

City of Coral Gables City Commission Meeting
Agenda Item F-3
February 24, 2026
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)

Agenda Items F-3 [Start: 2:58 p.m.]

A Resolution of the City Commission affirming support for the preservation of the Miami-Dade Urban Development Boundary (“UDB”) as it currently exists to protect downstream water resources, including the Biscayne Aquifer, regional groundwater supplies, and connected coastal waters, as well as the Everglades wetlands, and agricultural lands; urging the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners to reject the proposed development outside the UDB; urging the Florida State Legislature to oppose any legislation that would weaken the UDB in the Miami-Dade County Charter; encouraging advancement of attainable and workforce housing within the UDB to address housing affordability without expanding development into environmentally sensitive lands; adding preservation of the UDB to the City’s legislative priorities; and further directing the City Clerk to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, the Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, the President of the Florida Senate, the Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation, all other municipalities within Miami-Dade County, and the City’s lobbying team. (Sponsored by Commissioner Castro)

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February 24, 2026

Agenda Item F-3 – Resolution affirming support for the preservation of the Miami-Dade Urban Development Boundary (UDB)

[Date]

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Mayor Lago: Moving on to Mr. Clerk, one last item, correct? Item F-3.

City Clerk Urquia: F-3.

Mayor Lago: All right, thank you.

City Attorney Suarez: F-3 is a Resolution of the City Commission affirming support for the preservation of the Miami-Dade Urban Development Boundary as it currently exists to protect downstream water resources including the Biscayne Aquifer, regional groundwater supplies, and connected coastal waters as well as the Everglades wetlands and agricultural lands, urging Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners to reject the proposed development outside the UDB, urging the Florida State Legislature to oppose any legislation that would weaken the UDB in the Miami-Dade County Charter, encouraging advancement of attainable and workforce housing within the UDB to address housing affordability without expanding development into environmentally sensitive lands, adding preservation of the UDB to the city's legislative priorities, and further directing the City Clerk to transmit a copy of this resolution to Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners, Speaker of the Florida House of Representatives, the President of the Florida Senate, Miami-Dade State Legislative Delegation, all other municipalities within Miami-Dade County, and the city's lobbying team.

Commissioner Castro: Thank you, City Attorney, for reading this resolution into the record. This one should be very fast and very simple. Basically, this is about protecting our waterline. I understand that we're not on the western edge. However, water quality and supply are regional. This resolution is not about stopping progress. It's really defining the progress responsibly. It's so important to protect our water, our environment, and our taxpayers while encouraging smart growth where infrastructure already exists. That's it.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'll move it.

Mayor Lago: If I may, I just want to add something very quickly. Mr. Clerk?

City Clerk Urquia: Sir?

Mayor Lago: Motion and a second. For?

City Clerk Urquia: I apologize, who seconded? Thank you.

Mayor Lago: Okay, we have a motion and a second. Mr. Clerk. Mr. Clerk, could we have an item that I want to put up on the graphic? There's a graphic that I have for item F-3. Okay, so this is why, again, I want to be very clear. I do not support moving the UDB line. I have fought to not move the UDB line on multiple occasions. I went and fought against the highway that is currently under litigation. I went and spoke at the county against that. I'm very clear that I do not believe in

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moving UDB line. I believe in vertical development, not horizontal development. When you do horizontal development, you have to spend more in regard to infrastructure on all fronts, police, fire, drainage, water, everything. But I believe as a city, we should not get ourselves involved in this. Before Commissioner Castro got this resolution, this was sent to me by Mayor Cava. I told her, thank you very much, I agree with you, but I will not be embarking in this back and forth. This is a county issue. Let me explain to you two very simple points, very simple points, okay? Number one, in 2017, Miami-Dade County engineers and the county were going to transform this 250 plus acre site into a new wastewater treatment plant on the same site. It was blocked by a lawsuit, but the intention of the county at that point was to develop that site. If you look around that site right now, there's already truck parking on the other side of the UDB line. There's already extensive warehouses that are on the other side where the 836 is, and there's a lot of different pieces of infrastructure that are going up in that area, okay? The UDB line is not our fight. I believe that we should steer clear. What's the second and final point? Then we can take a vote, unless there's any further comment, is that look what happened to us with the RTZ. With the RTZ, we invoked, they invoked it on the city, and we had to come and basically put together our own RTZ overlay to minimize the damage. In my belief, that would have happened to the city in regard to impact fees, usage, signage, setbacks, heights. I think this is a county issue that we have two very competent County Commissioners, Commissioner Regalado and Commissioner Orbis, that they are dealing with this issue. It is currently going back and forth, and we haven't even seen the final, we haven't even seen the final end of what could potentially be proposed. It went before the Commission, which it already has Commission approval. The Mayor vetoed it, and it was going back before the county, and they were negotiating also final terms. So, to me, I think that we need to stay in our lane on this issue. I do not believe in moving the UDB line, but I do not believe that we should have at this current moment a vote on this issue, especially after the battle we went through in regard to the RTZ.

Commissioner Fernandez: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: You know, normally I'm 100 percent on board with not getting involved in things that are outside of our area. I do believe that this will affect us, though, indirectly. Any infringement that we continue to make towards the Everglades is going to have an impact on our weather here in South Florida, on our accessibility to water. It's been an issue for many, many years. I worked for many years on trying to stop the encroachment into the Everglades and try to restore the Everglades to what it was. Any movement of that UDB line further west will continue to impact what has always been the State of Florida and our access to water. For many years, we've been trying to restore the natural water flow. We raised the Tamiami Trail in order to allow for part of it. It's a project that just didn't have enough funding to continue all the way through the

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project. But that natural water flow was supposed to come from the north central Florida area all the way down into Florida Bay. And unfortunately, we haven't been able to get there. So, I do think that long-term, for the residents of Coral Gables, this is something that could affect us. So, I think we should take a stand on this issue just in support of future generations that will see the impacts of any encroachment into that area.

Mayor Lago: Commissioner Lara.

Commissioner Lara: No, I'm ready to vote. I'm ready to vote.

Mayor Lago: Okay.

Vice Mayor Anderson: I'm just going to add a few additional comments. As the UDB line continued to go west, our traffic increased. And the more asphalt we put over areas where we can have natural percolation and recharge of the Biscayne Aquifer, the less fresh water we're going to have recharging the Biscayne Aquifer. There's a lot of folks that don't understand that. They think that the Floridian Aquifer is also a water supply, but it's really brackish. It's below the Biscayne Aquifer. We're blessed to have it. So, I do feel strongly about this item. I, there was a previous attempt to expand the UDB in another direction on very low-lying pieces of property. I did express my opinion to our County Commissioners. The vote was changed after that. It might've been my voice, it might've been somebody else's voice, but I think collectively we need to let the County Commission know that, you know, with concern, I'd rather do, see infill. We have a lot of property that is not developed to its optimum within our city, within not, you know, within Miami-Dade County, and that there should be other locations that we're not going to be impacting the recharge of the Biscayne Aquifer. So that's why I moved on Commissioner Castro's item, as I felt very strongly about it.

Commissioner Castro: Through the Mayor.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: I truly appreciate your support, and I know exactly where you're coming from. I also want to encourage my colleagues and the people that are watching, residents, to go ahead and read the opinion piece that I posted in Community Newspaper regarding this subject in particular weeks back. So, this is fairly important to me.

Mayor Lago: Mr. Clerk, we have a motion and a second.

City Clerk Urquia: Yes, Mr. Mayor. I also have a member of the public requesting to speak on the item.

Mayor Lago: Yes.

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City Clerk Urquia: Maria Cruz.

[Note: She declined to speak]

Commissioner Lara: Yes.

Vice Mayor Anderson: Yes.

Commissioner Castro: Yes.

Commissioner Fernandez: Yes.

Mayor Lago: Yes.