



# 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.

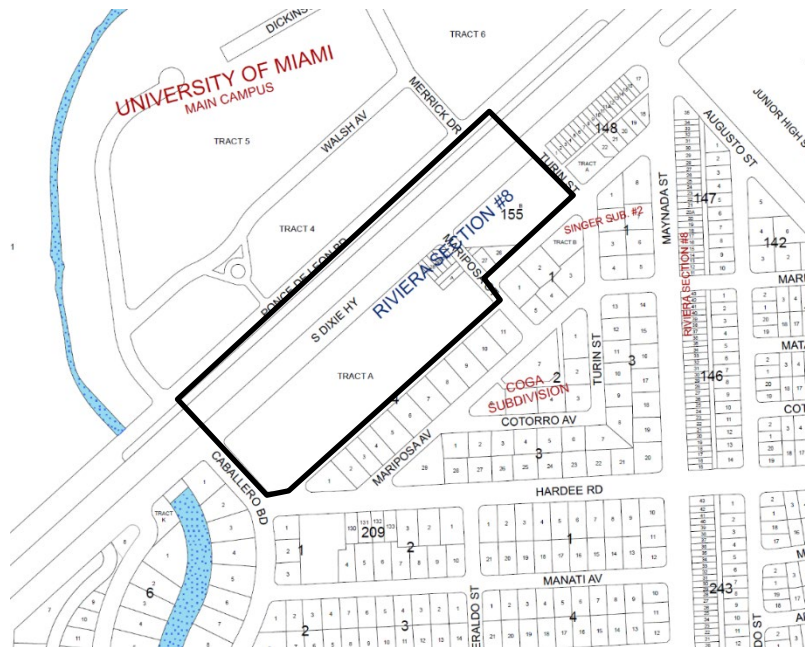
The recent County-proposed 'Coral Gables / University Station Rapid Transit Zone (RTZ) Expansion' is currently being considered solely by the County will preempt the City's Zoning regulations and processes. To be consistent with the intent and provisions of the County's Rapid Transit Zone—while also 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***



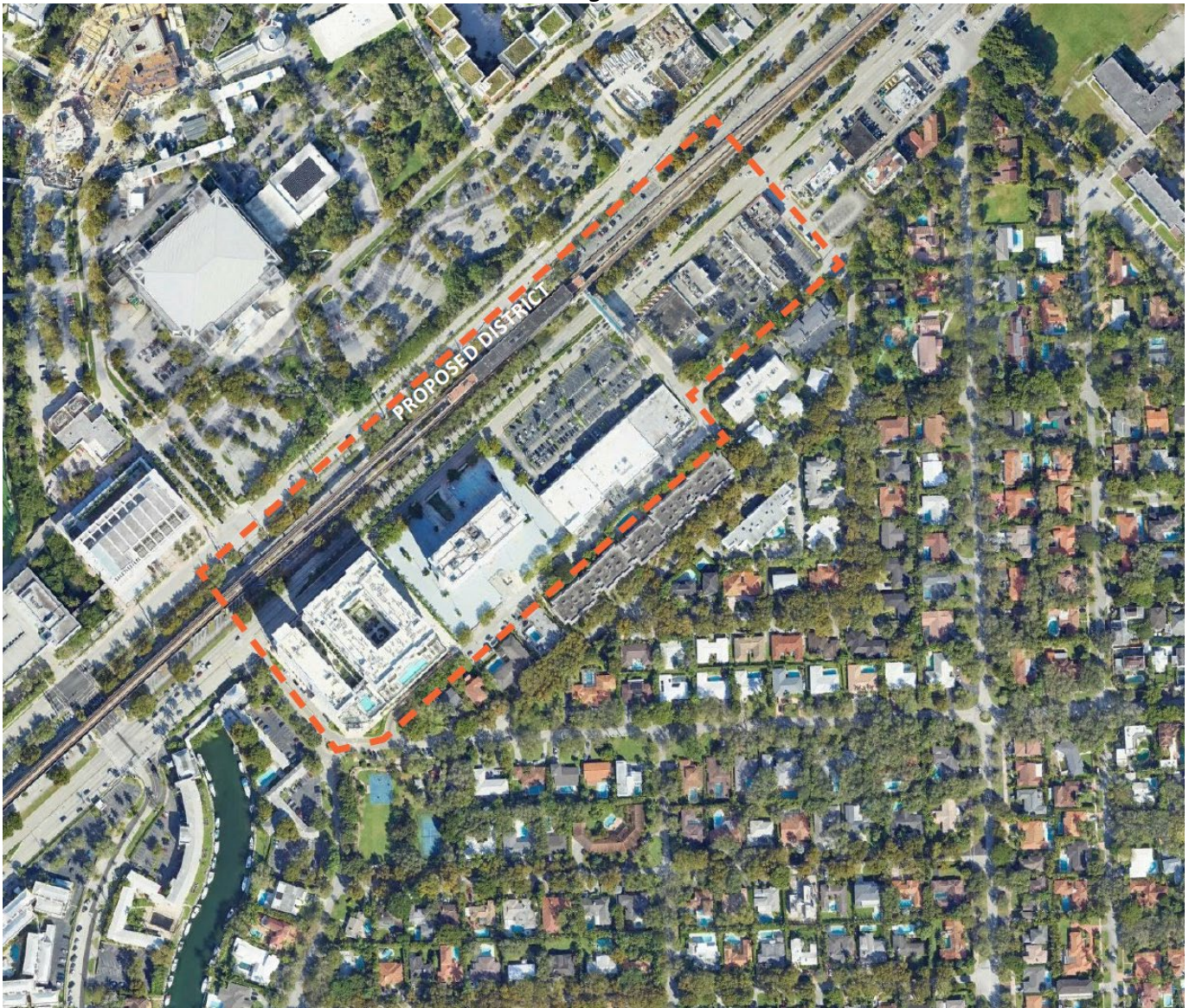
***Ariel Map***

**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

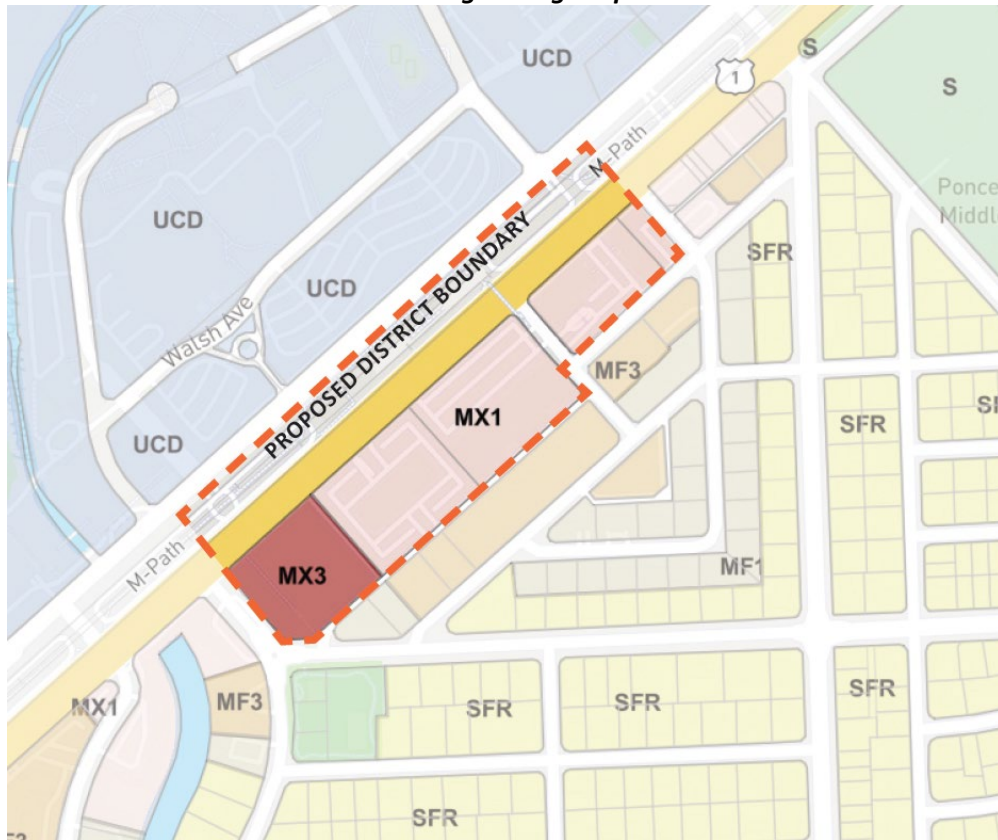


***Surrounding Land Uses***

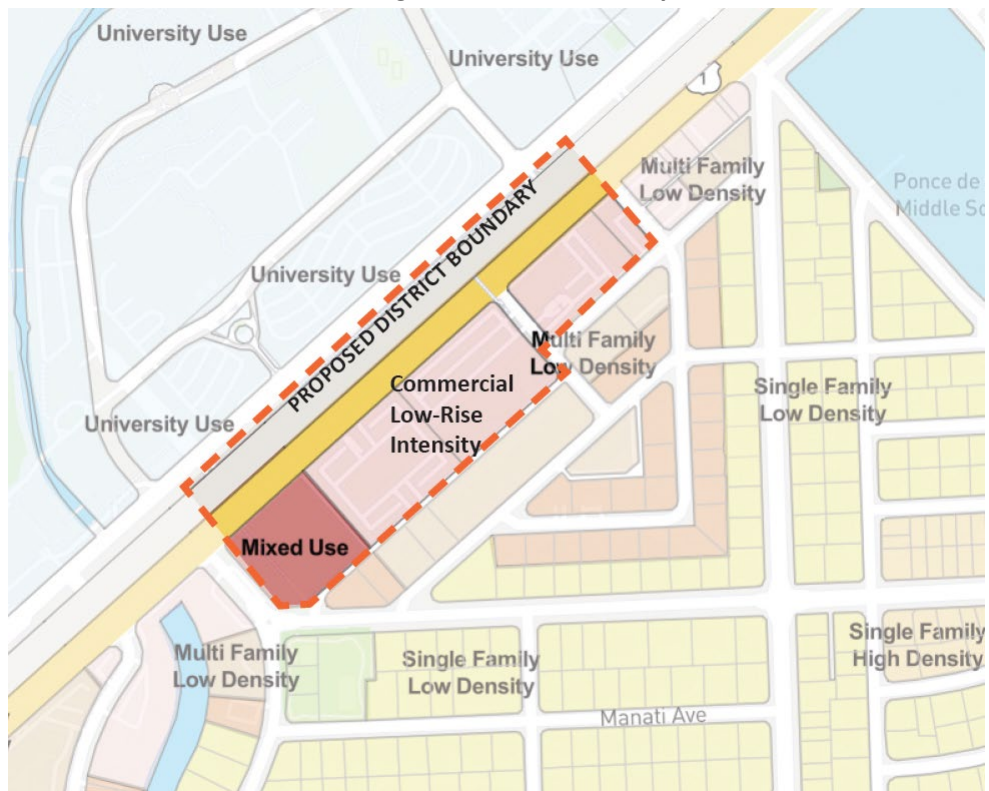
LOCATION	EXISTING LAND USES	FLUM DESIGNATIONS	ZONING DESIGNATIONS
Northwest	University of Miami	University	University Campus District (UCD)
Northeast	Mixed-Use	Commercial Low Rise Intensity;	Mixed Use 1 (MX1) District
Southwest	Gables Waterway Offices and Apartments;	Commercial Low Rise Intensity; Multi 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**

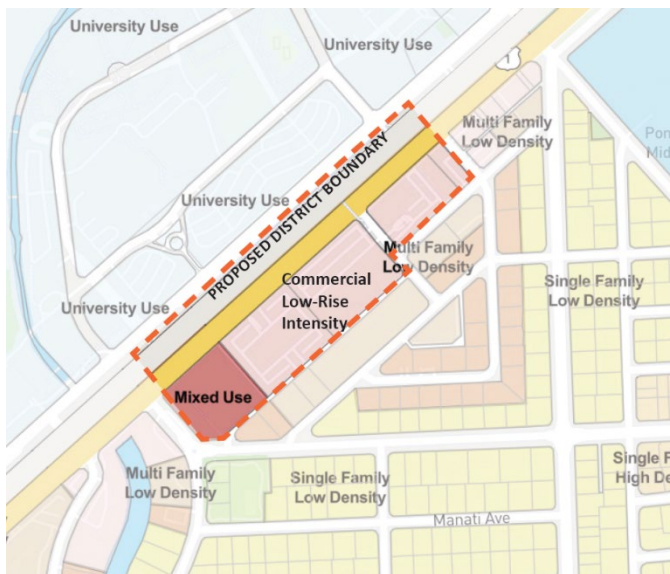


### 3. PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAP AMENDMENTS

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:

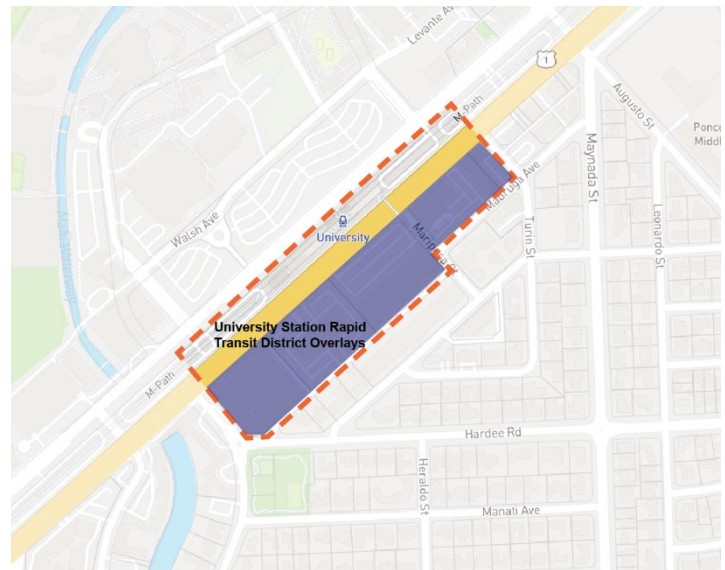
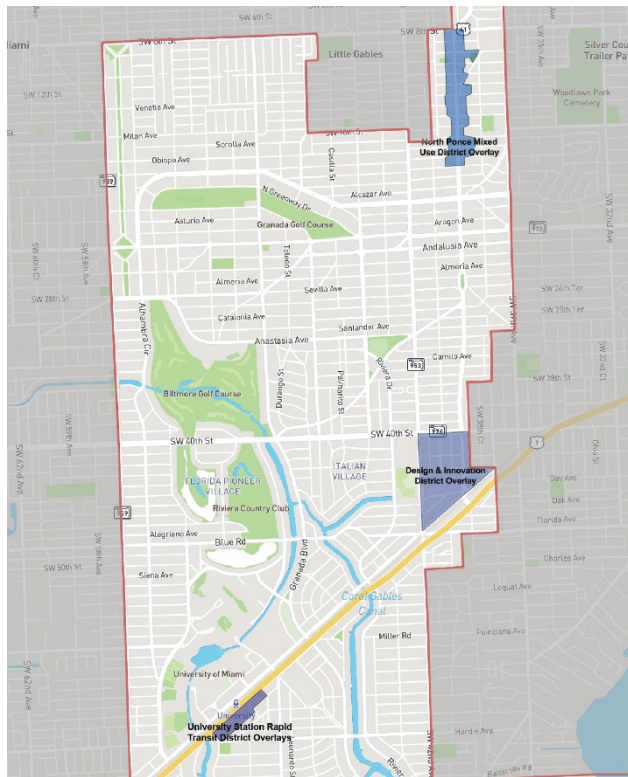
***Future Land Use Map***



***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

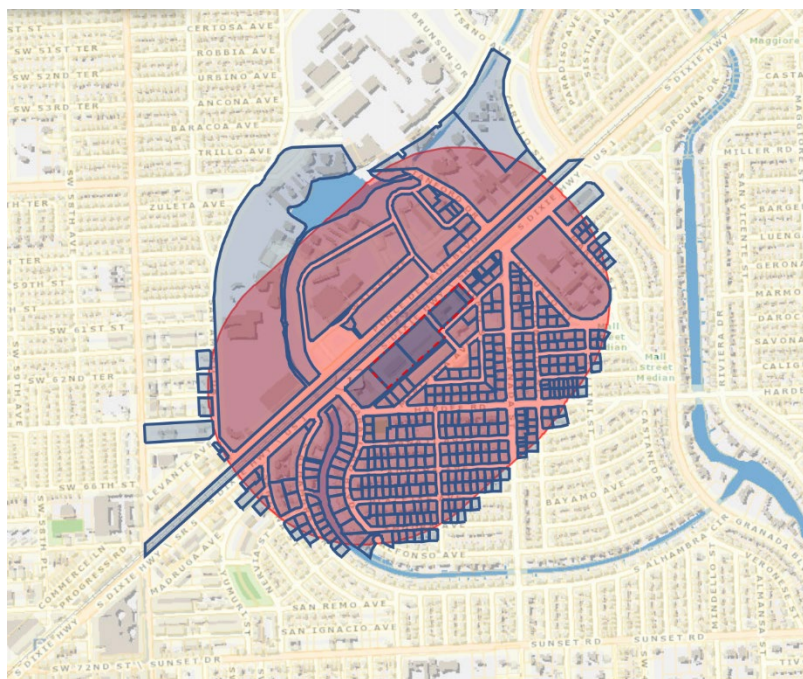
The submitted applications have undergone the following City reviews:

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

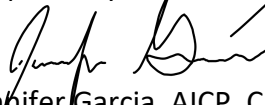
The Planning and Zoning Division recommends **approval**.

## 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