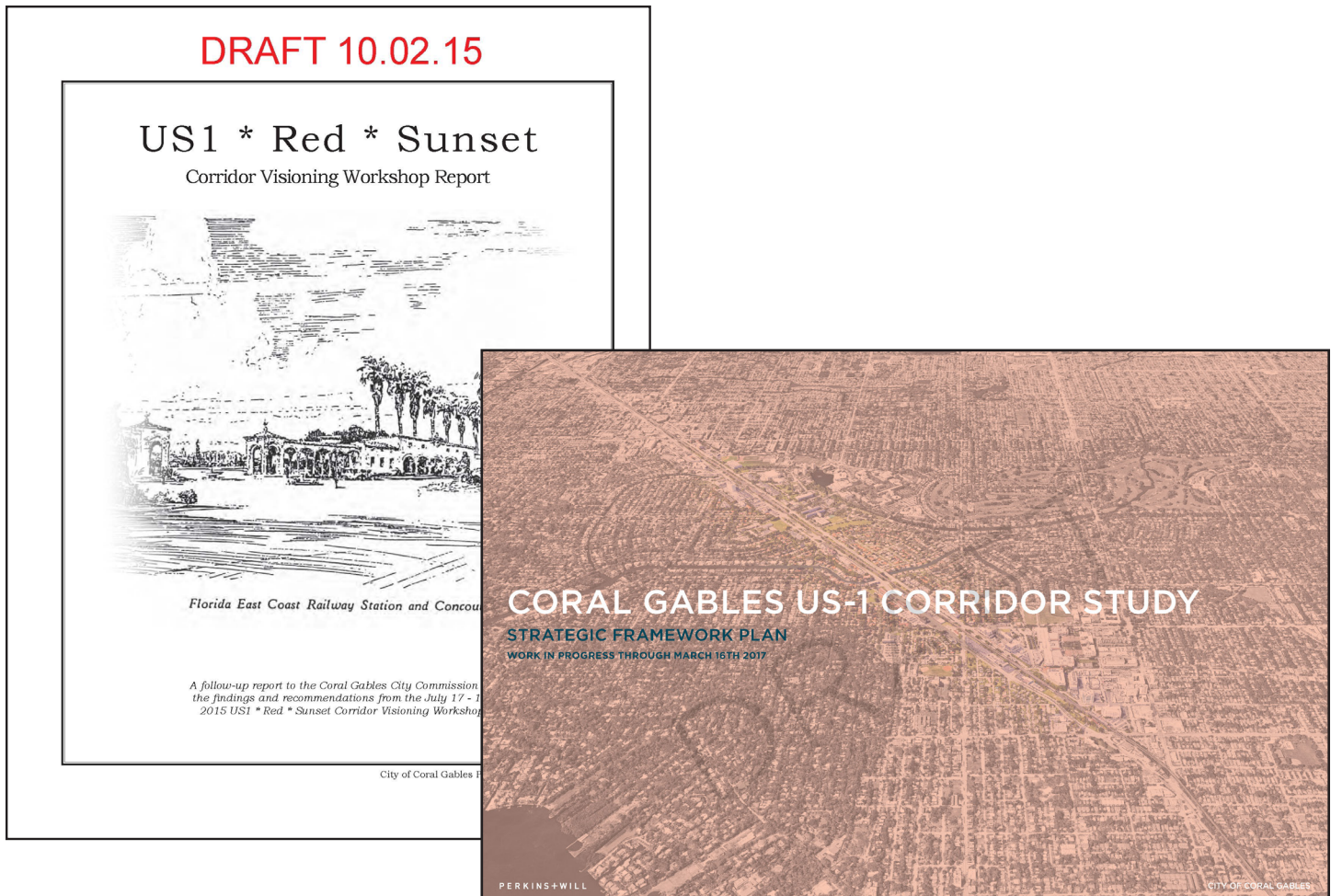
## LEGEND

Proposed District Boundary

Commercial High Rise Intensity	Industrial Use	Park and Recreational Use
Commercial Low-Rise Intensity	Mixed Use	Public Buildings and Grounds
Commercial Medium Rise Intensity	Multi Family Duplex Density	Religious or Institutional
Conservation Areas	Multi Family High Density	Single Family High Density
Educational Use	Multi Family Low Density	Single Family Low Density
Hospital Use	Multi Family Medium Density	University Use
	Open Space	

---

## Past Planning Initiatives



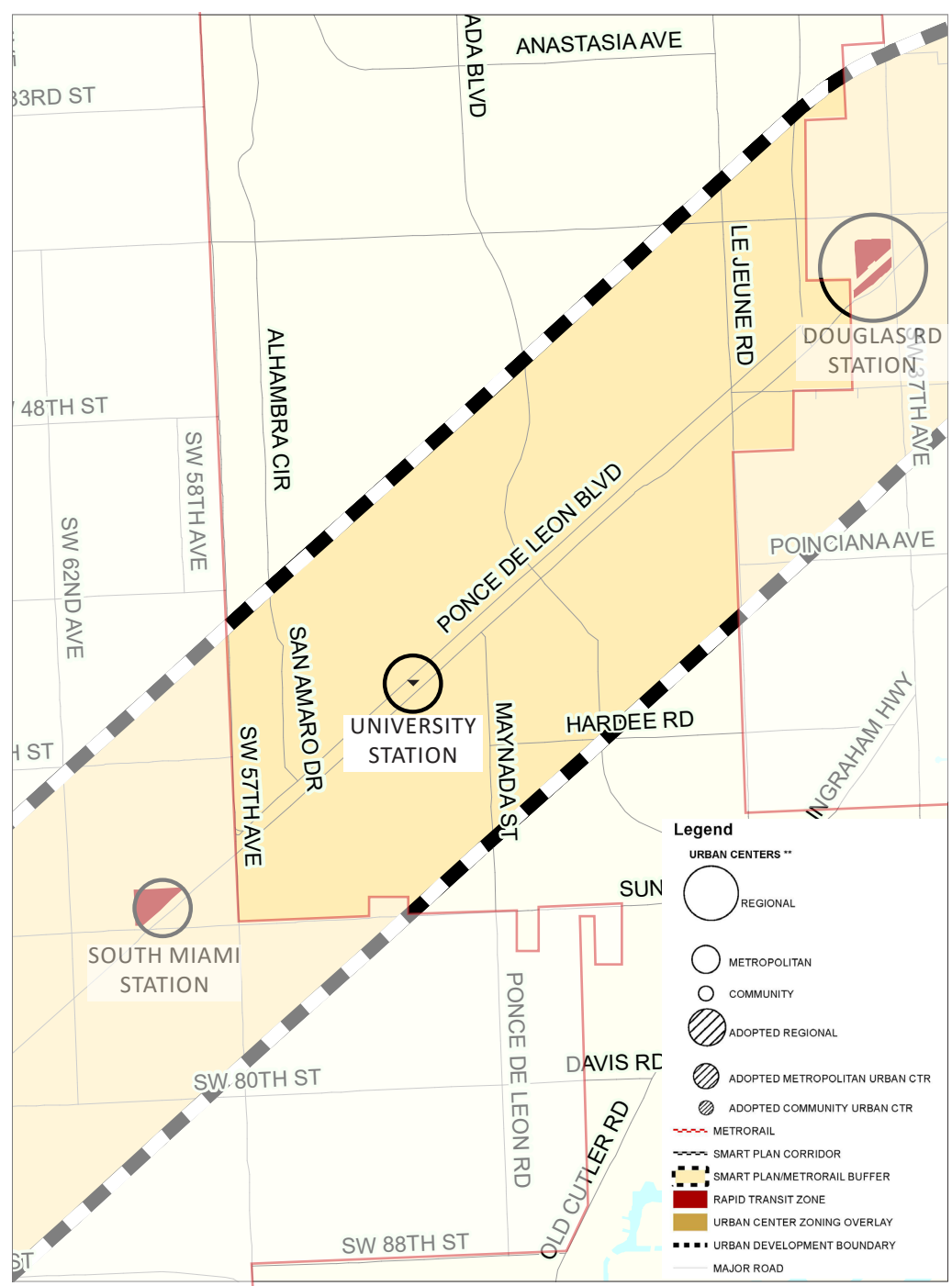
The US-1 corridor has been discussed multiple times for several years. Most recently, the City initiated a visioning workshop in 2015. Part of the recommendations from the public input collected at the workshops included the need to prepare a transit-oriented zoning overlay, with requirements for building massing and setbacks; guidelines for paseos and public spaces; parking requirements and shared parking strategies; and enhanced sidewalk requirements on US-1.

In 2016-17, the City hired Perkins Will to create a strategic framework plan for the US-1 Corridor. After

a series of public workshops with the community, the work of the study slowed down and was canceled. In-progress recommendations were similar to the 2015 study with tree canopy and wide sidewalks; reduction of parking lots along US-1; increase pedestrian safety and wider sidewalks along US-1; and reduce vehicular access from properties on US-1.

While many of the recommendations were adopted with the Zoning Code Update in 2021, the land use and zoning maps have not been changed to reflect redevelopment on US-1.

# Miami-Dade County SMART Corridor



Miami-Dade County’s SMART plan identifies the University Station as a Community Urban Center. The County has actively been adopting rapid transit sub-zones at each Metrorail station, including Douglas Road and Palmetto Bay.

---

---

## *Total Required Requests*

1. Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map Amendments:
  - Change to Commercial Low-Rise Intensity to Commercial High-Rise Intensity; and
  - Create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”
2. Comprehensive Plan Mixed Use Overlay Districts Map Amendment:
  - Create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”
3. Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments:
  - Allow 3.5 FAR without architectural incentives;
  - Modify mix of uses percentages; and
  - Create policies for the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”
4. Zoning Map Amendment:
  - Change Mixed-Use 1 (MX1) to Mixed-Use 3 (MX3); and
  - Create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”
5. Zoning Code Text Amendments:
  - Remove inconsistent Site Specifics within district boundary in Appendix A and US-1;
  - Add District as TDR receiving site in Article 14; and
  - Insert new “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”

## *General Regulations*

	<i>Current Regulations</i>		<i>County RTZ</i>	<i>City Proposed District</i>
<b>Review</b>	Change of land use / Zoning and Conditional Use		Special exception review/ approval	Expedited review (Staff + Commission only)
<b>Future Land Use</b>	Commercial Low-Rise	Commercial High Rise	Business and Office	Commercial High-Rise Intensity
<b>Zoning</b>	Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)	Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)	RTZ-SMART Corridor	Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)
<b>Height (ft)</b>	45	150	Max height of existing buildings w/in ¼-mile (150')	120 (no Med Bonus height) (+13.5 w/ 5% public open space) 147 maximum
<b>Density</b>	125		125	125
<b>FAR</b>	3.0 (1.5 per Site Specifics)		No Limit	3.5
<b>Med Bonus</b>	+0.2, +0.3 additional (3.5 FAR total)		-	N/A (Mediterranean style required)
<b>Use of TDRs</b>	Not allowed for this area		-	4.375 FAR (25% max additional)
<b>Mix of Uses</b>	8% min Retail/Commercial 85% max single use		2 uses min.	2 uses min.
<b>Setbacks</b>	20 feet (10 feet with arcade) on US-1 (Front: 125 feet, Rear: 50 feet, per Site Specifics)		0 ft	20 feet (10 feet with arcade) on all parcels facing US-1 25 feet rear setback with landscape buffer on 300'+ parcels
<b>Open Space</b>	10% on ground level		15% (incl. 10% on ground level)	10% on ground level (incl. setback areas)
<b>Stepbacks (ft) and Paseos</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Front/side street: 10' step-back above 45'</li> <li>Int. side: 15' stepback above 45'</li> <li>Rear w/out alley: 10' step-back above 45'</li> <li>Rear w/ alley: 3' stepback</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Within 100 ft of a single-family residential district, 30-foot setback with 10 ft landscape buffer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rear: 10 feet for the top 1/3 of the building facade</li> <li>No paseo required</li> </ul>
<b>Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 per studio/1-bd</li> <li>1.75 per 2-bd</li> <li>2.25 per 3-bd +</li> <li>1 per 300 sf comm, office</li> <li>1 1/8 per hotel room</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 per residential unit</li> <li>1.8 per 1,000sf comm.</li> <li>0.6 per 1,000sf office</li> <li>0.3 per hotel room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking required, except 1st floor restaurant, retail, residential.</li> <li>Reduction: 50%</li> <li>Waiver for 25% w/ parking plan and Remote Parking</li> </ul>

# Proposed Future Land Use Map Amendment



## LEGEND

Proposed District Boundary

Commercial High Rise Intensity	Industrial Use	Park and Recreational Use
Commercial Low-Rise Intensity	Mixed Use	Public Buildings and Grounds
Commercial Medium Rise Intensity	Multi Family Duplex Density	Religious or Institutional
Conservation Areas	Multi Family High Density	Single Family High Density
Educational Use	Multi Family Low Density	Single Family Low Density
Hospital Use	Multi Family Medium Density	University Use
	Open Space	

# Proposed Zoning Map Amendment



## LEGEND

--- Proposed District Boundary

Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)

Mixed-Use 2 (MX2)

Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)

Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1)

Multi-Family 2 (MF2)

Multi-Family 3 (MF3)

Multi-Family 4 (MF4)

Preservation (P)

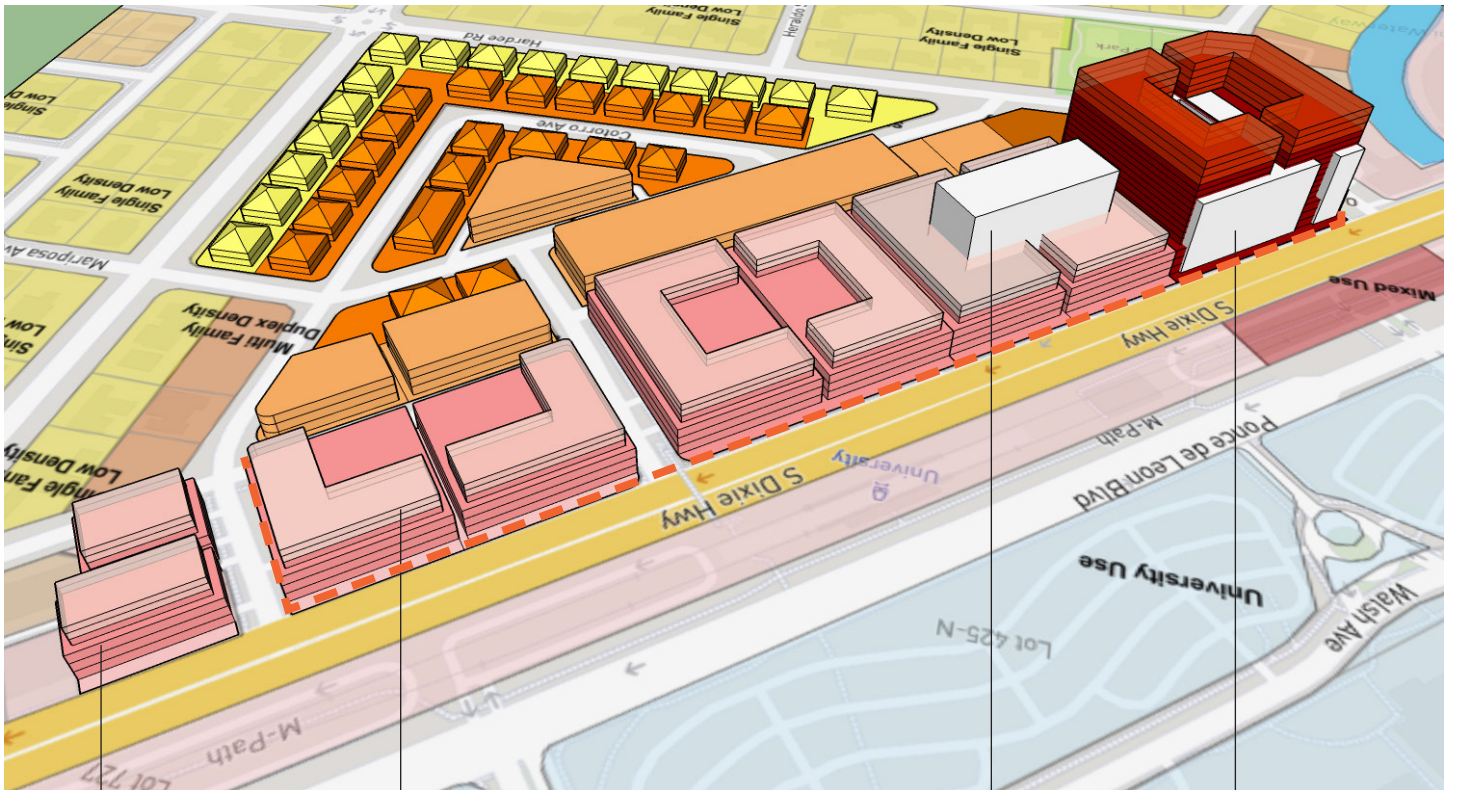
Single-Family Residential (SFR)

Special Use (S)

University Campus District (UCD)

---

## *Massing Comparison - Existing*



Height Allowed  
by Mixed-use 1

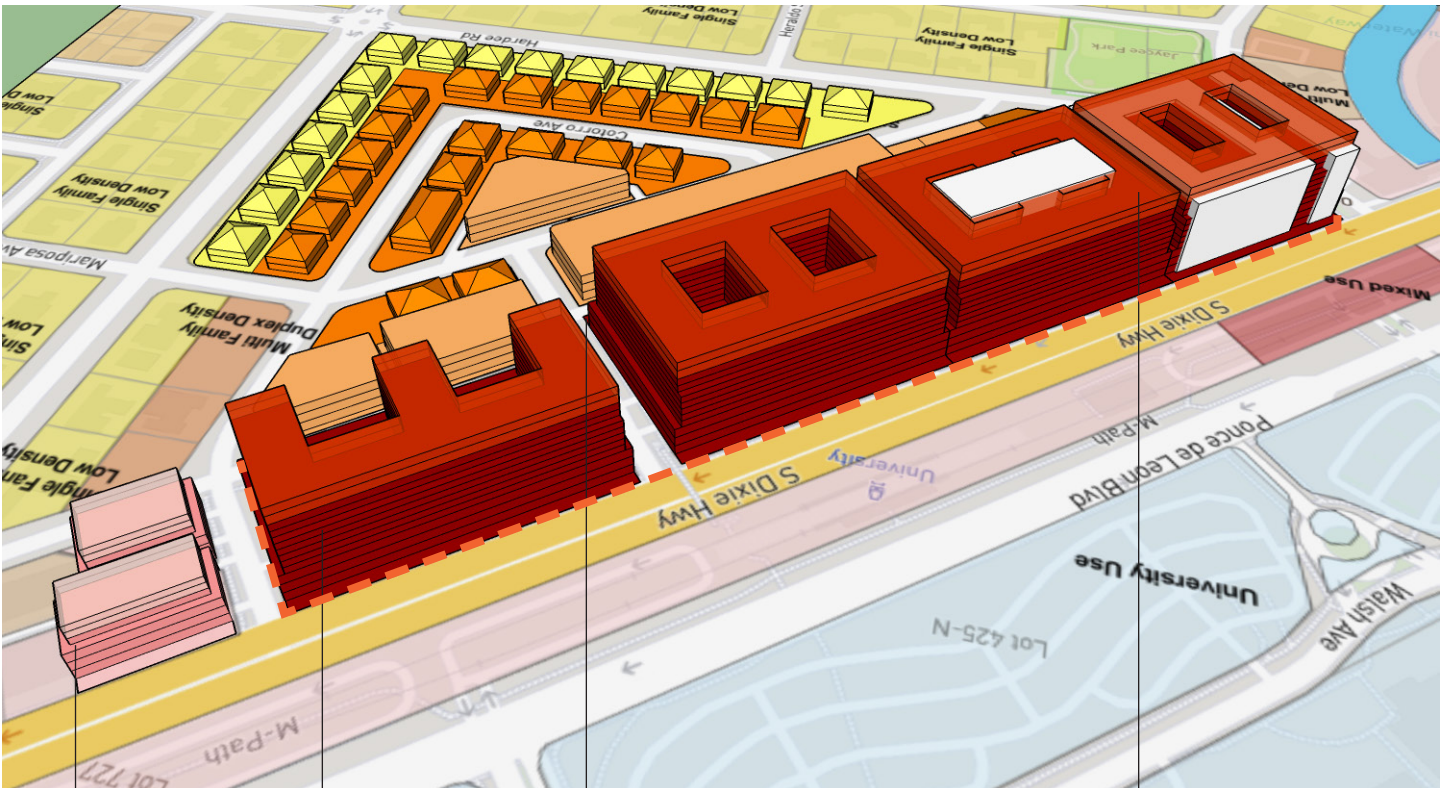
Height Allowed by  
Med Bonus II

Existing UM  
Office Tower

Existing Mixed-  
use Tower

---

## *Massing Comparison - Proposed*



Height Allowed  
by Mixed-use 1

Height Allowed by  
Proposed District

Additional Rear Setback  
Requirement

Height Allowed by  
Open Space Bonus

---

---

# *Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment*

## *Create a new Rapid Transit District Overlay in the Zoning Code to address a unified character for the University Station area and provide tailored regulations for high-quality development.*

### **Section 2-400. District Overlays.**

The several Overlay Districts provide mandatory additional regulations for specific areas within the Multi-Family (MF) and Mixed Use (MX) Districts. The District Overlays include:

- Central Business District Overlay (CBD)
- Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown District Overlay (DO)
- Giralda Plaza District Overlay
- North Ponce Neighborhood Conservation District Overlay (NPCO)
- Residential Infill Regulations Overlay (RIR)
- Design & Innovation District Overlay
- North Ponce Mixed Use District Overlay
- University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay

\*\*\*

### **Section 2-408. University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.**

#### **A. Purpose and applicability.**

1. The purpose of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay is to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan to locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations. These standards are consistent with the intent and provisions of Miami-Dade County's Rapid Transit Zone that provide for transit-oriented development adjacent to the existing mass transit system.

2. The District is established in order to maintain the following objectives:

- a. Enhance the aesthetic and physical character of the US-1 corridor to provide for the redevelopment of underutilized buildings and properties that is consistent with the high-quality design and architecture of the City and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
- b. Promote and encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor by requiring pedestrian-oriented building design and site planning.
- c. Provide greater housing opportunities in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions that are not in environmentally

vulnerable and sensitive areas.

d. Foster the activation of public areas and streets with a consistent design intent regarding ground floor building design, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike infrastructure, pedestrian amenities, and other elements in the public right-of-way.

e. Provide public benefits for adjacent residential neighborhoods to address the potential impacts of new developments that could degrade the aesthetics and welfare of the adjacent neighborhood.

#### **3. Applicability.**

a. The District applies to properties within a quarter-mile and as identified as "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" on the official Zoning Map of the City of Coral Gables.

b. Unless otherwise provided in this section, all provisions of applicable underlying zoning district designations affecting an individual property shall control use and development.

c. All of the standards provided below shall be mandatory for properties seeking approval pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.

#### **B. Regulations.**

1. Building sites. Buildings on building sites within the District of twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet or more, or with street frontage of two hundred (200) feet or more, shall require site plan review and approval by the City Commission.

#### **2. Height.**

a. MX3 properties in the District shall be at a maximum height of one hundred and twenty (120) feet. Additional bonus heights with architectural incentives shall not apply.

b. An additional thirteen feet and six inches (13.5) of building height may be granted by the City Commission for each additional five (5%) percent of landscaped open space provided as on-site publicly accessible open space to a maximum building height of one hundred and forty-seven (147) feet.

c. Height of architectural elements may exceed the maximum height in the District by a maximum of twenty-five (25) feet.

---

### 3. Use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).

Building sites within the District may receive Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) for a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 4.375, pursuant to Section 14-204.5.

### 4. Setbacks and Stepbacks.

- a. US-1: Twenty (20) feet setback, except an arcade may encroach into the setback a maximum of ten (10) feet.
- b. Rear stepback: Ten (10) foot minimum upper-story stepback shall be required for the top one-third (1/3) of the rear facade as a transition to the adjacent residential district.
- c. Rear setback: For building sites with a depth greater than three hundred (300) feet on US1, a rear setback of twenty-five (25) feet with a landscaped area shall be required.

### 5. Architecture.

- a. The architectural style of any building within the District shall be Coral Gables Mediterranean.
- b. The first four (4) stories, at a minimum, shall be designed to activate the street with habitable space of twenty (20) feet minimum depth and with consistent high-quality materials, such as natural stone, cast iron, and other materials.
- c. Ground floor commercial is required along the US-1 frontage.
- d. Commercial and residential entrances shall be accessed from the public sidewalk and shall be located adjacent to transit stops or to access to multimodal stations.

### 6. Open space and landscape.

- a. The building and open space frontage on US-1 shall be coordinated with existing and proposed public realm enhancements to ensure a unified and pedestrian-friendly public space.
- b. Pedestrian shading shall be provided with building arcades, overhangs, or shade trees that foster pedestrian activity.
- c. Plant species or landscape design that improves stormwater management shall be provided.
- d. A paseo shall not be required for any building length.

### 7. Parking.

- a. Ground floor retail, residential, and restaurants shall be exempt from the parking requirements.
- b. Developments within five hundred (500) feet of the station entrance may receive a parking reduction of fifty percent (50%) maximum. An additional twenty-five (25%) reduction may be granted with a parking plan that demonstrates the necessary amount of parking for each individual development.
- c. Properties shall be eligible to use remote parking in a parking structure that is located within 1000' of the subject site, pursuant to Section 10-108.B.
- d. Off-street parking shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the front property line and shall be screened with habitable linear space. Off-street parking is prohibited within the setback.

### 8. Public Benefit.

- a. Landscaping, furniture, shade, water features, art, and other pedestrian amenities shall be incorporated on and off-site to enhance pedestrian activity.
- b. Developments shall provide sidewalks, crosswalks, safety improvements to intersections, mobility pathways, and other pedestrian connections to adjacent or nearby multi-modal systems.
- c. Potential impacts of new development on rapid transit infrastructure, adjacent properties, or public facilities shall be addressed with improvements to the transit system infrastructure, connections to transit, traffic calming, emergency services facilities, public parks or public open spaces, tree canopy enhancements, public infrastructure, and other improvements.

### 9. Expedited Design Review.

- a. All proposed buildings shall be reviewed administratively by City Staff. The City Architect shall conduct the Preliminary Design Review prior to the City Commission's consideration of the site plan.
- b. The City Commission shall review the application, the recommendations of staff, and shall conduct a quasi-judicial public hearing and grant the approval, grant the approval subject to specified conditions or deny the application. The City Commission may attach such conditions to the approval that are necessary to ensure compliance with the standards set out in this section.

# *Proposed Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments*

## *Create a new Rapid Transit District Overlay in the Comprehensive Plan.*

**Table FLU-2. Commercial Land Uses.**

Table FLU-2. Commercial Land Uses			
Classification	Description	Density / Intensity	Height
Commercial High-Rise In-tensity.	This category is oriented to the highest intensity commercial uses, including residential, retail, services, office, and mixed use	<p>Maximum F.A.R. of 3.0, or 3.5 with architectural incentives <u>or if developed pursuant to University Rapid Transit District Overlay</u>. Up to an additional 25% F.A.R. may be granted for properties qualifying as receiving sites for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).</p> <p>Residential use shall only be permitted as part of a mixed-use development as provided herein with maximum of 125 units/acre. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>Within a Mediterranean Village development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. residential use shall be permitted, and</li> <li>2. the intensity of the project shall be regulated by a maximum Floor Area Ratio ("F.A.R.") of four (4.0), and shall be controlled by an approved Mediterranean Village Planned Area Development ("PAD") Plan, and</li> <li>3. additional height may be granted for specified uses or provide architectural embellishment</li> </ol>	<p>Up to 150' maximum (no limitation on floors), or 190.5' maximum (with a maximum 3 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p> <p>If developed pursuant to an approved PAD, within the Central Business District (CBD) and limiting density to 100 units/acre: Up to 205.5' maximum with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code</p>

**Table FLU-4. Mixed-Use Land Use.**

Table FLU-4. Mixed-Use Land Use	
Classification	Description
MXD, Mixed-Use or <del>MXOD</del> , Mixed-Use Overlay Districts ( <u>MXOD</u> ).	Mixed uses are permitted to varying degrees in the multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial land use categories, pursuant to underlying land use regulations and applicable Zoning Code provisions.
	<p>The general intent of the MXD is to promote a multi-faceted pedestrian friendly environment comprised of an assortment of uses, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential;</li> <li>• Retail/Commercial;</li> <li>• Office;</li> <li>• Industrial; and</li> <li>• Public Open Spaces.</li> </ul> <p>No single use may comprise more than eighty-five (85%) percent of the MXD floor area ratio. <u>However, if developed pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, a minimum of two (2) uses shall be included, with no minimum or maximum percentage thresholds.</u></p> <p>A maximum of 125 units/acre shall be allowed. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>The proportionate mix of uses shall be reviewed per development application. The following table establishes minimum and maximum thresholds based upon the FAR of the <u>Mixed-use</u> building. See Table FLU-4.1 below</p> <p>Additional MXD or Mixed Use Overlay District (MXOD) development standards, including maximum intensities, and height, are provided in the Zoning Code.</p>
<del>MXOD</del> , Mixed-Use Overlay Districts ( <u>MXOD</u> ).	<p>An MXOD may be permitted as an overlay in the Multi-Family Medium Density, Commercial and Industrial land use categories (see FLU-2: Mixed-Use Overlay District Map).</p> <p>Properties within the MXOD have the option of developing their property in accordance with the underlying land use.</p>

Table FLU-4.1 Minimum & Maximum Thresholds based upon FAR		
Type of Use	Minimum % of FAR	Maximum % of FAR
Residential	0%	85%
Retail/Commercial	8%	40%
Office	0%	85%
Industrial	0%	5%

---

---

# *Proposed Comprehensive Plan Text Amendments*

## *Create a new Rapid Transit District Overlay in the Comprehensive Plan.*

### **Policy FLU-1.9.5.**

Establish and implement a University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, which should include:

1. A boundary for the District, adopted on the Future Land Use Map.
2. Zoning regulations that would locate higher density and intensity development near the University Station MetroRail Station to encourage housing and other compatible uses that are supportive of pedestrian activities on the ground level of mixed-use buildings.
3. Mixed-use development along the US-1 corridor that is consistent with the goals of the Miami-Dade County's Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) plan to promote increased ridership of the rapid transit system.
4. Expedited development opportunity that serves as an alternative, compatible development path under the City's review authority and jurisdiction, with greater opportunities for community engagement.
5. Development strategies that provide greater mixed-use and housing opportunities in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions, and promote and encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor.

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-\_\_**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA, AMENDING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP AND MIXED-USE OVERLAY DISTRICTS MAP OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PURSUANT TO ZONING CODE ARTICLE 14, "PROCESS," SECTION 14-213, "COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENTS," AND SMALL SCALE AMENDMENT PROCEDURES (SS. 163.3187, FLORIDA STATUTES), FROM "COMMERCIAL LOW-RISE INTENSITY" TO "COMMERCIAL HIGH-RISE INTENSITY" AND TO CREATE THE "UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT OVERLAY" FOR BLOCKS 155 AND 156, CORAL GABLES RIVIERA SECTION PART 8, TRACT "A," REPLAT OF CORAL GABLES RIVIERA SECTION PART 8, WHICH ARE THE PROPERTIES BOUNDED BY SOUTH DIXIE HIGHWAY, CABALLERO BOULEVARD, MADRUGA, AND TURIN STREET (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, AND 1350 SOUTH DIXIE HIGHWAY); PROVIDING FOR A REPEALER PROVISION, PROVIDING FOR A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners adopted an expansion of the County's Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) that established the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; and

**WHEREAS**, the recently adopted County subzone, titled "Coral Gables / University Station Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) Expansion," preempts the City's zoning regulations, comprehensive planning framework, and established public review processes; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan encourages higher-density, transit-oriented development adjacent to multimodal transportation hubs, in order to facilitate compact, mixed-use development that leverages proximity to the existing mass transit system; and

**WHEREAS**, the US-1 corridor has been the subject of extensive discussion, planning efforts, and public engagement over several years, during which the City has worked closely with neighborhood stakeholders and has developed a detailed understanding of the community's values, context, and vision for future development; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Coral Gables has a longstanding history of collaboration and coordination with Miami-Dade County, and continues to prioritize intergovernmental cooperation while maintaining a leadership role in local, regional, and state-level planning initiatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the County’s RTZ subzone supersedes the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, the City seeks to retain local review authority and regulatory jurisdiction over properties within the proposed overlay district to ensure compatibility with adopted plans and community standards; and

**WHEREAS**, to be consistent with the intent and provisions of the County’s Rapid Transit Zone—while also preserving the City’s established character, aesthetic standards, and procedural safeguards—the City of Coral Gables is proposing the creation of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay as a local regulatory framework for transit-oriented development within this corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, after notice was duly published, a public hearing was held before the Planning and Zoning Board on July 2, 2025, at which hearing all interested parties were afforded the opportunity to be heard; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Board was presented with the proposed University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay and requested amendments, and after due consideration, recommended approval (vote: 5 to 1) of the map amendments; and

**WHEREAS**, after notice of public hearing duly published, the City Commission held a public hearing on October 28, 2025, at which hearing all interested persons were afforded the opportunity to be heard and this application for change of land use and creation of the district overlay were approved on first reading;

**WHEREAS**, after notice duly published, a public hearing for Second Reading was held before the City Commission, at which hearing all interested parties were afforded the opportunity to be heard; and after due consideration and discussion, the amendment on Second Reading was approved.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES THAT:**

**SECTION 1.** The foregoing “**WHEREAS**” clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Ordinance upon adoption hereof.

**SECTION 2.** The City of Coral Gables’ request for a change of land use pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14 “Process,” Section 14-213 “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” a change of land use from “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Commercial High-Rise Intensity” for and to create the “University Station Rapid Transit

District Overlay” for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, Tract “A,” Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway).

**SECTION 3.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 4.** If any section, part of section, paragraph, clause, phrase or word of this Ordinance is declared invalid, the remaining provisions of this Ordinance shall not be affected.

**SECTION 5.** Pursuant to Section 163.3187(5)(c), Florida Statutes, the effective date of the small-scale comprehensive plan amendment approved by this ordinance shall be thirty-one (31) days after adoption by the Commission, if the amendment is not timely challenged.

**SECTION 6.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon the date of its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, A.D., 2025.

(Moved: / Seconded:)

(Yeas: )

( ; Vote)

APPROVED:

VINCE LAGO  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

BILLY Y. URQUIA  
CITY CLERK

CRISTINA SUAREZ  
CITY ATTORNEY

**CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA**

**ORDINANCE NO. 2025-\_\_**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA PROVIDING FOR MAP AND TEXT AMENDMENTS TO THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES OFFICIAL ZONING CODE PURSUANT TO ZONING CODE ARTICLE 14, "PROCESS," SECTION 14-212, "ZONING CODE TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENTS," BY 1) AMENDING ARTICLE 2, "ZONING DISTRICTS," TO CREATE SECTION 2-408, "UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT OVERLAY" FOR PROMOTING THE USE OF MASS TRANSIT FACILITIES AND PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITIES ALONG TRANSIT CORRIDORS AND NEAR MULTIMODAL STATIONS; 2) AMENDING APPENDIX A, "SITE SPECIFIC ZONING REGULATIONS," TO REMOVE INCONSISTENT SITE SPECIFICS; 3) AMENDING ARTICLE 14, "PROCESS," SECTION 14-204, "TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS," TO EXPAND TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDRS) RECEIVING SITES TO THE "UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT OVERLAY," AND 4) MAKING ZONING DISTRICT BOUNDARY CHANGES FROM "MIXED-USE 1 (MX1)" TO "MIXED-USE 3 (MX3)" AND INCLUDING WITHIN THE "UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT OVERLAY" BOUNDARY FOR BLOCKS 155 AND 156, CORAL GABLES RIVIERA SECTION PART 8, AND TRACT "A," REPLAT OF CORAL GABLES RIVIERA SECTION PART 8, WHICH ARE THE PROPERTIES BOUNDED BY SOUTH DIXIE HIGHWAY, CABALLERO BOULEVARD, MADRUGA, AND TURIN STREET (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, AND 1350 SOUTH DIXIE HIGHWAY), AND TO CREATE THE "UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT;" PROVIDING FOR REPEALER PROVISION, SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, CODIFICATION, AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners adopted an expansion of the County's Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) to establish the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; and

**WHEREAS**, the adopted County subzone, titled “Coral Gables / University Station Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) Expansion,” would preempt the City’s zoning regulations, comprehensive planning framework, and established public review processes; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan encourages higher-density, transit-oriented development adjacent to multimodal transportation hubs, in order to facilitate compact, mixed-use development that leverages proximity to the existing mass transit system; and

**WHEREAS**, the US-1 corridor has been the subject of extensive discussion, planning efforts, and public engagement over several years, during which the City has worked closely with neighborhood stakeholders and has developed a detailed understanding of the community’s values, context, and vision for future development; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Coral Gables has a longstanding history of collaboration and coordination with Miami-Dade County, and continues to prioritize intergovernmental cooperation while maintaining a leadership role in local, regional, and state-level planning initiatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the County’s adopted RTZ subzone that would supersede the City’s Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, the City seeks to retain local review authority and regulatory jurisdiction over properties within the proposed overlay district to ensure compatibility with adopted plans and community standards; and

**WHEREAS**, to be consistent with the intent and provisions of the County’s Rapid Transit Zone—while also preserving the City’s established character, aesthetic standards, and procedural safeguards—the City of Coral Gables is proposing the creation of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay as a local regulatory framework for transit-oriented development within this corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, after notice was duly published, a public hearing was held before the Planning and Zoning Board on July 2, 2025, at which hearing all interested parties were afforded the opportunity to be heard; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning and Zoning Board was presented with the proposed University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay and requested amendments, and after due consideration, recommended approval (vote: 5 to 1) of the text and map amendments; and

**WHEREAS**, after notice of public hearing duly published, the City Commission held a public hearing on October 28, 2025, at which hearing all interested persons were afforded the opportunity to be heard and this application for change of Zoning Map and Code was approved on first reading;

**WHEREAS**, after notice duly published, a public hearing for Second Reading was held before the City Commission, at which hearing all interested parties were afforded the

opportunity to be heard; and after due consideration and discussion, the amendment on Second Reading was approved.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES THAT:**

**SECTION 1.** The foregoing “WHEREAS” clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Ordinance upon adoption hereof.

**SECTION 2.** The Official Zoning Code of the City of Coral Gables is hereby amended to read as provided in Attachment A<sup>1</sup>.

**SECTION 3.** The City of Coral Gables’ request for an amendment to the Zoning Map pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14 “Process,” Section 14-212 “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” from “Mixed Use 1 District” to “Mixed Use 3 District” and including within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” boundary for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, and Tract “A,” Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway), and to create the “University Station Rapid Transit District;”

**SECTION 4.** All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent or in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 5.** If any section, part of section, paragraph, clause, phrase or word of this Ordinance is declared invalid, the remaining provisions of this Ordinance shall not be affected.

**SECTION 6.** It is the intention of the Commission of the City of Coral Gables, Florida, that the provisions of this Ordinance shall become and be made part of the “Zoning Code” of the City of Coral Gables, Florida; and that the sections of this “ordinance” may be changed to “section”, “article”, or such other appropriate word or phrase in order to accomplish such intentions.

**SECTION 7.** If the Official Zoning Code of the City of Coral Gables Tables of Contents or other reference portions is affected by these provisions, then changes are approved as a part of this Ordinance.

**SECTION 8.** This Ordinance shall become effective upon the date of its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS \_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_, A.D., 2025.

(Moved: / Seconded:)

(Yeas: )

( ; Vote)

---

<sup>1</sup> Deletions are indicated by strikethrough. Insertions are indicated by underline.

APPROVED:

VINCE LAGO  
MAYOR

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

BILLY Y. URQUIA  
CITY CLERK

CRISTINA SUAREZ  
CITY ATTORNEY

## Attachment A

The Official Zoning Code of the City of Coral Gables is hereby amended to read as follows<sup>2</sup>:

### ARTICLE 2. ZONING DISTRICTS

#### Section 2-400. District Overlays.

#### **Section 2-408. University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.**

##### A. Purpose and applicability.

1. The purpose of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay is to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan to locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations. These standards are consistent with the intent and provisions of Miami-Dade County's Rapid Transit Zone that provide for transit-oriented development adjacent to the existing mass transit system.
2. The District is established in order to maintain the following objectives:
  - a. Enhance the aesthetic and physical character of the US-1 corridor to provide for the redevelopment of underutilized buildings and properties that is consistent with the high-quality design and architecture of the City and the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - b. Promote and encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor by requiring pedestrian-oriented building design and site planning.
  - c. Provide greater housing opportunities in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions that are not in environmentally vulnerable and sensitive areas.
  - d. Foster the activation of public areas and streets with a consistent design intent regarding ground floor building design, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike infrastructure, pedestrian amenities, and other elements in the public right-of-way.
  - e. Provide public benefits for adjacent residential neighborhoods to address the potential impacts of new developments that could degrade the aesthetics and welfare of the adjacent neighborhood.
3. Applicability.
  - a. The District applies to properties within a quarter-mile and as identified as "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" on the official Zoning Map of the City of Coral Gables.

---

<sup>2</sup> Deletions are indicated by strikethrough. Insertions are indicated by underline.

- b. Unless otherwise provided in this section, all provisions of applicable underlying zoning district designations affecting an individual property shall control use and development.
- c. All of the standards provided below shall be mandatory for properties seeking approval pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.

**B. Regulations.**

- 1. Building sites. Buildings on building sites within the District of twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet or more, or with street frontage of two hundred (200) feet or more, shall require site plan review and approval by the City Commission.
- 2. Height.
  - a. MX3 properties in the District shall be at a maximum height of one hundred and twenty (120) feet for habitable space. Additional bonus heights with architectural incentives shall not be applied.
  - b. An additional thirteen feet and six inches (13.5) of building height may be granted by the City Commission for each additional five (5%) percent of landscaped open space provided as on-site publicly accessible open space to a maximum building height of one hundred and forty-seven (147) feet.
  - c. Height of architectural elements, screened mechanical equipment, or other roof elements may exceed the maximum height in the District by a maximum of twenty-five (25) feet.
- 3. Use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs). Building sites within the District may receive Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) for a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 4.375, pursuant to Section 14-204.5.
- 4. Setbacks and Stepbacks.
  - a. US-1: Twenty (20) feet, except an arcade may encroach into the setback a maximum of ten (10) feet.
  - b. Adjacent residential districts: Upper-story stepback shall be required as a transition to the adjacent residential district, upon review and approval by the City Architect.
  - c. Rear setback: For building sites with a depth greater than three hundred (300) feet on US1, a rear setback of twenty-five (25) feet with a landscaped area shall be required.
- 5. Ground floor design.
  - a. The first four (4) stories, at a minimum, shall be designed to activate the street with habitable space of twenty (20) feet minimum depth and with consistent high-quality materials, such as natural stone, cast-iron, and other materials .
  - b. Any storage of vehicles or off-street parking that is above grade shall occur behind the provided habitable space.
  - c. Ground floor commercial or residential shall be accessed from the public sidewalk.

- d. Commercial and residential entrances shall be located adjacent to transit stops or to access to multimodal stations.

6. Open space and landscape.

- a. The building and open space frontage on US-1 shall be coordinated with existing and proposed public realm enhancements to ensure a unified and pedestrian-friendly public space.
- b. Pedestrian shading shall be provided with building arcades, overhangs, or shade trees that foster pedestrian activity.
- c. Plant species or landscape design that improves stormwater management shall be provided.
- d. A paseo shall not be required for any building length or frontage.

7. Parking.

- a. Ground floor retail, residential, and restaurants shall be exempt from the parking requirements.
- b. Developments within five hundred (500) feet of the multimodal station entrance shall receive a parking reduction of fifty percent (50%) maximum. An additional twenty-five (25%) reduction may be granted with a parking plan that demonstrates the necessary amount of parking for each individual development.
- c. Properties shall be eligible to use remote parking in a parking structure that is located within 1000' of the subject site, pursuant to Section 10-108.B.
- d. Off-street parking shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the front property line and shall be screened with habitable linear space. Off-street parking is prohibited within the setback.

8. Public Benefit.

- a. Landscaping, furniture, shade, water features, art, and other pedestrian amenities shall be incorporated on and off-site to enhance pedestrian activity.
- b. Developments shall provide sidewalks, crosswalks, safety improvements to intersections, mobility pathways, and other pedestrian connections to adjacent or nearby multi-modal systems.
- c. Potential impacts of new development on rapid transit infrastructure, adjacent properties, or public facilities shall be addressed with improvements to the transit system infrastructure, connections to transit, traffic calming, emergency services facilities, public parks or public open spaces, tree canopy enhancements, public infrastructure, and other improvements.

9. Expedited Design Review.

- a. All proposed buildings shall be reviewed administratively by City Staff. The City Architect shall conduct the Preliminary Design Review prior to the City Commission's consideration of the site plan. Applications requesting the Coral Gables Mediterranean Style Bonus shall require the approval by the City Architect for the Conceptual Mediterranean Review and preliminary review to secure bonuses.

- b. The City Commission shall review the application, the recommendations of staff, and shall conduct a quasi-judicial public hearing and grant the approval, grant the approval subject to specified conditions or deny the application. The City Commission may attach such conditions to the approval that are necessary to ensure compliance with the standards set out in this section.

## **ARTICLE 14. PROCESS**

### **Section 14-200. Procedures**

### **Section 14-204. Transfer of Development Rights.**

#### **Section 14-204.5. Use of TDRs on receiver sites.**

A. Use of TDRs on receiver sites. The receiving sites shall be:

1. Located within the boundaries of the CBD and designated mixed-use zoning, or
2. Located within the boundaries of the North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed Use District and designated mixed-use zoning, or
3. Located within the boundaries of the Design & Innovation District and designated mixed-use zoning, or
4. Located within the boundaries of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay and designated mixed-use zoning, or
5. Designated by the City Commission when located in a Planned Area Development (PAD) and zoned MX2 or MX3.

Use of TDRs as receiver sites are prohibited on properties within the Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown District Overlay facing Miracle Mile.

B. Maximum TDR floor area ratio (FAR) increase on receiver sites. An increase of up to twenty-five (25%) percent of permitted gross FAR and approved Mediterranean architectural style bonuses gross FAR may be permitted.

## **Appendix A. Site Specific Zoning Regulations**

### **Section A-83 - Riviera Section Part 8.**

A. Floor area ratio (FAR) Provisions for buildings four (4) or more stories in height.

~~1. See Archived Zoning Code Section 3-6(y).~~

2. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for C District buildings four (4) stories in height located on the following described property shall not exceed 1.5: (2829)

a. Lots 1 through 13, inclusive, Block 148.

b. Lots 1, 16, 17 and 27 in Block 155.

c. Lots 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31, in Block 156.

d. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.

~~6. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for C District buildings located on the following described property shall not exceed 3.5:~~

~~e. The Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~

~~B. Height of buildings.~~

~~1. No commercial building shall be constructed or erected on the following described properties to exceed four (4) stories or forty-five (45) feet, whichever is less:~~

~~a. Lots 1 through 13, inclusive, Block 148.~~

~~b. Lots 1, 17, 26 and 27, Block 155.~~

~~c. Lots 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31, Block 156.~~

~~d. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~

~~2. No commercial building shall be constructed or erected on the following described properties to exceed one hundred and twenty six (126) feet:~~

~~e. The Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~

~~3. No residential or mixed-use building shall be constructed or erected on the following described properties to exceed one hundred twenty two (122) feet:~~

~~f. The Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~

~~C. Setbacks Minimum front.~~

~~1. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A. One hundred and twenty five (125) feet (P. B. 46, Page 100).~~

~~D. Setbacks Minimum rear.~~

~~1. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A. Fifty (50) feet (P. B. 46, Page 100).~~

**City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting**  
**Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related**  
**October 28, 2025**  
**City Commission Chambers**  
**405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, FL**

**City Commission**

**Mayor Vince Lago**  
**Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson**  
**Commissioner Melissa Castro**  
**Commissioner Ariel Fernandez**  
**Commissioner Richard D. Lara**

**City Staff**

**City Attorney, Cristina Suárez**  
**City Manager, Peter Iglesias**  
**City Clerk, Billy Urquia**

**Public Speaker(s)**

**Maria Cruz**  
**Roberta Neway**  
**Lisa DeTournay**

---

Agenda Item E-8 and E-9 are related [Start: 3:10 p.m.]

E-8: An Ordinance of the City Commission amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay Districts Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Commercial High-Rise Intensity” and to create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, Tract “A,” Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway); providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, and providing for an effective date. (07 02 2025 PZB recommended approval, Vote: 5:1)

E-9: An Ordinance of the City Commission providing for map and text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-212, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” by 1) amending Article 2, “Zoning Districts,” to create Section 2-408,

*City Commission Meeting*

---

[Date]

1

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

“University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” for promoting the use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along transit corridors and near multimodal stations; 2) amending Appendix A, “Site Specific Zoning Regulations,” to remove inconsistent Site Specifics; 3) amending Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-204, “Transfer of Development Rights,” to expand Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) receiving sites to the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay,” and 4) making Zoning District boundary changes from “Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)” to “Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)” and including within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” boundary for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, and Tract “A,” Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway), and to create the “University Station Rapid Transit District,” providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date. (07 02 2025 PZB recommended approval, Vote: 5:1)

Mayor Lago: We're going to go to E-8 and E-9. Mr. Clerk, are we ready?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor, we are. All right.

City Attorney Suarez: E-8 is an ordinance of the City Commission amending the future land use map and mixed use overlay district's map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14 process section 14-213 Comprehensive Plan Text Map Amendments and small scale amendment procedures from commercial low rise intensity to commercial high rise intensity and to create the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay for Blocks 155 and 156. Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga and Turin Street providing for repeater provisions of ability clause and providing for an effective date. E-9 is an ordinance of the City Commission providing for Map and Text Amendments to the Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14 “Process” Section 14-212 Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments by amending Article 2 Zoning Districts to create Section 2-408 University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay for promoting the use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along transit corridors and near multimodal stations, amending appendix A site specific zoning regulations to remove inconsistent site specifics, amending Article 14 process section 14-204 transfer of development rights to expand transfer receiving sites to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay and making zoning district boundary changes for mixed use to mixed use 1 to mixed use 3 and including within the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay boundary for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga and Turin Street and to create the University Station Rapid Transit District providing for repeater provisions of ability clause and providing for an effective date. This is a quasi-judicial item, so I ask that we consolidate for purposes of the public hearing and that anyone who will be testifying today be sworn in by the City Clerk, please.

City Clerk Urquia: Those who will be testifying on this item please stand and raise your right hand. These were affirmed testimony you'll provide today will be the truth and nothing but truth. Thank you.

Planning and Zoning Director: Thank you. Good afternoon, Jennifer Garcia Planning and Zoning Director. So, what's before you right now is a city-initiated overlay district and I'll go through that right now. As you know, the county did approve of their expansion of the rapid transit zone for the county on September 3rd and they created in effect the Coral Gables and Universities Sub-Zone. So, the RTZ expansion as they've approved legislation right now is as each property is added to the RTZ sub-zone it goes through a very streamlined process. Those are the pre-application conference which two staff people from the City Coral Gables can attend and then it would go to their Rapid Transit Development Impact Committee, the RTDIC, along with two individuals from the City Coral Gables staff and then go to their BCC, their Board of County Commissioners for adoption. This RTZ expansion for the county did grant them regulatory jurisdiction over properties as they add into their sub zones. Right now, there's only one property that's in their sub zone, that's a property that we know as the University Shopping Center. So as a result, the city started in June, I believe, to look at this area holistically and not property by property and we're looking at the area between Caballero and Turin facing US-1. So, you can see here the area highlighted in yellow is the study area between Caballero and Turin facing US-1 directly across the street from the University of Miami and of course abutting multifamily to the south or to the east. This is the area you can see, it's mostly two blocks, two mega blocks; Track A and then Block 155. So, the Future Land Use Map shows this area is a variety of land use designations, but it's mostly commercial low-rise intensity with such a mixed-use for the Paseo project which is down by Caballero and the Zoning Map shows that it's mostly MX1, which is our lowest mixed use of the nation with MX3 being for the Paseo project. The request right now for the city is we're requesting it to change Comprehensive Plan for the Future Land Use Map, as well as a Mixed-Use Map, as well as our Zoning Map changes and then the Zoning Code Text Amendments and I'll get to each of those right now. The Future Land Use Map right now as I said is, commercial low-rise intensity, and that is proposed to be changed to commercial high-rise intensity to be more compatible with the mixed use of the Paseo as well as the existing high rise that's on the Gables 1 Tower right now. The other map to be amended with the comprehensive plan would be the Mixed-Use Overlay District Map and I'll be adding a new overlay district for mixed use in the same area between Caballero and Turin facing US-1. The Zoning Map Amendment would consist of changing those zoning designations from MX1 to be MX3 for those four properties there. And this is showing a graphic of the existing zoning and land use on the upper part of the slide and that's showing that that low rise intensity as well as MX1, and then the second the bottom part of the slide is showing the proposed, which would be high rise intensity of a maximum height of 120 feet. So, as you know, this is a reaction to the county's RTZ sub zone, so this is a table comparing our current regulations on the left side, the county's RTZ as adopted in the middle, and then the proposed city

*City Commission Meeting*

overlay district is on the green on the right side. So as proposed the review would be very limited as far as internal staff review and then before the City Commission as a resolution site plan approval. The height would be 120 feet with additional allowance for up to 147 feet, if they provided an additional 5 percent public open space. The density would remain the same to be 125 units an acre. The FAR would be 3.0 with an option to have Med Bonus to allow for 3.5 FAR total, and then allowing TDRs to be a receipt in this area for a maximum of 4.375 FAR. The setbacks would be the same as we are today with 20 feet off the front facing US-1, as well as 25 feet in the rear for those larger deeper properties. And the open space remains the same to be 10 percent on the ground level, which also includes the setback areas. And the setbacks would be up to the City Architect based on whatever makes sense for the size of the property and to be more compatible with the adjacent residential districts in the back. The parking would be required for residential although not required residential for the county. We would require that except for a 50 percent reduction as well as a 25 percent parking reduction if they have a parking plan and it would make sense as far as being compatible with the area. So, this is showing the review processes compared to the county RTZ sub-zone on the right side, sorry on the left side, and the city's overlay process on the right side. So, the county as you know, when they adopt legislation, they adopt property to be added in each property at a time. So once that property is being added in, they go through what they call their site plan approval for a special exception approval. So, they do the pre-application conference, the Rapid Transit Development Impacts Committee review and then their Board of County Commissioners then adopt the site plan. What's proposed for you today is not our usual process but actually a very streamlined process of internal review by staff, provide comments and recommendations to the Commission and the Commission would then adopt or would review and adopt the site plan. So, this was reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Board in July of this year, and here we are for first reading. We did send out mail notice within 1,500 feet of the proposed overlay district as required by code and that was sent out twice, once for the PZB meeting in July, and also for today's meeting. The property was posted as well. The website was posted. There's a newspaper advertisement in July and we even had an informational video that was made by our Communications Staff. I think broadcasted but shared with ENEWS a couple of times, as well as on our website. Staff does determine that this to be consistent with the Comp Plan. As the Comp Plan does say we want to encourage development and intensity near our transit areas and transit corridors, and it does comply with findings of fact and satisfies it. Thank you. That's it.

Mayor Lago: Thank you so much. Mr. Manager.

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Mayor. This is a proposal to try to work through the RTZ process. The RTZ sub-zone was created at the University of Miami. It does encompass the MARK Project. It does encompass for various other projects. We will be looking at -- this is an MX proposal. We will be looking at an MF proposal that would expand this later. The idea is to try to bring this project back under city review, which I think we are much better off than under county review.

*City Commission Meeting*

We would lose permit fees, potential impact fees and potential control of the project from a use perspective, from a CU perspective and even from a signage perspective.

Mayor Lago: So let me ask you a few questions just to put it on the record. I think it's important. So, we understand that certain behaviors have consequences. On the Planning and Zoning Board, when the MARK went, the project was presented in the Planning and Zoning Board. What was the height that was being proposed?

City Manager Iglesias: It was about eight stories.

Mayor Lago: And what did the code allow?

City Manager Iglesias: It was two stories over code.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Now, as a result of it was denied at RTZ, maybe we could have negotiated out to seven. We could have done some different things. As a result of the treatment in the Planning and Zoning Board, now they're going the RTZ route, correct? The county route.

City Manager Iglesias: Which could be Mayor, up to...

Mayor Lago: They're circumventing the city completely. We lose all power. And now they're going the RTZ route.

City Manager Iglesias: That is correct, Mayor, which they have no limit in FAR and have 150 feet.

Mayor Lago: 150 feet. How many stories is that?

City Manager Iglesias: That's anywhere from 14 to 15 stories.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, let's put this on the record because I know that nobody wants to talk about it because it's just not a good thing to talk about. Nobody wants to deal with that, you know, the results of this blow. The two biggest proponents in opposition of the MARK were Felix Pardo and Sue. They were denied the approval, not even left to negotiate. I've been dealing with the MARK now with you for the past three months. Next week I'm going to meet with them, with the Manager, in an effort to see if we can scale back and bring this back into the city in one form or another. I'm not happy about the design. I've already had conversations with the MARK's representatives. They're coming to negotiate on multiple different fronts and hopefully mitigate some of the RTZ. What do I mean by that? I mean that we're losing millions of dollars by them going the route of the RTZ in regard to impact fees. And now instead of having a project that could have been seven stories, maybe one floor outside of the zoning code, now it could be 14 or 15. Signage we have no control over and usages we have no control over. And the design today looks nothing like the one

they were proffering to the City of Coral Gables. Did I say anything that's not in line with what you agree with?

City Manager Iglesias: What you said is correct, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: So now we have to agree, now we have, now we're going to negotiate from a position of complete and utter weakness. And the purpose of the RTZ overlay that we're doing here is to offer, proffer developers something that says the city, you can go to the RTZ, but don't go to the RTZ, go to the City of Coral Gables RTZ. It's not as lucrative as the County RTZ, but we'll expedite your permits, we'll try to do things. You're going to develop the project anyways, but let's try to stay within our standards so that we can control the beauty and the breadth of the project. So, these are examples. We had two major examples of the Planning and Zoning Board. We had an encounter with Commissioner Raquel Regalado from District 7 and then we also had the encounter with the MARK. So, there are ramifications for our behavior, especially on the Planning and Zoning Board. So again, it's not me talking about it, you can watch it on video. I've watched it multiple times on video, and it's been played for me. So, I'm going to be meeting with the MARK representatives next week. They're going to fly into town with the Manager in hopes that we can come to an agreement to present to the Commission so that you don't see a 150-foot building there. So maybe you see a building that may be lower in scope and in scale. And I also want to negotiate in regard to the impact fees. If you go the RTZ route, we lose millions of dollars of impact fees. So, we want to promote other projects that are already going to be redeveloped anyways. For example, the project at the three-acre site for the University of Miami adjacent to the MARK to come through our RTZ, not the county. Let us keep the impact fees. Let us use that for good things in the neighborhood. Let us do great things with that money. Also consider our design standards, our signage standards, things that are emblematic of the City Beautiful. Not go outside and follow the county's RTZ. So, this is a Hail Mary. Don't think that I'm -- it's a Hail Mary. Hail Mary. But by the way, we had the project approved at eight stories. They came here with eight stories. The code allowed six. It had the setbacks. It had the Mediterranean design. It had everything. Now they don't have to adhere to any of that if they go the RTZ county. So, we're in a very tough position. I will do my best and hopefully we'll be able to bring something back. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yeah, we have some tough choices to make and I'm just going to, you know, for the purposes of some folks that don't know what we're referring to by impact fees. These are park impact fees. These are the fees that we can use to, you know, develop new parks. We have Phillips Park. We have potentially new parks coming in. Lots of money for our community is being ripped away and put into the county's hands. On top of that, you have the permitting fees and next to zero in a way of architectural review. No quality architects there. No quality, you know, they don't have the staff that we do in a way of engineering and so forth to be able to take care of this. Setbacks along US-1 are horrible. No one's going to want to walk along there. I mean, between a

10-foot sidewalk and an arcade underneath 20 feet being pushed back to the minimum, you know, with 10 feet of planted area, that's a hedge. So, lots of difficult choices we've been left with. I've encouraged residents to embrace development, that is, you know, I understand you don't want it, that is reasonable because if you allow reasonable development then you avoid this type of scenario like we have on the MARK. I know when their minds were changed, and it was after that Planning and Zoning Board meeting and they were done with us. They said I'm not going to go to the Commission. They're not going to go to another Planning and Zoning Board meeting and be treated the way that they were treated in that meeting, not before the Planning and Zoning Board or have an extended process back then the way the Commission was at that time. When I came on and I was elected, there was no Live Local Act. The RTZ zone for the county had not been yet adopted. I know that it was a much more expansive RTZ that was proposed after I got elected. You know, many people along Ponce were extremely nervous about it going up the rest of Ponce. The MARK folio was brought in as a, you know, a direct and proximate result of the treatment that folks received at this Planning and Zoning Board meeting and unfortunately it wasn't enough to cause particular members to adjust their behavior accordingly and the same bad treatment was given to the Commissioner when she came to speak to the Board to explain why, you know, Coral Gables needed to embrace a rapid transit zone adjacent to the rail. This is not, as some people have written an opinion piece on is going to bleed into the residential neighborhood. That is not what this is about. This is not what this is for. This is to be the lesser of two other evils, the Live Local or the county RTZ where you have zero control, zero ability to control the uses of the property. So, we have three choices. The first is, do you want to see Live Local projects next to your home? Would you rather have a county RTZ project next to your zone or would you like to have this Commission, and our staff have the best possible option for you available? I'm in favor of this because it gives us the control. We have on these particular lots, they're what, 325 feet deep, roughly what, 25 feet I think it is in the rear to create a planted buffer. Is that the right number, Mr. Manager?

City Manager Iglesias: That's about the right number, Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: And in that 25 feet, which is a full depth of a handsome front yard in most of our homes, you can have an amazing, planted buffer, not a 10-foot hedge. So, these are the types of things and choices that we can make to make our city better. To be able to control the signage and where it goes and the type of uses that go into those properties. We really have no other choice right now. We don't. So, I'm in favor of this.

Mayor Lago: Yes, sir.

Commissioner Fernandez: So, I think the Mayor phrased it perfectly with the phrase this is a Hail Mary. This is our way of trying to retake control over this project. And I think every Commission meeting we have the conversation five or six times about the preemptions that we're getting from outside. Somebody doesn't get what they want from the city, they're going to go to the county or

*City Commission Meeting*

to the state. That's the reality that we're facing. It's always going to the other parent to figure out if they can get from the other parent what they can't get from this one. This presents us with an opportunity to try to bring it back, give us some say in the matter, because right now we really don't have a say in these projects. Basically, go through the county and the county makes a decision and completely out of Coral Gables hands. So, I think this is a solution that makes sense right now. It will present not just the funding component but also the opportunity to have a sit down like the Mayor is going to have with the developer to try to find solutions on projects which we've been able to successfully get on other projects. We've had numerous projects that have been considering Live Local and through sit downs and getting resident engagement, they've scaled their projects down and made them something that has worked for residents. I think this is the opportunity that we have. It's really, I think, the only one we have at the moment. So, I'll be voting in favor of this just to make sure that we are able to bring this back, give ourselves an opportunity to bring those impact fees back and give the city a bit of a say while still having a project there that doesn't have as big of an impact on the residents who live close to it.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: So, this is not politicking, but I think it's a lesson to learn so we're not going to be doomed to making the same mistakes again and again and again. I think that the Planning and Zoning Board appointees are critical. These are not positions to be taken lightly and one really needs to understand the person's qualifications, their background and more importantly their vision for the city with a very important position they hold with the P&Z. And I believe that while there may be blame to go around because the process has taken too long, when they are in front of the P&Z, we must accelerate the process, the review process. We need to be much more of an efficient body at the P&Z in order to strategically solicit and obtain the best outcomes for the City of Coral Gables rather than what the past has shown. And with respect to Felix Pardo and Sue Kawalerski in particular, I think there was a lack of strategic vision, a lack of understanding in the worst of scenarios of what exactly delay, kicking the can down the road at best, and insulting a Commissioner from the County coming to visit to help explain to the city how the RTZ works and what they would be willing to do to assist us. It was short-sighted and destructive and incredibly counterintuitive to what it is that the small but vocal group that are anti-development in every sense of that misnomer, against development, which I've said many, many times, what exactly are you saying when you say you're against development? You're not saying really anything other than exhibiting some profound level of ignorance. Obviously, development can and should be a good thing when done responsibly and intelligently rather than condemn the word as being a pejorative, just the word development. So, in this case, Mr. Mayor, when you were recounting the history, Vice Mayor, where we had it within our grasp, a proposal of eight stories, you understand, that's a

starting point. You could have negotiated that down to seven. But looking back on it all, you never pass up a good deal looking for the best deal. Because if all you can do in your life is say, geez, all I've done are good deals, well, God bless you, okay? But in this instant, it's turned out to be a really, really, really bad deal and counterintuitive and counterproductive to what the vocal group will say they want no development of any kind. Now you're getting development off the scale, right? When we really had that mismanaged. So, when you say you've got a Hail Mary to throw, Mayor, you know, you've got a Hail Mary in another stadium that you've got to be able to land in the end zone. Because we really have it stacked up against us, but not only with respect to the MARK, but I fear the domino effect going down the line. So, we have got to think outside the box, we have got to be proactive, we've got to be strategic in everything we do, because the folks all the way up in Tallahassee, those in the county are going to out game us. Because in the end, with the power of the pen, and the legislation that grows more and more encroaching onto us, where Home Rule and home decision erodes every single day, we've got to be smarter than the way this game has been played. So, when we make appointments to the P&Z, when we make appointments to the special boards, we better be sure about what we're doing, because the impact and the repercussions are material, and they're long lasting.

Commissioner Fernandez: I think, Commissioner, one of the things that we as a Commission decided to take an initiative on this is informing residents about the RTZ, informing residents about Live Local, because I think a lot of members of our community weren't really aware of what it was and how it worked. I remember when we were discussing the Almeria project, a lot of the residents who were opposing the project originally were just saying, well, you know, we'll fight the project in Tallahassee. Well, that's not how Live Local works. And we had to go through a process of explaining how Live Local works. And, you know, like the Vice Mayor was saying, two years ago, or three years ago now, when she was elected, Live Local wasn't even a thing. The whole conversation of development has changed over the last three years because of the fact that now we have state and county who are now saying, you know what, we can make decisions for you.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner, but it's even gotten worse than that. And this is what I tried to state at the beginning of the meeting today with the issue that we dealt with historic preservation. When would you have ever thought a home of the magnitude that was demolished in Gables Estates by such an exceptional, all our architects here are amazing, you know, Fink, Paste, all of them are amazing. But you're talking about a world-renowned architect. They just bulldozed the house, not because it had structural issues, not because the law has changed, we're preempted, and it was in a flood area, potential flood area. So, they can change the laws for one minute. When would you have ever believed that somebody would tell you that a resident could cut their tree down, an oak tree, a perfectly fine oak tree, because on their property. Now that type of preemption exists as a result of Tallahassee. Again, you know, I try to limit what I say about Tallahassee because at the end of the day, we have to go up there and advocate, and I have the utmost respect for our Senators,

*City Commission Meeting*

our State Reps, and our Governor. But we have to be very thoughtful, very thoughtful, be very careful, because nobody would have said, and this RTZ was going to come down the pipe, nobody would have thought Live Local would have come down the pipe, and now we find ourselves in a position where we have to be careful and we have to negotiate, negotiate on deals. Like Commissioner Lara said, let's get a good deal. It may not be a great deal, but it's a good deal. And, you know, when you're talking about an eight-story building, when the court allows six, okay, well, let's negotiate. Expedited permits, maybe we'll give you seven stories, we'll give you a little additional intensity outside of the code, but we limit the height of the building. We've been able to do that before. We've done that before for green space. We've done that for other things. But here now, we don't even have any power whatsoever. Now we're even losing revenue, impact fees. So, it's only going to get more complicated. Yes, Commissioner.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah, through the Mayor. Okay, so number one, I want to congratulate the City Manager for putting this together. Number two, I want to stand by Felix Pardo and Sue. I know everybody here has been talking about them. They're not really present, but I'll go ahead and speak on their behalf. They were there to represent the Planning and Zoning Board, and I think what residents expect is for us to not just rubber stamp things and to fight for what we know the community wants. And I believe that's what they were doing. I'm going to go ahead and defend them. That's my position. Number two, I'm not ready to take this vote. I do think it's in the best interest of the city, but I'm not ready to take this vote because I believe I need to reach out as Commissioner, as myself, to the community, maybe do a Town Hall, because the residents that have reached out to me do not understand. And I have referenced them back to that video that we proposed that's out there with the Live Local and the RTZ, but I will not be supporting this. I do not feel comfortable. And yes, the Vice Mayor said it doesn't really encroach in the residential zone homes, it actually does, because most of the residents that have reached out to me are basically in South Gables. They're right next to that Rapid Zone, that Rapid, the RTZ. So, I do, I thank you. I think we're on the right track, but today I'm not ready to make this vote.

Commissioner Lara: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: But if I may first, just to put a little clarity into regards to Commissioner Castro's comments, let me read between the lines so I can tell all the residents. Number one, I will not be voting on this so that I can later say that I didn't vote on this. Remember, a developer can say, I don't want to use the Coral Gables zoning code. I just go RTZ. This is like RTZ light. Please pray to God that you do it. Please. There's no reason why not to support this. This is, again, and I want to put on the record, this is a clip for social media. This is a clip for media, for a future campaign ad. We have our hands tied. We have to support this. There's no other choice. We want developers to accept this. That's number one. Number two, in regard to Felix Pardo. Felix Pardo, it's inexcusable. He's an architect. He knows very well what he was doing. He knew where the RTZ

was. He did not catch him off guard. He knew exactly what he did when he grandstands along with Sue. Sue works for the county. She's well aware of what's happening and what was coming down the pipe, and it had already been approved by the county. Yes or no, Mr. Manager?

City Manager Iglesias: Yes, Mayor.

Mayor Lago: They knew. What we were there to do was to hold hands with the developer and say, please, let's negotiate so you can come our way, not go towards the RTZ. And what we did, we missed an opportunity, and we decided to grandstand and just push back the developer along with Commissioner Raquel Regalado. So, at the end of the day, it was a foolish mistake, and we're paying the consequences for it.

City Manager Iglesias: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes, sir.

City Manager Iglesias: Thank you, Mayor. The project that was presented, the original project, was the MARK. That area is MX1. It came as MX2, 97 feet. The county now is MX3 with 150 feet. It was two buildings with a 50-foot linear plaza, which was quite nice. This current project has nothing like that. This current project is one box compared to two buildings which are architecturally much, much better than what is proposed now. So, in hindsight, we went from MX2 to MX3 from a beautiful project. Really, compared to this, it's not comparable to what the proposal is. So, this is critical that we accept this now and give us a fighting chance to get this project back, which is the intent of what we're trying to do.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner.

Commissioner Lara: Mr. Mayor, yes. So, Commissioner Castro, I would urge you to vote and not punt. What we need, and I think it's crystal clear and I think it's self-evident, but I'm trying to convince you not only to vote, but to vote for it. This should be unanimous from this dais. The ship has sailed. We're trying to turn the rudder hard and see if we can point it in the 180-degree different direction. You want more resident input is what I understood, right? Because you want a Town Hall to discuss this in support of you deferring voting on this item. Am I right?

Commissioner Castro: Correct.

Commissioner Lara: Okay. Unlike your proposal for guidance for the sidewalks, you know, where you're looking for something to be superior to resident preference, right? Now you're urging resident preference. It's hard to keep track of where you really place resident preferences. But this has been timely noticed over many, many months. I don't believe this is a situation where the residents are unaware. Sue Kawalerski on the record said, I was unaware. The residents are unaware. Well, that's just a bald-faced lie. Incorrect statement of facts. The truth of the matter is

*City Commission Meeting*

that she was wrong when she said that before we and the Commission voted her off that board. What we need to do is try to focus on the problem at hand. And one of the things I mentioned when I thought we had a problem was delay. The P&Z delayed. And if you are going to be deferring your vote on this, at best, you're delaying. At worst, you're abdicating your obligation as an elected official to vote. I would urge you not only to vote, but to vote in favor of it. Because as much as I have all the faith in the world in our Mayor to be able to negotiate, it is he's going to be blindfolded, too, when you throw it. It's just going to be a real shot in the dark.

Mayor Lago: And I'm not Doug Flutie.

Commissioner Lara: But it's the only -- but it's the only option. And I like to think outside the box, but I can't think of another way to go. We need to also provide the Mayor with the ability to go and negotiate knowing that he has the five votes in support. Unity on this is important. Much more important than a soundbite.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So, what got us here is exactly what you're doing. Trying to punt. You're trying to delay. The delay that the Planning and Zoning Board did. The first time around when they had the opportunity to salvage the MARK project was a delay. The decision was made to go to the county RTZ. We have additional projects coming down the pike that can make that same choice, too. So, if what you're voting for is you're voting in favor of more projects to go to the county RTZ by failing to vote on this or voting against it, just remember that's what your vote is going to be for. Bigger, uglier, with less setbacks and less resident input. What I expect out of my Planning and Zoning Board members is not what happened on the MARK project. I expect constructive discourse, suggestions for improvements, not stonewalling a project to make sure that it supposedly doesn't get built because you did exactly the opposite. And that was patently obvious that Mr. Pardo understood the consequences of his action when Commissioner Regalado came and supported this very ordinance that he voted in favor of. He voted in favor of this. And after this, through the Gables Good Government, Director Garcia, myself, and two others had a symposium where we explained to people the law. What does the Live Local Act allow? What does the RTZ zone allow? And what our options are. It was eye-opening for everybody in the room at the Coral Gables Museum.

Mayor Lago: Madam Vice Mayor, I was there.

Vice Mayor Anderson: You were there.

Mayor Lago: And it was a packed house.

*City Commission Meeting*

---

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

[Date]

12

Vice Mayor Anderson: It was a packed house. And it was very eye-opening. Many people thought we could preempt the state or preempt the county. We have zero ability to preempt anybody. What we can do is, we can offer them options. And that's what we're going to be able to do. What we can do with these options is try to discourage our County Commissioner from bringing additional folios into the county RTZ. And if you fail to do that, you will be encouraging her because we're stonewalling once again to bring additional folios into the RTZ, you will cause the same result. And history will repeat itself if you stonewall.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: This needs to have a vote today.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. You know what? I'm very surprised on how passionate my colleagues talk to me. It's fascinating. But that's totally okay. Everybody here, this is such a great Commission. You know why? Because we all have different ways of thinking. And I think that has to be respected, number one. Number two, no, residents are not aware of what is happening. We've tried to advocate a little. We've tried to put out information out there. But they are not -- not a lot of them are aware of what is happening. So, no, I'm not going to defer this item because I would have to motion to defer and I'm not going to have the support. So, yes, it is my duty to vote on this item. And I will tell you one thing. I will not vote to upzone to MX3 at no circumstance without reaching out to the people I represent to the people that I promised I would never do this. So, no, my vote would be definitely not -- I will not support this. But there's no worry, guys, because I'm pretty sure -- I'm pretty sure we have all the votes here. So, you don't have to convince me to vote yes. My vote will be no. This will not be deferred. I don't have the support to defer this. And that's that.

Mayor Lago: If I may. Sorry. I'm just so frustrated. I apologize. I know that Marmot at the Coral Gables Gazette is chomping at the bit to include that sound bite. But I want to reiterate this, so everybody understands because they understand it. Everybody doesn't understand how you don't understand it. You come in as a developer. Let me give you an example. The three-acre parcel next door which the University of Miami owns and is right now selling, they're going to sell that. It's going to be a huge number. The new owner of that project is going to come and have two options. Option A would be using the Coral Gables zoning code or option B, go to the RTZ. That's what's available -- that's what's available right now. The RTZ or the Coral Gables zoning code or Live Local. Those are your three options. Two out of the three are not in benefit of the City of Coral Gables for multiple reasons. We lose signage rights, usage rights. We lose millions in impact fees. We lose our design control of the exterior facade of the building. It doesn't have to be Mediterranean, and we lose control of the zoning. At least before when you gave somebody a benefit, you could say, okay, let's negotiate. You want an additional 17 feet like Codina and Cadre wanted? Perfect. We would like to see a beautiful park contribution. We would like to see traffic

*City Commission Meeting*

calming. We would like to see lighting in the neighborhood. We would like to see sidewalks. We would like to see trees in the neighborhoods. We've done it. We did it with Agave. We did it with the Plaza. Even when I voted against the project, we got trolleys. We did a bunch of things. Now we cannot negotiate. The purpose of this is to plead and beg through this legislation that the developers will use this vehicle to achieve their goal at a much lesser scale because we're offering them different opportunities to reach their end goal at a much faster opportunity. So, at the end of the day, it's not about resident input. Residents know this. We're trying to avoid a catastrophe where you have a project that is, and I see how the residents were in the room. They shake their heads because they're agreeing with it. You're trying to save development sites that hopefully would be lesser in scale and in mass by using E-8 and E-9. If not, why would I leave you with this? Just think about this. If you're a developer and you own and you just bought the three-acre site from the University of Miami, why would you use the City of Coral Gables zoning code when you just go to the RTZ? Save yourself money. Save yourself time. Not have to meet our zoning requirements. Not have to meet our design standards, which are a lot more expensive when you build. If I may, Madam Zoning Director, may I ask you a quick question through the Manager? Is it more expensive to build, would you say, Mediterranean? Yes or no?

Planning and Zoning Director: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Okay. So, these are all reasons why a developer would say no to the Coral Gables zoning code and yes to the RTZ from the county. Commissioner Lara.

Commissioner Lara: Briefly. So, Commissioner Castro, I know you are saying that you're surprised, but I speak with the same passion towards you and towards any other of my fellow colleagues in the Commission because I'm very passionate about us being up here and doing what we're doing which is such a privilege to do for the residents of Coral Gables. And your voice matters. That's why I'm spending, I would assume we have sufficient votes to pass it. But your vote and your voice matters to me. That's why I've been spending this time trying to see if I understand you so that I can better convince you. When you say that you will never vote for MX3, do you understand you're not voting on whether this goes to MX3? I hope you're not proceeding from the false premise that the RTZ is going to go away or that this is already MX3. I mean do we can we you and I agree on that that it's already MX3?

Mayor Lago: Why because of the RTZ?

Commissioner Castro: Do you want me to answer you?

Mayor Lago: Through the Mayor, please.

Commissioner Lara: Well, I'm almost done. I think it's rhetorical, but we do agree that whether you vote or not it's RTZ is deemed MX3 already. I mean, can we agree on that?

*City Commission Meeting*

Commissioner Castro: No.

Commissioner Lara: Okay well then.

Commissioner Castro: I have a different opinion.

Commissioner Lara: Understood but today my, it's not just my opinion. Okay it's a fact. Okay is that it is MX3 and what the Mayor and I hope a unanimous vote from us and the Commission are going to hope to do is to control that process so that we can do it through this overlay. Which by the way was voted five to one in favor of it by the P&Z. Okay. So I don't understand how anybody can be against it if what you want to do is bring back to Coral Gables some say, some control, something that we have influence over because to vote either against this ordinance or to not vote at all on it is to literally hand it to the county and that I am against and I'm urging you to reconsider and vote for it.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor. What I said is that I'm not going to vote to upzone to MX3. I will be responsible with that vote without going to a Town Hall and without letting people know from my side of the story how this benefits the city. I haven't gotten the chance to do that so if I would have gotten the chance and I'm pretty sure they would understand it, I would feel more comfortable saying, you know, this is something that I promised I would never do. Okay and my name would not be on this right now without people understanding why I'm doing it. So, no. I appreciate you trying to convince me it's not going to happen, but guys don't worry you have the votes just go ahead and vote that's it what's the problem why are you trying to convince me so bad.

Mayor Lago: So, two quick things. Number one, I agree don't try to convince her. I'm sorry. Mr. Clerk.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Will you make a public record of a request and send it to my colleagues in the Commission how we voted on the last, I think the last projects over the last two years. I already made that, I think it's we've all been in unanimous except for one where Commissioner Castro voted against, by the way, all those projects required a zoning change just so you're aware. So, you have voted against projects that do not conform with the zoning code, and we've done it because this is the betterment of the city, parks, and different things that are appropriate. So, you have voted against. You have not been a strict adherent to the zoning code. I just want to put that on the record. I know I won't make the Gazette or Political Cortadito, but I still got to put it on the record. We got to move forward. We got a long agenda today, okay. This makes more sense and I'm tired of explaining it and I think Commissioner Lara put it best. This is not MX2. This is MX3 already. It's already done. Nobody in their right mind as a developer would pay tens of millions of dollars, 80, 90 million dollars for a property say, you know what, I'm going to, I'm going to accept less. I don't

*City Commission Meeting*

want to build more. I want to - I want to design a Mediterranean because I want to spend a ton more money. I don't want to have control over signage. I want to pay more impact fees. If you don't see that, then you're just being disingenuous, at the end of the day, playing politics. This is an effort to throw a Hail Mary and negotiate, which I will do, God willing, we have the approval today. Commissioner Fernandez.

Commissioner Fernandez: I just wanted to echo the words of Commissioner Lara. I respect your opinion, and I think you should be allowed to vote however you want. This doesn't have to be a unanimous vote, but I do see it as upholding the code that's already there because the county has already changed our code for us. This just gives us the ability to have a say in the matter. It gives us an ability to bring the impact fees back and that's the way I look at it. Perhaps a suggestion is hold a Town Hall between first and second reading, so that you can get their input and maybe we can make a unanimous vote in November or December, whenever it comes up for second reading, but for me I'll make the motion.

Mayor Lago: And by the way, another thing too, Commissioner, I think is we have to point out again, you could have held a Town Hall meeting July, August, September, October. This has been going on since July. We've had multiple discussions, multiple meetings on the dais. We've discussed it at multiple different levels here in the city. At the end of the day, I hold two Town Hall meetings a year to have the residents. We can put together a Town Hall within a week. Why would you wait to make a statement about putting a Town Hall the day of the vote, it just it just seems like political posturing in my opinion. We have a motion and a second

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll second it and reiterate, you know for folks that want to learn more about any issue there's many times that the Gables Good Government does these types of informational sessions. We had a packed house, people learned a lot, we all learned a lot during the process and thank you Ms. Garcia for participating in that. It was very informative I think for everyone. We need to move forward.

Mayor Lago: Yep.

Commissioner Lara: That was, if I could say, that was a packed GGG meeting, packed with you and Jennifer, as well attended. We had a developer there. We had somebody from the city. We had the most learning room only, most learned people coming from different angles to do what I felt was the big takeaway. The big takeaway for me was, must think outside the box.

Mayor Lago: Negotiate.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Right, right.

Commissioner Lara: That was a big takeaway.

*City Commission Meeting*

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

[Date]

16

Vice Mayor Anderson: And Commissioner Regalado's Chief of Staff was there

Mayor Lago: Yep. Negotiate.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Many, many people that didn't understand the true power and impact of the RTZ zone in our city and they understand that we must take action if we don't want our zoning code taken over.

Mayor Lago: All right we have a motion a second. Do we have any public comment?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Go ahead.

City Clerk Urquia: First speaker Mrs. Maria Cruz.

Mrs. Cruz: Mrs. Maria Cruz. It is Mrs. I will refuse to answer to anything but Mrs., whether the Mayor wants it or not. Very happy 55 years of marriage, no fooling around, no affairs. I refuse to be disrespected. If he cannot find a way to call me by my real name, then you know what, I will call you by a nickname instead of Mayor. Here we go again. This all could have been avoided had this city, this administration taken the time to do what they did after the fact. This is what happens very, very often. I thought we were over that because in the past it happened, but now we're back at it. People need to know. We talk about transparency. Most residents in this city did not know the options. Nobody took the time to tell them. I think I come to Commission. I think I hear. I had no idea what was going to Planning and Zoning that day, because Planning and Zoning people heard it at the last minute that this was coming up. Okay. This is what happened. You all decided that you knew best, and you were going to cut deals with the county without letting the people know. And let me tell you something before I get cut off, because I know somebody had a minute over, but I won't get it. You're talking about the Mayor is going to go negotiate, there's five of you. In order for the Mayor to go negotiate because he's not a strong Mayor. He's one voice of five. You all need to ask him, and you need to move it, and you need to give him permission to do it in your name. You cannot just say, he cannot stand here and say, "I am going to do. I will do. No. You need the consent of the other people in order to do it, because you're not a strong Mayor, sorry, you're one of five. And I didn't see on the things that the Mayor can do, negotiate for the city without getting somebody to nominate him and vote for it. That is what's wrong. People need to know. I am telling you that if the residents do then what they know now, there would have been no issue, but this administration chose to get together with the county, decide with the county, tell the county how much we could do before they talk to the people, and that is what's wrong. The people in the city want to know and I'm running because I know I'm not going to get any more time and the bell is going to ring, because you know what, Nick Cabrera could come up and talk

*City Commission Meeting*

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

[Date]

17

without even being called, the other man spoke for a minute something, but Maria Cruz has to go by the rules. Okay.

City Clerk Urquia: Roberta Neway.

Mayor Lago: Hold on. Wait, wait, wait. As I read at the beginning of the meeting. As a reminder, these comments, public comments are limited to those items on the agenda or within the scope of the city's Commission jurisdiction. Half of the items at the beginning of Mrs. Maria Cruz's comments are not items on the agenda. That is your first and only warning. Next time you make an accusation, or you make statements like that, you will not be allowed back in the Commission Agenda. You will not be allowed back in here. That is the end. Okay. You're not going to disrespect me and you're not going to disrespect this Commission. Yes, I don't want to hear about your wedding. I don't want to hear about affairs and all kinds of stuff. It comes to an end. That's the 10<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> time you've done it here, right. If anybody would like to contest it, you can contest the Commissioner. Now in reference to...

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: I'm not done yet. I'm not done.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. I'm glad you're not done. You just addressed me and I'm going to talk.

Mayor Lago: Let me finish. Let me finish.

Commissioner Castro: No, you're not going to finish. City Attorney, can you please clarify on the things that the Mayor was talking about.

City Attorney Suarez: So do you want me to clarify his ability to remind speakers to stick to the agenda item. He can. So, when public speakers are coming up during public comment, you're supposed to limit your comments to the item that's being discussed.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. So, if he's addressing a resident...

Mayor Lago: I'm done.

Commissioner Castro: Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. So, if he is addressing a resident in a unpolite, disrespectful way, suggesting that you know she's not married anymore when we know very well her husband has just passed. You're trying to tell me it is inappropriate for her to go ahead and address that.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner, you can play the game all you want.

*City Commission Meeting*

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

[Date]

18

Commissioner Castro: That's disrespect.

Mayor Lago: Again listen, you got one warning. The next one you're out of you're out of the halls. Okay. You will respect the Commission; you will respect the City of Coral Gables bottom line. Let's do this, because I would like to make it formal. I was doing the city a favor and meeting with the developer and the Manager and his team to have a conversation on how we can bring back millions of dollars of impact fees. Just if I may, just if I may. We did this game before in Tallahassee when Melissa Castro went up to Tallahassee.

Commissioner Castro: Commissioner, sir. Commissioner. Respect.

Mayor Lago: And they came back with zero dollars after the year before the Vice Mayor and I had gone up there and got over three million dollars when we didn't go up there. So, if you don't want me to be the person that negotiates this deal, let the Commission have somebody else. I have no problems with that. I was just trying to help out and try to build some consensus after the disaster that was created at the Planning and Zoning Board. So does the Commission want to take a position on me representing them having a meeting, which has not been set yet, by the way, we've been in conversations.

Commissioner Lara: I'll move that the Mayor conduct the negotiations.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll second.

City Attorney Suarez: Mayor, if I may.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

City Attorney Suarez: I just want to clarify. Section 2-28 of the code says that among the Mayor's duties include, to represent the City Commission in negotiations, meetings, and functions. So obviously those negotiations are subject to Commission review and approval. It doesn't mean that you know, you sign at the bottom line.

Mayor Lago: I understand that but, it's the constant contempt, it's the constant effort to undermine me. This was commonplace under Amos Rojas. It's not commonplace here. We're running a real meeting here, so at the end of the day you may not like the fact that you don't have control and you can do as you please, fire and hire, and bring incompetent people here to run this place like a clown show. At the end of the day, we're going to run it the right way. I want to even have more authority from my colleagues, from my colleagues where they have the faith and trust that I'm going to do everything I possibly can, like I've done what I've negotiated FPL deals, when I've done other things here, when I negotiated the Merrick Manor deal years ago, in an effort to bring it to a close. We have a motion, and we have a second from the Vice Mayor in regard to me leading the effort to try to correct this disastrous situation created by Melissa Castro's appointment.

*City Commission Meeting*

City Clerk Urquia: I have another motion on the floor before.

Mayor Lago: That's fine. Let's hear mine first.

Commissioner Fernandez: We would have to withdraw the other motion.

Mayor Lago: Withdraw the other one. Let's go. We can do it. I don't ask for much.

City Clerk Urquia: Do you still want to continue the public comment before you vote on this.

Mayor Lago: Look, we don't want to do -- we're going to do it after. Let's finish the public comment here and then we'll come back, but I want to be sure we address it because I'm tired of the undermining effort that we have here going on here.

City Clerk Urquia: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Next speaker, Roberta Neway.

Ms. Neway: Hello, Roberta Neway, 1236 South Alhambra Circle 33146. I'm a half mile from the proposed overlay, so it definitely affects me and to me, this overlay is the best way to ensure that the development harmonizes with the established neighborhoods, and it's also the best way to ensure that impact fees are used in such a way that we, the residents, benefit from the development. And that's it. I could go off topic, but I won't. Thank you for your time.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. May I ask you a question, Roberta. May I because you're pretty well connected amongst residents and different organizations. Do you think the residents are starting to understand a little bit more about the RTZ and the impacts of the RTZ.

Ms. Neway: I think the people in my neighborhood do, the ones that pay attention, yes. Definitely.

Mayor Lago: Thank you. Thank you very much.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, I'm going to go to Zoom next. The speaker is Lisa DeTournay

Mayor Lago: Lisa, the floor is yours.

Ms. DeTournay: Hi, can you hear me?

Mayor Lago: Yes, ma'am, we can.

Ms. DeTournay: Okay. Lisa DeTournay, 10 Aragon Avenue. You saw me earlier this morning.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Ms. DeTournay: I have a property in that area and my house used to be in that immediate area as well. So, I'm pretty familiar with the residents the locale, but what I want to say is there were so many resident meetings with the developers about this project being held from May 2023 through  
*City Commission Meeting*

February 2024, at least five of which I attended; and the room was packed with residents every time. I don't recall any Coral Gables City Commissioners attending any of those meetings to express opposition, but the residents were heard, at least we thought so. We had concerns as to the height, the density, the parking, and the traffic, because after the Thesis was built that neighborhood has been inundated with horrible traffic trying to get out especially in the mornings get out on US-1. So, I even remember seeing the property owner roll his eyes as he walked out of the meeting, because he was so fed up with the residents' concerns. After that the meeting stopped. One time they brought up Live Local like everybody's threatening Live Local, but I don't think they would have qualified since they're primarily aimed at students going to U of M. Anyway, let's go to the July 2025, when Commissioner Raquel Regalado attended the City Commission meeting to announce that the developers had decided to pursue and had been granted the RTZ status in Miami. The Planning and Zoning meeting came after that, so please stop blaming Sue Kawalewski for what was happening already before that meeting came, and as well, it's a shame that none of you were being more proactive two years prior to when all of this was starting. We were very civil, we residents. We asked them for a simple decrease of one floor. Everybody was very congenial, and we thought that that was the end of it. So anyway, that's where we are right now, and I just have to make another comment. Mr. Lara, you weren't there during this period of time, so there's nothing to say about you, but I really, I am hurt by the way that you speak down to toward residents being ignorant or not informed of so many things. I'm a doctor, I show a lot of respect and concern about what's happening in my community. I've lived in Coral Gables for 35 years, and I just think that people deserve more respect than you're giving them. And Mr. Lago, Mayor Lago, I'm sorry, you may not raise your voice, but you did campaign on bringing back decorum and civility to these meetings. You don't raise your voice, but your comments are hurtful toward people and sarcastic toward Commissioner Castro. I just like to see, I would like to see all of you working together rather than fighting, especially when somebody comes up with proposals that are supposed to be for the betterment of the residents. Anyway, well thank you for listening to me.

Mayor Lago: May I respond to you; may I respond to you.

Ms. DeTournay: Of course. Of course.

Mayor Lago: I just want to put on the record. Were you at the meeting at the public meeting that I held in your neighborhood at that residence house on the water.

Ms. DeTournay: No. I was not at that meeting. However, wait, the one – yeah, but that was the Mahi Canal. You're talking about before the election. Yes, I was at that meeting.

Mayor Lago: I was invited by one of the residents to go speak about the issue of the RTZ. The reason why I bring that up is because, a lot of residents in that meeting I was able to explain to them the what the forthcoming RTZ and what was happening. We did have a meeting; there were

*City Commission Meeting*

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

[Date]

21

many other residents in that area who were involved. In regard to being collegial and respectful. I'm more than willing to listen. I'm willing to engage, but at the end of the day, I have a difference of opinion than Commissioner Castro, at the end of the day. I don't believe, like for example, raising my salary 101 percent is appropriate, giving myself a car allowance, you know hiring Amos Rojas. I mean you asked me questions; you know 20-million-dollar COLA, you know indebting the city. Doing a lot of these things that are just inappropriate, in my opinion. So yes, if having a difference of opinion in regard to Commissioner Castro and being vocal about it makes me wrong, then I'm fine being wrong, but at the end of the day, I have always done my best to serve this city. Yeah, I'm vocal, yeah, I'm outspoken, but at the end of the day, I think that's what people want. I don't think people want individuals who aren't going to do the right thing and they're going to serve this community and I've done my best over the last 13 years. Madam Vice Mayor.

Vice Mayor Anderson: So doctor, I just wanted to add because I know a lot of time has passed and you know memories fade that the meeting that I was referencing in which it was punted or stonewalled by the Planning and Zoning Board preceded this matter going to the RTZ, preceded the encounter with Commissioner Regalado, and at that meeting Ms. Kawalowski referred to the potential residents of the MARK as locusts and it was a very contentious meeting and because of the manner in which they were, the applicant was treated and the extending delays, they made the choice to go to the county and have this RTZ zone put upon us it was because of that. And I can't turn back time, none of us can turn back time. Those choices were made, those words were stated, and they proceeded, and they expanded the RTZ zone to where now we have a county RTZ zone in our area. What was then just a possibility is now a reality and now we have to deal with it.

Mayor Lago: And I think that Vice Mayor, I think I'm very happy you stated that because people want to forget that fact. People want to forget that we were negotiating using our zoning code and that the RTZ was used in an effort to get an upper hand and move on. Nobody wants to face the fact of what happened at the Planning and Zoning Board meeting. It was very clear. I've watched it multiple times, the way that the Commissioner was treated in the County, along with the applicant. So, we can blame other people, if you want, it's perfectly fine, but we're facing the fact that we don't have control and we're trying to get some control back, just trying to see what we can put at our side; control the design, control the signage, maybe get some money back for the impact fees. So, we're just trying to do the best that we can and not antagonize the county because you know, we don't really win when we do that. Yes Commissioner.

Commissioner Lara: Briefly. Is the doctor still on the line?

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, she is.

Commissioner Lara: Okay. Doctor, pleased to meet you over the Zoom. I invite you to meet with me for a cup of coffee. I have office hours every single Monday here at City Hall or I will be happy

*City Commission Meeting*

*October 28, 2025*

*Agenda Items E-8 and E-9 are related – Ordinance amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay District Map – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay*

[Date]

22

to meet you wherever you like at a time it's mutually convenient. I try my very best to be respectful of all the people that I speak with. In fact, I spent quite a bit of time earlier in this meeting emphasizing the importance of residents being heard and preference with respect to a prior proposed ordinance and I spent a lot of time during this particular discussion item to convince one of my colleagues respectfully, Commissioner Castro, referring to her as a voice that's important because it is, and a voice that matters, because it does. So, if you know, if I wasn't an elected official when all of this began, I certainly am aware of what's going on, and as an elected official I brought it up what occurred during the PNZ meetings with those two individuals in particular, and I stated it and I repeat it because we got to be sure we don't make mistakes again. And here we have a unique opportunity, however long shot it may be, however difficult and steep the hill is to climb, that we should embrace because it's our only opportunity to try and take back what we, in my view, squandered away.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, anybody else.

City Clerk Urquia: That's it, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Okay, so close that. To not be to not face the fact that we are facing an RTZ and the other option is our zoning code is reckless. Looking for other options it's just facing reality. To not face reality is reckless. Sir, we have a motion and a second.

City Clerk Urquia: Mr. Mayor, just to be clear, we're voting right now on appointing you to negotiate on behalf of the city.

Mayor Lago: Well, I said first let's take let's take the one that was on first and then we'll come back, and we'll do that after E-9.

City Clerk Urquia: Understood. Thank you, sir.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Number one, Mayor Lago, I'm not your friend. So, I'm going to ask for some respect and you call me Commissioner Castro, and number two, I'm going to be gracious enough, gracious enough to not move to censure you. You will not continue to disrespect residents, okay, nor will you continue to call to say I'm incompetent and that you've lost 50 brain cells by listening to me. So, I'm going to ask you for a little respect and to really think a little before you talk. Right now, I'm going to be gracious, I will not be moving to censure you but consider this a warning. My vote is no.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

*City Commission Meeting*

Mayor Lago: Just want to make sure censure or censured, just want to make sure we're on the record.

Commissioner Castro: Censure.

Mayor Lago: Oh, okay.

Commissioner Castro: Censure. I know you're having a hard time listening.

Mayor Lago: No, that was actually I took that off your Instagram.

Commissioner Castro: Yeah. It's called -- that I know you're looking at my Instagram like you're obsessed with me. You know you stopped following me, but you look at every story I post how does that make sense, how does that make sense, like stop it. Worry about your family.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Make a motion to approve E-9.

Commissioner Fernandez: Second.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Mayor Lago: I'd like to be appointed even though as the City Attorney said it's not required. I'd like to make sure that we make a statement as a Commission

Commissioner Fernandez: I'll move it.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Second.

Mayor Lago: Thank you.

Commissioner Fernandez: yes.

Commissioner Lara: Just a comment. You know, I think this is well within your purview.

Mayor Lago: I know but we need to do it anyways.

Commissioner Lara: It is well within your purview and here we go again through unnecessary motion and vote.

*City Commission Meeting*

Mayor Lago: Let's do it.

Commissioner Lara: But while we're at it, you have my confidence and you have my vote is yes, but if you need any help or just let me know, let any of us on the dais know, we can help you with that as well.

Mayor Lago: Yeah. Thank you.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Before I vote on this, I thought we were voting on this one my previous vote is no.

City Attorney Suarez: So, I think she means on E-9, she wants to record her vote is no.

City Clerk Urquia: Okay.

Commissioner Castro: Okay. I'm sorry, I know you guys almost caught me there I'm sorry. It's no, on this one is a yes.

Mayor Lago: I know I just want to let I want to let her have her moment so we can enjoy it.

Commissioner Castro: I'm enjoying it too.

Mayor Lago: Yes. I want to ask my colleagues please, we're probably going to meet next week. We just got a schedule for them to fly down; they're flying down to meet. I want to make sure that I have all your input. Please send it through the Manager, if you have any guidance, any input that you'd like to address. Are there any questions, any statements, anything that you feel is pertinent and important moving forward on this issue, any items of negotiation that maybe we haven't talked about today, please bring it forward to the Manager, so I can make sure I address it all.

Commissioner Fernandez: If the Manager, would it be possible to set up a short meeting just to go over things before your meeting, I'd appreciate it.

Mayor Lago: Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

# MEMORANDUM

Agenda Item No. 7(A)

---


<b>TO:</b>	Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez and Members, Board of County Commissioners	<b>DATE:</b>	September 3, 2025
<b>FROM:</b>	Geri Bonzon-Keenan County Attorney	<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Ordinance relating to the Rapid Transit System Development Zone; amending chapter 33C of the Code; providing for the expansion of the Rapid Transit Zone and creating the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone which could, through future action of this Board, encompass property within a quarter mile of the University Metrorail Station; providing for County regulatory jurisdiction over properties added to the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone; providing for uses, and creating standards, criteria, and procedures for approval of applications within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; adding certain private property to the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; making technical changes; directing the County Mayor to coordinate and negotiate with the City of Coral Gables as to a future Interlocal Agreement which could address additional concerns or considerations that may arise in the future

---

A substitute was presented and forwarded to the BCC with a favorable recommendation at the July 8, 2025 Transportation Committee.

The substitute differs from the original item in that it changes the glazing requirement in 33C-18(E)(9) from 40 percent to 30 percent; it deletes language related to building scale from 33C-18(F)(7) and adds new language regarding compatibility; and deletes language related to building aesthetic from 33C-18(F)(9).

The accompanying ordinance was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Geri Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

GBK/ks


MDC001

# Memorandum



**Date:** September 3, 2025

**To:** Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Daniella Levine Cava   
Mayor

**Subject:** Fiscal Impact Statement for Ordinance Relating to the Rapid Transit System Development Zone – Providing for the Expansion of the Rapid Transit Zone and Creating the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone

---

The implementation of this Ordinance is anticipated to have a positive fiscal impact on the County. The proposed changes will not require additional staffing resources nor generate additional operational expenses; additionally, by extending the RTZ and facilitating mixed-use development along the corridor, the County will generate more Transportation Infrastructure Improvement District (TIID) to expand mass transit as well as boost fare collection with increased Metrorail ridership.



---


Roy Coley  
Chief Utilities and Regulatory Services Officer

# Memorandum



**Date:** September 3, 2025

**To:** Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Daniella Levine Cava   
Mayor

**Subject:** Social Equity Statement for Ordinance Relating to the Rapid Transit System-  
Development Zone – Providing for the Expansion of the Rapid Transit Zone  
and Creating the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone

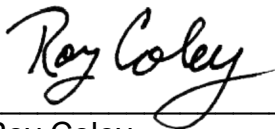
---

The proposed ordinance amends chapter 33C of the Code of Miami-Dade County (Code) to expand the Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) and create the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ. On September 1, 2022, the Board adopted Ordinance No. 22-106 creating the SMART Corridor Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ). The proposed ordinance to expand the RTZ and create a subzone emphasizes Miami-Dade County's commitment to equitable development and enhanced public transportation accessibility.

Recognizing the distinct character and architectural standards of the City of Coral Gables, the ordinance introduces tailored development criteria. Some examples are generous height allowances, and enhanced landscaping designed to maintain visual compatibility with the City. It also outlines procedures for application review, including City representation on the Rapid Transit Developmental Impact Committee (RTDIC).

The Subzone aims to promote high-density, mixed-use development within a quarter-mile radius of the University Station, while integrating land use and transportation planning. The ordinance addresses the CDMP's objective of integrating land use with transportation to attract transit ridership, produce shorter trips, and minimize transfers.

This initiative is expected to benefit both local and regional transit systems. This Code amendment will facilitate the development of additional residential density and commercial development adjacent to the mass transit system. Additionally, the ordinance directs the County Mayor to coordinate with the City of Coral Gables on a potential interlocal agreement to address future concerns and align regulatory processes.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roy Coley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

---

Roy Coley  
Chief Utilities and Regulatory Services Officer



# MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** September 3, 2025

**FROM:**   
Glen Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Agenda Item No. 7(A)

Please note any items checked.

- ☒ "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- ☒ 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- ☒ 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- ☐ Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- ☐ Budget required
- ☐ Statement of fiscal impact required
- ☐ Statement of social equity required
- ☐ Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- ☐ No committee review
- ☐ Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present \_\_\_\_, 2/3 membership \_\_\_\_, 3/5's \_\_\_\_, unanimous \_\_\_\_, majority plus one \_\_\_\_, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3) (h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c) (2) \_\_\_\_ ) to approve
- ☐ Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_  
Override \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda Item No. 7(A)  
9-3-25

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT ZONE; AMENDING CHAPTER 33C OF THE CODE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE AND CREATING THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE WHICH COULD, THROUGH FUTURE ACTION OF THIS BOARD, ENCOMPASS PROPERTY WITHIN A QUARTER MILE OF THE UNIVERSITY METRORAIL STATION; PROVIDING FOR COUNTY REGULATORY JURISDICTION OVER PROPERTIES ADDED TO THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE; PROVIDING FOR USES, AND CREATING STANDARDS, CRITERIA, AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS WITHIN THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE; ADDING CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY TO THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE; MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES; DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO COORDINATE AND NEGOTIATE WITH THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES AS TO A FUTURE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WHICH COULD ADDRESS ADDITIONAL CONCERNS OR CONSIDERATIONS THAT MAY ARISE IN THE FUTURE; PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, INCLUSION IN THE CODE, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter grants to the County the power to carry on a central metropolitan government and to provide for rail facilities and public transportation systems; and

**WHEREAS**, the University Station Metrorail station (University Station) is located within the City of Coral Gables; and

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade County has a long history of collaboration and coordination with the City of Coral Gables; and

**WHEREAS**, with respect to mass transit facilities, such as the University Station, the Board of County Commissioners has found that the coordinated review and analysis of mass transit facilities is necessary to carry on a central metropolitan government in Miami-Dade County and that coordinated review and analysis of the mass transit system is most effectively carried on under a uniform plan of regulation applicable to the County as a whole; and

**WHEREAS**, the County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) calls for the coordination of land uses and transportation facilities to, among other things, attract transit ridership, produce short trips, and minimize transfers; and

**WHEREAS**, the County's Future Land Use Map shows a Community Urban Center centered around the University Station; and

**WHEREAS**, providing for increased density and transit-oriented development adjacent to the County's existing mass transit system will increase ridership on the County's public transportation system and further the health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity and welfare of the present and future residents of the County; and

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of the purposes of better coordinating land uses and transportation facilities, such as the University Station, and recognizing that transit oriented developments should be located on parcels within a close radius of rapid transit stations, this Board may in the future wish to include properties in the County's Rapid Transit Zone District (RTZ or RTZ Zoning District) where such properties are located within a quarter mile of University Station; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board wishes to create a new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ Zoning District, to provide standards and procedures which are similar to the standards previously adopted for other subzones of the RTZ but which also include standards, criteria and procedures that have been specifically designed and created for this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board wishes to create procedures and criteria, with the goal of ensuring compatibility and consistency with such design and architectural standards; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition, the City of Coral Gables is well known for its ample tree canopy, and this Board wishes to ensure that the tree and landscaping requirements for this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone will be consistent with the tree canopy and landscaping goals that the City of Coral Gables has expressed and carried out elsewhere within its boundaries; and

**WHEREAS**, with respect to processes and procedures, the regulations governing this new Subzone would require applications for a special exception to be reviewed by the RTDIC, which is a committee that would include representation from the City of Coral Gables.

**WHEREAS**, as part of the development approval process, applicants would be requested to include proffered community benefits as part of an application in order to address or otherwise mitigate impacts from the proposed development, and depending on the particular application and the particular impacts, such proffered community benefits could potentially include pedestrian related improvements, off-site tree plantings, improvements related to stormwater management, public water and sewer infrastructure, or improvements related to transit; and

**WHEREAS**, this ordinance is intended to create this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ, together with its particular standards, procedures, processes, and criteria that have been developed in consideration of the particular character of the City of Coral Gables, while

also recognizing that the University Station is an existing Metrorail station and that promoting development on properties within a close vicinity of Metrorail stations would further the goals of the County's RTZ Zoning District, which have been well articulated in numerous ordinances related to the RTZ, including, but not limited, to Ordinance No. 21-33 and Ordinance No. 22-106; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to creating this new RTZ subzone, this ordinance also adds one property to this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ; and

**WHEREAS**, the private property owner of the property located at 1250 Harriet Tubman Highway, identified by Folio Number 03-4130-004-0010, has requested to be included within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ and under the County's exclusive regulatory jurisdiction; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board seeks to include the above identified private property and to designate such property as under the County's exclusive regulatory jurisdiction,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA:**

**Section 1.** The foregoing recitals are incorporated into this ordinance and are approved.

**Section 2.** Section 33C-18 of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida is hereby created to read as follows<sup>1</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup>Words stricken through and/or [[double bracketed]] shall be deleted. Words underscored and/or >>double arrowed<< constitute the amendment proposed. Remaining provisions are now in effect and remain unchanged.

>>**Sec. 33C-18. Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.**

- (A) *Purpose and Intent.* The following development review standards and criteria shall govern applications for initial plan approval of the general site development plan, and applications for final site plan review, for all development to be located within the boundaries of the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone established in this chapter. The standards set forth herein further the unique land use characteristics of this area, which lies within the City of Coral Gables, and are consistent with, and support the City's commitment to, design and architecture, trees and landscaping, principles of urban planning, including responding to the existing conditions of the City, and its natural features, infrastructure, and buildings, improved mobility, enhanced pedestrian environment, and the reduction of urban sprawl. Development in this subzone also addresses government service and infrastructure needs of this quickly growing area, and as may be appropriate to address impacts from proposed development, projects within this subzone are encouraged to incorporate public service, public infrastructure, or public benefit components.
- (B) *Boundaries.* The Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone is hereby established; the boundaries of the subzone are identified in Exhibit 38 of Section 33C-2. The legal description and a full-scale map of the boundaries will be on file with the Department.
- (C) *Permitted Uses:* Permitted uses shall be in accordance with section 33C-10(C) relating to the Brickell Station Subzone, which are incorporated by reference herein.
- (D) *Review and approval process for development in the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.* Applications for development shall be governed by section 33C-3.1, which is incorporated by reference herein, except as follows:
- (1) The pre-application conference shall include two representatives, named by the City Manager, from the City of Coral Gables.
  - (2) *Initial review.*
    - (a) Following the pre-application conference, applications, including governmental facilities,

shall be presented to the RTDIC in accordance with section 33C-6 for a recommendation as to compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

(b) For purposes of this section, the City of Coral Gables shall have two representatives, named by the City Manager, on the RTDIC. The City's appointees shall all be individuals with technical expertise and professional degrees in at least one of the following areas: (i) transportation, (ii) architecture, (iii) engineering, or (iv) law.

(c) Within 60 days after the filing of the application, the RTDIC shall issue a recommendation upon such application. The recommendation shall reflect the consensus of the members present.

The recommendation shall be transmitted to the Board of County Commissioners for final action.

(3) *Final Review for development of the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.*

(a) Following approval of the special exception, final review for all or a portion of the development shall be made and approved administratively by the Department in accordance with plans and documents approved by the Board of County Commissioners through an application for administrative site plan review ("ASPR") in accordance with section 33-284.88, except that the required dimensioned site plans shall include the additional information required by section 33C-3.1(C)(1)-(12).

(b) The Department review shall be guided by development and plan review standards established in this section.

(c) Applications for modification of an ASPR approved pursuant to this section, including applications for approval of a subsequent phase of a previously approved phased site plan, shall be considered and acted upon administratively, to the

extent consistent with the application approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

(E) Development Standards. Applications for development in the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone shall be governed by the following development regulations:

(1) Parking: The table below indicates minimum parking for each type of use.

<u>Use</u>	<u>Minimum Parking Requirements</u>
<u>Commercial/Retail, Restaurants, Bars, Convention Halls and Showrooms</u>	<u>1.8 spaces / 1000 SF</u>
<u>Office, Government, Institutional, Health Care Facilities</u>	<u>0.6 spaces / 1000 SF</u>
<u>Residential</u>	<u>0 spaces per unit</u>
<u>Hotels</u>	<u>0.3 spaces / room</u>
<u>Transit systems including Maintenance Facilities</u>	<u>0.6 spaces / 1000 SF (excluding platform)</u>
<u>Other Uses</u>	<u>50 percent of the required parking indicated in Section 33-124</u>

- (a) To minimize adverse visual effects of the structure(s), multi-story parking garages facing public and private streets, rights-of-way, and/or public open space shall utilize, but not be limited to: liner buildings; glazing; building wall extensions; vertical planted walls; berms; landscaping; architectural fenestration; sculpture; design features; or other innovative screening methods. Surface parking lots fronting streets shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from the right-of-way and screened at the 10-foot line with a wall having a maximum height of 3'6". The setback shall incorporate a combination of hard-scape and landscape elements finished to match the existing sidewalk.
- (b) Mechanized parking shall be allowed and, when provided, shall be exempt from the provisions of section 33-122. For the purpose of this Subzone, mechanized parking shall be

defined as a mechanism with vertical and horizontal transport capability that provides for automobile storage and retrieval. A mechanized parking space shall be counted toward the parking requirements of this Section. Mechanized parking may not be provided unless a queuing analysis is submitted and approved during the Administrative Site Plan Review process.

- (c) Required off-street parking for uses located within this Subzone may be located within one mile of the boundaries of the sub-zone. An applicant for approval of development with off-site parking shall execute and record in the public records of this County a declaration of restrictions, approved by the Director of the Department, covenanting that such development shall cease and terminate upon the elimination of such parking area, and that no development requiring such parking shall be made of such property until the required parking area is available and provided.

(2) Setbacks, cubic content, and lot size:

- (a) Due to the unique characteristics associated with the high-density or high-intensity, mixed-use developments contemplated for this sub-zone, there shall be no minimum setback from streets at grade and above the eighth floor, interior/rear property lines, and park rights-of-way.
- (b) There shall be no maximum or minimum limitation on the size of a floor plate.
- (c) There shall be no cubic content or minimum lot size requirements.

(3) Encroachments:

- (a) Buildings and structures above the ground floor may be built above colonnades and/or encroach into street setbacks but shall not extend into the public or private right-of-

way; except that a maximum of 100 percent of the street may be covered above the first floor with structures connecting buildings including: platforms fitted with trains and passenger waiting areas; roofs; upper story terraces, pedestrian bridges, automobile bridges between parking garages and parking garages. Adequate clearance for structures above streets shall be maintained.

(b) Cantilevered balconies, awnings, weather protection elements and similar features with adequate vertical clearance may encroach into street rights-of-way but shall not extend closer than six inches from the curb face. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in section 28-18, Code of Miami-Dade County, structures necessary or appropriate to the structural support of a Fixed-Guideway Rapid Transit System or an Intercity Passenger Rail System shall be permitted to encroach on or in a mapped street.

(4) *Floor Area Ratio and lot coverage:* The floor area ratio, lot coverage, and maximum square footage of buildings to be developed within the Subzone shall not be limited.

(5) *Building Height:* The maximum building height shall be the lower of (i) the maximum allowed by MDAD in accordance with the zoning regulations for Miami International Airport in Chapter 33; or (ii) the maximum height of an existing building that was approved by the City of Coral Gables within a quarter mile of a proposed development.

(6) *Open Space:* The minimum open space requirement shall be 15 percent of the gross development area. Open space shall include parks, plazas, balconies, terraces, courtyards, arcades/colonnades, pedestrian paths, rooftop green spaces above buildings and parking garages, and transit platform areas improved for pedestrian comfort.

(7) *Signs:* Signs visible from public rights-of-way or public areas shall comply with section 33C-3.2. The

signage plan submitted with the application for final site plan review shall contain criteria, locations and sizes of signs.

- (8) *Density:* Residential density shall not exceed the maximum number of units allowed in the CDMP for Community Urban Centers or less if the maximum allowed under the CDMP for a particular property is less than what would be allowed for Community Urban Centers.
- (9) *Architectural Expression:* Building facades facing public and private street rights-of-way or public open space or both shall be a minimum ~~[[40]]~~<sup>2</sup> >>30<< percent glazed. Glazing is not required for building facades that face the Metrorail rights-of-way or for above-grade parking garage structures that face public and private street rights-of-way or public open space; however, parking garages shall conform to the parking standards included herein. Blank walls facing public and private street rights-of-way and public open space shall be prohibited unless furnished with some type of artistic expression, such as sculpture, mosaic, and similar features.
- (10) *Landscaping:* Landscaping shall conform to the standards set forth in chapter 18 of this Code, provided that the following minimum standards are also met. In the event of any conflict between these standards and chapter 18, the stricter standard shall apply:
  - (a) *Lot trees:* A minimum of 30 trees per net acre of open space shall be provided. Trees may be placed in the lot, or in greens, squares, plazas and street medians within or in close proximity to this Subzone. Lot trees shall have a minimum 2-inch diameter at breast height.
  - (b) Street trees shall be planted at a maximum of 30 feet average on center, with a minimum 3-

---

<sup>2</sup> The differences between the substitute and the original item are indicated as follows: Words double stricken through and/or [[double bracketed]] are deleted, words double underlined and/or >>double arrowed<< are added.

inch diameter at breast height. Street trees shall be placed inside landscaped strips, tree planters, and in medians in the right-of-way or on private property where demonstrated to be necessary due to right-of-way obstructions, as determined by the Department of Transportation and Public Works or its successor Department or other agency with jurisdiction.

(c) The number, quality, and type of trees, including specified tree species, which would otherwise be required by the City of Coral Gables, as determined by the Director, shall be deemed to be a minimum standard. The Director may consult with the City of Coral Gables, as appropriate.

(d) Landscaping, such as particular landscaping species or landscaping design, that may address or otherwise improve stormwater management shall be considered, to the extent otherwise consistent with all applicable standards in this Code.

(11) *Service areas and mechanical equipment:* Service areas and fixtures shall be screened and located so as not to be visible from public and private rights-of-way or public open space. Mechanical equipment installed on roofs shall be screened from view by parapets or other architectural elements. Fixtures, including but not limited to backflow preventers, pumps, underground ventilation exhausts, and electrical vaults, shall be located within or to the side or rear of buildings; such fixtures shall not be located within the street setback area. Backflow preventers shall be shielded from view, as required by section 32-157(d).

(F) *Plan Review Standards.* The purpose of the plan review standards is to encourage the creation of development within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone that is consistent with the intent and purposes of these regulations, acts as a significant gateway for and destination to the area, and facilitates its future growth by designing and arranging buildings, public open space, transit, and street circulation in a manner that fosters around-the-clock pedestrian activity,

serves the local and regional transit demands of the community, and encourages public service, infrastructure, or public benefit components to address the needs of a growing population.

- (1) A mix of uses in the design of development projects is encouraged to the maximum extent possible. Mixed-use buildings, including, without limitation, residential, commercial, office, hotel, and restaurants, are highly encouraged in combination with transit and other governmental facilities.
- (2) Developments shall provide direct pedestrian and vehicular connections to the adjacent block and street network.

  - (a) All developments shall provide vehicular passenger loading and unloading zones to: (i) accommodate passengers who use vehicles for hire or transportation network companies; and (ii) minimize impacts of passenger loading and unloading on the surrounding roadway network. A loading or unloading zone that is shared among adjacent or adjoining parcels may be permitted, provided that a safe pedestrian route to each parcel is provided.
  - (b) Pedestrian crosswalks providing safe passage from adjoining streets and blocks into the development project of the Subzone shall be installed at street corners and, if practicable, midblock locations.
  - (c) Crosswalks shall be distinguished from other street elements by the use of conspicuous materials, texture and color.
- (3) Public open space in the form of plazas, squares, greens, and landscaped areas shall be incorporated in the design of all development projects at grade or on above-grade surfaces. The public open spaces should have a scale that is compatible and complementary with the intensity of proposed development, and their design should relate to the development's concept. Landscaping, furniture, art, paved pedestrian paths,

and lighting, among other features, should be used to enhance the open spaces pedestrian experience.

- (4) Consideration should be given to providing landscaping in a manner that reduces the heat island effect of the development on the urban environment.
- (5) All new development shall strive to meet certification standards from Florida Green Building Coalition or a similar organization.
- (6) Developments shall be designed with a coordinated outdoor lighting and signage system that is an integral part of the project and compatible and harmonious with existing and proposed development in the sub-zone and with surrounding uses. Signage should clearly indicate locations of, and guide pedestrians and vehicles to, proposed parking areas, transit facilities, permitted uses, and surrounding activities and uses.
- (7) ~~[[Proposed building scale should be in harmony with building scales allowed by applicable City of Coral Gables regulations for surrounding properties.]]~~  
>>The architectural design and scale of any proposed structure shall be compatible with surrounding existing or proposed developments.<< >>Buildings and their landscapes shall be built to the sidewalk edge in a manner that frames the adjacent street to create public space in the street corridor that is comfortable and interesting, as well as safe for pedestrians. Architectural elements at street level shall have abundant fenestration, windows and doors and design elements that create interest for the pedestrian.
- (8) Proposed development in the Subzone shall provide connections via bridges, paths, sidewalks, or a combination of such features to adjacent or nearby Metrorail systems.
- (9) ~~[[Proposed building aesthetic should be in harmony with the building aesthetic permitted by the City of Coral Gables for surrounding properties.]]~~  
>>The maximum building height may not exceed the height

of any existing buildings approved by the City within a quarter-mile radius.

(G) *Amendments.* At least six weeks prior to the scheduled public hearing of any amendments to this section 33C-18, the County shall mail or e-mail a copy of the proposed ordinance to the City Clerk and the City Attorney of the City of Coral Gables. The communication to the City shall include the date of the scheduled public hearing.

(H) *Public Benefits.*

(1) It is further provided that, in the review of an application for public hearing other than for a governmental facility, each reviewing agency shall provide a statement as to the proposed development's impact on public facilities and services, including assessment of impacts beyond minimum concurrency requirements pursuant to chapter 33G and minimum subdivision requirements pursuant to chapter 28. The reviewing agency may recommend additional improvements to address such identified impacts.

(2) Approval of such public hearing application may be conditioned on the provision of improvements recommended by a reviewing agency and of such other public service, public infrastructure, or public benefits improvements as the Board may determine to be appropriate to address the impacts of the new development on rapid transit infrastructure and on other properties or public facilities or infrastructure surrounding the proposed development area. Such improvements may include, without limitation: improvements to rapid transit infrastructure or surrounding roadways; mobility connections to the Rapid Transit System or other buildings or facilities in the surrounding area; emergency services facilities; educational facilities; public parks or public open spaces; tree canopy enhancements; public water and sewer infrastructure; improvements related to stormwater management; or affordable housing.<<

**Section 3.** Section 33C-2 of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida is hereby amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 33C-2. Rapid Transit Zone: definitions; designation of lands included; County jurisdiction; municipal services; occupational license taxes; municipal impact fees.**

\* \* \*

(B) *Designation of lands included in the Rapid Transit Zone.*

(2) The Board of County Commissioners hereby designates, as necessary for the construction, operation, maintenance, and support of the County's Rapid Transit System, and includes within the Rapid Transit Zone, all land areas (including surface, subsurface, and appurtenant airspace) shown on the following exhibits bearing the following effective dates, certified by the Clerk of the Board as a portion of this chapter, incorporated herein by reference, and transmitted to the custody of the Department: Exhibit 1, July 31, 1998; Exhibits 2 through 9 and Exhibits 11 through 16, July 13, 1979; Exhibit 10, May 26, 1983; Exhibit 17, February 13, 2014; Exhibit 18, February 1, 2020; Exhibit 19, February 1, 2020; Exhibit 20, December 27, 2019; Exhibit 21, June 12, 2020; and Exhibit 22(A), October 13, 2023, and Exhibit 22(B), February 14, 2025; Exhibit 23, December 11, 2021; Exhibits 24-26, and 28-31 and >>33,<< 34, September 11, 2022, [[and]] Exhibit 35, May 17, 2024, [[Exhibit 33, July 12, 2024]]; [[and]] Exhibit 36, October 11, 2024 >>and Exhibit 38, insert effective date<<.

\* \* \*

**Section 4.** This Board hereby directs the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to coordinate and negotiate with the City of Coral Gables to develop an interlocal agreement between Miami-Dade County and the City of Coral Gables related to any additional concerns or considerations which may arise in the future with respect to this ordinance and the RTZ process, including for example, additional points for formal input from the City of Coral Gables and how such processes would best work together with the City of Coral Gables' existing processes and existing staffing. Such interlocal agreement would not be required and would be subject to negotiation. Should the County Mayor and the City of Coral Gables negotiate the terms of a proposed interlocal agreement, such interlocal agreement would come back to this Board for approval after such negotiation. The City shall have 30 days from the effective date of this Ordinance to initiate such negotiation if it so chooses and 90 days from the effective of this Ordinance for an interlocal agreement to be approved by both governments and executed.

**Section 5.** If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or provision of this ordinance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected by such invalidity.

**Section 6.** It is the intention of the Board of County Commissioners, and it is hereby ordained that the provisions of this ordinance, including any sunset provision, shall become and be made a part of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The sections of this ordinance may be renumbered or relettered to accomplish such intention, and the word "ordinance" may be changed to "section," "article," or other appropriate word.

**Section 7.** This ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of enactment unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

PASSED AND ADOPTED:

Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency:

MBV for  
JEM

Prepared by:

Lauren E. Morse  
Abbie Schwaderer Raurell

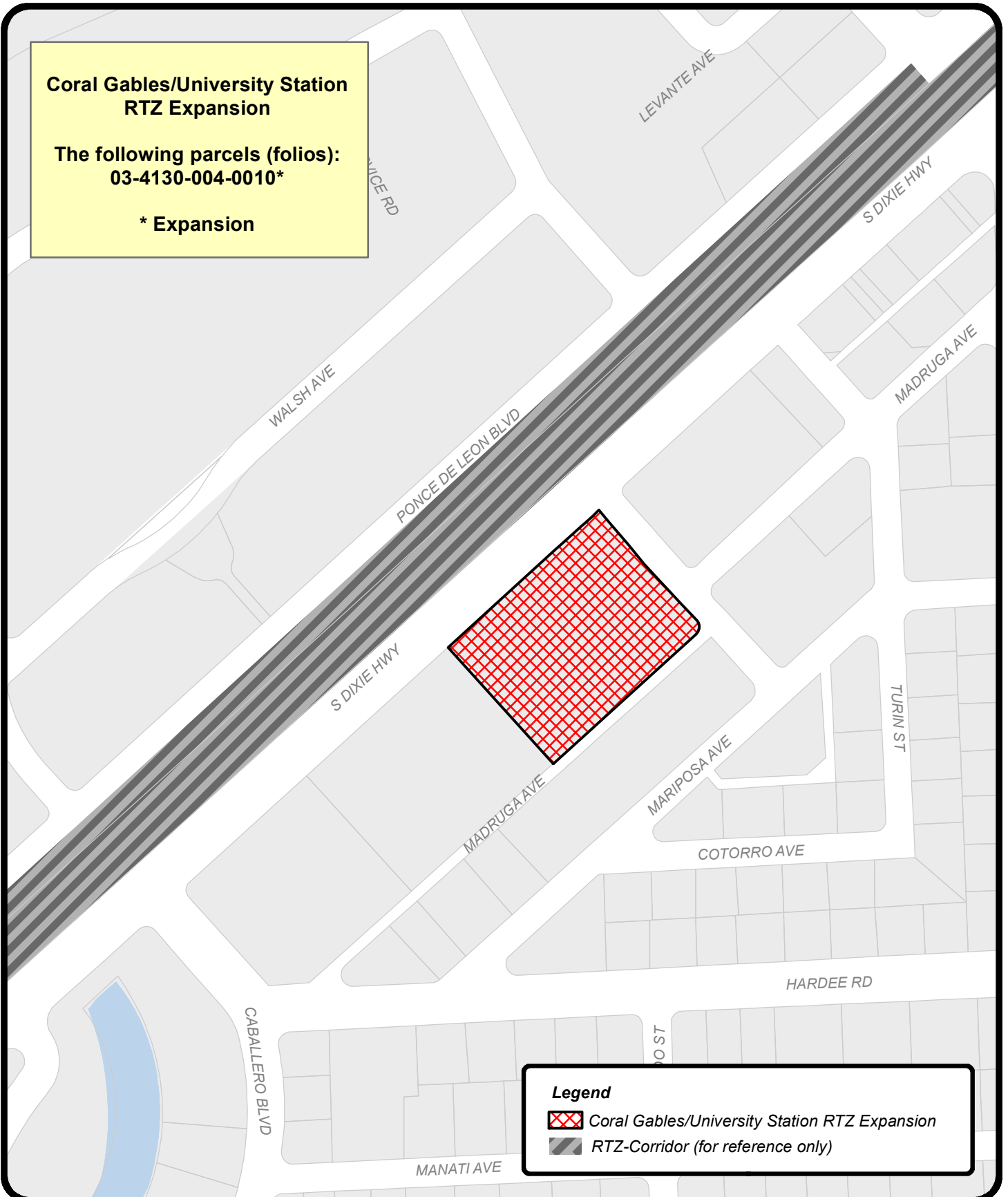
Prime Sponsor: Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado

# EXHIBIT 38



## Coral Gables/University Station RTZ Expansion

The following parcels (folios):  
03-4130-004-0010\*

\* Expansion



### Legend

-  Coral Gables/University Station RTZ Expansion
-  RTZ-Corridor (for reference only)

□ Full scale maps are on file with the department



## **FLOOR AMENDMENT**

**Miami Dade County • Board of County Commissioners Meeting  
September 3, 2025**

**Commissioner Regalado's Amendment  
Regarding Item 7A\_ (Legistar No. 251462)**

**Assistant County Attorney: Lauren E. Morse**

**Item type: ☐ Administration ☒ Commissioner Sponsored**

**Prime Sponsor: Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado**

---

Commissioner Regalado moves to amend Item 7A to: (1) add a new setback requirement for parcels within 100 feet of any single family residential district; (2) revise the open space requirement to be on net lot area instead of gross development area and add a minimum open space requirement at ground level; (3) require signs to comply with Article 11 of the Coral Gables Code instead of Section 33C-3.2 of the County Code; and (4) add a requirement for all development to comply with Coral Gables' ambience standards for lighting.

These amendments are to the proposed provisions in section 33C-18(E) which appear on pages MDC012, MDC013, and MDC015, and such amendments are shown below in double strikethrough and double underline:

\* \* \*

(E) *Development Standards. Applications for development in the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone shall be governed by the following development regulations:*

\* \* \*

(2) *Setbacks, cubic content, and lot size:*

- (a) *Due to the unique characteristics associated with the high-density or high-intensity, mixed-use developments contemplated for this sub-zone, there shall be no minimum setback from streets at grade and above the eighth floor, interior/rear property lines, and park rights-of-way.*
- (b) *There shall be no maximum or minimum limitation on the size of a floor plate.*
- (c) *There shall be no cubic content or minimum lot size requirements.*

>>(d) Notwithstanding anything stated to the contrary in the above subsections (a), (b), and (c), any parcel within 100 feet of a single-family residential district shall provide a 30-foot setback above ground along any interior property-lines facing a single-family residential district. Said 30-foot setback shall include a 10-foot landscape buffer along any interior property line that faces a single-family residential district.<<

\* \* \*

(6) Open Space: The minimum open space requirement shall be 15 percent of the ~~[[gross development area]]~~ >>net lot area. Ten percent of the required open space shall be provided at ground level<<. Open space shall include parks, plazas, balconies, terraces, courtyards, arcades/colonnades, pedestrian paths, rooftop green spaces above buildings and parking garages, and transit platform areas improved for pedestrian comfort.

(7) Signs: Signs visible from public rights-of-way or public areas shall comply with >>Article 11, "Signs", of the City of Coral Gables Zoning Code, as may be amended, and the review as to these City standards may include consultation with the City of Coral Gables zoning director or designee<< ~~[[section 33C-3.2]]~~. The signage plan submitted with the application for final site plan review shall contain criteria, locations and sizes of signs.

\* \* \*

>>(12) Lighting: Applications for development shall comply with Article 12, "Ambience Standards", of the City of Coral Gables Zoning Code, as may be amended, and the review as to these City standards may include consultation with the City of Coral Gables zoning director or designee.<<



## City of Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Staff Report

Applicant: City of Coral Gables

Application: **Comprehensive Plan Map Amendments and Zoning Code Map and Text Amendments – University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay**

Properties: 1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway

Public Hearing: Planning and Zoning Board

**Date & Time:** **July 2, 2025; 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Location: City Commission Chambers, City Hall,  
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida 33134

### 1. APPLICATION REQUEST

The City of Coral Gables is requesting review and consideration of the following:

1. **Comprehensive Plan Maps.** *An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay Districts Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from "Commercial Low-Rise Intensity" to "Commercial High-Rise Intensity" and to create the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, Tract "A," Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway); providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.*
2. **Zoning Code Text and Map.** *An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for map and text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process," Section 14-212, "Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments," by 1) amending Article 2, "Zoning Districts," to create Section 2-408, "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" for promoting the use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along transit corridors and near multimodal stations; 2) amending Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning Regulations," to remove inconsistent Site Specifics; 3) amending Article 14, "Process," Section 14-204, "Transfer of Development Rights," to expand Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) receiving sites to the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay," and 4) making Zoning District boundary changes from "Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)" to "Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)" and including within the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" boundary for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, and Tract "A," Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway), and to create the "University Station Rapid Transit District;" providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.*

The requests require three (3) public hearings, including review and recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board, and 1st and 2nd Reading before the City Commission.

## **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **Miami-Dade County Coral Gables / University Station Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) Expansion**

On May 6, 2025, Miami-Dade County adopted an ordinance on first reading to establish the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone within the Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ). The ordinance is scheduled for review and public hearing by the Transportation Committee on July 8, 2025, and may be scheduled for second reading by the Board of County Commissioners. As currently drafted, this County-proposed ordinance would:

- Grant to the County, regulatory jurisdiction over properties included within the proposed subzone,
- Specify the allowable uses, and
- Set forth development standards, criteria, and procedures for the review and approval of applications within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.

The Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) was established through the Miami-Dade County Code by the adoption and acceptance of the Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) for Miami-Dade County. The CDMP includes goals, objectives, and policies aimed at coordinating land use and transportation facilities to: attract transit ridership, encourage short trips, and minimize the need for transfers; establish a more compact and efficient urban form within the Urban Development Boundary; and promote both vertical and horizontal mixed-use development, as well as the redevelopment of properties located along existing and planned transit corridors and designated urban centers. These strategies collectively support transit-oriented development (TOD).

The County-proposed Rapid Transit Zone District of University Station acknowledges that transit-oriented developments are most effective when located on parcels within close proximity to rapid transit stations, to ensure better coordination between land use and transportation infrastructure. Accordingly, the Board of County Commissioners have historically added additional properties to the County's Rapid Transit Zone District (RTZ or RTZ Zoning District) and are likely to consider adding properties if they are situated within a quarter-mile radius of the University Station. As part of the currently proposed ordinance, one privately owned parcel — located at 1250 South Dixie Highway — is also proposed to be added to the proposed Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ. The property owner has requested inclusion in the subzone and to be placed under the County's exclusive regulatory jurisdiction.

The County's proposed ordinance establishing the University Station Rapid Transit Zone includes standards, criteria, and procedures for the approval of development applications within the subzone. These provisions are generally consistent with those adopted for other RTZ subzones but also incorporate additional standards and review procedures that have been specifically tailored to the context of the new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.

As a result of the County's proposed RTZ subzone that would supersede the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code, the City is now proposing map and text amendments to provide a basis to the County

that the City should retain review authority and regulatory jurisdiction of properties within the proposed overlay district.

### **Past Planning Initiatives by The City of Coral Gables**

The US-1 corridor has been the subject of ongoing discussion and analysis over several years. Most recently, the City initiated a public visioning workshop in 2015. Among the key recommendations gathered from public input during these workshops was the need to prepare a transit-oriented zoning overlay. Specific suggestions included building massing and stepback requirements, guidelines for paseos and public spaces, parking and shared parking strategies, and enhanced sidewalk standards along US-1.

In 2016-17, the City hired the planning and design firm Perkins & Will to develop a strategic framework plan for the US-1 corridor. This effort included a series of public workshops to engage the community. Although the study was later discontinued, many of the in-progress recommendations echoed those from the 2015 initiative, such as increasing tree canopy and sidewalk widths, reducing surface parking along the corridor, enhancing pedestrian safety, and limiting vehicular access from US-1.

While several of these recommendations were incorporated into the City's 2021 Zoning Code Update, the land use and zoning maps were not amended to reflect desired redevelopment patterns along the corridor.

### **Application Summary of the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay"**

The City of Coral Gables has a longstanding history of collaboration and coordination with Miami-Dade County. The City continues to prioritize intergovernmental coordination and seeks to maintain a leadership role on local, regional, and state planning issues.

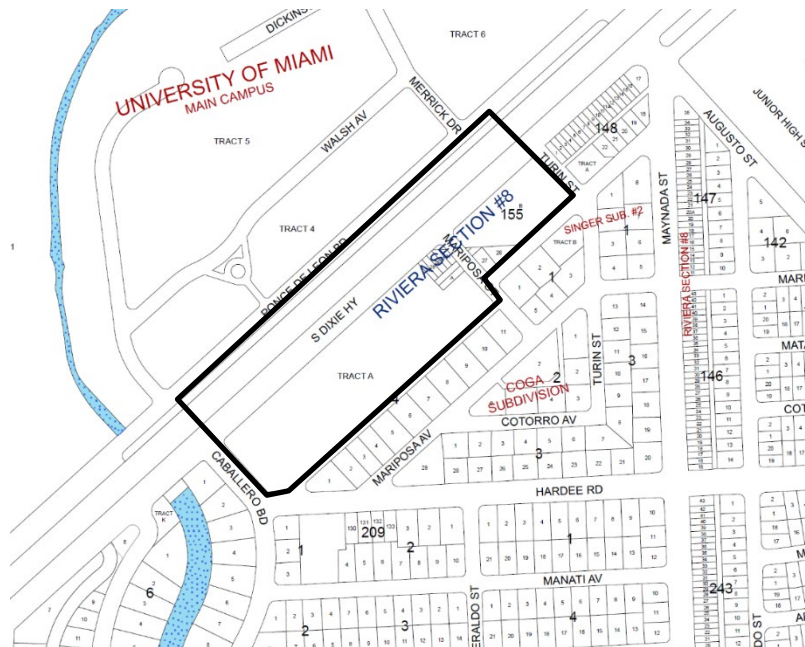
The recent County-proposed 'Coral Gables / University Station Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) Expansion' is currently being considered solely by the County will preempt the City's Zoning regulations and processes. To be consistent with the intent and provisions of the County's Rapid Transit Zone—while also preserving the City's long-standing character, established aesthetic standards, and procedural safeguards—the City is proposing the creation of the *University Station Rapid Transit District*. This district is intended to facilitate mixed-use development adjacent to the existing mass transit system. The proposed district encompasses parcels fronting the University Metrorail Station and is bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga Avenue, and Turin Street (as shown in the image below).

A total of five parcels are included within the district. These parcels have future land use designations of "Commercial Low-Rise Intensity" and "Commercial High-Rise Intensity," and are currently zoned as "Mixed-Use 1" and "Mixed-Use 3." Notable properties within the district include the University of Miami Gables One Tower and Paseo de la Riviera. The Gables One Tower is a 13-story office building built in 1971 and owned by the University of Miami. Paseo de la Riviera is a 10-story, mixed-use development that includes residential units, a hotel, and retail space. It was approved as a Planned Area Development (PAD) by the City in 2015, along with a Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment changing the designation from "Commercial Low-Rise Intensity" to "Mixed-Use." The remaining properties within the proposed district are one-story retail buildings.

The proposed amendments align with the goals of Miami-Dade County's initiative to designate this area as a SMART Corridor Subzone. The overlay district will help guide future development in a manner that complements the scale and intensity of existing structures in the area. Detailed zoning requirements for the overlay district are provided in the zoning code text amendment below.

**District Location.** Context information exhibited below.

***Lot, Subdivision, and Plat Map***

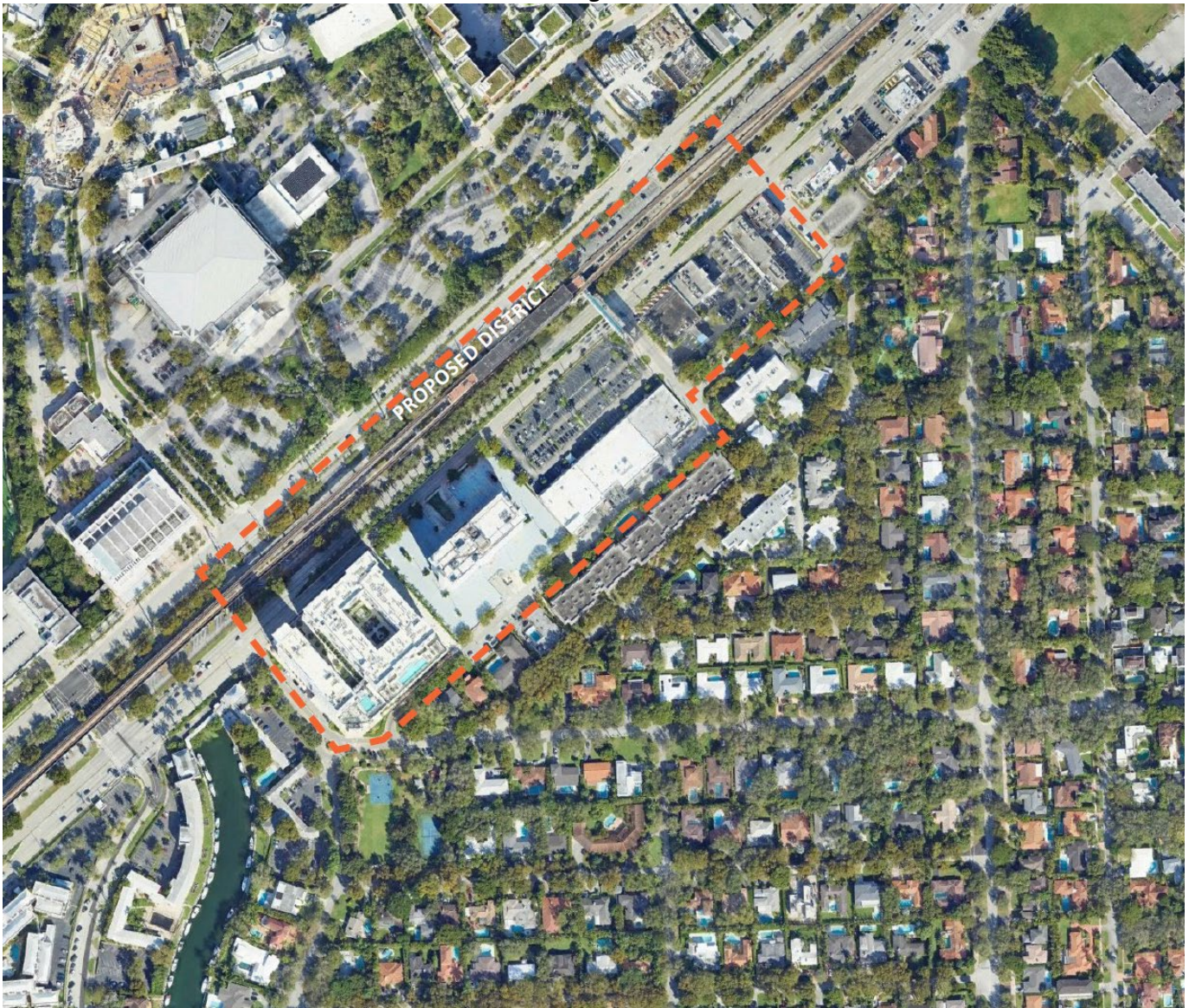


***Ariel Map***

**Site Data and Surrounding Uses.** The following tables provide the subject property's designations and surrounding land uses:

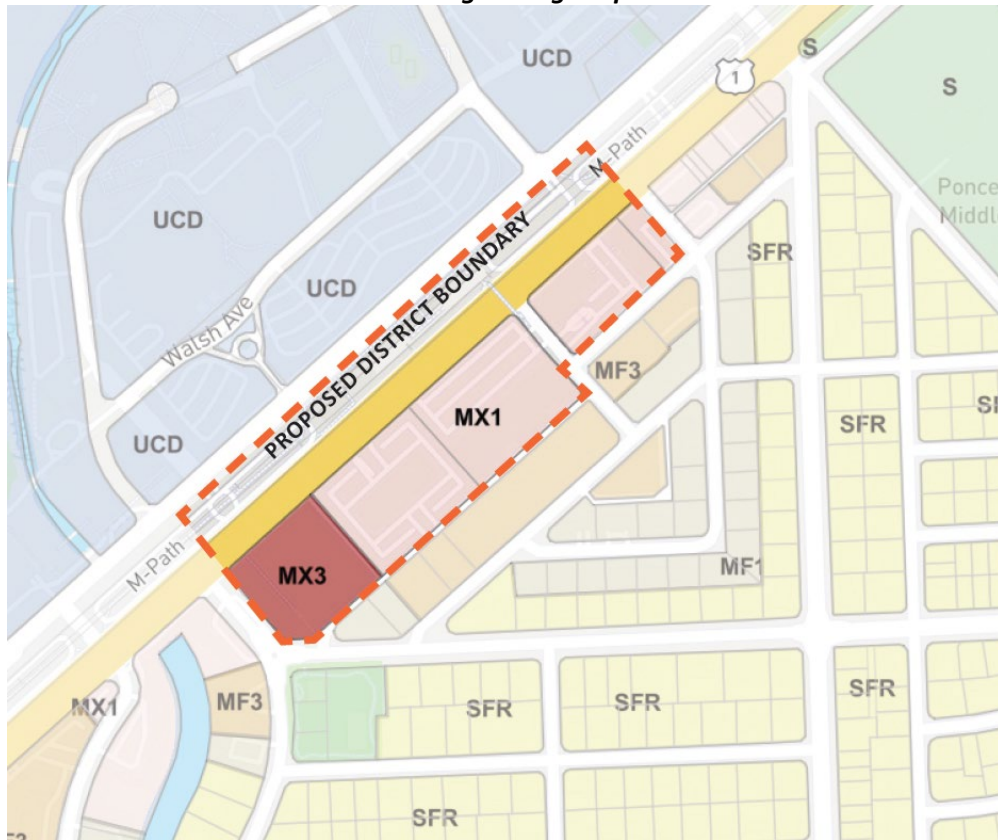
***Existing Property Designations***

Future Land Use Map designation	1150, 1190, 1250, and 1320 South Dixie Highway: <u>Commercial Low-Rise Intensity</u> 1350 South Dixie Highway: <u>Mixed Use</u>
Zoning Map designation	1150, 1190, 1250, and 1320 South Dixie Highway: <u>Mixed-Use 1 District</u> 1350 South Dixie Highway: <u>Mixed-Use 3 District</u>
Coral Gables Redevelopment Infill District	Yes

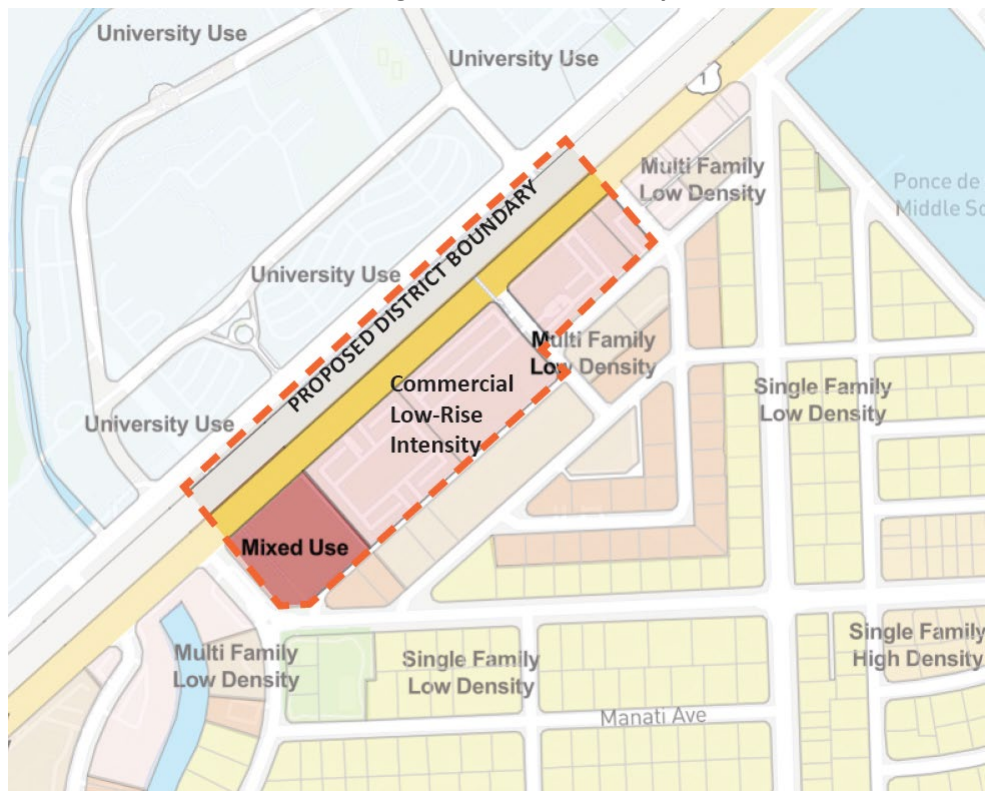
***Surrounding Land Uses***

LOCATION	EXISTING LAND USES	FLUM DESIGNATIONS	ZONING DESIGNATIONS
Northwest	University of Miami	University	University Campus District (UCD)
Northeast	Mixed-Use	Commercial Low Rise Intensity;	Mixed Use 1 (MX1) District
Southwest	Gables Waterway Offices and Apartments;	Commercial Low Rise Intensity; Multi Family Low Density;	Mixed Use 1 (MX1) District; Multi-Family 3(MF3);
Southeast	Apartment Buildings, Duplex, and Park	Multi Family Low Density; Multi Family Duplex Density; Park and Recreational Use;	Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1); Multi-Family 3 (MF3); Special Use (S);

**Existing Zoning Map**



**Existing Future Land Use Map**

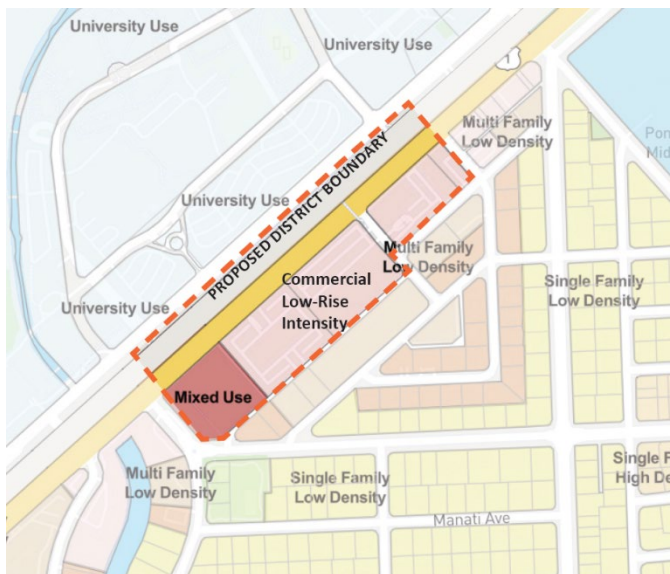


### 3. PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENTS

The proposed University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay applies to Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, and Tract “A” of the Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8. These properties are bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga Avenue, and Turin Street, and include five addresses: 1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway. Of these, four properties—1150, 1190, 1250, and 1320 South Dixie Highway—are proposed to change their Future Land Use Map designation from “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Commercial High-Rise Intensity.” The property at 1350 South Dixie Highway was previously approved for a Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment in 2015, changing its designation from “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Mixed Use” as part of the project application for Paseo de la Riviera. Similarly, the 13-story building at 1320 South Dixie Highway is a legal non-conforming structure, as the building height exceeds the maximum allowed height for “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity.” Additionally, the proposed district will be incorporated into the City’s Mixed-Use Overlay District Map, alongside the two existing overlay districts: the Design & Innovation District Overlay and the North Ponce Mixed-Use District Overlay.

A comparison of the property’s existing Future Land Use Map designations and the Applicant’s request designation is shown on the following maps:

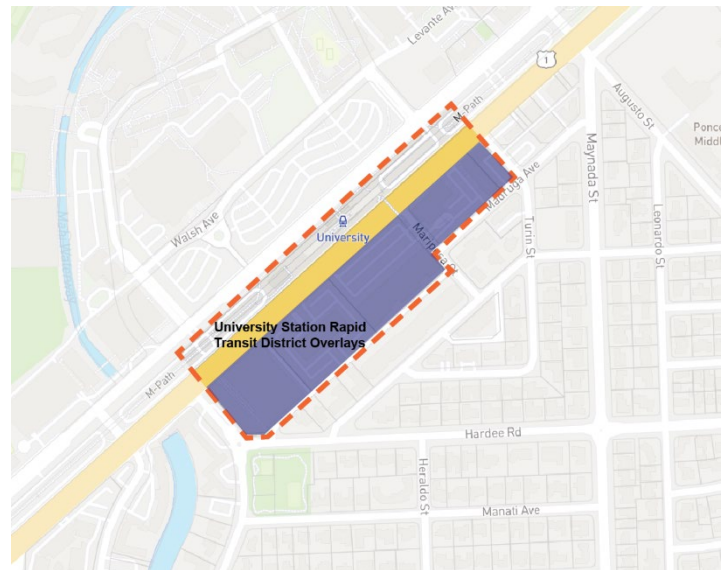
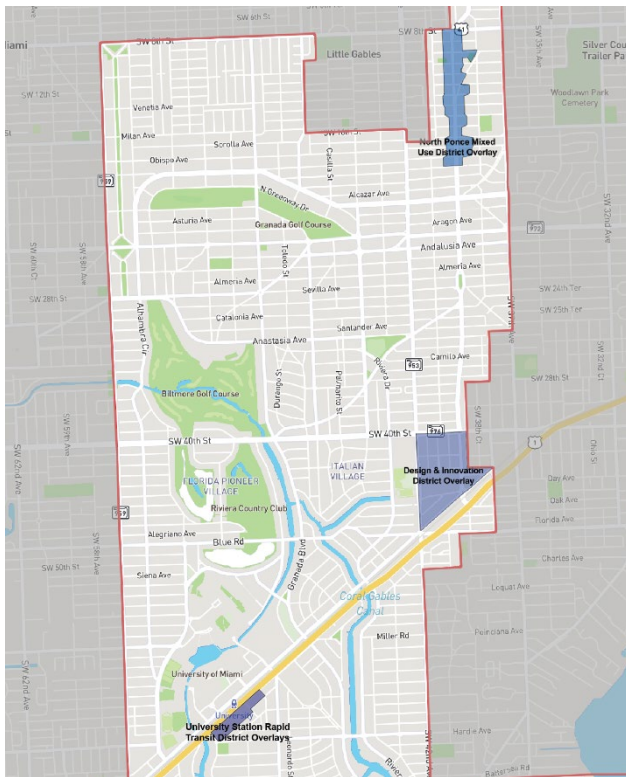
***Future Land Use Map***



***Proposed Future Land Use Map***



### Mixed-Use Overlay District Map



## 4. PROPOSED ZONING CODE MAP AMENDMENTS

Four properties in the proposed district—1150, 1190, 1250, and 1320 South Dixie Highway—are requesting a change from Mixed-use 1 (MX1) to Mixed-use 3 (MX3). And the other property at 1350 South Dixie Highway within the proposed district is currently designated as Mixed-use 3 (MX3).

### Existing Zoning Map



### Proposed Zoning Map



## 5. PROPOSED ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENTS

The proposed Zoning Code text amendment is provided below in ~~striketrough~~/underline format.

### ARTICLE 2. ZONING DISTRICTS

#### Section 2-400. District Overlays.

#### Section 2-408. University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.

##### A. Purpose and applicability.

1. The purpose of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay is to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan to locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations. These standards are consistent with the intent and provisions of Miami-Dade County's Rapid Transit Zone that provide for transit-oriented development adjacent to the existing mass transit system.
2. The District is established in order to maintain the following objectives:
  - a. Enhance the aesthetic and physical character of US-1 corridor that are consistent with the high-quality design and architecture of the City.
  - b. Promote and encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor by requiring pedestrian-oriented building design and site planning.
  - c. Provide greater housing opportunities in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions that are not in environmentally vulnerable and sensitive areas.
  - d. Foster the activation of public areas and streets with a consistent design intent regarding ground floor building design, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike infrastructure, pedestrian amenities, and other elements in the public right-of-way.
  - e. Provide public benefits for adjacent residential neighborhoods to address the potential impacts of new developments that could degrade the aesthetics and welfare of the adjacent neighborhood.
3. Applicability.
  - a. The District applies to properties within a quarter-mile and as identified as "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" on the official Zoning Map of the City of Coral Gables.
  - b. Unless otherwise provided in this section, all provisions of applicable underlying zoning district designations affecting an individual property shall control use and development.
  - c. All of the standards provided below shall be mandatory for properties seeking approval pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.

##### B. Regulations.

1. Building sites. Buildings on building sites within the District of twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet or more, or with street frontage of two hundred (200) feet or more, shall require review and approval by the City Commission.
2. Height.

- a. MX3 properties in the District shall be at a maximum height of one hundred and twenty (120) feet. Additional bonus heights with architectural incentives shall not be applied.
  - b. An additional thirteen feet and six inches (13.5) of building height may be granted by the City Commission for each additional five (5%) percent of landscaped open space provided as on-site publicly accessible open space to a maximum building height of one hundred and forty-seven (147) feet.
  - c. Height of architectural elements may exceed the maximum height in the District by a maximum of twenty-five (25) feet.
3. Use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs). Building sites within the District may receive Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) for a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 4.375, pursuant to Section 14-204.5.
4. Setbacks and Stepbacks.
  - a. US-1: Up to one hundred (100) feet in height: twenty (20) feet setback, except an arcade may encroach into the setback a maximum of ten (10) feet. If over one hundred (100) feet in height: thirty (30) feet stepback.
  - b. Fronting adjacent residential districts: Up to forty-five (45) feet in height: no stepback. If over forty-five (45) feet in height: ten (10) feet stepback.
  - c. Adjacent residential districts: For building sites with a depth greater than three hundred (300) feet, a rear setback of twenty-five (25) feet with a landscaped buffer shall be required.
5. Ground floor design.
  - a. The first four (4) stories, at a minimum, shall be designed to activate the street with habitable space of twenty (20) feet minimum depth and with consistent high-quality materials, such as natural stone, cast-iron, and other materials.
  - b. Any storage of vehicles or off-street parking that is above grade shall occur behind the provided habitable space.
  - c. Ground floor commercial or residential shall be accessed from the public sidewalk.
  - d. Commercial and residential entrances shall be located adjacent to transit stops or to access to multimodal stations.
6. Open space and landscape.
  - a. The building and open space frontage on US-1 shall be coordinated with existing and proposed public realm enhancements to ensure a unified and pedestrian-friendly public space.
  - b. Pedestrian shading shall be provided with building arcades, overhangs, or shade trees that foster pedestrian activity.
  - c. Plant species or landscape design that improves stormwater management shall be provided.
  - d. A paseo shall not be required for any building length or frontage.
7. Parking.
  - a. Ground floor retail, residential, and restaurants shall be exempt from the parking requirements.

- b. Developments within five hundred (500) feet of the station entrance may receive a parking reduction of fifty percent (50%) maximum. An additional twenty-five (25%) reduction may be granted with a parking plan that demonstrates the necessary amount of parking for each individual development.
  - c. Properties shall be eligible to use remote parking in a parking structure that is located within 1000' of the subject site, pursuant to Section 10-108.B.
  - d. Off-street parking shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the front property line and shall be screened with habitable linear space. Off-street parking is prohibited within the setback.
8. Public Benefit.
- a. Landscaping, furniture, shade, water features, art, and other pedestrian amenities shall be incorporated on and off-site to enhance pedestrian activity.
  - b. Developments shall provide. sidewalks, crosswalks, safety improvements to intersections, mobility pathways, and other pedestrian connections to adjacent or nearby multi-modal systems.
  - c. Potential impacts of new development on rapid transit infrastructure, adjacent properties, or public facilities shall be addressed with improvements to the transit system infrastructure, connections to transit, traffic calming, emergency services facilities, public parks or public open spaces, tree canopy enhancements, public infrastructure, and other improvements.
9. Expedited Design Review.
- All proposed buildings shall be reviewed by the Board of Architects and receive preliminary design approval within four (4) full board meetings. If approval has not been granted within four (4) reviews by the full board, the Applicant may request final review and approval by a panel of Special Masters, per Section 14-103.3.

## **ARTICLE 14. PROCESS**

### **Section 14-200. Procedures**

### **Section 14-204. Transfer of Development Rights.**

#### **Section 14-204.5. Use of TDRs on receiver sites.**

- A. Use of TDRs on receiver sites. The receiving sites shall be:
- 1. Located within the boundaries of the CBD and designated mixed-use zoning, or
  - 2. Located within the boundaries of the North Ponce de Leon Boulevard Mixed Use District and designated mixed-use zoning, or
  - 3. Located within the boundaries of the Design & Innovation District and designated mixed-use zoning, or
  - 4. Located within the boundaries of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay and designated mixed-use zoning, or
  - 5. Designated by the City Commission when located in a Planned Area Development (PAD) and zoned MX2 or MX3.

Use of TDRs as receiver sites are prohibited on properties within the Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown

District Overlay facing Miracle Mile.

B. Maximum TDR floor area ratio (FAR) increase on receiver sites. An increase of up to twenty-five (25%) percent of permitted gross FAR and approved Mediterranean architectural style bonuses gross FAR may be permitted.

## Appendix A. Site Specific Zoning Regulations

### Section A-83 - Riviera Section Part 8.

A. Floor area ratio (FAR) Provisions for buildings four (4) or more stories in height.

- ~~1. See Archived Zoning Code Section 3-6(y).~~
- ~~2. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for C District buildings four (4) stories in height located on the following described property shall not exceed 1.5: (2829)~~
  - ~~a. Lots 1 through 13, inclusive, Block 148.~~
  - ~~b. Lots 1, 16, 17 and 27 in Block 155.~~
  - ~~c. Lots 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31, in Block 156.~~
  - ~~d. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~
- ~~3. Maximum floor area ratio (FAR) for C District buildings located on the following described property shall not exceed 3.5:~~
  - ~~a. The Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~

B. Height of buildings.

- ~~1. No commercial building shall be constructed or erected on the following described properties to exceed four (4) stories or forty-five (45) feet, whichever is less:~~
  - ~~a. Lots 1 through 13, inclusive, Block 148.~~
  - ~~b. Lots 1, 17, 26 and 27, Block 155.~~
  - ~~c. Lots 27, 28, 29, 30 and 31, Block 156.~~
  - ~~d. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~
- ~~2. No commercial building shall be constructed or erected on the following described properties to exceed one hundred and twenty six (126) feet:~~
  - ~~a. The Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~
- ~~3. No residential or mixed use building shall be constructed or erected on the following described properties to exceed one hundred twenty two (122) feet:~~
  - ~~a. The Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A.~~

C. Setbacks-Minimum front.

- ~~1. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A. One hundred and twenty-five (125) feet (P. B. 46, Page 100).~~

D. Setbacks-Minimum rear.

- ~~1. All portions of Tract A except for the Southwesterly 360.00 feet of Tract A. Fifty (50) feet (P. B. 46, Page 100).~~

## 6. REVIEW TIMELINE / PUBLIC NOTICE

## City Review Timeline

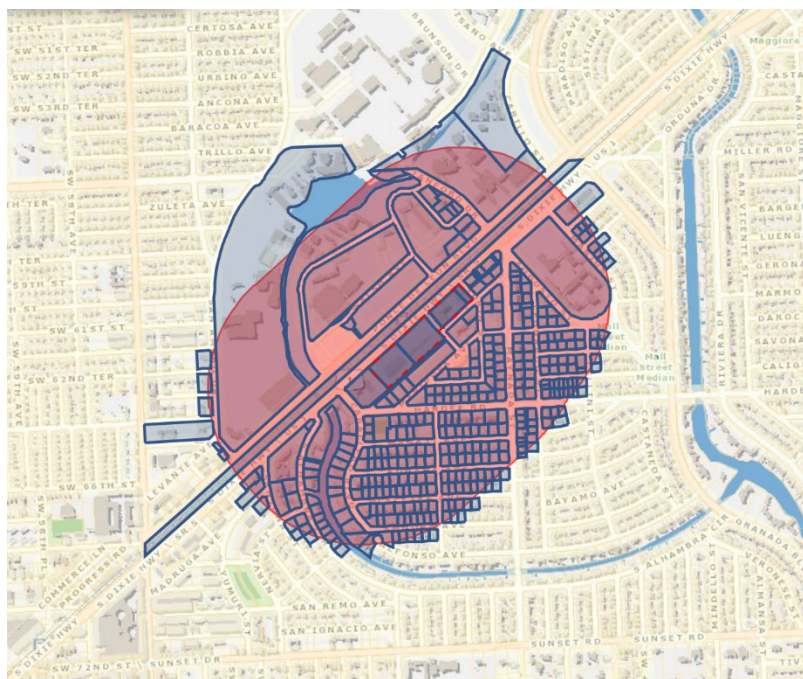
The submitted applications have undergone the following City reviews:

REVIEW COMMITTEES AND BOARDS	DATE
Planning and Zoning Board	07.02.25
City Commission – 1 <sup>st</sup> Reading	TBD
City Commission – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading	TBD

## Public Notification and Comments

Article 15, “Notices,” Section 15-100 of the Zoning Code requires notification be provided to all property owners within 1,500 feet of the property. The notification was sent on June 18, 2025 to notify property owners of the July 2, 2025 Planning and Zoning Board meeting. The notice indicates the following: applications filed; public hearing dates/time/location; where the application files can be reviewed; and provides for an opportunity to submit comments. There were 1,129 notices mailed. A copy of the legal advertisement and notice are provided as Attachment D. A map of the notice radius is provided below.

**Notification Radius Map**



The following has been completed to solicit input and provide notice of the Application:

PUBLIC NOTICE	DATE
Mailed notice within 1,500 feet of proposed district	06.18.25
Posted property	06.18.25
Legal advertisement	06.20.25
Posted agenda and Staff report on City web page/City Hall	06.27.25

## 7. FINDINGS OF FACT

This section of the report presents City Staff’s evaluation of the Application and Findings of Fact. The City’s responsibility is to review the Application for consistency with the City’s Comprehensive Plan (CP) Goals, Objectives, and Policies, compliance with the Zoning Code, and compliance with other applicable portions of the City Code.

**A . Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment**

Zoning Code Section 14-213.6 provides review standards for Comprehensive Plan amendments:

Standard	Staff Evaluation
1. Whether it specifically advances any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	The proposed Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment from “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Commercial High-Rise Intensity” advances objectives of the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Specifically, it supports policies that encourage higher-density development adjacent to multimodal transit facilities. The amendment is consistent with the City’s mobility vision and long-standing goals for transit-oriented development. As drafted in the accompanying Zoning Code text amendment, the maximum building height of one hundred and twenty (120) feet will ensure that future buildings will not be too intense with the close proximity to the established single-family neighborhood and will be more consistent with existing buildings along US-1.
2. Whether it is internally consistent with Comprehensive Land Use Plan.	The request maintains internal consistency with the City’s Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The parcels are located in a strategic location identified for transit-oriented growth, where the Plan promotes vertical mixed-use development, multimodal transportation access, and compact urban form. The proposed overlay district would better coordinate future development of similar building scales with the existing developments.
3. Its effect on the level of service of public infrastructure.	The amendment is expected to have a positive effect on the City’s multi-modal infrastructure. By concentrating density near the University Metrorail Station, the proposal supports efficient use of existing public transit, reduces reliance on automobiles, and encourages pedestrian-friendly environment. This is consistent with the County and City’s shared vision for transit corridor development. While redevelopment may increase roadway infrastructure demands over time, the overlay framework promotes walkability and transit ridership, which can help mitigate local vehicular traffic impacts.
4. Its effect on environmental resources.	The proposed overlay applies to an already urbanized segment of the US-1 corridor. No significant natural or environmentally sensitive resources are present on the subject sites. The overlay encourages vertical mixed-use development and reduced vehicle dependency, which may contribute to broader environmental goals by lowering emissions and limiting further sprawl in the

	region.
5. Its effect on the availability of housing that is affordable to people who live or work in the City of Coral Gables.	The overlay district and accompanying land use changes will support additional development in close proximity to a major transit station and university campus. This may help expand the supply of diverse housing types to contribute to the provision of housing for people who live and work in the City. While affordability provisions are not embedded in the land use change itself, the increased housing supply and reduced transportation costs associated with transit proximity can indirectly support housing affordability goals.
6. Any other effect that the City determines is relevant to the City Commission's decision on the application.	The proposal is a reaction to a proposed preemption ordinance by Miami-Dade County in order for the City to retain authority and regulatory jurisdiction. Additionally, it is part of a long-term planning effort to reposition the US-1 corridor as a transit-supportive, mixed-use district. The proposed overlay presents an opportunity to implement key principles from previous planning studies and recent zoning code updates, while preserving the City's design character and ensuring compatibility with adjacent neighborhoods. In conjunction with the proposed amendment, specific requirements related to height limits, setbacks, stepbacks, open space, and ground floor design will be addressed through the overlay zoning to ensure an appropriate building scale and a sensitive transition to surrounding areas.

Based upon the Findings of Facts provided herein, Staff finds the Application satisfies the provisions of the Zoning Code for the proposed future land use map amendment to Commercial High-rise Intensity for the proposed district. Additionally, Staff finds that the proposed zoning requirements, tailored specifically for the district, incorporate measures to mitigate potential negative impacts that could adversely affect neighboring properties.

## B. Zoning Code Map Amendment

Zoning Code Section 14-212.4 provides review standards for Zoning Code Map amendments:

Standard	Staff Evaluation
1. <b>It is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan in that:</b>	
a. Does not permit uses which are prohibited in the future land use category of the parcel proposed for development.	The proposed overlay does not permit any uses that are prohibited by the proposed "Commercial High-Rise Intensity" future land use designation. All permitted and conditional uses remain consistent with those envisioned for mixed-use development near a regional transit facility.

b. Does not allow densities or intensities in excess of the densities and intensities which are permitted by the future land use category of the parcel proposed for development.	The zoning overlay aligns with the allowable intensity under the “Commercial High-Rise Intensity” designation. While the overlay introduces design and development standards, it does not exceed the permitted density or building intensity.
c. Will not cause a decline in the level of service for public infrastructure to a level of service which is less than the minimum requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.	The area is already served by multimodal infrastructure. The overlay supports transit use and reduced vehicular dependency. Preliminary concurrency assessment by the City’s Public Works Department indicates that the level of service will not fall below adopted standards. Future developments will undergo concurrency review at the time of site plan or permit review to ensure that levels of service for infrastructure remain consistent with Comprehensive Plan standards.
d. Does not directly conflict with any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Plan.	The proposed zoning overlay is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s policies promoting compact mixed-use development along designated corridors. It directly supports the City’s Mobility Vision and policies related to land use coordination, urban form, and intergovernmental collaboration.
<b>2. Will provide a benefit to the City in that it will achieve two or more of the following objectives</b>	
a. Improve mobility by reducing vehicle miles traveled for residents within a one-half (1/2) mile radius by: i. Balancing land uses in a manner that reduces vehicle miles traveled; ii. Creating a mix of uses that creates an internal trip capture rate of greater than twenty (20%) percent; iii. Increasing the share of trips that use alternative modes of transportation, such as transit ridership, walking, or bicycle riding.	The proposed overlay supports all three mobility objectives. By promoting mixed-use development adjacent to the University Station and the University of Miami, it enables residents, employees, and visitors to reduce reliance on automobiles and instead walk, bike, or use transit. The inclusion of residential, retail, office, and institutional uses foster an internal trip capture rate that supports sustainable travel behavior.
b. Promote high-quality development or redevelopment in an area that is experiencing declining or flat property values.	The overlay provides a planning framework to attract high-quality redevelopment and reinvestment in this underutilized area by enabling development opportunities accompanied by higher design standards and requirements tailored specifically to the context and character of the district.

c. Create affordable housing opportunities for people who live or work in the City of Coral Gables.	While the overlay does not directly mandate affordable housing, it expands the supply of housing near a major employment and transit hub, which can support affordability goals through increased availability, reduced transportation costs, and access to amenities. The location is ideal for workforce housing for university and hospital staff, among others.
d. Implement specific objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.	The proposal directly advances multiple objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including Policy MOB-1.1.1, MOB-1.1.2, and MOB-1.1.3 related to mobility development, and GOV-2, GOV-2.1, GOV-2.2, and GOV-2.3, which emphasize intergovernmental coordination and strategic planning for regional-scale challenges.
<b>3. Will not cause a substantial diminution of the market value of adjacent property or materially diminish the suitability of adjacent property for its existing or approved use.</b>	The overlay includes regulatory controls designed to ensure high-quality development. New investment and development within the proposed district are expected to serve as a catalyst for improving the surrounding environment and enhancing market value. The area's proximity to major transportation infrastructure and institutional anchors further supports its suitability for higher-density development.

**Staff comments.** The request for a Zoning Code Map Amendment from Mixed-Use 1 to Mixed-Use 3 is connected to the requested Comprehensive Land Use Map Amendments. The proposed map amendments provide opportunities for housing, employment, and retail in close proximity to heavy rail public transit.

### C. Zoning Code Text Amendment

In accordance with Section 14-212.5 of the Zoning Code, the Planning and Zoning Board shall not recommend adoption of, and the City Commission shall not adopt, text amendments to these land Zoning Code unless the text amendment:

Standard	Staff Evaluation
a. Promotes the public health, safety, and welfare.	The proposed overlay district promotes public health, safety, and welfare by supporting transit-oriented, mixed-use development adjacent to the University Metrorail Station and the University of Miami campus. The overlay introduces design requirements that enhance pedestrian safety, encourage walkability, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and contribute to the overall livability and character of the area. These elements are consistent with adopted planning goals to promote a vibrant and sustainable urban environment.

b. Does not permit uses the Comprehensive Plan prohibits in the area affected by the text amendment.	The proposed overlay district does not introduce any uses that are prohibited by the Comprehensive Plan. All permitted and conditional uses remain consistent with the underlying future land use designations,” and support the goals of encouraging higher-density, mixed-use, and transit-supportive development along the US-1 corridor.
c. Does not allow densities or intensities in excess of the densities and intensities which are permitted by the future land use categories of the affected property.	The overlay zoning regulations are consistent with the allowable intensities and densities under the proposed “Commercial High-Rise Intensity” land use designation. While the overlay introduces refined development standards—such as height limits, setbacks, and design criteria—it does not exceed the intensity permitted by the Comprehensive Plan. Instead, it ensures that higher-intensity development is appropriately scaled and context-sensitive.
d. Will not cause a decline in the level of service for public infrastructure which is the subject of a concurrency requirement to a level of service which is less than the minimum requirements of the Comprehensive Plan.	The proposed zoning overlay is intended to concentrate development in areas already served by robust public infrastructure as part of the US-1 commercial corridor. Preliminary concurrency assessment indicates that the level of service for public infrastructure, including transportation, water, sewer, and schools, will not fall below adopted standards. Future development will be subject to concurrency review at the time of permitting to ensure compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and mitigation of any infrastructure impacts.
e. Does not directly conflict with any objective or policy of the Comprehensive Plan.	The proposed overlay district is consistent with and supports key objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, including policies promoting compact urban form, transit-oriented development, pedestrian connectivity, and mixed-use intensity near major transit hubs. The overlay advances the City’s broader planning vision for the US-1 corridor and does not conflict with any adopted policies or land use directives.

### Consistency Evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan (CP) Goals, Objectives and Policies

This section provides those CP Goals, Objectives and Policies applicable to the Application and the determination of consistency:

REF. NO.	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOAL, OBJECTIVE AND POLICY	STAFF REVIEW
1	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.1.</b> Promote mixed use development to provide housing and commercial services near employment centers, thereby reducing the need to drive.	
2	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.2.</b> Encourage land use decisions that encourage infill, redevelopment and reuse of vacant or underutilized parcels that support walking, bicycling and public transit use.	Complies
3	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.3.</b> Locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations.	

REF. NO.	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOAL, OBJECTIVE AND POLICY	STAFF REVIEW
4	<b>Policy MOB-1.1.5.</b> Improve amenities within public spaces, streets, alleys and parks to include the following improvements: seating; art; architectural elements (at street level); lighting; bicycle parking; street trees; improved pedestrian crossing with bulb-outs, small curb radii, on-street parking along sidewalks, pedestrian paths and bicycle paths to encourage walking and cycling with the intent of enhancing the feeling of safety.	Complies
5		
6	<b>Goal FLU-1.</b> Protect, strengthen, and enhance the City of Coral Gables as a vibrant community ensuring that its neighborhoods, business opportunities, shopping, employment centers, cultural activities, historic value, desirable housing, open spaces, and natural resources make the City a very desirable place to work, live, and play.	Complies
7	<b>Objective FLU-1.1.</b> Preserve Coral Gables as a “placemaker” where the balance of existing and future uses is maintained to achieve a high quality living environment by encouraging compatible land uses, restoring and protecting the natural environment, and providing facilities and services which meet or exceed the minimum Level of Service (LOS) standards and meet the social and economic needs of the community through the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Classifications and Map (see FLU-1: Future Land Use Map).	Complies
8	<b>Objective FLU-1.2.</b> Efforts shall continue to be made to control blighting influences, and redevelopment shall continue to be encouraged in areas experiencing deterioration.	Complies
9	<b>Policy FLU-1.10.2.</b> The City shall continue to maintain regulations consistent with the Comprehensive Plan which regulate the use and development of land in a manner which, at a minimum, provides for land use consistent with the Future Land Use Plan map series, interpretive text and Land Use Element goal, objectives and policies; regulate the subdivision of land; regulate signage; regulate development and use in areas subject to seasonal or periodic flooding, provide for stormwater management; open space and regulate on-site traffic flow and parking.	Complies
10	<b>Policy FLU-1.11.1.</b> Maintain and enforce effective development and maintenance regulations through site plan review, code enforcement, and design review boards and committees.	Complies
11	<b>Goal GOV-2.</b> Intergovernmental coordination shall be maintained as a major means of achieving consistency among all government agencies implementing plans and programs affecting the City of Coral Gables.	Complies
12	<b>Objective GOV-2.1.</b> Coordinate and cooperate City Comprehensive Plan activities with other jurisdictions and agencies at all levels and functions of government to achieve mutually beneficial goals and objectives.	Complies
13	<b>Policy HOU-1.5.1.</b> Encourage the development of diverse housing types such as smaller, more affordable units within the downtown area and mixed use development overlay area.	Complies
14	<b>Objective GOV-2.2.</b> Continue and improve coordination activities among government agencies with planning and impact assessment duties affecting the City, with other units of local government providing services but not having regulatory authority over the use of land, and with the comprehensive plans of adjacent municipalities, the county, and adjacent counties.	Complies
15	<b>Objective GOV-2.3.</b> Maintain and strengthen intergovernmental coordination and establish a leadership role on local, regional and state issues.	Complies

Based upon the Findings of Fact provided herein, Staff finds that the application satisfies the provisions of the Zoning Code for the proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment. Furthermore, the proposed text amendment fulfills key objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. It directly supports and reinforces the City's Mobility Vision to provide progressive direction for a multi-modal transportation system, and its development principles as outlined in Policy MOB-1.1.1, Policy MOB-1.1.2, and Policy MOB-1.1.3. In addition, the proposal advances Goal GOV-2, as well as Objectives GOV-2.1, GOV-2.2, and GOV-2.3, by facilitating intergovernmental coordination and collaboration with Miami-Dade County and local governments.

Staff finds that all five of these criteria are **satisfied**.

## 8. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

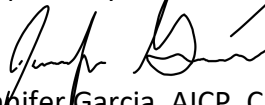
The Planning and Zoning Division recommends **approval**.

## 9. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Miami-Dade County Ordinance - First Hearing.
- B. University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District Analysis.
- C. Mailed notice.
- D. Public Comments.
- E. Presentation PowerPoint.
- F. Public Works Memo - Public Infrastructure Analysis.

Please visit the City's webpage at [www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com) to view all Application plans and materials, notices, applicable public comments, minutes, etc. The complete Application and all background information also is on file and available for examination during business hours at the Planning and Zoning Division, 427 Biltmore Way, Suite 201, Coral Gables, Florida 33134.

Respectfully submitted,



Jennifer Garcia, AICP, CNU-A  
Assistant Director of Development Services  
for Planning and Zoning  
City of Coral Gables, Florida

## MEMORANDUM

Substitute  
Agenda Item No. 4(L)

---

**TO:** Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** May 6, 2025

**FROM:** Geri Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Ordinance relating to the Rapid Transit System Development Zone; amending Chapter 33C of the Code; providing for the expansion of the Rapid Transit Zone and creating the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone which could, through future action of this Board, encompass property within a quarter mile of the University Metrorail Station; providing for County regulatory jurisdiction over properties added to the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone; providing for uses, and creating standards, criteria, and procedures for approval of applications within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; adding certain private property to the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; making technical changes; directing the County Mayor to coordinate and negotiate with the City Of Coral Gables as to a future Interlocal Agreement which could address additional concerns or considerations that may arise in the future

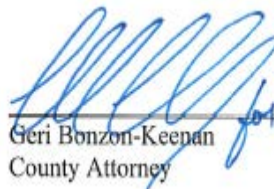
---

This substitute differs from the original item in that:

1. Makes a change to the title to identify the addition of property to the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.
2. Revises language in the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup> whereas clauses to reflect additional changes within section 2.
3. Deletes the original item's last whereas clause.
4. Adds three additional whereas clauses that identify property located at 1250 Harriet Tubman Highway/ Folio Number 03-4130-004-0010 to be added to the subzone and that such property will be under the County's exclusive regulatory jurisdiction.
5. Within section 2, changes the "Boundaries" contained in the new 33C-18(B) to include the newly added Exhibit 38.
6. Within section 2, revises language in 33C-18(D)(2)(d) and deletes language in 33C-18(D)(2)(e) to remove the recommendation for denial and the supermajority vote in the event that the City representatives do not concur with a recommendation.
7. Within section 2, revises language in 33C-18(E)(8) to change the maximum residential density standard from 500 units per gross acre to the number of units allowed in the CDMP for Community Urban Centers.
8. Within section 2, deletes section 33C-18(E)(12) related to alcoholic beverages.
9. Within section 2, revises 33C-18(F)(9) to replace design and architecture with aesthetic.
10. Adds a new section 3 that amends section 33C-2 of the Code to include the new Exhibit 38 and makes a technical change to delete an incorrect date currently in the Code for Exhibit 33
11. Adds a new Exhibit 38 that will be included as an Exhibit to the ordinance that identifies the boundaries of the new subzone with the added property.

Rule 5.06(i) of the Board's Rules of Procedure provides that differences between an original item and a substitute item should be uniquely identified by double underlining and double strike-through, or where such approach would not clearly show the substitute changes or is not practical, by providing footnotes or comments on the item. Based on Rule 5.06(i), the preceding comprehensive description of the differences between the original item and the substitute item is provided in lieu of double underlining and double strike-through.

The accompanying ordinance was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado.

  
Geri Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

GBK/jp

MDC001



# MEMORANDUM

(Revised)

**TO:** Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**DATE:** May 6, 2025

**FROM:**   
Glen Bonzon-Keenan  
County Attorney

**SUBJECT:** Substitute  
Agenda Item No. 4(L)

Please note any items checked.

- ☒ "3-Day Rule" for committees applicable if raised
- ☒ 6 weeks required between first reading and public hearing
- ☒ 4 weeks notification to municipal officials required prior to public hearing
- ☐ Decreases revenues or increases expenditures without balancing budget
- ☐ Budget required
- ☐ Statement of fiscal impact required
- ☐ Statement of social equity required
- ☐ Ordinance creating a new board requires detailed County Mayor's report for public hearing
- ☐ No committee review
- ☐ Applicable legislation requires more than a majority vote (i.e., 2/3's present \_\_\_\_, 2/3 membership \_\_\_\_, 3/5's \_\_\_\_, unanimous \_\_\_\_, majority plus one \_\_\_\_, CDMP 7 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3)(h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 2/3 vote requirement per 2-116.1(3) (h) or (4)(c) \_\_\_\_, CDMP 9 vote requirement per 2-116.1(4)(c) (2) \_\_\_\_) to approve
- ☐ Current information regarding funding source, index code and available balance, and available capacity (if debt is contemplated) required

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_  
Override \_\_\_\_\_

Substitute  
Agenda Item No. 4(L)  
5-6-25

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT ZONE; AMENDING CHAPTER 33C OF THE CODE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE AND CREATING THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE WHICH COULD, THROUGH FUTURE ACTION OF THIS BOARD, ENCOMPASS PROPERTY WITHIN A QUARTER MILE OF THE UNIVERSITY METRORAIL STATION; PROVIDING FOR COUNTY REGULATORY JURISDICTION OVER PROPERTIES ADDED TO THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE; PROVIDING FOR USES, AND CREATING STANDARDS, CRITERIA, AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS WITHIN THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE; ADDING CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY TO THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE; MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES; DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO COORDINATE AND NEGOTIATE WITH THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES AS TO A FUTURE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WHICH COULD ADDRESS ADDITIONAL CONCERNS OR CONSIDERATIONS THAT MAY ARISE IN THE FUTURE; PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, INCLUSION IN THE CODE, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter grants to the County the power to carry on a central metropolitan government and to provide for rail facilities and public transportation systems; and

**WHEREAS**, the University Station Metrorail station (University Station) is located within the City of Coral Gables; and

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade County has a long history of collaboration and coordination with the City of Coral Gables; and

**WHEREAS**, with respect to mass transit facilities, such as the University Station, the Board of County Commissioners has found that the coordinated review and analysis of mass transit facilities is necessary to carry on a central metropolitan government in Miami-Dade County and that coordinated review and analysis of the mass transit system is most effectively carried on under a uniform plan of regulation applicable to the County as a whole; and

**WHEREAS**, the County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) calls for the coordination of land uses and transportation facilities to, among other things, attract transit ridership, produce short trips, and minimize transfers; and

**WHEREAS**, the County's Future Land Use Map shows a Community Urban Center centered around the University Station; and

**WHEREAS**, providing for increased density and transit-oriented development adjacent to the County's existing mass transit system will increase ridership on the County's public transportation system and further the health, safety, order, convenience, prosperity and welfare of the present and future residents of the County; and

**WHEREAS**, in furtherance of the purposes of better coordinating land uses and transportation facilities, such as the University Station, and recognizing that transit oriented developments should be located on parcels within a close radius of rapid transit stations, this Board may in the future wish to include properties in the County's Rapid Transit Zone District (RTZ or RTZ Zoning District) where such properties are located within a quarter mile of University Station; and

**WHEREAS,** this Board wishes to create a new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ Zoning District, to provide standards and procedures which are similar to the standards previously adopted for other subzones of the RTZ but which also include standards, criteria and procedures that have been specifically designed and created for this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone; and

**WHEREAS,** this Board wishes to create procedures and criteria, with the goal of ensuring compatibility and consistency with such design and architectural standards; and

**WHEREAS,** in addition, the City of Coral Gables is well known for its ample tree canopy, and this Board wishes to ensure that the tree and landscaping requirements for this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone will be consistent with the tree canopy and landscaping goals that the City of Coral Gables has expressed and carried out elsewhere within its boundaries; and

**WHEREAS,** with respect to processes and procedures, the regulations governing this new Subzone would require applications for a special exception to be reviewed by the RTDIC, which is a committee that would include representation from the City of Coral Gables.

**WHEREAS,** as part of the development approval process, applicants would be requested to include proffered community benefits as part of an application in order to address or otherwise mitigate impacts from the proposed development, and depending on the particular application and the particular impacts, such proffered community benefits could potentially include pedestrian related improvements, off-site tree plantings, improvements related to stormwater management, public water and sewer infrastructure, or improvements related to transit; and

**WHEREAS,** this ordinance is intended to create this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ, together with its particular standards, procedures, processes, and criteria that have been developed in consideration of the particular character of the City of Coral Gables, while

also recognizing that the University Station is an existing Metrorail station and that promoting development on properties within a close vicinity of Metrorail stations would further the goals of the County's RTZ Zoning District, which have been well articulated in numerous ordinances related to the RTZ, including, but not limited, to Ordinance No. 21-33 and Ordinance No. 22-106; and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to creating this new RTZ subzone, this ordinance also adds one property to this new Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ; and

**WHEREAS**, the private property owner of the property located at 1250 Harriet Tubman Highway, identified by Folio Number 03-4130-004-0010, has requested to be included within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the RTZ and under the County's exclusive regulatory jurisdiction; and

**WHEREAS**, this Board seeks to include the above identified private property and to designate such property as under the County's exclusive regulatory jurisdiction,

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA:**

**Section 1.** The foregoing recitals are incorporated into this ordinance and are approved.

**Section 2.** Section 33C-18 of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida is hereby created to read as follows<sup>1</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup> Words stricken through and/or [[double bracketed]] shall be deleted. Words underscored and/or >>double arrowed<< constitute the amendment proposed. Remaining provisions are now in effect and remain unchanged.

>>**Sec. 33C-18. Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.**

- (A) *Purpose and Intent.* The following development review standards and criteria shall govern applications for initial plan approval of the general site development plan, and applications for final site plan review, for all development to be located within the boundaries of the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone established in this chapter. The standards set forth herein further the unique land use characteristics of this area, which lies within the City of Coral Gables, and are consistent with, and support the City's commitment to, design and architecture, trees and landscaping, principles of urban planning, including responding to the existing conditions of the City, and its natural features, infrastructure, and buildings, improved mobility, enhanced pedestrian environment, and the reduction of urban sprawl. Development in this subzone also addresses government service and infrastructure needs of this quickly growing area, and as may be appropriate to address impacts from proposed development, projects within this subzone are encouraged to incorporate public service, public infrastructure, or public benefit components.
- (B) *Boundaries.* The Coral Gables/University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone is hereby established; the boundaries of the subzone are identified in Exhibit 38 of Section 33C-2. The legal description and a full-scale map of the boundaries will be on file with the Department.
- (C) *Permitted Uses:* Permitted uses shall be in accordance with section 33C-10(C) relating to the Brickell Station Subzone, which are incorporated by reference herein.
- (D) *Review and approval process for development in the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.* Applications for development shall be governed by section 33C-3.1, which is incorporated by reference herein, except as follows:
- (1) The pre-application conference shall include two representatives, named by the City Manager, from the City of Coral Gables.
  - (2) *Initial review.*
    - (a) Following the pre-application conference, applications, including governmental facilities,

shall be presented to the RTDIC in accordance with section 33C-6 for a recommendation as to compliance with the requirements of this chapter.

(b) For purposes of this section, the City of Coral Gables shall have two representatives, named by the City Manager, on the RTDIC. The City's appointees shall all be individuals with technical expertise and professional degrees in at least one of the following areas: (i) transportation, (ii) architecture, (iii) engineering, or (iv) law.

(c) Within 60 days after the filing of the application, the RTDIC shall issue a recommendation upon such application. The recommendation shall reflect the consensus of the members present.

The recommendation shall be transmitted to the Board of County Commissioners for final action.

(3) *Final Review for development of the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone.*

(a) Following approval of the special exception, final review for all or a portion of the development shall be made and approved administratively by the Department in accordance with plans and documents approved by the Board of County Commissioners through an application for administrative site plan review ("ASPR") in accordance with section 33-284.88, except that the required dimensioned site plans shall include the additional information required by section 33C-3.1(C)(1)-(12).

(b) The Department review shall be guided by development and plan review standards established in this section.

(c) Applications for modification of an ASPR approved pursuant to this section, including applications for approval of a subsequent phase of a previously approved phased site plan, shall be considered and acted upon administratively, to the

extent consistent with the application approved by the Board of County Commissioners.

(E) Development Standards. Applications for development in the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone shall be governed by the following development regulations:

(1) Parking: The table below indicates minimum parking for each type of use.

<u>Use</u>	<u>Minimum Parking Requirements</u>
<u>Commercial/Retail, Restaurants, Bars, Convention Halls and Showrooms</u>	<u>1.8 spaces / 1000 SF</u>
<u>Office, Government, Institutional, Health Care Facilities</u>	<u>0.6 spaces / 1000 SF</u>
<u>Residential</u>	<u>0 spaces per unit</u>
<u>Hotels</u>	<u>0.3 spaces / room</u>
<u>Transit systems including Maintenance Facilities</u>	<u>0.6 spaces / 1000 SF (excluding platform)</u>
<u>Other Uses</u>	<u>50 percent of the required parking indicated in Section 33-124</u>

- (a) To minimize adverse visual effects of the structure(s), multi-story parking garages facing public and private streets, rights-of-way, and/or public open space shall utilize, but not be limited to: liner buildings; glazing; building wall extensions; vertical planted walls; berms; landscaping; architectural fenestration; sculpture; design features; or other innovative screening methods. Surface parking lots fronting streets shall be located a minimum of 10 feet from the right-of-way and screened at the 10-foot line with a wall having a maximum height of 3'6". The setback shall incorporate a combination of hard-scape and landscape elements finished to match the existing sidewalk.
- (b) Mechanized parking shall be allowed and, when provided, shall be exempt from the provisions of section 33-122. For the purpose of this Subzone, mechanized parking shall be

defined as a mechanism with vertical and horizontal transport capability that provides for automobile storage and retrieval. A mechanized parking space shall be counted toward the parking requirements of this Section. Mechanized parking may not be provided unless a queuing analysis is submitted and approved during the Administrative Site Plan Review process.

- (c) Required off-street parking for uses located within this Subzone may be located within one mile of the boundaries of the sub-zone. An applicant for approval of development with off-site parking shall execute and record in the public records of this County a declaration of restrictions, approved by the Director of the Department, covenanting that such development shall cease and terminate upon the elimination of such parking area, and that no development requiring such parking shall be made of such property until the required parking area is available and provided.

(2) Setbacks, cubic content, and lot size:

- (a) Due to the unique characteristics associated with the high-density or high-intensity, mixed-use developments contemplated for this sub-zone, there shall be no minimum setback from streets at grade and above the eighth floor, interior/rear property lines, and park rights-of-way.
- (b) There shall be no maximum or minimum limitation on the size of a floor plate.
- (c) There shall be no cubic content or minimum lot size requirements.

(3) Encroachments:

- (a) Buildings and structures above the ground floor may be built above colonnades and/or encroach into street setbacks but shall not extend into the public or private right-of-

way; except that a maximum of 100 percent of the street may be covered above the first floor with structures connecting buildings including: platforms fitted with trains and passenger waiting areas; roofs; upper story terraces, pedestrian bridges, automobile bridges between parking garages and parking garages. Adequate clearance for structures above streets shall be maintained.

- (b) Cantilevered balconies, awnings, weather protection elements and similar features with adequate vertical clearance may encroach into street rights-of-way but shall not extend closer than six inches from the curb face. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in section 28-18, Code of Miami-Dade County, structures necessary or appropriate to the structural support of a Fixed-Guideway Rapid Transit System or an Intercity Passenger Rail System shall be permitted to encroach on or in a mapped street.

- (4) *Floor Area Ratio and lot coverage:* The floor area ratio, lot coverage, and maximum square footage of buildings to be developed within the Subzone shall not be limited.

- (5) *Building Height:* The maximum building height shall be the lower of (i) the maximum allowed by MDAD in accordance with the zoning regulations for Miami International Airport in Chapter 33; or (ii) the maximum height of an existing building that was approved by the City of Coral Gables within a quarter mile of a proposed development.

- (6) *Open Space:* The minimum open space requirement shall be 15 percent of the gross development area. Open space shall include parks, plazas, balconies, terraces, courtyards, arcades/colonnades, pedestrian paths, rooftop green spaces above buildings and parking garages, and transit platform areas improved for pedestrian comfort.

- (7) *Signs:* Signs visible from public rights-of-way or public areas shall comply with section 33C-3.2. The

signage plan submitted with the application for final site plan review shall contain criteria, locations and sizes of signs.

- (8) *Density:* Residential density shall not exceed the maximum number of units allowed in the CDMP for Community Urban Centers or less if the maximum allowed under the CDMP for a particular property is less than what would be allowed for Community Urban Centers.
- (9) *Architectural Expression:* Building facades facing public and private street rights-of-way or public open space or both shall be a minimum 40 percent glazed. Glazing is not required for building facades that face the Metrorail rights-of-way or for above-grade parking garage structures that face public and private street rights-of-way or public open space; however, parking garages shall conform to the parking standards included herein. Blank walls facing public and private street rights-of-way and public open space shall be prohibited unless furnished with some type of artistic expression, such as sculpture, mosaic, and similar features.
- (10) *Landscaping:* Landscaping shall conform to the standards set forth in chapter 18 of this Code, provided that the following minimum standards are also met. In the event of any conflict between these standards and chapter 18, the stricter standard shall apply:
  - (a) *Lot trees:* A minimum of 30 trees per net acre of open space shall be provided. Trees may be placed in the lot, or in greens, squares, plazas and street medians within or in close proximity to this Subzone. Lot trees shall have a minimum 2-inch diameter at breast height.
  - (b) Street trees shall be planted at a maximum of 30 feet average on center, with a minimum 3-inch diameter at breast height. Street trees shall be placed inside landscaped strips, tree planters, and in medians in the right-of-way or on private property where demonstrated to

- be necessary due to right-of-way obstructions, as determined by the Department of Transportation and Public Works or its successor Department or other agency with jurisdiction.
- (c) The number, quality, and type of trees, including specified tree species, which would otherwise be required by the City of Coral Gables, as determined by the Director, shall be deemed to be a minimum standard. The Director may consult with the City of Coral Gables, as appropriate.
- (d) Landscaping, such as particular landscaping species or landscaping design, that may address or otherwise improve stormwater management shall be considered, to the extent otherwise consistent with all applicable standards in this Code.
- (11) *Service areas and mechanical equipment:* Service areas and fixtures shall be screened and located so as not to be visible from public and private rights-of-way or public open space. Mechanical equipment installed on roofs shall be screened from view by parapets or other architectural elements. Fixtures, including but not limited to backflow preventers, pumps, underground ventilation exhausts, and electrical vaults, shall be located within or to the side or rear of buildings; such fixtures shall not be located within the street setback area. Backflow preventers shall be shielded from view, as required by section 32-157(d).
- (F) *Plan Review Standards.* The purpose of the plan review standards is to encourage the creation of development within the Coral Gables/University Station Subzone that is consistent with the intent and purposes of these regulations, acts as a significant gateway for and destination to the area, and facilitates its future growth by designing and arranging buildings, public open space, transit, and street circulation in a manner that fosters around-the-clock pedestrian activity, serves the local and regional transit demands of the community, and encourages public service, infrastructure, or public benefit components to address the needs of a growing population.

- (1) A mix of uses in the design of development projects is encouraged to the maximum extent possible. Mixed-use buildings, including, without limitation, residential, commercial, office, hotel, and restaurants, are highly encouraged in combination with transit and other governmental facilities.
- (2) Developments shall provide direct pedestrian and vehicular connections to the adjacent block and street network.
  - (a) All developments shall provide vehicular passenger loading and unloading zones to: (i) accommodate passengers who use vehicles for hire or transportation network companies; and (ii) minimize impacts of passenger loading and unloading on the surrounding roadway network. A loading or unloading zone that is shared among adjacent or adjoining parcels may be permitted, provided that a safe pedestrian route to each parcel is provided.
  - (b) Pedestrian crosswalks providing safe passage from adjoining streets and blocks into the development project of the Subzone shall be installed at street corners and, if practicable, midblock locations.
  - (c) Crosswalks shall be distinguished from other street elements by the use of conspicuous materials, texture and color.
- (3) Public open space in the form of plazas, squares, greens, and landscaped areas shall be incorporated in the design of all development projects at grade or on above-grade surfaces. The public open spaces should have a scale that is compatible and complementary with the intensity of proposed development, and their design should relate to the development's concept. Landscaping, furniture, art, paved pedestrian paths, and lighting, among other features, should be used to enhance the open spaces pedestrian experience.

- (4) Consideration should be given to providing landscaping in a manner that reduces the heat island effect of the development on the urban environment.
- (5) All new development shall strive to meet certification standards from Florida Green Building Coalition or a similar organization.
- (6) Developments shall be designed with a coordinated outdoor lighting and signage system that is an integral part of the project and compatible and harmonious with existing and proposed development in the sub-zone and with surrounding uses. Signage should clearly indicate locations of, and guide pedestrians and vehicles to, proposed parking areas, transit facilities, permitted uses, and surrounding activities and uses.
- (7) Proposed building scale should be in harmony with building scales allowed by applicable City of Coral Gables regulations for surrounding properties. Buildings and their landscapes shall be built to the sidewalk edge in a manner that frames the adjacent street to create public space in the street corridor that is comfortable and interesting, as well as safe for pedestrians. Architectural elements at street level shall have abundant fenestration, windows and doors and design elements that create interest for the pedestrian.
- (8) Proposed development in the Subzone shall provide connections via bridges, paths, sidewalks, or a combination of such features to adjacent or nearby Metrorail systems.
- (9) Proposed building aesthetic should be in harmony with the building aesthetic permitted by the City of Coral Gables for surrounding properties. The maximum building height may not exceed the height of any existing buildings approved by the City within a quarter-mile radius.
- (G) Amendments. At least six weeks prior to the scheduled public hearing of any amendments to this section 33C-18, the County shall mail or e-mail a copy of the proposed ordinance

to the City Clerk and the City Attorney of the City of Coral Gables. The communication to the City shall include the date of the scheduled public hearing.

(H) Public Benefits.

- (1) It is further provided that, in the review of an application for public hearing other than for a governmental facility, each reviewing agency shall provide a statement as to the proposed development's impact on public facilities and services, including assessment of impacts beyond minimum concurrency requirements pursuant to chapter 33G and minimum subdivision requirements pursuant to chapter 28. The reviewing agency may recommend additional improvements to address such identified impacts.
- (2) Approval of such public hearing application may be conditioned on the provision of improvements recommended by a reviewing agency and of such other public service, public infrastructure, or public benefits improvements as the Board may determine to be appropriate to address the impacts of the new development on rapid transit infrastructure and on other properties or public facilities or infrastructure surrounding the proposed development area. Such improvements may include, without limitation: improvements to rapid transit infrastructure or surrounding roadways; mobility connections to the Rapid Transit System or other buildings or facilities in the surrounding area; emergency services facilities; educational facilities; public parks or public open spaces; tree canopy enhancements; public water and sewer infrastructure; improvements related to stormwater management; or affordable housing.<<

**Section 3.** Section 33C-2 of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida is hereby amended to read as follows:

**Sec. 33C-2. Rapid Transit Zone: definitions; designation of lands included; County jurisdiction; municipal services; occupational license taxes; municipal impact fees.**

\* \* \*

(B) *Designation of lands included in the Rapid Transit Zone.*

- (2) The Board of County Commissioners hereby designates, as necessary for the construction, operation, maintenance, and support of the County's Rapid Transit System, and includes within the Rapid Transit Zone, all land areas (including surface, subsurface, and appurtenant airspace) shown on the following exhibits bearing the following effective dates, certified by the Clerk of the Board as a portion of this chapter, incorporated herein by reference, and transmitted to the custody of the Department: Exhibit 1, July 31, 1998; Exhibits 2 through 9 and Exhibits 11 through 16, July 13, 1979; Exhibit 10, May 26, 1983; Exhibit 17, February 13, 2014; Exhibit 18, February 1, 2020; Exhibit 19, February 1, 2020; Exhibit 20, December 27, 2019; Exhibit 21, June 12, 2020; and Exhibit 22(A), October 13, 2023, and Exhibit 22(B), February 14, 2025; Exhibit 23, December 11, 2021; Exhibits 24-26, and 28-31 and >>33,<< 34, September 11, 2022, ~~[[and]]~~ Exhibit 35, May 17, 2024, ~~[[Exhibit 33, July 12, 2024]]~~; ~~[[and]]~~ Exhibit 36, October 11, 2024 >> and Exhibit 38, insert effective date<<.

\* \* \*

**Section 4.** This Board hereby directs the County Mayor or County Mayor's designee to coordinate and negotiate with the City of Coral Gables to develop an interlocal agreement between Miami-Dade County and the City of Coral Gables related to any additional concerns or considerations which may arise in the future with respect to this ordinance and the RTZ process, including for example, additional points for formal input from the City of Coral Gables and how such processes would best work together with the City of Coral Gables' existing processes and existing staffing. Such interlocal agreement would not be required and would be subject to

negotiation. Should the County Mayor and the City of Coral Gables negotiate the terms of a proposed interlocal agreement, such interlocal agreement would come back to this Board for approval after such negotiation. The City shall have 30 days from the effective date of this Ordinance to initiate such negotiation if it so chooses and 90 days from the effective of this Ordinance for an interlocal agreement to be approved by both governments and executed.

**Section 5.** If any section, subsection, sentence, clause or provision of this ordinance is held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected by such invalidity.

**Section 6.** It is the intention of the Board of County Commissioners, and it is hereby ordained that the provisions of this ordinance, including any sunset provision, shall become and be made a part of the Code of Miami-Dade County, Florida. The sections of this ordinance may be renumbered or relettered to accomplish such intention, and the word "ordinance" may be changed to "section," "article," or other appropriate word.

**Section 7.** This ordinance shall become effective ten (10) days after the date of enactment unless vetoed by the Mayor, and if vetoed, shall become effective only upon an override by this Board.

PASSED AND ADOPTED:

Approved by County Attorney as  
to form and legal sufficiency:

Prepared by:

Lauren E. Morse  
Abbie Schwaderer Raurell

MAG for GBK  
JEM

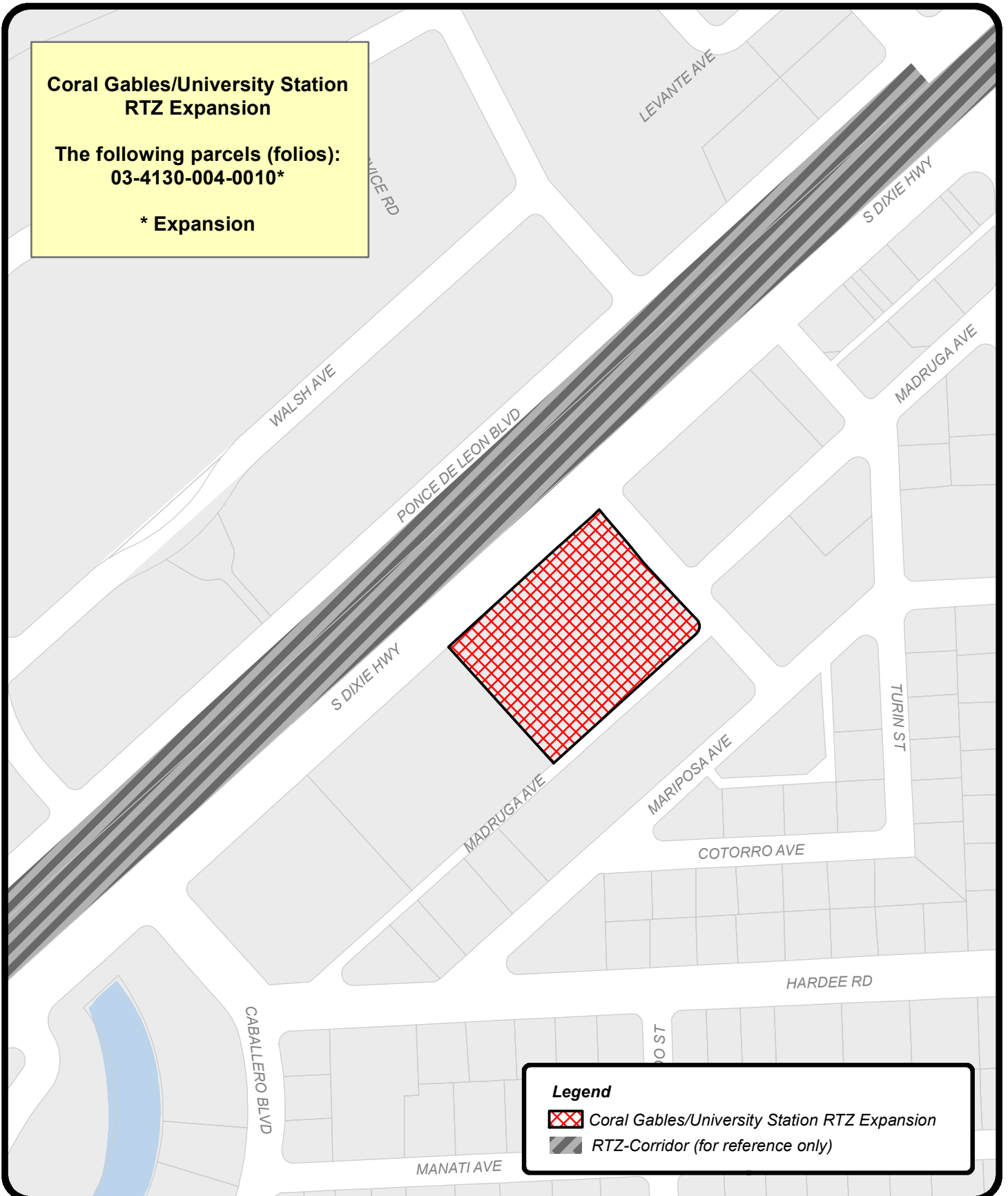
Prime Sponsor: Commissioner Raquel A. Regalado

# EXHIBIT 38

## Coral Gables/University Station RTZ Expansion



The following parcels (folios):  
03-4130-004-0010\*

\* Expansion

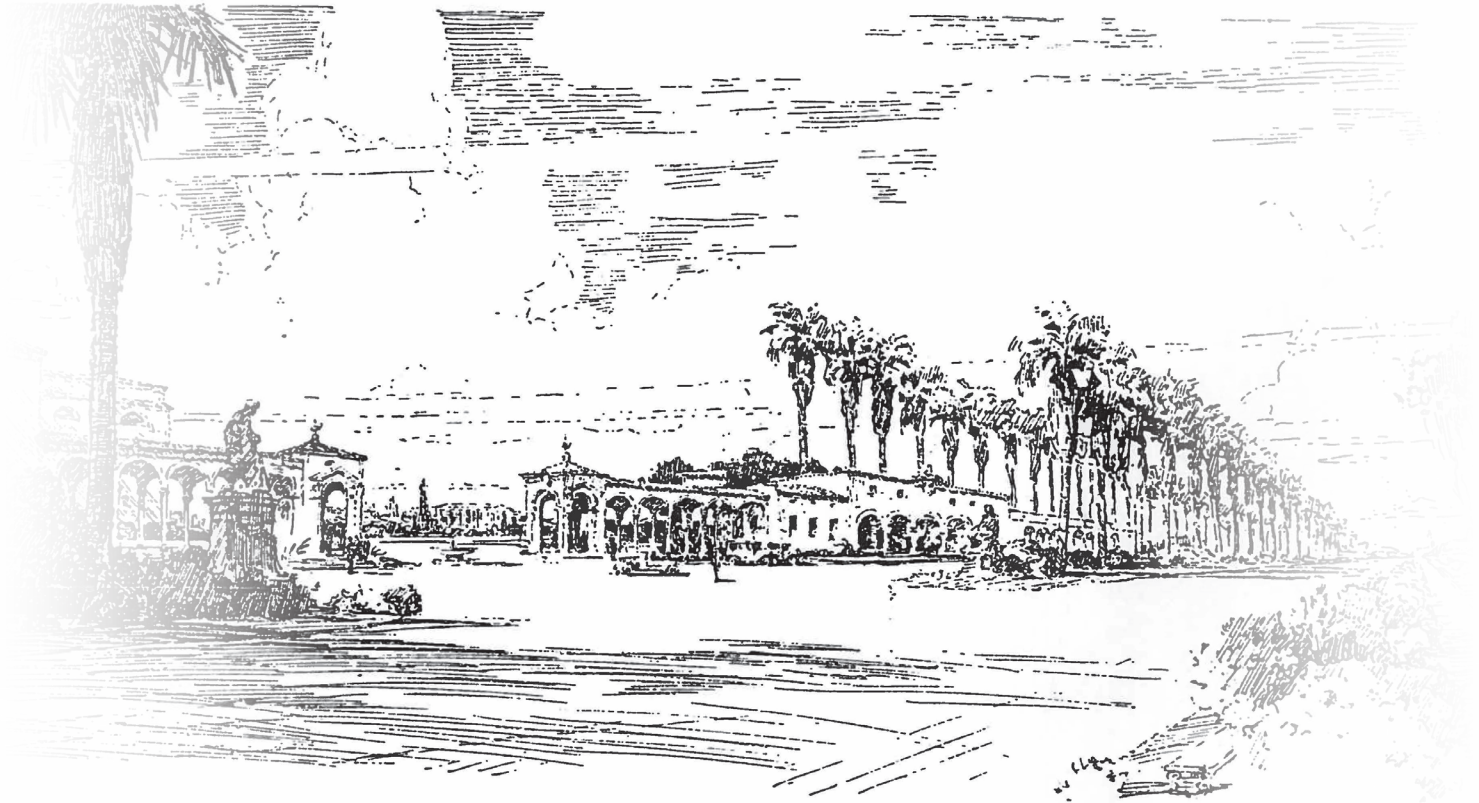


□ Full scale maps are on file with the department

### Legend

-  Coral Gables/University Station RTZ Expansion
-  RTZ-Corridor (for reference only)





*Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse*

# UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan Map Amendments  
and Zoning Code Map & Text Amendments

*Zoning regulations to improve housing opportunities near the University Metrorail Station  
and to encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities.*

Prepared by City of Coral Gables Planning Division Staff  
DRAFT June 2025

---

## *Planning for a Rapid Transit Street On US-1*

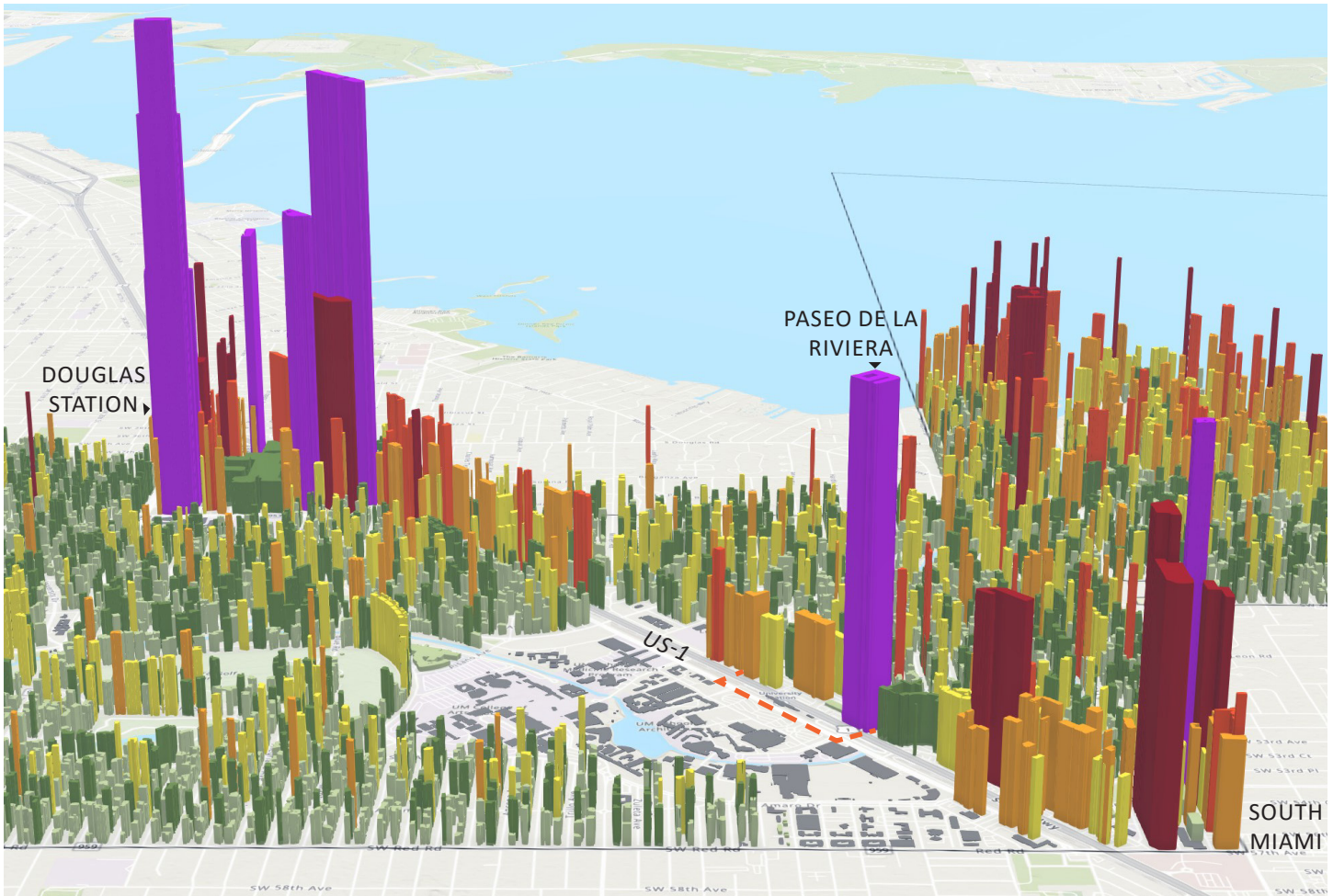
The US-1 corridor within the City of Coral Gables is a quickly developing commercial corridor. Buildings along the southeast side of US-1 include a mix of older, single-story retail development and strip malls, with the tallest building on US-1, Gables One Tower, that sits on a parking level surrounded by a wall, and The Paseo de la Riviera, a recently constructed mixed-use building.

The University Metrorail Station is located on the University of Miami (UM) campus side of US-1 and is connected to the south by a pedestrian bridge. The area is planned for parks, a greenway, bikeways, and popup retail with soon-to-be-constructed Underline. The UM campus frontage is dominated by a parking lot screened by shrubs and fencing.



---

## Revenue Model



To the southeast of these commercial developments are multiple blocks of low density multi-family and duplexes. Immediately south is the established residential Riviera neighborhood.

Redevelopment along US-1 has occurred primarily near the Douglas Doad Metrorail Station and the City of South Miami. The only recent redevelopment on the corridor between those two development nodes is the Paseo de la Riviera development. This recently-constructed mixed-use development shows significant revenue in this immediate area on a 2024 revenue model diagram. While the diagram illustrates that many existing

development patterns have proven to grow value over time and provide for a high quality of life and welfare for the community, this segment of US-1 provides relatively low revenue and value in the city.

This segment of US-1 is also designated to be a “Community Urban Center” on the Miami-Dade County’s SMART Corridor plan. As such, a Coral Gables / University Station Sub-Zone has been recently proposed by the County and is currently being considered to preempt the City’s Zoning regulations and processes.

# Mixed-Use Districts (Zoning Map)



## LEGEND

--- Proposed District Boundary

Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)

Mixed-Use 2 (MX2)

Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)

Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1)

Multi-Family 2 (MF2)

Multi-Family 3 (MF3)



Multi-Family 4 (MF4)

Preservation (P)

Single-Family Residential (SFR)

Special Use (S)

University Campus District (UCD)



# Commercial Intensities (Future Land Use Map)



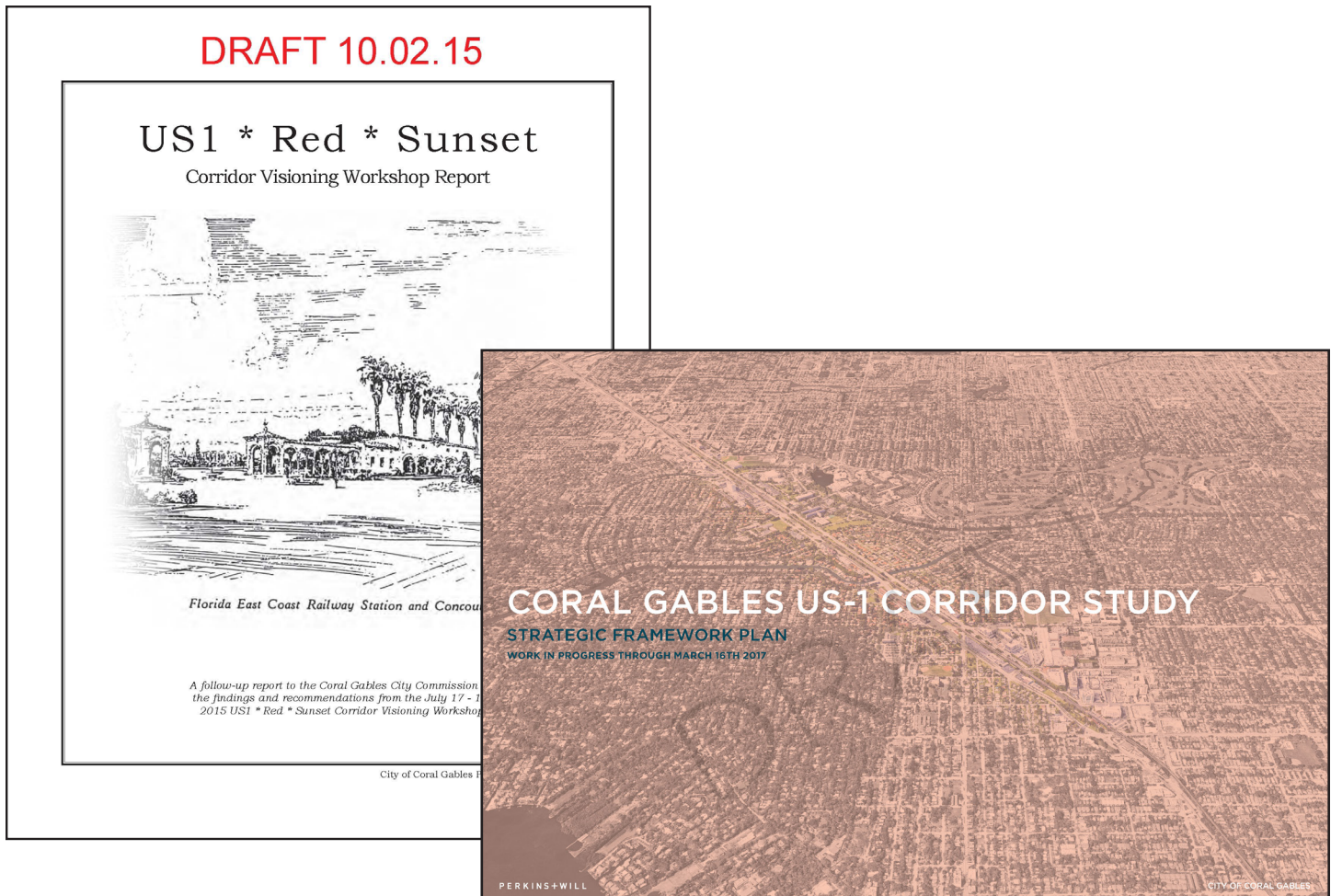
## LEGEND

Proposed District Boundary

Commercial High Rise Intensity	Industrial Use	Park and Recreational Use
Commercial Low-Rise Intensity	Mixed Use	Public Buildings and Grounds
Commercial Medium Rise Intensity	Multi Family Duplex Density	Religious or Institutional
Conservation Areas	Multi Family High Density	Single Family High Density
Educational Use	Multi Family Low Density	Single Family Low Density
Hospital Use	Multi Family Medium Density	University Use
	Open Space	

---

## Past Planning Initiatives



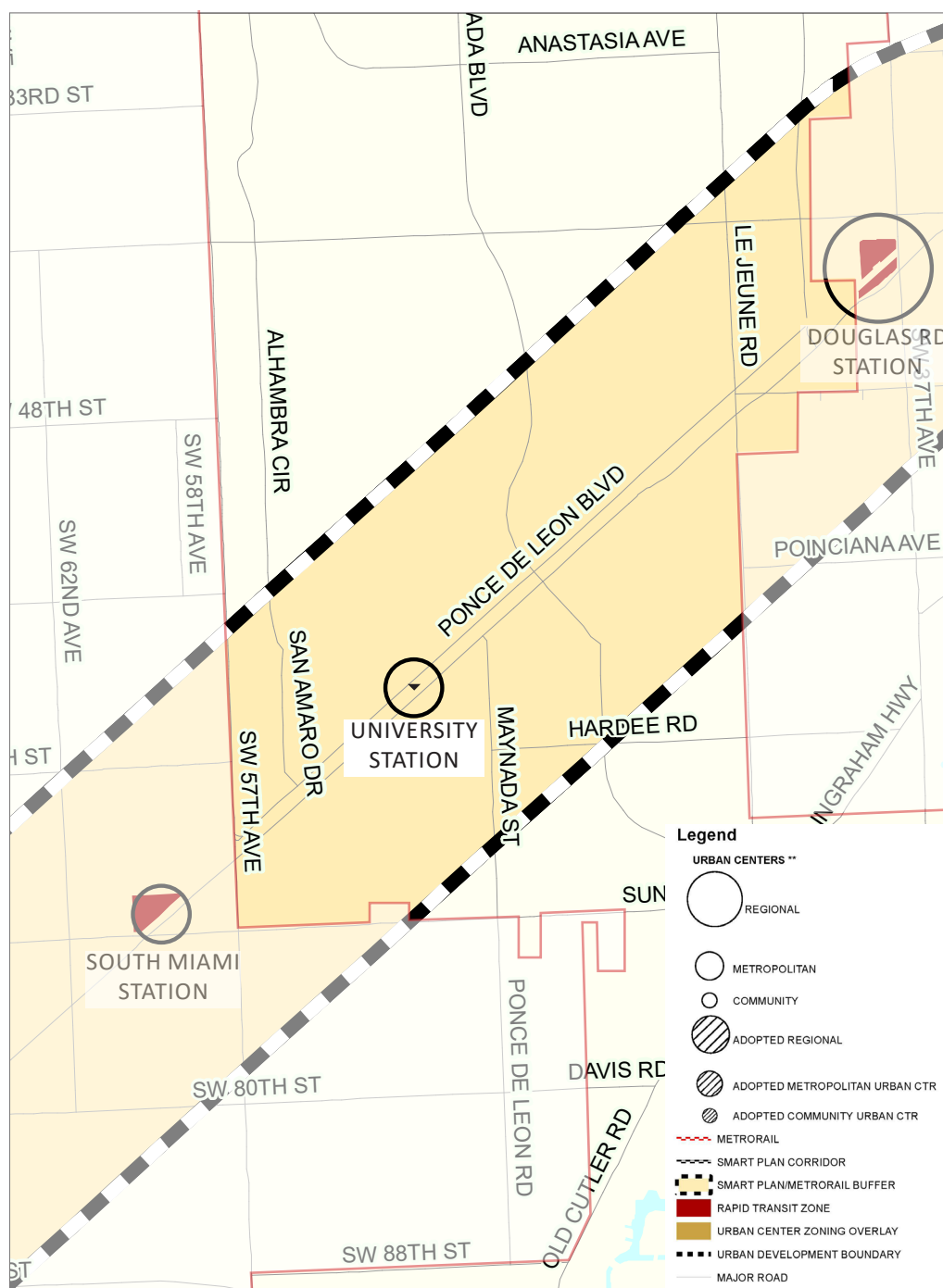
The US-1 corridor has been discussed multiple times for several years. Most recently, the City initiated a visioning workshop in 2015. Part of the recommendations from the public input collected at the workshops included the need to prepare a transit-oriented zoning overlay, with requirements for building massing and setbacks; guidelines for paseos and public spaces; parking requirements and shared parking strategies; and enhanced sidewalk requirements on US-1.

In 2016-17, the City hired Perkins Will to create a strategic framework plan for the US-1 Corridor. After

a series of public workshops with the community, the work of the study slowed down and was canceled. In-progress recommendations were similar to the 2015 study with tree canopy and wide sidewalks; reduction of parking lots along US-1; increase pedestrian safety and wider sidewalks along US-1; and reduce vehicular access from properties on US-1.

While many of the recommendations were adopted with the Zoning Code Update in 2021, the land use and zoning maps have not been changed to reflect redevelopment on US-1.

# Miami-Dade County SMART Corridor



Miami-Dade County's SMART plan identifies the University Station as a Community Urban Center.

The County has actively been adopting rapid transit sub-zones at each Metrorail station, including Douglas Road and Palmetto Bay.

## *General Regulations*

	<i>Current Regulations</i>		<i>County Proposed RTZ</i>	<i>City Proposed District</i>
<b>Review</b>	Change of land use / Zoning and Conditional Use		Special exception review/ approval	Expedited review (see Sec. 2-408.D(9))
<b>Future Land Use</b>	Commercial Low-Rise	Commercial High Rise	Business and Office	Commercial High-Rise Intensity
<b>Zoning</b>	Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)	Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)	RTZ-SMART Corridor	Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)
<b>Height (ft)</b>	45	150	Max height of existing buildings w/in ¼-mile (150')	120 (no Med Bonus height) (+13.5 w/ 5% public open space) 147 maximum
<b>Density</b>	125		125	125
<b>FAR</b>	3.0 (1.5 per Site Specifics)		No Limit	3.0
<b>Med Bonus</b>	+0.2, +0.3 additional (3.5 FAR total)		-	+0.2, +0.3 additional (3.5 FAR total)
<b>Use of TDRs</b>	Not allowed for this area		-	3.75 FAR w/o Med Bonus 4.375 FAR w/ Med Bonus (25% max additional)
<b>Setbacks</b>	20 feet (10 feet with arcade) on US-1 (Front: 125 feet, Rear: 50 feet, per Site Specifics)		0 ft	20 feet (10 feet with arcade) on all parcels facing US-1; 25 feet rear setback with landscape buffer on 300'+ parcels
<b>Open Space</b>	10% on ground level		15% (incl. upper floor terraces)	10% on ground level (incl. setback areas)
<b>Stepbacks (ft) and Paseos</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Front/side street: 10' step-back above 45'</li> <li>Int. side: 15' stepback above 45'</li> <li>Rear w/out alley: 10' step-back above 45'</li> <li>Rear w/ alley: 3' stepback above 45'</li> </ul>		None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US-1: 30' stepback above 100'</li> <li>Fronting adjacent residential districts: 10' stepback above 45'</li> <li>No paseo required</li> </ul>
<b>Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 per studio/1-bd</li> <li>1.75 per 2-bd</li> <li>2.25 per 3-bd +</li> <li>1 per 300 sf comm, office</li> <li>1 1/8 per hotel room</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 per residential unit</li> <li>1.8 per 1,000sf comm.</li> <li>0.6 per 1,000sf office</li> <li>0.3 per hotel room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking required, except for ground floor restaurant, retail, residential.</li> <li>Reduction: 50%</li> <li>Waiver for 25% w/ parking plan and Remote Parking</li> </ul>

---

---

## *Total Required Requests*

1. Future Land Use Map Amendments:

- Change to Commercial High-Rise Intensity; and
- Create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”

2. Mixed Use Overlay Districts Map Amendment:

- Create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”

3. Zoning Map Amendment:

- Change Mixed-Use 1 (MX1) to Mixed-Use 3 (MX3).

4. Zoning Code Text Amendments:

- Remove inconsistent Site Specifics within district in Appendix A and US-1;
- Add District as TDR receiving site in Article 14; and
- Insert new “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.”

# Proposed Future Land Use Map Amendment



## LEGEND

Proposed District Boundary

Commercial High Rise Intensity	Industrial Use	Park and Recreational Use
Commercial Low-Rise Intensity	Mixed Use	Public Buildings and Grounds
Commercial Medium Rise Intensity	Multi Family Duplex Density	Religious or Institutional
Conservation Areas	Multi Family High Density	Single Family High Density
Educational Use	Multi Family Low Density	Single Family Low Density
Hospital Use	Multi Family Medium Density	University Use
	Open Space	

# Proposed Zoning Map Amendment



## LEGEND

--- Proposed District Boundary

Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)

Mixed-Use 2 (MX2)

Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)

Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1)

Multi-Family 2 (MF2)

Multi-Family 3 (MF3)

Multi-Family 4 (MF4)

Preservation (P)

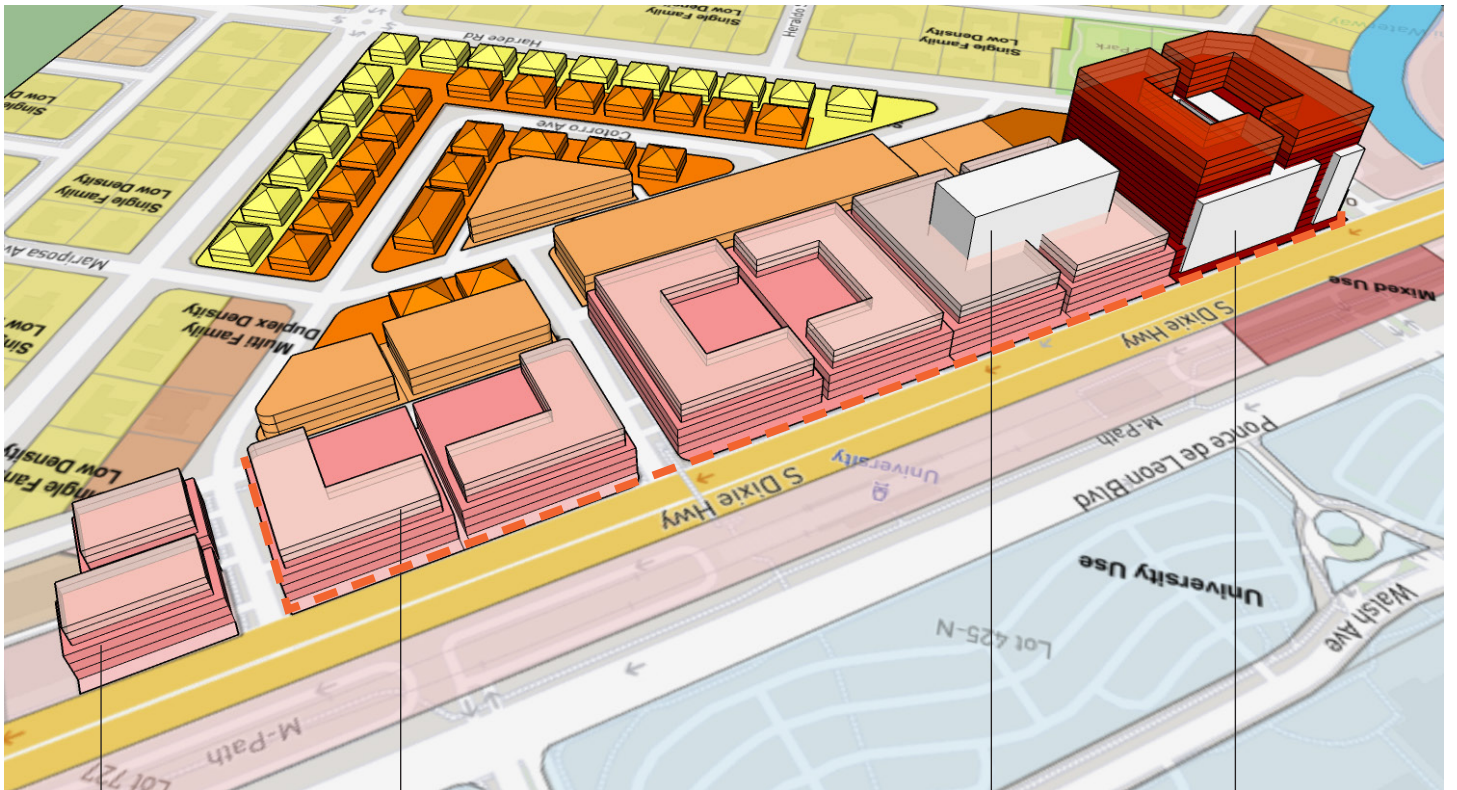
Single-Family Residential (SFR)

Special Use (S)

University Campus District (UCD)

---

## *Massing Comparison - Existing*



Height Allowed  
by Mixed-use 1

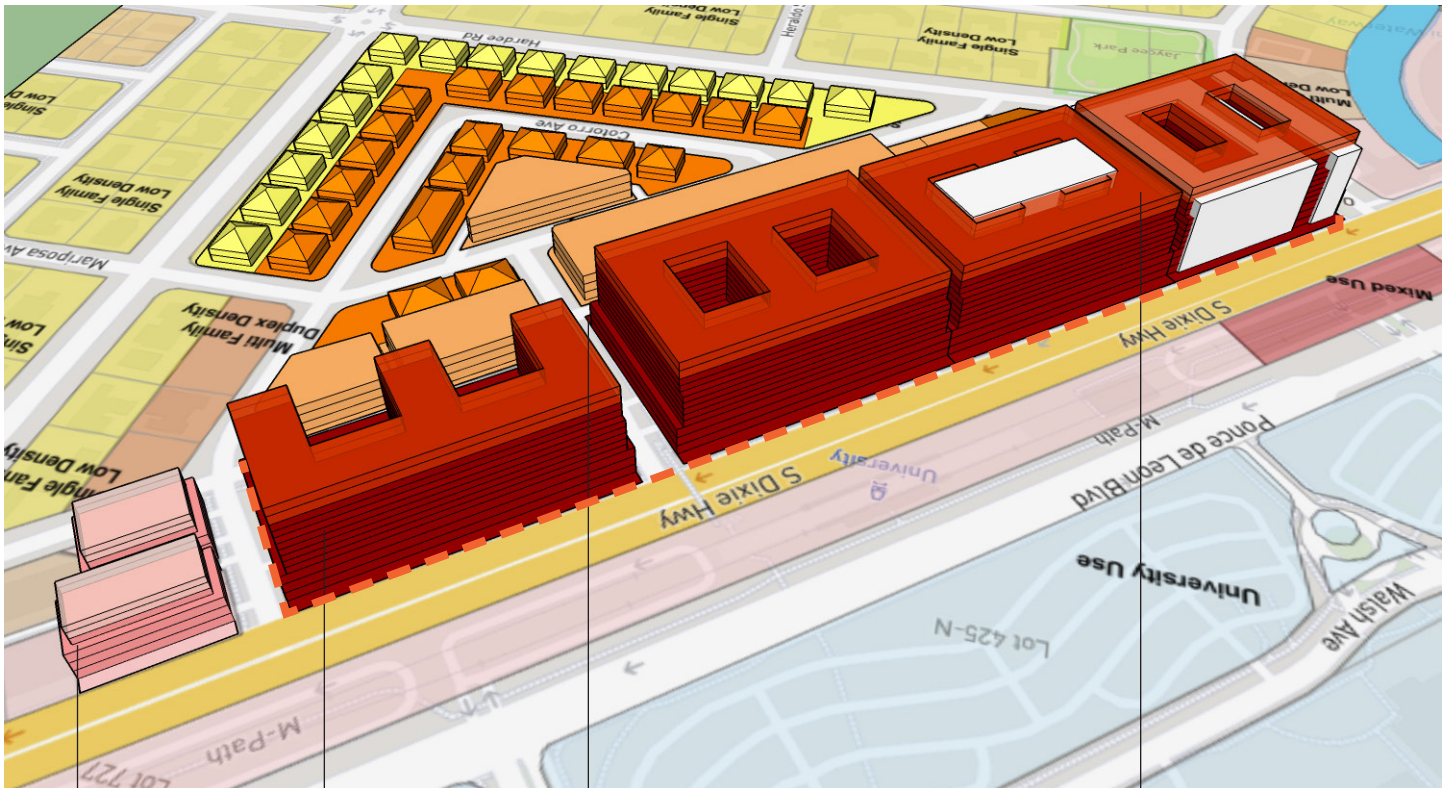
Height Allowed by  
Med Bonus II

Existing UM  
Office Tower

Existing Mixed-  
use Tower

---

## *Massing Comparison - Proposed*



Height Allowed  
by Mixed-use 1

Height Allowed by  
Proposed District

Additional Rear Setback  
Requirement

Height Allowed by  
Open Space Bonus

---

---

# *Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment*

## *Create a new Rapid Transit District Overlay in the Zoning Code to address a unified character for the University Station area and provide tailored regulations for high-quality development.*

### Section 2-400. District Overlays.

The several Overlay Districts provide mandatory additional regulations for specific areas within the Multi-Family (MF) and Mixed Use (MX) Districts. The District Overlays include:

- Central Business District Overlay (CBD)
- Zain/Friedman Miracle Mile Downtown District Overlay (DO)
- Giralda Plaza District Overlay
- North Ponce Neighborhood Conservation District Overlay (NPCO)
- Residential Infill Regulations Overlay (RIR)
- Design & Innovation District Overlay
- North Ponce Mixed Use District Overlay
- University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay

\*\*\*

### Section 2-408. University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.

#### A. Purpose and applicability.

1. The purpose of the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay is to implement the goals, objectives, and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan to locate higher density development along transit corridors and near multimodal stations. These standards are consistent with the intent and provisions of Miami-Dade County's Rapid Transit Zone that provide for transit-oriented development adjacent to the existing mass transit system.

2. The District is established in order to maintain the following objectives:

- a. Enhance the aesthetic and physical character of US-1 corridor that are consistent with the high-quality design and architecture of the City.
- b. Promote and encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor by requiring pedestrian-oriented building design and site planning.
- c. Provide greater housing opportunities in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions that are not in environmentally vulnerable and sensitive areas.

d. Foster the activation of public areas and streets with a consistent design intent regarding ground floor building design, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike infrastructure, pedestrian amenities, and other elements in the public right-of-way.

e. Provide public benefits for adjacent residential neighborhoods to address the potential impacts of new developments that could degrade the aesthetics and welfare of the adjacent neighborhood.

#### 3. Applicability.

a. The District applies to properties within a quarter-mile and as identified as "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" on the official Zoning Map of the City of Coral Gables.

b. Unless otherwise provided in this section, all provisions of applicable underlying zoning district designations affecting an individual property shall control use and development.

c. All of the standards provided below shall be mandatory for properties seeking approval pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay.

#### B. Regulations.

1. Building sites. Buildings on building sites within the District of twenty-thousand (20,000) square feet or more, or with street frontage of two hundred (200) feet or more, shall require review and approval by the City Commission.

#### 2. Height.

a. MX3 properties in the District shall be at a maximum height of one hundred and twenty (120) feet. Additional bonus heights with architectural incentives shall not apply.

b. An additional thirteen feet and six inches (13.5) of building height may be granted by the City Commission for each additional five (5%) percent of landscaped open space provided as on-site publicly accessible open space to a maximum building height of one hundred and forty-seven (147) feet.

c. Height of architectural elements may exceed the maximum height in the District by a maximum of twenty-five (25) feet.

---

### 3. Use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).

Building sites within the District may receive Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) for a maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 4.375, pursuant to Section 14-204.5.

### 4. Setbacks and Stepbacks.

- a. US-1: Up to one hundred (100) feet in height: twenty (20) feet setback, except an arcade may encroach into the setback a maximum of ten (10) feet. If over one hundred (100) feet in height: thirty (30) feet stepback.
- b. Fronting adjacent residential districts: Up to forty-five (45) feet in height: no setback. If over forty-five (45) feet in height: ten (10) feet stepback.
- c. Adjacent residential districts: For building sites with a depth greater than three hundred (300) feet, a rear setback of twenty-five (25) feet with a landscaped buffer shall be required.

### 5. Ground floor design.

- a. The first four (4) stories, at a minimum, shall be designed to activate the street with habitable space of twenty (20) feet minimum depth and with consistent high-quality materials, such as natural stone, cast iron, and other materials.
- b. Any storage of vehicles or off-street parking that is above grade shall occur behind the provided habitable space.
- c. Ground floor commercial or residential shall be accessed from the public sidewalk.
- d. Commercial and residential entrances shall be located adjacent to transit stops or to access to multimodal stations.

### 6. Open space and landscape.

- a. The building and open space frontage on US-1 shall be coordinated with existing and proposed public realm enhancements to ensure a unified and pedestrian-friendly public space.
- b. Pedestrian shading shall be provided with building arcades, overhangs, or shade trees that foster pedestrian activity.
- c. Plant species or landscape design that improves stormwater management shall be provided.
- d. A paseo shall not be required for any building length.

### 7. Parking.


- a. Ground floor retail, residential, and restaurants shall be exempt from the parking requirements.
- b. Developments within five hundred (500) feet of the station entrance may receive a parking reduction of fifty percent (50%) maximum. An additional twenty-five (25%) reduction may be granted with a parking plan that demonstrates the necessary amount of parking for each individual development.
- c. Properties shall be eligible to use remote parking in a parking structure that is located within 1000' of the subject site, pursuant to Section 10-108.B.
- d. Off-street parking shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the front property line and shall be screened with habitable linear space. Off-street parking is prohibited within the setback.

### 8. Public Benefit.

- a. Landscaping, furniture, shade, water features, art, and other pedestrian amenities shall be incorporated on and off-site to enhance pedestrian activity.
- b. Developments shall provide sidewalks, crosswalks, safety improvements to intersections, mobility pathways, and other pedestrian connections to adjacent or nearby multi-modal systems.
- c. Potential impacts of new development on rapid transit infrastructure, adjacent properties, or public facilities shall be addressed with improvements to the transit system infrastructure, connections to transit, traffic calming, emergency services facilities, public parks or public open spaces, tree canopy enhancements, public infrastructure, and other improvements.

### 9. Expedited Design Review.

All proposed buildings shall be reviewed by the Board of Architects and receive preliminary design approval within four (4) full board meetings. If approval has not been granted within four (4) reviews by the full board, the Applicant may request final review and approval by a panel of Special Masters, per Section 14-103.3.

	<b>City of Coral Gables</b> <b>Notice of Public Hearing</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>City of Coral Gables</b>	
<b>Application:</b>	<b>University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District</b>	
<b>Property:</b>	<b>1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway</b>	
<b>Public Hearing - Date/Time/ Location:</b>	<b>Planning &amp; Zoning Board</b> Wednesday, July 2, 2025, 6:00 p.m.  City Commission Chambers, City Hall, 405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida, 33134 e-comments: <a href="http://www.CoralGables.GranicusIdeas.com/meetings">www.CoralGables.GranicusIdeas.com/meetings</a>	

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the City of Coral Gables, Florida, Planning & Zoning Board will conduct a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, July 2, 2025**, for map and text amendments to the Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan and to the Zoning Code to create the “University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District” adjacent to the University Metrorail Station. The proposed District includes the parcels fronting the station bounded by South Dixie Hwy, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Ave, and Turin St. The proposed amendments align with the goal and intent of Miami-Dade County’s initiative to designate the area as a SMART Corridor Subzone. The proposed overlay district would better coordinate future development of similar building scales with the existing developments.

The requests require three public hearings, including review and recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board, and 1st and 2nd Reading before the City Commission. (Ordinance Format)

1. **Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use and Mixed-Use Overlay Districts Maps.** *An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, amending the Future Land Use Map and Mixed-Use Overlay Districts Map of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” and Small Scale amendment procedures (ss. 163.3187, Florida Statutes), from “Commercial Low-Rise Intensity” to “Commercial High-Rise Intensity” and to create the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, Tract “A,” Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway); providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.*
2. **Zoning Code and Map.** *An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for map and text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-212, “Zoning Code Text and Map Amendments,” by 1) amending Article 2, “Zoning Districts,” to create Section 2-408, “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” for promoting the use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along transit corridors and near multimodal stations; 2) amending Appendix A, “Site Specific Zoning Regulations,”*

*to remove inconsistent Site Specifics; 3) amending Article 14, "Process," Section 14-204, "Transfer of Development Rights," to expand Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) receiving sites to the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay," and 4) making Zoning District boundary changes from "Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)" to "Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)" and including within the "University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay" boundary for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, and Tract "A," Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8, which are the properties bounded by South Dixie Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and Turin Street (1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway), and to create the "University Station Rapid Transit District;" providing for repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.*

Additional information may be found at [www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com). Please forward to other interested parties.

The meeting will also be via Zoom at [www.zoom.us/j/83788709513](https://www.zoom.us/j/83788709513). A dedicated phone line will also be available by dialing: (305) 461-6769, Meeting ID: 837 8870 9513.

The public may also comment on an item on the agenda by sending an email to [planning@coralgables.com](mailto:planning@coralgables.com) prior to the day before the scheduled meeting.

Sign up to receive future public notices via email at <https://shorturl.at/N3X6w>.

Sincerely,

*City of Coral Gables, Florida*

**Menendez, Jill**

---

**From:** Alexandra Szczupak <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:57 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

#### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Alexandra Szczupak  
a.aserind@gmail.com

6304 caballero Blvd  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Betty Mortenson <pinesdavis@bellsouth.net>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2025 1:53 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Betty Mortenson

[pinesdavis@bellsouth.net](mailto:pinesdavis@bellsouth.net)

1218 Aduana Avenue  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Carlos Alarcon <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 7:45 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Carlos Alarcon  
tarregamon@gmail.com

6627 Tarrega Street  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Carmen Ortizbutcher MD <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 1:31 AM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Carmen Ortizbutcher MD  
islandclinic@yahoo.com

6305 Caballero blvd  
Coral gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Cathy Burnweit <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 4:01 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Cathy Burnweit  
cburnweit@aol.com

6304 Caballero Blvd  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Cesar Carvalho <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 11:05 AM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Cesar Carvalho  
cesarluisbraga@gmail.com

6308 Caballero Blvd  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Denise Barros <dedinba@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 24, 2025 8:49 PM  
**To:** Lago, Vince; Anderson, Rhonda; Fernandez, Ariel; Castro, Melissa; Lara, Richard; district7@miamidade.gov  
**Cc:** Planning; City Clerk  
**Subject:** VOTE NO to July 2 MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning Changes (University Station / Caballero Blvd Area) and KEEP your campaign promises

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

My name is Denise Carvalho, and I live at 6308 Caballero Blvd, Coral Gables, 33146. I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

- 1150 South Dixie Highway
- 1190 South Dixie Highway
- 1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)
- 1320 South Dixie Highway
- 1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

### 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

- Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”
- Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”
- Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, *“I will vote the way the residents want.”* We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

### 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garagemeans months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat trafficfrom hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

But Mrs Regalado, on her 2025 campaign website, states that she is committed to advocating for “responsible urban planning” and “defense of our natural resources”. She also states that she leads the fight to protect Biscayne Bay.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents. And we expect our county commissioner of district 7 to protect Coral Gables environment and promote responsible urban development.

### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

- **Traffic:** South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within ¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.
- **Sewage and Stormwater:** Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.
- **Emergency Services:** Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

### 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

## Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

1. Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.
2. Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.
3. Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don’t allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park.
4. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

## In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone’s campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please add this as a written comment to the July 2nd hearing.

Best regards, Denise

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Eric Aserlind <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 4:59 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Eric Aserlind  
easerlind@gmail.com

6304 Caballero blvd  
Coral gables , Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Gigi Citarella <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 27, 2025 1:15 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Gigi Citarella

[gigicitarella@yahoo.com](mailto:gigicitarella@yahoo.com)

1225 Aduana Avenue  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Jorge Pereira <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:52 AM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Jorge Pereira

japereira@bellsouth.net

807 South Alhambra Circle  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Lisa Pereira <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 1:30 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Lisa Pereira

lfpereira@bellsouth.net

807 South Alhambra Circle  
Coral gables , Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Nancy Del Pozzo <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 7:44 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

#### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

#### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Nancy Del Pozzo

nancydelpozzo@gmail.com

6627 Tarrega Street  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Siena Devine Guzmán <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 26, 2025 8:39 AM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Siena Devine Guzmán

sienadg@icloud.com

927 Hardee Rd  
Coral Gables , Florida 33146

## Menendez, Jill

---

**From:** Tracy Devine Guzmán <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 25, 2025 11:07 PM  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** VOTE NO July 2nd MX-3 Overlay and Up-Zoning

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.**

Planning City Planning,

Dear Mayor Lago, Vice-Mayor Anderson, Commissioners, and Commissioner Regalado,

I am writing on behalf of my family and many Riviera & South Gables neighbors who will also contact you. We urge you to VOTE “NO” to the proposed University Station Rapid Transit Overlay and associated up-zonings that convert the following low-rise parcels from MX-1 (≈ 45 ft / 3.5 stories) to MX-3 (≈ 190 ft / 14 stories + bonuses):

1150 South Dixie Highway

1190 South Dixie Highway

1250 South Dixie Highway (site of \*The Mark\*—already denied a MX-2 jump in 2024)

1320 South Dixie Highway

1350 South Dixie Highway

Although not explicitly named, the adjacent parcel at 6100 Caballero Boulevard (purchased by Fortune International for \$37.5 million) will almost certainly be granted equal height rights if this overlay is approved. The damage this would cause to the character, safety, environment, and livability of our neighborhood is profound—and irreversible.

### 1. A 233% Height Increase in a Low-Rise, Residential Area

These parcels are nestled between quiet single-family homes, low-density multifamily units, and the sensitive Mahi Canal. The leap from MX1 (≈45 ft) to MX3 (≈190 ft) would allow developers to build beyond 13 stories, with additional height possible through so-called Mediterranean design and TDR (Transfer of Development Rights) bonuses.

The Mark, at 1250 S. Dixie, previously failed to secure MX3 upzoning. So why now propose an overlay to rezone not only that lot, but an entire corridor? This would open the door for Gables Waterway—located just across the canal—to build two towers (already proposed at 13 and 9 stories) where just 3-4 stories are currently permitted.

We are not opposed to smart development. We are opposed to unrestrained vertical sprawl in an area zoned to remain moderate, especially one so close to historic, residential, and ecological assets.

## 2. This Violates the Promises You Made

Our elected officials pledged to protect us from exactly this kind of overreach:

Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson: “Dedicated to representing the interests of the residents and curbing over-development.”

Mayor Vince Lago: “I’ve worked hard to protect Coral Gables from overdevelopment... I’ve stood against high-density projects that don’t fit our community.”

Commissioner Richard Lara: “My goal is to preserve the uniqueness of our City Beautiful by fighting against overdevelopment.”

These upzonings go directly against those pledges. In fact, many of us heard Vice-Mayor Anderson tell residents directly, “I will vote the way the residents want.” We are now calling on you to keep that promise.

## 3. A Direct Threat to an Endangered Species Habitat

The Mahi Canal, also known as the Coral Gables Waterway, is far more than a scenic backdrop — it is an ecologically vital, federally and state-recognized Manatee Protection Zone and Warm-Water Aggregation Area. Each winter, a large number of manatees seek refuge in its warmer waters, feeding on seagrass and raising their calves in peace.

The proposed construction of two 13-story towers along its banks threatens this fragile habitat in multiple ways. Blocking sunlight with tall structures will cause seagrass to die, water to cool, and manatees to vanish — or die. This isn’t speculation; it is a documented manatee habitat, and disruption without environmental review is not only reckless but potentially illegal under the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act.

The threat doesn’t end with shadows. A 500-car podium or underground garage means months of pile-driving, constant noise, and silt disruption, along with the risk of fuel or

chemical seepage entering the canal. Since the Mahi Canal flows directly into Biscayne Bay, a federally protected marine ecosystem, any contamination — whether from stormwater runoff, debris, or spills — becomes a regional environmental hazard.

And the danger does not stop once construction is complete. Increased boat traffic from hundreds of new luxury units — many with waterfront access — will bring motorized watercraft into the same calm, shallow refuge manatees depend on for survival. These slow-moving mammals are extremely vulnerable to boat strikes, which are a leading cause of manatee injury and death in Florida. Turning a quiet canal into a boating corridor will make it unsafe and uninhabitable for one of our most iconic and protected species.

Despite all this, no comprehensive environmental impact study has been publicly disclosed or required. The risks to manatees, seagrass, and downstream ecosystems are too great to ignore. Coral Gables must act as a steward of this unique habitat — not as the agent of its destruction.

#### 4. County-Level Pressure and Overdevelopment Agenda

We are also concerned by the ongoing role of County Commissioner Raquel Regalado, who has become one of the most vocal champions of aggressive upzoning around transit hubs—even when it runs counter to neighborhood preservation. Commissioner Regalado has repeatedly promoted the expansion of Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) policies that override municipal codes in the name of density. In public forums and interviews, she has stated that cities like Coral Gables need to be more “flexible” and “accept” higher density near stations, suggesting that communities resisting this are “obstacles to regional growth.” But growth at all costs is not sustainable—especially when it threatens federally protected habitats and permanently alters the character of single-family neighborhoods.

Coral Gables has its own building code and planning principles for a reason. We expect our elected leaders—not county pressure—to decide what is right for Coral Gables residents.

#### 5. Infrastructure, Traffic & Safety Are Already Strained

Traffic: South Dixie, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Avenue, and Red Road are already choked with congestion. This overlay could bring ≈1,600 new residents only considering The Mark as if it reaches 8 floors as previously requested and denied and Gables Waterways (not considering the other addresses on the University Rapid Transit Overlay) with hundreds of additional cars. And yet, no traffic impact study has been required because the site sits within

¼ mile of a Metrorail stop—a legal loophole that does not reflect lived reality. In fact, no one that will live on those two luxury developments will use the Metrorail, as both projects are securing a very large number of garage parking spots.

Sewage and Stormwater: Our neighborhood has already experienced stormwater backups and sewer strain. How will the system handle dozens of new floors, retail, and hundreds of units? The city has not studied this.

Emergency Services: Coral Gables firefighters have testified publicly that staffing has not increased despite the city approving project after project. They have technical difficulties handling high rise buildings. Response times are already at risk—and this overlay adds more fuel to the fire.

## 6. TDRs (Transfer of Development Rights) Are an Insult to Residents

The overlay would enable developers to buy extra “air rights” from historic or low-density zones and stack more height on top of their towers—effectively purchasing the sky above our homes. If “air” is for sale, why is the city profiting and not the people who lose their views, sunlight, and peace?

This practice benefits outside developers at the expense of residents. It’s not just bad planning—it’s unjust.

## 7. Gables Waterway Is the Endgame

Make no mistake: although the July 2 hearing doesn’t name it, Gables Waterway (6100 Caballero Blvd) will claim whatever entitlements these parcels receive. That’s why Fortune International made its purchase contingent on approvals.

This overlay is not just about The Mark or a few parcels on U.S. 1. It paves the way for a massive luxury project on the banks of a federally protected manatee canal.

Once this precedent is set, there is no turning back.

## 8. Timing Undermines Transparency and Participation

It is deeply troubling that a proposal of this magnitude is scheduled for public hearing on July 2nd, in the middle of summer vacation and just two days before the Fourth of July holiday, when many families are traveling or unavailable. Whether intentional or not, this timing severely limits resident participation in a decision that will permanently affect our neighborhood’s future. If the City truly values public input, this item must be deferred to a later

date in the fall when full community engagement is possible. Rushing a decision on something so consequential—during a time of low attendance—undermines transparency and public trust.

### Our Requests

We, the undersigned residents of Coral Gables, respectfully ask:

Deny the MX3 overlay and zoning changes for all parcels listed.

Maintain the 4-story (≈45 ft) height cap for 1150–1350 South Dixie Highway and 6100 Caballero Blvd.

Require independent environmental and traffic studies before allowing even a 1-story increase. Don't allow extra traffic inside the single family home streets, including Madruga Avenue and specially Caballero Blvd where we have our neighborhood park, Jaycee Park. Honor the commitments you made to voters to defend the City Beautiful from overdevelopment.

### In Closing

This is not about opposing progress. It is about preserving what makes Coral Gables livable, safe, and beautiful. It is about respecting the residents who built this city and the wildlife that shares it with us.

It is also about trust. That trust is broken when elected officials campaign on one message and then govern the opposite way.

A 13-story wall on the Mahi Canal was not in anyone's campaign brochure.

Please prove that our city leaders still listen. Please vote no on this overlay and keep your campaign promises. Preserve our zoning, our neighborhood, our manatees, and our voice.

Thank you for your service. I look forward to your written response on how you intend to vote.

Please submit this as a written comment for the July 2nd hearing and read it aloud during the meeting.

Tracy Devine Guzmán  
tdguzman@miami.edu

927 Hardee Road  
Coral Gables , 33146

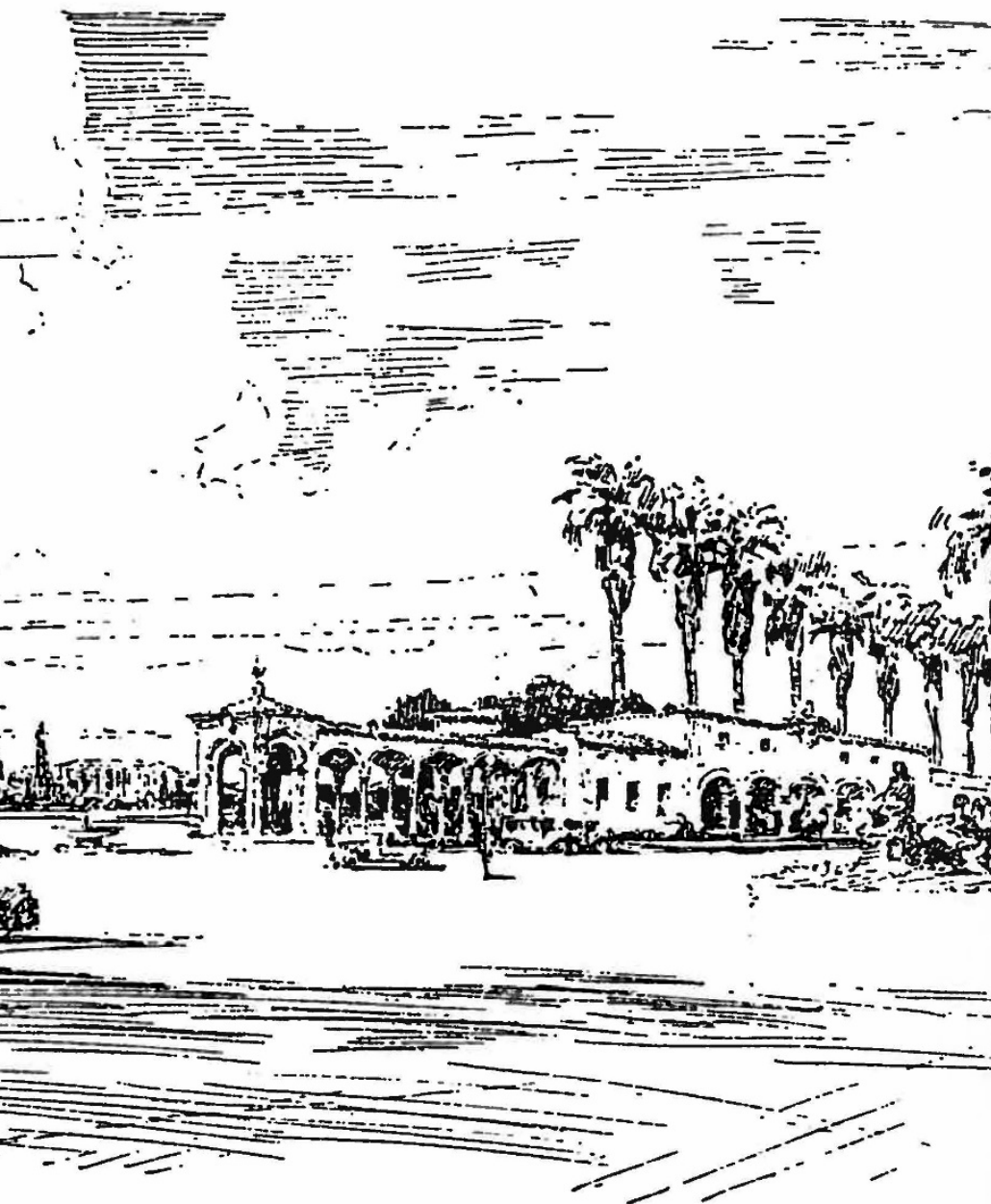
**From:** [Jim Berlin](#)  
**To:** [Planning](#)  
**Cc:** [DENISE BRAGA DE CARVALHO](#)  
**Subject:** Univ Station District  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 24, 2025 10:28:43 AM

---

CAUTION: External Sender. Please do not click on links or open attachments from senders you do not trust.

Dear Gables Planning Board;  
South Gables neighbors are concerned about a possible University Station RTO District.  
We request your careful attention  
on what this proposed District  
means re already heavy congested  
traffic on US1. We resist effort  
that might limit application of  
standard code and permit regs.  
And will watch a July 2 review.  
Thanks, JimBerlin 737 Tibidabo

Sent from my iPhone



*Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse*

# *University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District*

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP  
ZONING CODE MAP AND TEXT  
AMENDMENTS

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD  
JULY 2, 2025



# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RTZ EXPANSION

May 6 Miami-Dade  
County adopted on First  
Reading to create the  
“Gables/University  
Station Subzone” within  
the Rapid Transit Zone

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Mayor  
Veto \_\_\_\_\_  
Override \_\_\_\_\_

Substitute  
Agenda Item No. 4(L)  
5-6-25

## ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

ORDINANCE RELATING TO THE RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT ZONE; AMENDING CHAPTER 33C OF THE CODE OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA; PROVIDING FOR THE EXPANSION OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE AND CREATING THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE WHICH COULD, THROUGH FUTURE ACTION OF THIS BOARD, ENCOMPASS PROPERTY WITHIN A QUARTER MILE OF THE UNIVERSITY METRORAIL STATION; PROVIDING FOR COUNTY REGULATORY JURISDICTION OVER PROPERTIES ADDED TO THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE OF THE RAPID TRANSIT ZONE; PROVIDING FOR USES, AND CREATING STANDARDS, CRITERIA, AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS WITHIN THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE; ADDING CERTAIN PRIVATE PROPERTY TO THE CORAL GABLES/UNIVERSITY STATION SUBZONE; MAKING TECHNICAL CHANGES; DIRECTING THE COUNTY MAYOR OR COUNTY MAYOR'S DESIGNEE TO COORDINATE AND NEGOTIATE WITH THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES AS TO A FUTURE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT WHICH COULD ADDRESS ADDITIONAL CONCERNS OR CONSIDERATIONS THAT MAY ARISE IN THE FUTURE; PROVIDING SEVERABILITY, INCLUSION IN THE CODE, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE

**WHEREAS**, the Miami-Dade County Home Rule Charter grants to the County the power to carry on a central metropolitan government and to provide for rail facilities and public transportation systems; and

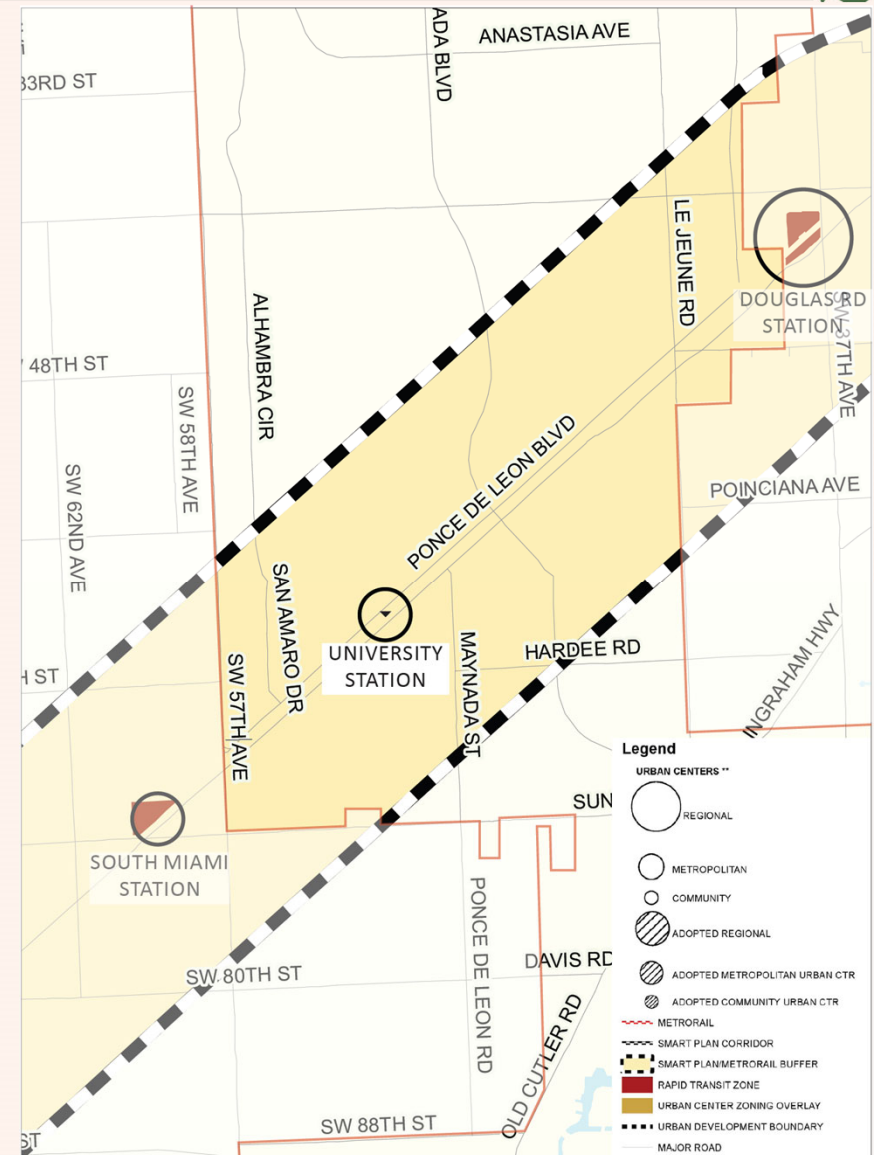
**WHEREAS**, the University Station Metrorail station (University Station) is located within the City of Coral Gables; and

**WHEREAS**, Miami-Dade County has a long history of collaboration and coordination with the City of Coral Gables; and

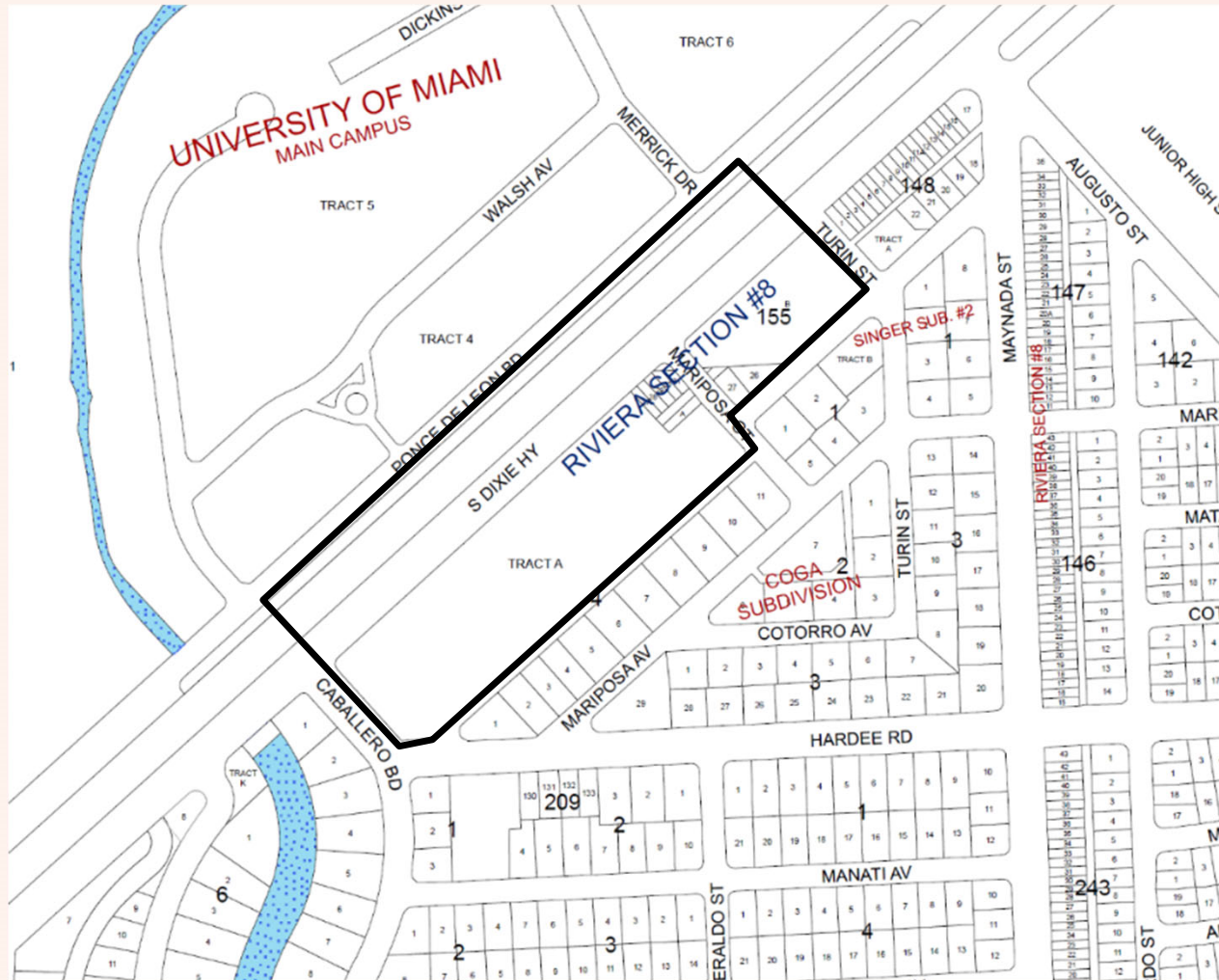
MDC003

# MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RTZ EXPANSION

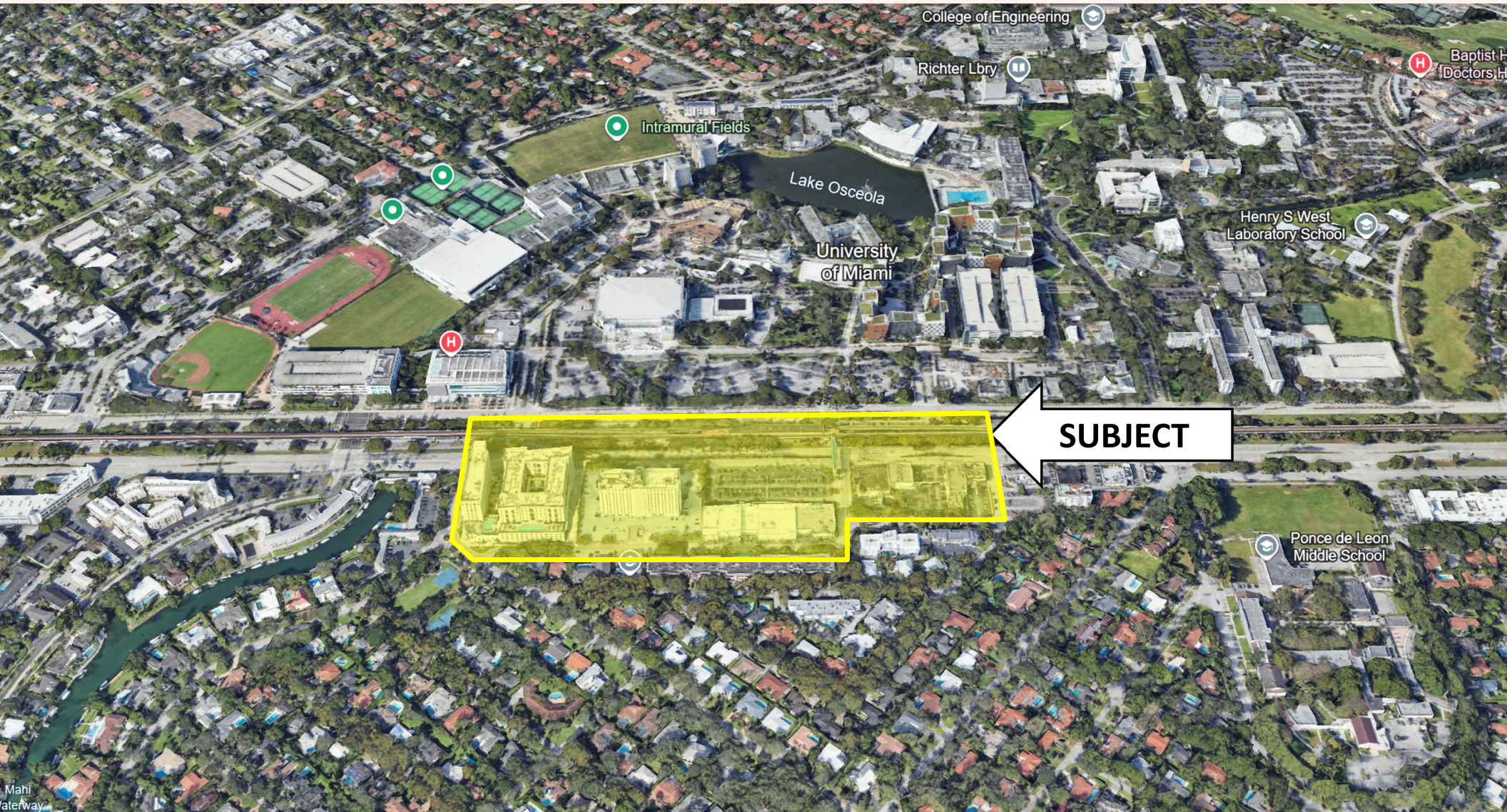
- Grant the County regulatory jurisdiction
- Specify the allowable uses
- Set forth development standards, criteria, and procedures for the review and approval



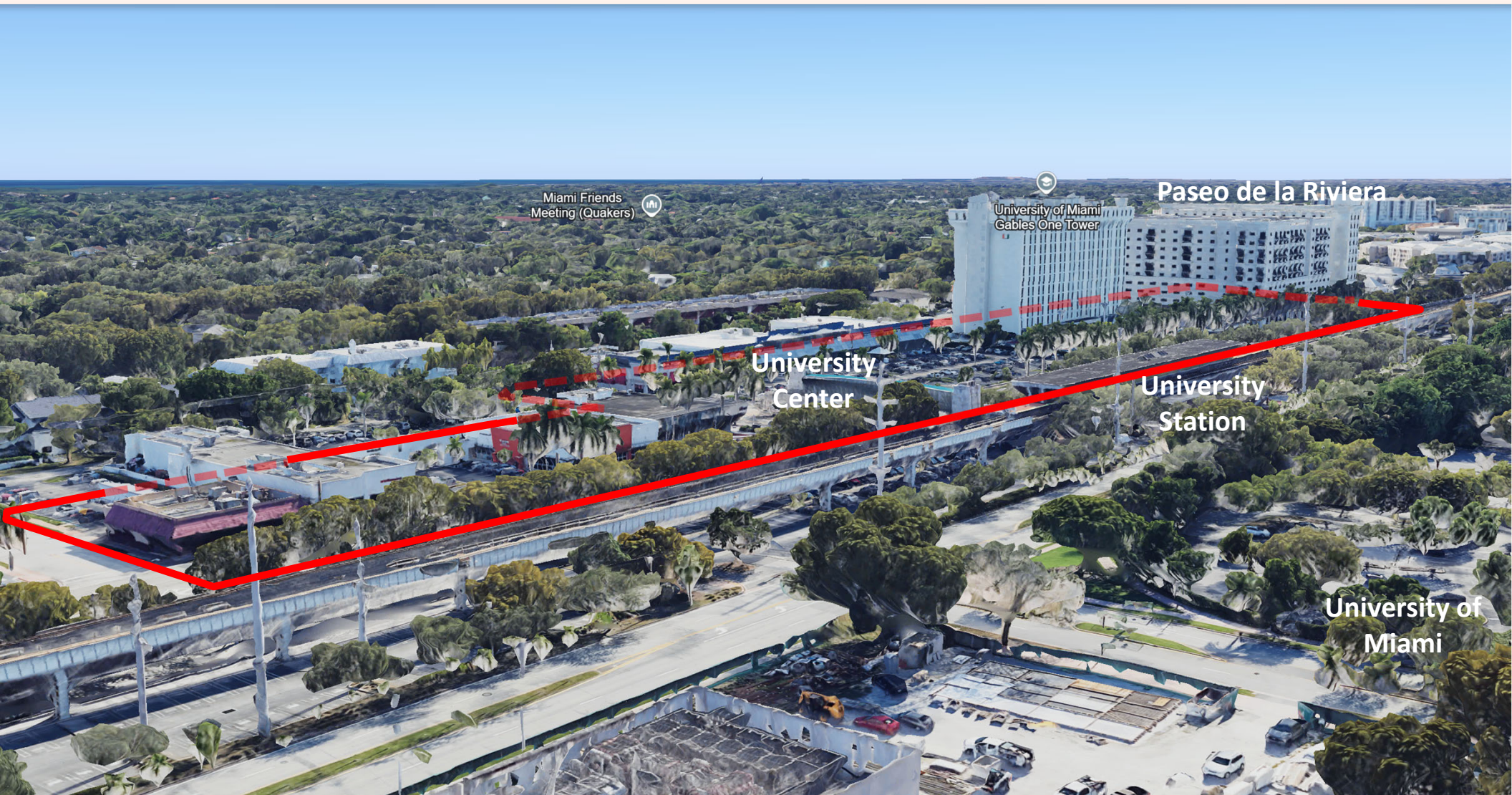
# LOCATION



# LOCATION



# EXISTING CONDITIONS



# FUTURE LAND USE AND ZONING

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP



COMMERCIAL LOW-RISE INTENSITY  
AND MIXED-USE

## ZONING MAP



MX1 AND MX3

**REQUEST #1:**  
COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE MAP AND MIXED-USE MAP CHANGES

**REQUEST #2:**  
ZONING MAP CHANGE

**REQUEST #3:**  
ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENTS

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENTS

## FUTURE LAND USE MAP



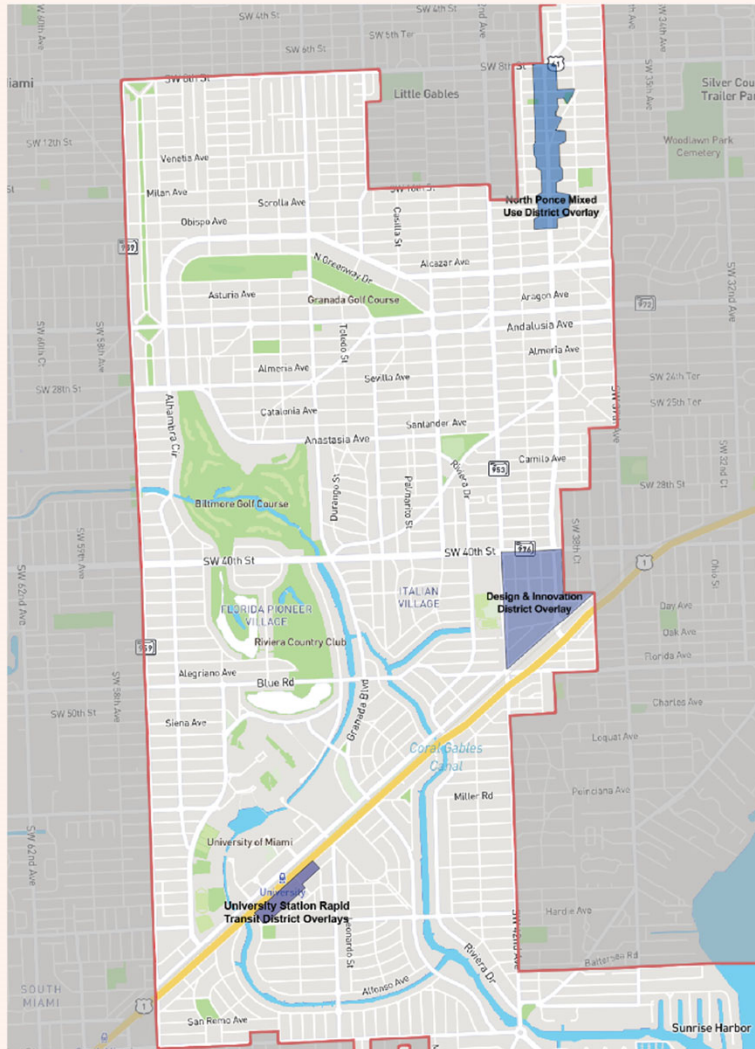
## PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP



# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENTS



## MIXED-USE OVERLAY DISTRICT MAP



# ZONING MAP AMENDMENTS

EXISTING ZONING MAP

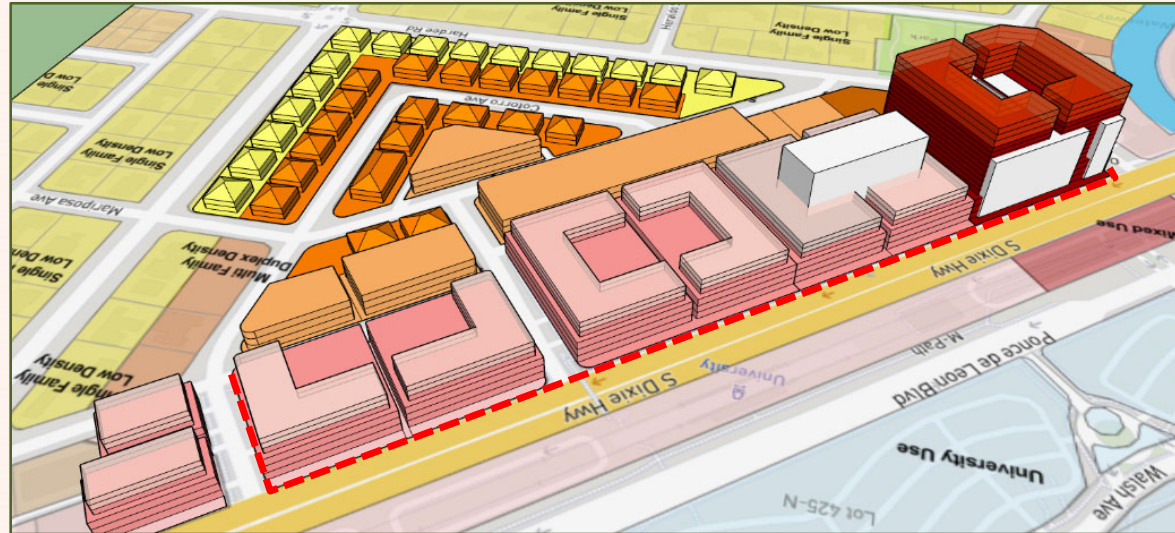


PROPOSED ZONING MAP



# PROPOSED LAND USE / ZONING

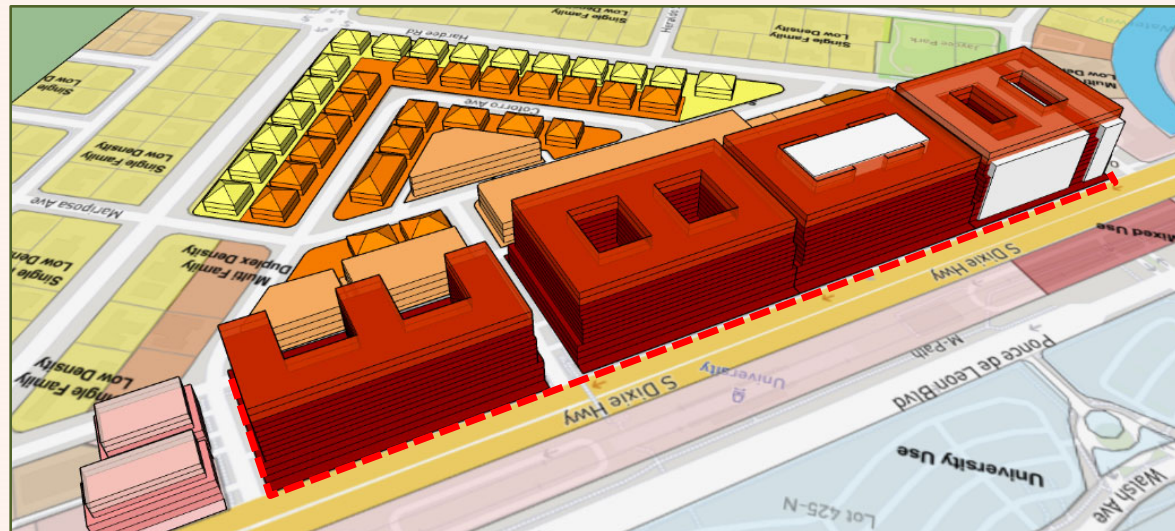
EXISTING



COMMERCIAL  
LOW-RISE  
INTENSITY

MX1 AND MX3

PROPOSED



COMMERCIAL  
HIGH-RISE  
INTENSITY

MX3

# ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENTS

	Current Regulations		Proposed RTZ	City Proposed District
<b>Review</b>	Change of land use / Zoning and Conditional Use		Special exception review/approval	Expedited review
<b>Height (ft)</b>	45	150	Max height of existing buildings w/in ¼-mile (150')	120 (no Med Bonus height) (+13.5 w/ 5% public open space) 147 maximum
<b>Density</b>	125		125	125
<b>FAR</b>	3.0 (1.5 per Site Specifics)		No Limit	3.0
<b>Med Bonus</b>	+0.2, +0.3 additional (3.5 FAR total)		-	+0.2, +0.3 additional (3.5 FAR total)
<b>Use of TDRs</b>	Not allowed for this area		-	3.75 FAR w/o. Med Bonus 4.375 FAR w Med Bonus (25% max additional)

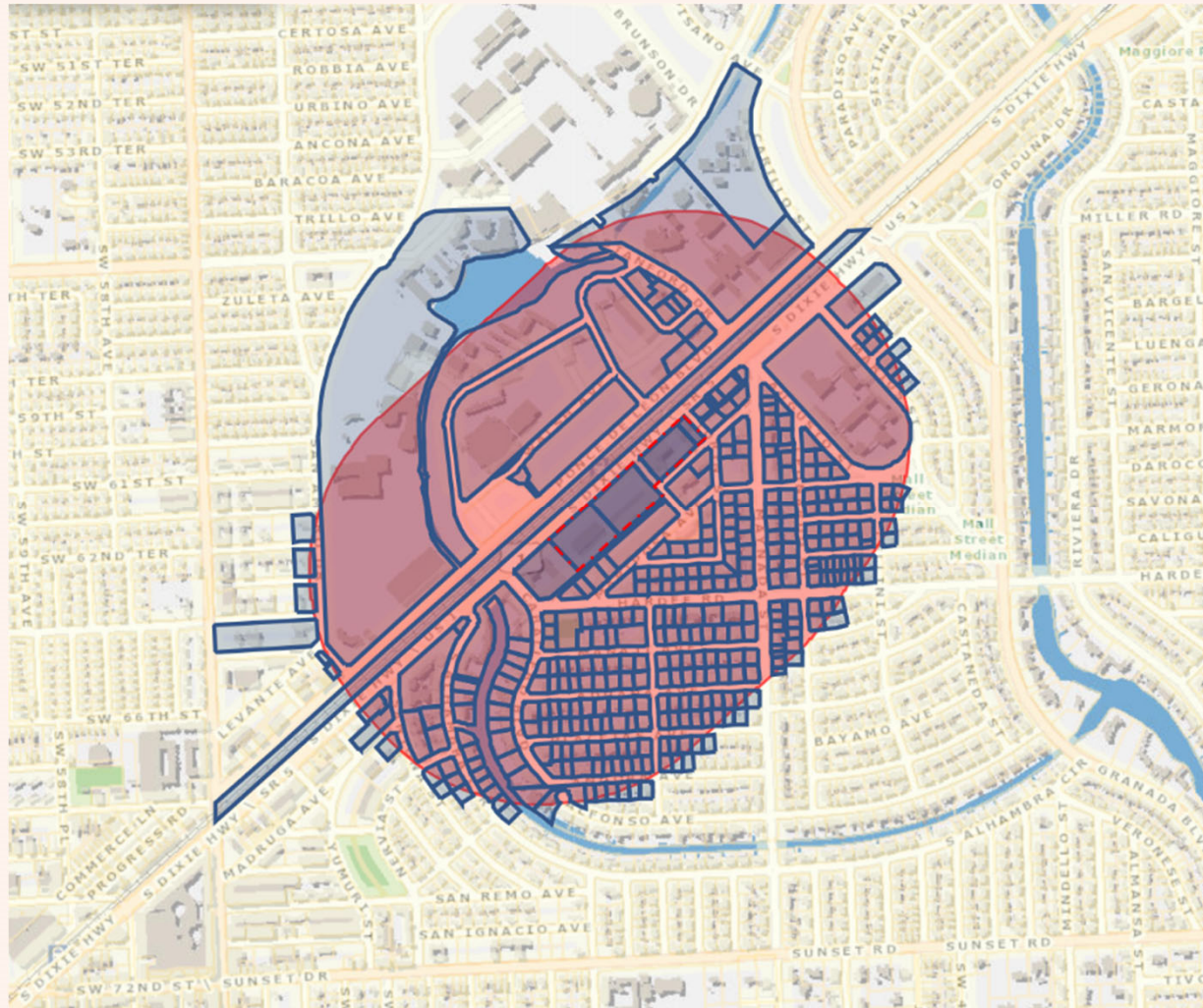
# ZONING CODE TEXT AMENDMENTS

	Current Regulations	Proposed RTZ	City Proposed District
<b>Setbacks</b>	20 feet (10 feet with arcade) on US-1 (Front: 125 feet, Rear: 50 feet, per Site Specifics)	0 ft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 feet (10 feet with arcade) on all parcels facing US-1</li> <li>• 25 feet rear setback with landscape buffer on 300'+ parcels</li> </ul>
<b>Open Space</b>	10% on ground level	15% (incl. upper floor terraces)	10% on ground level (incl. setback areas)
<b>Stepbacks (ft) and Paseos</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Front/side street: 10' stepback above 45'</li> <li>• Intr. side: 15' stepback above 45'</li> <li>• Rear w/out alley: 10' stepback above 45'</li> <li>• Rear w/ alley: 3' stepback above 45'</li> </ul>	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• US-1: 30' stepback above 100'</li> <li>• Fronting adjacent residential districts: 10' stepback above 45'</li> <li>• No paseo required</li> </ul>
<b>Parking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 per studio/1-bd</li> <li>• 1.75 per 2-bd</li> <li>• 2.25 per 3-bd +</li> <li>• 1 per 300 sf comm, office</li> <li>• 1 1/8 per hotel room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 0 per residential unit</li> <li>• 1.8 per 1,000sf comm.</li> <li>• 0.6 per 1,000sf office</li> <li>• 0.3 per hotel room</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking required, except for ground floor restaurant, retail, residential.</li> <li>• Reduction: 50%</li> <li>• Waiver for 25% w/ parking plan and Remote Parking</li> </ul>

# REVIEW TIMELINE

<b>1</b>	<b>PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD: 07.02.25</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>CITY COMMISSION 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: TBD</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>CITY COMMISSION 2<sup>ND</sup> READING: TBD</b>

# LETTERS TO PROPERTIES (1,500 FT)



# **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION**

**1 TIME**

**LETTERS TO PROPERTIES**

**PZB**

**1 TIME**

**PROPERTY POSTING**

**PZB**

**1 TIME**

**WEBSITE POSTING**

**PZB**

**1 TIME**

**NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT**

**PZB**

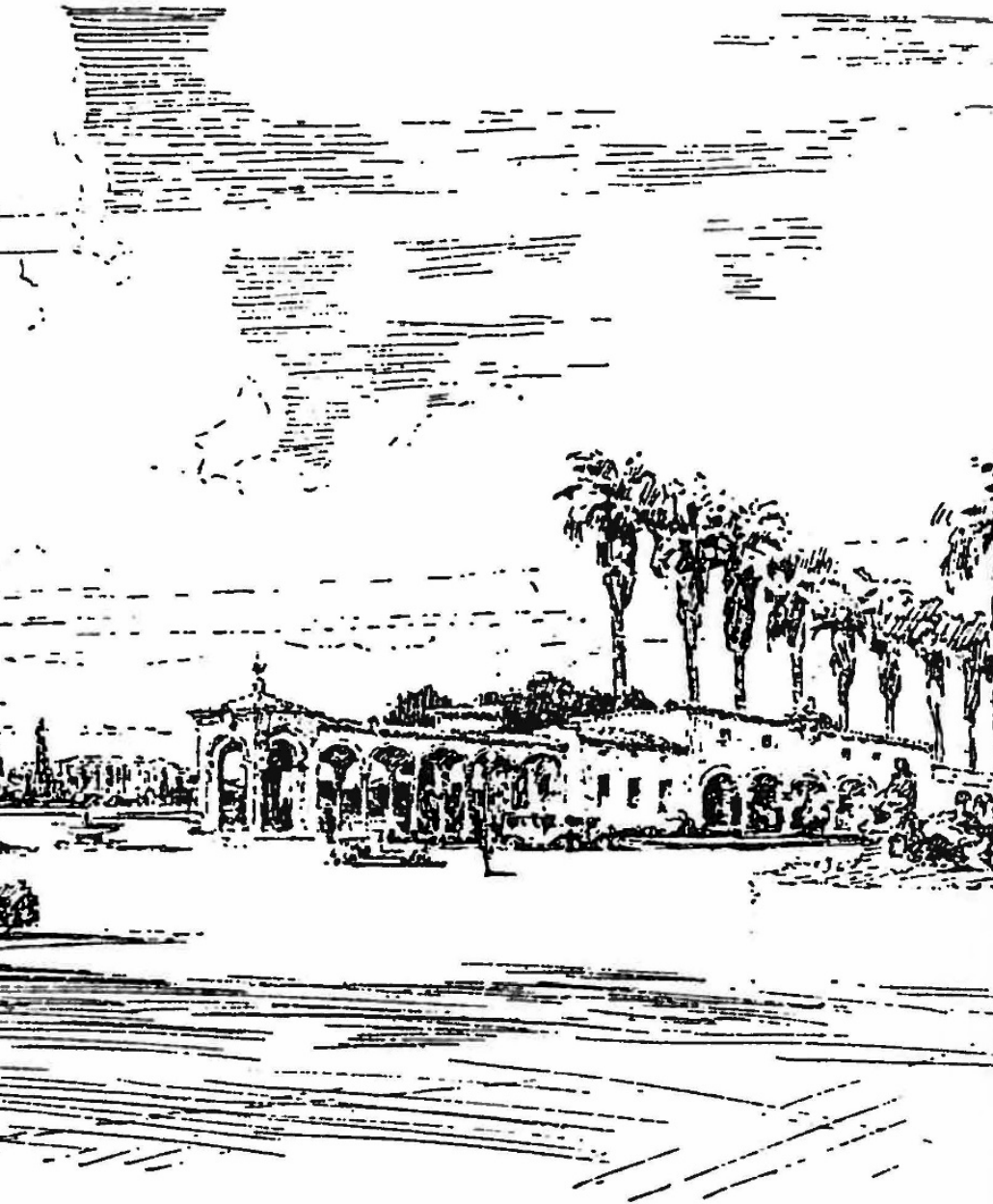
# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

---

STAFF'S DETERMINATION IS THAT THIS APPLICATION IS CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES.

THE APPLICATION COMPLIES WITH THE FINDINGS OF FACT.

THE STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL ARE SATISFIED.



*Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse*

# *University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District*

---

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP  
ZONING CODE MAP AND TEXT  
AMENDMENTS

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD  
JULY 2, 2025



# CITY OF CORAL GABLES

## - MEMORANDUM -

**TO:** JENNIFER GARCIA  
PLANNING & ZONING DIRECTOR

**DATE:** JUNE 27, 2025

**FROM:** HERMES DIAZ  
PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT:**  
CITY OF CORAL GABLES' PROPOSAL  
FOR MIXED USE ZONES WITHIN THE  
MIAMI-DADE COUNTY  
RAPID TRANSIT ZONE

---

The City of Coral Gables includes several Mixed-Use 1 (MX1) parcels located within Miami-Dade County's Rapid Transit Zone, just south of the University Metrorail Station. Within this area, one Mixed-Use 3 (MX3) property has been developed as The Paseo de la Riviera. The subject parcels are bound by South Dixie Highway, Madruga Avenue, Turin Street, and Caballero Boulevard.

The impact of new developments on public infrastructure—including adjacent roadways, sanitary sewer systems, stormwater facilities, and other utilities—is generally not determined by building height. Additionally, in cases where the existing utility infrastructure lacks sufficient capacity to accommodate a proposed development, the City retains the authority to require capacity enhancements as a condition of project approval.

In conclusion, because the proposed zoning change does not alter the currently permitted residential density of 125 units per acre, the increased building height and potential additional square footage—achieved through amendments to the Future Land Use and Zoning Map, and the application of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)—will not result in a decline in the level of service for public infrastructure below the minimum standards established in the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Thank you.

c: Jose Olivo, Deputy Director of Public Works  
Paul Rodas, City Engineer

1 CITY OF CORAL GABLES  
2 LOCAL PLANNING AGENCY (LPA)/  
3 PLANNING & ZONING BOARD MEETING  
4 VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT  
5 WEDNESDAY, JULY 2, 2025, COMMENCING AT 6:00 P.M.

6 Board Members Present at Commission Chamber:

7 Eibi Aizenstat, Chairman  
8 Robert Behar  
9 Felix Pardo  
10 Sue Kawalerski  
11 Nestor Menendez  
12 Alex Bucelo

13 City Staff and Consultants.

14 Peter Iglesias, City Manager  
15 Fengqian "Grace" Chen, Principal Planner,  
16 Jill Menendez, Administrative Assistant/Board Secretary  
17 Jennifer Garcia, City Planner  
18 Craig Collier, Special Counsel  
19 Arceli Redila, Zoning Administrator  
20 Craig Southern, Planning Official

21 Also Participating:

22 County Commissioner Raquel Regalado  
23 Chip Withers  
24 Dr. Betty Mortenson  
25 Cathy Burnwell  
26 Denise Carvalho  
27 Lisa DeTournay  
28 Maria Cruz  
29 David Harnett, Esq.  
30 Roger Kogan  
31 Daniel Millay  
32 Victoria Weller  
33 Henry Pinero  
34 Francisco Senior, via Zoom  
35 Pat Parker, via Zoom

1

1 recommendation.

2 Pursuant to Resolution Number 2021-118, the  
3 City of Coral Gables has returned to  
4 traditional in-person meetings; however, the  
5 Planning and Zoning Board has established the  
6 ability for the public to provide comments  
7 virtually.

8 For those members of the public who are  
9 appearing on Zoom and wish to testify, you must  
10 be visible for -- to the court reporter to be  
11 sworn in. Otherwise, if you speak without  
12 being sworn in, your comments may not have  
13 evidentiary value.

14 Lobbyist Registration and Disclosure, any  
15 person who acts as a lobbyist must register  
16 with the City Clerk, as required pursuant to  
17 the City Code.

18 As Chair, I now officially call the City of  
19 Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Board Meeting  
20 of July 2nd, 2025 to order. The time is 6:00  
21 p.m.

22 Jill, if you'd please call the roll.

23 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

24 MR. BEHAR: Present.

25 THE SECRETARY: Armando Bucelo?

3

1 THEREUPON:

2 (The following proceedings were held.)

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It's six o'clock.

4 Let's go ahead and get started, please.

5 I'd like to go ahead and call the meeting  
6 to order. I'd like to ask everybody to please  
7 silence their phones and beepers, if you have  
8 any.

9 Good evening. The Board is comprised of  
10 seven members. Four Members of the Board shall  
11 constitute a quorum, and the affirmative vote  
12 of four Members shall be necessary for the  
13 adoption of any motion. If only four Members  
14 of the Board are present, an applicant may  
15 request and be entitled to a continuance to the  
16 next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.  
17 If a matter is continued due to a lack of  
18 quorum, the Chairperson or Secretary of the  
19 Board may set a Special Meeting to consider  
20 such matter.

21 In the event that four votes are not  
22 obtained, an applicant, except in the case of a  
23 Comprehensive Plan Amendment, may request a  
24 continuance or allow the application to proceed  
25 to the City Commission without a

2

1 MR. BUCELO: That's --

2 MR. BEHAR: Alex.

3 MR. BUCELO: -- the wrong Bucelo.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Alex.

5 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo? I'm so sorry.

6 MR. BUCELO: Present. Close enough,  
7 though.

8 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?

9 MS. KAWALERSKI: Here.

10 THE SECRETARY: Nestor Menendez?

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Present.

12 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?

13 MR. PARDO: Here.

14 THE SECRETARY: Javier Salman?

15 Eibi Aizenstat?

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Here.

17 Notice Regarding Ex-Parte Communications,  
18 please be advised that this Board is a  
19 quasi-judicial board, which requires Board  
20 Members to disclose all ex parte communications  
21 and site visits. An ex parte communication is  
22 defined as any contact, communication,  
23 conversation, correspondence, memorandum or  
24 other written or verbal communication that  
25 takes place outside of the public hearing

4

1 between a member of the public and a member of  
2 a quasi-judicial board regarding matters to be  
3 heard by the Board.

4 If anyone made any contact with a Board  
5 Member regarding an issue before the Board, the  
6 Board Member must state on the record the  
7 existence of the ex parte communication and the  
8 party who originated the communication.

9 Also, if a Board Member conducted a site  
10 visit specifically related to the case before  
11 the Board, the Board Member must also disclose  
12 such visit. In either case, the Board Member  
13 must state, on the record, whether the ex parte  
14 communication and/or site visit will affect the  
15 Board Member's ability to impartially consider  
16 the evidence to be presented regarding the  
17 matter. The Board Member should also state  
18 that his or her decision will be based on  
19 substantial, competent evidence and testimony  
20 presented on the record today.

21 Does any Member of the Board have such a  
22 communication and/or site visit to disclose at  
23 this time?

24 MR. BEHAR: No.

25 MR. PARDO: No.

5

1 MR. BUCELO: No.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Swearing In, everyone  
3 who speaks this evening must complete the  
4 roster on the podium. We ask that you print  
5 clearly, so the official records of your name  
6 and address will be correct.

7 Now, with the exception of attorneys, all  
8 persons physically in the City Commission  
9 Chambers, who will speak on agenda items before  
10 us this evening, please rise to be sworn in.

11 (Thereupon, the participants were sworn.)

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

13 Zoom platform participants, I will ask any  
14 person wishing to speak on tonight's agenda  
15 item to please open your chat and send a direct  
16 message to Jill Menendez, stating you would  
17 like to speak before the Board, and include  
18 your full name. Jill will call you, when it's  
19 your turn. I ask you to be concise, for the  
20 interest of time.

21 Phone platform participants, after Zoom  
22 platform participants are done, I will ask  
23 phone platform participants to comment on  
24 tonight's agenda item. I also ask you to be  
25 concise, for the interest of time.

6

1 First we have the approval of the minutes  
2 of March 12th, 2025.

3 MR. BEHAR: Motion to approve.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a motion to  
5 approve. Is there a second?

6 MS. KAWALERSKI: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue made the second.

8 Any discussion? No?

9 Call the roll, please.

10 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?

11 MR. BUCELO: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes.

14 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Menendez?

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?

17 MR. PARDO: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

19 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

20 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

22 The procedure that we'll use for tonight is  
23 the following: First we'll have the  
24 identification of the agenda item by  
25 Mr. Collier, then we'll have the presentation by

7

1 the applicant or agent, presentation by Staff,  
2 and then we'll go ahead and have a public  
3 comment, in Chamber first, Zoom platform, and  
4 then phone line platform. Then we'll go ahead  
5 and close the public comment, Board discussion,  
6 motion, further discussion, if needed, and  
7 second of motion, then Board's final comments  
8 and a vote.

9 First, before we get started, what I'd like  
10 to do is, I'd like to thank two Members of the  
11 Board that are not with us anymore. That is  
12 Chip Withers, who's in attendance with us  
13 tonight, and Julio Grabiell, for all of their  
14 devotion, time and dedication that they have  
15 provided the Board. Their leadership will be  
16 missed.

17 I would also like to welcome -- we have two  
18 new Board Members tonight -- Nestor Menendez,  
19 appointed by Vice Mayor Anderson, and Alexander  
20 Bucelo, appointed by Commissioner Lara. I  
21 would like to ask each appointment to please  
22 tell us a little bit about yourself. If you  
23 don't mind, Nestor, if you'd go first.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: Sure. My name is Nestor  
25 Menendez. I recently moved to Coral Gables in

8

1 2020. I served previously on the  
2 Transportation Advisory Board. I was Vice  
3 Mayor Rhonda Anderson's appointment on that. I  
4 was asked to serve on the Planning and Zoning  
5 Board, so I moved over to this Board.

6 I'm a practicing attorney. My practice is  
7 at One Alhambra. So I work here, I live here,  
8 and I've been looking for any way to give back  
9 to this Community.

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Welcome.

11 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We appreciate it.

13 Alex, welcome back.

14 MR. BUCELO: Thank you. I was going to  
15 say, not a new member, a returning member.

16 I'm Alex Bucelo. I'm sorry if this is a  
17 little close.

18 I'm Alex Bucelo. I have been born and  
19 raised in Coral Gables. I have served on this  
20 Board. I have served on the Mayor -- I have  
21 the pleasure of serving on the Mayor's Advisory  
22 Board currently. I've served on the Code  
23 Enforcement Board. So, any way I can give back  
24 to this community, I'm all in.

25 So, quite frankly, this is -- don't tell

9

1 the other boards, but this is definitely my  
2 favorite board to serve on. So thank you. I  
3 look forward to serving with you guys the next  
4 couple of years.

5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

6 Also, I'd like to welcome openly  
7 Commissioner Regalado, who's with us today --  
8 thank you very much for coming -- as well as  
9 City Manager Peter Iglesias, and my  
10 understanding is, we also have with us the Vice  
11 Mayor, Anderson, on Zoom with us.

12 THE SECRETARY: That's correct.

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

14 What I'd like to do first is pass the gavel  
15 over to my Vice Chair, if you would accept.

16 MR. BEHAR: I will accept it.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I would like to go  
18 ahead and make the recommendation for the  
19 appointment of the Board Member that we have as  
20 a whole. I would like to nominate Alice Bravo.  
21 We have many projects that are coming up before  
22 us, and a lot of them have to do with traffic  
23 and planning concerns. The reason Alice Bravo,  
24 that I recommend her, is because she's a  
25 veteran engineer, civil engineer, with over 25

10

1 years of experience in transportation planning  
2 and design.

3 She previously served as Director of  
4 Miami-Dade County's Department of  
5 Transportation and Public Works. She was the  
6 Deputy City Manager of the City of Miami, where  
7 she oversaw six departments, including Planning  
8 and Zoning, Real Estate Management and Capital  
9 Improvements. She has overseen significant  
10 projects, including Miami-Dade County's  
11 Strategic Area Rapid Transit, SMART, and she  
12 also oversaw the Port of Miami tunnel  
13 public-private partnership, the P3, the 95  
14 express lanes, and the reconstruction of the  
15 Palmetto Expressway interchange and several  
16 transit oriented development projects.

17 Ms. Bravo can bring her experience and  
18 expertise on these subjects to the Board, by  
19 providing her insight in vehicular and planning  
20 issues regarding the projects.

21 MR. BUCELO: Mr. Chair, may I?

22 MR. BEHAR: Yes, please.

23 MR. BUCELO: I will second that motion.  
24 That's an incredible resume.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second.

11

1 MR. BUCELO: I will second it.

2 MR. BEHAR: Okay. We have a first and a  
3 second. Any other discussions? No discussion?  
4 I close it.

5 And, Jill, can you please call the roll?

6 THE SECRETARY: Yes.

7 Nestor Menendez?

8 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

9 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?

10 MR. PARDO: Yes.

11 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

12 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

13 THE SECRETARY; Alex Bucelo?

14 MR. BUCELO: Yes.

15 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?

16 MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes.

17 THE SECRETARY; Eibi Aizenstat?

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. BEHAR: If we're done, now I'm going to  
21 pass it back to you, Mr. Chair.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

23 Proceeding forward, we have the first item  
24 on the agenda, which is F-1.

25 Mr. Collier, would please read it into the

12

1 record?

2 MR. COLLIER: Yes.

3 F-1, an Ordinance of the City Commission of

4 Coral Gables, Florida, amending Future Land Use

5 Map and Mixed-Use Overlay Districts Map of the

6 City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan

7 pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process,"

8 Section 14-213, "Comprehensive Plan Text and

9 Map Amendments," and Small Scale amendment

10 procedures (Sections 163.3187, Florida

11 Statutes), from "Commercial Low-Rise Intensity"

12 to "Commercial High-Rise Intensity" and to

13 create the "University Station Rapid Transit

14 District Overlay" for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral

15 Gables Riviera Section Part 8, Tract "A",

16 Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8,

17 which are the properties bounded by South Dixie

18 Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga, and

19 Turin Street, providing for a repealer

20 provision, severability clause, and providing

21 for an effective date.

22 Mr. Chairman, there's a related item, which

23 is F-2, which is the Ordinance. I'd like to

24 read that in, as well, and then we would hold

25 the public hearing on both items, but then we

13

1 would vote on them separately.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Separately.

3 Understood.

4 MR. COLLIER: Item F-2, an Ordinance of the

5 City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida

6 providing for map and text amendments to the

7 City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code

8 pursuant to Zoning Code Article 14, "Process,"

9 Section 14-212, "Zoning Code Text and Map

10 Amendments," by 1) amending Article 2, "Zoning

11 Districts," to create Section 2-408,

12 "University Station Rapid Transit District

13 Overlay" for promoting the use of mass transit

14 facilities and pedestrian activities along

15 transit corridors and near multimodal stations,

16 2) amending Appendix A, "Site Specific Zoning

17 Regulations," to remove inconsistent Site

18 Specifics; 3) amending Article 14, "Process,"

19 Section 14-202, "Transfer of Development

20 Rights," to expand Transfer of Development

21 Rights (TDRs) receiving sites to the

22 "University Station Rapid Transit District

23 Overlay," and 4) making Zoning District

24 boundary changes from "Mixed-Use 1 (MX1) to

25 Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)" and including within the

14

1 "University Station Rapid Transit District

2 Overlay" boundary for Blocks 155 and 156, Coral

3 Gables Riviera Section Part 8, and Tract "A"

4 Replat of Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 8,

5 which are the properties bounded by South Dixie

6 Highway, Caballero Boulevard, Madruga and Turin

7 Streets, and to create the "University Station

8 Rapid Transit District," providing for repealer

9 provision, severability clause, codification,

10 and providing for an effective date.

11 Items F-1 and F-2, public hearing.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

13 Jennifer.

14 MS. GARCIA: Good afternoon, Jennifer

15 Garcia, Planning and Zoning Director.

16 I'm going to present the item and then

17 we're going to have our guest speaker to speak,

18 as well.

19 MR. IGLESIAS: Yes, thank you.

20 Peter Iglesias, City Manager.

21 Good evening, Chair and Board Members.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Welcome, sir.

23 MR. IGLESIAS: Thank you very much.

24 I would like to welcome our County

25 Commissioner, Raquel Regalado, here. She's

15

1 here concerning the RTZ, our RTZ regulations.

2 She is a wealth of information on that. She's

3 highly experienced and very dedicated to

4 promoting transportation, and some of the --

5 and all of the mobility aspects that we're

6 dealing with along the Rapid Transit Zone.

7 So, with that, I would like to have our

8 Planning Director present, and then we're

9 certainly here, and the Commissioner is here to

10 discuss the issue and certainly answer

11 questions concerning the RTZ County

12 regulations.

13 So, with that, you're most welcome. Thank

14 you very much.

15 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Thank you.

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you,

17 Mr. Manager.

18 Welcome, Commissioner.

19 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: It's a pleasure.

20 MS. GARCIA: So if I could have the

21 PowerPoint, please. Thank you.

22 So let's see. So this all started in May.

23 Miami-Dade County is proposing to -- why is

24 that not going -- Miami-Dade County adopted, on

25 First Reading, expansion of the RTZ, of the

16

1 Rapid Transit Zone, called the Gables  
2 University Station Subzone, and already  
3 approved by the County is that University  
4 Station is considered a community urban center,  
5 but what this ordinance is doing is proposing  
6 actual regulations in a subzone for this area.

7 My voice is going in and out. I apologize.  
8 I was on the phone a lot with residents this  
9 morning and afternoon, so my voice is kind of  
10 leaving me.

11 But in this ordinance, it is granting the  
12 County regulatory jurisdiction over this  
13 specific area of our City, as it specifies  
14 allowable uses, as well as development  
15 standards, criteria and review of these  
16 developments in the subzone.

17 So, as a reaction to the County, the City  
18 is proposing an overlay district. We have many  
19 overlay districts in our City throughout. You  
20 know, the North Ponce Overlay District, as well  
21 as the Design and Innovation District. There  
22 are many overlay districts that we have in our  
23 City. It is not an uncommon way of planning in  
24 our City. So the overlay district that we're  
25 looking at is between Caballero, on the south

17

1 side, you know, almost to US-1, and up to  
2 Turin, and then Madruga, on the south side.

3 So, as you can see on this aerial looking  
4 southwest, you can see that the Thesis Hotel is  
5 on the very south part of this overlay  
6 district. The Gables One Tower is just next to  
7 that, that shopping center -- the shopping  
8 center is in the middle, and there are some  
9 low-rise, TGI Friday's, and the property is  
10 there just to the north of Turin -- I'm sorry,  
11 north of Madruga, I believe.

12 Just looking south, you can see the TGI  
13 Friday's is low commercial areas, on the very  
14 left side of the slide. You can see the  
15 University Shopping Center in the middle. Then  
16 you can see the more taller buildings of -- I'm  
17 sorry, the University of Miami Gables One  
18 Tower, as well as Paseo de la Riviera, on the  
19 very right side.

20 The current Future Land Use Map shows that  
21 the Thesis Hotel is a mixed-use zoning -- I'm  
22 sorry, mixed-use land use, and the rest of the  
23 properties there are commercial low-rise  
24 intensity. And the zoning right now, for the  
25 Thesis, is MX3, and the remaining properties

18

1 are MX1.

2 The request that the City has right now,  
3 again, as a reaction to the County, is to  
4 change the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Map  
5 and Mixed-Use Map, as well as the Zoning Map,  
6 and then Zoning Code Text Amendments, and I'll  
7 go through that right now.

8 So, right now, the Future Land Use Map, as  
9 I said, shows Mixed-Use for the south parcel,  
10 which is the Thesis Hotel, and the commercial  
11 low-rise, and that will be changed to  
12 commercial high-rise, to allow additional  
13 height next to the Metro Station.

14 And, then, the Mixed-Use Overlay District  
15 Map of our Comprehensive Plan would include  
16 this new overlay district. You can see those  
17 three overlay districts in our Comprehensive  
18 Plan right now, the North Ponce Mixed-Use  
19 Overlay, the Design and Innovation District,  
20 and this will be the third one, which will be  
21 the University Overlay District.

22 And the Zoning Map changes would include  
23 changing MX1 to be MX3, again, to allow the  
24 extra height. No increase of FAR and no  
25 increase of density for that map change.

19

1 So this is showing a massing of what that  
2 would look like. The existing is that top map.  
3 You can see -- in the top image, you can see  
4 that pinkish color is right now the MX1 or the  
5 commercial low-rise massing, with the darker  
6 pink being the as of right height, and then the  
7 light pink being the Mediterranean Bonus. On  
8 the bottom of the slide is the proposed. So if  
9 this is changed to commercial high-rise or MX3,  
10 you can see that massing much higher, and,  
11 again, no change in density and no change in  
12 intensity, with these map changes.

13 So this is looking at a comparison between  
14 what we allow now in our Zoning Code, and what  
15 the RTZ, proposed by the County, and then what  
16 our mixed-use overlay district, on the far  
17 right column. So the review of our current  
18 process would be, any property in this area,  
19 would have to request change of land use and  
20 zoning, as we saw more than a year ago with the  
21 University Shopping Center. So it would  
22 require a change of land use, a change of  
23 zoning, as well as a conditional use mixed-use  
24 site plan. The proposed RTZ with the County  
25 would require this special exception and review

20

1 and approval.

2 The City is proposing a more expedited  
3 review for faster Board of Architects review,  
4 to give them certainty that they can go through  
5 the process without any large hurdles.

6 The current height is 45 feet for those MX1  
7 properties, and 150 feet for those MX3  
8 properties. The proposed County is 150 feet,  
9 just because they're saying, within the quarter  
10 mile, the highest building. The highest  
11 building is the Gables One Tower, which is 150  
12 feet. The Thesis Hotel property is already  
13 MX3.

14 So what's proposed today is, the overlay  
15 district would be 120 feet, and that would not  
16 allow Mediterranean Bonus height, but would  
17 allow a couple of stories, two stories, based  
18 on additional open space -- with open space,  
19 for a maximum height of 147 feet. The density  
20 would remain the same. It would be 125 units  
21 an acre. The FAR right now is 3.5. This  
22 allows for 1.5 per the site specifics. The  
23 proposal is to eliminate that, to be more  
24 consistent with the County's no limitation of  
25 FAR, to have 3.0. And, then, with

21

1 would keep the same set backs, 45 feet, for any  
2 area that's facing residential, and then allow  
3 for a 100-foot step back -- I'm sorry, at 100  
4 feet, to step back 30 feet, facing US-1, that  
5 is a more broader, more important thoroughfare.

6 And, then, the parking, as you know, it  
7 depends on the number of bedrooms that we have  
8 in our current regulations. The County is  
9 proposing zero parking residential units, as  
10 well as some parking requirements for  
11 commercial and non-residential units,  
12 non-residential spaces. The City is proposing  
13 in this overlay district to require parking,  
14 except for ground floor restaurant, retail  
15 uses, as well as a 50 percent reduction for the  
16 remaining required parking for the area -- for  
17 the building. In relation to that, also  
18 waiving 25 percent, if they provide a parking  
19 plan via remote parking or available transit  
20 passes or whatnot.

21 So the time line is, we are here today at  
22 the Planning and Zoning Board. We hope to go  
23 to the Commission on First Reading in August,  
24 and the Second Reading will be determined at  
25 that time.

23

1 Mediterranean Bonus, that would be an  
2 additional .5, and then use of the TDRs.

3 As you know, the use of TDRs is only  
4 allowed in our CBD and in our North Ponce  
5 Mixed-Use District, as well as our Design and  
6 Innovation District. This would be a proposal  
7 to expand the receipt of TDRs to expand to this  
8 district.

9 The setbacks are similar to what they are  
10 right now, which is 20 feet on US-1. The  
11 proposed County Ordinance is zero feet. What  
12 we're proposing today for the overlay district  
13 is to retain that 20 feet on US-1, as well as  
14 an additional 25 feet on the rear of those  
15 larger properties, which is the Thesis, the  
16 Gables One Tower, as well as the University  
17 Shopping Center, so they're not so deep. It  
18 also gives more space for that narrower street  
19 on the back.

20 Open space is similar, 10 percent on the  
21 ground level is our underlining requirement,  
22 and we're not changing that. The step backs,  
23 as you know, right now, 45 feet, required a  
24 10-foot step back. The County, of course, does  
25 not have any step back requirements, but we

22

1 So we mailed notices within 1,500 feet, as  
2 required by our Zoning Code, and that was  
3 mailed out once. We posted the property a  
4 couple of weeks ago, and we posted the website,  
5 as well as newspaper advertisement, as required  
6 by Code.

7 The Staff has determined this application  
8 is consistent with the Comp Plan, as it does  
9 promote development near transit stops and  
10 transit stations, along transit corridors, and  
11 it does comply with the findings of fact that  
12 are located in your Staff Report, and we  
13 recommend approval. Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

15 Commissioner.

16 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Yes. So, first and  
17 foremost, it's a pleasure to be here.

18 Just a little background on the RTZ, for  
19 those of you who haven't followed it. We were  
20 talking earlier about Alice Bravo. When she  
21 sits on your Board, she'll be able to speak  
22 specifically about the nodes.

23 So when Miami-Dade County started its urban  
24 planning in the 1970s, ramping up to what would  
25 be the build-out of the Metrorail, before they

24

1 created the tear, they decided that we would  
2 have the creation of urban centers, and those  
3 urban centers would take ten to fifteen years  
4 to create, and the first spots that were  
5 dedicated for those were what later became the  
6 Metrorail nodes, right.

7 So you have 27th, 37th, Gables, all of the  
8 way to Dadeland. For those of you who remember  
9 that, I was there for the ribbon cutting of the  
10 Dadeland station. It was the end of the line,  
11 because our Miami-Dade ended back in Dadeland.  
12 Now, it's very different.

13 So, when we went back to look at what  
14 eventually became the RTZ, one of the things  
15 that we dealt with is, it had taken 25 years to  
16 do the first node. The first node being 27th  
17 and 37th, which are both in District 7. The  
18 fact is that it took the County 25 years to do  
19 it, and that we were using it as an opportunity  
20 to refresh the Metrorail stations and to really  
21 reconsider what the liner of South Dixie  
22 Highway was going to be.

23 So we started meeting with different people  
24 about the RTZ. I was initially very critical  
25 of the RTZ, because it did not give any

25

1 municipalities any time to match our zoning  
2 code. So we spent about a year and a half, we  
3 carved out certain areas, and one of the things  
4 that I insisted it be part of the RTZ Ordinance  
5 was giving municipalities two years to meet us  
6 at our zoning point, right.

7 The other thing is that there isn't really  
8 a punitive aspect to the RTZ. When the RTZ was  
9 first considered, the idea is, if the cities  
10 didn't do this, "X" would happen, right. It  
11 doesn't have that. I've always thought that  
12 the best thing to do would be to go to the  
13 cities and prove this concept. At least, in my  
14 district, that what I've focused on. I've  
15 always wanted it to include interlocals, but  
16 that's a very difficult thing. However, I can  
17 tell you that, when South Miami was considering  
18 what to do with Sunset Place, we had this  
19 conversation, and they actually met us at our  
20 zoning. So Sunset Place, and also the property  
21 across from Sunset Place, which is the  
22 Government Center, does meet all of the RTZ  
23 requirements and then some. So there was no  
24 need to bring those properties into the RTZ and  
25 we're actually -- because we have a library

26

1 there, we worked on that project and we're  
2 going to be building a new library, and they're  
3 also, like Coral Gables, investing in the  
4 Underline.

5 We've used the nodes now as examples of a  
6 proof of concept. When we first started  
7 talking about the RTZ, one of the polemic  
8 issues was the zero parking requirement, and  
9 that is not to say that someone is going to  
10 build something without parking. That is to  
11 say that the County is allowing the developer  
12 to decide what parking works for them, and Link  
13 is a prime example of that. It's now going  
14 into Phase 3. In Phase 1 of Link, 67 percent  
15 of the residents there do not have cars. They  
16 have parking, but those units do not come with  
17 that parking. That parking is extra, you know.

18 And when you look at the zone, one of the  
19 ways that I explain it to people is, I am a dog  
20 lover. If I was moving into an apartment that  
21 didn't allow Sam to come, I would not live  
22 there. If I felt the same way about my car,  
23 which I do not, I live in the Rapid Transit  
24 Zone, I would not move into a building that did  
25 not have a parking space, right. I live in a

27

1 home with two other adults. We share an  
2 electric Fiat and we live in the RTZ. I am the  
3 only County Commissioner that lives in the RTZ,  
4 but it really is a different mindset.

5 The other thing that we try to explain to  
6 our municipalities is that there was eventually  
7 going to be a redevelopment, because a lot of  
8 the areas along this corridor are old 1980s  
9 parking lots, right, where you have the parking  
10 lot facing South Dixie Highway, and then you  
11 have the building in the back. And the idea  
12 was to bring those buildings forward, with the  
13 RTZ, and to create a step down, so that you  
14 actually have less density as you go into those  
15 residential areas, as opposed to continue to  
16 encroach upon those residential areas, and to  
17 amass people along the corridor, in the hopes  
18 that they will be using public transportation.  
19 Link and Grove Station have both proved that  
20 people are interested and living there to use  
21 public transportation.

22 As you will recall, one of the projects  
23 that I inherited, that we've actually helped  
24 and doubled down on, is the South Miami  
25 Metrorail Station, which was boxed. When I

28

1 started at the County Commission, one of the  
2 issues that we had in South Miami is, we had a  
3 lot of UM students that were cutting up houses,  
4 living eight, nine, ten in a house, a box with  
5 student housing, which was very polemic at the  
6 time, and everyone thought that the world would  
7 end if we did student housing at a Metrorail  
8 station. We're now working on Box 3. It's  
9 been very successful. It's really curtailed  
10 the use of housing by students in the  
11 residential areas, and once again, over 75  
12 percent of those students use public  
13 transportation.

14 So the proof is in the pudding, in terms of  
15 the RTZ, and this is an opportunity for Coral  
16 Gables to start meeting us at that level. As  
17 you saw on that presentation, it does not meet  
18 all of the RTZ requirements, but I believe that  
19 it is a good start, and I think that you should  
20 start somewhere, and I know that there's always  
21 push back when we make these changes, but the  
22 alternative is Live Local, and we have to be  
23 honest about that. And Live Local gets  
24 stronger and stronger every legislative term.

25 So, as much as we get push back for making

29

1 changes to our Comprehensive Master Plan, I  
2 think we also have to be cognizant that the  
3 alternative involves no public comment, no  
4 community benefit, no conversation about  
5 anything else. So I think it really is an  
6 opportunity for us to look at this corridor,  
7 and try to envision the future, and also answer  
8 the need for housing.

9 So there is a need for housing. There is a  
10 need for housing in the corridor. I can tell  
11 you that we're committed to continue  
12 investigating in the Metrorail. We've worked  
13 on almost all of the stations. Our last one is  
14 South Miami, but we have -- we redid 37th.  
15 We've just reopened -- we redid 37th. We just  
16 reopened 27th. And, obviously, we're working  
17 on Dadeland North and Dadeland South, and now  
18 we have the busway. So that, when you add it  
19 to the Underline, you know, one of the things  
20 that this area has is, it already has a  
21 pedestrian bridge. So the pedestrian bridges,  
22 I think, were a good investment, when they were  
23 made, a little ahead of their time, maybe, but  
24 now that we have the Underline and something to  
25 go to, not just Metrorail, I think we're going

30

1 to see a tremendous use, and a real desire by  
2 people, who want a 15-minute city, right, and  
3 understand the concept, from a planning  
4 perspective of a 15-minute city, that are going  
5 to come to this area in order to do that.

6 My drafting of this item really is very  
7 different from what has been presented to the  
8 RTZ at this point. It includes an interlocal,  
9 it includes Chapter 33, which is what we used  
10 at Grove Central. So I've done my best to  
11 include, as much as possible, and I'm always  
12 here to help the City Beautiful, and I hope  
13 that you will consider your proposal. I think  
14 it is thoughtful and an important first step.

15 I'm happy to answer your questions.

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

17 Any questions from the Board?

18 MS. KAWALERSKI: Not at this point. Will  
19 you be here a little later?

20 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Yes.

21 Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. KAWALERSKI: Thank you.

23 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Sure.

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

25 Jennifer, any other -- no?

31

1 How many speakers do we have on this item?

2 THE SECRETARY: About six.

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Six in Chambers? And  
4 in Zoom?

5 THE SECRETARY: One, so far.

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Can you start,  
7 please, with the in Chambers?

8 Lisa DeTournay.

9 MS. DETOURNAY: Hi. My name is Lisa  
10 DeTournay. I live at 10 Aragon Avenue, Suite  
11 1405, just down the street, but I also have a  
12 property in the area that we're discussing,  
13 directly behind there.

14 I've been involved -- I've lived in Coral  
15 Gables since 1991, I've lived in Miami a few  
16 years before that, and I've seen so much  
17 growth. I'm not against growth, but I am  
18 against the incredible rise that we're having  
19 in our neighborhoods.

20 I don't frankly see the push to bring so  
21 many new people into the City. There certainly  
22 aren't livable workforce places, unless you  
23 make over \$100,000, then you qualify, but I  
24 don't know anybody who works in a restaurant,  
25 et cetera, that makes that kind of money.

32

1 I know this isn't Live Local right now, but  
2 that's the option, as was mentioned before, if  
3 we don't like Rapid Transit. I personally  
4 don't see why, in this City, that we pride  
5 ourselves the City Beautiful, what exactly does  
6 that mean? Does that mean we have a lot of  
7 trees, does that mean we prohibit excessive  
8 growth and keep it beautiful like that or is  
9 this like a population contest?

10 So, in the particular area, I've been  
11 involved, in the last couple of years, going to  
12 townhalls for the area, University Center. The  
13 neighbors made it very clear to the developer,  
14 the owner of that property, and the lawyer, et  
15 cetera -- everybody that was there, we made it  
16 very clear that we weren't happy with eight  
17 stories, we would like seven. There were  
18 plenty of townhalls. I saw the angry owner  
19 storm out after the meeting one time, and then  
20 they've delayed anything more, and then they  
21 came back, well, sorry, you don't like it,  
22 we're going Rapid Transit, because then we can  
23 do what we want.

24 Their project is to bring, I don't know how  
25 many units now they have scheduled, but

33

1 thinking they'll be mostly rented to students  
2 and they won't need cars. I know, from just my  
3 place that I rent out, that usually my tenants  
4 have a car. And, also, the use of public  
5 transportation along the US-1 corridor only  
6 goes from here to there, it doesn't go  
7 north-south, so people are going to be using  
8 Ubers or something like that. It's still  
9 traffic.

10 You're asking, in this particular area of  
11 the proposed overlay we're talking about, for  
12 single-family homes, which is pretty much  
13 everything to -- and past Sunset, from US-1,  
14 and you're asking for high-rises, to bring that  
15 much more population to that area. Traffic is  
16 already very difficult since the Thesis came in  
17 to negotiate. The U of M Building has been  
18 vacant for a while, so that doesn't even count  
19 for current transportation needs or traffic  
20 needs.

21 So I think what I'm trying to say is, I  
22 don't know what the big push is to increase our  
23 population. I'm originally from Los Angeles  
24 and I always compare -- when people say, "Oh,  
25 where are you from?" I don't say Miami. I say

34

1 Coral Gables, because I'm very proud and I  
2 compare that to Beverly Hills. Everybody knows  
3 what Beverly Hills is. Beverly Hills also has  
4 a workforce thing, but certainly, along their  
5 main corridor, which is Santa Monica Boulevard,  
6 off of Wilshire, going all of the way to  
7 Downtown. They certainly don't allow any  
8 building, other than homes, on the residential  
9 side of Santa Monica Boulevard. I don't see  
10 why we have to be so different, and what the  
11 importance is of making this corridor so tall,  
12 and, frankly, not within the perspective of the  
13 rest of the Gables.

14 Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

16 Just a question, if I may. When you  
17 referred to University Center, are you  
18 referring to where the Friday's is, that  
19 shopping center?

20 MS. DETOURNAY: Yes, more known for Bagel  
21 Emporium.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct. Thank you.

23 MS. DETOURNAY: Thank you.

24 THE SECRETARY: Cathy, and I'm sorry, I  
25 couldn't make out your last name.

35

1 MS. BURNWEIT: Hi. I appreciate the  
2 opportunity to speak with you guys. I  
3 assume that if you ask --

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you could please  
5 state your name and address, for the record.

6 MS. BURNWEIT: Oh, Cathy Burnweit, and live  
7 at 6304 Caballero Boulevard.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

9 MS. BURNWHITE: And I am, obviously,  
10 affected by this project, which is one block  
11 from me.

12 I am more concerned, however, about this  
13 huge high-rise initiative, and creeping south  
14 to the waterway and the Gables Waterway  
15 project. There, it is being proposed, nine  
16 stories, across from my house, my child's  
17 house, who was raised there, and my grandchild,  
18 who's living there now, and if you put these  
19 huge buildings in that small area where they're  
20 proposed now on this -- in this building north  
21 of the Thesis, what are you going to say to the  
22 Gables Waterway project when they want to put  
23 13 stories and 11 stories and nine stories in  
24 the residential neighborhood? "Oh, we just  
25 allowed the County to do it, so we're going to

36

allow Coral Gables to do it."

So I think it's really important that we stop the spread of Brickellization of the US-1 corridor. You have high-rises at 27th, at 37th and at South Miami. You can walk to South Miami in less than a half mile. You can walk to the Douglas Metro station in less than two miles. So you do not need this.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.

THE SECRETARY: Chip Withers.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mr. Withers, welcome back.

MR. BEHAR: Welcome. Welcome.

MR. WITHERS: Good evening. Thank you for having me here. A lot of old faces -- well, I shouldn't say a lot of old faces, a lot of familiar faces.

MR. BEHAR: Thank you.

MR. WITHERS: I apologize.

So here we go again. A lot of people --

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you would please --

MR. WITHERS: Chip Withers, 1104 Hardee Road, Coral Gables, Florida. I was brought home in the house I live in 73 years ago. So

37

I've been living in the house there for 73 years, 1104 Hardee Road. You're welcome to stop by any time.

So, here we go, this is -- although the rapid pace this issue has developed in the last couple of weeks, it really started, I think it was 1893, the World's Fair, where the City Beautiful movement actually was kicked off. It was probably one of the most influential parts of George Merrick's life, and the whole reason for the City Beautiful movement was that the urbanization of the traffic and the cities, pushed cities to think about opening spaces and putting in planned communities. Felix knows this.

And what happened was, some cities, like San Francisco and Cleveland, really tried to develop the idea, but really, really fell flat on their faces. Basically three cities in American today, Shaker Heights, Ohio, Washington DC, and Coral Gables, Florida, still use that City Beautiful concept as their north star.

So the issue that I saw for 30 years sitting in the role as the Planning and Zoning

38

Board or the City Commission, was that we love the integrity that we have built in protecting our residential neighborhoods. Saying that, we are in a position right now where we've been looking at the 600-pound gorilla known as the, you know, US-1 corridor, and Commissioner Regalado, who is a real hero in my mind -- I respect her a great deal -- she's been there, she's fought the fight, and personally I want to say, thank you for your hard work in bringing this issue, and really trying to protect the sanctity of some of the Coral Gables neighborhoods through this Rapid Transit Zone.

I don't see a whole lot of issues out there. We have basically three competing municipalities. We have the City of Coral Gables, which we are trying to protect our Zoning Code, we have the Live Local, which is right around the corner from us, that I don't know how much, you know, we've discussed this. I've discussed it, and we've been told by our City Attorney that we don't have a whole lot of options in slowing that down. And we have an opportunity now, it looks like, to maybe

39

negotiate and try to work this out with the County to at least, maybe not get the entire loaf of bread, but part of the loaf of bread.

So I support the initiative. I support the fact that we are acting in haste to get this done. I support the County in working with us and hopefully we'll come to a resolution this evening. So, thank you, again, for your time, and welcome back, Peter. It's good to see you, as always, and City Attorney, City Clerk, it's great to see you, as well. So thank you very much.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you for coming.

THE SECRETARY: Betty.

DR. MORTENSON: Hello. I am Dr. Betty Mortenson.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could I ask you to lower the microphone? Thank you.

DR. MORTENSON: Hello. My name is Dr. Betty Mortenson. I live on the 1200 Block of Aduana. I am basically in the little area that they call South Gables.

The reason I am coming to talk is very simple. Nobody has looked at the life-safety issues, life-safety problems that these two

40

giant constructions cause. We're thinking of increasing the density, increasing the number of people, increasing the number of cars, because this is Miami, everybody drives, right along Dixie and right along Caballero.

Right now we have major problems with the Thesis. We were told many times, by all of the engineers, that it would not increase our traffic, it would not delay us going. I am one of many doctors, nurses and emergency personnel that live in the South Gables area. When a couple of minutes' increase, when we are called and we have to get to which ever hospital we're coming from, in five minutes, it takes us 25, 30 minutes, what happens? People die. Doctors can't get to the heart attacks and people die. Nurses can't help the stroke patients, and they are now stroked or incapacitated.

We need to stop, slow down, and think about what this is going to mean. Any one of us could have a stroke. Any one of us could have a heart attack, a fatal problem. Without the ability of we, doctors, nurses, and emergency personnel, to get to the hospitals, everybody is going to suffer. I'm not just talking about

41

Coral Gables. I'm talking about Miami-Dade. We service Baptist, we service South Miami Hospital, we service Mercy, and a few minutes makes a major difference in someone's life or death or ability to resolve a stroke.

So think. You guys are in a very unique -- ladies, also -- in a very unique position to save someone's life. It may be yours. It may be your family member's. It may be one of the citizens of Coral Gables or Dade County. So think very seriously.

This is Miami. Nobody takes the Metro, because the Metro goes up and down. It has no tributaries. It has nothing else. So to make more density means more cars, more people coming in, us not being able to do our job, which is to save people's lives. This is imperative, folks. Any one of us could have that problem.

Two of my colleagues, who are not in Miami, they were in their 40s, one died of a heart attack, and the other one died of a stroke complication. Had they been in this area, where we are able to still maneuver, it might not have happened. But if we increase the

42

density, those of us in the South Gables are landlocked. We cannot get out. Dixie Highway is a variable parking lot, and now you're going to increase the density there and in Coral Gables. Think about it, guys, lady, these are our lives. You are in a unique position to help save lives. Please think about this, before you increase the density.

Thank you.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.

THE SECRETARY: Denise Carvalho.

MS. CARVALHO: Hi. My name is Denise Carvalho. I live in 6308 Caballero Boulevard.

I have been here before to tell you what we think and say that we are against the Mark, which is going to bring a bunch of new students from the University of Miami, to live in the neighborhood, and now -- and I was happy to see that you guys heard our message, that we didn't have a traffic study, we didn't have structure to have all of these people come over and live in our neighborhood and increase in -- like one-third the amount of people that live there, just by that building alone.

So, now, I got a really big surprise to

43

realize that it went to the County and we had no notice. We had no notice from the City of Coral Gables that said to us that they were doing a counter-proposal for the County legislation, that was not going to talk -- the people of the City was not going to hear our points, and they are all counting on all of those people using the Metrorail.

Please stand up and say who uses the Metrorail to ride here today.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you can, please direct all comments to the Board. I'd appreciate it.

MS. CARVALHO: Sorry, but I wanted to make a point here. Nobody uses the Metrorail. Nobody will ever use the Metrorail, if it continues to be that way. So you expand first the Metrorail, please, Commissioner --

MR. BEHAR: Can you address us?

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Please address us.

MS. CARVALHO: Sorry. You need to please expand the Metrorail to other areas, and then build, and -- we have a very big traffic problem already, and at least if you allow this bigger than it was before denied, please don't

44

1 use any -- don't let anyone have cars. No  
2 parking. If nobody has parking, they're going  
3 to have to use the bicycles. They're students.  
4 They're not committed to the City of Miami  
5 (sic). They are there for a four-year term,  
6 and they're going to leave. They're not  
7 citizens of the city.

8 And Gables Waterway is our big concern.  
9 It's an environmental issue, a really big  
10 environmental issue. We are very fond of our  
11 canal and this will ruin our canal, because if  
12 you accept all of that, and Gables Waterway is  
13 in the vicinity, it's like adjacent to all of  
14 these, you're going to accept Gables Waterways  
15 under RTZ, under whatever, and it's not  
16 something that is going to be a long-term good  
17 thing for our City. It's going to be bad for  
18 our City. It's going to ruin our single-family  
19 neighborhood, a calm single-family neighborhood  
20 that's Riviera and South Gables.

21 I live there. It's been ten years that  
22 I've lived there. I knew the 45 feet height  
23 that was on the Code. I never expected this to  
24 be changed like that, in this map, in a  
25 signature. This is really, really concerning.

45

1 I have an apartment in Miami Beach, 7330  
2 Ocean Terrace. They wanted to build something  
3 on the site of it. It took years, and lots of  
4 talks with the neighborhood, to be allowed. We  
5 gained so much from it. Those TDRs -- those  
6 TDRs don't come to our neighborhood. They go  
7 somewhere else. We lose our sky, for a  
8 building like that. We increase the density of  
9 our neighborhood and we don't get anything of  
10 that -- for that. So that's something really,  
11 really, really bad.

12 Okay. That's all. Thank you very much for  
13 hearing.

14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.

15 THE SECRETARY: David Harnett.

16 MR. HARNETT: Good afternoon. My name is  
17 David Harnett, and I am the lawyer and son of  
18 Catherine Harnett, who lives at 510 Marmore, in  
19 Coral Gables, which is four blocks north of  
20 Hardee Road, just on the east side of the canal  
21 and Riviera Drive.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you provide your  
23 office address, for the record, please?

24 MR. HARNETT: My office address is 8900  
25 Southwest 107th Avenue, Suite 301, and I live

46

1 at the home at 510 Marmore two days a week, and  
2 my family has been living in Coral Gables for  
3 95 years. I grew up in that neighborhood.  
4 I've seen the changes that have happened, and I  
5 echo much of the sentiments that have been said  
6 here today. And really appreciate -- I live  
7 down in Pinecrest the other time, and we really  
8 appreciate Commissioner Regalado's leadership  
9 on a lot of these issues.

10 Nevertheless, I urge the Board and the City  
11 Commission, when it travels to them, to  
12 consider a couple of things. I've watched as  
13 this corridor development has occurred, and  
14 when it went up at 37th Avenue, I distinctly  
15 remember the comments from all of the officials  
16 from the City of Coral Gables, which was, we  
17 don't have any control over that. That's the  
18 County. It's their land, their say, right on  
19 the Metrorail.

20 Now we're talking about, which you do have  
21 control over, in the zoning. I urge -- I don't  
22 know enough about the land use and the zoning  
23 issues between the County and the City, but I  
24 urge the City to do what it can, and if this  
25 proposal is about maintaining control over the

47

1 zoning, that's one thing I would urge the City  
2 to do.

3 There are a couple of things that I would  
4 articulate, which is, if I heard correctly  
5 about the development that's ultimately going  
6 to be proposed at the complex which was -- is  
7 the Friday's, Bagel Emporium, the ten-story  
8 building which used to house the Hurricane  
9 Center, that now is University of Miami or  
10 whatever it is, next to the Thesis Hotel, if I  
11 heard correctly they're proposing a compromise  
12 with the County that would be a zoning height  
13 of 120 feet. If I got that right, that's  
14 probably ten stories. Then you're talking  
15 about roofs, and, then, when you get to  
16 trade-offs that I've seen in the zoning over  
17 the last four, five, six, seven years,  
18 particularly when it gets up at the Commission,  
19 the next thing you know, as was articulated, it  
20 sounds to me like it won't be ten stories, it  
21 will be eleven, twelve, with some trade-offs,  
22 some public land use openings and some art  
23 given to the City, that you can post around the  
24 City, and walk around.

25 For the time that I've lived in this area,

48

1 which is my whole life, basically, and before  
2 that, the City of Miami, Miami-Dade County, of  
3 which my mother's father was Mayor of Miami,  
4 we've never been a commuter town, and  
5 respectfully to those who want to make it that,  
6 because of population control, it's not going  
7 to change here in the City of Miami. For the  
8 time I've grown up, they've talked about, when  
9 they put it in the Metrorail, for the Florida  
10 East Coast Railway, and now it's there. People  
11 still own cars.

12 Down at the Dadeland area, the building  
13 that went up, that's along the corridor, just  
14 south of the last Dadeland station, if I  
15 understand correctly, that building, which has  
16 been up for two years now, is still unrented by  
17 ten or twenty or thirty percent. That's next  
18 to the lot that they just tore down, where the  
19 KFC was, which is just south -- where Shorty's  
20 is, which is going to be another building  
21 that's going to go up right by Dadeland, which  
22 if I understand it, is going to be there.

23 We're already faced, at Red Road and US-1,  
24 to the westbound of Coral Gables, right in that  
25 area, with a 22 to 30-story building that's

49

1 going to go up, that's going to increase the  
2 population there, as well. I think, anybody  
3 who articulates that it's going to -- that  
4 these buildings are going to somehow create  
5 affordable housing in that area, is grasping at  
6 straws, because I don't see it.

7 The developers are going to come in.  
8 They're going to build high-rises and they're  
9 going to sell them at three, four, five  
10 thousand dollars a month, apartment-wise, and  
11 they're going to be 500 to two million dollar  
12 units, at best, at the beginning. Why?  
13 Because this is Coral Gables.

14 One of the beauties about Coral Gables is  
15 what has gone on forever, which was the  
16 maintaining and not seeding control over  
17 zoning, and the reason the people live in the  
18 City of Coral Gables is because of the strict  
19 zoning and building codes that we have, and  
20 every time there is an encroachment, where the  
21 buildings go higher, and then they go a block  
22 over, and then the next developer comes and  
23 says, "Well, you see, they did it down the  
24 block, so now I'm entitled to it," that's what  
25 these people are talking about and I believe

50

1 that's what the community would articulate, in  
2 whole, if it was posed to them.

3 The last thing that I would say is, is that  
4 I read the proposal in the Staff memo, and  
5 there are a couple of things here which are key  
6 to what -- if I understand it, is the County's  
7 development plan, which, in theory, this is all  
8 supposed to create more affordable housing for  
9 the increase in the population community.  
10 Well, the words that the Staff is using is,  
11 "May," and I would respectfully submit, I have  
12 never seen a study, read it in The Herald or  
13 heard it articulated in the meetings that I now  
14 have started to watch with more frequency,  
15 either here or even at the Commission, where  
16 there has been any articulation that affordable  
17 housing is coming to the City of Coral Gables  
18 in those buildings that are going up or the  
19 buildings that just went up at 37th Avenue,  
20 much less the one at 27th Avenue.

21 So I would urge -- I don't know enough  
22 about all of the zoning, and I actually came  
23 here for the water management one, but I would  
24 urge this Board to do what it can to maintain  
25 as much control, and recommend to the

51

1 Commission to keep as much control over all of  
2 the zoning rights we have, all of the building  
3 rights we have, and how we regulate them here  
4 in the City of Coral Gables, not unlike or very  
5 much like what they're trying to do now in the  
6 Village of Pinecrest, where my other home is.

7 So thank you for your time.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir, for  
9 coming.

10 THE SECRETARY: Daniel. And he's going to  
11 need to be sworn in.

12 MR. MILLAY: I am.

13 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)

14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

15 MR. MILLAY: Hi. My name is Daniel Millay.  
16 I live at 1205 Mariposa Avenue, 433. I am  
17 quite literally facing the University Center  
18 development and what used to be TGI Friday's.  
19 I wasn't around when he was here, but now,  
20 going after him, I hope I can be as articulate.

21 I have no disagreement that development  
22 needs to be done. My opposition is to the  
23 scale at which it is being done. Anything that  
24 has -- that is done, needs to be done  
25 thoughtfully and purposefully and with

52

consideration to real world impacts.

Everyone's talked about, oh, the traffic, the health, the appearance of Coral Gables, but there some things that are systematically and fundamentally wrong with trying to build up so high in these areas. So I have a simple question. Where do you turn left? Has anyone looked at the map and seen where you turn left out in that whole stretch, to go south on Dixie? There is one light. One, two-lane road, that turns left. All of this traffic will try and go to that light, causing huge backups, or, alternatively, they'll go down to the Stanford light, where it has -- how many rows is it?

Madruga, which leads into Maynada, Augusto Street and Miami Homestead Avenue, which is front of the school, all lead you into that intersection, which is already a busy, busy intersection, with people going south. So, just, fundamentally, it's not built to handle the kind of stress these giant buildings will do, because using The Mark as an example, they wanted to do sixty percent of all of their traffic on Madruga Avenue, or Madruga Court,

53

the road behind. It's a 300 percent increase. That was one single building, which made it 2,700 trips a day on that road, which is more -- barely more than an alley street. So that was a single building, not counting all of the other ones combined.

And on top of that, the loading docks for these buildings, there's nowhere on that street that you can pull into a building physically. They may note, in their study, that the trucks cannot turn right into these buildings. So what the trucks will do is park on the street to load and unload. So, again, fundamental problems with trying to build these giant buildings in these tiny areas that are not designed for these.

And, also, to address the use of the Metro, I am someone that uses the Metro. I told you, I live right behind the building. I work Downtown. I'm a perfect example of it. I still need my car. Everything, except going to work, I have to drive to, because even going to Aldi, one stop down, three broken elevators on one of my trips. So can you imagine an elderly person trying to go on their grocery shopping,

54

using the Metro, trying to haul all of the groceries up and down the stairs, across two bridges, where you have three different elevators broken, on each bridge and at the station. So it's not feasible just to assume, hey, we're on the Metro line, everyone's going to use the Metro for everything, because it just does not work that way.

I am a resident there. I see it. So let me tell you, as someone who sees -- lives there and sees what happens, from a practical and realistic standpoint, as I said, I still have to drive. When I leave in the morning to take my daughter to school, half of our parking garage is living, at the same time, to go to work themselves. We live on the Metro, but these people do not work -- because the Metro only goes north-south, very restrictive. There's only so many places to go, and it will become less, the more you build, because, again, using The Mark as an example, the current square footage for retail on the University Center Shopping street is 58,000 square feet. Their proposed retail was 19,000 square feet.

55

So doing the mixed-use and trying to squeeze all of this in reduces the amount of retail and shopping available to residents, so then you now have to go further to anything else, because it's just not there, because they've tried to squeeze -- they squeezed out the bigger box stores, that had more stuff, to make little boutiques or tiny little cafe restaurants, that now you have to go out further for more things.

So just because they've done it at other places does not mean it works here. We cannot say, "Hey, look, they're doing construction down there. That's great. They're developing. Let's do it here, too," without looking at how it actually impacts. Just the fact that they're building and having this idea that, oh, you're on the Metro, it means everyone will use the Metro, does not mean the reality of the situation is what you envision it or a perfect scenario.

So I want to again emphasize that I am not opposed to development. I just want to scale it way back and not have these giant buildings, that do not fit the area in any way.

56

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

3 THE SECRETARY: Robert Kogan.

4 MR. KOGAN: Good evening. My name is  
5 Robert Kogan. I live at 1127 Manati Avenue,  
6 and like Chip, I've been living on that block  
7 for 65 years. I have to tell you that, like  
8 most of everybody else here, I am not opposed  
9 to development. I remember when the Food Fair  
10 was at University Center, when I used to go  
11 there with my mom.

12 I just want to tell you, I am very familiar  
13 with that shopping center. I'm also familiar  
14 when they build Gables Tower, when I was going  
15 to Westlab. I used to ride my bike from  
16 Westlab to my house, and stop and watch the  
17 construction every day, while that building was  
18 going up. Again, I'm not against development.  
19 I understand what's happened to the shopping  
20 center over the years, and that's fine. With  
21 new development, new people coming in, there's  
22 no problem.

23 It's the scale that we're talking about  
24 here. As a person that's lived in that area,  
25 as I mentioned, 65 years, I can tell you

57

1 happened there. The courts ruled in their  
2 favor.

3 All I'm saying is, do not seed the zoning  
4 to the County, because what we're going to end  
5 up with is something that we're all going to  
6 hate. And remember, once this building is  
7 built, it's not coming down. It's going to be  
8 permanent, and we're all going have to live  
9 with the consequences. Like I said, I'm a  
10 homeowner there, grew up there.

11 And, also, what you have to remember is  
12 that, there's no sidewalks on Hardee, there's  
13 no sidewalks on Madruga, there's no sidewalks  
14 on Caballero, and there's no sidewalks on  
15 Turin. I don't care what the developer says,  
16 if you go to Jaycee Park in the morning or  
17 afternoon, all you have to do is look at all of  
18 those people, with their children and their  
19 strollers, walking, riding their bikes,  
20 whatever. You're going to have a mess. People  
21 are going to get hit.

22 And I'm a person, and if you want to ask  
23 Mr. Withers, he sees me every afternoon riding  
24 my bike around the block, I can't tell you how  
25 many close calls I've had right now, since The

59

1 exactly how traffic patterns are. I don't care  
2 what a traffic study says, I have personal  
3 experience, life experience, and the only way,  
4 like the previous speaker said, if you want to  
5 make a left turn now, because of all -- from  
6 The Thesis development, the only place you can  
7 go is to the corner by the junior high school,  
8 Maynada -- that's not me? Oh, I'm sorry, I  
9 thought that was my phone -- to make a left  
10 turn.

11 Now, you have a bunch of roads leading into  
12 that. You have the kids going to junior high  
13 school in the morning and in the afternoon,  
14 with the buses. It's a complete disaster, if  
15 you had more density, more traffic. That's  
16 just one of the issues.

17 Another issue is future development. If  
18 you allow this in, how about the University  
19 Waterway project? Like another speaker  
20 previously said, they're going to point to that  
21 and say, "Hey, how about us?" That's what  
22 happened down in the Coral Gables waterway, if  
23 you'll remember, when the City tried to fight  
24 that new building going up. The developer  
25 said, "Hey, they built one," and you know what

58

1 Thesis has gone up, missing not being hit by a  
2 car, okay. And, also, Uber pick-ups, Uber  
3 drop-offs, they're using the parking at Jaycee  
4 Park. They're not going into the building at  
5 all. They're not going into the valet area at  
6 all.

7 Also, I wanted to talk to you about the  
8 circle there, the traffic circle. I'll be  
9 happy to send pictures over to the Board here,  
10 three years ago, a car carrier went around that  
11 circle, couldn't make it, drove right through  
12 it. I have the photos in my phone, if anybody  
13 wants to see it. Took down the shrubbery, took  
14 down the street signs. Called the City of  
15 Coral Gables police non-emergency, gave them  
16 the license number of the car carrier, nothing  
17 happened. This has gone on and on and on. I  
18 would ask for you to check with Public Works  
19 and ask them how many times they've had to  
20 replace the foliage and the signs there at that  
21 circle at Caballero and Hardee. It's quite a  
22 few, I can tell you, from personal experience.

23 So all of these issues -- oh, and one final  
24 thing, just to inform you -- Chip, did you get  
25 a notice in the mail?

60

1 MR. WITHERS: Yes.

2 MR. KOGAN: You did?

3 A lot of people on Manati did not, and you  
4 have to take into consideration, my next door  
5 neighbor, on the opposite side of the street,  
6 didn't get a notice. They had no idea about  
7 this. So I'm just saying, yes, you followed  
8 the law by sending out so many feet, but this  
9 affects everybody in the University Estates  
10 area, on the east side of Maynada, west side of  
11 Maynada, the same on Hardee. So I would  
12 advise, just a recommendation, in the future,  
13 extend it, because everybody uses it. Maynada  
14 and Hardee is going to be affected, in that  
15 neighborhood.

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

18 Jill?

19 THE SECRETARY: Victoria Weller.

20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sorry, I was going to  
21 ask if there was anybody else.

22 THE SECRETARY: Yes, and then we have four  
23 speakers on Zoom.

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Thank you.

25 MS. WELLER: Hello. I'm Victoria Weller.

61

1 I just off of a 10-hour flight from Europe and  
2 I came, because this is an important issue.

3 As a younger --

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Would you state your  
5 address, please, for the record?

6 MS. WELLER: Oh, 1218 Aduana Ave.

7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

8 MS. WELLER: As a younger member of the  
9 community -- me?

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let's get you sworn  
11 in, since you came later.

12 (Thereupon, participants were sworn.)

13 MS. WELLER: Okay. Hi. Did I accomplish  
14 all of the prerequisites? Okay. Perfect.  
15 Awesome.

16 As a younger member of the community, I've  
17 grown up in Coral Gables. I love Coral Gables.  
18 And one of the beauties of Coral Gables is the  
19 aesthetic appeal to it. And I'm in a unique  
20 position in my life right now, as a young  
21 adult, that I can afford to buy property, and  
22 one of the places that I looked into is Coral  
23 Gables, because I think it's beautiful.

24 If I wanted to live in an urban, you know,  
25 high-rise area, I would. It's not. I want the

62

1 community. And I understand moving forward  
2 development is important and it will happen,  
3 but I agree with the previous speakers, that  
4 scale is the key here, and living in that  
5 community for so many years, the traffic, even  
6 with The Thesis, what that gentleman said about  
7 the traffic circles, is very true. I can no  
8 longer, you know, drive to the park -- and I  
9 use the park. I play tennis -- because I guess  
10 the Uber drivers use it. I can tell you, I use  
11 the street right in front of The Thesis, and it  
12 is backed up four cars. I use my horn more  
13 often than not. Or I take the little gap,  
14 where the waterway is, that little gap through  
15 that parking lot, and, you know, with the  
16 development coming in, that's not even an  
17 option for me in the future.

18 What I'm saying is that this is -- that  
19 this will affect everyone in the residential  
20 neighborhoods, because traffic needs to  
21 continue to flow forward, and if it can't,  
22 because US-1 is overly congested, and let's be  
23 real, it is, they'll take the back roads of the  
24 neighborhoods, and those neighborhoods, one of  
25 the appeals to them, is that, you know, people

63

1 walk around. There's a sense of community.  
2 And if you take that away, because there's more  
3 cars, there's more traffic, there's more  
4 people, because the density is increased  
5 because we're putting ten-story buildings or  
6 higher, then, you know, you take away the  
7 appeal of the beauty and the aesthetics of what  
8 I find unique about Coral Gables, which is like  
9 it's green, it's, you know, City Beautiful for  
10 a reason.

11 So I think, you know, you guys have an  
12 opportunity to listen to us and also decide,  
13 moving forward, what the best way to go forward  
14 is, with what the City -- you know, what you  
15 guys intended it to be, but it would affect,  
16 and I think scale is important to consider in  
17 this option.

18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, and welcome  
20 back.

21 THE SECRETARY: Henry Pinero.

22 MR. PINERO: Hi. My name is Henry Pinero.  
23 I live at 1215 Aduana Avenue, basically two  
24 blocks away from the affected area.

25 I want to ask a couple of questions, and

64

1 leave you with an anecdote. So why is it that  
2 all of these types of zoning changes seem to  
3 happen and seem to occur during the dead of  
4 summer? Why do we get notifications, while I  
5 was out on vacation? I just barely got back  
6 for this. Is this designed on purpose? I'm  
7 just asking the question, and I want you guys  
8 to do a --

9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you would, if you  
10 would just make your comments and statements  
11 and we'll note your question, and, then, at  
12 that point, if anybody on the Board will take  
13 up and answer it, we'll take it at that time

14 MR. PINERO: Okay. Take it as a rhetorical  
15 question.

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Understood.

17 MR. PINERO: And I'll fill in my theories.  
18 I think that this is done on purpose, so that  
19 there is less attendance, less participation.  
20 I was on a group chat with my neighbors, and a  
21 lot of them were out. I just managed to make  
22 it in for this.

23 My question is, are you guys asking  
24 yourselves the question of why these major  
25 zoning changes are happening in the dead of

65

1 summer? Why it always feels like it's  
2 happening with very little notification, which  
3 I think is something that some others have  
4 brought up? I'm just asking the question. I  
5 want you guys to really look at it, as  
6 neighbors.

7 If your neighbors are being affected by  
8 this, would you listen to them? Would you take  
9 it to heart? I feel like there's a concerted  
10 effort to get this passed, and I would like you  
11 guys to ask the right questions of all of those  
12 that are in favor of this. That's Number One.

13 So why are we doing -- why is -- the theory  
14 behind all of these developments is that it is  
15 going to be transit oriented development and  
16 it's going to spur people to use the Metrorail  
17 and all sorts of traffic transit. Well, I have  
18 never seen a study -- we have multiple  
19 developments that have been put in place, the  
20 Paseo, the buildings further on -- further up  
21 north on US-1, closer to Coral Gables High, no  
22 study has been done, since any of these  
23 buildings has been erected, to show an  
24 increased use in the Metrorail by the people  
25 that live there. Why hasn't that been done? I

66

1 would like to understand that.

2 Why don't we test the theory that is  
3 driving all of this? If we are a data oriented  
4 society, if we have cameras everywhere, if we  
5 are measuring the traffic going through one  
6 location and another, why can't we get that  
7 data? Why can't we see the effectiveness of  
8 these theories? We have multiple data points  
9 that are being ignored. That's the second  
10 question.

11 The third point that I want to make is an  
12 anecdote that I want to share from a month or  
13 so ago. At the Paseo building, there was a  
14 graduation ceremony or some type of graduation  
15 party being held. I came home at 11:00  
16 something at night with my family. I tried to  
17 turn into Caballero. I could not turn in.  
18 Everything was completely backed up. My point  
19 is, I had to go back, and double back, and use  
20 a side street, cost me several minutes. My  
21 point with this is that the impact of these  
22 developments is not being quantified.

23 I'm an engineer by training. I want to see  
24 quantification. We have the tools to test  
25 these theories out. The reality is that, it is

67

1 not driving the use of the Metrorail. The  
2 truth is, it is impacting the neighbors  
3 directly. That's it.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

5 Jill, anybody else in Chambers?

6 THE SECRETARY: No.

7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. How many do we  
8 have on Zoom?

9 THE SECRETARY: So far, four.

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Please call the  
11 first person.

12 THE SECRETARY: Francisco Senior.

13 Mr. Senior, can you please open your camera?

14 Would you like me to go to the next person?

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, please.

16 THE SECRETARY: I think he's connecting.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If he comes back,  
18 we'll take him before.

19 THE SECRETARY: He's connected.

20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: He's connected?

21 THE SECRETARY: Yeah.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

23 THE SECRETARY: Can you hear us?

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: There you are, sir. A  
25 little frozen, but you're there.

68

MR. COLLIER: Mr. Chairman, if it's possible, we would need to swear these --

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, as long as we can see them.

Sir, would you raise your right hand, please, so you can be sworn in?

MR. SENIOR: Yes --

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Jill, if we can, let's move to the second person, and if he's able to figure out his internet, we'll circle back.

THE SECRETARY: David Woodbury.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Are you having the issue with the second person, also?

THE SECRETARY: I can see him on the camera. Okay. Now he unmuted himself.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

THE SECRETARY: David, can you hear us?

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mr. Woodbury, are you there?

You're muted.

Mr. Woodbury?

We can't hear you.

Jill, is it a problem with the City's internet or equipment or --

THE SECRETARY: I've given them access.

69

I've actually made them co-host. So it's -- it might be just signal.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could we try the third individual and then we'll keep those other people in mind, please?

THE SECRETARY: Sure. Julie. She's not on anymore.

The third speaker was Julie, but she's no longer on.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

THE SECRETARY: And I also have Maria Cruz.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could we put Mrs. Cruz on, please?

THE SECRETARY: Sure. Mrs. Cruz.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Mrs. Cruz, are you there?

MR. COLLIER: Just for the record, this has worked in the past. We seemed to be having a problem tonight.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Jill, is it possible to maybe have these people -- I know, without being video, there won't be any evidentiary value -- but maybe we can get them on sound only, without video, and that may help going through.

70

THE SECRETARY: They've been unmuted. They have access. It's not coming through.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: They have access, okay.

MR. BEHAR: Can I get an IT person maybe to help out?

MR. COLLIER: I might suggest that we move on with the proceeding, and then we can hold it in abeyance when they come back up.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We can open it back up. I would agree with that.

While we're waiting for them, I'd like to ask Jennifer a question, if I may, please.

There's been a lot of discussion about what the County is doing, and there's been discussion about what we're trying to do. Can you talk about the RTZ, as it relates to the County only, if the City doesn't implement its own? In other words, what's the radius of the RTZ for the County?

MS. GARCIA: I believe it's a quarter mile for the community urban center.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

MS. GARCIA: The Douglas Center, for example, is a metropolitan urban center. It's

71

a little bit wider or larger circle, but South Miami and the University station is a university -- sorry, it's a quarter mile.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. So for the County, we're talking about a quarter mile radius from, I guess, the entrance to the Metro Station?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: So, the RTZ, actually, if you look at the map, goes along the entire SMART corridor. However, it is not as of right. The properties have to come into the RTZ. So that's where you get the confusion, right.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: So that's why I said, like the RTZ has existed as an overlay, but the properties have to come in one by one or in pairs or whatever.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sorry.

And if a property asks to come in, is it automatic?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: No.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What's the requirement per property?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: So there is a

72

1 process by which they come in, and it has to be  
2 brought to the Board of County Commissioners.  
3 It goes to First Reading. It goes to  
4 Committee. And then it goes to Second Reading.  
5 And there could be delays in that process,  
6 right, and the Commissioner of the district is  
7 normally involved in it.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. And what the  
9 City is now trying to do, my understanding, is  
10 to be very specific with three or four specific  
11 addresses that would be in the RTZ? That's  
12 with the City --

13 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: So what the City is  
14 looking at doing is looking at the zone around  
15 the current property that has requested to come  
16 into the RTZ, because what the RTZ item does  
17 is, once a property comes in, it also creates a  
18 small overlay. So the City is looking at a  
19 smaller overlay footprint.

20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And that footprint is  
21 not the quarter mile radius?

22 MR. BEHAR: It's less.

23 MS. GARCIA: No, it's just those five --

24 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: No, it's smaller.  
25 It's smaller.

73

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.

2 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: But the RTZ  
3 actually overlays -- everywhere where the SMART  
4 plan goes, the RTZ follows it.

5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Understood. Thank you  
6 for the clarification.

7 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Sure.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Jill, do we have  
9 anybody back up?

10 THE SECRETARY: Let's try again with  
11 Mr. Senior.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let's try one more  
13 time with all three, please, and if not, do we  
14 have anybody on the phone?

15 THE SECRETARY: We have three people on the  
16 phone, but they haven't indicated they wish to  
17 speak.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. Let's try those  
19 three. If not, I'll go ahead and close it for  
20 public comment. If they're able to resolve  
21 their issue, then we'll take it up at that  
22 time.

23 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Senior?

24 I think we have David on. David, can you  
25 hear us?

74

1 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chairman, I think we should  
2 go on, and if they're able to resolve it, we  
3 open it up again.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I agree. At this  
5 point, let's go ahead and move forward. I'm  
6 going to go ahead and close it for public  
7 comment. If those three individuals are able  
8 to figure out what it is, I will go ahead and  
9 open it up for them to speak.

10 MR. BUCELO: Mr. Chairman, how about if  
11 they put a call in number? Maybe it's a Zoom  
12 issue.

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It's in there. That's  
14 why I asked if there was.

15 MR. BUCELO: Oh, okay. Understood.

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Felix, would you start  
17 us off?

18 MR. PARDO: I'd like a little  
19 clarification. I'm a little confused with the  
20 whole premise.

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Please --

22 MR. COLLIER: Your mic.

23 MR. PARDO: Good? Thank you.

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.

25 MR. PARDO: I'm a little confused with the

75

1 premise. We had a project that came before us  
2 a while ago, and it was a certain project to  
3 develop there on the property where the  
4 existing shopping center was.

5 So as far as ownership, et cetera, it's  
6 still the same. It's only the design  
7 constructs that are being changed through  
8 this -- through this specific University  
9 Transit District change, correct?

10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The way I -- Jill -- I  
11 mean, Jennifer, sorry.

12 MS. GARCIA: Yeah. So the former Mark  
13 project has expired. The expiration for the  
14 Board of Architects has already expired. I  
15 think, after this Board, they went to the  
16 County and rallied the County to create an  
17 overlay -- not an overlay, but an expansion of  
18 the RTZ legislation, to be able to incorporate  
19 that project into that --

20 MR. PARDO: So that specific project went  
21 to the County to request this at that time?

22 MS. GARCIA: Yes. Correct.

23 MR. PARDO: Okay.

24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Did they go to Live  
25 Local also?

76

1 MS. GARCIA: No.  
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But they could?  
 3 MS. GARCIA: Through the City, sure, yeah.  
 4 MR. BUCELO: Chair, if I may, what is  
 5 the -- I apologize.  
 6 MR. PARDO: I hadn't finished yet.  
 7 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Please continue.  
 8 MR. PARDO: So, understandably, we had been  
 9 looking at a specific project, that had gone to  
 10 the Board of Architects, that had a certain  
 11 design. So that's out the window?  
 12 MS. GARCIA: I haven't seen anything from  
 13 them since it came before this Board last  
 14 year -- early last year.  
 15 MR. PARDO: Right. So, basically, the  
 16 change of zoning that they're requesting --  
 17 they were requesting at that time from the City  
 18 of Coral Gables is --  
 19 MS. GARCIA: Right.  
 20 MR. PARDO: -- null and void, because they  
 21 were able to, let's say, for use of a better  
 22 word, and I don't mean to offend anyone, to  
 23 usurp that specific request, and then continue  
 24 and ask for this specific project.  
 25 So, if that's the case, from what I

77

1 understand, Commissioner Regalado, the nodes  
 2 that are existing on the corridor are  
 3 complemented by the busway, which, in fact,  
 4 Alicia Bravo, who is an excellent engineer, and  
 5 was in charge of that at one time, in her many  
 6 capacities over the years, was augmenting and  
 7 then finishing, and this complementary bus  
 8 service that was being attached to that, and  
 9 she was basically in charge of doing that, to  
 10 be able to have those components of the bus  
 11 service, to be able to complement these  
 12 particular stations.

13 So my first question, from a conceptual  
 14 standpoint, and I know how powerful your seat  
 15 is and your position and your knowledge is of  
 16 all of these different things, would it be,  
 17 first of all, difficult to request better  
 18 specificity of the complementary bus service  
 19 from this particular station, mass transit  
 20 station, that goes in one direction, as was  
 21 addressed a couple of times, where it could be  
 22 more useful, you know, to the City?

23 For example, many years ago, through Billy  
 24 Kerdyk, the trolley system that was created has  
 25 helped substantially over the years, where it's

78

1 been copied by many municipalities throughout  
 2 the County. The ridership is incredibly high,  
 3 because it's incredibly efficient. Obviously,  
 4 it's the right cost. But that, I think, would  
 5 be very important.

6 The second thing is --

7 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Do you want me to  
 8 answer the transit one?

9 MR. PARDO: I'm going to ask you two other  
 10 things, because I know you can talk and chew  
 11 gum. There's no doubt about that.

12 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Okay.

13 MR. PARDO: But I think, Commissioner, that  
 14 the SMART corridor concept, the negative -- the  
 15 negative, which I have seen, and I've seen  
 16 other Commissioners, like in District 8,  
 17 Higgins -- yes --

18 (Simultaneous speaking.)

19 MR. PARDO: Right. And, then, one of the  
 20 things that she was concerned, on a project in  
 21 her district, which is almost at the end of the  
 22 line there, Homestead and the Highway, was that  
 23 basically most of those people there, they're  
 24 single-family homes, that are much closer to  
 25 the SMART corridor, and she was very concerned

79

1 about the impact of basically upzoning the  
 2 properties that were within that distance, the  
 3 thousand foot, I think it was, if memory serves  
 4 me right, and, therefore, upzoning those areas  
 5 without any type of public hearing process  
 6 and/or an understanding of the compatibility  
 7 issues that were there, and she was -- in a  
 8 particular case, she was able to win the day  
 9 for the residents, in that case.

10 I would think that the second step, as far  
 11 as the bus corridor component, to be able to  
 12 make it more usable for the residents of Coral  
 13 Gables, would be the possibility of finally  
 14 resolving the Caballero intersection, because  
 15 it's almost a hypotenuse triangle there, and it  
 16 becomes a funnel effect, that people can't get  
 17 out, as has been stressed by many of the  
 18 neighbors here today. That has been going on  
 19 for a long time. It's only gotten worse with  
 20 the two large projects that were built there.  
 21 So I know that we're at the mercy of DOT, but I  
 22 think that it is essential that that finally  
 23 gets resolved, with some type of mechanism,  
 24 through engineering, that could be hopefully  
 25 addressed.

80

And, then, the third item is that, if -- when you look at these corridors, I don't see anywhere, and I don't know if you have any objection of carving out a larger component of it, where you could carve a larger component, you know, to provide parks, you know, for the people that would live in this area. So many of these students, that would be going to the University of Miami, may not have cars, but they have recreational needs, and we have very little large recreational spaces. These little pocket parks are -- may be essential for you to walk your dog there and back, but not to use them.

Would you address the concept?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Of course. So I'll start with the last one first. One of the things that we're looking at, at this corridor, is obviously the investment that we're making in the Underline. The Underline Phase 3 is very different from the Underline Phase 2 and Underline Phase 1, just because of the amount of space that we have.

So a lot of the parks concerns and a lot of the outreach that we did in this area was to

81

the programming of Underline Phase 3. So Underline Phase 3, in the City of Coral Gables, for example, includes a dog park, because that's one of issues that kept coming up, when we were meeting with Coral Gables residents at the Underline.

We're also -- in the UM area, near this site, where we have a little bit further down the Baptist one that we just broke ground on, so that's the Baptist. I think it's the Pine Rockland Garden there. And then we also have an outdoor amphitheater, that's going to be created, because the Underline, in this part of the Gables, creates a complete reshuffling of the parking spaces, and actually is going to have large spaces.

In this area, also, we'll have, a little bit further down, the micro forest. So the micro forest are more green space, stormwater retention, green infrastructure, because that part of the impact actually floods a lot, and that's one of the things that we took into account, the natural reservoir that occurs there, and putting the micro forest there.

So the one thing that we have considered in

82

all of this area here is requiring developers to do bike lanes, pedestrian walkways, right, and that's throughout this entire corridor, including parts of Underline Phase 2. So that's the first thing there, in terms of the green spaces and the parks.

The second part of your request, in terms of the intersections, is important. Right now, Stacey Miller is our new Director of Transportation. She used to be the FDOT Secretary for District 6. So we're very excited about what she brings to the County. We had been working on the busway that you mentioned, intersection by intersection, with FDOT. Actually, the intersection at 136th has taken over seven months to figure out, because they can be very challenging.

I'm always open to helping with intersections. Our team recently redid the intersection in MAST Academy on the Rickenbacker, because we had asked the School District a million times, and we just went and we redid it. So if you want to look at Caballero, I'm happy to work with Pete, you know, and bring Stacey and the team in to look

83

at it and see what can be done.

When we get requests for traffic calming or traffic realignment, it has to be approved by the municipality first and then sent to the County. We cannot take on the request without the approval of the County Commissioner, or, at the minimum, the Manager. So I'm always happy to do that, and we've been called in, on a few intersections. And we get called in on a lot of pedestrian crossings, and we're happy to help with those. The only thing I would say about the ped crossings is, more and more, we're finding them just not to be effective, so we've been asking FDOT to provide us with different tools, right, just because the nature of Miami is such, unfortunately, that people see yellow and they go faster, not slow down. It's a challenge. I know, it's a challenging situation, but it's one that we deal with all of the time, but that's always on the table.

So we're always here happy to help with whatever intersection. The only thing that I would add to that is, usually we get a lot of requests for stop signs. The district does put a limit on how many stop signs we can use in

84

certain areas, because it just slows down traffic, but the County does have an overlay and we are looking at actually slowing down the speed in all residential areas. So that's something that we're currently working on, that the Board actually passed unanimously about six months ago.

Now, in terms to what happens when you have the RTZ development, right, the RTZ and how it works, really, is, like I mentioned, we have the overlay, and then the different sites come in. When those sites come in, the Commissioner of the district makes certain requests, right. In this particular RTZ application, this is the first one that comes to the County that includes an interlocal and the use of Chapter 33, and that is by design. That was my request to the Board.

I want the City of Coral Gables to have a seat at the table and to be able to weigh in. It is the same vehicle that we used for Grove Central, when we did it with the City of Miami. So this is actually the first non-governmental owned property to come in with a request of an interlocal and participation by a city. I

85

actually came before the City, when I submitted the RTZ application the first time, and I have met with all of them about it, and this is a byproduct of a lot of those conversations.

In terms of the transit, I think we need to clarify a point. While the Metrorail, as currently constructed, only goes from one end to another, there have been several investments that changed the way that the Metrorail works. You mentioned the trolley, and one of the things that we're working on at the County right now is, once again, giving the municipalities more flexibility in terms of County connectivity. I'm working on an item that actually forces the cities to work on having joint trolley stops.

So, for example, in the City of Coral Gables and the City of Miami, when you get to 37th Avenue on the City of Miami trolley, you have to get down at one site, at the City of Miami 37th, and you have to cross 37th Avenue to now get on the Coral Gables trolley and continue your route. So we're actively working to bridge those gaps, so that we can have a more unified trolley system, and we're not

86

being ridiculous with like a few feet. So we're working on that.

The other thing is, I sit on the Board of Tri Rail. I'm currently the vice chair. I was the chair for several years. Tri Rail actually goes all of the way to West Palm, and it meets at the MIC. You can take the Metrorail to the MIC, and you can take the Tri Rail there, all of the way to West Palm.

I also was very proud to open Miami Central Station. You can take the Metrorail to Miami Central Station, and now you have a direct all of the way to West Palm, and you can also take the Metrorail to the Hialeah station, where you can connect with Tri Rail again.

So one of the things that we're doing is, not only are we looking at connectivity, separate and aside from the buses, which we are connecting, and the trolleys, but we're also connecting all other systems.

Now, in July, we launched our one ticket app. This is a tri county app, that allows you to buy tickets for all three counties on the same platform, and gives you the schedules for all three counties. And if you visit the link

87

at Douglas, one of the things that they incorporate in their design, that I think allows so many of their uses to use public transit is, they actually have boards with all of the current times for the Metrorail, for the Metromover. They have a rideshare drop-off point. They have Tri Rail, they have Brightline, and the ways that you can connect there and they're also pushing out the app, when it rolls out now in July.

So we are working on the Flagler now. So we're working on Flagler. We're working on the Coastal Link. These are all transit projects that the County is working on, in the hopes of undoing the twenty years where we were not working on transit projects.

MR. PARDO: So, Commissioner, since you have a hand in what you want and what you don't want, one of the things that I'm very concerned with also is, from a visual impact, these people have been living in their neighborhood, single-family homes, for years and years and years, and they're pretty expensive homes. And all of a sudden, the last thing you want to do is look through your kitchen window and see,

88

1 you know, this behemoth there.

2 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: A hundred percent,  
3 and that's why my item said that it could not  
4 -- it would not and cannot be taller than what  
5 was already approved by Coral Gables. Coral  
6 Gables approved The Thesis. There's a series  
7 of buildings that are a lot taller than what  
8 this RTZ item states, and that's by design.  
9 I'm not making a judgment call on what has been  
10 approved by the City Beautiful, but I  
11 specifically limited this development to its  
12 surrounding areas, and it has to be compatible  
13 with its surrounding areas, and actually  
14 smaller than what has already been approved.

15 MR. PARDO: The one thing that we do not  
16 have in the City of Coral Gables, stepping  
17 down, when the height is at a certain point,  
18 it's not so much toward US-1, but it's more  
19 toward the residential area. I mean, it's  
20 common sense. The City of Miami has it. There  
21 should be absolutely no reason why it can't be  
22 implemented here.

23 And the second part is, having a landscaped  
24 buffer area, continuous area, where mature  
25 trees can grow abutting that area. Not now,

89

1 but within years, where they can get up to 45  
2 feet in height. Giving them space to do that,  
3 I think, would be very good, to be able to  
4 buffer the negative impact.

5 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Right. The  
6 landscaping is something that I include in all  
7 of my applications. This would be no  
8 different. Obviously you want a buffer.

9 Again, we're very early in the process on  
10 the County side. We'll see what happens as we  
11 go to Committee, and it moves forward, but the  
12 idea was that Coral Gables could also mirror  
13 some of this and start having those  
14 conversations, and those are all requirements  
15 that you can also discuss with Staff and make  
16 recommendations.

17 MR. PARDO: I have one final question for  
18 you, and one for our attorney. The final  
19 question is, when you look at the timing, you  
20 know, it's very overwhelming to receive this  
21 package on a Friday afternoon and you're going  
22 through hundreds of pages, and not only this  
23 application. Unfortunately, I read everything,  
24 and I'm looking -- am I misunderstanding, are  
25 you under a time table crunch? In other words,

90

1 from your first motion, to your second one, is  
2 there a four-month limit or did I misread that?

3 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: The timing on the  
4 City side is not something that I control. I  
5 can tell you --

6 MR. PARDO: I'm sorry, on the County side.

7 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: This item went to  
8 First Reading and now goes to Committee and  
9 then goes before the full Board. So, yes, that  
10 item is already moving through the County  
11 Commission.

12 MR. PARDO: Right, but you still have  
13 access to be able to amend it?

14 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Yeah. We still  
15 have the public hearings. You know, it still  
16 has the final reading. It just had the First  
17 Reading. The only time that we can speak on an  
18 item is when it goes to First Reading. So  
19 there will be an opportunity, at Committee, and  
20 at the Second Reading.

21 MR. PARDO: Right, because the thing is  
22 that the rest of -- the devil is in the  
23 details, and there are a lot of details in  
24 there, where I found many discrepancies within  
25 our own Staff's, you know, whatever. And maybe

91

1 it's because they were trying to do too much,  
2 you know, in a short period of time.

3 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Are you speaking to  
4 what was presented here at Coral Gables or the  
5 item that is before the County Commission,  
6 because they're two different things?

7 MR. PARDO: No, in the Coral Gables  
8 component. What I wanted to make sure is that  
9 there is enough time to vet this properly at  
10 the City of Coral Gables side, you know, to  
11 make sure that everything, you know, works well  
12 and we iron out the kinks out of this.

13 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: I mean, of Coral  
14 Gables, I really can't. I have no way of  
15 knowing like how -- if you want to speak to  
16 timing.

17 MS. GARCIA: After we got the notice in  
18 May, we reacted as quickly as we could, to try  
19 to research what was being proposed,  
20 highlighting our concerns, discussing them with  
21 you, to have a, more or less, complete draft of  
22 our ordinances that we do for the overlay  
23 districts within our City. I don't know if  
24 that answers your question or not.

25 Our process is, Planning and Zoning,

92

Commission on First and Second Reading. The County process --

MR. PARDO: Until the public hearing today, there are many items there, in your components, that I think have to be looked at by this Board, you know, before taking a final action on something like that.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: The only thing that I would add, the developer has opted to go with the County. I think that it's important that the City of Coral Gables is given another option.

What are the options? These are privately owned parcels. Their options are Coral Gables, right, or whatever municipality, RTZ, if they're within the SMART zone, or Live Local. They can move within those options however they please. We have nothing to do with that. All we can do is respond to their requests.

So, in terms of the timing, that's what I'm saying. In terms of the timing, there's really -- we have our process, Coral Gables now is initiating their process, but this is not a County owned parcel.

MR. PARDO: So this, at this point, is the

93

City driving the bus or is the County or the developer, which one of the three?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Well, the developer initially chose the City of Coral Gables, went through a process with Coral Gables for a period of time. I don't know how long that was, but I know you all saw the project. And now they've made the request to use the RTZ.

The City is now offering an alternative. I have no way of knowing how that alternative will be received by anyone in that overlay district. There is no way that we would know that.

MR. PARDO: Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Attorney, my last question, which is about precedent, any other project, outside of this zoning, cannot pull in or use, you know, this as a precedent for this particular project, which is a good concern that was raised by the neighbors, and I just want to make sure that you're in agreement with that?

MR. COLLIER: Well, the point of precedent is, precedent is only precedent if the Board says it's precedent. So I can't tell you that, just because one area was developed, does that

94

serve as precedent for another area. It's only precedent if a Board believes it to be precedent, and sometimes it's not viewed as precedent, it's viewed as a separate entity or issue.

I can say that, with regard to what is before us, the County has their own process. I think it's the City's desire to have a say, but we would like to try to match you as close as possible, so we can keep the process within the City, rather than having -- rather than seeding the zoning jurisdiction to the County. We don't want to have a choice.

The County is position is, we can take jurisdiction, because under our -- this is their argument, I'm familiar with it, because I was an Assistant County Attorney for 36 years, so I understand that they believe they have jurisdiction to take these areas relating to Metrorail, and they can take jurisdiction, and while the County will have a -- while the City will have a seat at the table in the decision-making process, there will be other seats besides the City's seat.

The City is trying to convince the County

95

that we've got a process, we are close, but not exact, but some of the places that we're different on have a rational basis for why they're different, and we're hoping to show the County, even though you've got a public hearing next Tuesday, where, once it's -- if it's approved at that public hearing, it goes to the County Commission for final adoption. So they're on a track. I don't know how long it will be, but they're moving.

So the City wants to try to say to the County, "Listen, before you make that decision, give us a chance to come up with a process that will come very close to what you're trying to accomplish."

MR. PARDO: And that's why the Commissioner is here.

MR. COLLIER: That's why the Commissioner is here, and that's why there is a certain urgency to the application.

MR. PARDO: Mr. Chairman, those are all of the comments I have.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: What I'd like to do, I was informed that a Zoom, the reason it's not working, is because the City needs to restart

96

1 it. What I'd like to do is take a break brief,  
2 so the City can restart the Zoom, and there's  
3 people that are waiting to speak.

4 So what I'd like to do is, take a short  
5 break, maybe about five minutes -- I don't know  
6 if it takes longer, so the City can restart  
7 their Zoom and we can listen to those people.

8 Thank you.

9 THE SECRETARY: Everyone on Zoom, please  
10 make sure you use the Zoom link 378709513.

11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We'll take a  
12 five-minute break.

13 Mrs. Cruz, thank you for coming and your  
14 dedication. It's nice to see you in person.

15 (Short recess taken.)

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If everybody would  
17 please have a seat. I've been told that we've  
18 resolved the issue with Zoon and we will go  
19 ahead and get started.

20 What I'd like to do is open up the public  
21 comment for a little bit first, and I'd like to  
22 ask Ms. Maria Cruz, if she would please come up  
23 and speak.

24 MS. COLLIER: She needs to be sworn in.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you would raise

97

1 your right hand, please.

2 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.

4 MS. CRUZ: Mrs. Maria Cruz, 1447 Miller  
5 Road. I'm sorry that I had to come in like  
6 this. I have a sister in the hospital. That's  
7 why I was Zooming. And I could hear the people  
8 talking, but you all could not hear them. So  
9 I'm here. I got in the car, came here, because  
10 this is important.

11 The first comment I had is, it's  
12 interesting, our City, the people that  
13 represent us, they've been talking to the  
14 Commissioner, they've been talking to  
15 Miami-Dade, they haven't been talking to the  
16 residents. We have not been asked. Nobody has  
17 said, "Okay, how about you? What do you want  
18 us to say on your behalf?" No. They're  
19 cutting deals, without talking to us, and then,  
20 "This is what we're proposing."

21 No, we are the taxpayers. We are the  
22 people that they represent. They should listen  
23 to us first, before they propose anything,  
24 because, guess what, we may be agreeable, we  
25 may not be. They need to hear us first.

98

1 Let me tell you, this is the same thing  
2 that has happened with the waterway and the  
3 bridges, because, you know what, Miami-Dade  
4 decided, this is how we're going to do it and  
5 forget about what the people want. You know  
6 what, we have a vote. We have a voice. We pay  
7 taxes. They need to listen to us. That's  
8 Number One.

9 Number Two, I'm mesmerized. I, almost 80  
10 years old, I'm going to get in my car, go to  
11 Metrorail, park there, get on Metrorail, get  
12 off Metrorail, go on the mover, then, you know,  
13 I'm going to West Palm Beach, connect with this  
14 and that and the other thing? How many people,  
15 that live in Coral Gables, is going to do that?  
16 If not, what, we're going to get on the  
17 trolley, to get to the bus? Come on, guys.

18 This is a city where most of us have cars.  
19 We expect to go with -- driving our car. When  
20 I get in my car -- like today, if I have to  
21 wait for Metromover, I couldn't have made it  
22 here. You know, we, this City, our residents,  
23 are car driven. We're not going to get on a  
24 bus, with strangers, or God forbid me, what if  
25 they have COVID or what if they have some

99

1 disease, I'm going to sit next to a stranger?  
2 Think about our population. You know what, I'm  
3 almost 80 years old. I can tell you, I will  
4 not do it, and most of our elderly will not do  
5 it. That's bananas.

6 Number Two, the University of Miami should  
7 be responsible for their housing. I remember  
8 Bill Harnett telling me, many moons ago,  
9 because this has been so long, that the  
10 University of Miami had an agreement with the  
11 City about the number of people that they could  
12 enroll. I guess we've forgotten that or we  
13 have agreed to disregard it, so now we --  
14 we have to make it possible for those students  
15 to be housed here, because the University  
16 doesn't provide the housing that they need.  
17 It's our job now. And you know what, the  
18 interesting part is, most of the students that  
19 come to the University, whether they pay out of  
20 pocket or they take loans or they get grants,  
21 they are paying upwards, I hear, of \$80,000 a  
22 year, and they are -- they need affordable  
23 housing?

24 You know why, because they live by  
25 themselves, and they don't work, and so you

100

1 know what, we have to provide affordable  
2 housing for them. Explain that one.

3 And the third one is, any of us that live  
4 near the University of Miami, and I live half a  
5 block, when they tell the University of Miami  
6 students, "Do not drive," go by my house, look  
7 across the street, and look at all of the  
8 plates from New Jersey, North Carolina,  
9 whatever, whatever. They're not residents.  
10 They're the students. They park in front of  
11 our homes. They disregard -- I'm telling you,  
12 our neighborhood is full of student housing.  
13 We have so many houses, that house students,  
14 that have five, six cars in front of their  
15 houses. Enough is enough.

16 Now, I was -- I'm telling you, I was  
17 driving, taking notes, okay. We're comparing  
18 it to South Miami. We're not South Miami.  
19 We're not South Miami. And that area is not a  
20 business area. We're infringing on the  
21 residents, on the people that bought their  
22 homes to have a nice home in a beautiful city,  
23 City Beautiful, and now we're going to make it  
24 easy for the people that are transient, because  
25 University of Miami are not residents, they're

101

1 transient. They come, they'd be here for some  
2 time, and then they leave, and we have to  
3 accommodate them. It's not right. It's not  
4 fair.

5 This is not something that we want, and I  
6 bet you that if you were to ask most of the  
7 residents, they will tell you, it is not our  
8 problem. We should not have to be providing  
9 housing -- every time I hear, it's student  
10 housing, student housing. That's not our  
11 business.

12 Let me tell you, when some of these big  
13 buildings were built, they were not student  
14 housing. They were going to be rentals, but  
15 not student housing, God forbid. Yeah, they  
16 were student housing, and we were lied to.  
17 Enough is enough. You all represent us. Come  
18 on.

19 You know, what, first of all, the City  
20 should not be talking, on our behalf, without  
21 asking us what we want. That's Number One.  
22 Somebody needs to let our Commissioners know  
23 that nobody talks for me, before they tell me,  
24 and give me a chance to talk about it. That's  
25 Number One.

102

1 Number Two, the University needs to step up  
2 to the place. They, instead of building -- you  
3 know, they keep building. Build housing. Do  
4 it, or restrict the number of out-of-towners  
5 that come here, because you cannot provide  
6 housing. You know, don't tell the parents,  
7 "Oh, yeah, there's buildings that you can  
8 rent," No. Parents should know that when they  
9 go to the University, the University should  
10 look after their kids. I'm sorry. Wrong is  
11 wrong. Thank you.

12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you for coming,  
13 Ms. Cruz.

14 Jill, how many people do we have on Zoom?

15 THE SECRETARY: We have a few that had  
16 signed up, so I'm going to try this again.

17 MR. BEHAR: Well, we only had two others.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We had two. Ms. Cruz  
19 came, so we have two people. Let's call those  
20 two individuals.

21 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Senior and --

22 MR. BUCELO: David.

23 MR. BEHAR: -- and David.

24 THE SECRETARY: Mr. Senior, can you  
25 please --

103

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you call David,  
2 the next individual?

3 THE SECRETARY: He's not connected.

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: He's not connected, so  
5 We only have Mr. Senior?

6 THE SECRETARY: Correct.

7 MR. SENIOR: Hello.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, hi, how are you?  
9 If you would like to be sworn in, we need to  
10 see you. You can still speak, if you'd like,  
11 without being seen.

12 Mr. Senior, we can see you now -- we can't  
13 see you now.

14 MR. PARDO: Your mic is not on.

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Your mic is muted, Mr.  
16 Senior.

17 MR. SENIOR: Unmute, okay.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Now I can hear you.  
19 Yes, sir.

20 MR. SENIOR: Okay. So you want to swear me  
21 in?

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Only if we can see  
23 you, and we can't, so --

24 MR. BEHAR: Check your camera.

25 MR. BUCELO: He has his finger on the

104

1 camera, I think.  
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Is your finger on the  
 3 camera, sir?  
 4 MR. SENIOR: Oh, maybe. Sorry.  
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If we can now just  
 6 turn the camera to you. It's okay. Maybe you  
 7 can just turn towards the camera.  
 8 MR. SENIOR: Wait a moment, because it's  
 9 hard for me otherwise.  
 10 Okay. I got it now.  
 11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: If you would please  
 12 raise your right hand.  
 13 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)  
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 15 Go ahead, sir.  
 16 MR. SENIOR: Okay. I live at 6012 San  
 17 Vicente Street, which is, you know, about two  
 18 blocks across from -- (Unintelligible).  
 19 Anyway, the traffic here is horrendous.  
 20 You know, at times, in Hardee, it's like a  
 21 snake, going so (Unintelligible.)  
 22 And, then, when it goes to Maynada,  
 23 (Unintelligible) goes to the left. When you  
 24 try to make a left at US-1, you know, I used to  
 25 do where The Thesis is -- (Unintelligible) --

105

1 now next to The Marks.  
 2 Once a thousand people or more are going to  
 3 be living in that building, you know, I can't  
 4 see it. I mean, traffic is horrendous. The  
 5 developers, they do the building and they don't  
 6 live here, but the people that make Coral  
 7 Gables the way Coral Gables is are the  
 8 residents. I've been living here since 1961,  
 9 okay, in this area, and I love it, but it's  
 10 getting difficult by the day.  
 11 You know, we just -- you know, we can  
 12 fight, I guess, with the State, with the  
 13 County, but don't let us live like we've been  
 14 living. You know, how can they change all of  
 15 the rules? You know, I remember when President  
 16 Reagan came to Miami when he was president and  
 17 he saw the Metrorail. His comment was, "Oh,  
 18 that's a white elephant that they've done  
 19 here," like a waste of money, okay.  
 20 (Unintelligible.)  
 21 You know, that shouldn't be to the  
 22 detriment of the people that live in the area  
 23 you know. You know, the traffic is bad.  
 24 (Unintelligible).  
 25 Like the Mark talking about three or four

106

1 thousand more people living in that small area.  
 2 You know, it's just -- the people that live  
 3 south, like I do, you know, are affected.  
 4 We're affected, you know. We've got to see how  
 5 we can fight this, because it's just not fair  
 6 that outsiders can dominate what gets done on  
 7 this City, and by outsiders, I'm talking the  
 8 State, the County, okay, the developers.  
 9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.  
 10 MR. SENIOR: Coral Gables, works very hard  
 11 -- okay. I thank you so much for letting me  
 12 talk.  
 13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No, thank you. Thank  
 14 you for bearing with us.  
 15 MR. SENIOR: Okay.  
 16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, sir.  
 17 Jill, the other gentleman, David, is not on  
 18 anymore, correct?  
 19 THE SECRETARY: That is correct. We have  
 20 Pat Block.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Was he on before?  
 22 THE SECRETARY: Yes.  
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay. And that's the  
 24 last person?  
 25 THE SECRETARY: Correct.

107

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Okay.  
 2 After this gentleman, we'll go ahead and  
 3 close the public hearing.  
 4 MR. BEHAR: Was he already signed up from  
 5 before?  
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes. Jill said that  
 7 this gentleman was signed up from before.  
 8 MR. SENIOR: We sent various messages to --  
 9 she's coming through now.  
 10 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Your microphone is  
 11 muted. If you could please unmute. Can you  
 12 hear us?  
 13 MS. PARKER: Yes.  
 14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. If you'd  
 15 like to be sworn in, we do need -- in San  
 16 Francisco, perfect.  
 17 MS. PARKER: I'm sorry.  
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: That's okay. Could  
 19 you raise your right hand, please?  
 20 MS. PARKER: Yes.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 22 (Thereupon, the participant was sworn.)  
 23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 24 Go ahead, please.  
 25 MS. PARKER: I have a question, because

108

1 somebody in the meeting, a Commissioner --  
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Could you state your  
 3 name and address, for the record, please?  
 4 MS. PARKER: Sorry. It's Pat Parker, 720  
 5 Coral Way, Coral Gables, Florida.  
 6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.  
 7 MS. PARKER: Yeah. I have lived in South  
 8 Gables, on Sunset and on Portillo, and my  
 9 family has lived on South Alhambra, and what  
 10 the developers are getting away with is really  
 11 a big problem, and one of the Commissioners or  
 12 somebody on your dais said that when the people  
 13 from The Mark didn't get their way, they went  
 14 to Miami-Dade and got this overlay done.  
 15 That's not fair, it's manipulative, and it's  
 16 not what Coral Gables -- if Coral Gables says,  
 17 no, it's no, and if you can then go to Dade  
 18 County and get Coral Gables overwritten, I  
 19 think Coral Gables has to take a stand on that.  
 20 That's not fair.  
 21 And everybody I know said the traffic is  
 22 absolutely horrendous. When they were doing  
 23 The Paseo, your traffic study said it would  
 24 have no effect on traffic, and I spoke at that  
 25 time and I said, "Even a kindergartner knows

109

1 that if you have that many people, it is going  
 2 to affect traffic." It's been terrible.  
 3 And that tiny little park, you know, for  
 4 the waterway, they tried to put in townhouses,  
 5 and we were concerned about the garbage pickup  
 6 and stuff affecting the children in the park.  
 7 Now, I don't think anybody can park in the  
 8 park, and it's very dangerous for children and  
 9 other people.  
 10 I think Coral Gables has to take a stand  
 11 and not be bullied by Dade County, or, more,  
 12 bullied by a developer who can run to Dade  
 13 County and get your's overturned. If they want  
 14 to do eight feet, you said seven feet, and now  
 15 what did they accomplish? They've accomplished  
 16 maybe thirteen feet?  
 17 So I think we have to really look at, that  
 18 as the City, as the Commission, that we can't  
 19 be bullied by even Dade County. We're part of  
 20 Dade County, but we're our own municipality,  
 21 and Coral Gables has always been of the people,  
 22 for the people, by the people, and somewhere we  
 23 got lost.  
 24 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, ma'am.  
 25 Thank you for your comments.

110

1 I'm going to go ahead and close it again  
 2 for public comment.  
 3 Sue.  
 4 MS. KAWALERSKI: Thank you. And thank you,  
 5 Commissioner Regalado and Anthony. It's good  
 6 seeing you in a different context. But I have  
 7 some questions for the Commissioner, if I  
 8 might.  
 9 Thank you so much.  
 10 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Of course.  
 11 MS. KAWALERSKI: I think you mentioned  
 12 that -- the developer is Landmark, I believe,  
 13 right, Landmark out of Athens, Georgia, and, of  
 14 course, we know Landmark, because they created  
 15 the Venera project. It is student housing.  
 16 They're a student housing developer. So they  
 17 came and lobbied you to get this on the  
 18 Commission agenda.  
 19 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: They made a request  
 20 to be considered for the RTZ.  
 21 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. And you sponsored  
 22 the legislation to make that happen?  
 23 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Yes.  
 24 MS. KAWALERSKI: So, as the sponsor of this  
 25 legislation, can you slow down this process,

111

1 because you're hearing tonight residents that  
 2 have no idea what's going on in their  
 3 neighborhood and how it's going to affect them,  
 4 Number One? It's summertime, and a lot of  
 5 those residents that are going to be directly  
 6 affected aren't even around. Can you, as the  
 7 sponsor of the legislation, slow the process  
 8 down?  
 9 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: I have already put  
 10 in -- this process has already started. I came  
 11 before the Commission -- and I think that  
 12 that's important. I came before the  
 13 Commission, before this started, and explained  
 14 to them, and answered all of their questions  
 15 regarding this application, and that was like  
 16 -- yeah, if you can get -- June 10th.  
 17 So, again, I mean, we had a discussion  
 18 about it. We've talked about it in the past.  
 19 I met with Coral Gables when the RTZ was put  
 20 in. As I mentioned earlier, the RTZ had a  
 21 two-year period, in which the municipalities  
 22 had to consider doing these overlays and  
 23 figuring out if they were going to change their  
 24 Comp Plan. So the process has already started,  
 25 and that was my point earlier to Felix. The

112

process has already started.

I think that it's great that Coral Gables is considering making changes to their Comp Plan, and I've been happy to meet with them and discuss with them all of the different options that they have, and like I mentioned, this is the first RTZ that comes with an interlocal, where the city gets a seat at the table.

So I have no regrets as to how we have entered to this point. I really have done everything to have Coral Gables' participation, just like I did with South Miami and just like I've done with all of my cities.

MS. KAWALERSKI: All right. But you're hearing tonight residents that are saying, first I heard about this, was within a couple of days. So now you're actually hearing from the people that are going to be directly impacted, forget the Commission and forget the City Administrators.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Respectfully, Sue, I hear from people all of the time, and I'm happy to sit here and listen to them, and I spoke to them during the break.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Yes.

113

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: And we're happy to receive their calls and their e-mails, but if we were to stop a governmental process just because someone says that they did not know about it, government would not function, and you should know that, as a County employee.

MS. KAWALERSKI: So, I mean, you're going to take these comments and say, tough luck?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: No. We have a public hearing and we welcome them to attend the public hearing at the County, and they have their right to speak here. They have their right to speak to the Coral Gables Commissioner. The Manager is sitting here. There's plenty of opportunities to speak to all of the stakeholders. The only time where they will not be allowed to speak to stakeholders is if this developer decides to go Live Local, and then we're all out of the conversation.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So the answer to my question is, no, you're not going to slow down the process?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Your characterization is incorrect and I disagree with you.

114

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. We can agree to disagree, but --

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Respectfully.

MS. KAWALERSKI: But let me ask you something, you were talking about the SMART plan, and you were talking about the impetus for creating RTZ zones, Rapid Transit Zones, was because the County was going to create all of these fantastic transit ways, whether it be more rail, bus, rapid bus. Kendall was going to be an east-west corridor.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: I didn't say that. I said that the nodes were created in the 1970s with a plan, and that the County, in this area, did build the Metrorail. The Rapid Transit Zone is an attempt to utilize existing investments in transit, and if you would listen to our County meetings, you would hear that my fellow Commissioners complain about how this district, in particular, has more access to transit than any other districts. There are districts that don't have any access to transit, and that's why the Rapid Transit Zone was created, in order to incentivize people to use transit, so that the County can then take

115

into account and comply with the promise that was made when I was ten years old.

So what happened, you know, while I was a child and with the half penny, really is out of my hands. I just try to do the best that I can, with the tools that we have been given.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So a lot of residents were saying, you know, you're asking people to use a Metrorail system that goes from Dadeland station to basically Downtown and the off-shoot to the airport, okay. One of your fellow Commissioners, Oliver Gilbert, was quoted as saying, We misplanned. We told the public that it would cost "X" amount of dollars and we were wrong. It's going to cost triple the amount. We have no money. I'm paraphrasing one of your Commissioners, okay.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Oliver Gilbert, who was the Chair of the County Commission, made it a priority to do the north corridor, which was promised when the half penny was done. That is currently in the NEPA study, as are other transit plans.

The Federal Government was, for many years, only funding SMART starts. Even that funding

116

1 has now been paralyzed. And if you've been  
2 following the State budget, we actually have  
3 issues with the match that was provided by FDOT  
4 originally for the northeast corridor, which  
5 goes all of the way to Aventura.

6 So I don't think that you can make a  
7 blanket statement, whether you're quoting  
8 Oliver Gilbert or not, about a 35-year process.

9 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. But you make a  
10 great point. There's really no money to build  
11 transit at this point in time. So we're stuck,  
12 at this point in time, with the bus rapid  
13 transit system, that's going to connect to the  
14 Metrorail, basically a north-south corridor, no  
15 money for east-west or whatsoever, okay, at  
16 this point in time.

17 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Well, at this point  
18 in time, the County has several NEPAs and the  
19 NEPAs are funds. There are projects that we're  
20 moving forward with, but they take a long time.  
21 You know, the County has also invested in lots  
22 of other options, that do require people to  
23 make connections, as do all forms of  
24 transportation. I don't think that you can  
25 assume that there's one form of transportation.

117

1 But to your point, one of the reasons that  
2 we're investing in the RTZ is to have users  
3 where they can walk to these stations and use  
4 transit. That's the entire point.

5 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So, to that  
6 point -- I don't know, do you still sit on the  
7 TPO, the Transportation --

8 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: We all sit on the  
9 TPO, yes, and I am the Chairman of Bicycle and  
10 Pedestrian Safety.

11 MS. KAWALERSKI: Fantastic.

12 Okay. So, to your point, it's kind of like  
13 the cart before the horse. We're forcing all  
14 of the people into a dense area, to use  
15 Metrorail, that isn't going to be expanded for  
16 ten, twenty, thirty, forty years, okay, and if  
17 we did force them to use Metrorail, guess what  
18 they're saying to us -- guess what the TPO is  
19 saying, they're not using Metrorail.

20 Headline, Transit Ridership has Declined  
21 Steadily." So all of the TPO studies, these  
22 are studies from 2022, all of the way up to  
23 this year --

24 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That includes  
25 buses, and it is not true of Metrorail.

118

1 Actually, Metrorail is being used more now than  
2 ever, because of the development, in part, of  
3 the Rapid Transit Zone and the investment that  
4 we have made in upgrading our stations, which  
5 were thirty years old before the development.

6 MS. KAWALERSKI: Well, I don't know what  
7 I'm reading here, then, because I have a  
8 pre-pandemic to current study here, and it says  
9 that levels of ridership are down 14 to 26  
10 percent.

11 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That includes  
12 COVID.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: I know it includes COVID.  
14 This is 2019. COVID started in 2020.

15 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: But the decline  
16 that you're talking about includes COVID.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue, if you can, if we  
18 could allow the Commissioner to answer the  
19 question.

20 MR. BEHAR: Correct, because I don't think  
21 this is --

22 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. There's a point I'm  
23 getting to, because we're pushing RTZs, and yet  
24 we have no -- why are we pushing RTZs, when  
25 there is no transportation plan to allow these

119

1 people to go wherever they want to go?

2 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Respectfully, the  
3 RTZ item was passed over four years ago, and  
4 it's the law on the books for the County, and  
5 has been the marker for our Comprehensive  
6 Master Plan. So, as far as any issues with the  
7 RTZ, respectfully, that ship has sailed.

8 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So, again, the  
9 TPO -- again, all studies from the TPO -- you  
10 sit on the TOP -- it says, "The transit use  
11 decline attributed to Uber, Lyft and taxi use  
12 by age group." The biggest groups that you're  
13 trying to attract to an RTZ, which would be a  
14 student population --

15 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Those studies are  
16 County-wide studies, Sue. That is not District  
17 7.

18 MS. KAWALERSKI: Pardon me?

19 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That is not  
20 District 7. That is the entire County, and  
21 there are parts of the County that have no  
22 transit, as you yourself just pointed out.

23 MR. BEHAR: If I may, Mr. Chair. That may  
24 not be a factual evidence, so I don't know  
25 that -- if that should be continued to be

120

1 pushed on, something that the Commissioner is  
2 saying to the Board Member that's not factual.  
3 I think we should respect that.

4 MS. KAWALERSKI: All I'm doing in quoting  
5 from --

6 MR. BEHAR: That may not be factual, Sue.

7 MS. KAWALERSKI: -- the transportation --  
8 you can have this. I can put it into the  
9 record.

10 MR. BEHAR: Yeah, you can put anything, and  
11 it may not be factual.

12 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: But that's County-wide.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Are you saying that the  
14 Transportation Planning Organization, which the  
15 Commissioner sits on, is creating false  
16 documents?

17 MR. BEHAR: County-wide.

18 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That's County-wide.  
19 We're not talking about County-wide. We're  
20 talking about District 7. Those are different  
21 facts, very different facts.

22 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. Fair enough.

23 By the way, I do have a breakdown of the  
24 Douglas Station, and the Douglas Station has  
25 gone up two percent, okay.

121

1 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: It was under  
2 construction.

3 MS. KAWALERSKI: Pardon me?

4 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: It was under  
5 construction. It was closed for eight months.

6 MS. KAWALERSKI: I understand that, but  
7 it's only gone up two percent. So we're not  
8 seeing a massive amount of people going to use  
9 Metrorail and the TPO says, in fact,  
10 ridership --

11 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That's not true.  
12 We were shuttling them to Grove Station,  
13 because the Douglas Station was closed, because  
14 we were repairing it.

15 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. All right. So, in  
16 other words, what happens at the meeting next  
17 week Tuesday? It's a public meeting. The  
18 County Committee has a public meeting next  
19 week, Tuesday, 9:00 a.m. How we are notifying  
20 the residents directly affected about that  
21 meeting that's happening less than a week from  
22 now?

23 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: The County has no  
24 changes in its notice requirements. We always  
25 have Committee on the same week. All RTZ items

122

1 always go to Transit. They have been  
2 published. We have told people about it.  
3 There's no --

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue, just one thing.  
5 If you have an issue that is with the County  
6 and the overall, then that would be something  
7 to bring up and actually attend that  
8 transportation meeting at 9:00 in the morning  
9 and bring up your issues.

10 MS. KAWALERSKI: Well, it's not my issues.  
11 It's the residents' issues.

12 MR. BEHAR: Let them go then.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: But they don't know that  
14 the meeting is happening.

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue, I understand, but  
16 I think, in this process, in our process, I'd  
17 like to deal with what is the City's issue,  
18 which is important, as opposed to what the  
19 County's issue is.

20 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. All right, Mr.  
21 Chairman, but with that said, what is the City  
22 of Coral Gables going to do between now and  
23 Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. to notify the impacted  
24 residents that that is going to be their only  
25 opportunity to speak to the County? What is

123

1 the City going to do?

2 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: It's not their only  
3 opportunity. They will also have Second  
4 Reading.

5 MS. GARCIA: Well, I've discussed this with  
6 residents over the phone, through e-mails. I  
7 have sent them links, where they could attend  
8 this meeting. I'm not sure what else you think  
9 we should do, as a Staff person, from the City  
10 of Coral Gables, but they are, of course,  
11 welcomed to join the meeting on Tuesday at 9:00  
12 a.m.

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. And who's  
14 representing the City of Coral Gables at this  
15 meeting?

16 MS. GARCIA: We'll have our  
17 intergovernmental manager there.

18 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So we're going  
19 through this process. Are we doing this for  
20 not, because the Commission is going to do it  
21 anyway? Are we here just because?

22 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: I have no way of  
23 knowing what the Commission is or is not going  
24 to do. It's a process.

25 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. But the Commission

124

1 voted unanimously, with two absent members,  
2 unanimously for this, correct?

3 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: On First Reading,  
4 yes, but we cannot discuss it at First Reading,  
5 and that's why we have a Committee process.

6 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. And Commissioners  
7 usually vote for each other's projects, so it's  
8 probably going to be another unanimous vote,  
9 wouldn't you say?

10 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: I have no way of  
11 knowing that.

12 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So let me ask you  
13 this, are we wasting out time here?

14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Sue, that's  
15 inappropriate. I'm sorry.

16 MR. BEHAR: You're crossing the line there.

17 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It's not for this --  
18 if there is -- if residents have an issue with  
19 the County, they need to go to their district  
20 Commissioner and voice their opinion. If they  
21 have an issue with the City, there's  
22 appropriate channels within the City to voice  
23 your opinion, also. Our job, on this Board  
24 here today, is to listen to all of the  
25 evidence, and at the end, make a determination,

125

1 based upon what we feel is the correct thing or  
2 not. I'm not saying that you're right and I'm  
3 not saying that you're wrong, but to  
4 interrogate somebody as if they're on trial, to  
5 me, it's just not appropriate.

6 MS. KAWALERSKI: Well, I'm sorry you don't  
7 like my line of questioning, but we need  
8 answers, because we haven't gotten them, okay.  
9 The residents -- we're here to protect the  
10 residents, okay. We're not here to protect  
11 anyone else, except the residents.

12 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Respectfully, Sue,  
13 I am elected by the residents, and I also  
14 represent the residents.

15 MS. KAWALERSKI: And I'm glad you do.

16 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: And I'm happy to  
17 discuss it with them, whenever they want to.

18 MS. KAWALERSKI: I'm glad you do. It's  
19 just that --

20 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: If you have any  
21 specific concerns -- and by the way, you're  
22 asking me about an item that isn't even on the  
23 agenda. I'm here to help you navigate an item  
24 on the agenda, that is a potential change to  
25 your Comp Plan, that seeks to mirror the RTZ.

126

1 I'm not here to discuss the RTZ item that is  
2 before the County Commission. That will occur  
3 on Tuesday. And you're welcome to attend.

4 MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. But because you  
5 have all of this knowledge, I'm asking you  
6 things like the SMART plan and RTZ, to have  
7 some more information.

8 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: And I'm happy to  
9 answer them. I'm just not in the mood to be  
10 berated by you at 8:34 in the evening.

11 MS. KAWALERSKI: Well, I'm sorry if you  
12 feel I'm berating you. I didn't intend to do  
13 that, I'm not doing that.

14 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: You don't have a  
15 question. You're just making a statement. And  
16 you're within your right to make your  
17 statement. It's just that you have other Board  
18 Members that actually have questions and we can  
19 do that, and then you can go back to saying  
20 whatever you would like, but I would like to  
21 answer their questions.

22 So unless you have a specific question --

23 MS. KAWALERSKI: I will move on, and I did  
24 have a specific question at the beginning, and  
25 I think the answer was, no, so thank you.

127

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you, Sue.  
2 Robert?

3 MR. BEHAR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Commissioner, welcome, and I apologize for  
5 the uncomfortable situation that we're putting  
6 you through. First and foremost, I want to  
7 express my gratitude to you, for your  
8 commitment and willingness to work with Coral  
9 Gables, limiting the height of the Gables RTZ  
10 subzone to 120 feet, where 150 feet could be  
11 possible, and limiting the area of the distance  
12 of the station to those four particular  
13 properties, one which is already complete,  
14 built, and not, you know, further than we could  
15 possibly go. Thank you.

16 Let's be very clear why we're here tonight.  
17 There was a project that came to this Board  
18 last year, which my firm was the architect at  
19 the time. I'm no longer the architect to that  
20 project. That project was an eight-story  
21 building, with a maximum height of 96 feet,  
22 fronting US-1, direct connection to the  
23 Metrorail station, with a bridge that linked  
24 the station to the site via the pedestrian  
25 bridge.

128

1 Three of the Board Members of this Board  
2 voted to deny the project. I had to recuse  
3 myself, because it was my project. Three Board  
4 Members voted to deny the project, three voted  
5 for the project, and we know who they are. I  
6 mean, it's clear.

7 Because of that decision, because the  
8 application failed, it opened the door to  
9 property owners to say, "Hey, we have the  
10 option in Miami-Dade County to either go  
11 through the RTZ, because of the proximity to  
12 the Metrorail, or, in the worst case scenario,  
13 we could go Live Local," and that will be  
14 detrimental, because we cannot control that.

15 Before I finish and give my opinion, I want  
16 to ask a couple of questions to Jennifer, and  
17 one recommendation that I think -- Jennifer, we  
18 are creating a 25-foot rear setback buffer,  
19 landscaped buffer, because all of these  
20 properties are in excess of 300 feet.

21 MS. GARCIA: Yes.

22 MR. BEHAR: I verified it, because the  
23 property I was working with is in excess of  
24 300. So, essentially, you're going to get a  
25 25-foot liner park buffer abutting the

129

1 residential, correct?

2 MS. GARCIA: Correct.

3 MR. BEHAR: I tried to go through this over  
4 the weekend and I read a lot of it, and I  
5 understand the majority of it. There was one  
6 that I missed, you know, that you brought up a  
7 good point today, that maybe we could look at  
8 it. We're proposing -- the Gables is proposing  
9 that, on the US-1 property -- a project  
10 fronting US-1, at a hundred feet, you step it  
11 back 30 feet, right?

12 MS. GARCIA: Correct. 30 feet, up in the  
13 air, vertical.

14 MR. BEHAR: Right. My recommendation would  
15 be that, that setback -- that step back, let's  
16 call it, it would be more advantageous to do it  
17 maybe in the back area, not so much on US-1,  
18 because US-1 is very a wide road. So I much  
19 rather have the height on US-1 and not so much  
20 on the back side. And I think that could make,  
21 you know, more sense.

22 MR. PARDO: What I mentioned, Robert.

23 MR. BEHAR: Okay.

24 MR. PARDO: That's exactly what I  
25 mentioned.

130

1 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That's what you  
2 meant by the step down?

3 MR. BEHAR: Yes, in the back --

4 MR. PARDO: In the back, not --

5 MR. BEHAR: -- you know, so that would  
6 be -- those are the only two, you know,  
7 questions and comments that I have.

8 In closing, if we don't approve this  
9 tonight, we will end up with the County's RTZ  
10 regulations, which will be, at minimum, 150  
11 feet, with a much wider distance from the  
12 station, or even worse, like I mentioned  
13 before, we could end up with a Live Local  
14 project, which none of us, including one of the  
15 architects on this Board, will want to see  
16 there.

17 MR. PARDO: It's only you and me.

18 MR. BEHAR: Okay. I didn't want to name  
19 you, but -- so, to me, I think this is  
20 something that we must take care of tonight,  
21 and I will be prepared to make a motion to  
22 approve this. Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Alex.

24 MR. BUCELO: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

25 And I want to say, I echo you thoughts.

131

1 First of all, Commissioner, I want to thank you  
2 for being here and send my regards to your dad.  
3 He's a good friend of ours.

4 I just had a simple question, because a lot  
5 of the questions I had have been answered. You  
6 had mentioned that the Gables -- what you're  
7 seeing from the Gables is a good first step.  
8 What is it that you would like to see more of  
9 or less of? Have you guys had any  
10 communications?

11 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: We did. We had  
12 several meetings. You know, we've been more  
13 than happy to meet with Staff and talk to them,  
14 the same way that we did with South Miami and  
15 the same way that we do with all of the cities,  
16 in terms of what was the intent of the RTZ and  
17 what we would like to see.

18 I disagree with the parking, and it's --  
19 when we say that the County does not require  
20 parking, what we're saying is that we're  
21 allowing the developer to determine whatever  
22 parking they need, based on whatever model they  
23 have. We have yet to have an RTZ that does not  
24 have parking. It just depends on who they are  
25 building for and why.

132

1 Like I said, in the case of Box, they  
2 decided to use the Metrorail parking, because  
3 its student housing, that they decided would  
4 not have parking. So they have access to the  
5 parking lot at the Metrorail station, but  
6 that's where it begins and it ends.

7 So I think it's important to give people  
8 flexibility. They're all building different  
9 products along the corridor, and that's been  
10 one of the reasons that developers have chosen  
11 the RTZ. So I think the elimination of the  
12 paseo is good. I mean, to the point that was  
13 made earlier about the setbacks, obviously, if  
14 you start with so many setbacks, you start  
15 limiting the amount of area that you can build  
16 in, and that's what gives you the extraordinary  
17 height, because if you can't build out, you  
18 just go up. So I just caution them to be  
19 concerned -- you know, be mindful of that, but  
20 I think this is -- I think it's a good first  
21 step.

22 I mean, I can tell you, the application  
23 that is before us now is smaller than what  
24 we're discussing, because we're saying that it  
25 can't be bigger The Thesis.

133

1 MR. BUCELO: How big is The Thesis? I'm  
2 sorry to interrupt you. How tall is The  
3 Thesis?

4 MS. GARCIA: Well, The Thesis is 125 feet,  
5 but the UM Gables One Tower is 150 feet.

6 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Right, but I think  
7 that the overall intent of the overlay is to  
8 start having this conversation, right, in terms  
9 of what can be done and what this corridor can  
10 look like, utilizing Coral Gables, as opposed  
11 to the County, or to Robert's point, Live  
12 Local, which doesn't have any of these  
13 limitations, right.

14 MR. BUCELO: And there will be time, if  
15 this is not, quote/unquote, accepted to amend  
16 it, change it, to at least, I guess, have some  
17 sort of compliance or is Tuesday the deadline?  
18 Like if the City were to submit -- if we were  
19 to approve this motion and it carries, is there  
20 still time to change the parking, if that's  
21 something that's still an issue further down  
22 the road or --

23 MS. GARCIA: Right. So this is only the  
24 first meeting we're having on this, the  
25 Planning and Zoning Board. It would go to

134

1 Commission, with the approval of this Board, in  
2 August, and then the Second Reading, then  
3 later.

4 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Yeah, so that's  
5 your process.

6 Again, I think, now we're confounding two  
7 issues, right. One thing is the current  
8 application that's before the County Commission  
9 on one parcel. Right now what we're talking  
10 about is an overlay district, that includes  
11 this parcel, and what Coral Gables is looking  
12 at doing in order to change its Comp Plan for  
13 that footprint, two separate things.

14 MR. BUCELO: Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

16 Nestor?

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: Thank you for coming and  
18 answering all of these questions. I think I  
19 echo Mr. Behar's sentiments, and in listening  
20 to the residents' concerns, I think we're at a  
21 point here where we're most restrictive versus  
22 preemption, and where the Metrorail was built  
23 way before its time, and the County put,  
24 basically, the cart before the horse. I think  
25 the RTZ -- and the County -- and the County

135

1 failed to develop timely with that very, very  
2 forward thinking project. I feel initiatives  
3 like the RTZ are the attempt to right that  
4 wrong, and, therefore, given that the RTZ, as  
5 you said, is done and we have to deal with the  
6 laws on the books, I would -- and I think I  
7 echo a lot of sentiments of the people that  
8 have spoken here tonight, where, you know, I  
9 grew up in Downtown, in the Roads, I'm used to  
10 development and using the monorail and the  
11 Metrorail, and people move to Coral Gables to  
12 kind of get out of that, but it would be naive  
13 for us to think that development, with the  
14 growth of this City -- I don't think anybody  
15 saw the growth 30 years ago to what it is  
16 today.

17 And anybody who drives on US-1 can tell you  
18 that when US-1 was built, it wasn't built for  
19 the amount of people that we have or the cars.  
20 Even taking away 50 percent of the cars, I  
21 don't think it's going to, you know, suffice.  
22 So I would rather Coral Gables have some sort  
23 of input, instead of just being taken  
24 completely out of equation, and I know it's  
25 taxing on the residents to think there's going

136

1 to be these buildings going up, to service mass  
2 transit, but I think that that's the point.

3 We do like to drive cars, but the point is  
4 to get them to use mass transit, whether it'd  
5 be students, whether it'd be people working  
6 Downtown, whether it'd be people going to Palm  
7 Beach.

8 I have a cousin who has -- we have a lot of  
9 family in Palm Beach, and he takes the rail  
10 every time he goes up there, and he lives a  
11 block away from the Venetian Pool. So there  
12 are people willing to do it. I think the  
13 adage, if you build it, they will come, is  
14 appropriate, but I think our input -- it would  
15 be great to have some kind of input, instead of  
16 having a developer cut us out or just go Live  
17 Local.

18 So, again I echo these sentiments, and  
19 something is better than nothing, at this  
20 point.

21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

22 We've heard a lot here tonight. I want to  
23 start by saying, thank you. You took the time  
24 to come and listen to us.

25 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Of course.

137

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Whether it was good or  
2 it was bad, but you took the time to come, and  
3 I think that's part of the process.

4 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: I come from the  
5 School Board. No worries.

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But I do recognize  
7 that.

8 I think we're at a point, within the City,  
9 that we need to look at what our options are,  
10 and if we don't make our own path forward or  
11 have some input into the decision, it can only  
12 be worse. The project that Robert spoke about,  
13 that at one time he was involved with, which is  
14 The Mark, the Board, in essence, turned it  
15 down.

16 They went and said, "Okay, we're just going  
17 to go with Live Local (sic)." I don't know if  
18 it's so much, as what was spoken about here,  
19 that to do student housing, you're giving them  
20 affordable housing to those people. I think  
21 the key, when you look at certain projects is,  
22 for student housing, you have a certain amount  
23 of units and a common area, and that allows you  
24 to get within the percentage that you need to  
25 be able to do the Live Local.

138

1 MR. BEHAR: This is not Live Local. This  
2 is RTZ.

3 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: No. No. No. Right.  
4 But what I'm saying is, the points that we have  
5 bad is, the Live Local is the worst alternative  
6 that we're getting to.

7 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: And what I would  
8 add to that analysis is, in the corridor, the  
9 top of workforce, which is 120 AMI, is under  
10 market rate, significantly under market rate.  
11 That's the issue.

12 So when you talk about workforce housing  
13 and the price point for 120 AMI and you spread  
14 that along the County, in many places, it's  
15 above market rate, so it doesn't work. In this  
16 corridor, it is significantly below.

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: Can I interject for a  
18 second?

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

20 MR. HERNANDEZ: Sorry. I just have a one  
21 question. If a developer does decide to go  
22 Live Local, what input are they required to  
23 take from the residents, from the City, from  
24 the County?

25 MR. BEHAR: Zero.

139

1 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Nothing.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Nothing.

3 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: It's an  
4 administrative process.

5 MR. HERNANDEZ: And I think that that's  
6 something that needs to be conveyed to the  
7 residents, that if a developer does go for,  
8 let's call it, the nuclear option, whatever  
9 they come and they say, it's just we're at the  
10 behest of the developer and him complying with  
11 Live Local.

12 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Right. So Live  
13 Local creates a statutory compliance, but it  
14 has a two-fold loss. Not only do you not have  
15 input or control over the density and  
16 intensity, but you also lose the tax base.

17 MR. HERNANDEZ: Right.

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: And going forward,  
19 the -- I'm looking at it not as -- the way I'm  
20 looking at it is, not a specific project that's  
21 before us, but the RTZ that's before us.  
22 There's been a lot of talk about The Mark or  
23 other projects. When those projects come  
24 before us, that's when I will look at these  
25 projects.

140

1 I echo, and my sentiment is the same as  
2 Robert, as far as the step back, if that's  
3 possible, and what Felix said. That makes a  
4 lot of sense to me. I don't know if it's  
5 doable or if it's possible, but if it is, that  
6 does make sense. What I like about it is, if  
7 I'm looking at a quarter mile distance, I'm  
8 including a lot of other projects, and one of  
9 the projects that was mentioned is the Gables  
10 Waterway.

11 The way the Gables is looking at it right  
12 now, it does not include the Gables Waterway  
13 project. That's not to say that they cannot  
14 come before us and ask. Anybody can come  
15 before us and ask. It's up to us, and it's  
16 ultimately up to the Commission, to make that  
17 determination, not just us.

18 I do know that the properties that we're  
19 looking at behind it are commercial properties,  
20 which is a four-story apartment building, that  
21 is behind --

22 MS. GARCIA: Yes, multi-family.

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It's multi-family.

24 MS. GARCIA: Correct.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: It's four-story --

141

1 MS. GARCIA: I believe so.

2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: -- that's there. And,  
3 then, behind that is also multi-family, and I  
4 think the area is zoned duplex.

5 MS. GARCIA: Uh-huh.

6 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So, to me, in a way,  
7 it makes sense. I would like it to be able to  
8 be stepped down in the back, as opposed to the  
9 front, the way Robert said, if possible, but I  
10 am in support of moving this forward, and I  
11 think -- you know, unfortunately, there's a  
12 meeting that's going before the transportation  
13 on the 9th. I think if we don't act now, we  
14 may not be able to act, and I think that's very  
15 important. That's the way I read it, and  
16 that's my understanding.

17 MR. BEHAR: Mr. Chairman, sorry to  
18 interrupt you. It's five minutes to 9:00. We  
19 must take a quick extension.

20 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Let's do that.  
21 Anybody like to make a motion to extend the  
22 meeting past 9:00?

23 MR. BUCELO: I'll move.

24 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'll second.

25 MR. BEHAR: For how long?

142

1 MR. PARDO: Just take into consideration  
2 that I don't think we can get to the rest of  
3 the --

4 MR. BEHAR: We're not. This is just, I  
5 think, to conclude this item.

6 MR. PARDO: That's fine.

7 MR. COLLIER: May I suggest 9:15?

8 MR. BUCELO: 9:15.

9 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So 9:15 is your  
10 motion, Alex?

11 MR. BUCELO: Yes.

12 MR. HERNANDEZ: I second.

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Second.

14 Everybody in favor say, aye.

15 (All Board Members voted aye.)

16 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you. Sorry  
17 about that.

18 So, for those reasons -- and I'm sorry, I  
19 lost my train of thought a little bit --

20 MR. BEHAR: You're in support of the  
21 project.

22 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: For those -- the fact  
23 was that, going to the transportation on the  
24 9th, we're not going to have a say as to what  
25 we can do. You did say that you were here and

143

1 you spoke and you gave -- you spoke with the  
2 City. I assume you spoke with the previous  
3 City Managers. They didn't bring it at any  
4 point before us. You know, I'm glad we have  
5 Mr. Iglesias with us, the City Manager, because  
6 he understood that it was important, and to  
7 bring it forward right away, and for that I do  
8 thank you.

9 That's really all of my comments.

10 MR. BEHAR: Then, Mr. Chair, I'm going to  
11 make a motion to approve. I would like to put,  
12 if we can, the step back, instead of being on  
13 US-1, be on the back of the property, closer to  
14 the residential.

15 MS. GARCIA: Just to be clear, right now,  
16 the way it's drafted, it's 45 feet, and then a  
17 ten-foot step back.

18 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: You're saying, like  
19 the massing -- you want the massing towards the  
20 road?

21 MR. BEHAR: Towards the front.

22 MS. GARCIA: Right.

23 MR. BEHAR: Right, Felix?

24 MR. PARDO: Correct.

25 MR. BUCELO: I'll second.

144

1 I'll make a motion for that.  
 2 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Jennifer, you  
 3 understand the motion?  
 4 MS. GARCIA: Yeah. Just to clarify, right  
 5 now, the way it's drafted today, there's a  
 6 ten-foot step back above 45 feet in the back.  
 7 MR. BEHAR: Then you can go up to a  
 8 hundred, right? You could go up to 120?  
 9 MS. GARCIA: On the back, yeah. So you're  
 10 saying to have a greater step back --  
 11 MR. BEHAR: Create an addition step back at  
 12 a hundred feet. Instead of doing it in the  
 13 front, do it on the back. You're not  
 14 changing -- you're not losing anything. Just  
 15 put it in the front.  
 16 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Massing -- it's a  
 17 massing issue.  
 18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct. And that is  
 19 on the first item, which on F-1, that we're  
 20 taking up first.  
 21 MR. BUCELO: With those changes, I'll  
 22 second that motion.  
 23 MR. COLLIER: Well, I think it's the F-2  
 24 that's going to have the amendment with the  
 25 step back.

145

1 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Right. So right now  
 2 we're doing F-1.  
 3 MR. COLLIER: So we have to have a motion on  
 4 F-1. F-1 is the Comp Plan Amendment.  
 5 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.  
 6 So Robert?  
 7 MR. BEHAR: I'll make a motion to approve.  
 8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second.  
 9 MR. BUCELO: Second.  
 10 MS. KAWALERSKI: Where would the step back  
 11 come into play, in this item or the next item?  
 12 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The next one. Let's  
 13 talk about that, the step back, at the next  
 14 item.  
 15 We have a motion. We have a second. Any  
 16 other discussion?  
 17 THE SECRETARY: I'm sorry, who's the  
 18 second?  
 19 MR. BUCELO: I was.  
 20 MR. PARDO: One question, Mr. Chair.  
 21 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes, sir.  
 22 MR. PARDO: My concern right now is that  
 23 the footprint is specific and it's smaller, you  
 24 said, correct?  
 25 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: No. The

146

1 application that is before the County  
 2 Commission is just one parcel.  
 3 MR. PARDO: One parcel. But the graphics  
 4 that we were shown --  
 5 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Right. The RTZ  
 6 covers all of it, but the County is considering  
 7 one parcel; however, but the issue is --  
 8 MS. GARCIA: The overlay district.  
 9 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: -- the overlay  
 10 district, right. So it's the creation of an  
 11 overlay district is the match.  
 12 So this is not about --  
 13 MR. PARDO: Your motion is for the entire  
 14 district?  
 15 MR. BEHAR: The motion that's being  
 16 presented to us --  
 17 MR. PARDO: Or only the application?  
 18 MR. BEHAR: No. No. No. We're not  
 19 dealing with the application.  
 20 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: The application is  
 21 at the County.  
 22 MR. BEHAR: We're dealing with the City of  
 23 Coral Gables, which encompassed those four  
 24 specific properties, one is already built,  
 25 which doesn't apply to that one.

147

1 MR. PARDO: That's what I wanted to make  
 2 sure, because we're talking about two different  
 3 things.  
 4 MR. BEHAR: We're talking 1150, 1190, 1250,  
 5 1320 and 1350. Those are the four addresses  
 6 that we're applying this to. I don't care, I  
 7 mean, what the County is doing.  
 8 MR. PARDO: Perfect. That's clear.  
 9 Second thing, on this particular -- through  
 10 our City Attorney, on this particular issue  
 11 that we have right now, this motion, I wanted  
 12 to make sure that -- do we express our concern  
 13 about the improvement -- what should be an  
 14 improvement to Caballero and US-1, which is the  
 15 chocking point of this entire neighborhood?  
 16 Does that go in now or would that be in the  
 17 second application?  
 18 MR. COLLIER: I think it should be in F-2.  
 19 F-1 is really just overarching --  
 20 MR. BEHAR: And that really should be on  
 21 project specific, because we put conditions on  
 22 projects.  
 23 MR. PARDO: Right. But Robert, what I  
 24 wanted to make sure was that we didn't miss the  
 25 boat by voting on this and missing it.

148

MR. BEHAR: Okay. Fair enough.

MS. KAWALERSKI: And I've got one question. If we pass this, can the County still trump our overlay?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Yes. The County has home rule.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So regardless of what we do right now --

MR. COLLIER: That's the position -- I should say, that's the position of the County. And they've taken that position, by the way, on other station projects, where they've essentially taken jurisdiction on it.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. So, regardless if we vote this in, the County can come and say --

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: The developer chooses. The developer chooses what path they take, and the point of the County has always been, meet us at our zoning. We prefer that the developer chooses -- as long as you have something that's comparable, and like I said, that's what happened in South Miami.

The South Miami Sunset Place did not come to the County to be included in the RTZ. They worked it out with South Miami. And that's

149

happened all over the County.

MR. BEHAR: What I could tell you, because the density would still be limited to 125 units per acre.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Right.

MR. BEHAR: I did a quick massing study, you're never going to reach the potential height on the buildings.

MR. PARDO: Because of the massing --

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. I just want to know -- I want to get it clear, we vote on this, and the developer for the Waterway project says, "We're going to bypass Coral Gables altogether, let's not even bother filling out an application, let's go to the County," can that happen?

MR. PARDO: No, because they're outside of the envelope of the node.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Of this item. (Simultaneous speaking.)

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: One at a time, so the court reporter can please take it down.

MS. KAWALERSKI: So, in other words, no matter what we do here, the developer can bypass Coral Gables altogether and go directly

150

to the County, because now the County says, yeah, okay, apply for an RTZ zone development? You don't have to even deal with those Coral Gables people.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: For four years, this has been an option. For four years, this has been an option, an option that has been taken up by many parcels all over Miami-Dade County, in several districts, including my own.

MS. KAWALERSKI: Okay. But now they're seeing the first opportunity in Coral Gables. This is now a great opportunity in Coral Gables.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: This opportunity is available County-wide.

MR. PARDO: Mr. Chairman, I think there's a confusion. I think the Commissioner is speaking about one thing. Sue is speaking about another.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.

MR. PARDO: The waterway project, which is on the other side of the canal, I'm looking at it on Google Map, that is over 1,320 feet away. Why is that important? That's a quarter of a mile.

151

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Correct.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That project is in what is our RTZ overlay, but there has not been an item brought to include that in the RTZ. Everything along the entire corridor is in the County's RTZ, everything along the SMART path. So everything is available to those developers, just like Live Local is available to them, by virtue of having a commercial zoning.

MR. PARDO: You're talking about the SMART corridor? Only the SMART corridor?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Right. Yeah, the RTZ is only the SMART corridor.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Commissioner, it's fair to say that the further you get away from a hub or a station, the less density you're allowed? Is that fair to say? So if you get half a mile or a mile away from, I guess, Dadeland station, which would be still considered to be RTZ?

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: That is correct. It is about distance.

MR. HERNANDEZ: Right. So, I guess, the closer you are, the more density you get. The further you are, the less density you get.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: And one issue that

152

has not been brought up, but comes up all of the time, the RTZ does not include residential. It only includes commercial. Because that's another issue that comes up all of the time.

You can't take R-1 and pour it into the RTZ, just like you can't take and R-1 and pour it into the Live Local, right. So there is an underlay of zoning. There would have to be an upzoning at the municipal level, in order to qualify for the parameters within the Rapid Transit Zone.

MR. BEHAR: So the Gables waterway project, what is the zoning on that?

MS. GARCIA: MX1, I think, mixed with MF3.

MR. PARDO: 45-foot height limit, four stories.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The F-1 part, but the other part is --

MS. GARCIA: It's a mix of mixed-use, as well as multi-family, yes.

COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Multi-family, mixed-use, that's all game, for Live Local, for RTZ and for whatever Coral Gables decides to do.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So we have a motion.

153

instead of being on US-1, for it to be on the rear of the properties.

MS. GARCIA: For those deep --

MR. BEHAR: For those properties.

MS. GARCIA: Right, at 100 feet.

MR. BEHAR: At 100 feet.

MR. BUCELO: I second that motion.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have a second by Alex.

MR. PARDO: So there are two setbacks on the back side?

MR. BEHAR: There's two step backs.

There's one at 45 feet --

MR. PARDO: I didn't hear the first one.

MR. BEHAR: -- and the other one at a hundred feet.

MR. PARDO: Okay. And I would like to condition that. Are we in discussion --

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We are in discussion, sir.

MR. PARDO: So, in discussion, again, the intersection of Caballero and US-1 -- you know, when I looked at the Staff observation, they basically said that, because there wasn't an increase -- I was disappointed, because they

155

We have a second. Any other discussion?

Let's call the roll, please, Jill.

THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?

MR. PARDO: Yes.

THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

MR. BEHAR: Yes.

THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?

MR. BUCELO: Yes.

THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?

MS. KAWALERSKI: No, with the caveat that this is a waste of time.

THE SECRETARY: Nestor Menendez?

MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

MR. BEHAR: I make a motion on F-2, with the proposed --

MR. COLLER: So with the step back to be on the back side.

MS. GARCIA: With the additional step back at 100 feet.

MR. BEHAR: At the back side.

MR. PARDO: Robert, read it specifically into the record, please.

MR. BEHAR: The proposed 30-foot step back,

154

basically said -- there you go. "In conclusion" -- this is the memorandum from our Public Works Director -- the last paragraph, "In conclusion, because the proposed zoning change does not alter the currently permitted residential density of 125 units per acre, the increase to building height and potential additional square footage achieved through amendments to the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map and the application of Transfer of Development Rights, will not result in a decline in the level of service for public infrastructure below the minimum standards established by the City's Comprehensive Plan."

Mr. Chairman, I think it's important that we put an improvement component observation, correctly done, by professionals, to look at that intersection, which has been a problem --

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: But is that even --

MR. PARDO: -- on Caballero and US-1.

CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: I'm not disagreeing with you, but I don't know if that is before us. I think that comes before us --

MR. BEHAR: We can do that here, or is that a project specific, that is responsible to

156

1 address those concerns, which are very valid  
2 concerns?

3 MR. PARDO: Isn't that what we're doing  
4 right now?

5 MR. BEHAR: No.

6 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: So, Felix, as your  
7 County Commissioner, I'm happy to work with the  
8 Manager, looking specifically at Caballero. We  
9 don't need an actual project in order to look  
10 at Caballero. The issue is that, when you look  
11 at zoning, you're looking at the green book,  
12 and what FDOT considers an F, D, C street.  
13 It's very different from what you and I  
14 experience while we're on the intersection.  
15 It's two different standards.

16 So even if you were to consider some  
17 limitation to the overlay, that limitation  
18 would be written by the FDOT standard, which  
19 it's very circular. We're happy -- I'm happy  
20 to work -- you know, if the Commission and the  
21 Manager want us to look at Caballero, we're  
22 happy to work together and look at Caballero  
23 and see what can be done.

24 I mean, there's no -- if you have a street  
25 that you believe is near failure, there's no

157

1 need to necessarily wait for a development in  
2 order to address whatever that issue is. We  
3 can address that issue through a request from  
4 the City and I'm happy to do that.

5 MR. BEHAR: Commissioner, if you'll give us  
6 your commitment that you will do that --

7 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Of course. Of  
8 course. I'm happy to do that.

9 MR. BEHAR: We'll get the Manager to do  
10 that with you. I think the residents will be  
11 very pleased and happy about it.

12 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Of course.

13 MR. PARDO: It is a bottleneck, and just  
14 two projects that were already built there,  
15 just made it substantially worse, and being a  
16 level F road, per FDOT, it doesn't make it any  
17 better.

18 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: And the only thing  
19 that I can say to that is, whenever we have  
20 those conversations, we're limited because  
21 imminent domain no longer allows us to take,  
22 you know, and to widen the roads, but when  
23 development does come to those areas, then you  
24 can request an easement for widening, if a  
25 widening is determined to be one of the

158

1 solutions or to change the configuration of the  
2 lanes. Those are all things that can occur,  
3 once the property owners come and request  
4 something of the City or the County, but we're  
5 limited in our ability to take, in order to  
6 resolve congestion and street failure.

7 CITY MANAGER IGLESIAS: Mr. Pardo, we'll be  
8 happy to work with the Commissioner, the FDOT  
9 and our Public Works Department to see what we  
10 can do to minimize the impact of the problem at  
11 that intersection.

12 MR. PARDO: Okay.

13 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

14 We have a motion. We have a second. Any  
15 other discussion?

16 MS. KAWALERSKI: I have a question.  
17 Commissioner, can we have some kind of  
18 assurance that what is being discussed here  
19 will end up in the actual plan of that  
20 developer?

21 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: What do you mean?

22 MS. KAWALERSKI: The step backs we're  
23 talking about, right. We're talking about the  
24 massing towards the front.

25 MS. GARCIA: Well, right now, the

159

1 legislation that the City is doing, for the  
2 overlay district that we're proposing, to be  
3 consistent with what the County is proposing,  
4 but we're not controlling where the developer  
5 will go. They may go to the County or they may  
6 go to the City.

7 MS. KAWALERSKI: No, I'm not talking about  
8 that. We were talking about your proposal and  
9 Mr. Felix's proposal to have --

10 MR. BEHAR: It would be as part of the  
11 regulations.

12 COMMISSIONER REGALADO: Overlay. That's  
13 the Coral Gables --

14 MR. BEHAR: But we cannot control if they  
15 go directly to the County. We're hoping that  
16 those three properties will go through the  
17 Gables, our proposed RTZ program.

18 MR. PARDO: And our recommendations are  
19 going to go to the Commission anyway, where  
20 they may tack on other things or even take it  
21 to our own Commission. They can tack on or  
22 take off.

23 MR. BEHAR: And remember, we're going to  
24 have a member of the City of Coral Gables at  
25 those County Commissions. At that time, that

160

1 person is the one that will say, hey, we have  
2 these regulations. Can we try following those  
3 regulations?

4 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: We have -- we're  
5 limited on time right now. We have a motion.  
6 We have a second. I'd like to call the roll,  
7 please.

8 THE SECRETARY: Robert Behar?

9 MR. BEHAR: Yes.

10 THE SECRETARY: Alex Bucelo?

11 MR. BUCELO: Yes.

12 THE SECRETARY: Sue Kawalerski?

13 MS. KAWALERSKI: No.

14 THE SECRETARY: Nestor Menendez?

15 MR. HERNANDEZ: Yes.

16 THE SECRETARY: Felix Pardo?

17 MR. PARDO: Yes.

18 THE SECRETARY: Eibi Aizenstat?

19 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Yes.

20 Thank you again.

21 MR. COLLER: We need a motion for deferral  
22 of the balance of the --

23 MR. BEHAR: We will. Commissioner, please  
24 say hello to your father, Tomasito. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Thank you.

161

1 The time I have right now is 9:08. So we  
2 have time to make a deferral.

3 MR. BEHAR: I'll make a motion to defer all  
4 of the other items until the next available  
5 meeting.

6 MR. COLLER: What's the date and time of  
7 the next meeting? I don't know -- are you  
8 going to re-notice that --

9 MS. GARCIA: Yes, we will.

10 MR. COLLER: Oh, you will?

11 MS. GARCIA: Yes. It's August 13th.

12 MR. COLLER: August 13th, okay.

13 MR. PARDO: And I wish that you would  
14 calculate the amount of time that you think,  
15 because there are a couple of items there that  
16 may go long, so if you put them all on the same  
17 one, then you don't have any time for all of  
18 that.

19 MR. BEHAR: If something else is coming  
20 new, maybe that may have to be for the  
21 following meeting. How many items we got  
22 coming, three?

23 MR. COLLER: So this is just three, three  
24 that we're deferring.

25 MS. GARCIA: Right.

162

1 MR. BEHAR: So those are the first three,  
2 and if you calculate, like Mr. Pardo said,  
3 calculate the time, maybe we could add a couple  
4 more -- if not -- I don't think they're big  
5 items. I went through them.

6 MR. PARDO: I just don't want them all  
7 lumped in there.

8 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So we have a motion to  
9 defer. Who seconded it, please?

10 MR. BUCELO: I do.

11 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Alex is on a roll  
12 tonight.

13 MR. COLLER: You can do it as a voice vote.

14 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: So we have a first and  
15 a second. Everybody in favor to defer say,  
16 aye.

17 (All Board Members voted aye.)

18 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: Anybody against? No?  
19 Thank you.

20 Is there a motion to adjourn?

21 MR. BUCELO: I move.

22 MR. HERNANDEZ: I'll second if

23 CHAIRMAN AIZENSTAT: The two new people,  
24 Alex, and Nestor seconded. Everybody in favor  
25 to adjourn say, aye.

163

1 (All Board Members voted aye.)

2 (Thereupon, the meeting was adjourned at  
3 9:13 p.m.)

164

C E R T I F I C A T E


1  
2  
3 STATE OF FLORIDA:  
4 SS.  
5 COUNTY OF MIAMI-DADE:  
6  
7  
8

9 I, NIEVES SANCHEZ, Court Reporter, and a Notary  
10 Public for the State of Florida at Large, do hereby  
11 certify that I was authorized to and did  
12 stenographically report the foregoing proceedings and  
13 that the transcript is a true and complete record of my  
14 stenographic notes.

15  
16 DATED this 14th day of July, 2025.  
17

18 

19  
20 -----NIEVES SANCHEZ-----  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

	<b>City of Coral Gables Notice of Public Hearing</b>	
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>City of Coral Gables</b>	
<b>Application:</b>	<b>University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District</b>	
<b>Property:</b>	<b>1150, 1190, 1250, 1320, and 1350 South Dixie Highway</b>	
<b>Public Hearing - Date/Time/ Location:</b>	<b>CITY COMMISSION</b> <b>Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 6:00 p.m.</b>  City Commission Chambers, City Hall, 405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida, 33134 e-comments: <a href="http://www.CoralGables.GranicusIdeas.com/meetings">www.CoralGables.GranicusIdeas.com/meetings</a>	

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given that the City of Coral Gables, Florida, Planning & Zoning Board will conduct a Public Hearing on **Wednesday, December 10, 2025**, for text amendments to the Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan for the “University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District” adjacent to the University Metrorail Station. The proposed District includes the parcels fronting the station bounded by South Dixie Hwy, Caballero Blvd, Madruga Ave, and Turin St. The proposed text amendments provide special allowances for a mix of uses and a floor area ratio (FAR) maximum of 3.5 to better align with Miami-Dade County’s recently adopted Coral Gables / University Station Subzone. The requests require three public hearings, including review and recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board, and 1st and 2nd Reading before the City Commission. (Ordinance Format)

*An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida, granting approval of proposed amendments the text of the City of Coral Gables Comprehensive Plan pursuant to expedited state review procedures (S. 163.3184, Florida Statutes) and Zoning Code Article 14, “Process,” Section 14-213, “Comprehensive Plan Text and Map Amendments,” to simplify the mix of uses when developed within the “University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay” and allow a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 3.5; providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.*

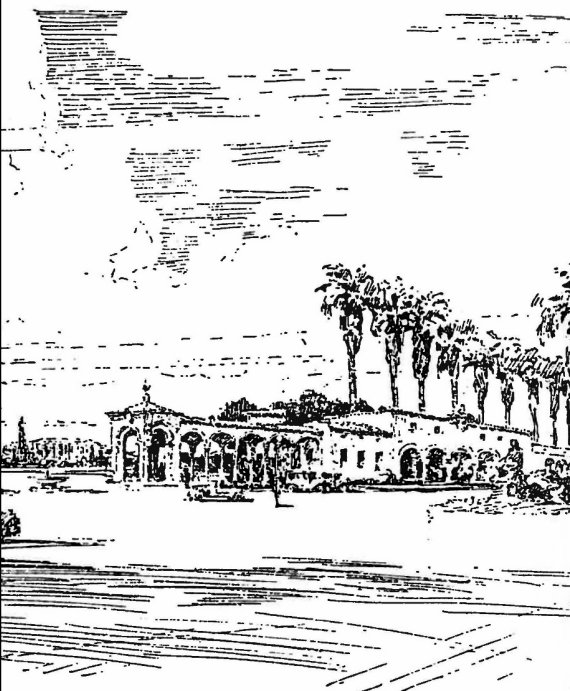
Additional information may be found at [www.coralgables.com](http://www.coralgables.com). Please forward to other interested parties. The meeting will also be via Zoom at [www.zoom.us/j/83788709513](https://www.zoom.us/j/83788709513). A dedicated phone line will also be available by dialing: (305) 461-6769, Meeting ID: 837 8870 9513.

The public may also provide comments by sending an email to [planning@coralgables.com](mailto:planning@coralgables.com) prior to the day before the scheduled meeting.

Sign up to receive future public notices via email at <https://shorturl.at/N3X6w>.

Sincerely,


*City of Coral Gables, Florida*



# University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
TEXT AMENDMENTS

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD  
DECEMBER 10, 2025



Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse

1

## MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RTZ EXPANSION

September 3<sup>rd</sup>: Miami-Dade County adopted on Second Reading to create the “Gables/University Station Subzone” within the Rapid Transit Zone

MEMORANDUM


Agenda Item No. 7(A)

<b>TO:</b> Honorable Chairman Anthony Rodriguez and Members, Board of County Commissioners	<b>DATE:</b> September 3, 2025	
<b>FROM:</b> Geeti Bouzoo-Keenan County Attorney	<b>SUBJECT:</b> Ordinance relating to the Rapid Transit System Development Zone; amending chapter 33C of the Code providing for the expansion of the Rapid Transit Zone and creating the Coral Gables University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone which could, through future action of this Board, encompass property within a quarter mile of the University Metrorail Station, providing for County regulatory jurisdiction over properties added to the Coral Gables University Station Subzone of the Rapid Transit Zone; providing for rules, and creating standards, criteria, and procedures for approval of applications within the Coral Gables University Station Subzone; adding certain private property to the Coral Gables University Station Subzone; making technical changes, directing the County Mayor to coordinate and negotiate with the City of Coral Gables as to a future Interlocal Agreement which could address additional concerns or considerations that may arise in the future	

A substitute was presented and forwarded to the BCC with a favorable recommendation at the July 8, 2025 Transportation Committee.

The substitute differs from the original item in that it changes the glazing requirement in 33C-18F(9) from 40 percent to 50 percent; it deletes language related to building scale from 33C-18F(7) and adds new language regarding compatibility; and deletes language related to building aesthetic from 33C-18F(9).

The accompanying ordinance was prepared and placed on the agenda at the request of Prime Sponsor Commissioner Rafael A. Regalado.

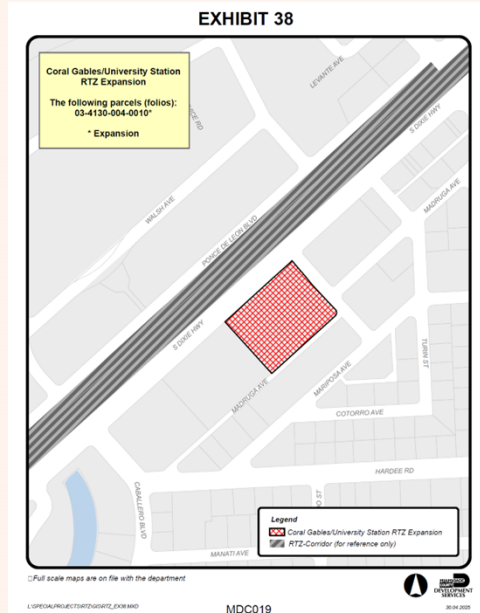
  
 Geeti Bouzoo-Keenan  
 County Attorney

GBK:ks

MDC001

2

## MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RTZ EXPANSION

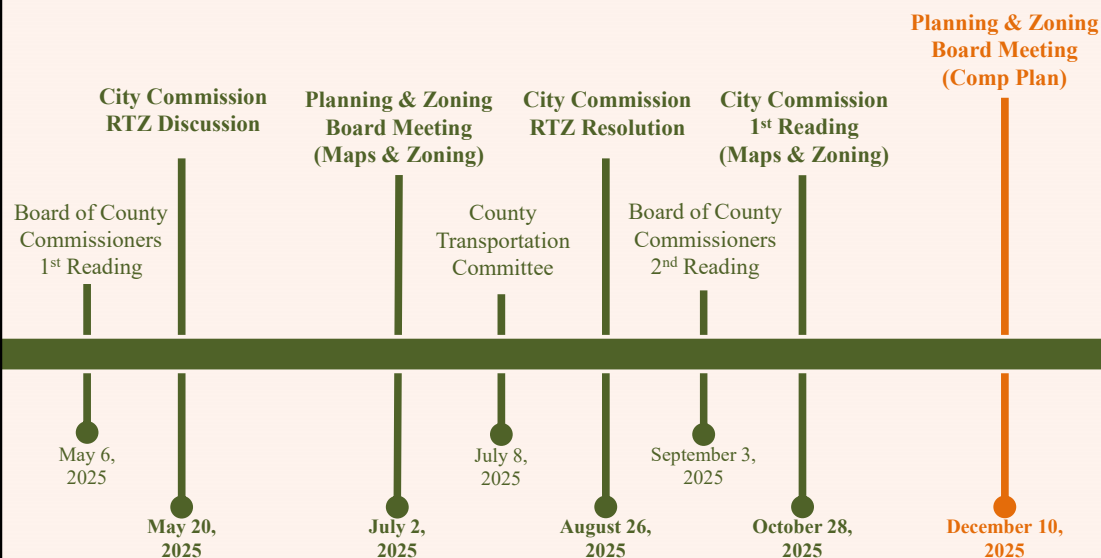


- Grants the County regulatory jurisdiction
- Specifies the allowable uses
- Development standards, criteria, and procedures for the review and approval by County

3

3

## CITY'S UNIVERSITY STATION OVERLAY



4

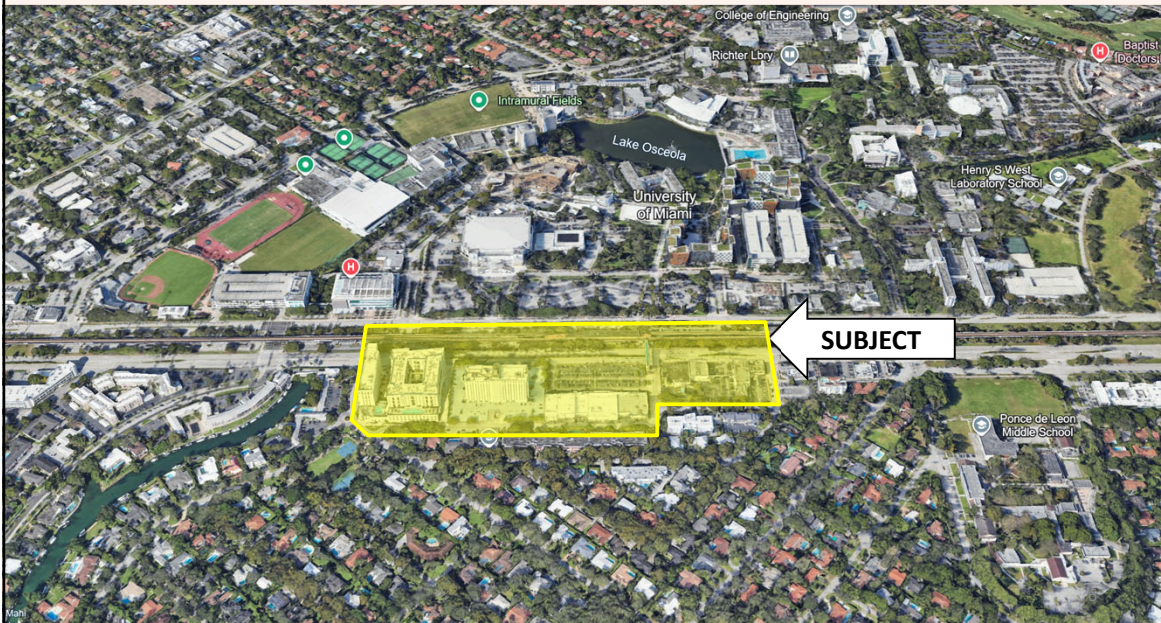
4

## EXISTING CONDITIONS



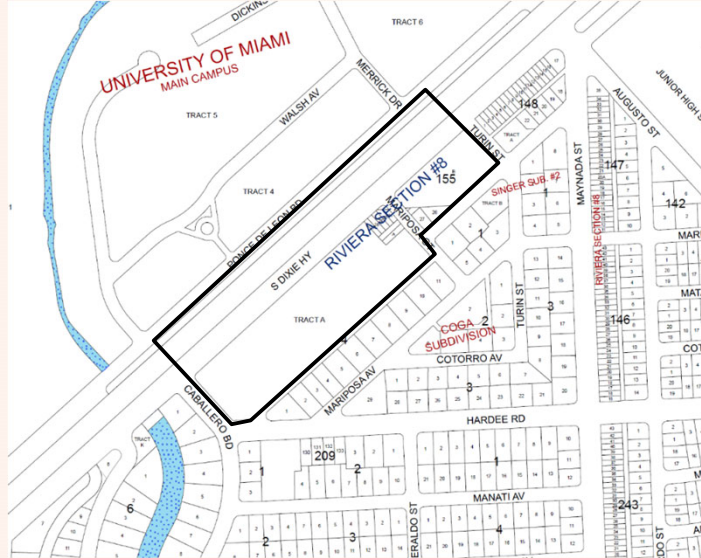
5

## LOCATION



6

## LOCATION



7

7

## JULY'S MAP AMENDMENTS

PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP



PROPOSED ZONING MAP

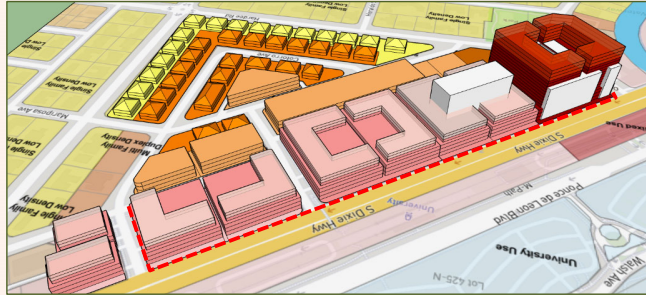


8

8

## JULY'S MAP AMENDMENTS

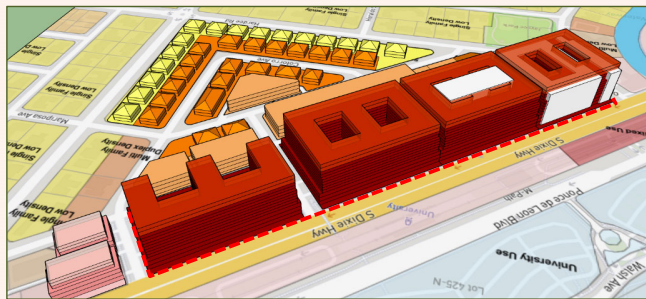
EXISTING



COMMERCIAL  
LOW-RISE  
INTENSITY

MX1 AND MX3

PROPOSED



COMMERCIAL  
HIGH-RISE  
INTENSITY

MX3

9

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENTS

Table FLU-2. Commercial Land Uses.

Classification	Description	Density / Intensity	Height
Commercial High-Rise Intensity.	This category is oriented to the highest intensity commercial uses, including residential, retail, services, office, and mixed use.	<p>Maximum F.A.R. of 3.0, or 3.5 with architectural incentives, <b>or 3.5 if developed pursuant to University Rapid Transit District Overlay</b>. Up to an additional 25% F.A.R. may be granted for properties qualifying as receiving sites for Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs).</p> <p>Residential use shall only be permitted as part of a mixed-use development as provided herein with maximum of 125 units/acre. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p> <p>***</p>	<p>Up to 150' maximum (no limitation on floors), or 190.5' maximum (with a maximum 3 additional floors) with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p> <p>If developed pursuant to an approved PAD, within the Central Business District (CBD) and limiting density to 100 units/acre: Up to 205.5' maximum with architectural incentives per the Zoning Code.</p>

10

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENTS



Table FLU-4. Mixed-Use Land Uses.

Classification	Description
MXD, Mixed-Use or MXOD, Mixed-Use Overlay Districts (MXOD).	Mixed uses are permitted to varying degrees in the multi-family residential, commercial, and industrial land use categories, pursuant to underlying land use regulations and applicable Zoning Code provisions.
	<p>The general intent of the MXD is to promote a multi-faceted pedestrian friendly environment comprised of an assortment of uses, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Residential;</li> <li>• Retail/Commercial;</li> <li>• Office;</li> <li>• Industrial; and</li> <li>• Public Open Spaces.</li> </ul> <p>No single use may comprise more than eighty-five (85%) percent of the MXD floor area ratio. <b>However, if developed pursuant to the University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, a minimum of two (2) uses shall be included, with no minimum or maximum percentage thresholds.</b></p> <p>A maximum of 125 units/acre shall be allowed. Density shall be unlimited for properties within the Central Business District (CBD) and the Design &amp; Innovation District.</p>

\*\*\*

11

11

# COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENTS



## Policy FLU-1.9.5.

Establish and implement a University Station Rapid Transit District Overlay, which should include:

1. A **boundary** for the District, adopted on the Future Land Use Map.
2. Zoning regulations that would locate higher density and intensity development near the University Station MetroRail Station to **encourage housing and other compatible uses** that are supportive of **pedestrian activities** on the ground level of **mixed-use buildings**.
3. **Mixed-use development along the US-1 corridor** that is consistent with the goals of the Miami-Dade County's Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (**SMART**) plan to promote **increased ridership** of the rapid transit system.
4. **Expedited development opportunity** that serves as an alternative, compatible development path under the **City's review authority and jurisdiction**, with greater opportunities for **community engagement**.
5. Development strategies that provide greater **mixed-use and housing opportunities** in close proximity to transit, employment, park systems, and educational institutions, and promote and encourage **use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities along the US-1 corridor**.

12

12

REVIEW TIMELINE	
<b>1</b>	<b>PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD: 07.02.25 (MAPS AND ZONING)</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>CITY COMMISSION 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: 10.28.25 (MAPS AND ZONING)</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD: 12.10.25 (COMP PLAN)</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>CITY COMMISSION 1<sup>ST</sup> READING: TBD (COMP PLAN)</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE: TBD (COMP PLAN)</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>LOCAL REVIEW AGENCIES: TBD (COMP PLAN)</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>CITY COMMISSION 2<sup>ND</sup> READING: TBD (COMP PLAN, MAPS, ZONING)</b>
13	

## LETTERS TO PROPERTIES (1,500 FT)

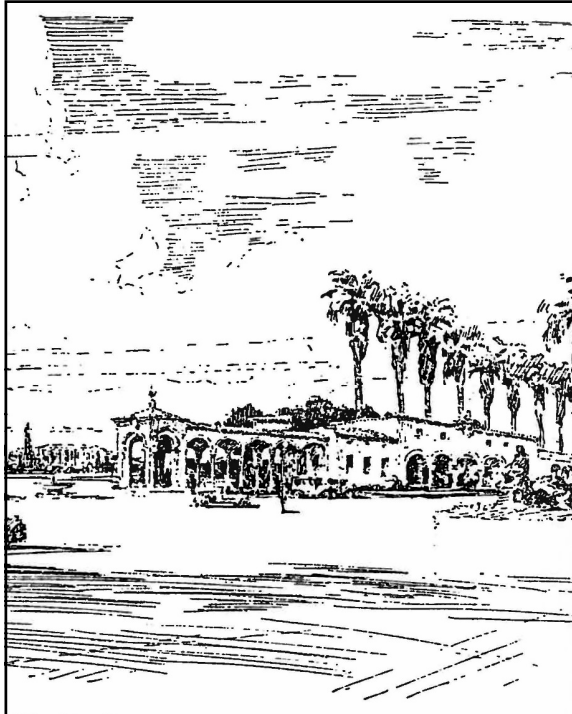
14

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION	
1 TIME	LETTERS TO PROPERTIES PZB
1 TIME	WEBSITE POSTING PZB
1 TIME	NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENT PZB
<div>15</div>	

15

<p> <b>COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY</b> </p> <p> STAFF’S DETERMINATION IS THAT THIS APPLICATION IS <b><u>CONSISTENT</u></b> WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES. </p> <p> THE APPLICATION <b><u>COMPLIES</u></b> WITH THE FINDINGS OF FACT. </p> <p> THE STANDARDS FOR APPROVAL ARE <b><u>SATISFIED</u></b>. </p>
--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

16



*Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse*

# *University Station Rapid Transit Overlay District*

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
TEXT AMENDMENTS

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD  
DECEMBER 10, 2025

