

Florida East Coast Railway Station and Concourse

UNIVERSITY STATION RAPID TRANSIT DISTRICT

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

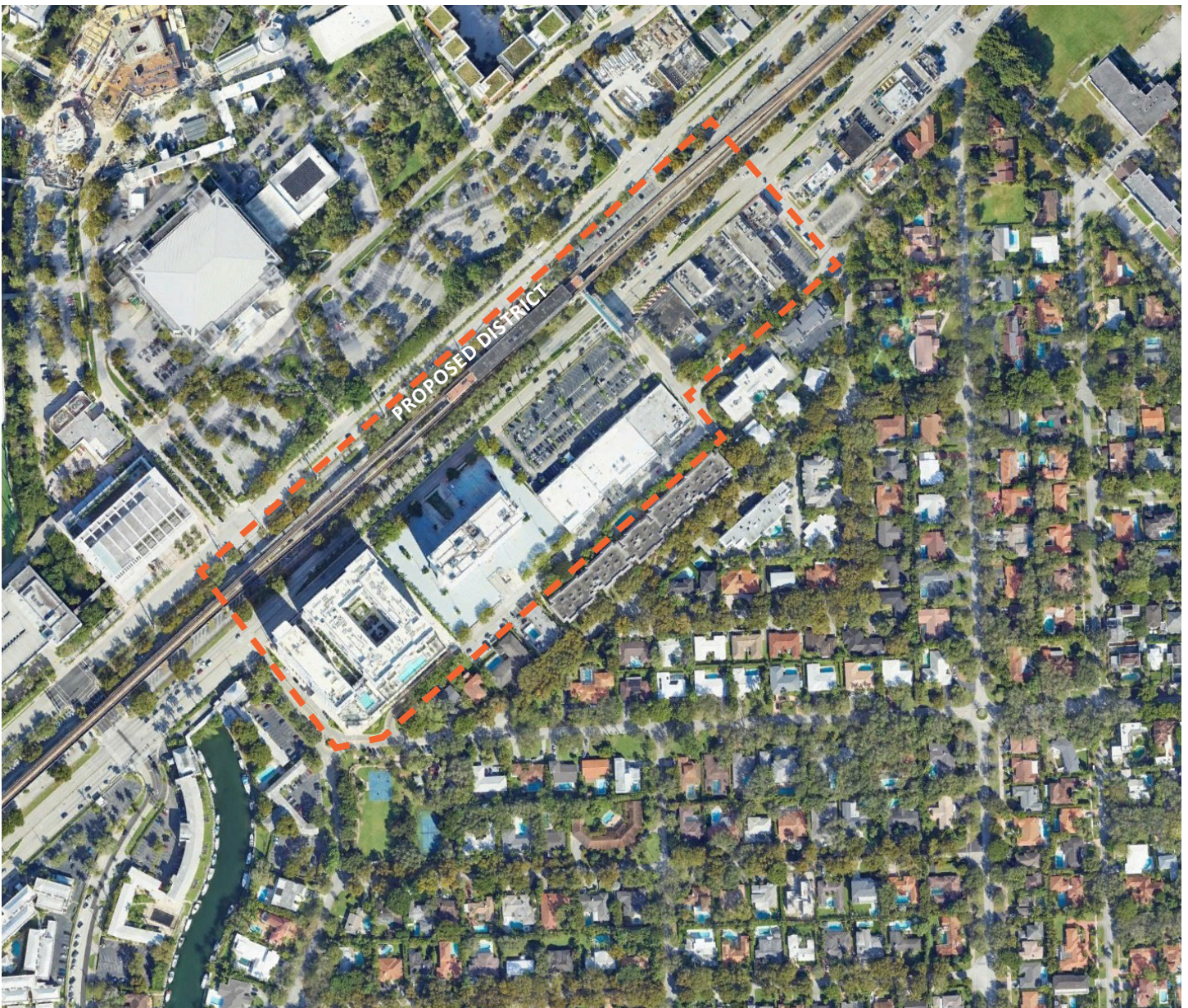
*Zoning regulations to improve housing opportunities near the University Metrorail Station
and to encourage use of mass transit facilities and pedestrian activities.*

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

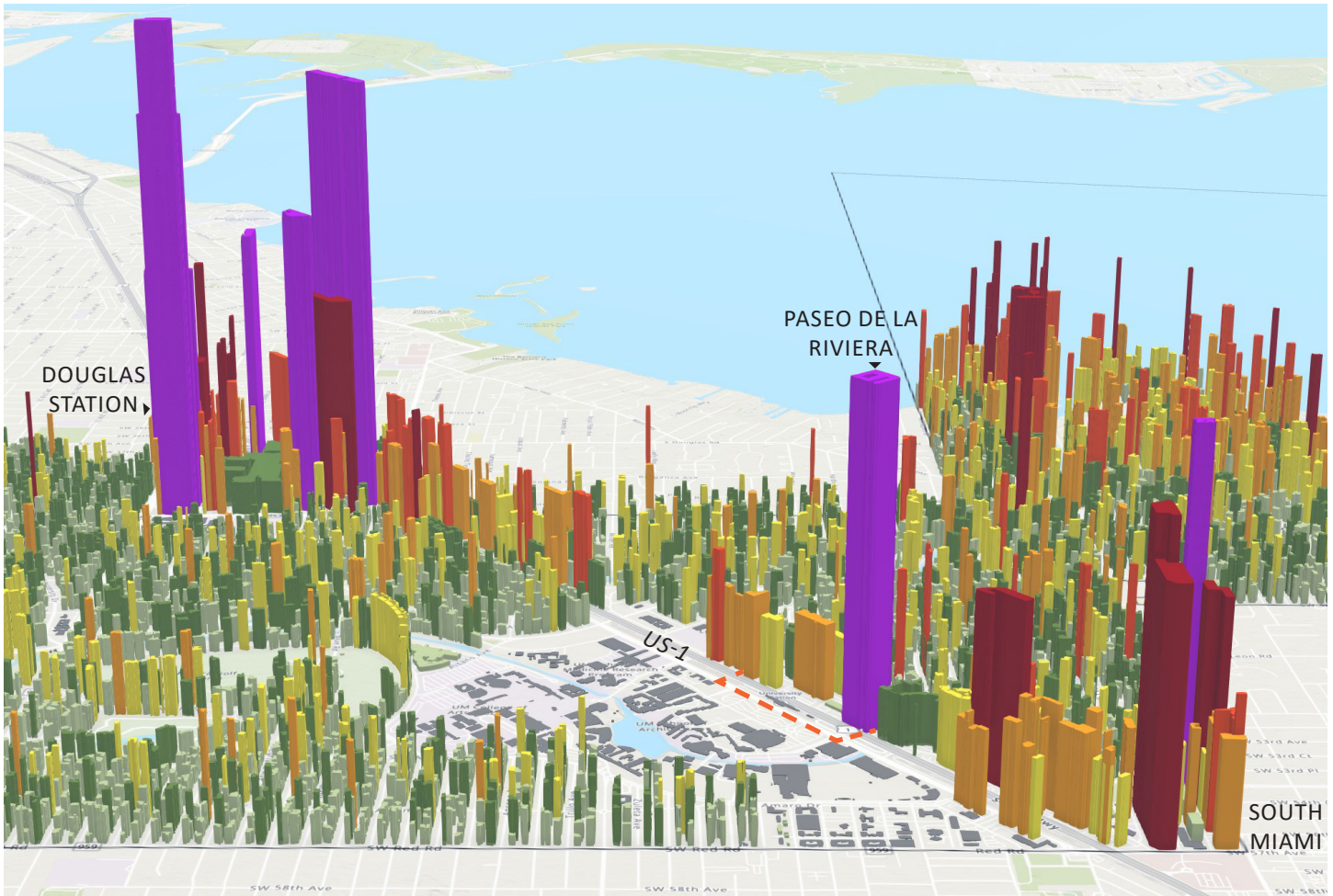
Planning for a Rapid Transit Street On US-1

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)

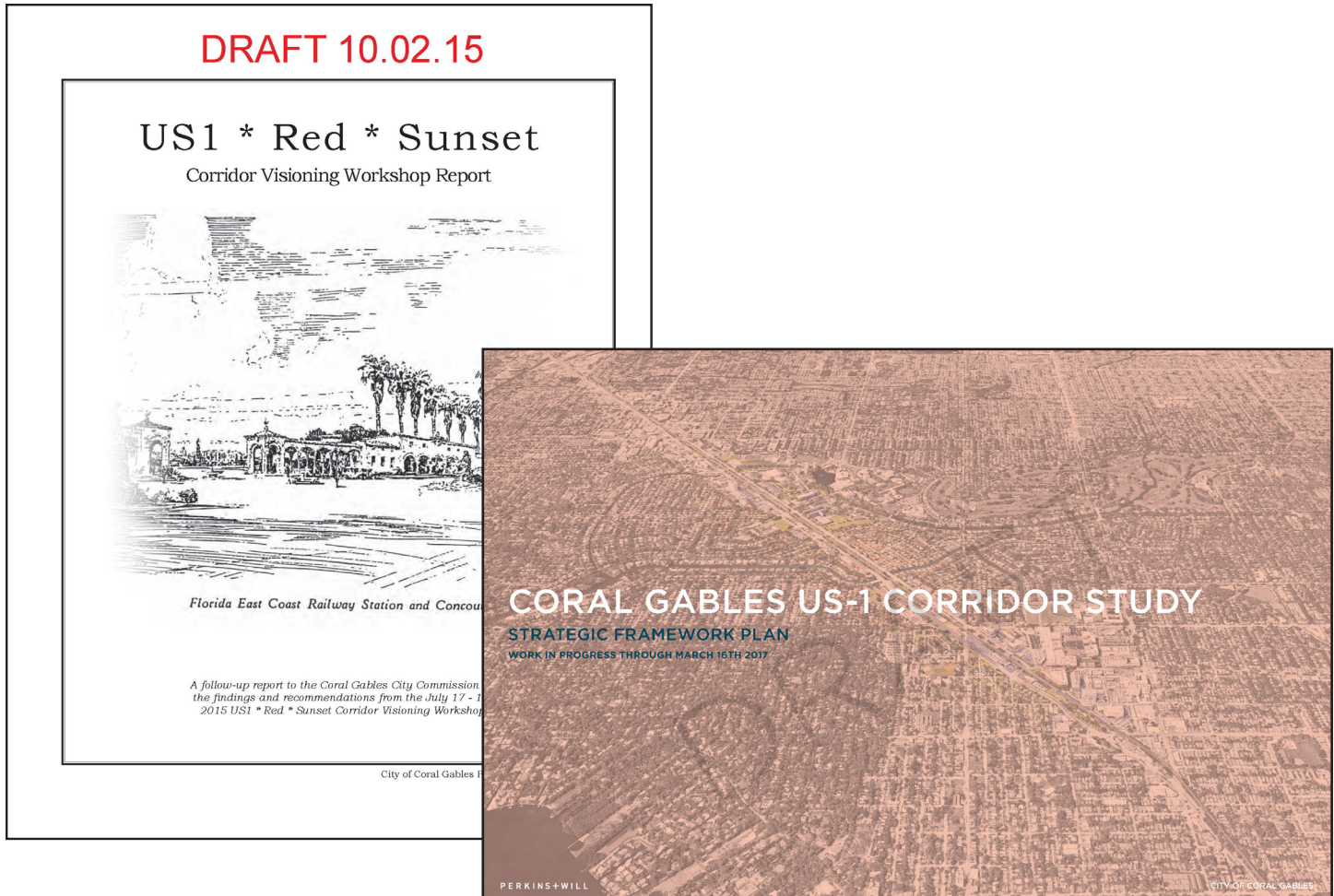


LEGEND

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



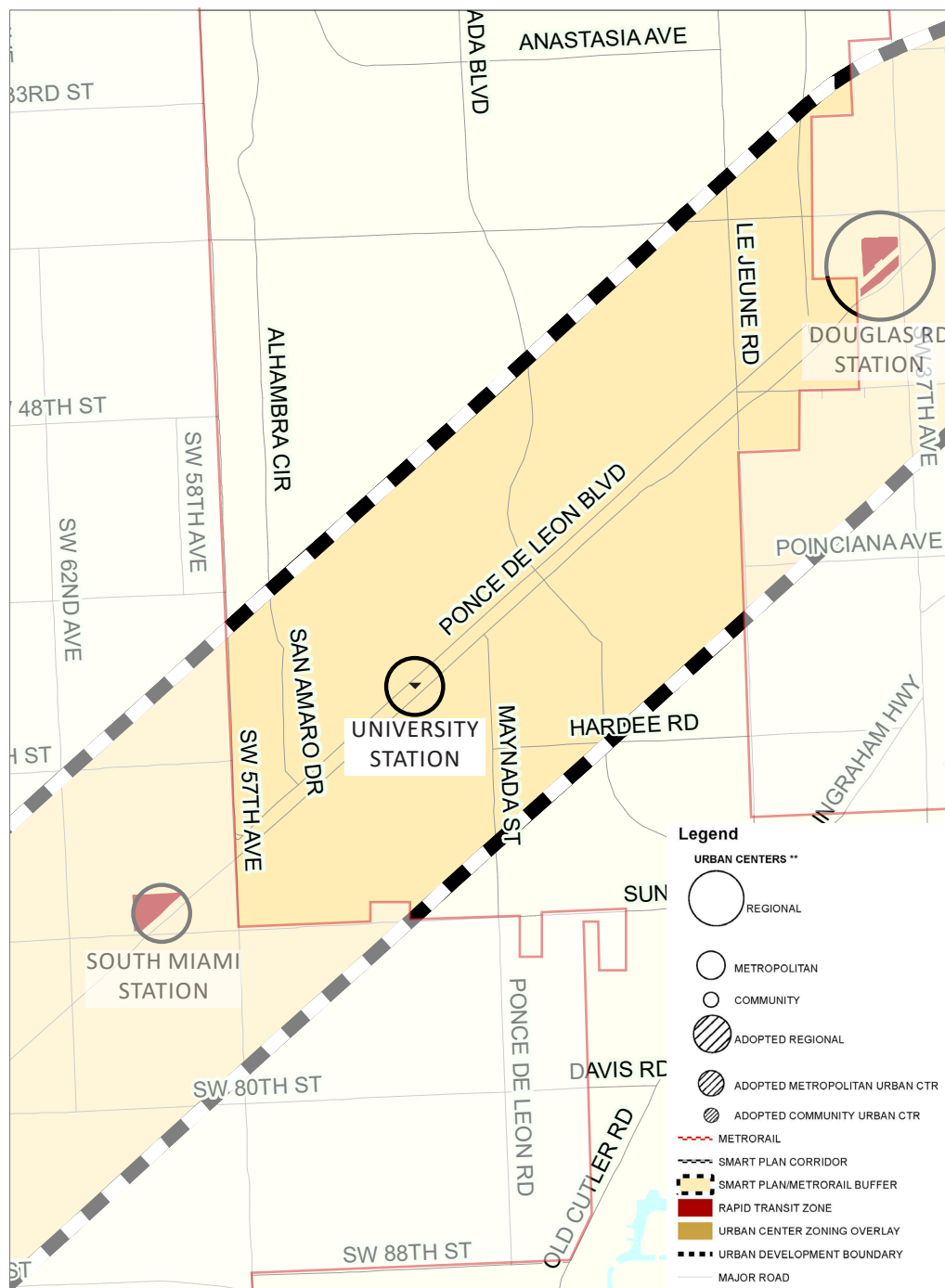
The US-1 corridor has been discussed multiple times for several years. Most recently, the City initiated a visioning workshop in 2015. Part of the recommendations from the public input collected at the workshops included the need to prepare a transit-oriented zoning overlay, with requirements for building 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>
Review	Change of land use / Zoning and Conditional Use		Special exception review/ approval	Expedited review (Staff + Commission only)
Future Land Use	Commercial Low-Rise	Commercial High Rise	Business and Office	Commercial High-Rise Intensity
Zoning	Mixed-Use 1 (MX1)	Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)	RTZ-SMART Corridor	Mixed-Use 3 (MX3)
Height (ft)	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
Density	125		125	125
FAR	3.0 (1.5 per Site Specifics)		No Limit	3.5
Med Bonus	+0.2, +0.3 additional (3.5 FAR total)		-	N/A (Mediterranean style required)
Use of TDRs	Not allowed for this area		-	4.375 FAR (25% max additional)
Mix of Uses	8% min Retail/Commercial 85% max single use		2 uses min.	2 uses min.
Setbacks	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
Open Space	10% on ground level		15% (incl. 10% on ground level)	10% on ground level (incl. setback areas)
Stepbacks (ft) and Paseos	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Front/side street: 10' step-back above 45' Int. side: 15' stepback above 45' Rear w/out alley: 10' step-back above 45' Rear w/ alley: 3' stepback 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within 100 ft of a single-family residential district, 30-foot setback with 10 ft landscape buffer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rear: 10 feet for the top 1/3 of the building facade No paseo required
Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 per studio/1-bd 1.75 per 2-bd 2.25 per 3-bd + 1 per 300 sf comm, office 1 1/8 per hotel room 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 per residential unit 1.8 per 1,000sf comm. 0.6 per 1,000sf office 0.3 per hotel room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parking required, except 1st floor restaurant, retail, residential. Reduction: 50% Waiver for 25% w/ parking plan and Remote Parking



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
		Multi Family High Density		Single Family High Density
Conservation Areas		Multi Family Low Density		Single Family Low Density
Educational Use		Multi Family Medium Density		University Use
Hospital Use		Open Space		

Proposed Zoning Map Amendment

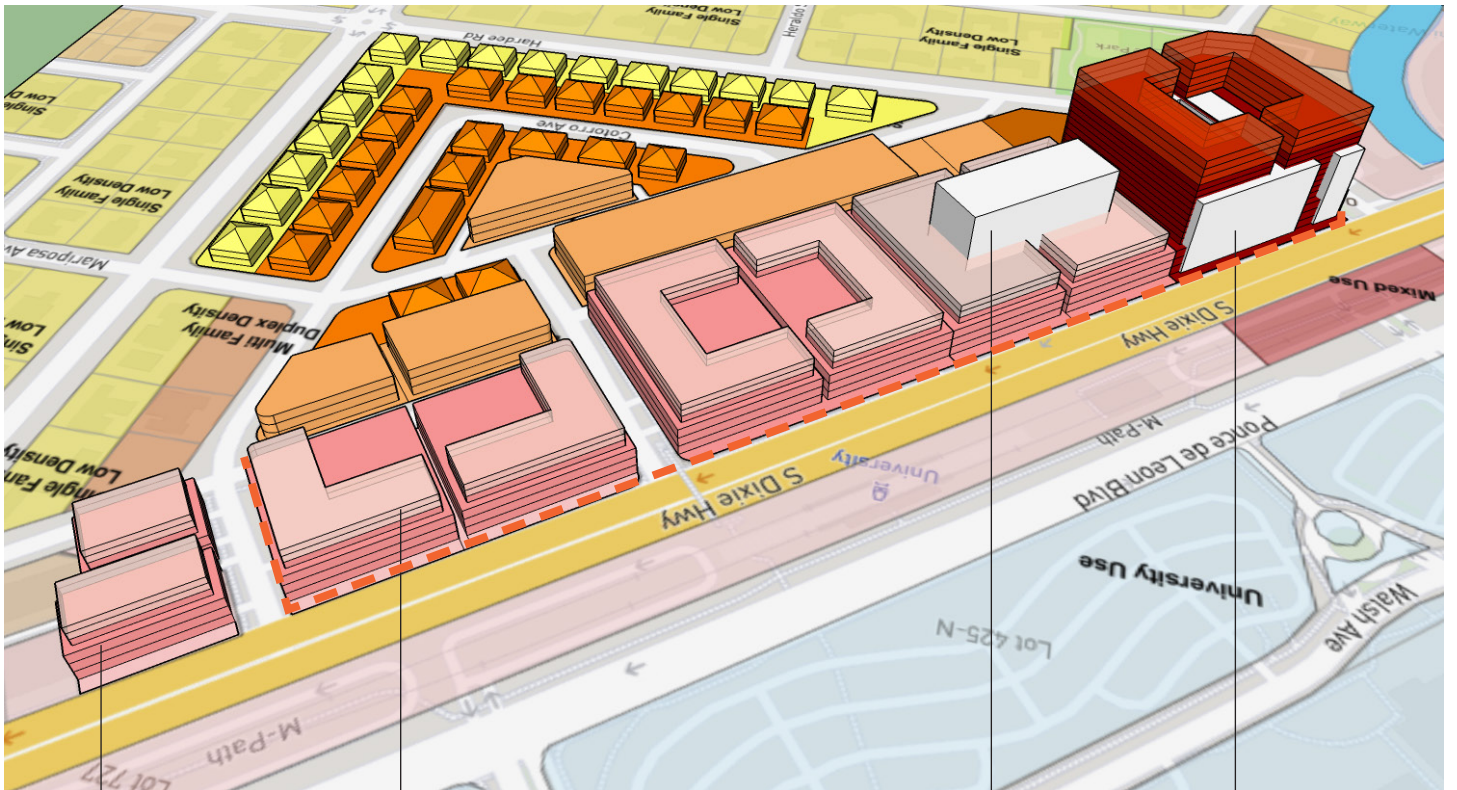


LEGEND

Proposed District Boundary

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Mixed-Use 1 (MX1) | Multi-Family 4 (MF4) |
| Mixed-Use 2 (MX2) | Preservation (P) |
| Mixed-Use 3 (MX3) | Single-Family Residential (SFR) |
| Multi-Family 1 Duplex (MF1) | Special Use (S) |
| Multi-Family 2 (MF2) | University Campus District (UCD) |
| Multi-Family 3 (MF3) | |

Massing Comparison - Existing



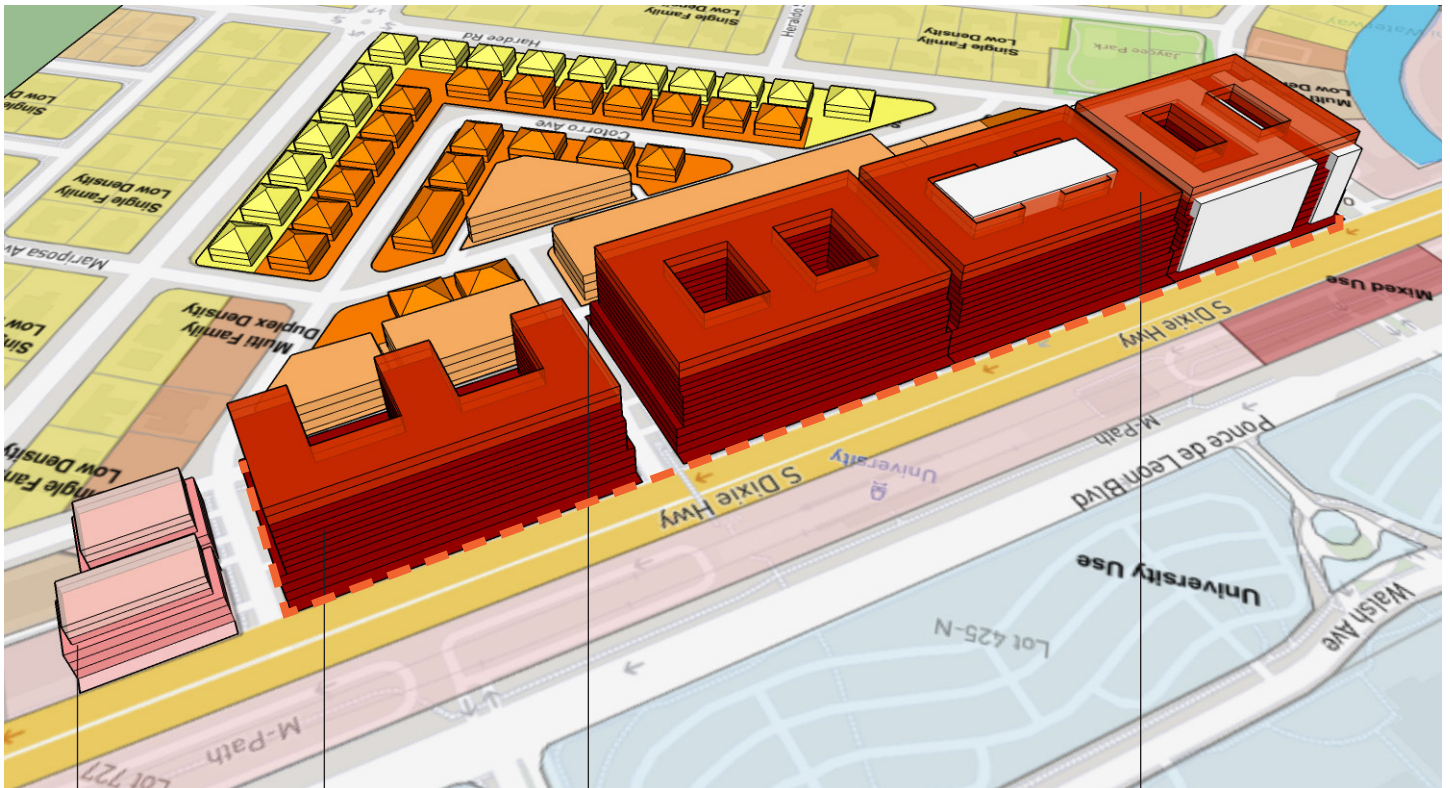
Height Allowed
by Mixed-use 1

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 & Innovation District.</p> <p>Within a Mediterranean Village development:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. residential use shall be permitted, and 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 3. additional height may be granted for specified uses or provide architectural embellishment 	<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 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.
	<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"> • Residential; • Retail/Commercial; • Office; • Industrial; and • Public Open Spaces. <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 & 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>
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>

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.