

# West Kendall Corridor

May 21, 2016

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Miami-Dade County Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources  
Development Services Division



# West Kendall Corridor

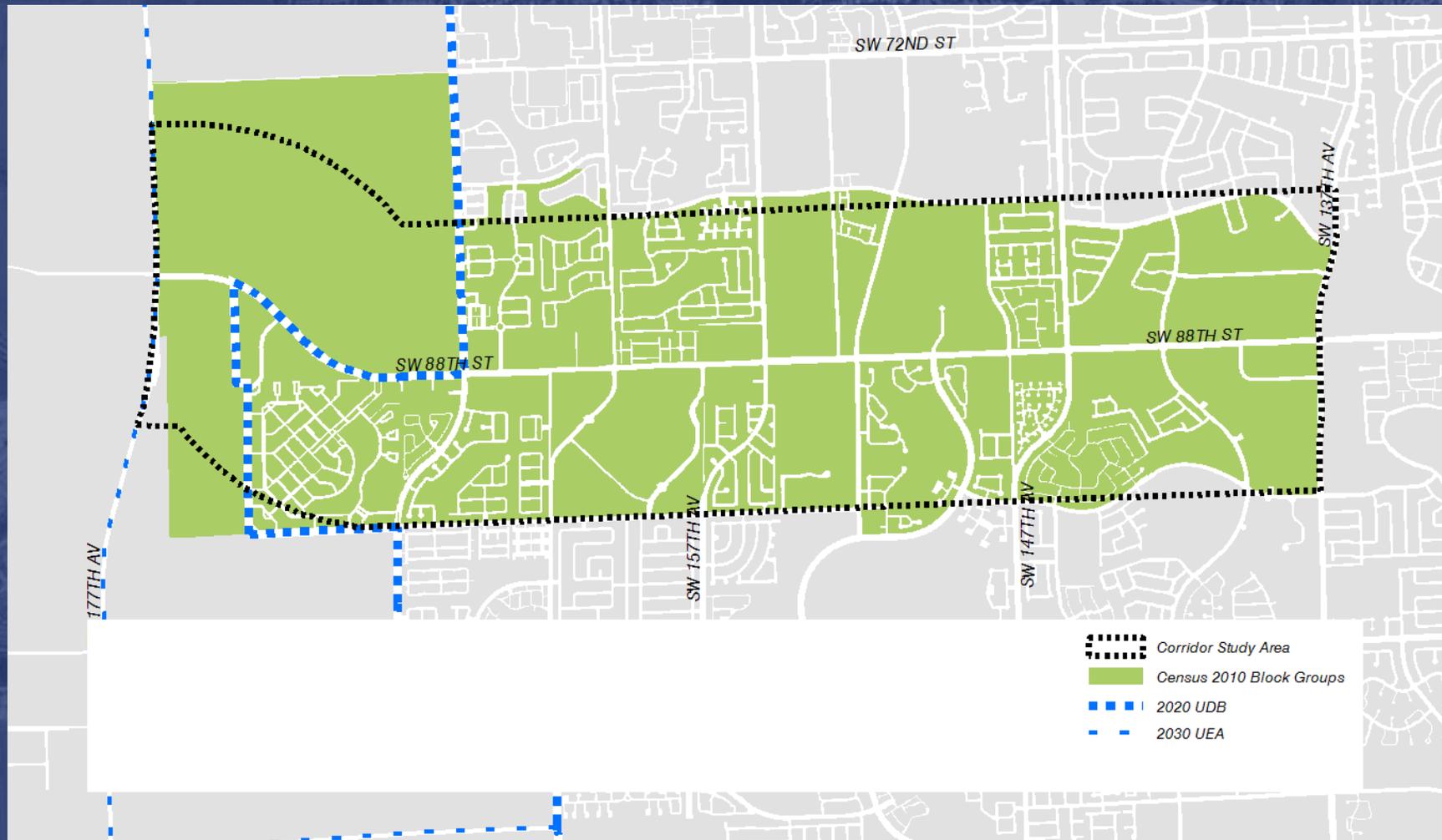
## Presentation Outline

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- Review Study Area
- Review of Citizens' Plans and Presentations
- Planning report and recommendations
- Next steps

# West Kendall Corridor

## Study Area





# West Kendall Corridor

March 1, 2014 Public Workshop



# West Kendall Corridor

March 1, 2014 Public Workshop



# West Kendall Corridor

March 1, 2014 Public Workshop



# West Kendall Corridor

March 1, 2014 Public Workshop



# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans – Consensus Elements

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- Develop mixed uses
- Provide a civic center
- Develop more employment areas
- Provide location for farmer's markets
- More open space
- More bicycle/pedestrian paths
- Improved transit service

# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans



Bike lanes with buffers from cars  
 Bike lanes connected to parks  
 More street lights – ornamental  
 Entrance markers on Kendall at 137th and Krome Avenues  
 Upscale retail and mixed uses at the Kendall Town Center with parks and civic buildings

UEA should be a buffer to Krome Avenue with a farmer's market and horse stables  
 Express buses and park and ride for 836 extension  
 Need lighting and additional activities in parks  
 Need additional spaces at park and ride facilities  
 Need additional employment opportunities

# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans



Need Shade trees and gathering places  
Need mixed uses at the Town center/Heart of the community  
Provide a native animal park north of Kendall  
Need a farmer's market and trolley service  
Have an organic institute-place to teach how to grow food  
More office/work places

Provide places for arts and culture  
Kendale Lakes Mall – old and uninviting; add more retail along Kendall for visibility; build parking garages; add more destination shopping, better tenants; add mixed uses inc. residential  
Make streets safer, increase pedestrian crossing time and have crosswalks on each corner

# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans

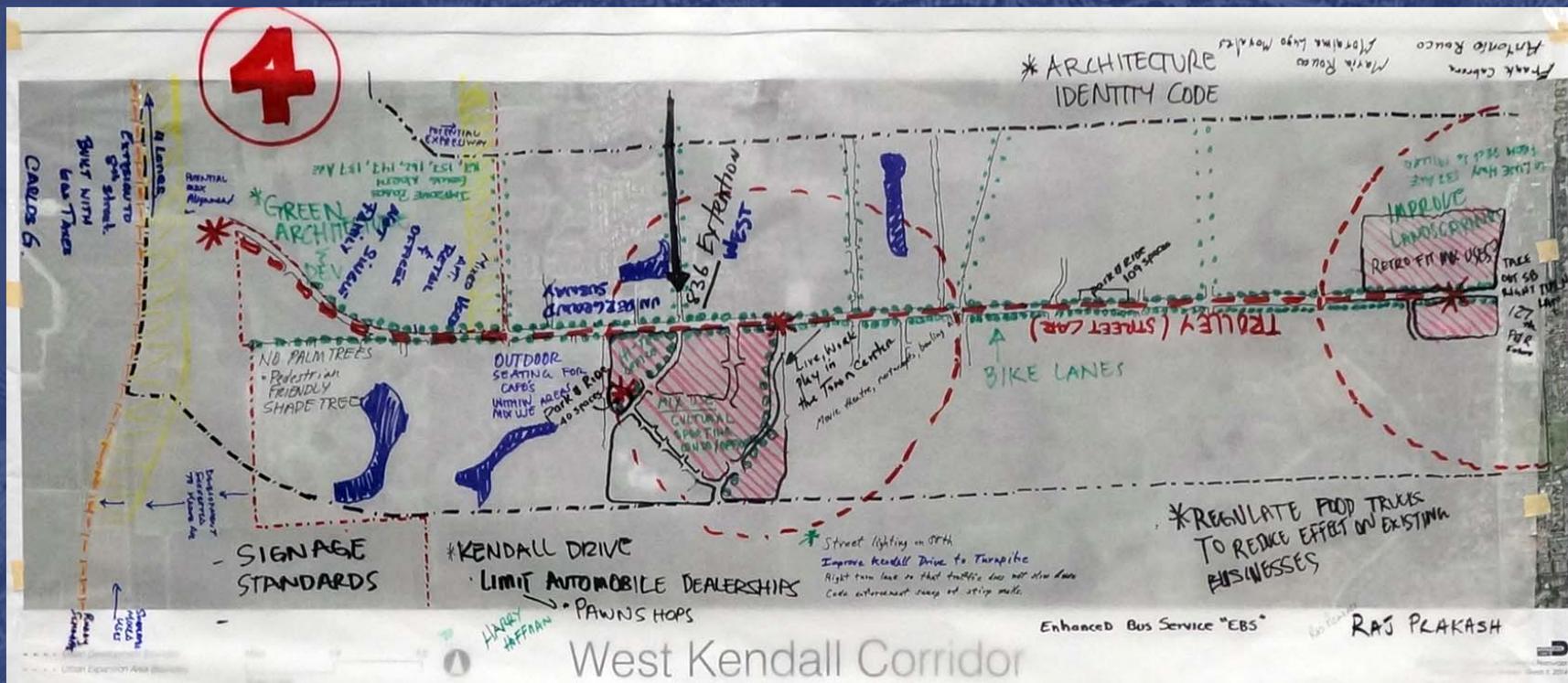


West Kendall should become a city to provide for enhanced services  
A Town Center should be developed  
Land in the Expansion Area should be used for mixed uses, open space, bike lanes and Vertical farming equal to the amount of land being developed

Business/industrial park with 10,000 jobs; various densities, mixed uses  
Increased density needed to provide for desired things  
836 Expressway extension needed  
Provide passenger service on the CSX railroad

# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans

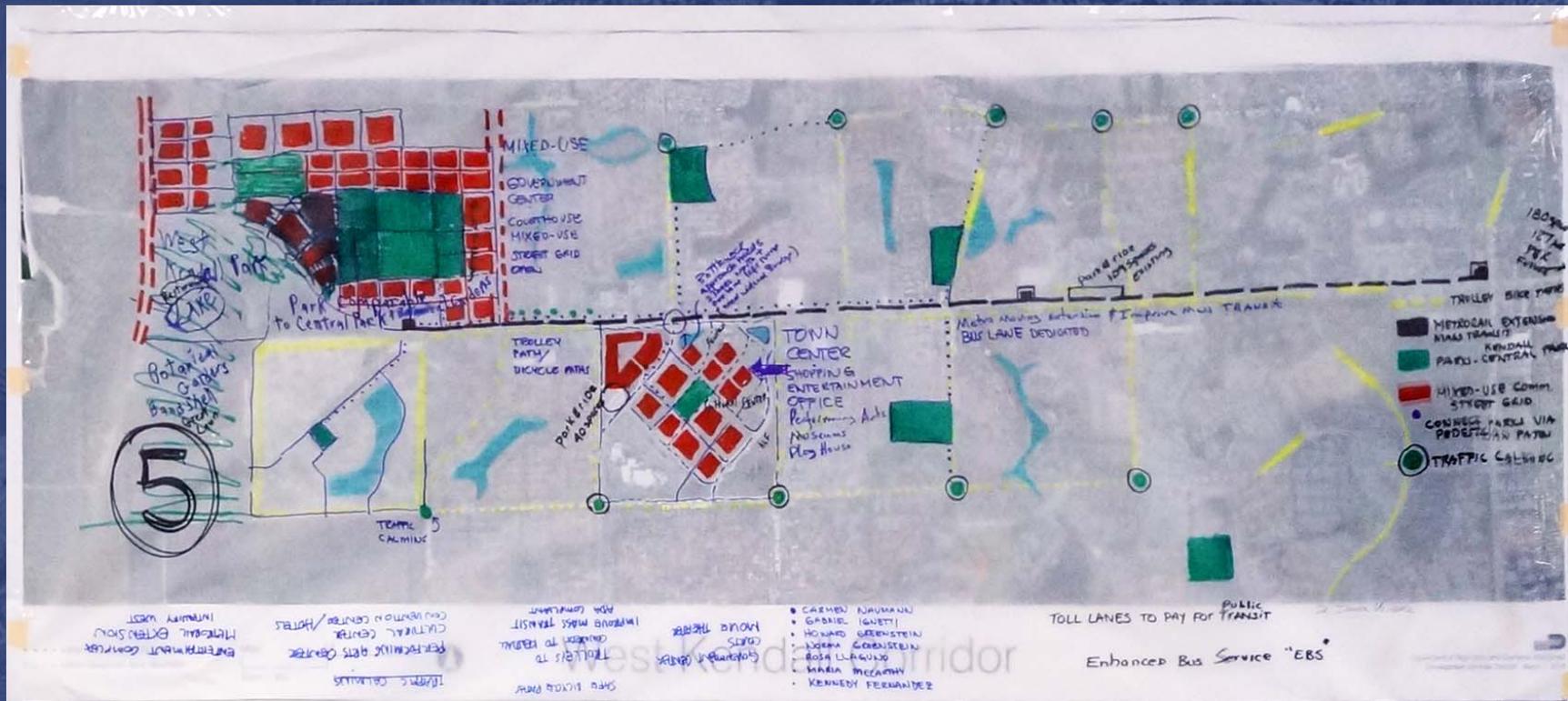


Improve Kendall Drive with shade trees  
 Improve 137th Avenue to 6 lanes from Kendall to Miller  
 Limit types of businesses such as car dealers and pawn shops  
 Widen Krome Avenue for improved access to the north  
 Implement signage and architecture standards

Need to regulate food trucks  
 Need green architecture and development  
 Provide Trolley Service  
 Live/work development in Town Center  
 Extend 836 Expressway to Kendall

# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans



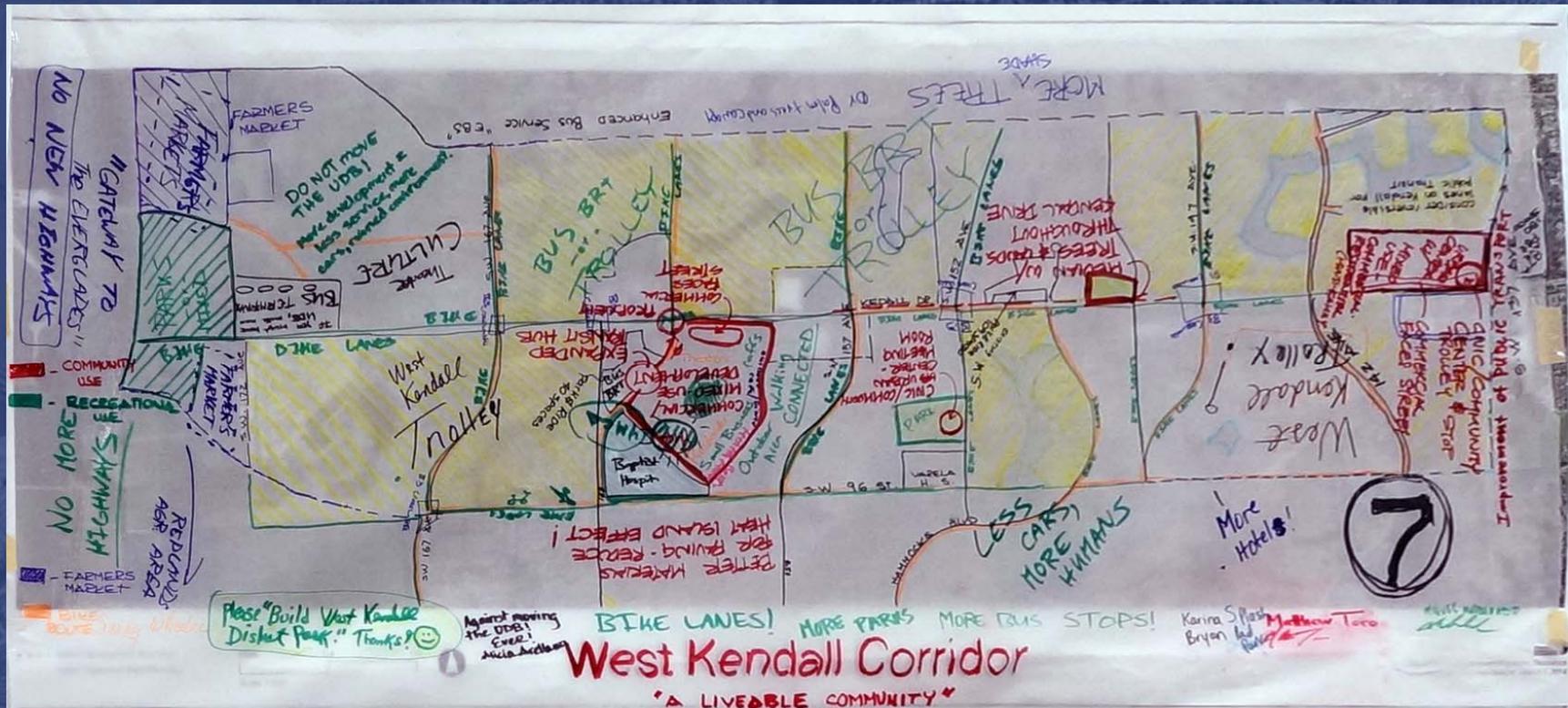
Need an upscale hotel  
 Large park and gardens in the UEA with mixed uses along Kendall  
 Kendall Town Center should have shopping, entertainment/movie theater, offices, performing arts/museum, government center/courthouse

Dedicated bus lanes/Metrorail to FIU  
 Need more traffic calming/traffic circles  
 Need a local trolley service  
 Need shaded sidewalks  
 Need more Bicycle paths



# West Kendall Corridor

## Citizens' Plans



137th and Kendall area should become mixed-use with civic facilities  
 Mixed-use development at the Kendall Town Center, walkable and attractive, provide workplaces to provide employment  
 Enhanced bus lanes along Kendall in a dedicated right of way, don't remove lanes from Kendall, provide increased frequencies

Don't move the UDB  
 Don't build more expressways  
 Provide a trolley service  
 Farmer's market in the UEA  
 Large park in in the UEA

# West Kendall Corridor

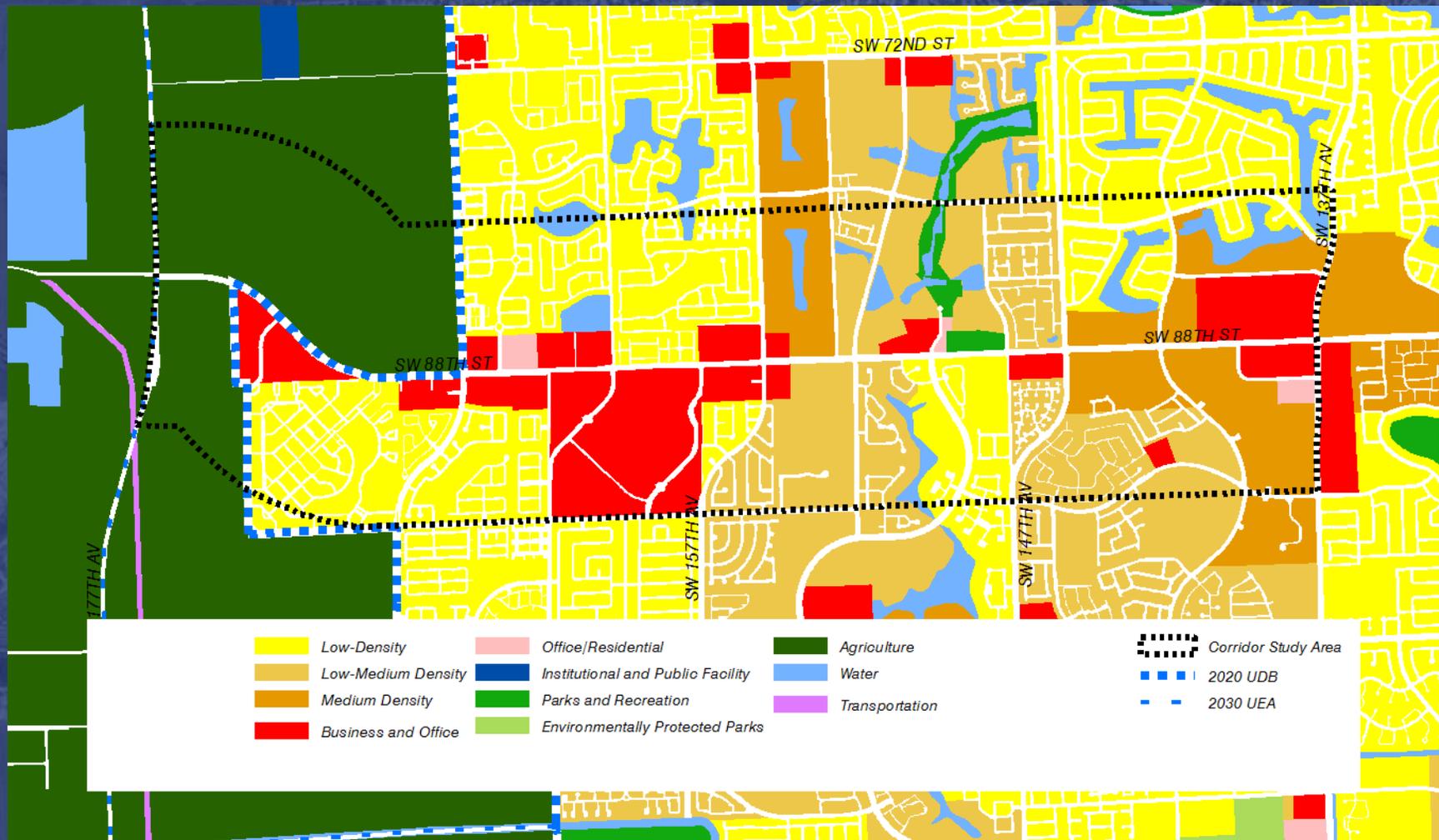
## Planning Process Goals

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- Create a vision for the future
- Transform West Kendall to a destination
- Enhance livability
- Provide transportation options
- Encourage a mix of uses

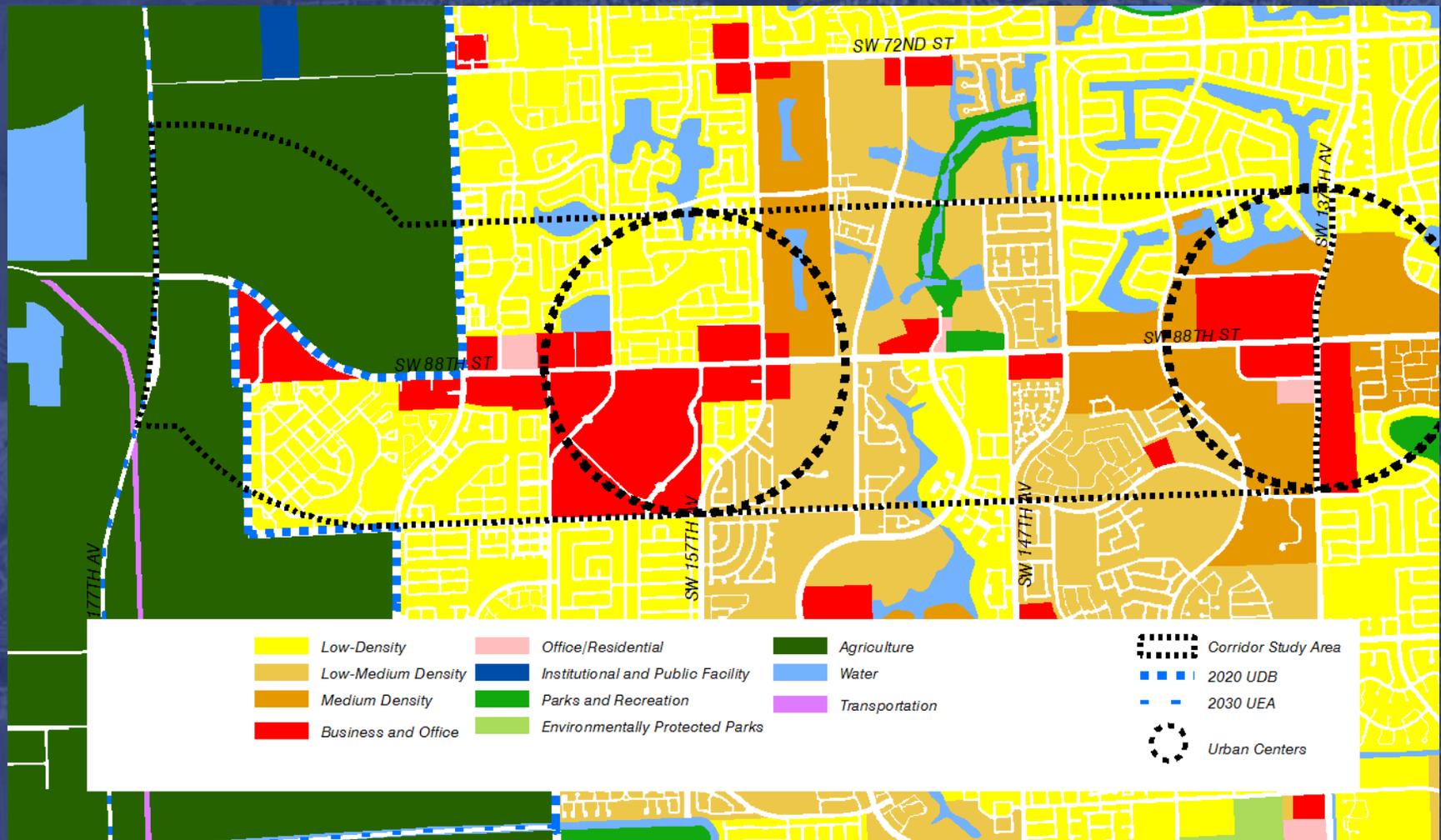
# West Kendall Corridor

## Comprehensive Plan



# West Kendall Corridor

## Comprehensive Plan



# West Kendall Corridor

## Planning Report



*Miami-Dade County  
Regulatory and Economic Resources  
Department  
Development Services Division  
May 2016*



# West Kendall Corridor Planning Report

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# Planning Process

This document was prepared consistent with the requirements of Sections 2-116.2 through 2-116.11 of the code of Miami-Dade County which establishes procedures for the development of Area Planning reports. This section of the code provides specific requirements for the initiation, scope, preparation, acceptance, and implementation of area plans.

Since the late 1990s, the charrette workshop format has been the county's preferred method to encourage public participation and formulate recommendations for area plans. The term 'charrette' is derived from the French term for 'little cart' and refers to a final intense work effort by 18th century architecture students to meet a project deadline and place their projects into this cart. The contemporary charrette process is intended to foster a similar burst of creative ideas involving the public and is a valuable tool for identifying issues to be addressed in an area plan.

This planning process began in 2013 with a resolution\* by the Board of County Commissioners directing planning staff to conduct a study for the West Kendall Corridor. The purpose of the study as established by this resolution is to provide residents and property owners an opportunity to contribute to a vision for the growth and improvement of the area and to develop recommendations to influence the form and character of future development. A series of public meetings were held at the West Kendall Regional Library to present background information on the study area and to

\* Resolution No. 377-13

identify issues of concern. Extensive effort was made so that the West Kendall community was aware of the planning process. All meetings were advertised in the Miami Herald, mailings were sent to property owners in the study area, and a website was established to provide information on meetings and distribute documents relevant to the planning process.

The public charrette workshop event took place on Saturday, March 1, 2014 at Felix Varela Senior High School. After a brief overview of the study area, workshop participants gathered into groups, each provided with an aerial photo of the study area overlaid with trace paper. With the assistance of planning staff, each group discussed community issues and drew their ideas onto the trace paper, which by the end of the afternoon, would become the 'Citizens' Plans.' After several hours of drawing and discussion, the plans were displayed and representatives from each group discussed the features of their plan. The concepts and issues identified in each presentation are outlined with each of the Citizens' Plans shown on pages 16-19. It is important to note that the recommendations presented in this area plan are only possible with the consensus provided by the participants of the charrette workshop.

In the following week, planning staff remained in the study area, working at the office of District 11 Commissioner Juan C. Zapata where the public was invited to visit with and observe staff at work on planning concepts for the West Kendall Corridor. Many community members visited during the week and provided valuable





Top, View northeast at Kendall Drive and SW 167th Avenue; left, Kendall Square TND, view north along SW 171st Avenue



Residential land use designation of the CDMP which is the most common land use designation in the urbanized portions of the county. With the continued strength of the residential market for this type of the development, the required mix of uses and additional infrastructure requirements of the TND district are not necessary to attract buyers and therefore there seems to be little incentive for developers to offer a TND product.

**The situation today**

A comment that was repeatedly expressed by the public during the planning process was that “the West Kendall area was not planned.” In reality, the opposite is true: West Kendall was planned to be exactly what it is today, however the development that resulted from 1960s and 1970s era-planning is poorly suited to the lifestyles and desires of West Kendall’s current residents. This is clearly illustrated by the ‘Citizens Plans’ shown on the following pages where many of the needs identified were never envisioned by the GLUMP or CDMP at the time of the majority of West Kendall’s development.

The challenge for now and the future is how to adapt the existing development pattern to one that serves these changing circumstances. The character of existing development in West Kendall makes this particularly difficult, due mainly to the fragmented nature of the various development tracts as described above. Unlike older areas of the county that have experienced significant transformation over time, West Kendall lacks a regular grid and lot pattern, making incremental redevelopment impractical. The widespread use of development covenants and condominium associations further restrict the ability of changes in land uses

# West Kendall Corridor Study Area

to occur.

With these constraints, this area plan focuses mainly on the areas most able or likely to change in the future. These areas include commercial centers along Kendall and vacant land both within the existing urbanized areas and in the Urban Expansion Area. These areas are discussed in more detail in the Planning Recommendations section of this report.

### Existing land use

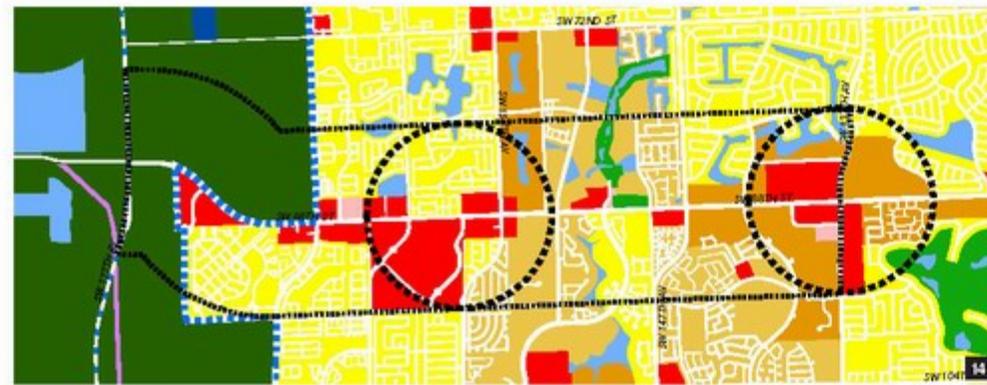
The Planning Research section of the Regulatory and Economic Resources Department has an ongoing program of identifying existing land uses throughout the county. A map of the land uses identified in the study area is shown in Figure 13 on page 9. Of the generalized categories shown in the map, single-family uses are the most prevalent, occupying 27.4 percent of the study area. Areas for streets and lakes take up 16.7 and 6.9 percent of the study area, respectively. 7.6 percent of the study area is identified as privately owned vacant land, most of which is located at the Kendall Town Center property adjacent to the West Kendall Baptist Hospital. Outside the Urban Development Boundary the study area is almost entirely occupied by agricultural uses.

### Comprehensive plan

Miami-Dade County is required by state statute to maintain a comprehensive plan to manage growth and development consistent with state and regional comprehensive plans. The county's Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) includes a Land Use Plan map that designates where development of various uses and intensities is permitted. The future land use designations in the study area are illustrated in Figure 14 on page 9.



Map, Existing Land Use



Map, CDMP Land Use Designations

Map, 2013 Roadway Level of Service



Map, Transit Services



routes. All these except the 137 are east-west routes that connect to Metrorail. There is a 40 space park-and-ride lot and bus terminal located on 162nd Avenue adjacent to West Kendall Baptist Hospital. A leased 109 space park-and-ride lot is located at the Miami Baptist Church property on the north side of Kendall Drive at 150th Avenue. In November 2013, the 88 and 104 routes began operating with improved service in the study area.

In the FY2015-2024 Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Miami-Dade Transit, there are two programmed transit improvements that will occur in the study area. In 2023 the 288 'Enhanced' bus service is to begin operating. Also in 2023, the current route 288 will be improved with enhanced stations, queue jump and by-pass lanes, transit signal priority, and real-time bus arrival information with electronic signs within bus stations. The other improvement is a 140-space dedicated park-and-ride facility on the north side of Kendall Drive at Southwest 150th Avenue which is scheduled to be completed by 2016. This facility will provide bus bays and shelters so that transit patrons will not have to cross Kendall Drive to board eastbound buses.

**Transportation planning**

The Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is responsible for coordinating transportation improvements in the county through the 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 25-year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). These plans prioritize transportation projects over their time horizons through a category system.

The MPO has commissioned many studies over the years that analyze the potential ad-

Map, Existing Parks, Schools, Bike lanes



Kendall Green Park north of Kendall Drive between SW 147th and 152nd Avenues



area provide amenities such as tennis courts, baseball fields, jogging and walking trails, shelters and picnic areas. Many of the parks are located adjacent to schools, allowing students to share facilities. The West Kendall District park at Southwest 157th Avenue between Southwest 112th and 120th Avenues will be a significant amenity to the area once it is completed. This 160-acre park will provide sports fields and other facilities in addition to the dog park that has already been constructed.

There are many public schools located in and around the study area. Elementary schools include Kendale Lakes, Dante B. Fascell, Oliver Hoover, Christina M. Eve, Claude Pepper, and Calusa. The middle and high schools in the area are Hammocks Middle and Felix Varela Senior High. There are two libraries serving the area, West End Regional Library, located in the Hammocks Plaza shopping center, and the Kendale Lakes branch library, located at Kendall Drive and Southwest 152nd Avenue.

Except for Kendall Drive west of Southwest 162nd Avenue, public streets in the area are provided with sidewalks. Private drives within individual developments typically do not have sidewalks. Bicycle lanes in the area are located along Southwest 142nd Avenue north of Kendall Drive, along Southwest 84th Street between Southwest 137th and 142nd Avenues, along Southwest 158th and 162nd Avenues between Kendall Drive and Southwest 96th Street, and along Southwest 96th Street from Southwest 152nd to 162nd Avenues, and the 'Main Street' adjoining West Kendall Baptist Hospital.

# Citizens' Plans

The drawings on the following pages, the 'Citizens' Plans,' were created on March 1, 2014 during the public design workshop by groups of six to ten residents, property owners, and others interested in the West Kendall area. The bulleted items next to each of the plans are from the concepts illustrated on the plan drawings and the presentations made by participants in each group.

One purpose of these plans are to identify areas of consensus among participants in the planning process. In the West Kendall Corridor, the primary areas of consensus include: providing additional employment opportunities; mixed use development at the Kendall Town Center and other nodes along Kendall Drive; providing improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and shade trees; development of a large park in the Urban Expansion Area (UEA); limiting additional single-family development in the UEA; providing enhanced public transit service, including circulator/trolley service and dedicated bus lanes along Kendall Drive; and areas for farmers' markets and other community events.

In the following section, these specific concerns within the study area are analyzed and specific recommendations with design solutions provided for their improvement.

## Group 1



- Provide wide sidewalks with shade trees
- Need Bike lanes with buffers from cars
- Bike lanes should be connected to parks
- More ornamental street lights
- Entrance markers on Kendall at 137th and Krome Avenues
- Upscale retail and mixed uses at the Kendall Town Center with parks and civic buildings
- UEA should be a buffer to Krome Avenue with a farmer's market and horse stables
- Express buses and park and ride for 836 extension are needed
- Need lighting and additional activities in parks
- Need additional spaces at park and ride facilities
- Need additional employment opportunities

## Group 2



- Need shade trees and gathering places
- Need mixed uses at the Town center/Heart of the community
- Provide a native animal park north of Kendall
- Need a farmer's market and trolley service
- Have an organic institute-place to teach how to grow food
- More office and work places
- Provide places for arts and culture; large park in the UEA
- Kendale Lakes Mall is old and uninviting; add more retail along Kendall for visibility; build parking garages; add more destination shopping, better tenants; add mixed uses including residential
- Make streets safer, increase pedestrian crossing time and have crosswalks on each corner

### Group 5



26

- Need an upscale hotel
- Large park and gardens in the UEA with mixed uses along Kendall
- Kendall Town Center should have shopping, entertainment/movie theater, offices, performing arts/museum, government center/ courthouse
- Dedicated bus lanes/Metrorail to FIU
- Need more traffic calming/traffic circles
- Need a local trolley service
- Need shaded sidewalks
- Need more Bicycle paths
- The UEA should be developed with an open street grid, mixed uses, and civic uses

### Group 6



27

- Need more parks
- Provide more shopping areas
- Need bicycle trails
- Build a city hall
- Need a hotel
- Provide a farmers' market

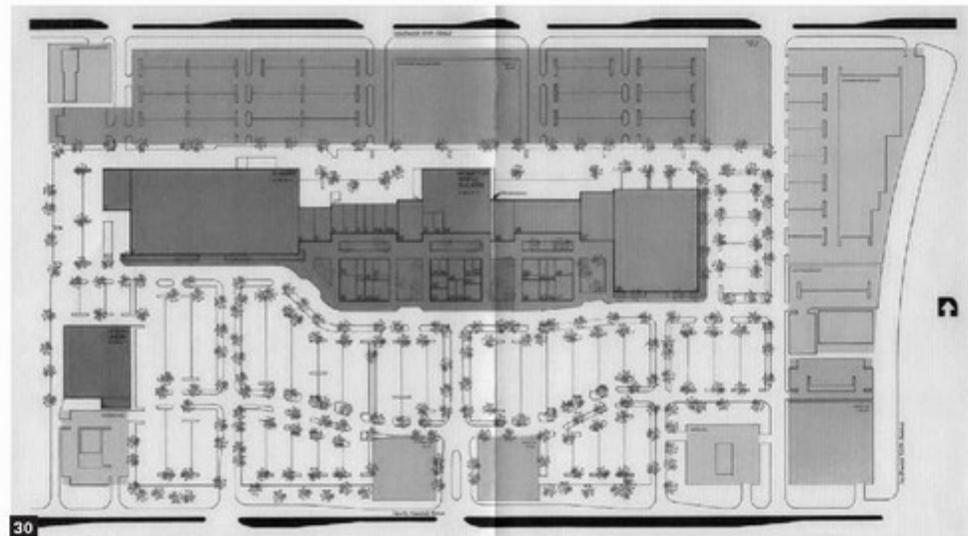
# Planning Recommendations

The planning recommendations in this section are intended to illustrate potential future development and public facilities in the West Kendall Corridor. These recommendations are derived mainly from the public input received during the planning process as well as county policies for development already in place. Some of these may require changes in policy or regulation, zoning or master plan changes, or public hearings; suggested policy changes are noted along with each recommendation. Recommendations for development or redevelopment on private property are not intended to limit future building activity to what is shown here, but to illustrate the implementation of existing or proposed planning policies and the needs identified through the planning process. Potential means for the realization of these recommendations are further discussed in the Implementation section of this report. A summary of recommendations for the areas of interest are listed in the shaded box following each heading.

## Kendale Lakes Plaza Area

- *Redevelopment of older shopping centers in this area should occur consistent with the CDMP standards for Urban Centers*

The 40-acre shopping center at the northwest corner of Kendall Drive and Southwest 137th Avenue was the first major shopping area built in the West Kendall area. This center occupies the majority of the commercial portion of the large Kendale Lakes development that began construction in the late 1960s. Built in



Top, Kendale Lakes Mall, 1980 photo; left 1978 site plan



Top, Kendale Lakes Plaza, 2014 aerial photo; right, parking lot infill concept

the late 1970s, it was initially known as Kendale Lakes Mall and anchored by a K-Mart, a three-screen Wometco theater, and a Grand Union supermarket. In front of the main retail building were three smaller retail buildings which together created an outdoor pedestrian mall. Freestanding concrete canopies linked the buildings together and provided weather protection to shoppers. In the 1990s, following changes in retail tenants and competition from newer shopping centers in the area, the buildings that formed the 'mall' were demolished, the center was renamed and became a more typical strip center. Only the buildings now occupied by K-Mart, Marshalls, and FedEx Office remain from the original mall. Over time, additional retail buildings have been built in the center's parking lot as well as along Southwest 137th Court. North of the main retail strip building and south of Southwest 84th Street are two self-storage facilities.

This center and the surrounding shopping areas across Kendall Drive and Southwest 137th Avenues are within a designated Community Urban Center. The county's Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) has specific standards for uses, intensity, and physical character of Urban Centers. At the time the Kendale Lakes Mall was built, these Urban Centers were called 'Activity Centers' and had only general guidelines for their development with the expectation that these areas would become the location of suburban-style shopping centers or malls. In 1996 the CDMP was amended to rename the Activity Centers to Ur-

# Planning Recommendations

ban Centers and to provide specific standards for uses, buildings, streets and public spaces, and parking within these centers. These standards describe the development of places with a distinctly urban and pedestrian-oriented character where a street and block network is lined with buildings of a scale and architecture that recalls many of the older neighborhoods in the county. Many of these designated Urban Centers are located adjacent to Metro-rail, Busway, and Tri-Rail stations to encourage development in areas with a high level of transit service. In the case of the centers in West Kendall, intensified development in these areas can serve as an impetus for additional transit infrastructure and services.

The illustrations in figures 32 through 34 show the phased redevelopment of the Kendale Lakes Plaza in a manner consistent with the CDMP standards for Urban Centers. In figure 32, the parking areas between Kendall Drive and the existing retail buildings are shown in-filled with new commercial and mixed-use buildings and where parking aisles become streets that form a pedestrian-oriented block network. Within the interior of these blocks surface parking areas may become parking garages as additional development occurs. Over time, as retail tenants change, the existing shopping center buildings can be redeveloped to extend this block network toward Southwest 84th Street to create a connection to the residential areas to the north. The existing one-story self-storage complexes along Southwest 84th Street could be replaced by multi-story storage buildings and mixed-use or residential buildings that would be more compatible with existing residential development to the north and west. This development concept accom-



Top and left, Kendale Lakes Mall redevelopment concepts

# Planning Recommendations

## Streets

- Provide bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, or additional landscaping along Kendall Drive
- Provide on-street parking along Southwest 152th Avenue north of Kendall Drive
- Provide on-street parking along Southwest 149th Avenue south of Kendall Drive
- Provide bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, and additional landscaping on four-lane streets with excess capacity

Because of the tract-type development pattern in the study area, most public streets are either section-line or half-section line roadways; there are relatively few public local streets. Kendall Drive, Krome Avenue, and Southwest 137th Avenue south of Kendall Drive are state roads maintained by the Florida Department of Transportation, all other public streets are maintained by the county. Aside from Kendall Drive, which was improved with four lanes in the 1960s, other streets were improved or constructed as adjoining development occurred. Kendall Drive, Hammocks Boulevard, and Southwest 157th and 167th Avenues have 110-foot wide right-of-ways; other section line or half-section line roadways have right-of-ways between 70 and 100 feet. Public local streets typically have a right-of-way of 50 feet.

Kendall Drive east of Southwest 162nd Avenue has six travel lanes, sidewalks, curbs, and a median landscaped with grass and a variety of palms. Although it has an exceptionally wide right-of-way for a six-lane roadway, this additional area seems to have been given mainly to wide travel lanes; for comparison, Bird Road between the Palmetto Expressway and Southwest 117th Avenue is a six-lane roadway with a



Top, SW 149th Avenue existing condition; left, photo illustration with on-street parking and additional landscaping



Top, SW 162nd Avenue existing condition; right, photo illustration with landscaped median and bicycle lanes

similar design as Kendall Drive but is located within a 100 foot right-of-way. This additional ten feet of right-of-way should be further studied to determine how it could be used for bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, or additional landscaping.

In certain areas, the use of the right-of way for parking has become problematic because the streets were not designed to accommodate parked vehicles. Along Southwest 149th Avenue, adjacent to the Kendall 147 Plaza shopping center, cars and delivery trucks park in the swale areas between the street and sidewalks; the grass that was once planted there is now dirt and rocks. The installation of numerous 'No Parking' signs in this area has been mostly ineffective at deterring this practice. Since the demand exists for on-street parking, a more effective strategy would be to provide a right-of-way improved with dedicated parking areas. The images on page 25 show how on-street parking and additional landscaping would improve the function and appearance of this street. A similar condition exists along the east side of Southwest 152nd Avenue south of Southwest 80th Street; the swale area in many parts is now dirt and rocks due to its use as a parking lane. Constructing curbs and parking lanes along with planting additional landscaping would result in the improved appearance and function of this street. In the future, streets should be constructed with on-street parking in areas having commercial and multi-family uses, as these are where parking in the right-of-way tends to occur.

Streets such as Southwest 96th Street and Southwest 162nd Avenue are half-section roads with four lanes that lack any landscap-

# Planning Recommendations

ing within the right-of-way. This is because the median area is used for left turn lanes or is merely striped asphalt. Due to the discontinuous street grid in West Kendall, many of these half-section roadways carry relatively little traffic in relation to their capacity; these streets should be further analyzed for a 'road diet.' This term is typically used when a four-lane roadway without left-turn lanes is redesigned with two through travel lanes and left-turn lanes at intersections. In the case of 96th Street or 162nd Avenue, the removal of two travel lanes would provide space for additional landscaping, bicycle lanes, or wider sidewalks. A similar treatment was implemented for Southwest 208th Street between Southwest 87th and 92nd Avenues, which was constructed in 2004 with four lanes, a striped median, and turn lanes. In 2010 two travel lanes were removed and bicycle lanes, a parking lane, and a raised landscaped median were added. The images on page 26 illustrate how Southwest 162nd Avenue could appear if raised medians, bicycle lanes and landscape strips adjacent to the sidewalks were constructed and shade trees were planted. Traffic studies should be conducted to determine whether a 'road diet' would be appropriate for these and similar streets in the study area.

## Kendall Town Center Area

- *Future development approvals or amendments to the Kendall Town Center DRI should be consistent with the CDMP standards for Urban Centers*

The quarter-square mile between Kendall Drive and Southwest 96th Street from Southwest 157th to 162nd Avenues was platted in 1926 as the 'Greater Miami Heights' subdivi-



Top, Aerial view to the north of the Kendall Town Center site with West Kendall Baptist Hospital under construction; left, SW 162nd Avenue and Kendall Drive, existing view to the south

# Planning Recommendations

sion. This subdivision was laid out with 25-foot wide building lots in the typical Miami street grid with blocks 660 feet long. A broad boulevard ran north to south dividing the subdivision in half. This area remained undeveloped and was planted with row crops until the mid-2000s. In 2001 this area was redesignated from 'Low-Density Residential' to the 'Business and Office' future land use category as part of a CDMP Development of Regional Impact (DRI) application. The development plan approved at a subsequent zoning hearing was that of an open-air regional mall with five department store anchors, a movie theater, assisted living facility, medical offices, hotel, transit terminal, and a 50,000 square-foot community center. This was never built and in 2004 a new development plan was approved that included a hospital and an open-air shopping center with one department store anchor. The other uses remained but were modified in their placement. Consistent with the DRI phasing requirements, the roadway improvements for Southwest 159th and 162nd Avenues and the transit terminal were built along with the West Kendall Baptist Hospital as the first phase of development. Recently, the assisted living facility has been constructed and occupies a four-story building on the east side of Southwest 158th Avenue.

The four remaining undeveloped tracts are each owned by different entities; Baptist Hospital owns the tract to the east of the existing hospital buildings, Centre At Kendall Town Center and Sunflower Hospitality own the tracts west of Southwest 162nd Avenue, and West Kendall Holdings, a subsidiary of the Howard Hughes Corporation, owns the largest remaining tract that was to be the site of



*Top, Kendall Town Center development concept view to the southwest, Kendall Drive is in the foreground; left, Kendall Town Center development concept, view along Kendall Drive to the west*

# Planning Recommendations

terior walkways in a traditional enclosed mall. The primary use along the remaining streets, including Kendall Drive and Southwest 158th and 162nd Avenues, are surface parking lots as would be typical for a suburban mall or strip center. As part of the original CDM P application a covenant was recorded which includes guidelines that require “a high quality, unified development design.” The contents of these guidelines are exceedingly general and would not preclude even the most typical type of strip shopping center from being developed.

One of the most strongly expressed needs identified through the planning process was that of a ‘town center’ for West Kendall. Not surprisingly, the Kendall Town Center property was seen as an ideal location for such a center. Although the approved retail center is called a ‘town center,’ the desire of the community is for something more than simply a shopping center. Some of the uses desired for this area are retail, offices, residential, restaurants, movie theaters, and open spaces. Many of these are already part of the approved development plan for this property, however its design as an inward-facing ‘lifestyle center’ lacks the elements of a town center as envisioned by the residents of West Kendall. Many of these elements, such as mixed uses, pedestrian-oriented streets, and open spaces are specifically addressed in the standards for Urban Centers, as described above. To demonstrate how the development of the Kendall Town Center property can be more consistent with the community’s desires as well as the county’s planning policies, an alternative development concept is illustrated on pages 28 through 32.

This overall concept is shown in the aerial



*Kendall Town Center development concept view to the south from above Kendall Drive*

view on page 28. Retail and entertainment uses are located along Kendall Drive and on both sides of a linear open space that extends diagonally between Southwest 158th and 162nd Avenues. Mixed-use residential, retail and office buildings are located to the south and adjacent to the hospital. A street grid is used to organize the various buildings and helps contrib-

ute to a walkable block system. Buildings that fill each block and provide visual interest to pedestrians along the sidewalk edge are a key element for walkability, as are wide sidewalks and shade. Visual interest is a difficult element to quantify but is necessary to encourage and sustain pedestrian activity. Walking becomes unpleasant when the pedestrian environment

# Planning Recommendations

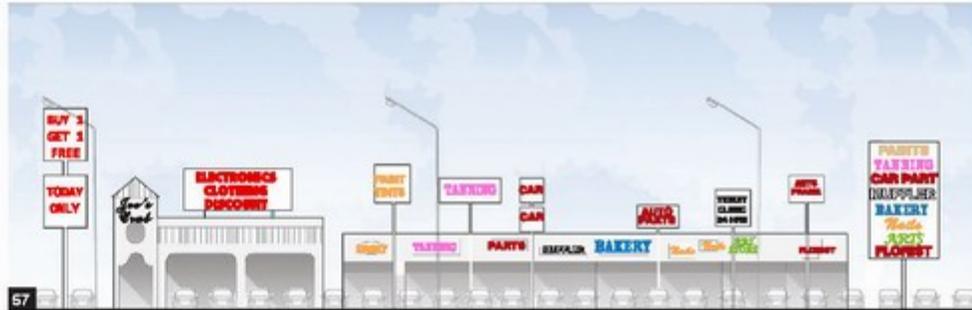
are those on a building and detached are those standing free on a property. Attached signs are limited in size by a percentage of wall area; detached signs are limited in size and number by the length and number of street frontages. The color, scale, placement, and visual quality of signs are not regulated. For shopping centers without strict leasing standards that regulate signage this can result in an unattractive jumble of signs with varying colors, placement, and illumination.

In the West Kendall area, one of the most unfortunate examples of this is the shopping center on the south side of Kendall Drive between Southwest 117th Avenue and the Turnpike. The use of various sign types and illumination methods and their haphazard arrangement across the building façade result in an unattractive and cluttered appearance. Detached signs for shopping centers that identify multiple tenants can also exhibit the same issues; in many cases, smaller tenants are listed within a grid that may have had a uniform type and color when the sign was initially installed. As tenants change and signage is replaced, often the original consistency is lost resulting in more visual clutter. With additional unpermitted temporary signs, such as banners, portable signs, and flags, many commercial areas exhibit a visual cacophony that can detract from the apparent quality of a community. This effect is compounded in suburban areas where the primary spatial experience is of open space and greenery so signage tends to be an intrusive element in the landscape; in urban areas where buildings are larger and built closer to streets, extensive signage in a variety of colors, types and sizes is often unobjectionable and seen simply as a natural element of the urban



Top, signage at Kendall lakes plaza; far left and left, signage along Kendall Drive

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Top and middle, illustration of signage alternatives; right and far right, signage in Coral Springs

streetscape.

In suburban areas such as West Kendall, since the existing signage regulations do not address these issues, additional zoning requirements could be implemented to do so. Many other municipalities have more extensive signage standards that are intended to control or improve the visual quality of signs. For example, the city of Coral Springs in Broward County has extensive requirements for the consistency of wall and detached signs in shopping areas. Coral Springs requires uniformity of color, illumination and placement for sign on shopping center buildings; detached signs are limited in height and permit only six individual tenants to be shown. The before-and-after illustrations on page 36 demonstrate the effect that more extensive signage standards would have on a typical shopping center. In contrast, for areas developed as Urban Centers, larger and more varied signs could be appropriate and more restrictive sign standards may not be necessary.

#### Urban Expansion Area

- Standards should be implemented that require a development pattern that includes: mixed uses; a street grid; right-of-ways with adequate space for bicycle and parking lanes, landscaping in medians and at the street side, and wide sidewalks; interconnected lakes and canals surrounded by continuous open spaces that provide walking and bicycle paths and recreation areas

Since the Urban Development Boundary (UDB) was established in 1983, it has successfully controlled the extent of urban development in the county and preserved land

# Planning Recommendations

for agriculture, aquifer recharge, wetlands, and conservation. The CDMP has extensive policies regarding where the UDB should and should not be expanded and what circumstances warrant an expansion. The depletion of vacant, developable land in the urbanized portion of the county is one of the primary causes that would justify an expansion. Since land is a finite resource and suitable agriculture and conservation areas are limited, efficiently utilizing land already inside the UDB is the first option to accommodate future development. One of the purposes of the CDMP-designated Urban Centers is to require development in these areas to have a minimum density and intensity that is much higher than what is common throughout the county to more efficiently use already-urbanized land.

From a countywide perspective, CDMP policies regarding the expansion of the UDB have been effective in directing new urban development to areas adjacent to existing developed areas and away from environmentally sensitive land. However, most development that has occurred in areas where the UDB was expanded has simply been a continuation of low-density residential or business uses. Until recently, the CDMP did not provide specific guidance on how newly urbanized land should be used; in 2013, new CDMP policies were adopted regarding land proposed to be brought within the UDB that include requiring any new development to provide a mix of uses, a minimum residential density of 10 units per acre, demonstrate that new development will not impede redevelopment and infill efforts in the already-urbanized area, and that the new development will have a positive fiscal impact on the county.



*Urban Expansion Area north of Kendall Drive west of Southwest 167th Avenue, existing condition*

If the UDB is to be expanded, the CDMP has designated certain areas where such expansion should first be directed toward. These are identified on the LUP map as Urban Expansion Areas (UEA). In West Kendall, the area from Bird Road to Southwest 136th Street between Southwest 167th and Krome Avenues is located within the UEA and is partly within the extent of the study area. If the UDB is to be expanded in this area, the participants of this planning process strongly desired that such an expansion should not occur to allow for mainly detached single family-type development. Since the CDMP has already designated land

in this area as within the UEA, mixed uses, a variety of housing types, and places of employment beyond retail and restaurant uses were identified as the types of development that should occur there. Parks, open spaces, bicycle paths, and places for community events such as farmers' markets in a pedestrian-friendly environment were also desired.

In the 1995 CDMP Evaluation and Appraisal Report section titled "Efficiency and Functionality of Development Patterns," the low intensity of suburban development in the county is analyzed as it relates to the develop-

Urban Expansion Area north of Kendall Drive and between Southwest 167th and Krome Avenues; photo-simulation of a typical suburban development pattern



ment capacity of land within the UDB; along with increasing the density and intensity of new development, several other strategies were discussed to improve the form and character of new development. The standards for activity centers (subsequently renamed 'Urban Centers') were identified as being useful to encourage mixed uses and high-quality urban design but that further implementation though zoning would be necessary for these standards to be effective. Outside of urban centers, it was observed the design of many recently built developments were poor and that additional design guidelines would be neces-

sary for these areas as well. Twenty years later, the situation is little changed. The TND district has not been widely adopted; typical RU-1MA and RU-TH districts are widespread and individual developments are often unattractive and divided by walls or gates. Commercial development continues to be isolated from surrounding residential areas and even adjacent business uses, exacerbating traffic congestion by generating multiple local vehicle trips.

On this page and the next page are photo-simulations of how the area around Krome Avenue and Kendall Drive in the UEA could

be developed. These illustrations do not imply a recommendation to expand the UDB; but instead show the implications of specific development patterns that could occur if the land supply within the UDB is depleted and urban expansion is warranted. On page 38, the development illustrated follows the typical pattern of recent suburban development and exhibits many of the negative elements mentioned above. Business, office, and residential uses are segregated by curving arterial and collector streets; shopping centers and business uses are oriented toward the intersections of major streets and office uses are separated from retail shops and restaurants by berms and surface parking areas. Surface parking is the most prominent landscape feature outside of single-family areas which makes walking unpleasant and undesirable for any trip beyond that of walking from a car to a building. The street network requires nearly all vehicle trips to travel onto arterial streets resulting in traffic congestion even at the low development density and intensity illustrated. In residential areas, lakes make each block extraordinarily long, further discouraging walking and complicating automobile circulation. These lakes typically do not have any frontage along open spaces or streets and are instead surrounded by residential lots, preventing any enjoyment of the water by the surrounding community or those residents whose houses do not adjoin a lake.

In contrast, the image on page 39 illustrates this same area developed in a manner that reflects concepts shown in the Citizens' Plans. A consistent street grid is used where multi-story buildings define the perimeter of each block; combined with wide sidewalks and active

# Planning Recommendations

ground-story uses such as retail stores, restaurants, or offices, this type of development encourages pedestrian activity and results in an attractive streetscape. The use of a street grid reduces traffic congestion on the arterial streets by providing multiple routes for any origin and destination. Open spaces, rather than occurring mainly in the form of unusable landscape buffers, are consolidated into large park and plaza spaces containing lakes, sports fields, and walking and bicycle trails.

The concepts below should be implemented if the UDB is expanded to allow development to occur in the UEA. To create a more coherent development pattern and a walkable environment, a consistent street grid should be required and the use of arbitrarily curving streets and tract type developments avoided. Wider right-of-ways should be required to provide adequate space for bicycle and parking lanes, landscaping in medians and at the street side, and wide sidewalks. Buildings should be located at the perimeter of blocks in a manner that frames the street and creates a human-scaled space. Open spaces located along streets should take the form of usable plazas and greens; residual landscape areas and water retention features should be placed at the center of blocks. Lakes and canals should be interconnected and surrounded by continuous open spaces that provide walking and bicycle paths and recreation areas. Development in this area should also comply with the minimum standards for non-residential uses, public facilities, residential density and non-residential intensities provided in CDMP policy LU-8H. Future zoning that is applied to this area should also implement these minimum standards.



Urban Expansion Area north of Kendall Drive and between Southwest 167th and Krome Avenues; photo-simulation of an urban block-type development pattern

## Transit Service and Facilities

- *Dedicated lanes for Bus Rapid Transit should be implemented along Kendall Drive*
- *Local trolley/circulator service should be implemented in the West Kendall area*

The study area is currently served by several Miami-Dade Transit bus routes. Since at least the 1975 CDMP LUP map, the Kendall Drive corridor has been identified for future rapid transit service. Improved transit services was also desired by participants in this planning process; express bus services, dedicated transit

lanes, trolley service, elevated Metrorail, and an underground subway were all suggested as desirable. The Kendall Link MPO study, completed in 2007, analyzed several similar alternatives for the Kendall Drive corridor. The recommended alternative was Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service with a single reversible dedicated transit lane.

One of the primary concerns that was raised during that study was how the dedicated transit surface lane would impact vehicle traffic on Kendall Drive and intersecting streets. The Kendall Link study noted that surface BRT

Left, SMART corridor map; Top right, Miami Baptist Church property with leased park-and-ride, 2014 aerial photography; Right, future parkand ride and transit terminal with additional development



lanes “are anticipated to result in adverse impacts to vehicular traffic due to the removal or reduction in width of travel lanes required to accommodate the BRT guideway.” At the same time, many left turn lanes along Kendall Drive would need to be reduced or eliminated to provide space for the BRT lanes and stations.

Since the Kendall Link study was completed, the introduction of the route 288 “Kendall Cruiser” has been the most significant change in transit service in the Kendall Area. The 288 is a limited-stop route that replaced the Kendall KAT route. Although Kendall Cruiser



route stops less than the Route 88 local service, it provides little travel-time benefit since it operates in mixed traffic and is therefore often ‘crawling along’ Kendall Drive during rush hours.

In 2015, the MPO requested the Florida Department of Transportation to begin a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) study for BRT and LRT alternatives. A PD&E study is more specific than a study like the

‘Kendall Link’ and is necessary before detailed design and construction work can begin. The PD&E study is scheduled to begin in June 2016. The Kendall Corridor is a key part of the Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) plan. The SMART concept plan was adopted by the MPO in April 2016 and adjusts the funding priorities for six transit corridors to “Priority I” (the highest level) in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

# Implementation

A plan of this type, which involves both public and private property owners, as well as numerous public agencies at different levels of government will be challenging to implement. Summarized below are some of the means by which the recommendations made in this report can be realized. The table on page 47 summarizes the recommendations for the various planning areas analyzed and identifies a specific implementation action for each.

## Planning

The county's planning efforts as established through the Comprehensive Development Master Plan (CDMP) have been largely effective in ensuring an adequate distribution of land uses and countywide service delivery. What has not been as successful is the implementation of the CDMP policies and the "Guidelines for Urban Form" through the use of zoning to result in attractive and functional residential and business areas. While at the level of a single subdivision, shopping center, or industrial park there may be many well-designed developments throughout the county, it is instead the manner in which each individual element fits into a logical overall pattern of development that is a better measure of whether planning has been successful. This is the realm where improvement is still needed.

As mentioned in the previous section, the 1995 CDMP Evaluation and Appraisal Report recognized that the quality of many developments in the county are poor and the planning and zoning standards in effect are inadequate

to ensure a satisfactory level of design. This is not a problem unique to Miami-Dade County; it is largely a by-product of the patterns of conventional suburban development common throughout the United States. It is interesting to note then, that the desires of the participants of this planning process, who are largely the residents of low-density conventional suburban developments would so strongly desire things like mixed-use areas, pedestrian-oriented shopping streets, and meaningful open spaces—all of which, regardless of the planning policies that may be implemented, the development industry seems unwilling or unable to provide in a suburban context such as West Kendall. The marketability and financing of development plays a role as well since commercial spaces and residential unit types that lack a perceived market are unlikely to be built.

## *Urban Centers*

In any case, there are certain current CDMP policies that apply to the design of new development and are intended to address many of these shortcomings. However, their applicability is somewhat ambiguous and should be revised to be more effective. For areas within a designated Urban Center but do not have urban center zoning, as at the centers at 137th Avenue and Kendall Town Center, the applicability of the Urban Center standards for development that are mandatory (described using the word "shall") should be clarified. Currently, CDMP policy LU-9F directs the county to adopt zoning regulations for Urban Cen-

ters, but the specific implementation of these standards are otherwise undefined where such a zoning district has not yet been applied. In this instance, for development on a property within an Urban Center and zoned BU-2, the CDMP states: "All development and redevelopment in Urban Centers shall conform to the guidelines provided below. [Specific development standards follow]" The CDMP also states in a earlier paragraph that "All such lawful uses and zoning are deemed to be consistent with this Plan as provided in the section of this chapter titled 'Concepts and Limitations of the Land Use Plan Map.'" Taken together, there is an apparent conflict in the ability to determine the CDMP consistency of a development or redevelopment on a lot zoned BU-2 within an Urban Center. To resolve this, a new policy or descriptive text equivalent should be included in the CDMP to address development in areas where zoning has not yet implemented the mandatory development standards established by the CDMP. The same could also apply to other policies and standards not related to Urban Centers that have yet to be implemented through zoning.

## *Urban Expansion Area*

A significant part of the study area is located within the Urban Expansion Area (UEA) and as such, the CDMP states that urban development is likely to be warranted there between the years 2020 and 2030. Should this area be included within the Urban Development Boundary and available for urban development, the CDMP generalized neighborhood

# Implementation

forts. Permitted uses, development intensities, and design standards for urban centers are provided in Appendix B.

## Signage

Amendments to the current zoning standards for business signage can be adopted to address the design and quality issues identified in this planning report. Changes to zoning standards will not have an immediate effect except on signs permitted subsequent to the adoption of amended code requirements. As an alternative to the typical ‘grandfathering’ of signs permitted under previous zoning standards, a ‘grace period’ could be implemented where after a certain period of time all signs will have to conform to the current zoning requirements. For example, following the adoption of new signage standards in the city of Miami Gardens, all signs were required to conform to the current zoning requirements within five years.

## Streets, Transit

The implementation street and transit improvements will require additional studies to determine the exact location, scope, and funding requirements for each specific facility. A systematic method to identify necessary pedestrian and bicycle quality-of-service improvements should be developed so that they may be included in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The specific recommendations in this planning report, including dedicated BRT lanes, should be further analyzed for their feasibility and included in the LRTP or TIP. Planning studies for larger-scale improvements that require significant design analysis can be funded through the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Planning Area	Recommendation	Implementation Action
Kendale Lakes Plaza Area	Redevelopment of older shopping centers should occur consistent with the CDMP standards for Urban Centers	<i>Planning:</i> Adopt new CDMP policy regarding development in Urban Centers <i>Zoning:</i> Amend BU zoning districts to require development consistent with Urban Centers
Streets	Provide bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, or additional landscaping along Kendall Drive; Provide on-street parking along Southwest 152nd Avenue north of Kendall Drive; Provide on-street parking along Southwest 149th Avenue south of Kendall Drive; Provide bicycle lanes, wider sidewalks, and additional landscaping on four-lane streets with excess capacity	<i>Streets, Transit:</i> Identify funding for design and construction or additional studies necessary for inclusion in the TIP or LRTP
Kendall Town Center Area	Future development approvals or amendments to the Kendall Town Center DRI should be consistent with the CDMP standards for Urban Centers	<i>Planning:</i> Adopt new CDMP policy regarding development in Urban Centers <i>Zoning:</i> Amend BU zoning districts to require development consistent with Urban Centers
Signage	Zoning requirements for more consistent and attractive business signage should be adopted	<i>Zoning:</i> Amend existing zoning requirements with additional standards as recommended
Urban Expansion Area	Standards should be implemented that require a development pattern that includes: mixed uses; a consistent street grid; wider right-of-ways with adequate space for bicycle and parking lanes, landscaping in medians and at the street side, and wide sidewalks; lakes and canals that are interconnected and surrounded by continuous open spaces that provide walking and bicycle paths and recreation areas	<i>Planning:</i> Adopt new CDMP development standards for the Urban Expansion Area; alternatively, amend the LUP map to locate an Urban Center in the UEA <i>Zoning:</i> Adopt a new zoning district applicable to the UEA that implements the recommended development pattern
Transit Facilities	Dedicated lanes for Bus Rapid Transit should be implemented along Kendall Drive; Local trolley/circulator service should be implemented in the West Kendall area	<i>Streets, Transit:</i> Identify funding for design and construction or additional studies necessary for inclusion in the TIP or LRTP

# West Kendall Corridor

## Next Steps

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- Public Comment
- Planning Advisory Board
- Board of County Commissioners

# West Kendall Corridor

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For more information, visit [www.miamidade.gov/zoning](http://www.miamidade.gov/zoning) or call 305-375-2842.

