

# INNOVATION DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLANNING

PREPARED FOR CITY OF OPA-LOCKA CRA





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Paris is an assistant development manager with AJ Capital Partners where she manages adaptive reuse and new construction projects in the Little River neighborhood of Miami. The project scopes include apartments, office, retail, and hospitality.

Prior to joining AJ Capital Partners, she began her real estate career in residential property management for national and boutique firms in Atlanta, GA, before relocating to the Washington, DC area and joining Long and Foster in residential sales. She later joined CBRE where she assisted in managing a large commercial asset portfolio. While with CBRE, she relocated to South Florida and worked in brokerage and operations management.

Paris is a proud graduate of Neumann University with a bachelor's degree in Communications.



CHRISTINA JOLLEY

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**Vice President & Director of  
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Christina Stine Jolley is a Vice President with Blanca Commercial Real Estate, Inc., the leading independently owned commercial real estate services firm in Florida. She has nearly 10 years of experience in the industry. On behalf of Blanca Commercial Real Estate, Ms. Jolley leverages her extensive local roots and network to support the firm's ongoing expansion to meet a growing demand for its services in Broward.

Prior to joining the firm, Ms. Jolley most recently served as a Senior Associate at Cushman & Wakefield, where she spearheaded business development and marketing for what grew to become Broward's most active office tenant advisory team. Prior to this, Ms. Jolley worked as a law clerk for the Fort Lauderdale land use and zoning firm, Lochrie & Chakas. In addition to drafting legal documents, her work included building relationships with Broward government officials and real estate developers, and providing clients with strategic counsel across all aspects of the county's development entitlement processes.

The Boca Raton, Fla., native received a bachelor's degree in public relations, with honors, from the University of Florida and a law degree from the University of Richmond School of Law.



CORY DORMAN

KIMLEY-HORN &  
ASSOCIATES, INC.  
**Associate Transportation  
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Cory Dorman was born and raised in Miami, Florida. He graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor of Art in Economics and a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering. He has worked for Kimley-Horn & Associates, Inc. as a traffic engineer for nearly eight (8) years. He is passionate about mobility and transportation, with a focus on site plan development, to help seamlessly integrate private industry with our public spaces and ensure viable and sustainable growth in our communities.



GUSTAVO LANGONI

DYNAMIC EARTH

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Gustavo Langoni is a Senior Geotechnical Engineer at Dynamic Earth, LLC. He has over 18 years of geotechnical engineering experience in land development and infrastructure projects throughout the US southeast coast, California, and Central/South America. He currently leads the Florida and International Geotechnical practice for Dynamic Earth out of their Delray Beach Office. Prior to joining Dynamic Earth, Mr. Langoni spent 5 years in Panama City helping develop the geotechnical practice for a large US based engineering firm and helping them develop a share of the local market. He has professional engineering licenses in the US and Panama. He specializes in foundation and geotechnical design of tall and super tall structures, subterranean construction, marine structures, and large infrastructure projects.



DAVID SNOW

CITY OF MIAMI

PLANNING DEPT.

**Assistant Director**

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David Snow is the current Assistant Director for the City of Miami Planning Department and has been with the City for over 14 yrs.

He manages a department of over 25 staff members that are responsible for coordinating Land Development, Comprehensive Planning, Urban Design, Historic Preservation, Art In Public Places and Hearing Boards efforts within the City as well as overseeing high-profile projects such as Streetscape Master Plans, Legislative Code Amendments, Neighborhood Revitalization District(s), and the Virginia Key Master Plan implementation. David has also played a leading role in the creation and implementation of the Wynwood Revitalization District, Miami Design District Special Area Plan, Regatta Park Design, and Miami 21 Sign Code. He is currently coordinating the Miami 21 Task Force Final Report implementation, the West Grove Affordable Housing Study, and the Marine Stadium Flex Park Design.

David has a Bachelor of Science in Planning and Urban Development from Arizona State University. Has served as Chair of the Planners Technical Committee of Miami-Dade County from 2012 – 2014 and currently serves on the Miami Shores Village Planning and Zoning Board. He continues to work towards making the City of Miami a successful metropolitan center by addressing planning issues related to emerging urban development trends and future adaptation needs climate challenges.



XIAOYUN LI

RSP ARCHITECTS

**Project Architect**

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Xiaoyun Li is a project architect at RSP Architects' Miami office. Professionally, he is a designer and an engaged problem solver. Personally, he has lived in some of the largest, most populated cities impacted by such intractable challenges as mobility, affordable housing, and climate change. Growing up in Shenzhen, China, then attending Tulane University in New Orleans, then moving to Atlanta and now Miami, he has seen that the only path forward is resilient, enlightened urbanism. As a project architect, he oversees and executes building project design from the conceptual phase through the completion of construction. Working closely with clients, consultants and city officials, he strives to create economically successful, responsible, and sustainable projects that improve the quality of life for communities. He is a part of the One Cocowalk project that is awarded in 2021 "Best Project in ENR Awards", "Class A Office and Mixed-Use LEED Gold Award", and "AIA Merit Award of Excellence Restoration and Renovation". He played a critical design role in Parson's Alley Project that is awarded "Urban Land Institute Development of Excellence Award" in 2017.



# BACKGROUND

## Project Introduction

Opa-Locka has the opportunity to achieve its vast potential by overcoming a few key challenges. The team was tasked with identifying these challenges and developing a plan to create an innovation district that promotes job creation, talent retention and capitalizes on the City's inherent strengths and pre-existing industries. The City is seeking to attract more innovative tech-based businesses and mixed-use commercial developments. The aim is to not only improve the area but also to ensure the greatest level of fiscal productivity and diversified commercial activities.

The team interviewed industry leaders, community stakeholders, and government officials to formulate a comprehensive study and plan. Using the research as a guideline, the team proposed recommendations tailored to Opa-Locka's unique challenges and opportunities, as further detailed in this report.



### OPA-LOCKA 2021 STATISTICS

- Population: ~16,149
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher: 8.5%
- Median Household Income: \$21,523
- Employment rate: 45.6%
- Poverty Rate: 41.2%

### PROMINENT INDUSTRIES

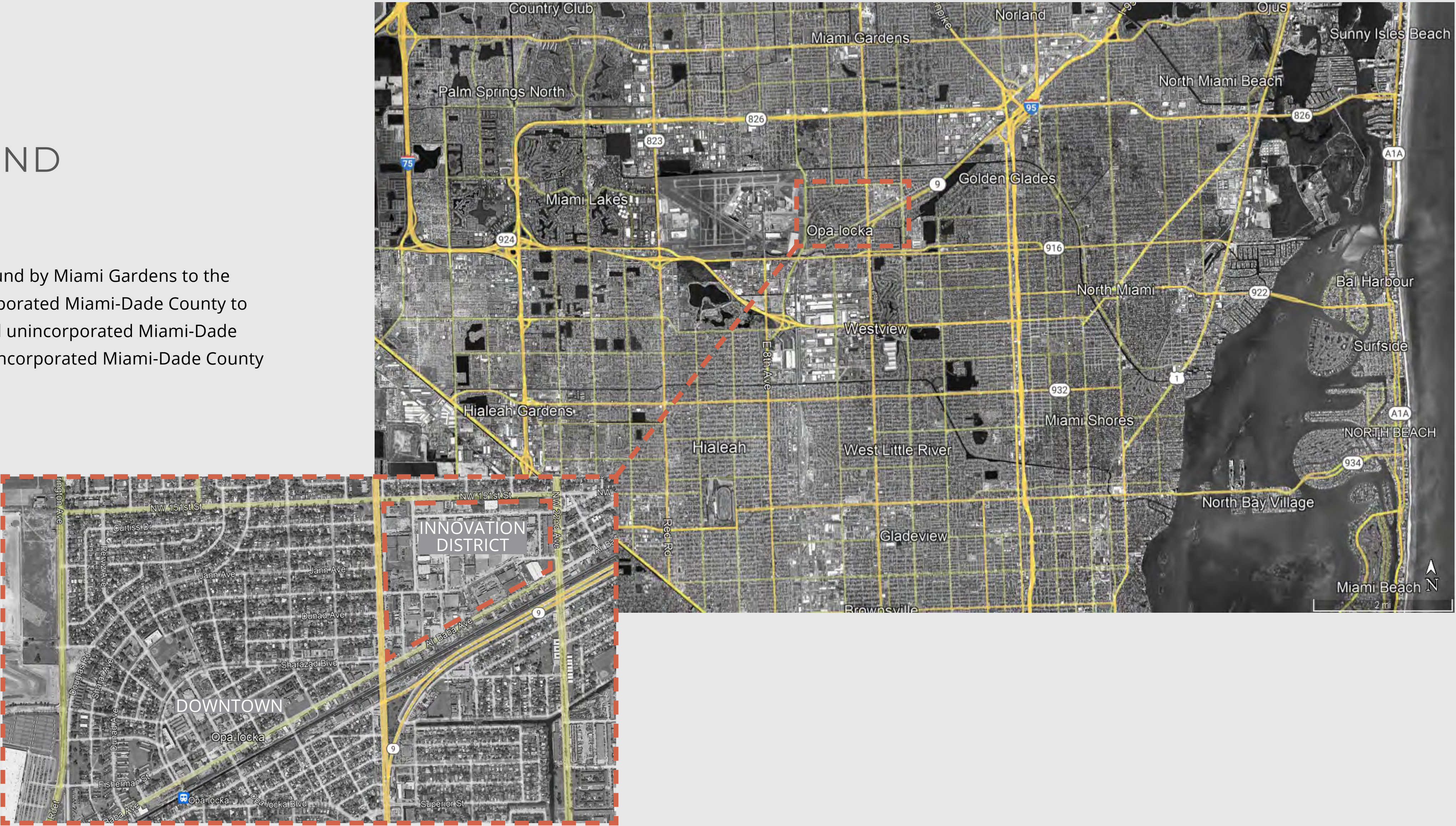
- Automotive
- Marine
- Aviation
- Medical
- Administrative/ Clerical



# BACKGROUND

## Project Site

The City of Opa-locka is bound by Miami Gardens to the north, Hialeah and unincorporated Miami-Dade County to the south, North Miami and unincorporated Miami-Dade County to the east, and unincorporated Miami-Dade County to the west.





## Project Site

[illegible]



# BACKGROUND

## Existing Condition Photos

During heavy precipitation events, the OI D floods. Infrastructure has been a known concern for some time.

The industrial nature of the auto-related and manufacturing uses has resulted in this area being incompatible with the largely residential surroundings and has suffered from years of disinvestment.





# ASSESSMENT

PRIMARY | SECONDARY CHALLENGES AND ADVANTAGES



# PRIMARY ASSESSMENT

## REPUTATION | PERCEPTION

### 01 IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE

Opa-Locka has a negative reputation associated with crime and corruption that is hindering its ability to attract investment and funding from private and public sector stakeholders alike.

It is a deeply-embedded, long-held perception of the City, and these opinions tend to overshadow any new initiatives and progress.

### 02 WHY IT MATTERS

The image of a city directly correlates to its economic prosperity and the quality of life of its residents. In the private sector, the negative perception that people have about the City prevents potential investors from seriously considering investing in the OID and the City at large. New public funding is difficult to secure, as funds have been misused in the past.

### 03 UNIQUE ADVANTAGE

Opa-Locka has the opportunity for a clean slate and a chance to broadcast the changes they are willing to make - and have already made - to become a more attractive place to live and work.

As the other issues that the team has identified evolve, the City will be in a better position to capitalize on the momentum they are creating if they have a cohesive strategy around their image and public relations.

As more positive news about the City spreads, there will be a domino effect of interest and investment.



# PRIMARY ASSESSMENT

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### 01 IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE

In the interviews with key leaders in target industries, infrastructure continually came up as a one of the main items that developers look for when deciding on locations in which to invest. This presents a dire challenge for the OID whose infrastructure is in serious disrepair. The prevalent infrastructure concerns are the condition of the pavement structures, the lack of a properly functioning storm water system, and the sewer system's capacity to support higher density, additional uses.

- The storm water system needs a major overhaul that,
- requires retrofitting major components of the storm water system, significant capital investment, and several years to implement.
- Flooding continues to deteriorate the condition of existing pavement and will continue to negatively impact any improvements made in the area making it a top priority and a critical path to the renovation of the District.

### 02 WHY IT MATTERS

Businesses that rely on transportation of goods, such as industrial and commercial developers, will require access roadways to be designed to sustain heavy traffic loads and to maintain a high pavement serviceability index. Pedestrian mobility is also challenged by the current infrastructure conditions, as further discussed in the Transit section of the report.

- Flooding limits mobility within the District, creates saturated ground conditions; and
- Deteriorates the aesthetic look of the area.
- The conditions of the internal roadways are currently not appropriate for commercial or industrial development.

This issue will continue to deter capital investment until a comprehensive plan to solve the matter is developed and implemented.

### 03 UNIQUE ADVANTAGE

The City has made efforts to evaluate the storm water system and develop plans for implementation. The City has also been seeking funding from the county, state, and federal resources.

- The roadways along the perimeter of the OID are in relatively good condition;
- making its boundary suitable for a first phase of rehabilitation which could generate revenue that may be used to further improve the District.
- The advantageous location of the OID and the relatively low land costs are attractive to developers.
- Interest is expected to increase as development in South Florida continues to migrate west towards Opa-Locka.



# INFRASTRUCTURE ANALYSIS



## ROAD CONDITION LEGEND

- In Moderate to Good Condition
- In Poor Condition
- Completely Deteriorated



# SECONDARY ASSESSMENT

## TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY

### 01 IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE

Vehicular mobility to and from the OID study area is relatively good, as the surrounding roadways provide good connectivity to the regional roadway network. However:

- Internal connectivity within the OID is poor as few roadways provide continuous connectivity through the District.
- The undesirable roadway alignments force vehicles to execute multiple turning movements to maneuver through the area.
- Pedestrian mobility to and from the District is extremely limited.
- There are no bicycle facilities within the OID.
- Access is further hindered by illegal parking which is widespread within the OID.
- While several transit stops with connections to multiple routes are provided within the vicinity of the OID, without further development of solutions to complement these existing transit amenities, commuters and employees may need to walk significant distances to/from their origin or destination. This is commonly referred to as the “First Mile/Last Mile Problem”.

### 02 WHY IT MATTERS

It is imperative that roadways and pedestrian/bicycle facilities be planned and designed in such a way that promotes efficient and safe circulation through the District and surrounding area that minimizes confusion and generally enhances mobility options for all users.

- The poor roadway/sidewalk conditions will deter economic investment;
- Prospective businesses/developers will not only struggle to provide access to their sites, but they will struggle to generate activity for their businesses, patrons, and clients;
- Inadequate transportation facilities can impact how a resident travels to and from a place of employment,
- making transportation more costly, which can decrease opportunities for residents.

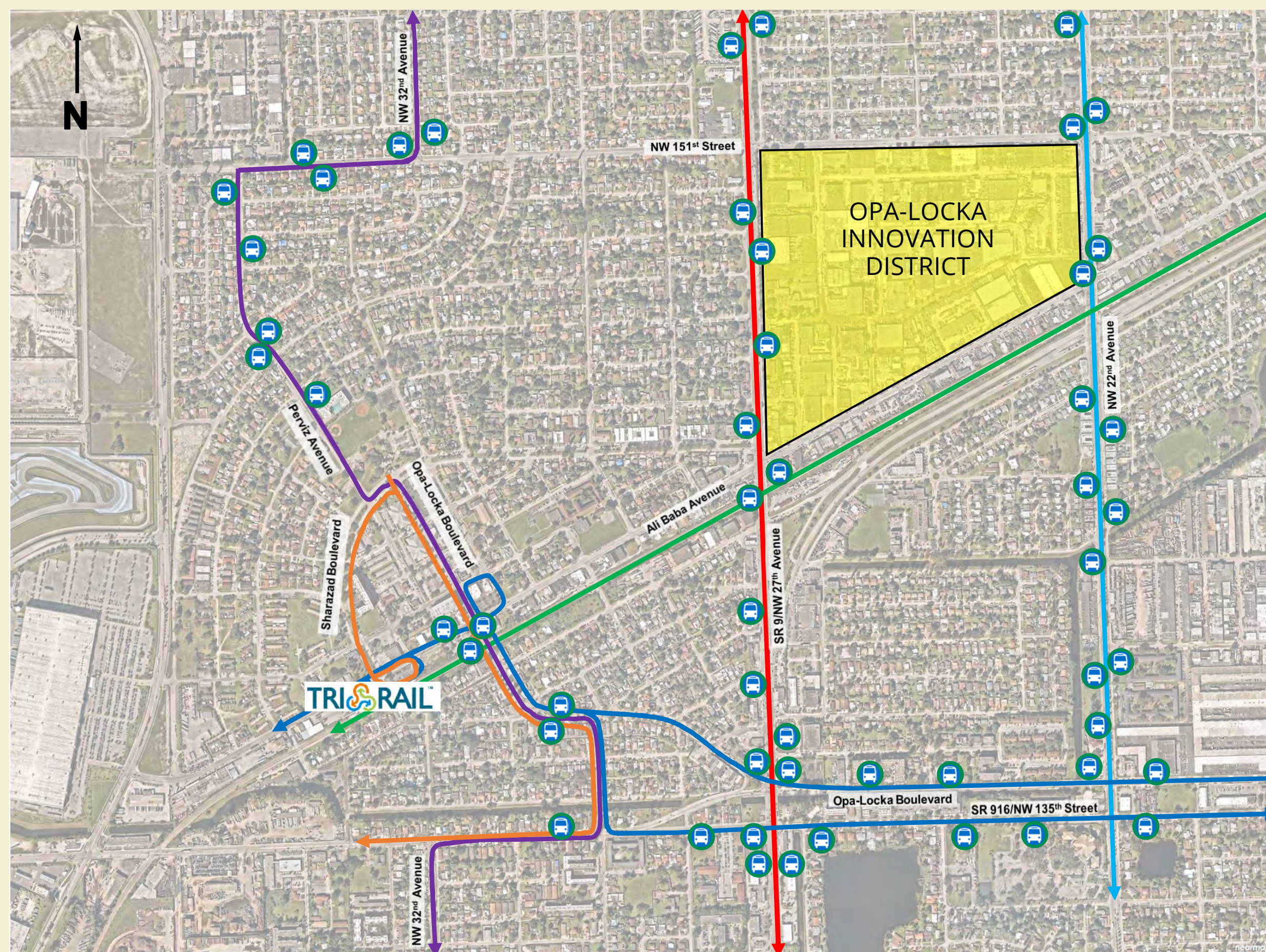
### 03 UNIQUE ADVANTAGE

The surrounding roadways carry high traffic volumes, and this provides the District with the opportunity to capture “pass-by” traffic volumes to generate positive economic activity.

- This presents an opportunity to consolidate and transform the existing public right-of-way into a more seamless public realm that can incorporate placemaking and multi-modal activity.
- SR 817/NW 27th Avenue was included as part of the North Corridor in the Miami-Dade TPO’s SMART Plan which seeks to identify enhanced transit alternatives that will incentivize Transit-Oriented Development which can bring increased density and multi-modal design to this area.
- The Opa-locka Tri-Rail station, the Opa-locka Executive Airport, the Concours Club, and the private company distribution centers (i.e., Amazon), are all located within close proximity, and the OID could provide a hub for the maintenance, development and storage for these groups.
- Existing businesses and industries within the OID provide readily-accessible resources to leverage for implementing micro-mobility/micro-transit solutions to improve mobility shortfalls.



# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY ANALYSIS



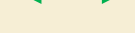

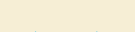

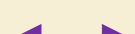


## EXISTING TRANSIT AMENITIES

The Opa-Locka Innovation District is served by nine (9) Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works Metrobus routes, in addition to the Opa-Locka Tri-Rail Station.

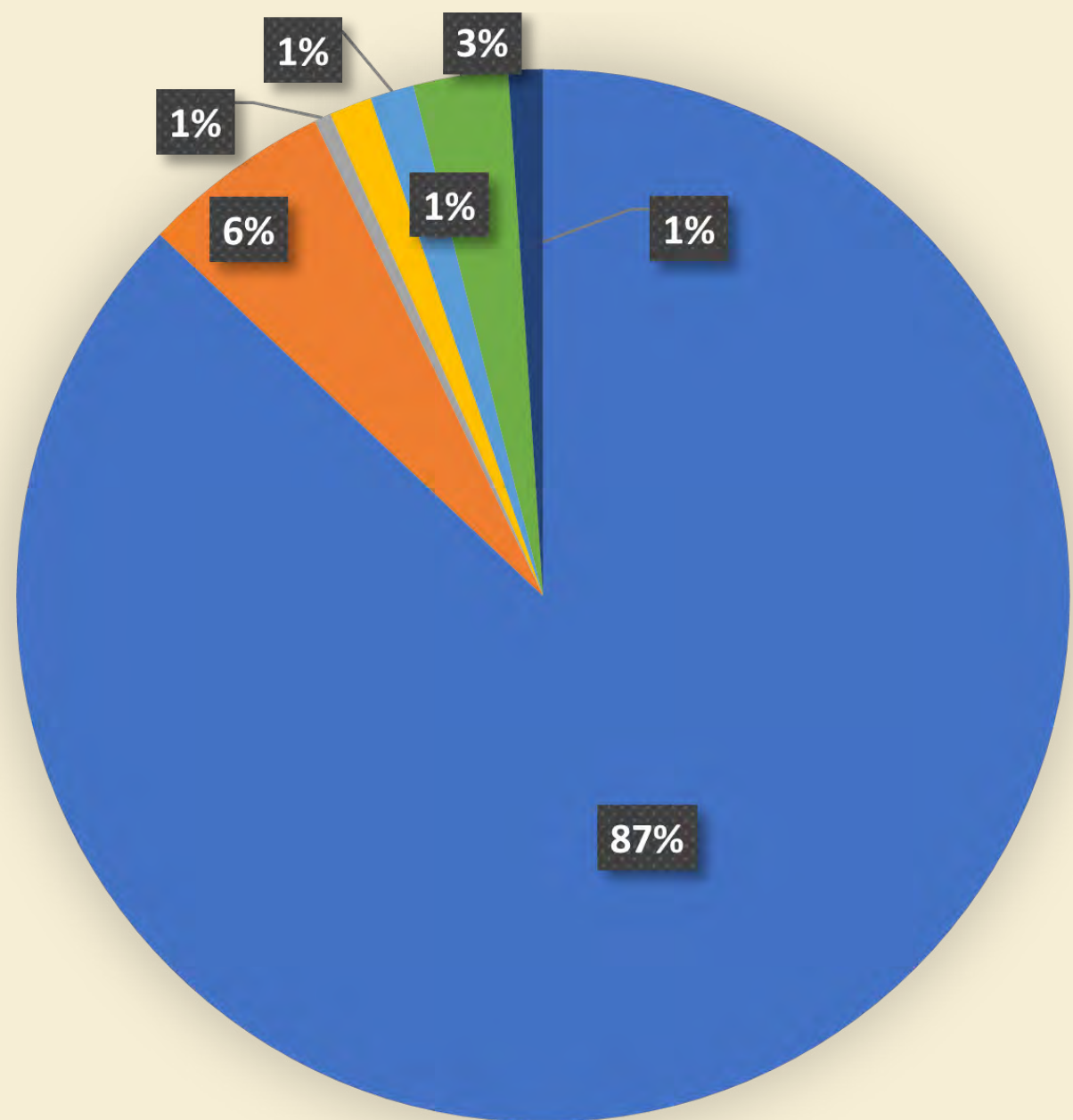
- The Tri-Rail station records the second-lowest ridership (Hialeah Market station is the lowest) as compared to all other stations.
- However, since neighboring stations have much higher ridership, there is an opportunity to leverage the area's accessibility for economic improvement.

## LEGEND

-  Miami-Dade DTPW Transit Bus Stop
-  SFRTA Tri-Rail
-  DTPW Routes 27 & 297
-  DTPW Routes 17, 22, 217, & 246
-  DTPW Route 32
-  DTPW Route 42
-  DTPW Route 135

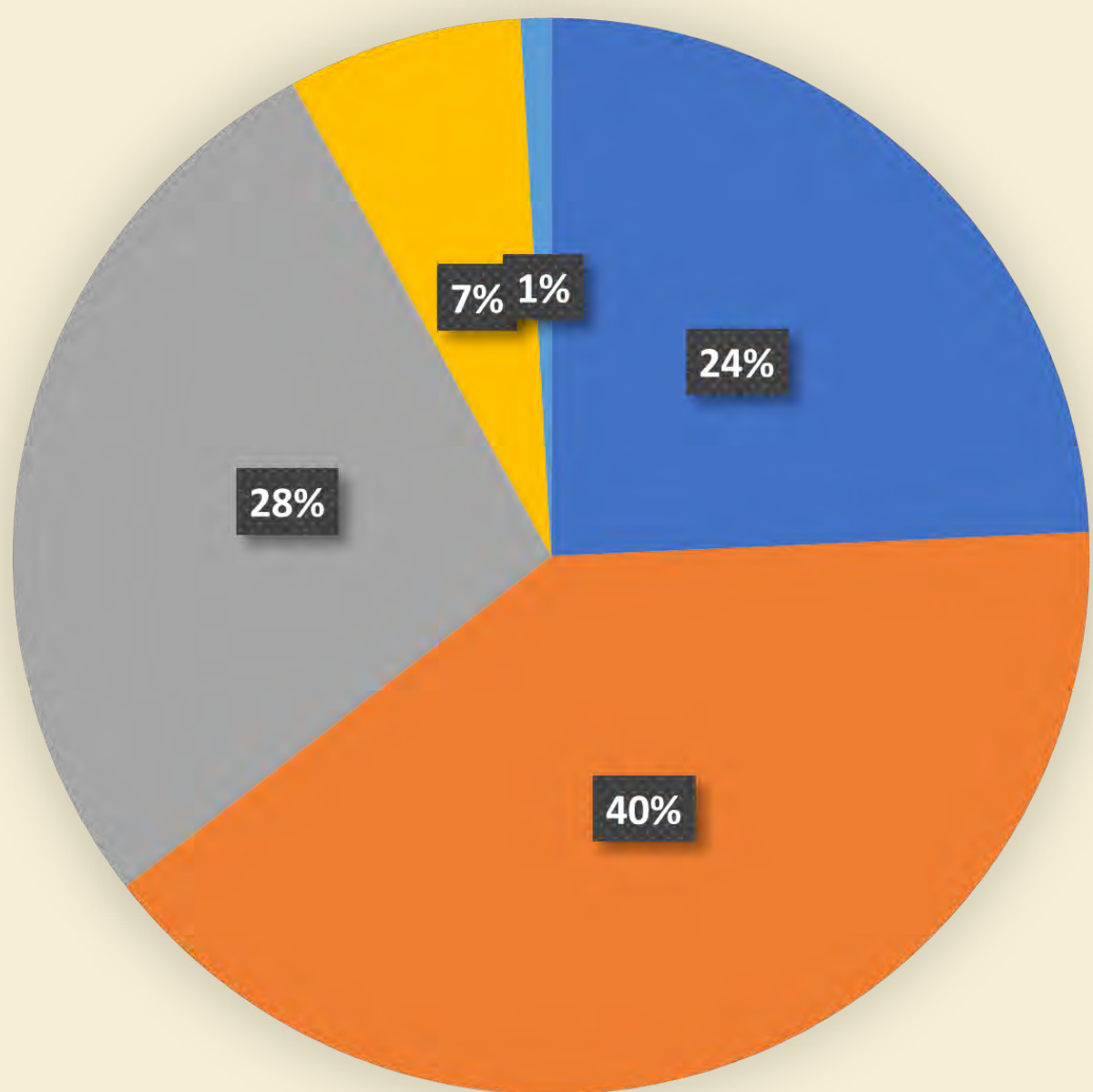


# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY ANALYSIS



MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION TO WORK

87%	Car, Truck, or Van
6%	Public Transportation (Exclude Taxi)
1%	Taxi
1%	Bicycle
1%	Walking
3%	Other Transportation
1%	Worked from Home



VEHICLE OWNERSHIP

24%	No Vehicle
40%	1 Vehicle
28%	2 Vehicle
7%	3 Vehicle
1%	4+ Vehicle

## RESIDENT MOBILITY

Based on vehicle ownership data collected from the US Census Bureau, approximately 24 percent (24%) of Opa-Locka residents do not own a vehicle, compared to approximately 10 percent (10%) of Miami-Dade County residents. Approximately 87 percent (87%) of Opa-Locka residents utilize a private vehicle to travel to/from the workplace, compared to approximately 85 percent (85%) of Miami-Dade County residents.

- Rather than the lower vehicle ownership serving as a representation of a robust public transit system and ease of access, this statistic may reflect unemployment levels within the community and a reliance on private vehicles to travel to job centers.
- The need for a private vehicle can create an additional economic drain on a community and highlights the need for more accessible and reliable transit or alternative modes of transportation.



# SECONDARY ASSESSMENT

## COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION

### 01 IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE

The City of Opa-Locka desires to empower its residents with professional career and educational resources in order to compete in the current and future job market. The ultimate goal is to partner with local colleges and universities to provide course and/or certificate training and apprenticeship opportunities to residents. There is also an opportunity for local businesses to provide corporate sponsorship opportunities for talent development of current and potential future employees.

Specific challenges that are impeding progress:

- The closest High School is Miami Lakes Senior High School, which is located in the municipality of Hialeah and sits ~4 miles away, creating a transportation burden on students
- College course credits, and established workforce training programs -although some non-traditional- require some financial commitment that is unaffordable to many Opa-Locka residents. There is also limited community outreach and a lack of awareness/ perceived disinterest regarding information on training programs, financial aid resources and scholarship funding.
- There have been some political challenges, including breakdowns in communication regarding programs offered between higher learning institutions and the Opa-Locka Community. And frequent changes in City leadership.

### 02 WHY IT MATTERS

The lack of a high school within the City of Opa-Locka creates a disconnect between the local businesses in the City and the education system. Many local businesses resort to hiring outside of Opa-Locka, causing an ongoing talent loss as students, upon graduation leave Opa-Locka for a neighboring city for better opportunities. Furthermore, students that are unable to attend a school outside of the neighborhood are vulnerable to drop-out.

Educational resources and workforce training programs must be accessible to Opa-Locka residents. Lack of information and/ or an inability to afford to attend higher institutions of learning or participate in training programs to close the skills gap is detrimental to the residents of the City, furthering the skills gap and unemployment rate.

Breakdown in communication around programs offered between high education institutions and the Opa-Locka Community and frequent changes in leadership allows for things to fall through the cracks, and slowing down the progression of workforce development and training programs tailored to the Opa-Locka community.

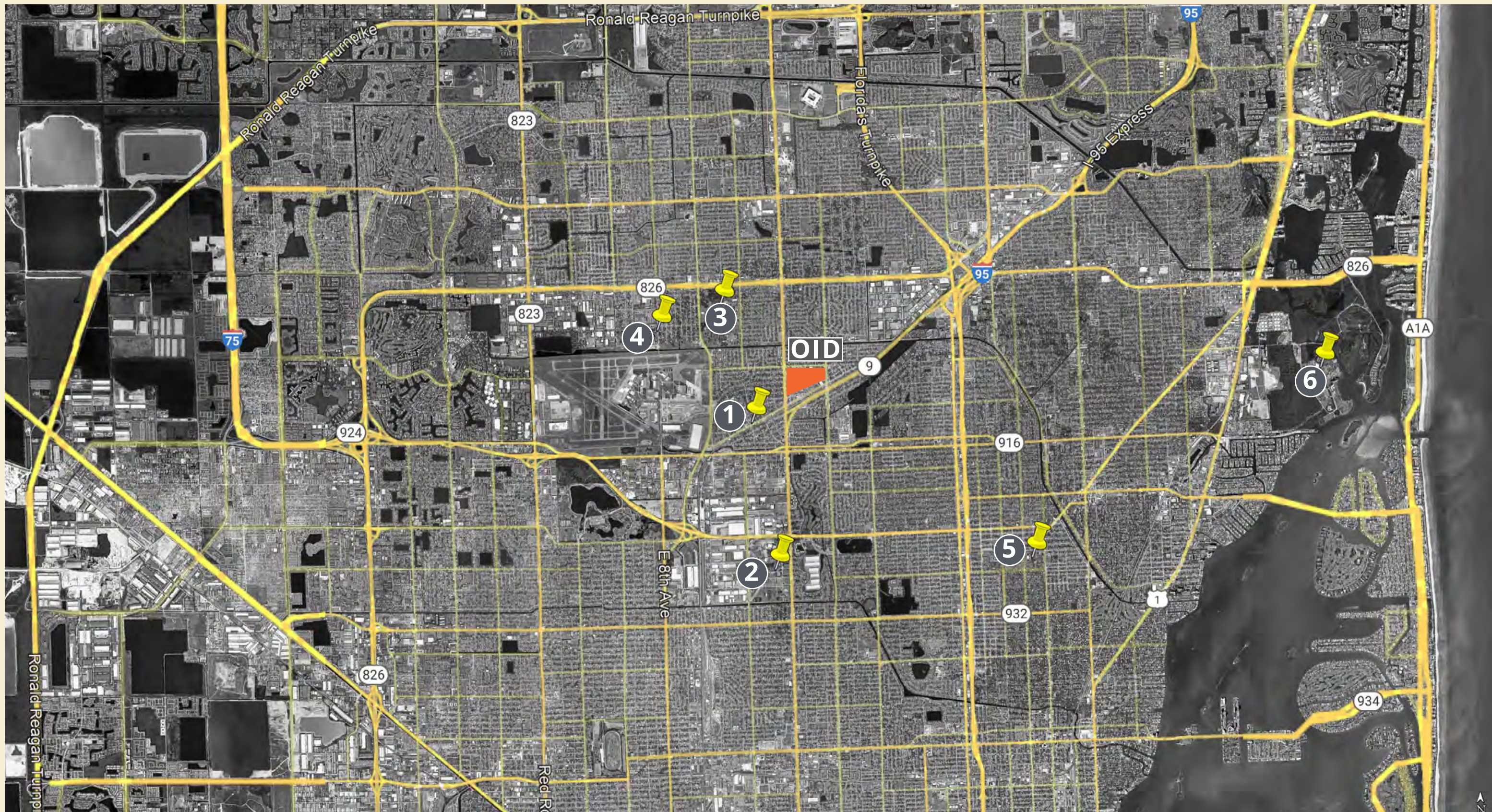
### 03 UNIQUE ADVANTAGE

The City of Opa-Locka has opportunities with local resources to address the workforce education and skills gap. Its proximity to multiple institutes of higher education, including Florida International University, Miami-Dade College and Florida Memorial University is an opportunity to build and leverage financial aid and training programs tailored to the needs of its residents.

The City has also established relationships with prominent community organizations including the Carrie Meek Foundation and the Miami Beacon Council. Career Source South Florida is another valuable community resource with a branch inside the City. From a community reinvestment and local business perspective, an Amazon fulfillment center sits directly within the community. This is an additional opportunity for the City of Opa-Locka to engage and participate in their community and employee investment programs. Lastly, the Opa-Locka Executive Airport is within the neighborhood, holding potential for work and educational/training partnership opportunities for target workforce industries.



# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION ANALYSIS



## ADJACENT HIGHER ED INSTITUTIONS

- Students without personal transportation have to take on additional financial burden to attend the nearby college or university.
- Partnerships between neighborhoods/ communities and institutions of higher education are more efficient when the school sits within the neighborhood (i.e., rent credits and discounts for professors and school staff as well as students.)

## LEGEND

- 1 City of Opa-Locka
- 2 Miami Dade College North Campus (1.8 miles)
- 3 St. Thomas University (2.3 miles)
- 4 Florida Memorial University (2.5 miles)
- 5 Barry University (4.5 miles)
- 6 FIU Biscayne Bay Campus (8.9 miles)



# SECONDARY ASSESSMENT

## INCUMBENT AND TARGET INDUSTRIES

### 01 IDENTIFYING THE ISSUE

The OID is roughly 100 acres of generally light and heavy industrial industries mostly focused on auto-related and manufacturing uses. However, there are few skilled or high-wage jobs within the District.

- Many of the region's food distribution centers are located around Opa-Locka. Many of the drivers do not live within the surrounding neighborhood.
- The heavy truck volume throughout the day can create a negative impact to the Opa-Locka communities, such as noise, the strain on infrastructure and traffic, pedestrian and vehicular safety, and livability.

### 02 WHY IT MATTERS

Opa-Locka's economy has been challenged for decades, and it consistently ranks among Florida's poorest cities.

- Employment opportunities within the City are generally limited to blue collar, service industry, or medical and administrative support. Therefore, the residents and employees have few opportunities in career growth and earning potential.
- Higher educational attainment is limited and subsequently, the area does not provide a significant workforce to support skilled employment opportunities. Today's employers, and therefore potential investor partners in the City, desire to be proximately located to strong and deep workforce pools.

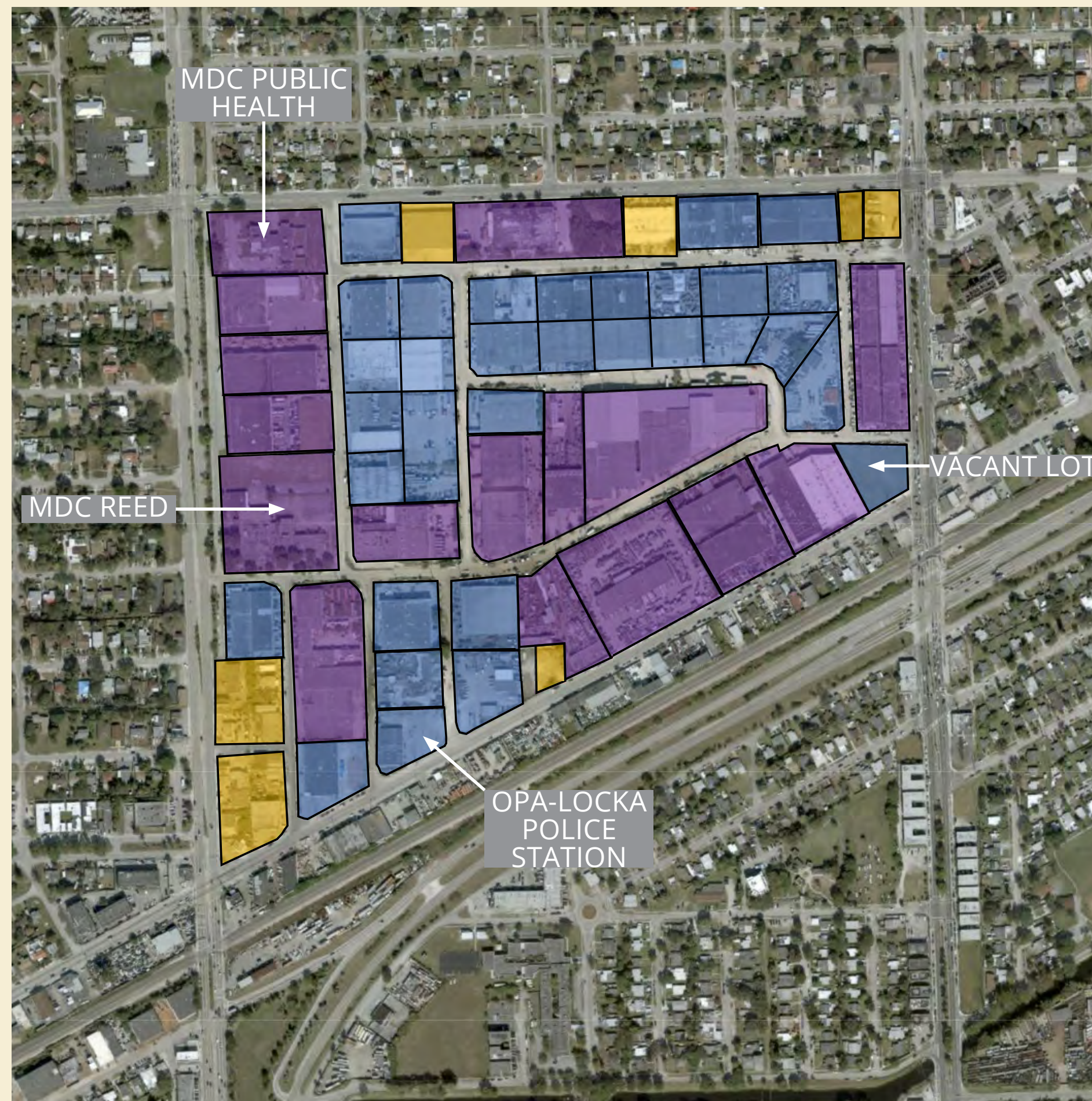
### 03 UNIQUE ADVANTAGE

The City of Opa-Locka, Opa-Locka Community Development Corporation (CDC) and the Miami-Dade Beacon Council have provided strong support of new industries coming to this area. The City is also looking into revising its zoning in the Innovation District to allow for the types of uses and industries the City wishes to attract.

- An opportunity to establish flexible land development regulations (LDRs) that will help incentivize new industries interested in the area while discouraging uses that may not be compatible with the future innovation district.
- Creating Public Private Partnerships with targeted industries will help attract business that may not have been interested in the area before.
- The Opa-Locka Executive Airport access is great for business needs and presents an opportunity to establish an innovation hub in the market of aerospace (see attached The Economic Impact of Opa-Locka Executive Airport report)



# INCUMBENT AND TARGET INDUSTRIES



## PROPERTY LOT SIZE

Lot size area for existing properties within the Opa-Locka Innovation District are substantial in size, as a majority of existing parcels are greater than two (2) acres.

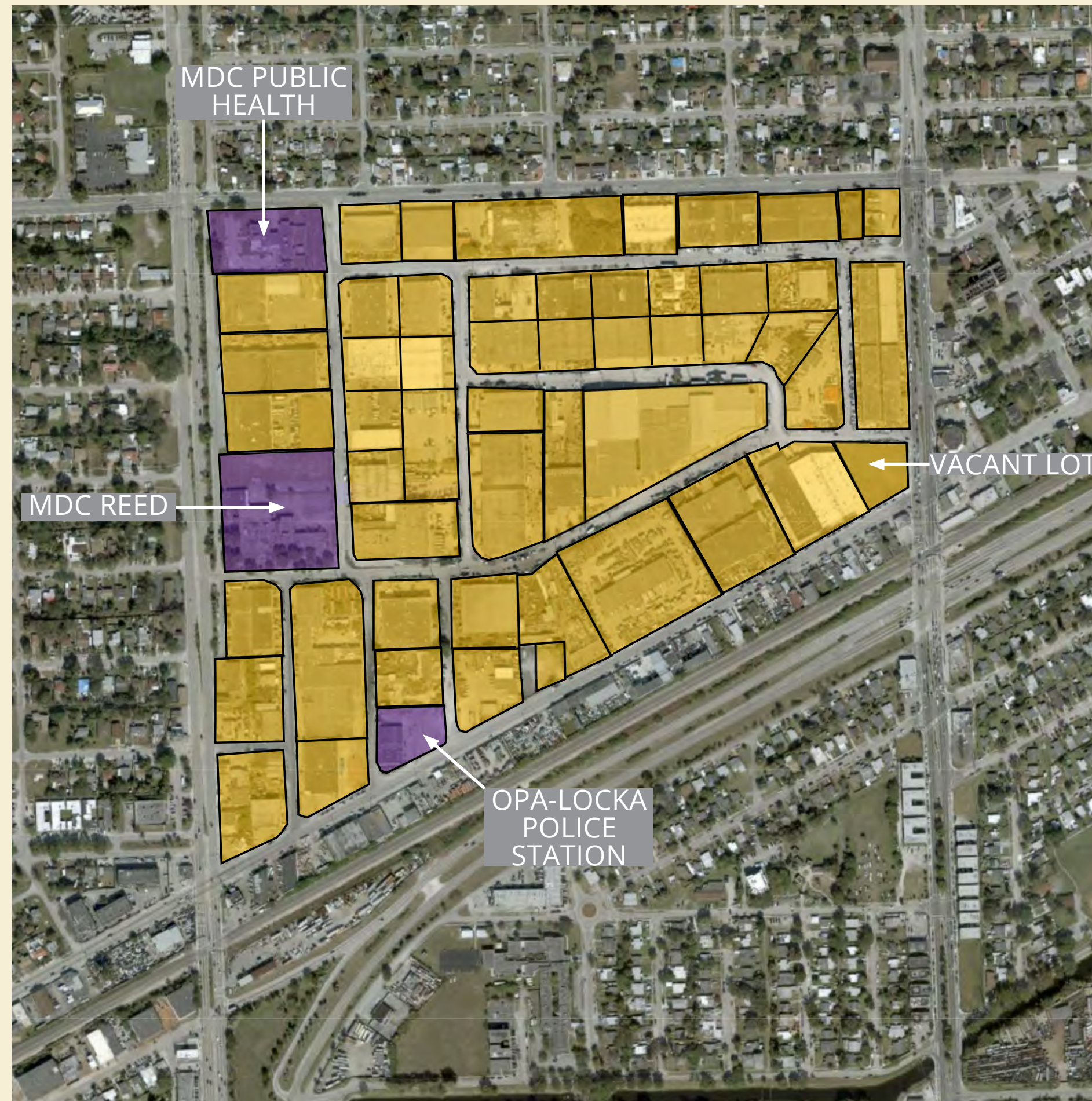
- This may be considered a benefit to the District for future development needs as it relates to adequate development area for flex space and innovation campus floor area.
- Many of the properties have long blocks greater than 400ft in length which creates a barrier and significantly reduces access to the interior parts of the OID. If maintaining the same frontage, new development will appear monolithic, especially facing the immediately adjacent residential neighborhood.
- The current zoning code does not address these issues. It promotes more larger industrial scale development instead of compact innovation space development. Industrial uses will continue to proliferate if this is not fixed.

## LOT SIZE LEGEND

- 0 - 9,000 sf
- 10,000 - 39,000 sf
- 40,000 - 79,000 sf
- 80,000 - 100,000+ sf



# INCUMBENT AND TARGET INDUSTRIES



## LAND OWNERSHIP

Predominate ownership of property in the OLD area is private. Private land is more difficult to control while Public land avails itself to the utilization of government funding and public-private partnership.

Opa-Locka CRA should consider strategies to incentivize future development that meet the community needs, in conjunction with business phasing of the District.

## LOT SIZE LEGEND

- Public
- Private



# CASE STUDIES

EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS IN SIMILARLY SITUATED MUNICIPALITIES



# INFRASTRUCTURE: STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

## Augustenborg, Malmö, Sweden

During the 1980s and 1990s, the neighborhood of Augustenborg in Malmö was an area of social and economic decline and was frequently flooded by an overflowing drainage system. Between 1998 and 2002, the infrastructure was rehabilitated and improved. Some of the improvements included creation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS), water channels, and retention ponds. Additionally, the rainwater from roofs, roads and car parks was re-directed through a system of trenches, ditches, ponds and wetlands, with only the surplus being directed into the conventional sewer system. Green roofs were required for all developments built after 1998 and were retrofitted on more than 11,000 m<sup>2</sup> of rooftops of existing buildings.

As a result, problems associated with flooding were mitigated and the aesthetic and public image of the city was improved significantly. The city re-branded as an ecological city attracting an influx of capital and achieving environmental milestones. Some of the successes included:

- Reducing tenancy turnover by almost 20%,
- Reduction of environmental impact of the buildings by 20%, and
- Energy efficiency was increased by 10%.



*In 2010, Malmö  
received the UN's  
prestigious World  
Habitat Award  
for its "Ecodistrict  
Augustenborg"*





# INFRASTRUCTURE:

## BAGBY STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Houston, Texas

The aging infrastructure along ten city blocks of Bagby Street in Houston’s Midtown needed revitalizing in order to keep up with the area’s vibrant business and pedestrian life. Bagby is a one-way collector that connects downtown Houston to the Museum District and one of the most heavily traveled freeways in Texas, the Southwest Freeway (US59).

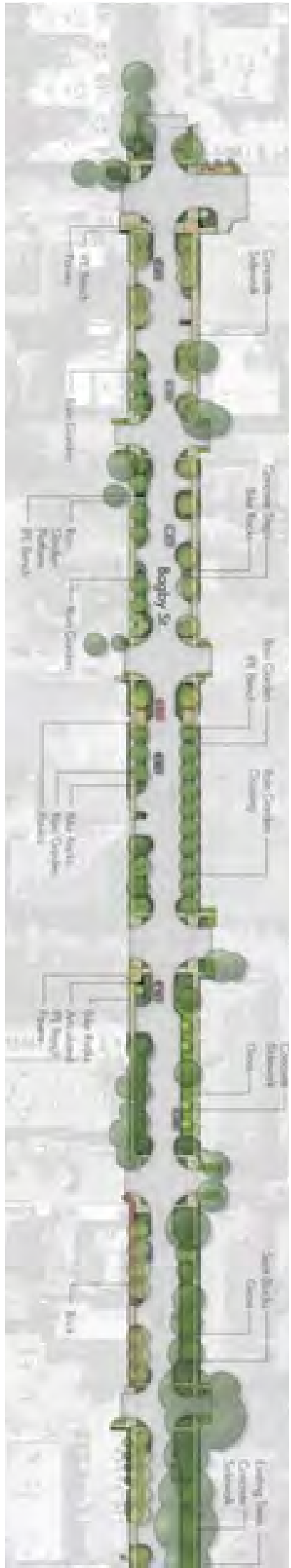
The project resulted in a walkable community with wide sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly amenities while maintaining vehicular mobility. It set a new standard for sustainable street design in Texas. The area has attracted more than \$25 million in new private developments since the pavement improvements.

The project has received the following awards and recognitions:

- 2014 Public Works Projects of the Year, The Texas Chapter of the American Public Works Association
- 2014 Best Street of the Year, Congress for the New Urbanism
- 2014 Active Mobility/Complete Streets Award, International Making Cities Livable organization



*The Bagby Street project is the first of four Greenroads-certified sustainable roadway projects in Houston*





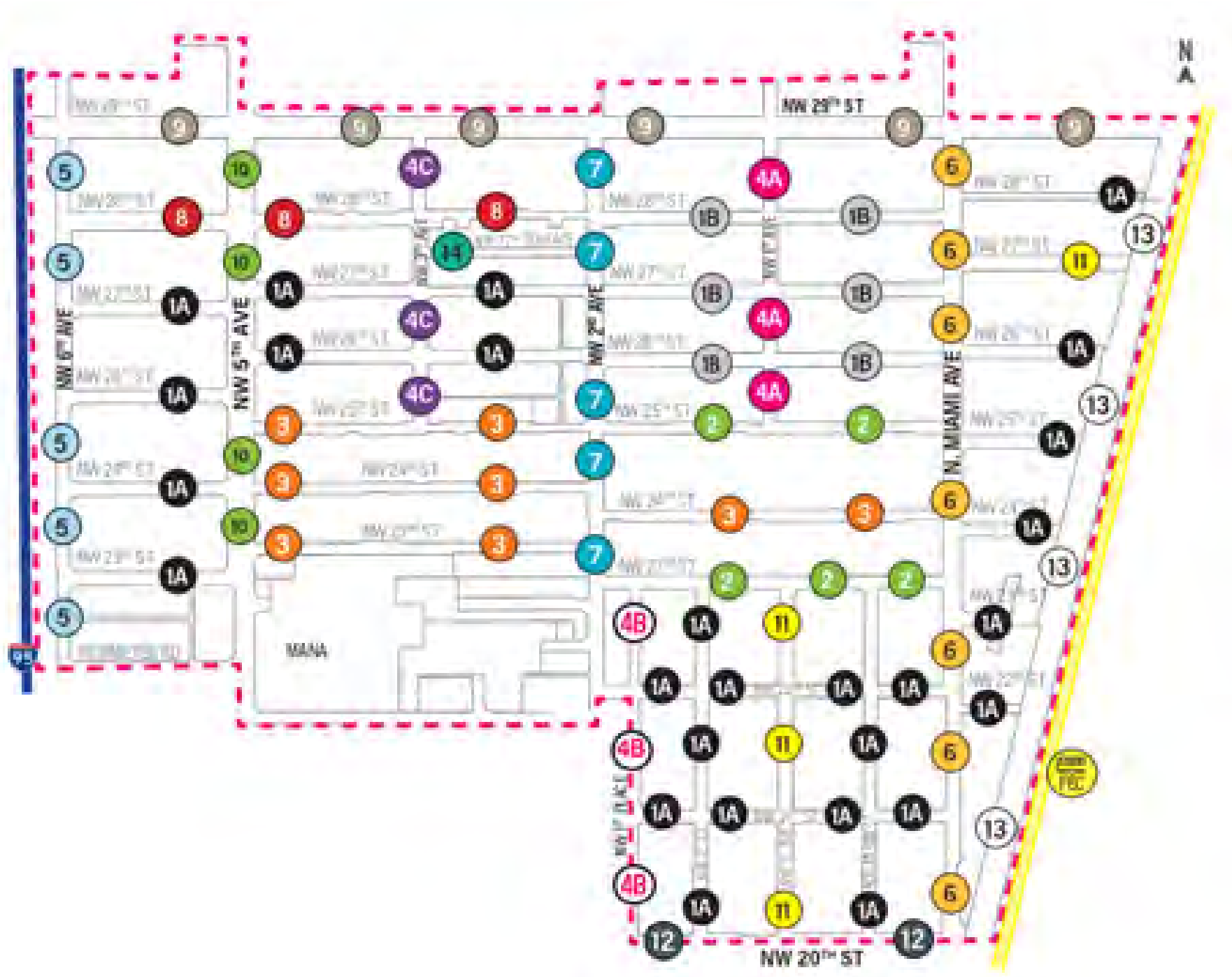
# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY: MULTIMODAL MOBILITY

## Miami, Florida

In Fall 2020, the City of Miami unanimously approved the Wynwood Streetscape Master Plan that “fosters enhancements beyond standard requirements to roadway and sidewalk conditions with an unprecedented focus on sustainability, resiliency, mobility, safety and social connectivity for the 50 city-block arts district.”

The Wynwood neighborhood has experienced a period of unprecedented growth and has quickly transformed from a blighted, industrial area to a bustling placemaking destination. Supported by the Wynwood NRD-1 overlay district as part of the City of Miami’s Miami 21 Zoning Code, the Wynwood Streetscape Master Plan seeks to provide amenities to meet the needs of all modes of transportation with planned road-diets, pedestrian-only promenades/linear green spaces (Woonerfs), bicycle lanes, and tree canopies.

Although many of the more major improvements have not yet been constructed, the City’s development of an informed, intentional master plan exemplifies a first critical step in defining the vision of an emerging neighborhood to incentivize investment and provide a safe, comfortable environment for a true mix of neighbors including residents, employees, patrons, and visitors alike. Wynwood’s revitalization efforts over the past decade have resulted in over 7,500 new jobs, over 5 million annual visitors and over \$1.5 billion in local investment and spending to support the South Florida economy.



*An unprecedented  
focus on  
sustainability,  
resiliency, mobility,  
safety and social  
connectivity.*





# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

## TOD IN LOW-INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS

### Fruitvale Transit Village, California

Fruitvale, California continued to be a troubled neighborhood into the 1990’s after its affluent residents that settled in the area since World War II migrated to new suburbs with more appeal and promises of improved business opportunities. As a result, the neighborhood began to suffer from vacant businesses, unemployment, poverty, and high crime rates. In 1998, the district was designated a “Redevelopment Area” and ultimately in 2004, became home to a \$100 million mixed-use project centered around the BART transit system’s Fruitvale station. Currently, the neighborhood has maintained a diverse resident mix and thriving businesses.

The research indicated that large-scale TOD projects can contribute to neighborhood revitalization without displacing current low-income communities if “they incorporate the various forms of socio-political, financial, and cultural capital that exists in these communities into the planning and implementation of TOD projects.” Community-based organizations (CBOs) and their involvement in leveraging a local resource such as cultural capital is vital to a neighborhood’s revitalization. The CBOs championed the efforts to gather community input, promote community participation, and collaborate with local government officials.



Community-based organizations (CBOs) and their involvement in leveraging a local resource such as cultural capital is vital to a neighborhood’s revitalization





# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION:

## LAWRENCE PARTNERSHIP TRAINING CONSORTIUM

### Lawrence, Massachusetts

The Lawrence Partnership Training Consortium is a testimony of how local leaders established partnerships with the community resources to reinvest in its residents, aiding in their skills and professional development. Riddled with poverty, a low graduation rate (69% vs. the states average of 90%) and only 12% of the residents holding a bachelor’s degree, the community of Lawrence was in dire need of skills development opportunities to empower its residents. In partnership with the public school system, community leaders were able to enter the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston’s “Working Cities Challenge” competition. Winning first prize, the city was able to establish the Lawrence Working Families initiative, leading to the creation of the Lawrence Partnership. The Partnership was led by the private sector, who immediately embarked on a 6-month strategic planning process to:

- 1. Promote economic development,
- 2. Attract business to Lawrence and
- 3. Lower the city’s unemployment rate.

Not long after instituting its presence in the community, the Lawrence Partnership established the Venture Loan Fund, offering capital to small, immigrant/minority owned local businesses. Small businesses were able use this funding to in turn invest in their employees’ development as well as attracting and training new talent. Furthermore, the Working Group developed a network of over 400 training programs in the region specific to the dominant industries in the area.



*The Lawrence Partnership Training Consortium is a testimony of how local leaders established partnerships with the community resources in order to reinvest in its residents*



# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION:

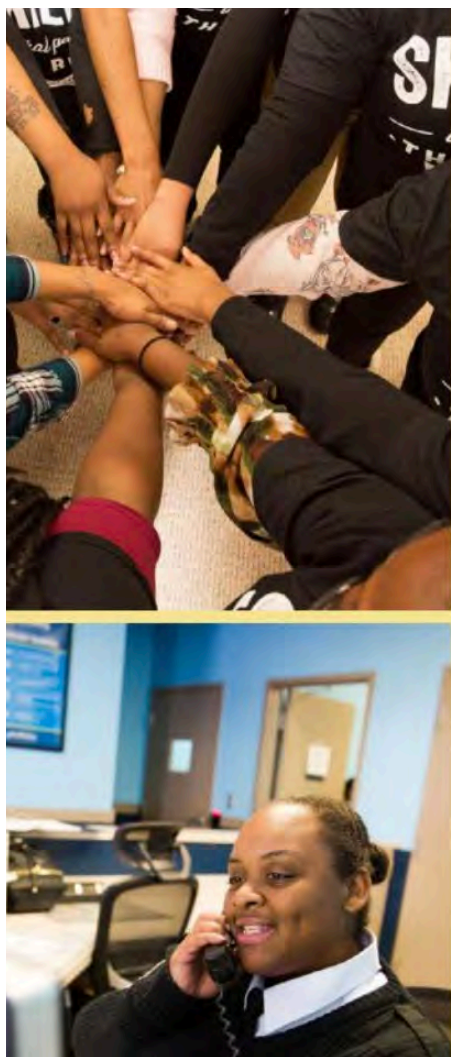
## WEST PHILADELPHIA SKILLS INITIATIVE

### Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, over the last decade, has experienced rapid urban growth that has resulted in an uneven landscape of opportunities and resources. Pockets of the city have experienced robust growth and a wealth of resources, while other parts of the city have been left behind. Residents in certain neighborhoods are being displaced and no longer able to compete for opportunities due to skill set gaps.

A stagnant public school system and the perceived inaccessible post-secondary education programs further worsened the issues. Philadelphia also experienced a high poverty and crime rates. After the death of a student outside of University of Pennsylvania, local anchor institutions established the University City District (UCD) organization designed to clean up the city to increase its aesthetic and safety appeal. To address the high unemployment rate, the UCD established a workforce development program coined the West Philly Skills Initiative (WPSI).

The WPSI aids local business in identifying their pain points when it comes to employees and attracting talent. After gathering feedback, the WPSI works closely with the employer to strategize and create a training program. In collaboration with third party development and training companies, a curriculum is created for the employer that is then rolled out to the residents of West Philadelphia. Interested residents can apply for this development program. Accepted applicants complete a full skills training, either at a resource center or via “on-the-job” training. The program has proven to be very successful, with 95% of graduates obtaining employment after completing the program.



## West Philadelphia Skills Initiative Program Overview



White Paper  
WINTER 2021



*The (WPSI) program has proven to be very successful, with 95% of graduates obtaining employment after completing the program.*





# INCUMBENT AND TARGET INDUSTRIES:

## MAGIC CITY INNOVATION DISTRICT

Miami, Florida

Located within Little Haiti in the City of Miami, the Magic City District is a proposed private development that looks to bring a mixed-use campus focused on local entrepreneurship and innovation in technology, the arts and entertainment, sustainability and resiliency, and health and wellness. The site consists of 17 acres of land made up of a former trailer park, older warehouse spaces and the historic DuPuis Medical Office and Drugstore Building. The new development when completed will consist of 7,794,139 square feet of development including 2,630 residential dwelling units, 2,208,540 square feet of office space, 520,970 square feet of commercial space, 201,600 square feet of hotel 119,610 square feet of expo space and 6,061 parking spaces. Overall development is estimated to be over \$1 billion in total cost.

The development will be fully responsible to the restoration and improvements of infrastructure needs for the project. This includes investments in roadways, storm water drainage, parks and open space, and transportation needs. A major component of the development strategy as it relates to the community is the establishment of the Magic City Innovation District Foundation, a charitable fund at the Miami Foundation, a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation, to support the economic, social, and cultural prosperity of Little Haiti and the diverse people who live and work there.



*The development will be fully responsible to the restoration and improvements of infrastructure needs for the project.*





INCUMBENT AND TARGET  
INDUSTRIES:  
IMPERIAL MOTO, LITTLE RIVER DEVELOPMENT  
Miami, Florida

Imperial Moto is a “motors-inspired” coffee shop located in the Little River District in Miami. This 2,000 square foot establishment is a unique space that combines a motorcycle theme with a coffee shop. The Little River District is a former industrial district that is transforming into creative worker space for Miami. Established in 2016, Imperial Motors is one of the pioneers for this transformation in the neighborhood.

A unique space  
that combines a  
motorcycle theme  
with a coffee shop





# RECOMMENDATIONS



# REPUTATION | PERCEPTION: REBRANDING

The City should hire a PR agency to work with City staff and stakeholders to develop a comprehensive public relations strategy that focuses on changing the perception of the City and leveraging positive news and progress the City is making to attract new investment.

- Specifically, it is recommended that Opa-Locka partner with a firm that has experience representing municipalities. One such example is Levy PR, which is local to South Florida and has that type of experience.
- Branding overhaul and creating a cohesive brand package is essential for the future success of the City of Opa-Locka.
- Immediate steps the City can take to implement this initiative is developing an RFP for PR services. An example company and example municipality RFP are attached at the end of the report.

FORT LAUDERDALE

FTL

DDA

DOWNTOWN  
DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)  
MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES

RFP # MARKETING-2020-1

The Fort Lauderdale Downtown Development Authority invites qualified marketing and public relations firms to submit a proposal package for consideration to provide all or a portion of marketing and public relations (PR) services including strategic messaging, development of materials and content, digital media management, and media correspondence.

SUBMISSION DUE DATE  
September 21, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. (ET)

*Submitting the proposal package at the DDA office by or before the stated date and time is solely and strictly the responsibility of the respondent.*

*The DDA reserves the right to postpone, accept, or reject any or all proposals in whole or in part. All Proposers must certify that they are not on the State of Florida Comptroller General List of Ineligible Bidders. All proposals shall remain in effect for One Hundred Eighty (180) days from the RFP submission due date.*

**CONE OF SILENCE:** Any verbal or written communications between any Proposer (potential or actual), or its representatives and any DDA Board Member, staff member, committee member, or consultant regarding this procurement are strictly prohibited from the date of the RFP advertisement through the date of execution of the contract. The only exceptions to this are: (1) written requests regarding information or clarification made to DDA’s designated contact during the allowable time-period under the solicitation; (2) any communications at a publicly noticed meeting of DDA. Any violation of the requirements set forth in this section shall constitute grounds for immediate and permanent disqualification of the Proposer/violator from participation in this procurement.

RFP# MARKETING-2020-1Page 1

## public relations.

Levy is a worldwide agency that provides the professionalism, experience and an innovative approach to its clients. Specializing in both the national and international arenas, Levy delivers a fresh and creative vision for clients. We are committed to developing a PR campaign for our clients in order to introduce brands, strengthen their presence and raise visibility. We identify the target audience and position our clients so that they are communicating via print, online media and TV broadcast.

We are constantly generating new press stories to secure coverage using different angles and reaching into new markets. Our goal is to keep our client’s message essential by introducing new creative ideas and story angles to the media. Through established relationships with international media in Latin America, Europe and abroad, we have launched numerous successful marketing campaigns in countries such as Argentina, China, Brazil, Panama, Mexico, Canada and the UK. We are extremely effective with creating partnerships and aligning our clients with media from around the world to continually increase global business reach.

## strategic marketing.

Levy prides itself on taking a strategic perspective to all clients and situations and thoroughly tackling projects from a 360-degree approach. From initial concepts to crafting an identity, mood, tone and feeling, Levy understands what it takes to not only promote, but to create a successful brand. We launch in-depth, exploratory sessions with our clients to fully understand their current brand positioning, and we are able to strengthen the brand and offer new perspectives through a series of exercises. Through our extensive discovery sessions, strategic process and intuitive methods, Levy has the capability of bringing powerful brands to fruition. We implement this process in all phases of the marketing approach, including PR, social media and interactive events.



## community.

Levy strives to connect clients with the community in which they do business. We understand public relations encompasses more than just press, so we facilitate relationships for our clients with our network of government and private organizations as well as different charitable partners.

## partnerships.

Levy goes above and beyond market standards by offering a network of niche partnerships and strategic opportunities with a variety of organizations in order to capture our clients’ target audiences. The relationships we have cultivated over the years have allowed us to successfully forge long-lasting partnerships for our clients to contribute to their overall success. Partners include brands like the Orange Bowl, NSU Museum of Art, The Real Deal, Veuve Clicquot, Hublot, Delos, Art Basel and more.





# INFRASTRUCTURE:

## BUILD INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

There are two key issues that require immediate attention to attract capital investment: 1) Flood prevention and 2) the rehabilitation of the pavement. Showing that the City can properly operate and maintain its storm water system will help build investor’s confidence in the government.

- The infrastructure improvements can be phased starting from the perimeter (NW 27th Avenue, Ali Baba Avenue, NW 151st Street, and NW 22nd Avenue) to provide the necessary cash flow to support the capital investment.
- Subsequent attention should be focused on the NW 147th street corridor being a roadway that connects NW 27th Avenue and NW 22nd Avenue.
- The City has been developing a Stormwater Master Plan since 2020. We recommend that this plan be reviewed and supplemented by an engineering consultant with experience in similar large infrastructure rehabilitations including the rehabilitation of pavement and improvement of streetscapes.

Images of Clematis Street in West Palm Beach are shown on the right.



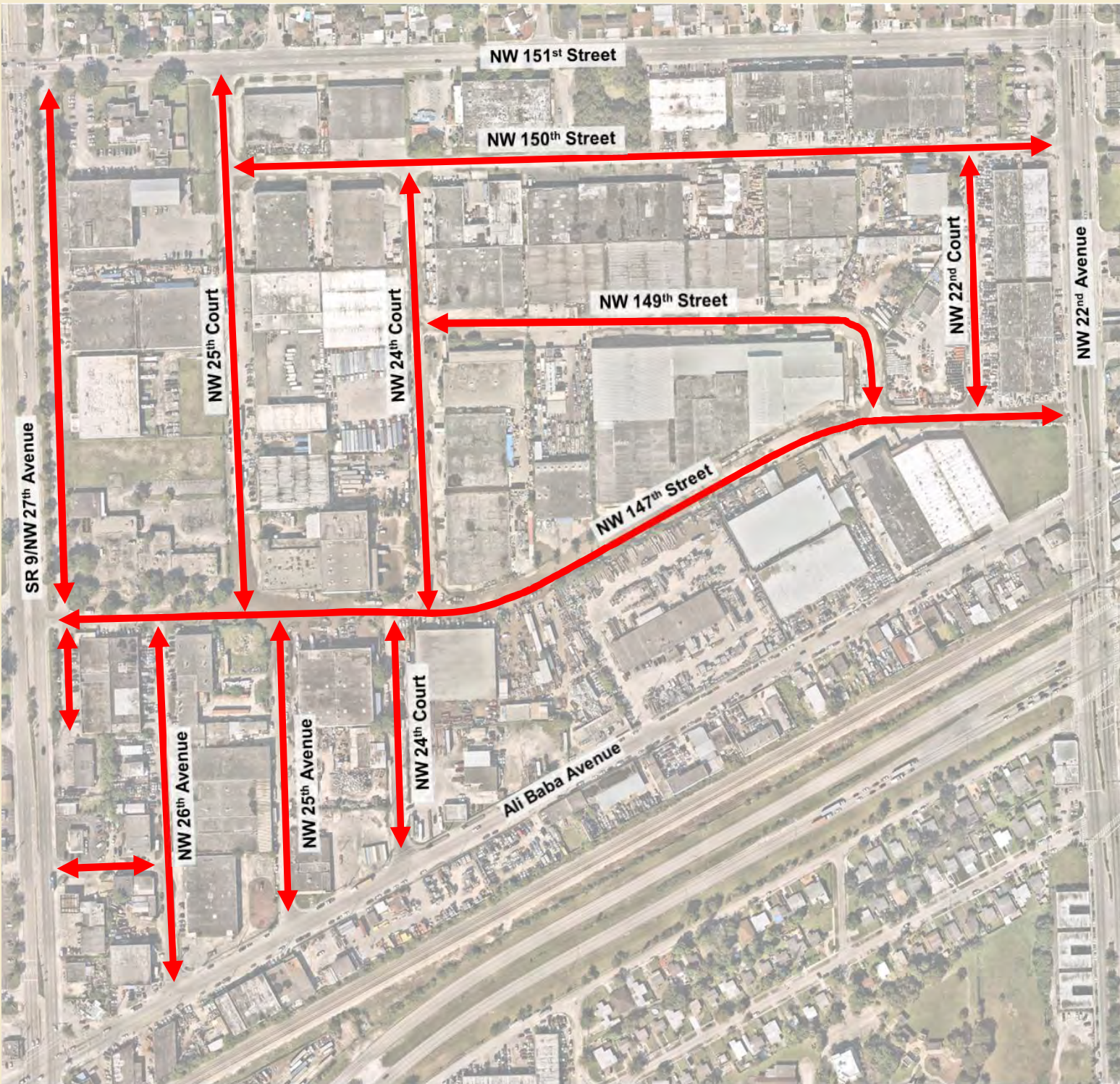


# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

## DISTRICT MACROSCOPIC MOBILITY

All roads within the District are currently two-way traffic. Given the redundant North-South parallel roadways, the City should look into a new circulation pattern that promotes one-way traffic and improves public right-of-way for other modes of mobility.

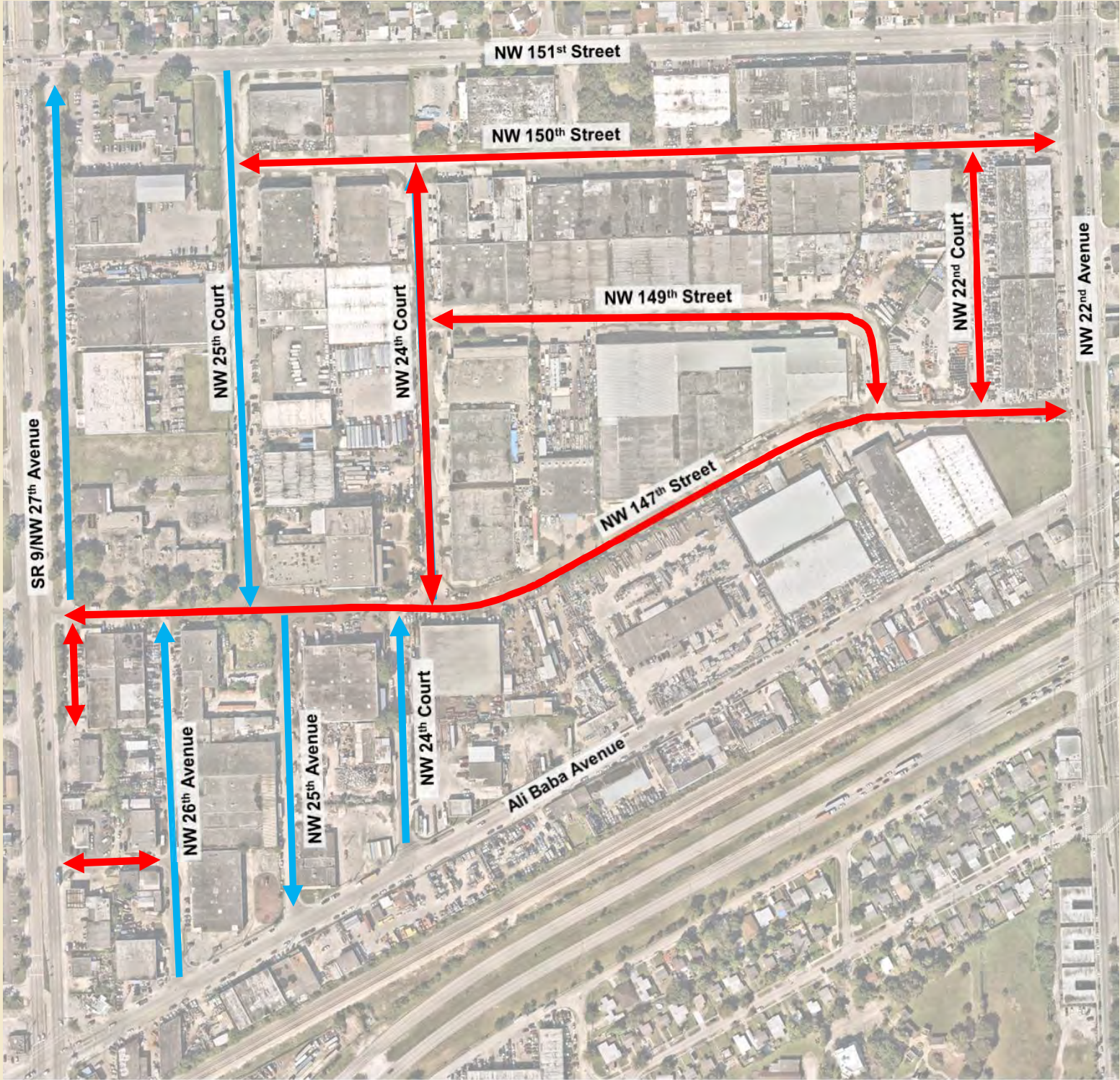
- Major micromobility-friendly road and separate service road should be clearly identified.
- The City should leverage the traversable infrastructure at the outer boundaries to attract development inwards.
- Miami-Dade County SMART Plan North Corridor will evaluate potential for elevated heavy rail or enhanced bus rapid transit along NW 27th Avenue
- Prevalent illegal parking can be better regulated with an established paid parking system (i.e. Pay By Phone, Park Mobile), anticipating greater parking needs as the District continues to develop and improve.
- Require new developments to internalize loading or designate shared loading areas on-street.



### LEGEND

- ↔ Two-Way Traffic
- One-Way Traffic

### EXISTING CIRCULATION



### PROPOSED CIRCULATION



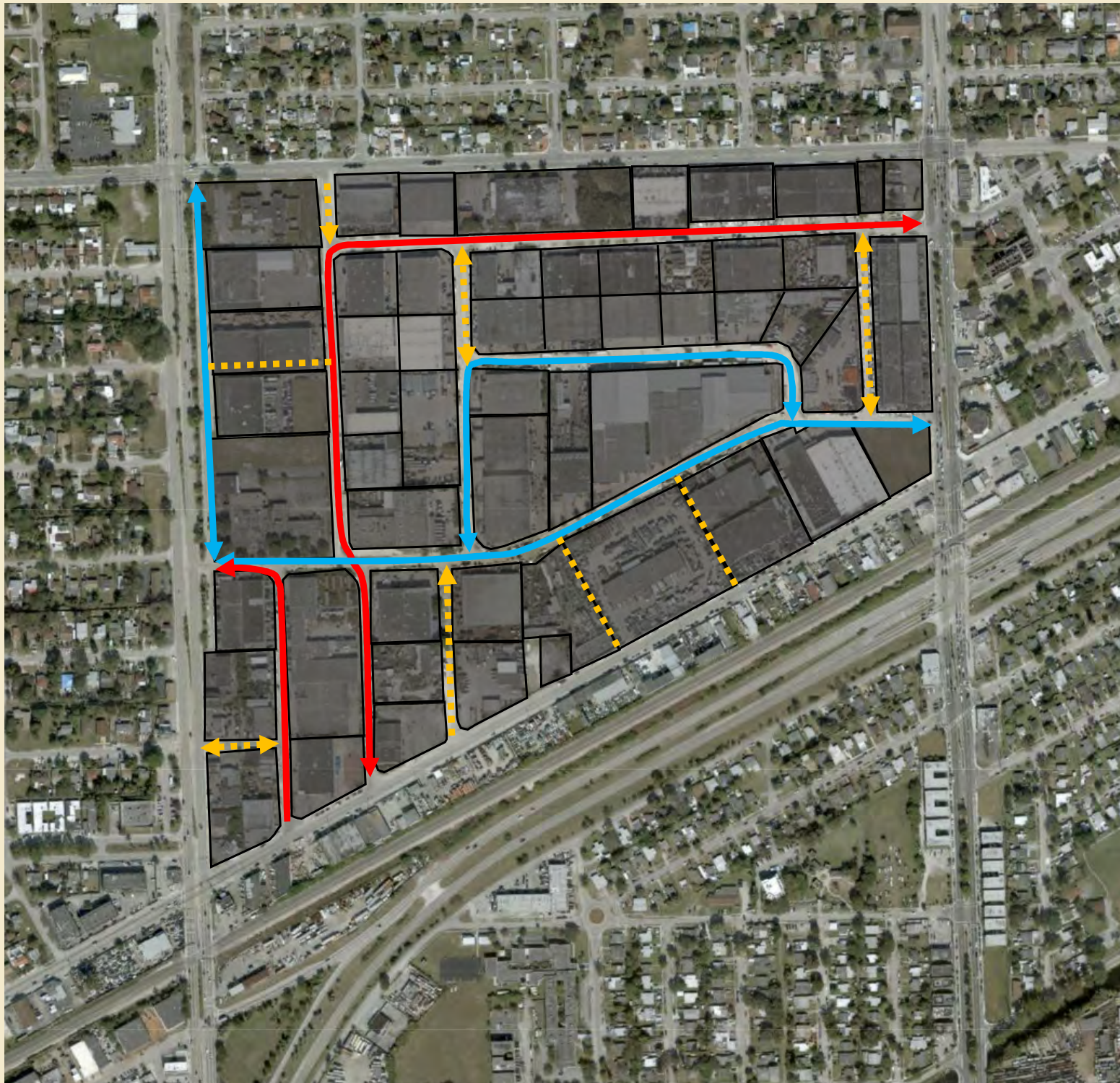
# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

## DISTRICT MACROSCOPIC MOBILITY

For the District circulation to function successfully, even during phasing and transition, separate service routes and multimodal routes should be identified. We propose the following preliminary options:

- Option 1 leverages the outer boundary of the District where we expect most of the initial development to occur given the advantage of the navigable roadway infrastructure. As such, service routes are proposed along the outskirts of the District to serve those properties while micro-mobility routes remain throughout the District as short-term and potentially more feasible rehabilitation can be provided to the roadway network for micro-mobility utilization, rather than the level of rehabilitation needed to accommodate service vehicles.
- Option 2 prioritizes the District core. Given the existing roadway network, the District has a relatively defined core for activity. As such, the service and micro-mobility routes identified in Option 2 seek to incentivize development in the core of the District. Note that this Option 2 may be challenging given the poor condition of infrastructure in the core.

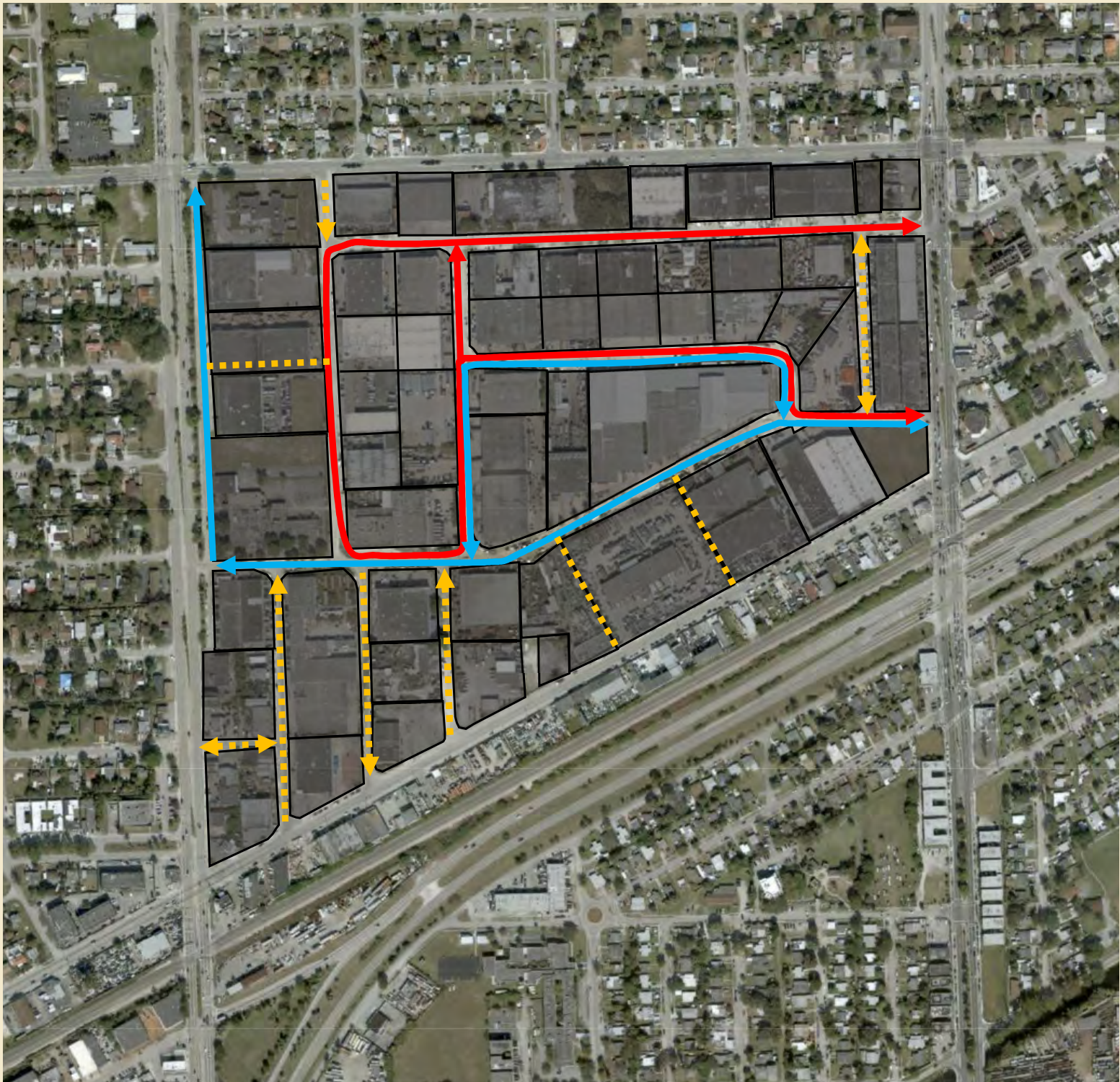
Future easements are also proposed as a part of the zoning code to address the issue of the unique lot size conditions and to promote cross-block passage connectivity.



LEGEND

- ↔ Phase I Service Vehicle Route
- ↔ Phase I Micromobility Route
- ↔ Future Improvement Route
- ..... Future Breezeway Easement

PHASING OPT 1



PHASING OPT 2



# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

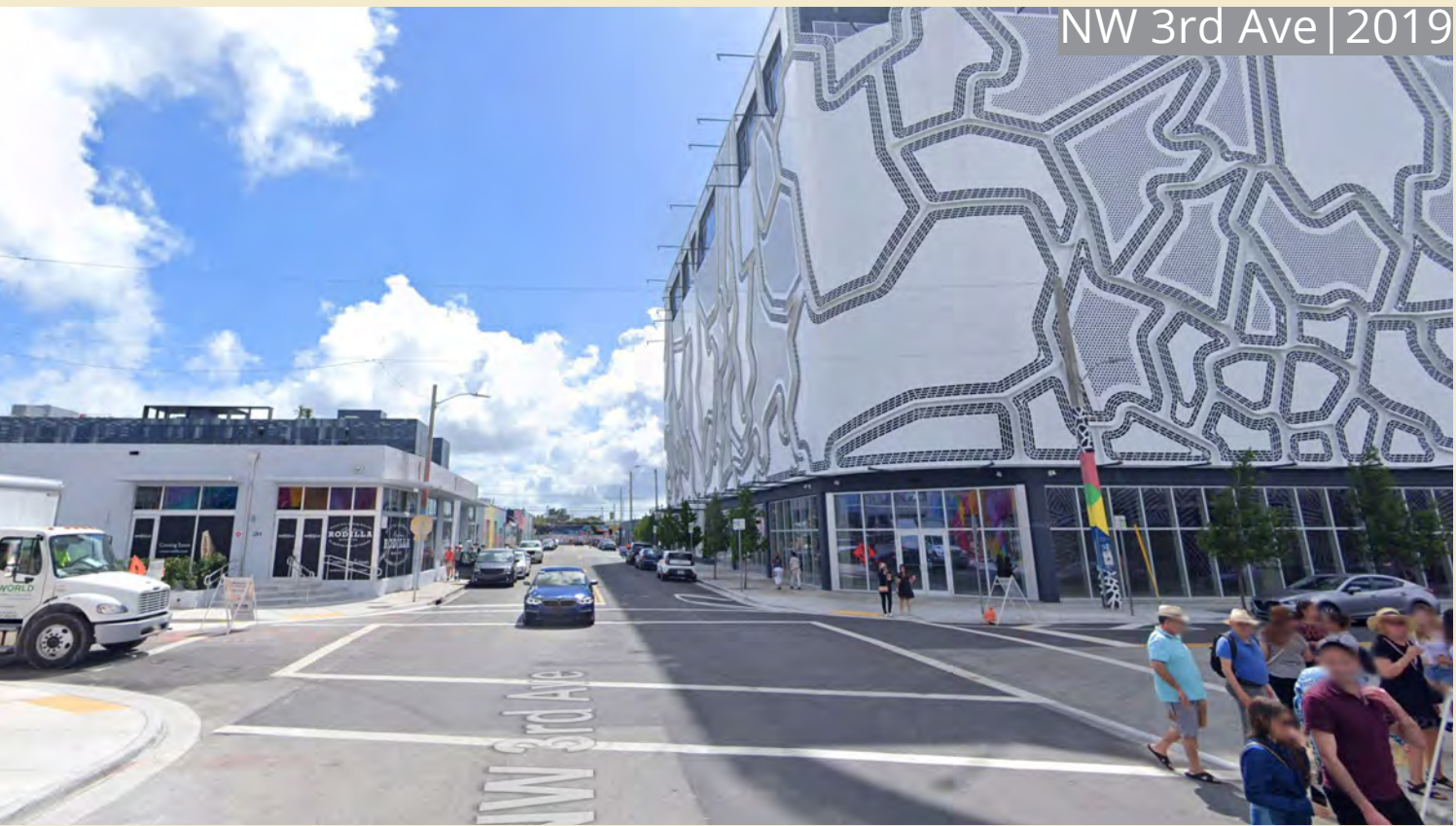
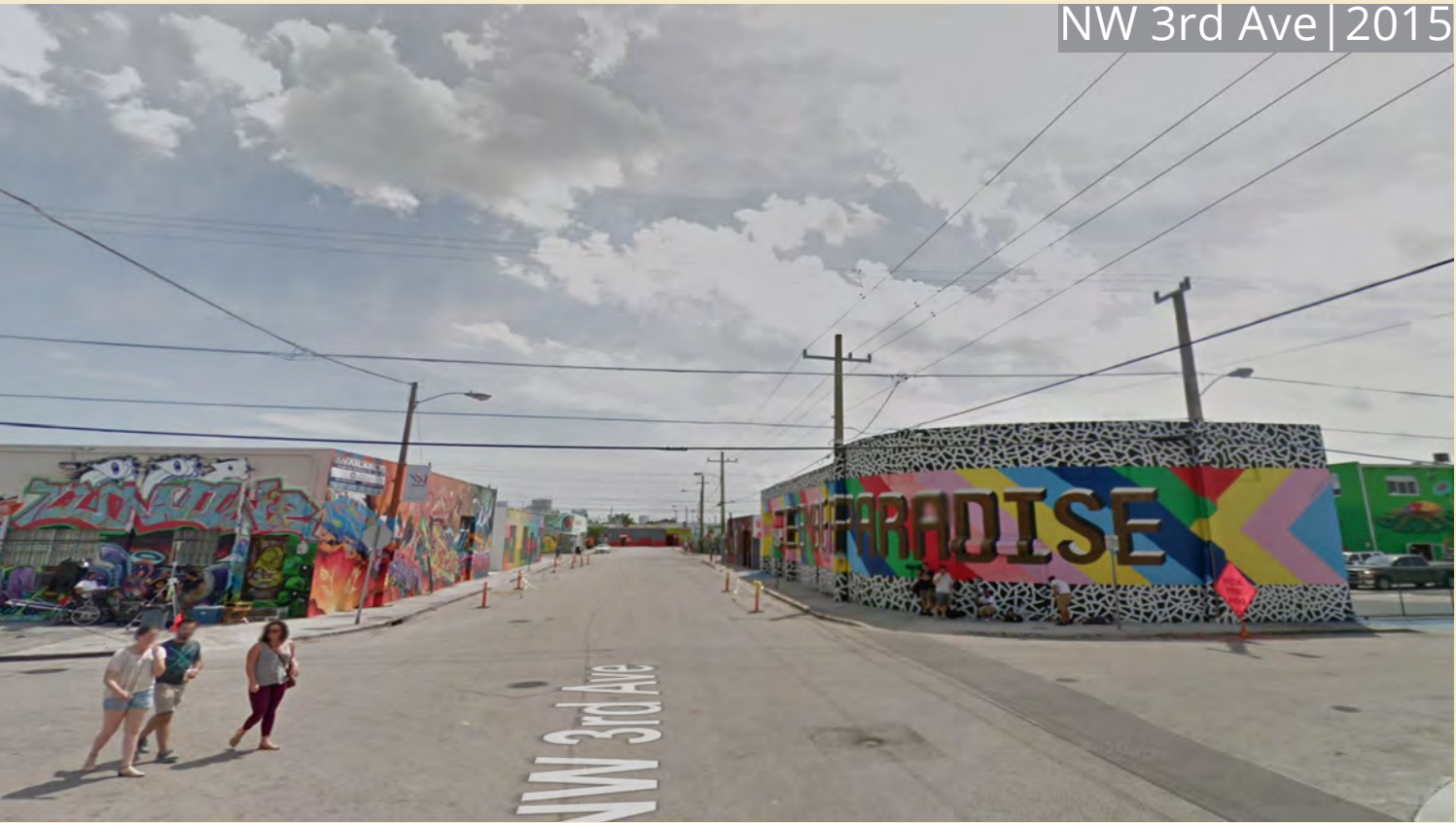
## STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN

Using Wynwood as an example, a streetscape master plan was developed to identify specific street sections for specific types of roadways. (See case study on page 23 for additional information)

If a similar approach is implemented in the OID:

- This will allow the City to incrementally improve the public spaces within the District as part of the permitting process for new development.
- As existing non-conforming properties will not be subject to these requirements, the element of incentivizing development is critical to this approach.
- Re-design streets to provide a “complete street” which include well-defined on-street parking that can calm traffic, increase parking supply, and enhance road user safety.

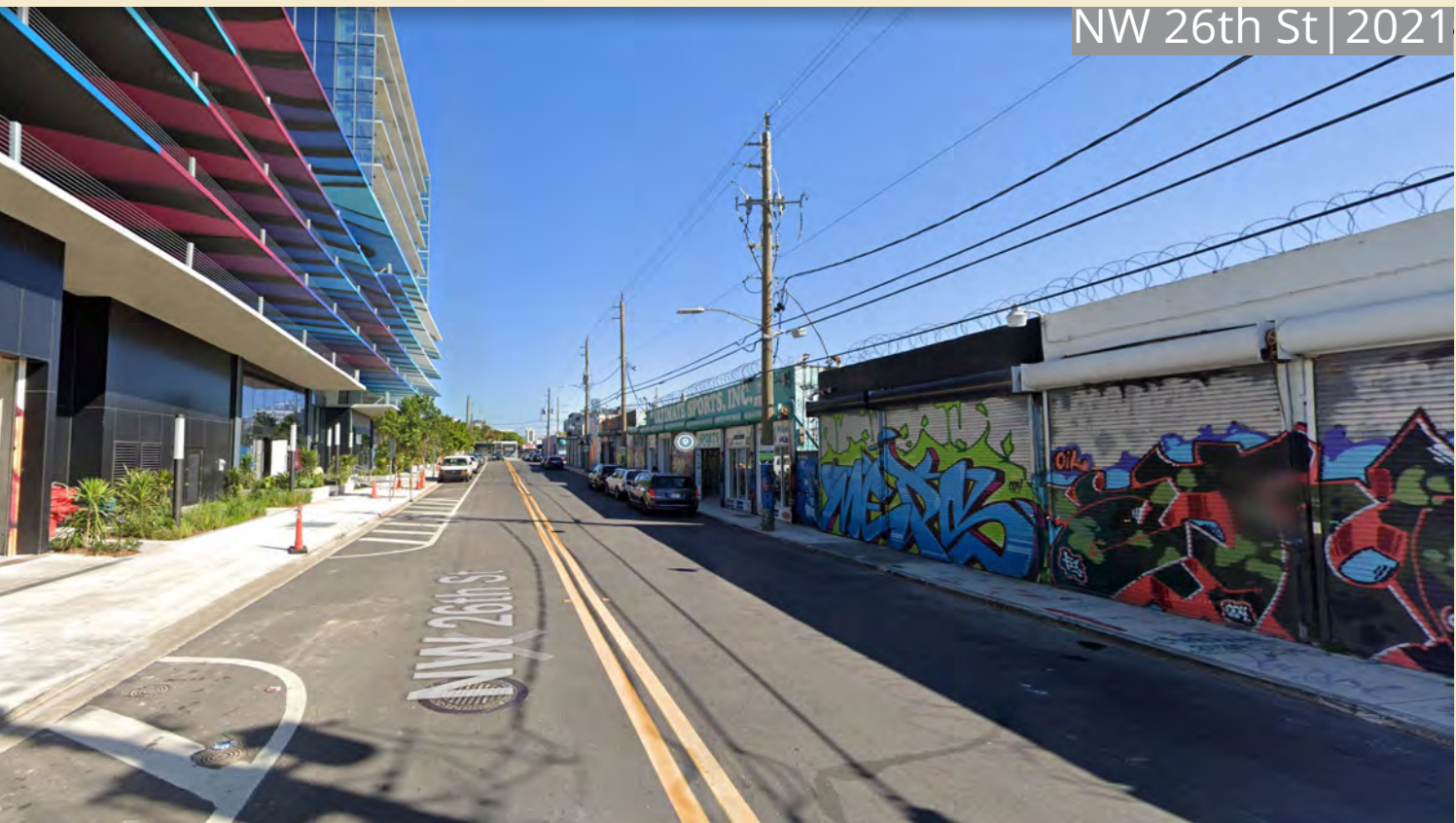
Photos on the right are time lapse of Wynwood developments on NW 3rd Avenue.





TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:  
STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN

Photos on the right are time lapse of Wynwood developments on NW 26th Street.





# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

## DISTRICT MICROSCOPIC MOBILITY

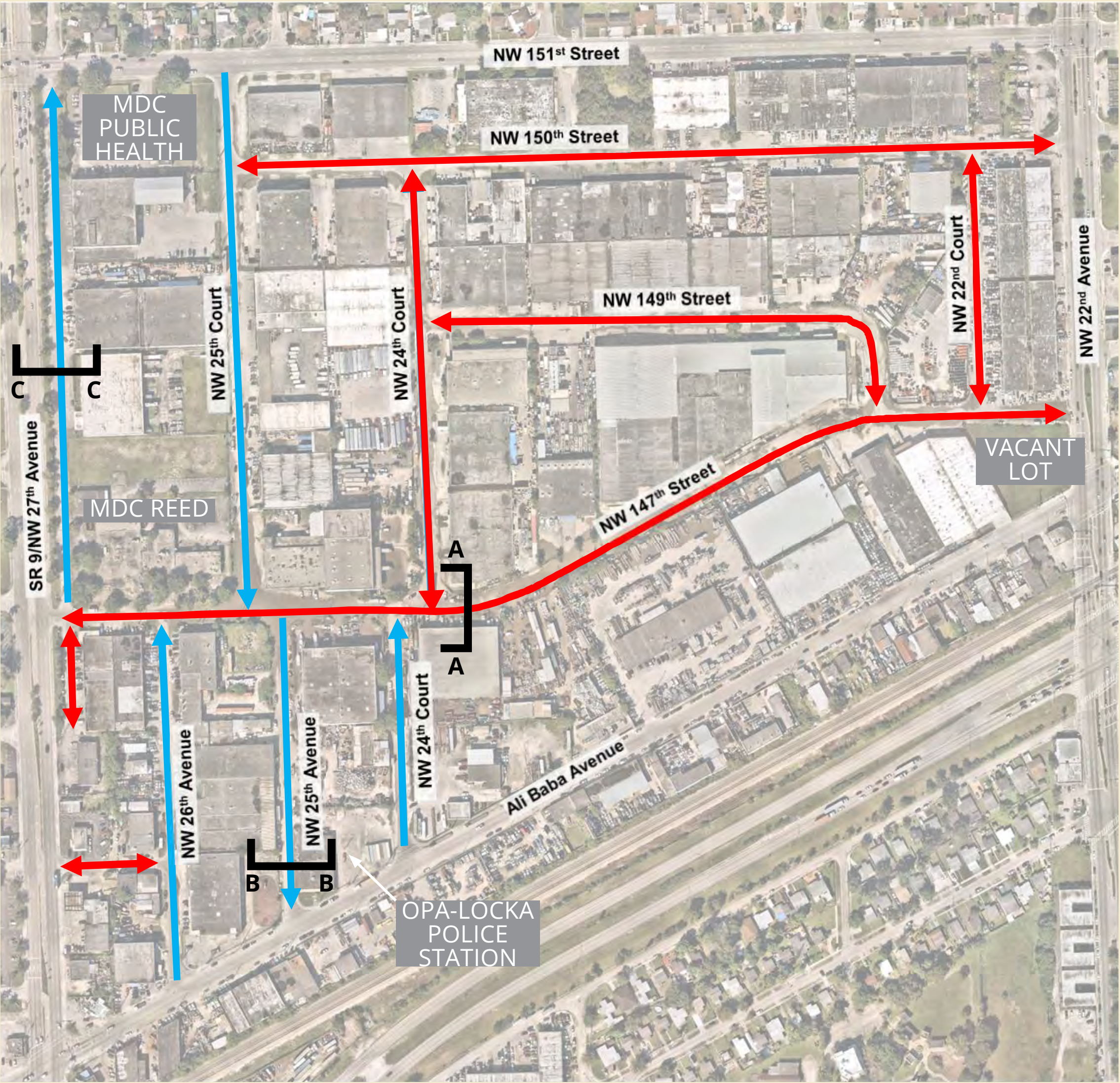
It is critical that visitors of the OID, whether local or from outside of the City, can safely and effectively travel to and from the District.

- The OID benefits from its proximity to single and multifamily residential areas and its proximity to major arterial roadways, interchanges, and multimodal facilities.
- E-scooters and e-bicycles are primed for use in this District, and City-wide, to promote quick and cost-effective transportation in and out of the area.
- Expand Freebee service area to include Opa-Locka (currently already serving neighboring Miami Lakes) and leverage existing businesses and industries to attract micro-mobility/micro-transit companies to improve the “First Mile/Last Mile” problem.
- Leveraging the existing facilities in the area that could serve as storage and maintenance facilities for these micromobility vehicles, as well as the existing labor force skilled in the automotive repair and maintenance industry.

The following proposed street sections provide the potential kit of parts for the District on how public space is utilized and shared amongst vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists, and micro-mobility users.

### LEGEND

- ↔ Two-Way Traffic
- ➡ One-Way Traffic
- └ Street Section Location





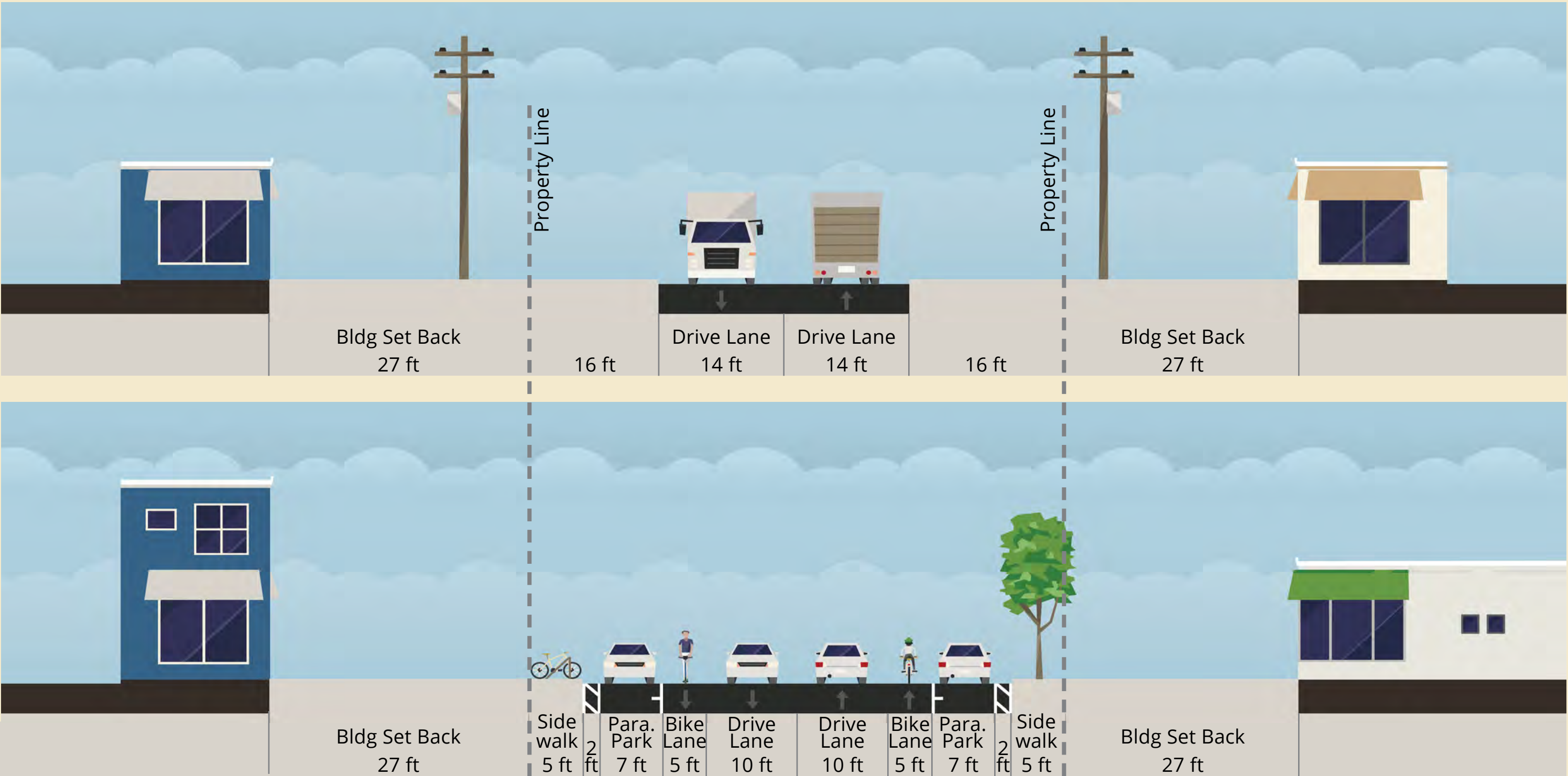
# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

## STREET SECTION EXAMPLES

NW 147th Street provides the only continuous east-west connection through the District from NW 27th Avenue to NW 22nd Avenue.

Therefore, this right-of-way is positioned to be the primary gateway and main thoroughfare through the area, and thus the most frequently utilized to get to/from the District. This is a 60-foot right-of-way with the opportunity to provide a balance between the needs of moving vehicular traffic as well as accommodating safe and effective multimodal activity.

As a result, parallel on-street parking spaces, dedicated bicycle lanes and wide sidewalks are proposed to create the sense and feel of an activated main street.



SECTION A-A



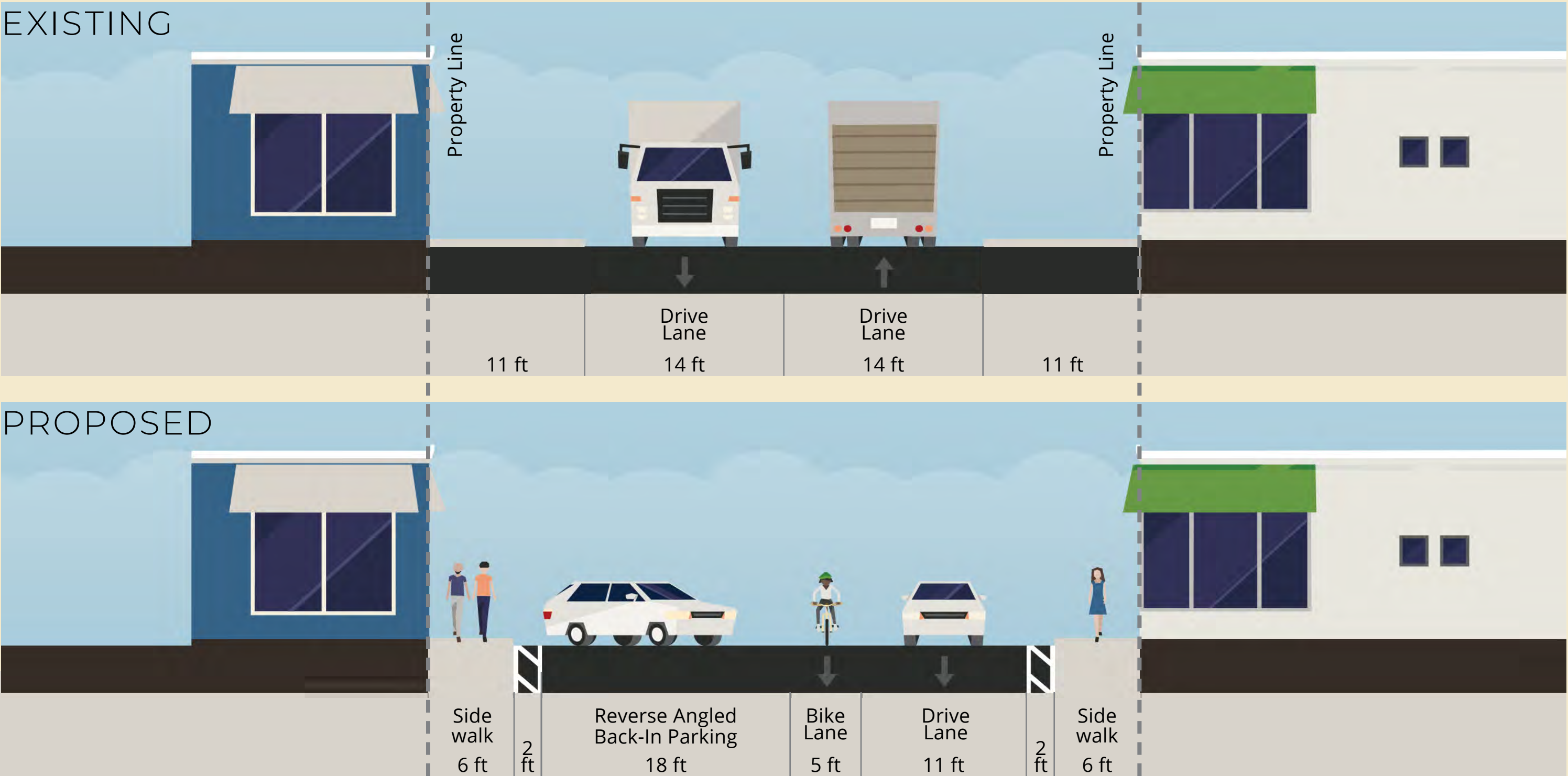
# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY: STREET SECTION EXAMPLES

NW 25th Avenue, similar to many of the north-south connections within the district, extends relatively short distance and provides an opportunity to better utilize the right-of-way to better serve the District.

These right-of-way widths range from 50 to 65 feet. A conversion to a one-way facility could simplify circulation/access within the District and re-prioritize the right-of-way and the public realm for use by multiple users.

Reverse angled back-in parking is proposed to improve visibility between vehicles leaving a parking space and bicyclists utilizing the on-street dedicated bicycle lane.

SECTION B-B





# TRANSIT | ACCESS | MOBILITY:

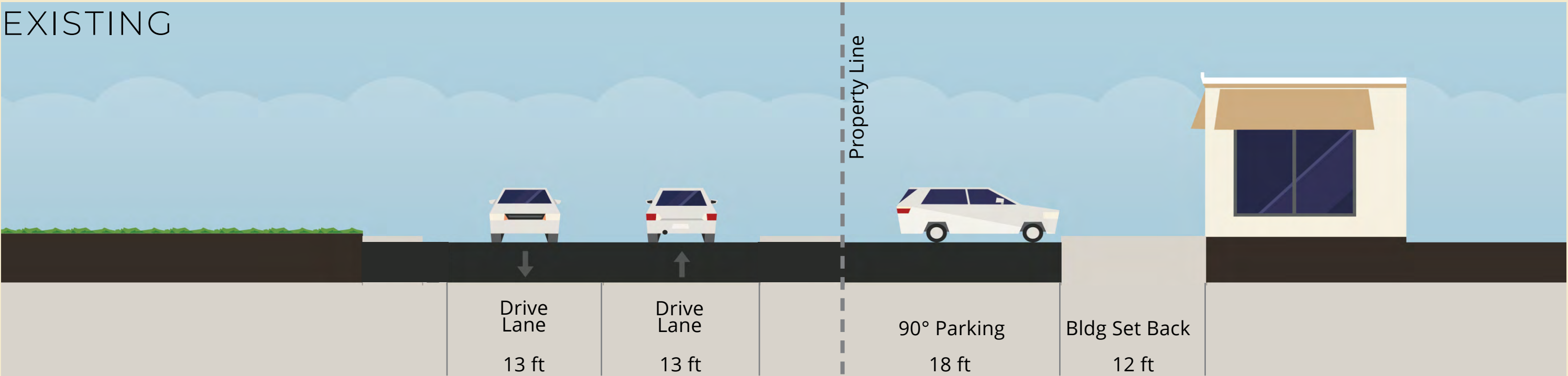
## STREET SECTION EXAMPLES

NW 27th Avenue Frontage Road provides access to properties just east of SR 9/NW 27th Avenue within the District and is part of Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) right-of-way. This FDOT right-of-way is approximately 40 feet wide and extends more than 1 mile to the north.

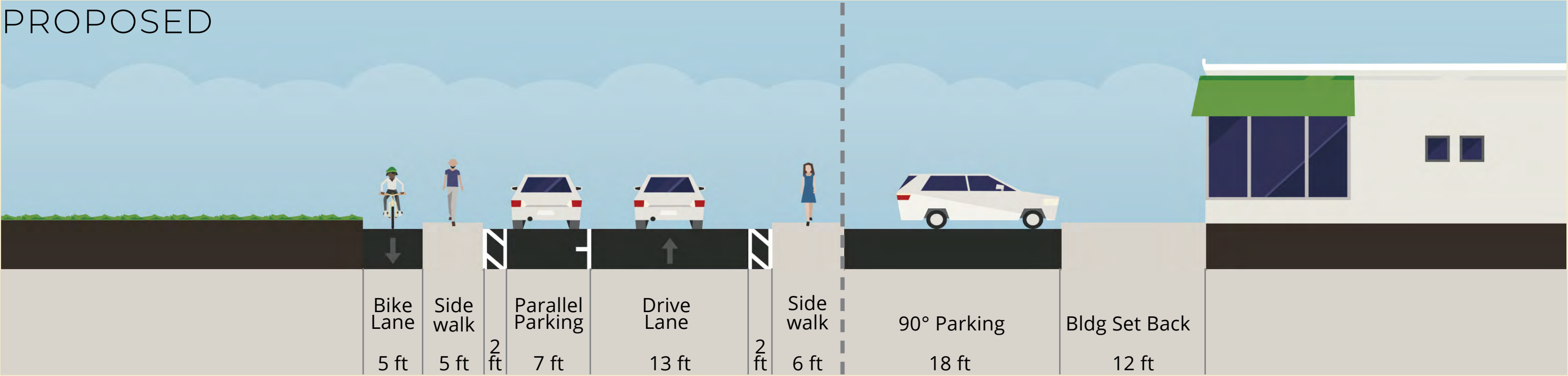
As this area is expected to benefit from future transit facilities as part of the Miami-Dade TPO’s SMART Plan (North Corridor) and associated Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) zoning incentives, a conversion to a one-way northbound facility could minimize vehicular conflict points and provide the necessary width to provide a multimodal amenity (such as a shared-use path) that can serve future TOD projects and benefit the District.



EXISTING



PROPOSED



SECTION C-C



# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION:

## EDUCATION ADVANCEMENT

The City of Opa-Locka’s commitment to fostering and leveraging its relationships with local higher education institutions, as well as closing the gap between educational resources and residents of the City is imperative to the advancement of Opa-Locka’s workforce.

- Partner with a reputable developer to petition for a high school to be built in the City.
- Partner with Miami-Dade College, St. Thomas University, and Florida Memorial University (all within a 3-mile radius) to provide shuttle service. The shuttle service will have the added benefit of providing high visibility and establishing a presence of these institutions in Opa-Locka, creating a bridge between them and the community.
- Establish regular college/trade school fairs and offer hands-on assistance with financial aid applications. Partner with The Carrie Meek Foundation education programs.
- Organize a grassroots initiative to create a petition to bring relevant and in-demand industry skills courses to the local higher learning institutions.





# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION:

## CAREER ADVANCEMENT

The City of Opa-Locka can overcome many of the challenges presented in regards to the career advancement of its residents through a collaborative approach with many of its local community and corporate resources as well as the engagement of its resident stakeholders, and business and community leaders.

- Create financial incentives for small businesses to invest in talent through tax credits.
- Engage local organizations like CareerSource South Florida (Opa-Locka Branch) to create training/co-op opportunities for high school aged residents
- Partner with corporate career building initiatives, such as:
  - o Amazon (UpSkilling 2025 and CareerChoice Programs)
  - o Argo AI (Internship Programs, AV Testing)
  - o Ford Next Generation Learning (Community Driven High School Learning)
  - o George T. Baker Aviation Technical College (High School and Post-Secondary)
  - o Tesla START Training Program (Miami Dade College partner)





# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION: AMAZON PROGRAMS

## Amazon Upskilling 2025 Program

- Amazon has committed \$1.2B to provide employees and the public with education, skills training, and even college tuition through the year 2025. Current programs include:
  - o Amazon Web Services Grow Our Own Talent (on-the-job training and placement)
  - o Surge2IT (Training program for entry-level IT employees)
  - o User Experience Design and Research (UXDR) Apprenticeship

## Amazon CareerChoice Initiative

- Amazon’s CareerChoice Initiative is a pre-paid tuition program that works in collaboration with higher education partners to provide virtual and classroom training and college credit programs including:
  - o Amazon Technical Academy (Transition into software engineer career)
  - o Amazon Technical Apprenticeship
  - o Amazon Web Services Training and Certification
  - o Mechatronics and Robotics Apprenticeship
  - o Machine Learning University (MLU)





# COMMUNITY WORKFORCE | EDUCATION:

## COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Form a liaison committee that will organize, coordinate and drive collaboration between the City of Opa-Locka and the various local organizations and businesses. The committee should include residents that have a personal stake in the progress of the City of Opa-Locka i.e., local business owners, educators, or those in academia.





# INCUMBENT AND TARGET INDUSTRIES:

## BUSINESS PHASING



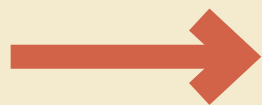
### PH I BUSINESS CLEAN UP 1-5 YRS

**Transition Out:**

- Allow businesses five (5) years to consider other operations that are aligned with the OID. Incentives can include tax or impact fee reduction, as well as a transition program to establish vocational education programs at their current businesses.
- Increase enforcement of violations (illegal dumping, parking for business use beyond business property, providing services that are not licensed by the business. etc.) within the District.

**Transition In:**

- Façade improvement program (incentivizing art and new painting)
- Elevate existing businesses. Incentive strategies should be considered for businesses that are adequately transitioned within the 5-year time frame.



### PH II NEW INNOVATION 5-10 YRS

**Attract New Innovation Business:**

- Provide tax incentives, development capacity incentive, parking reduction, permitting and impact fee credit, and grant programs
- Develop partnerships with City and existing businesses/property owners

**Establish Community Connection Program:**

- Identify academy
- Create training program
- Engage vocational trades school



### PH III ELEVATE GROWTH 10-20 YRS

**Leverage the New Success of OID:**

- Attract new partnerships/business
- Evolve tax incentives and benefit programs
- Further improve and adapt the streetscape and infrastructure



# INCUMBENT AND TARGET INDUSTRIES:

## FLEXIBLE LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATION

The new regulation should support innovation spaces that will activate ground floors. Clear category of uses should be established for OID.

- Education and Job Academies related to automotive science, robotics, artificial intelligence, aviation technology, computer science and programming, such as:
  - o Administration and educational learning centers;
  - o Research Facilities
  - o Special Training/Vocational Schools
- Creative office space
- Manufactured Enabled Retail is a facility primarily engaged in the manufacturing, processing, or assembly of goods and shall include on-premises retail sales. Such as maker space, breweries, and coffee roasters.
- Co-working Use is considered a shared office use with common amenities that permits access and use on a short-term contractual basis.





ACKNOWLEDGMENT

ULI Southeast Florida Caribbean, Leadership Institute.  
Tanya Wilson, Assistant Village Manager, Miami Shores Village.  
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Agustin Dominguez, President, Affordable Communities of Florida, Inc.  
Stanley Rigaud, Vice President, International Economic Development, Miami-Dade Beacon Council.  
Bradlee Lord, Vice President, Seagis Property Group.  
Dr. Donnie Hale, Executive Director of Community Engagement and Strategic Partnerships.  
Eric Clement, SVP Fund Manager, RXR Realty.  
Brian Pearl, Principal, Global City Development.  
Jannie Russell, Chairwoman, Opa-Locka CRA.  
Gregory Gay, Director, Opa-Locka CRA.  
Corion DeLaine, Former Interim CRA Manager, Opa-Locka CRA.  
Kinshannta Hall, Board Clerk, Opa-Locka CRA.  
Darwin Williams, Interim City Manager, City of Opa-Locka.  
Gerald Lee, Interim Community Development Director, City of Opa-Locka.  
Sha’mecca Lawson, Executive Assistant to the City Manager, City of Opa-Locka.  
Christopher Wills, Deputy City Clerk, City of Opa-Locka.  
Joanna Flores, City Clerk, City of Opa-Locka.

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