Town Center Master Plan Report

City of Miami Gardens, Florida

Prepared by:

Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Acknowledgements.

City of Miami Gardens

Mayor	Shirley Gibson
Vice Mayor	Oscar Braynon, II
Councilmember	Melvin L. Bratton
Councilmember	Aaron Campbell, Jr.
Councilmember	Ulysses Harvard
Councilmember	Sharon Pritchett
Councilmember	Barbara Watson
City Manager	Danny O. Crew, Ph.D.
Assistant City Manager	Christopher D. Steers
Director	Jay Marder, AICP
Senior Planner	Bhairvi Pandya, AICP

Calvin Giordano & Associates, Inc.
Master Plan + Pattern Book + Regulating Plan

President	Dennis Giordano
Vice-President-In-Charge	Shelley Eichner, AICP
Project Manager/Architect	Gianno Antonio Feoli, ASLA AIA Urban Design - Landscape Architecture - Planning

 © Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Introduction:

The City of Miami Gardens has a unique opportunity to redevelop existing areas within the designated Town Center District as an opportunity to establish a downtown area of cultural and civic importance, a place where people truly live, work, and play – a place to celebrate community.

This Master Plan, Pattern Book and Ordinance Recommendations are all the result of the efforts of a great number of people – City and Civic Leaders, City Staff, Citizens, Landscape Architects, Urban Planners and designers, architectural historians, and a number of other professionals, who are not only needed to implement the vision but who's input have helped shape the outcome of this journey.

The City of Miami Gardens has great impetus for the development and creation of their Town Center, promoted by the anticipated new Miami-Dade County MetroRail station, a new City Hall facility, connections to an existing County Public Library, and the need to establish a Civic and Cultural Arts Center for their residents.

Miami Gardens has had the forethought to see beyond just the immediate, short-term needs of the City and has chosen to not address these in isolated conditions. Instead, the City is utilizing these initiatives as the catalyst for the creation of an environment that fosters civic pride, a sense of community, a sense of place and viable economic commercial activity.

To achieve this goal, the Master Plan steers away from establishing formulaic assemblages of land-uses that will result in the creation of a Business District. Instead, careful consideration is made to create cohesive and planned environments that promote a mix of uses, adequate densities and intensities of use to properly activate the Town Center, affordability, livability, and walkability.

The Miami Gardens Town Center is a product of the vision of the City of Miami Gardens and its residents to provide a true, viable town center for its citizens. The vision for the Town Center is such that it comprises public transportation, residential, commercial, office and civic uses, in both horizontal and vertical mixed-use combinations. The Town Center is designed to be the heart of the City, a downtown environment where people can live, work, shop, and be mobile in a space that is rich in architectural character and that is composed of open public spaces that make the pedestrian experience the foremost important criteria for design. The vibrancy of the Town Center is intricately dependent on the future expansion of the Miami-Dade County's MetroRail North Extension and the planned station at the Town Center site, coupled with the construction and articulation of a matrix of systems that provide connectivity and character experiences built into the proposed street networks and their relationships to the establishment of a street and sidewalk culture. Centered around a "town square," the Town Center enfolds pedestrian-oriented streets that connect the four different Sub-District Areas (Civic Center Sub-District, Commercial Corridor Sub-District, Town Square Sub-District, and Residential Node Sub-District), as well as the internal Quad areas (the Residential Quad, Commercial Quad, Mixed-use Quad and the Transportation Hub Quad) comprising the Town Square Sub-District. Housing many of the City's significant institutions, such as City Hall, the Transit Hub, and the Regional Public Library, the Town Center will be the place for the citizens of Miami Gardens to commune, celebrate and establish the personal and historical achievements of their City and community.

This publication contains the vision of the City of Miami Gardens' Town Center in the form of its Master Plan. It is a framework to be used to guide development to the successful implementation of the vision.

The Master Plan as depicted herein, illustrates the vision for a redevelopment initiative in an already-existing condition – predominantly surrounded by residential uses. The Master Plan represents the City of Miami Gardens' vision of the Miami Gardens Town Center. It provides a guide that establishes key components and principles for its development and is the basis for the zoning recommendations put here forth.

Organization:

The scope of work for this document includes three phases:

Town Center Master Plan and Planning Book Components:
The Master Plan Components illustrates the vision for a redevelopment initiative in an already-existing condition-predominantly surrounded by residential uses. The Master Plan Components represents the City of Miami Garden's vision of the Miami Gardens Town Center. It provides a guide that establishes key components and principles for the development of the vision.

It regulates all aspects of the constructed realm for the Town Center, including architectural massing, building types, land uses, heights, facades, style recommendations, materials, detail guidelines for open space, streets, parking, and service functions. It establishes the basic design guidelines that will ensure that the development of the Town Center will all be in keeping with the overall vision, and thus serves as a pictorial accompaniment to the Zoning Ordinance.

Town Center Regulating Plan:
The Town Center Regulating Plan sets forth the legal criteria that will regulate all development within the Town Center District. As part of its criteria, the ordinance will determine density, required amenities, building parameters, street typologies, design criteria, and other specificities that will aide in ensuring that the vision for the Town Center is a mandatory implemental facility.

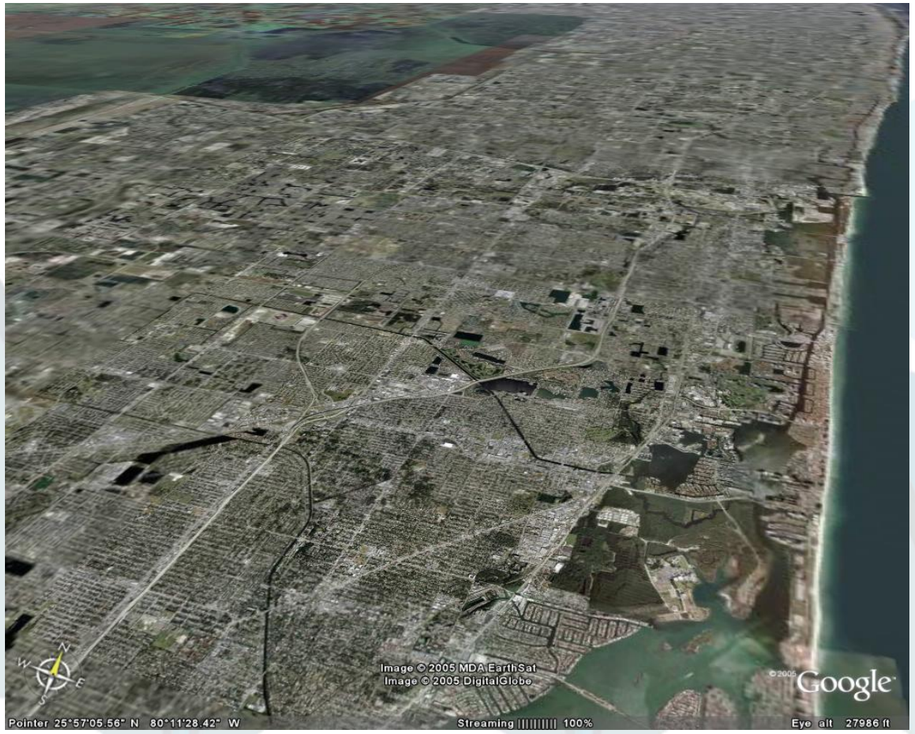
© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Regional Analysis

Miami Gardens is located in South Florida in on the boundary between Miami-Dade and Broward Counties, situating itself at an important strategic location as the gateway into Miami-Dade County for Broward residents utilizing the future MetroRail North Extension. The City, incorporated in 2002, neighbors and is approximate to the cities of Aventura, North Miami, Miami Lakes, and Miramar. Like much of South Florida, the City of Miami Gardens is characterized by a multi-cultural community. The regional area is characterized by its sub-tropical climate encompassing a three-county region, including the Florida Keys in Monroe County, Miami-Dade County and Broward County. Miami Gardens, because of it's unique location on the edge between two of the most culturally diverse and dynamic areas in Florida, has an opportunity to capitalize on the advantage of its geographic location and the present regional economic vitality to create a Town Center that will serve Miami Gardens into as its cultural core and as a stage for its development into the 21st Century.

Contextual Analysis

This diagram shows the location of the Town Center in the context of Miami Gardens at the intersection of West 27th Avenue and North 183rd Street – Miami Gardens Avenue. This location, just west of Interstate 95 and just north of the local expressway State Road 826 – Palmetto Expressway, illustrates the great potential for local and regional connectivity of the selected area designated as the Town Center District. Additionally, the Town Center is in close proximity to the Golden Glades Exchange, a point of confluence of the aforementioned regional connectors with State Road 441, Miami-Dade County's North 163rd Street, and the Florida's Turnpike.



© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Permitted Uses
No building or structure, or part thereof, within the district shall be erected, altered or used, or land used in whole or in part for other than one or more of the following specific uses, subject to all other applicable standards and requirements contained in this ordinance:

Multifamily apartments and townhouses
Hotels and motels
Commercial services and retail goods, including spas and health clubs, beauty salons, clothing, florists, gift shops, banking services, pharmacy, news stands, and restaurants.
Conferencing facilities and meeting rooms
Offices – business, medical and professional
Public and private educational facilities
Parking lots and garages
Public parks and recreation facilities
Government uses
Recreational uses, including cinemas and theatres

All uses, if not prohibited below or specifically permitted above but which can be construed to be allowed under these permitted uses, shall be deemed permitted.

Conditional Uses
Bars, taverns, cabarets, and lounges provided that individual establishments shall not exceed three thousand (3,000) square feet in gross floor area.
Religious uses.

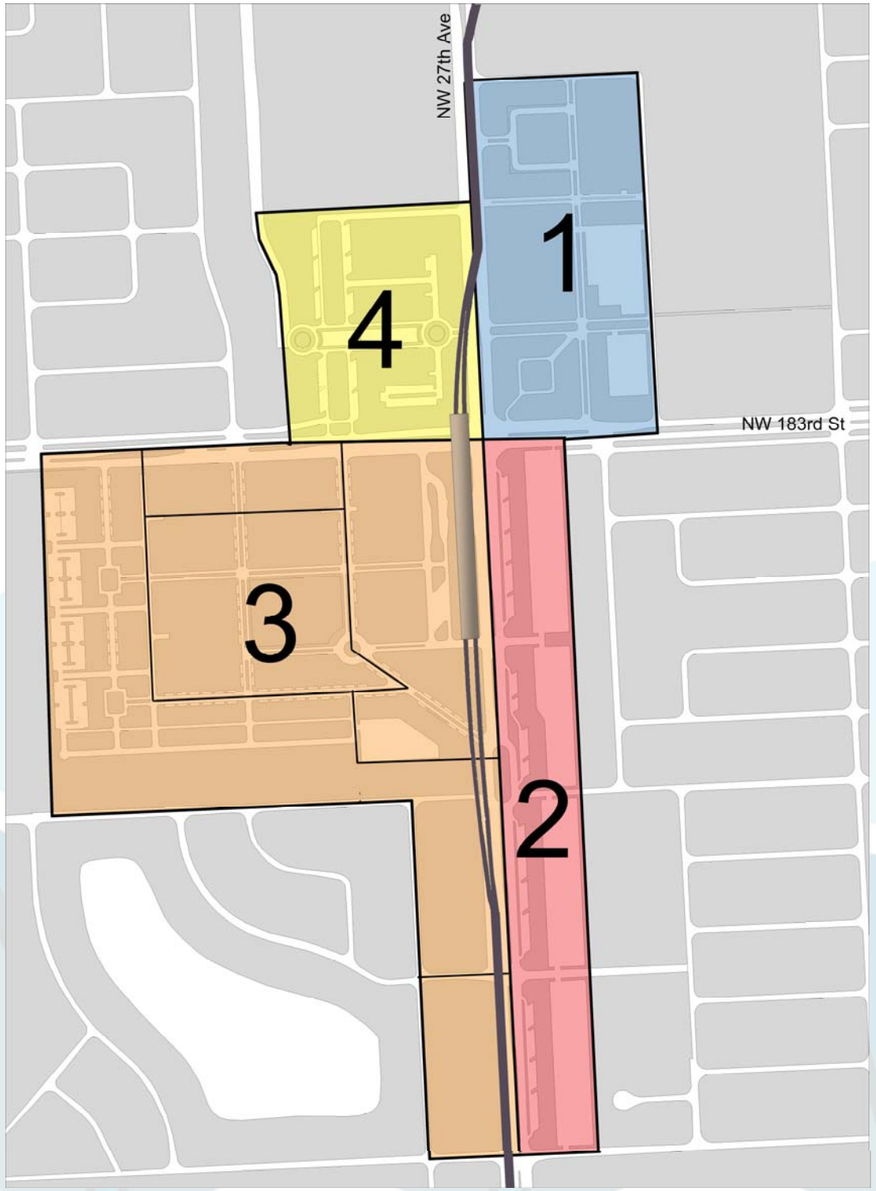
Prohibited Uses
The permitted uses listed in this district shall not be construed to include, either as a principal or accessory use, any of the following:

Pawnshops
Automobile and light truck new sales agency or rental
Automobile service stations
Automobile self-service gas stations
Automobile storage within a building
Installation of automobile tires, batteries and accessories
Automobile washing
Adult entertainment as defined in Article II.
Apartment Hotels
Single-Family, Duplex Homes.

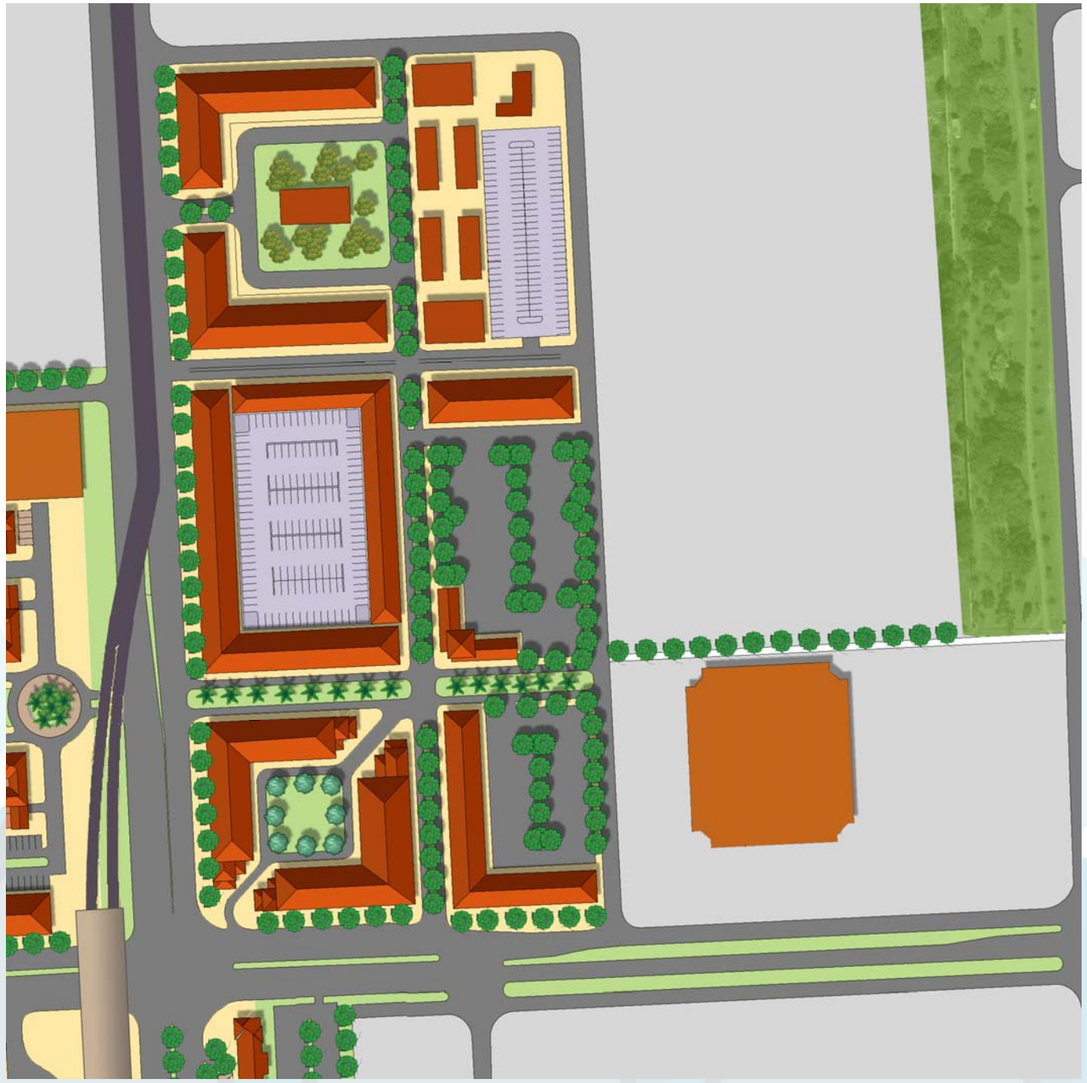
© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Site Analysis

This diagram shows the conditions of the site in the local context. The greatest impacts on the site are the location of the future station for the MetroRail at the intersection of Miami Gardens Drive and W 27th Avenue. The area that comprises the Town Center District is bisected by both major vehicular corridors, creating four distinct sub-districts, each with very unique surrounding conditions and contexts.



Sub-District 1: Civic Center is located at the northeastern corner of the intersection. It presently has a strip commercial shopping center to the south and is abutted by a newly constructed Fire Department Station and a Police Station to the north. Also occupying this sub-district is a Miami Modern (MiMo) inspired commercial office building that will house the future City Hall for the City. To the east of the sub-district there is planned a residential development and there is a potential connection to the Miami-Dade Regional Library and a linear park that runs north-south terminating at the library facility and connection opportunity.



© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Sub-District 2: Commercial Corridor is located at the southeastern corner of the intersection. It presently is characterized by stand-alone commercial buildings and by commercial strip shopping centers fronting W 27th Avenue. The commercial properties typically provide parking on the rear of the buildings, serving as a buffer between to the abutting Single-family residential predominant uses to the east. Presently there is an existing right-of-way that provides an opportunity for further enhancing connectivity to between the residential properties to the east and W 27th Avenue.

Sub-District 3: Town Square is located at the southwestern corner of the intersection. It is an L-shaped area that presently has Single-family residential uses on the internal streets and commercial properties facing W 27th Avenue, similar to the conditions across the street. On the northern extents of the sub-district is an under-utilized xx-acre parcel of land designed as a commercial big-box strip center with XX acres of asphalted surface parking and deteriorated, poorly-maintained buildings. This area alone is the most crucial piece of the entire Town Center, because it holds the highest potential for a visionary mixed-use redevelopment of the kind envisioned by the City of Miami Gardens. The future Metrorail station is scheduled to be located at the intersection of Miami Gardens Drive and W 27th Avenue, with the rails lines running along the entire eastern boundary of the sub-district. To the west of the sub-district there are Single-family residential uses to the south and an institutional use to the north, housing the facilities for the Job Corps.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

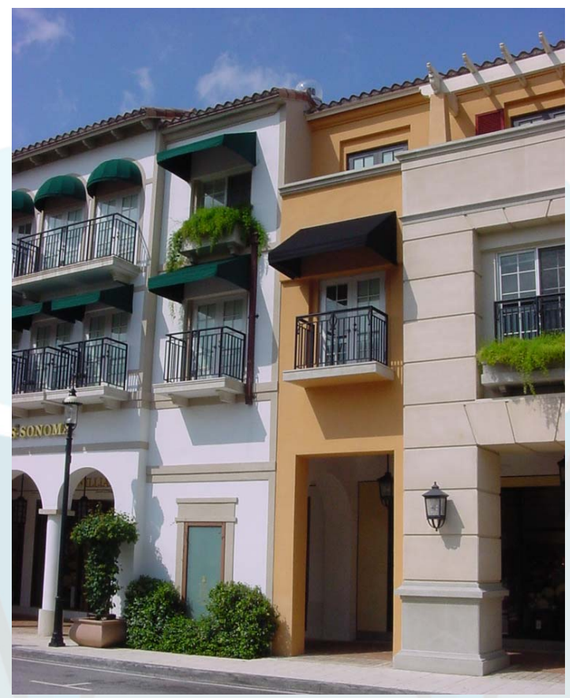
Sub-District 4:Town Square North is located at the north western corner of the intersection. It is spatially limited by the confining natural and cultural barriers present – a waterway canal to the west, Miami Gardens Drive to the south, and W 27th Avenue to the east. To the north of the sub-district there exists a well-maintained multi-family residential use complex. The Metrorail transit corridor rails which originates on the south side of Miami Gardens Drive will continue north to border the sub-district's eastern boundary for a short distance before it transitions into the middle of W 27th Avenue, where it will remain and transition to the east side of the w 27th Avenue once it has existed the Town Center District. This is planned as an access to the Metrorail from the Northwest corner of the intersection between Miami Gardens Drive and W. 27th Avenue.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Comparative Analysis and Precedents

Illustrated below for comparison purposes, include an analysis for the traditional pedestrian-oriented plazas and street networks around the Pantheon and Plaza Navonna in Rome, Italy, that of Main Street in Miami Lakes, and that of City Place in West Palm Beach. The intent for including these are to illustrate and better convey the size of the site and the scale of the different Master Plan's elements.

 © Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



Development Data

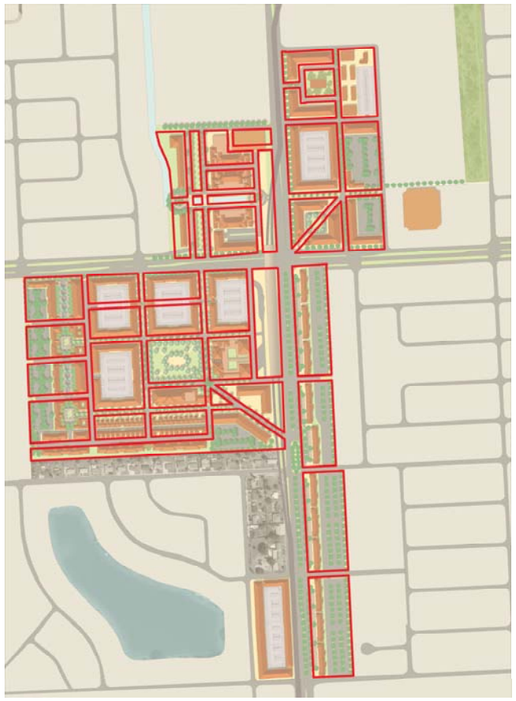
Project Type	New Town Center
Acres	72.9
Parking	3,300 spaces in four parking garages
Residential Density	50 Units/Acre
Commercial Uses	
Building Area by Type of Use	
Retail	600,000 SF
Office (three buildings)	750,000 SF
Residential Uses-Initial Phase	
Unit Type	Number of Units
Townhouses	51
Apartments	33
Rental Apartments	430
Live/Work/Flats	56
Total	570

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Miami Gardens Town Center – Existing Conditions

Miami Gardens Town Center – Proposed Concept for Town Square

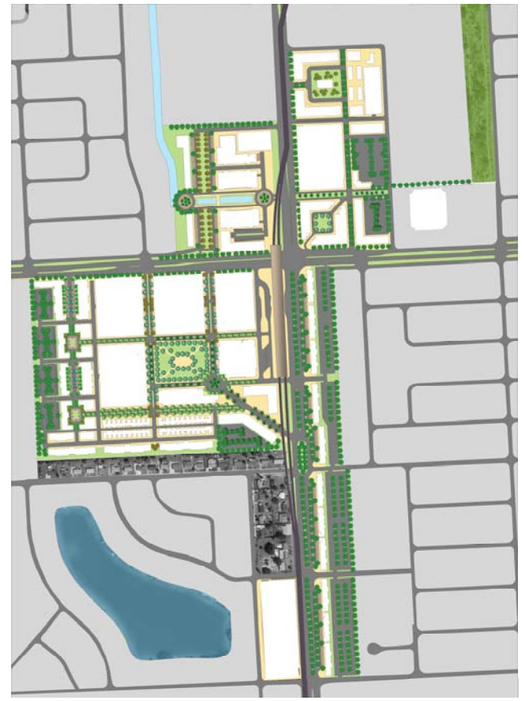
© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



Block Framework

Blocks
The Miami Gardens Town Center fragments the existing conditions to establish a new city-block system of distances that are pedestrian friendly and are conducive to increased walkablility. Block sizes and intersection spacing create a vibrant, community organized along a series of street typologies, each relating to the primary use fronting the corridor. The blocks, shown in yellow above, are generally defined by building facades along all corridor edges of the block, with the exception of areas where the buildings front a park or the Town's Square.

The future MetroRail Station is situated on the most important, the most visible, and the most valuable property within the project site, acting as the corner stone for the viability of the Town Center's redevelopment initiative, located at the intersection of W 27th Avenue and N 183rd Street (Miami Gardens Drive). The footprint for the future parking lot, which will be designed to accommodate a future parking structure with commercial liners on the ground level, was the design catalyst for the articulation of the geometry of the street network.



Public Realm

Framework
The public realm is composed of parks, boulevards, streets, squares, and a canal. The plan is crafted to provide ample means of connections both internally and as it relates to the surrounding context. The streets and spaces are designed to support and nurture multiple activities in an effort to serve as a framework and stage and to allow the citizens of Miami Gardens to act out the social life of their Town Center.

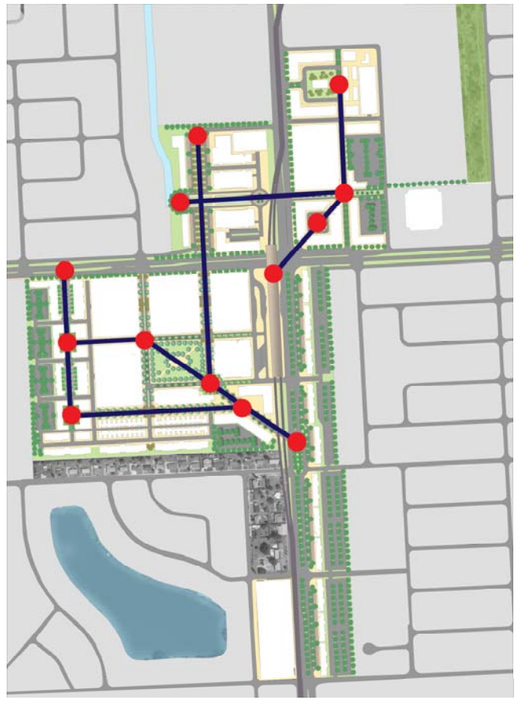
Streets and Squares
Boulevards, streets and squares are designed as the front door to the buildings within the Town Center. These public spaces are in essence the areas that describe the vitality of a town center, because they accommodate diverse activities that inform the sociability of the culture of the place and they connect the larger public areas with the surrounding context. The squares are designed to accommodate both large and small public gatherings, each at a different scale. Residential squares serve as defining elements in the creation of neighborhoods while the larger Town Square serves as both a civic ceremonial space and accommodates diverse outdoor uses, such as performance, markets, and other means of recreation.

Approaches

The design of the streets and blocks network makes emphasis on not creating a "hard edge" around the town center area or its frontages onto either Miami Gardens Drive or W 27th Avenue. Instead, the emphasis is on "blurring" the edges and allowing more permeability into the Town Center Sub-districts so as to increase its connectivity and relationship with the existing conditions.

Access ways into and throughout the Town Center are strategically designed relate to the character and uses of the streets and to have inherent traffic calming conditions that will ensure pedestrian safety at all times, while maintaining a fluid, continuous movement of vehicular traffic. Major connectors to the intersecting arterials integrate ease of access to those streets heavily programmed with commercial activity, while minor access ways provide accessibility for residents and visitors to streets heavily programmed for residential use.

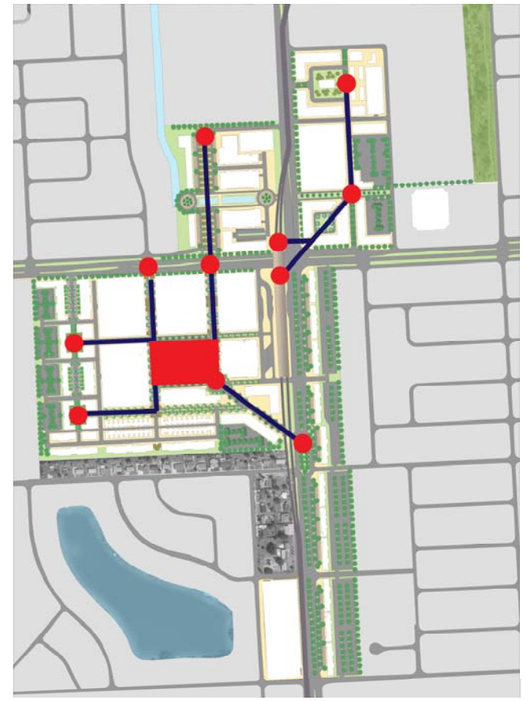
© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



Vistas

General
View-sheds and vistas have been carefully synchronized within the town center's sub-districts coupled with the entryways and uses to establish a hierarchy of public space, reinforce the stature of the civic and public realms, and to create visual termini for the various staged public experiences.

Primary vistas permeating the town center are illustrated above. The first primary vista within the site is along the Garden Boulevard, a diagonal boulevard that is focused on the Town Square. This axis is reinforced by a continuous colonnade and character landscape streetscape design. The second primary vista is a smaller scale diagonal that is centered on the future MetroRail station and the intersection of Miami Gardens Drive and W 27th Avenue. This vista is terminated on an internal roundabout that connects the City Hall and the Library into the town center. Secondary visual connections, as illustrated, within the town center sub-districts have been strategically designed to focus attention on architectural and enhanced natural features that provides both a visual hierarchy and that mitigates the fragmented nature of the Town Center District resulting from the effects of the bisecting vehicular arterial corridors.



Civic Character

General
The civic character of a town identifies the symbolic heart of a city. The congruence of the new City Hall, the Library, and the Transit Hub have been organized to create a civic center that reflects the symbolic importance the Town Center will have to the City of Miami Gardens.

Transit Building, City Hall, and the Library
The MetroRail station is envisioned to be the point of departure and arrival for many residents and visitors connecting the Town Center with the regional areas. As such, the MetroRail will be a gateway and symbolic entry into the town center. Because the MetroRail is an above-ground transit line, the serving parking amenity is designed to be a parking structure with a roof-top plaza deck at a relative level to the boarding deck of the trains, so as to serve as a transitional "landing" experience and leading down into the Town Square. The buildings scheduled as the new City Hall and the existing Library facility and their associated grounds have been connected with the use of public streets and small public spaces to hinge the existing structures into a unified experience, while promoting experiential connections beyond to the other sub-districts of the Town Center.

Synthesis

The Miami Gardens Town Center combines the social and physical elements of the community into more than an agglomeration of disparate parts and uses. Instead, it is strategically crafted to provide spaces for the daily social activities of its citizens, to provide a mix of uses within a comfortable walkable area, emphasize a sense of civic hierarchy, and promote community well-being. Beyond simple functionality, the design for the Town Center reflects the aspirations of the citizens of Miami Gardens to establish a core that promises a lasting legacy to its people, while promoting a sense of pride and identity to the community.

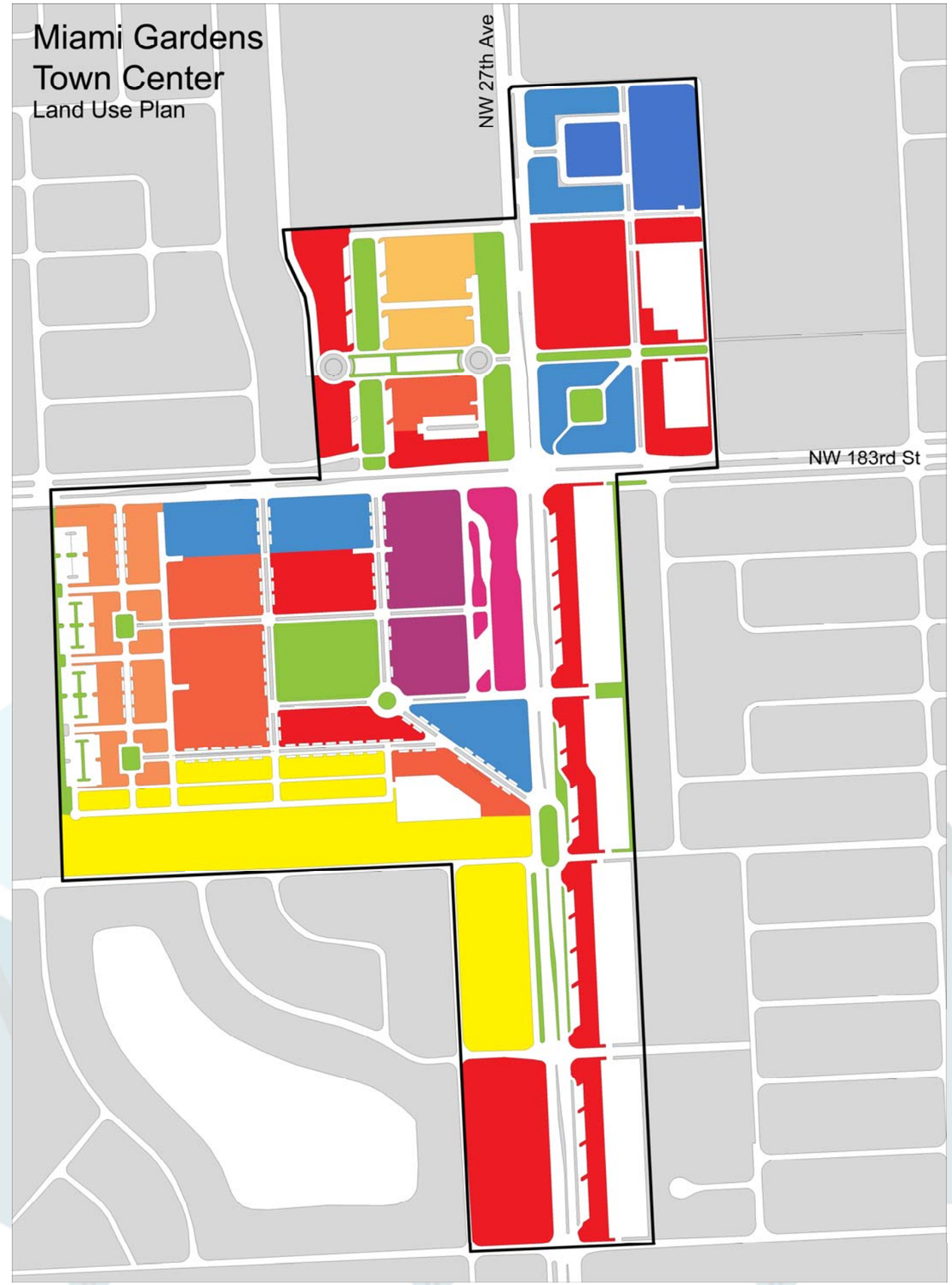
The Town Center sets up a series of public "stages" where the everyday lives and drama of the residents can play out in a place constructed from a well-connected and comprehensible framework of blocks and streets, centered around the communal core of the Town Square, and interrelated by the connecting views and experiences of the visual cues that tie the sub-districts together.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Land Uses

The location of land uses and relationships between them is critically important in ensuring that a vibrant mix is achieved that promotes the area's positive livability and economic viability. The land use plan illustrates identifies the types and locations of uses within the Town Center. Sub-District 3: Town Square has been broken down into Quads, each with a predominant land-use type. While designations for single-use buildings have been planned for, it is the encouragement of this Plan that a vertical mix of uses be implemented so as to achieve the vibrancy and energetic character initially envisioned as a key element for this project by the City of Miami Gardens.

While this Master Plan provides general locations for building locations and sizes, the exact location and size of each building and adjustments to the locations of uses will be refined at the time of Site Plan development.



LAND-USE LEGEND

- TOWN HOUSES
- GARDEN APARTMENTS
- MULTI-FAMILY BUILDINGS
- MU: RETAIL & MULTI-FAMILY
- COMMERCIAL
- CIVIC USES
- MU: RETAIL & OFFICE
- MU: TRANSIT & MULTI-FAMILY
- TRANSIT
- PARK OPEN SPACE

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 1: Civic Center

Acres	17
Commercial Uses	
Retail	178,200 SF
Office	127,600 SF
Residential Uses	
Townhouses	0
Apartments	0
Total	0
Parking	
Required	1135
Provided	1142
Surplus	+7

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 3: Town Square

Acres	38.9 Overall
Residential Quad	
Residential Uses	
Townhouses	249 Units
Apartments	328 Units
Total	577 Units
Parking	
Required	459
Provided	411
Shared	48

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 3: Town Square

Acres	38.9 Overall
Commercial Quad	
Commercial Uses	
M-U Retail	48,000 SF
M-U Office	59,000 SF
Residential Uses	
Apartments	22 Units
Parking	
Required	236
Provided	200
Shared	36

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 4: Residential Node

Acres	12
Commercial Uses	
Retail	16,500 SF
Residential Uses	
Apartments	600 Units
Parking	
Required	1163
Provided	1406
Surplus	+243

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 2: Commercial Corridor

Acres	14
Commercial Uses	
Retail	110,000 SF
Residential Uses	
Townhouses	0
Apartments	0
Total	0
Parking	
Required	1100
Provided	1285
Frontage Road	91
Rear Property	1194
Surplus	+185

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 3: Town Square

Acres	38.9 Overall
Mixed-Use Quad	
Commercial Uses	
M-U Retail	573,000 SF
M-U Office	245,000 SF
Retail	63,088 SF
Residential Uses	
Apartments	419 Units
Parking	
Required	2064
Provided	2257
Surplus	+109

Proposed Development Data
Sub-District 3: Town Square

Acres	38.9 Overall
Transportation Quad	
Commercial Uses	
Retail	88,000 SF
Residential Uses	
Apartments	48 Units
Parking	
Required	757
Provided	965
Shared	51

Summary Development Data
Residential Uses

Densities	
Sub-District 1	0 Units per Acre
Sub-District 2	0 Units per Acre
Sub-District 3	27.5 Units per Acre
Sub-District 4	50 Units per Acre
Intensity of Uses	
Sub-District 1	0 Units
Sub-District 2	0 Units
Sub-District 3	1066 Units
Sub-District 4	600 Units

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Parking

With the exception of designated residential parking and parking specifically assigned for use by the MetroRail's patrons, all the buildings within the Town Center District share parking.

Consistent with the vision for creating streets and public environments that are pedestrian-friendly, that are livable, and walkable, all parking spaces have been located either in parking structures or, when surface parking is provided, have been located to the interior of the blocks or to the rear of the property, so as to minimize the visual and spatial impact of these on the overall experience of the Town Center.

Along commercial corridors, curbside parking with intermittent landscaped bulb-outs is provided to serve the ground level, sidewalk fronting commercial establishments.

Parking Ratios + Shared Parking

	Base Parking Ratios	Shares Parking Ratios For Mixed-Use Blocks*
Office	4.0/1,000 SF	4.0/1,000 SF
Retail	5.0/1,000 SF	3.5/1,000 SF
Apartment	1.6/1,000 SF	1.3/1,000 SF
Townhouse	1.0/unit	1.0/unit

(total required for program)

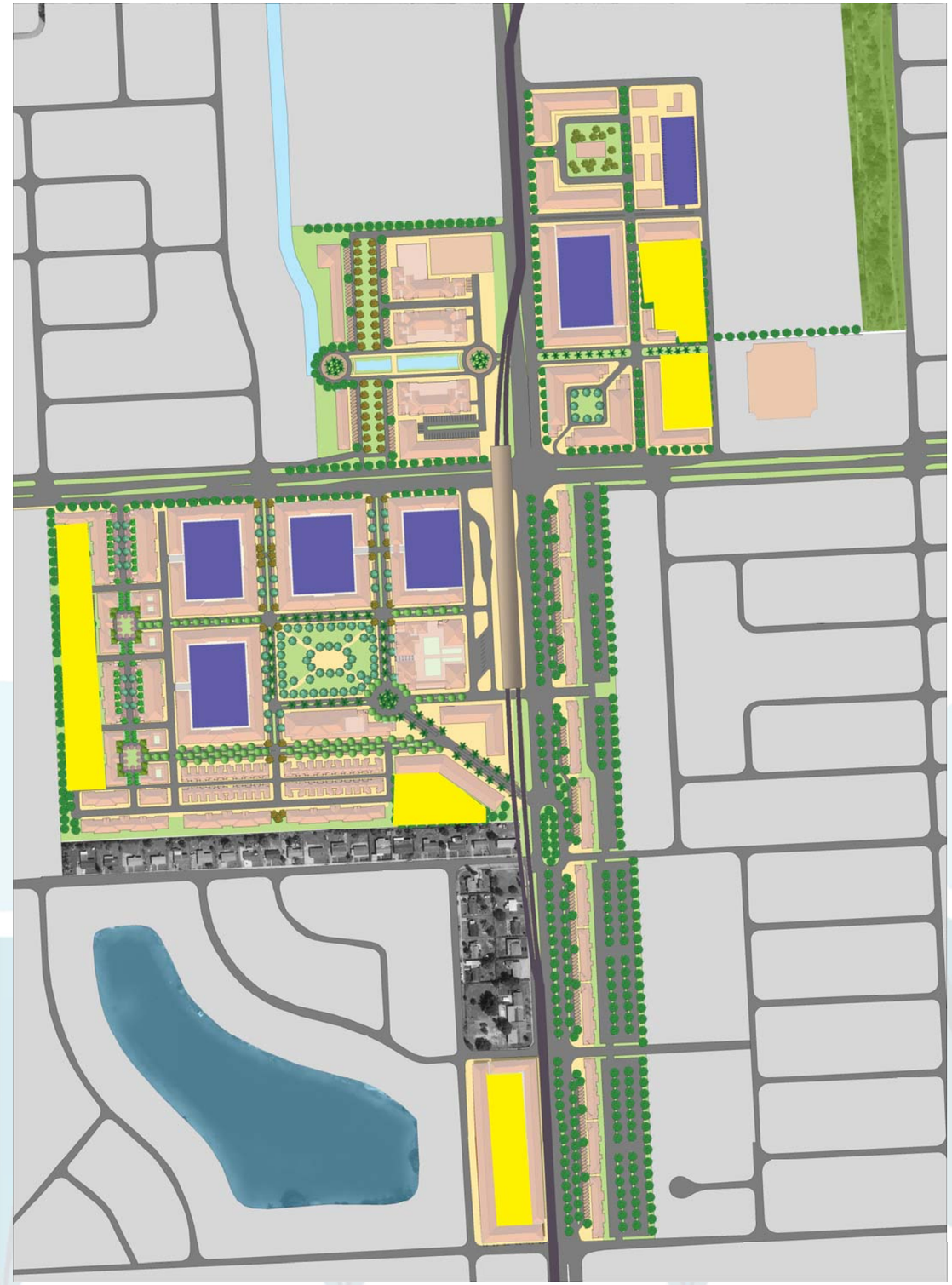
*Shares Parking Percentages (for mixed-use blocks)

Use	Weekday			Weekend	
Office	12 AM-6 AM	9 AM-4 PM	6 PM-12 PM	9AM-4	6PM-12PM
Retail	5	100	23	10	20
Apt.	5	70	90	100	70
TH	100	77	100	100	100
	100	100	100	100	100

PARKING LEGEND

PARKING GARAGE

PARKING LOT



© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Public Realm

The creation of tangible, healthy, and vibrant public realm creates a dialogue that ensues in the City's public spaces – its streets and squares – as the ultimate expression of life in the Town, a place where identity, character and culture is played out. The Master Plan provides public spaces that are not owned by a special group, nor are they dedicated to specific purposes. Without restrictions on their use, the stage for the sidewalk culture of the Town Center is such that it can be a place to sip a cup of coffee or hot cocoa, read a book, chat with friends, or play hop-scotch – places where children can be free to play while being kept a watchful eye by the close-by neighbors. In the same fashion, the design for the Town Center aims to cause frequent meetings, encounters and exchanges of ideas among citizens – qualities of public realm that are a fundamental requirement for a neighborhood's well-being.

The Master Plan, by creating a well-functioning public realm, serves multiple important functions. First, it builds social capital by cementing social relations through repeated contact among inhabitants in multiple overlapping role relationships. By providing a mix use of vertical and horizontal uses, for example, a condo resident's daily life is intertwined by an over-looking window to that of a storekeeper's on the ground floor. A recognition gives way to familiarity, so does anonymity and security. Second, the public realm is an incomparable teacher of social skills and attitudes; children and youth learn through observation, imitation and participation how to relate and behave with a diversity of others – young and old, poor and well-to-do, healthy or disabled. In bringing inhabitants together the Town Center contributes to a more communal, democratic way of life and encourages all to linger, share observations and perspectives, and thereby humanizes the city center. The Master Plan borrows from the wealth of knowledge that is held by traditional cities that still have strong communities, for they teach us how the specific design of streets and squares can encourage a rich public life, and how the form of buildings and their relationship to the street can support this.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Squares and Parks

The Town Square and small neighborhood parks are designed as multifunctional squares, an important invention of traditional town planning. They are socially conceived as medieval town centers, the heart of the City, the center of economic, civic, social and cultural life, providing multiple reasons for people to talk to each other, to work together, to coordinate activities, to prepare for community festivals, and to celebrate together. As the natural setting for public engagement it is important that their locations be a prominent one. Their visibility reminds citizens of the value of civic engagement. The square may function as a market place in the morning, a place for outdoor cafes and restaurants through the afternoon and evening, quiet and peaceful on some days, and on other days the setting for festivals, street musicians and theatrical performances, a ceremonial civic stage, and a playground for children. It is designed to bring all the diverse members of the community together in one place. The creation of a genuine, functioning mixed-use square that fosters community and civic engagement involves not only the design of the space, but also the design of the built fabric around it, organization of building uses, and pattern of events and celebrations in the square.

The creation of central, open accessible spaces and active sidewalks provide opportunities to promote community-based activities that invest in the social well-being of the City.

Farmers' Market
Farmers' markets are important not simply because they bring fresh produce into the City and provide an incomparable aesthetic experience, in fact, farmers' markets are one of the most powerful generators of social and economic life and are thus conceived for the Town Square. They provide venues through which residents can share, investing in the social capital of their neighborhood.

Community Festivals
Community Festivals instill in the individual a sense of joy and well-being, promoting a shared sense of identity and pride in community, while building civic character. Community festivals are the expression of the culture of place. They bring together the diverse population, people of different ages, social and economic groups, ethnic backgrounds, and enable them to work together to achieve a common goal- the celebration of the community as a whole. The planning and practice, the discussion of themes, making of costumes, the creation of beautiful works of art and music, and especially eating and drinking together in the public space at festivals helps to bind the community together.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Mixed-Uses

Presently, the City of Miami Gardens is planned out with typical 1950's modern planning principles, conceptualized as "single functioning zoning", separating the varied functions and activities of the city into single-use areas. This principle (except for extreme situations of industrial contamination) has now been shown to have disastrous consequences for social sustainability, as well as ecological sustainability.
In a town or city structured on principles of true urbanism the primary building block is a structure that combines two uses, the commercial and residential uses, for example with a restaurant at street level and residential dwelling above. The close proximity of vital activities, including living, working and socializing, and of the private and the public realms, are what makes the public realm so hospitable and the private dwelling so convenient. This fine textured urban fabric makes the traditional city not only socially healthy, but also ecologically sound, eliminating unnecessary vehicular travel, reinforced when mass transit is integrated with a town center. It is also an extremely flexible building type, allowing developers to provide living venues for different incomes. High-ceilinged floors facing the square or tree-lined street offer prestigious and high priced accommodations; lower-ceilinged floors with less advantageous views offer affordable housing. This allows rich and poor, old or young, to all have the benefit of being able to live without a car. Additionally, vertical mixed-uses encourage safety and security. The shop, restaurant or business at street level draws life onto the street, making it possible for people's paths to cross, for conversation to develop, and a business population to supervise and have some daytime jurisdiction over the square. As Jane Jacobs wrote in *The Life and Death of Great American Cities,* the apartments above provide, "eyes on the street", resulting in nighttime jurisdiction over the street, and a residential population to frequent the street or square and to form a community. To function in this way it is essential that the building façade be permeable – with many openings at street level, and with balconies and windows above street level.

Compact Urban Fabric

The most functional, sustainable, ecologically built urban fabric is a compact, human, with buildings that are connected one to one another along the street, accommodating a mix of uses. These contiguous buildings create a continuous wall along the street façade and enclose public space. They form blocks of buildings perforated by entrances and usable inner courtyards that allow an integration of the private and public spaces, promoting outdoor areas suitable for toddler's play, children's ball games, outdoor restaurants, gardens, and trees. They create the opportunity for private apartment balconies and roof gardens to open onto a quiet oasis in the city. Increased connectivity creates pedestrian networks through the town, promote residents to walk and increase their physical well-being.

Sidewalks
The sidewalks of the Town Center range from10 feet to 25 feet in width. Their width designation is planned, congruent with the use of the fronting building, to activate the sidewalk and generate vibrancy and interest. Their spaces can be appropriate for uninterrupted strolls, merchandise display, or restaurant and café use.

Outdoor cafes and restaurants are extremely valuable in encouraging people to spend more time in public spaces, facilitating meetings and extended conversations in the public realm, at all times during the day. The Master Plan locates these on internal streets away from the high vehicular areas of the main arterial corridors, in an effort to allow multiple layering of the sidewalks' uses- places where children can safely play while parents and grandparents sit at the café and where conversation around the table is not drowned out by the sound of traffic.

Integrated Transportation

Designing the Miami Gardens Town Center based on principles of true urbanism, the Master Plan goes beyond addressing issues of connectivity in the movement of vehicles, and instead it focuses on people, accessibility and their experience. Integral to the design is the consideration of all the members of the population – children and older people, the handicapped, poor and well-to-do; the varied trips that they need to make – to school, work, shopping, the library or theater; and makes these trips as pleasant, economical, safe, comfortable, simple and autonomous as possible. The emphasis on the trips people make, their destinations, their experiences, and promoting repeated uses of the sidewalks and public realms, instead of movement and vehicles, while relating these to available public transportation is a characteristic that guarantees design and social success of a place. Needs for transport generate use of facilities; use of facilities generates familiarity to the place these needs are met; familiarity generates a sense of ownership and of belonging. The role of the impact of public transportation as an opportunity to capitalize in the investment in social capital is critical in the marriage of transport, needs, wants, and habits, and how they all work together to generate culture and community.

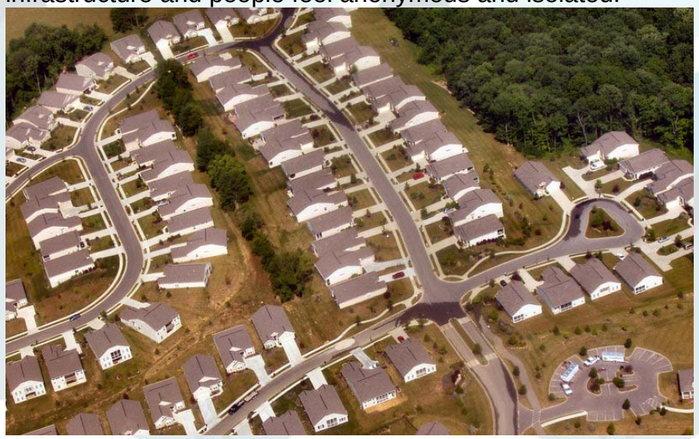
Of course, a public transit system cannot work without an appropriately, compactly built urban fabric. Public transportation necessitates a client base – people who chose or depend on the mode for getting places. Experience has proven that the best client-base to support on-going transit are people that live in close proximity to the station.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

A Town Center of Short Distances

In order to reduce distances traveled everyday to work, shops, and school, the Master Plan establishes the creation of a cellular city-block structure: the town square plays an integral role as the center of the district and promotes diverse work opportunities, shopping, housing, within close proximity to infrastructural amenities: the Miami –Dade County Public Library facility, integration of City Hall with the City's core, and connections to nearby recreational opportunities. There are social and health benefits as well as ecological advantages to this: commuting by foot through one's neighborhood permits people to begin to recognize strangers as "familiars", makes possible greetings between acquaintances, a pause for conversation among friends, and play among children under the watchful eyes of adults – all micro-social events that help to build community. Commuting by automobile has the opposite effect – it destroys the social fabric.

A mechanism to promote this beneficial characteristic is density and intensity of use. By increasing the number of people that live in an area, a design immediately invest in the social wellbeing of the community at large. Sustainable densities not exceeding 50 units per acre in an area well-balanced by commercial, retail, and adequate open spaces with a carefully designed public realm comprised of open, landscaped streets provide the right mix of people and uses to generate the vibrancy that succeeds in a Town Center development of this sort. Densities less than 30 units per acre begin to "thin out" the human experience to a point where it is detrimental to the creation of socially-invested public, cultural space. The same occurs when the density is over 60 units per acre – the density puts a strain on infrastructure and people feel anonymous and isolated.



Children and Youths

In order to make our cities healthy and livable for all, we must first make them livable for children. If our cities are unhealthy or lack livability, children are the first to suffer. Every aspect of the Town Center's urban design, built fabric, and organization of streets, or patterns of transportation and mobility seeks to impact children in a positive way.

By creating an environment that is walkable, the design promotes the natural exercise of walking and biking, in a setting where vehicular traffic is second to the safety of pedestrians and the assurance of their positive experience. The sprawling, low-density, auto-dependent character of suburban developments promote child obesity has become a national problem and anonymity in neighborhoods, handicapping the personal lessons in sociability of a neighborhood's residents. Encouraged to participate in the impromptu social interactions of community-life that can accompany autonomous walking and biking, children are empowered to develop a sense that they are included in and belong to their community.

This is the antithesis to the pathogenic environment of violence-filled media that provides no lesions in life. The Master Plan is an opportunity to affect the design of the physical environment to support the inclusion of children in the public, social realm and to educate them to become valued community members and citizens.

The Master Plan sets the stage for the creation of good public spaces that facilitate the social development of children: they learn how to talk to adults other than their parents and teachers. In good public spaces the conversations among varied adults present a model for children to emulate. Children grow up assuming that the are the kind of personal that their physical environment tells them they are. They see their environment as a portrait of themselves; a sparsely populated, isolated or anonymous environment has a deadening effect, seeming to justify further detachments from developing a sense of social responsibility. It is this Master Plan's intent to create the framework for a Town Center that is worthy of a child's affection, in which they can feel at home, and find "their special places", it should be possible for children to get to know their city inside out, to "hold their city in the palm of their hand". They are, after all, the ones who will inherit the city, and become responsible for in her future.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

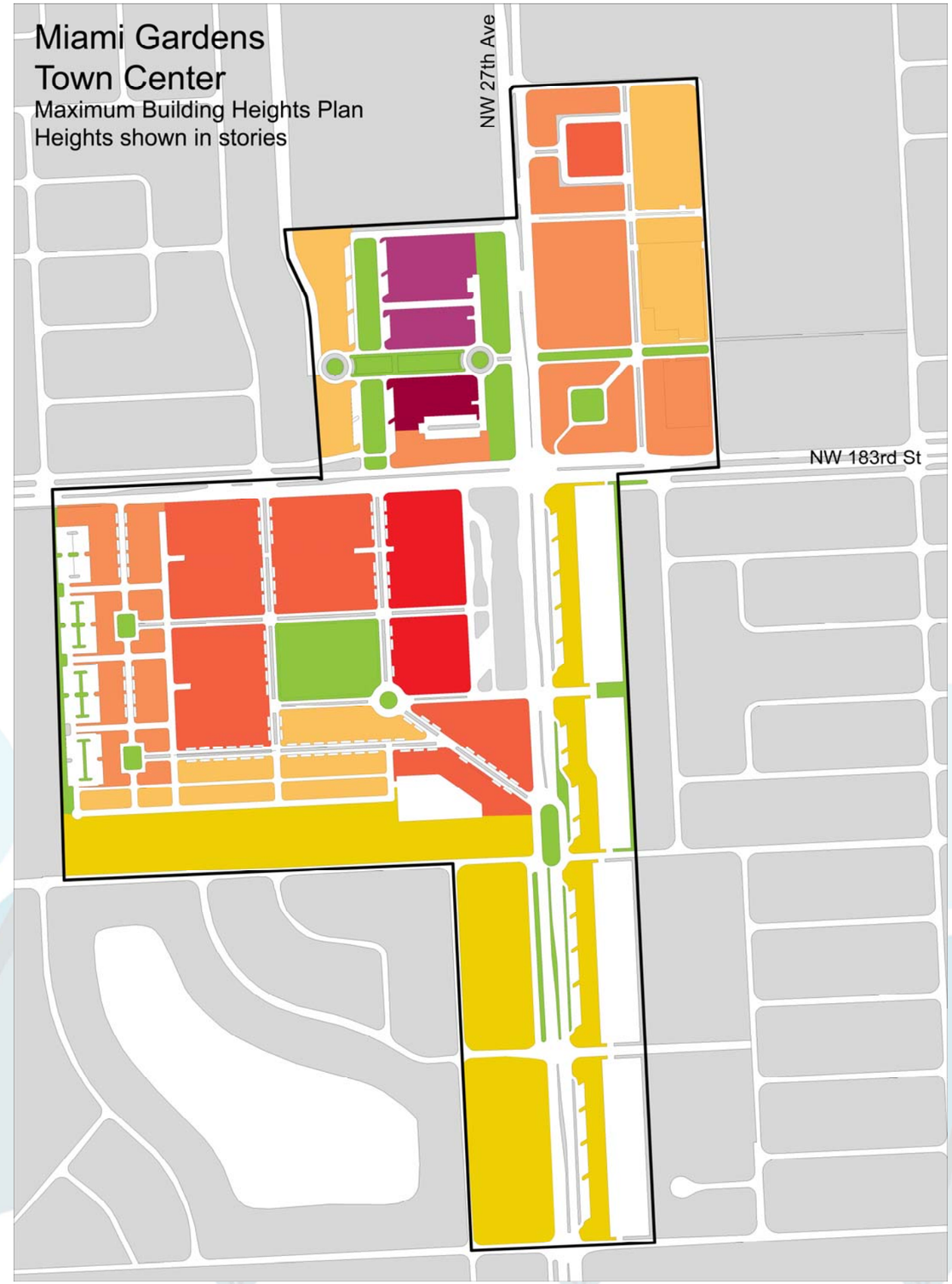
Building Heights

Heights
The Master Plan carefully consider building heights in the creation of well-defined, comfortable, human-scaled environments. Building heights are a critical factor in creating a livable community, because by defining streets and the pedestrian environment they ultimately affect how pedestrians will feel and interrelate. Building heights also contribute significantly to the character of a place. In order to maintain interest and dynamism along the street corridor, building and façade heights should vary along a street.

Stories
The minimum ground level retail space shall have a minimum floor-to-floor clearance of 18 feet. The minimum floor-to-floor clearance for any floor being occupied by office shall be 15 feet. The minimum floor-to-floor clearance for any floor being occupied by any residential use shall be 10 feet.

One Story Buildings
No buildings shall be less than 25 feet in height. One story buildings shall be designed so that the exterior expression of the building's façade reads with a tall first floor and a false second story.

Three and Four Story Buildings
The cornice line of buildings should vary in order to provide variety. Buildings screening a garage shall be a minimum of 4 stores.



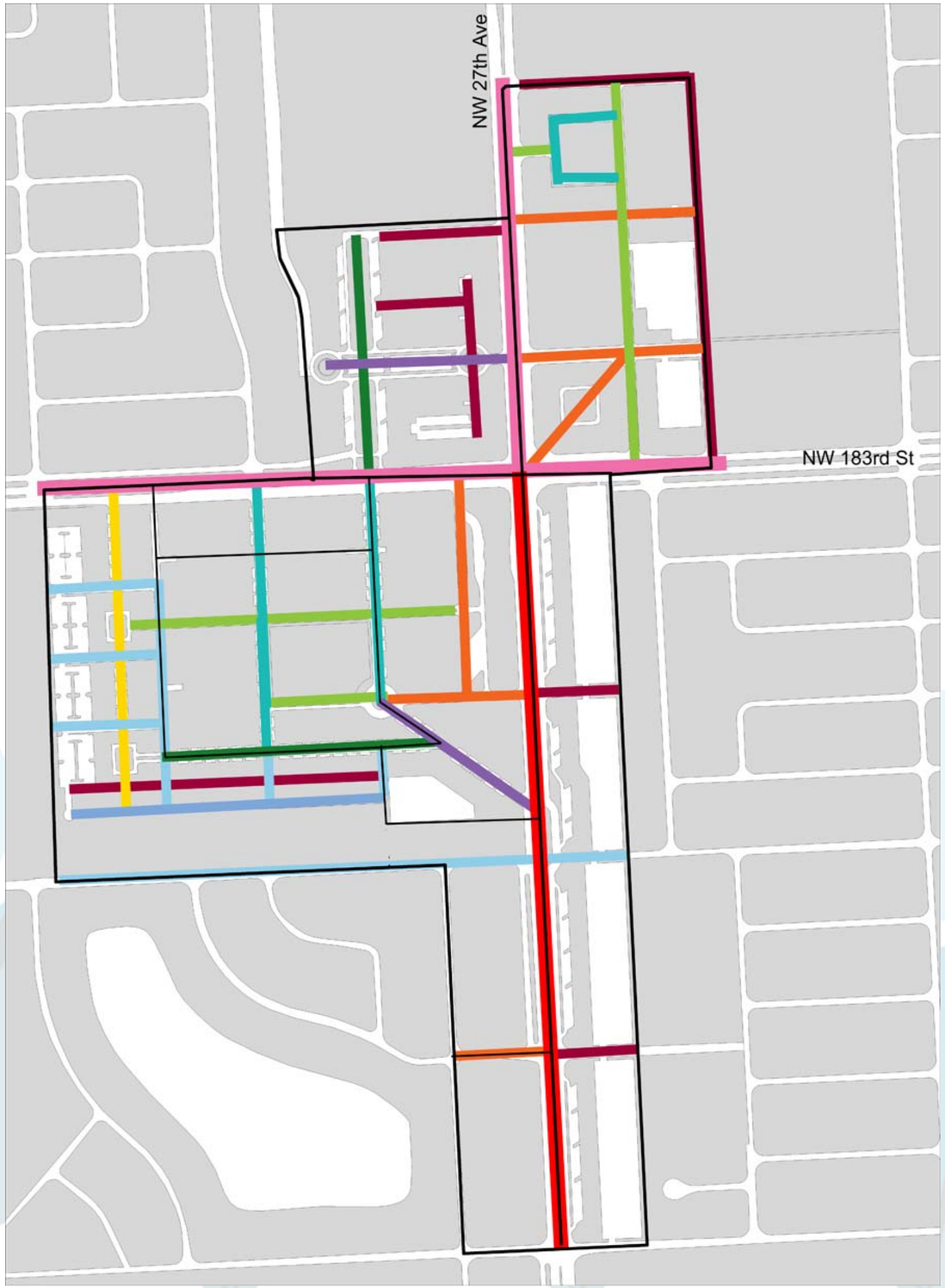
BUILDING HEIGHTS LEGEND
- 2 STORIES
- 3 STORIES
- 4 STORIES
- 5 STORIES
- 8 STORIES
- 10 STORIES
- 12 STORIES
- PARK OPEN SPACE

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Street Pattern

Streets
Town Center streets are intended to be vibrant and active. They are the most important component of the articulation of the space, yet they are not just vehicular service ways, but instead form the fundamental unit of the public realm. The Master Plan prioritizes the walkability and livability of the sidewalk, creating interactions with the pedestrians on the street. Additionally, the pedestrian is provided with amenities that encourage prolonged use of the sidewalk, such as seating areas, designated use-zones, and continuous shade, either by street trees' canopies or by means of architectural features.

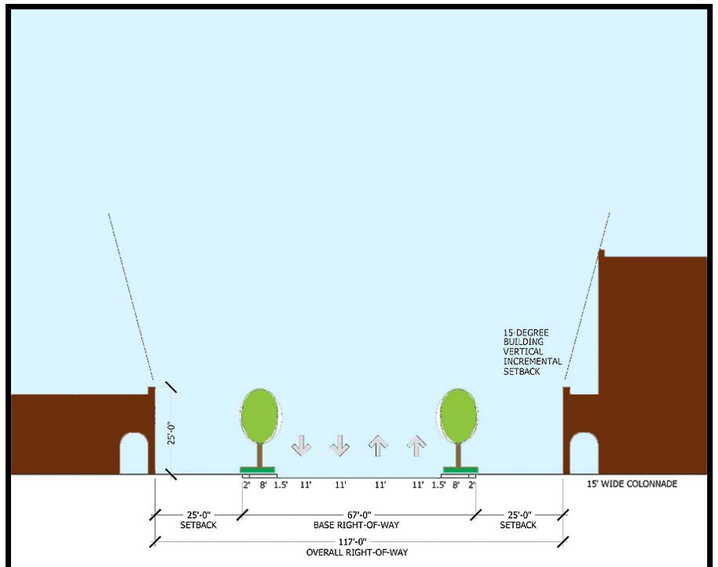
Each street typology has been designated to reflect a unique character represented within the plan. They vary from an urban character to a more intimate informal character, generated by consideration regarding the ground-level use fronting the sidewalk, the height of the abutting buildings, and the role of the street in mobilizing vehicular traffic.



STREET FRONTAGE LEGEND

- BOULEVARD
- MAIN STREET
- SIDE STREET
- PARK LANE
- ESPLANADE
- SERVICE LANE
- RESIDENTIAL ROAD
- RESIDENTIAL WAY
- RESIDENTIAL LANE
- COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR A
- COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR B

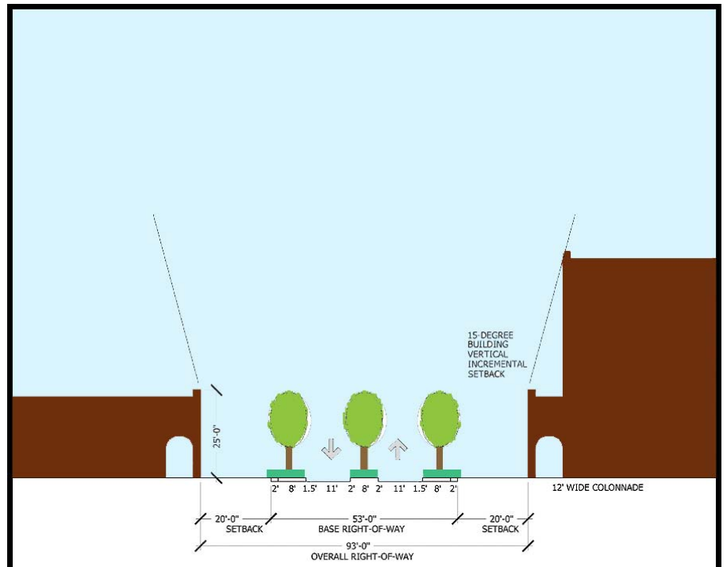
© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



BOULEVARD TYPICAL STREET SECTION

N.T.S.

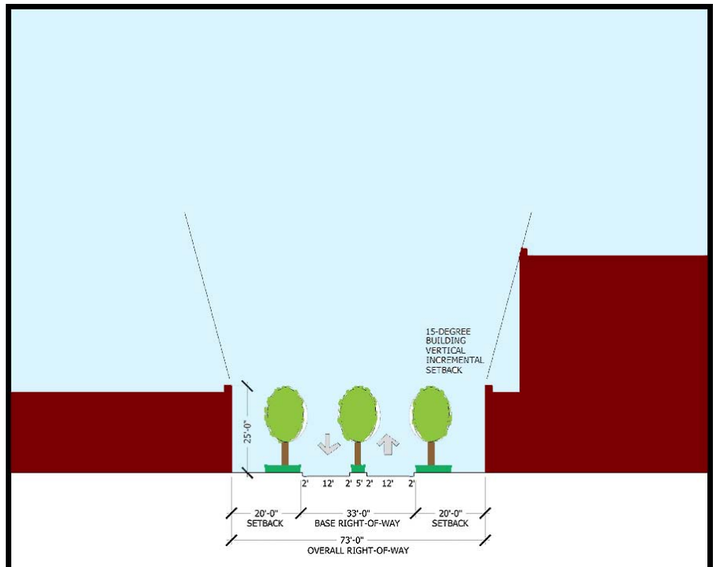
Boulevard:
Characterized by four (4) travel lanes, each eleven (11') feet in width, and two (2) parking lanes, each eight (8') feet wide. Parking bays shall be established so as to promote a landscaped bulbout of no less than seventy-three (73) square feet at a spacing that shall be no less than seventy-two (72) feet on center. The total sectional width of the Boulevard BROW shall be no less than sixty-seven (67') feet.



MAIN STREET SECTION

N.T.S.

Main Street:
Characterized by an eight (8') foot landscaped median, two (2) travel lanes, each eleven (11') feet in width, and two (2) parking lanes, each eight (8') feet wide. Parking bays shall be established so as to promote a landscaped bulbout of no less than seventy-three (73) square feet at a spacing that shall be no less than seventy-two (72) feet on center. The total sectional width of the Main Street BROW shall be no less than fifty-three (53') feet.

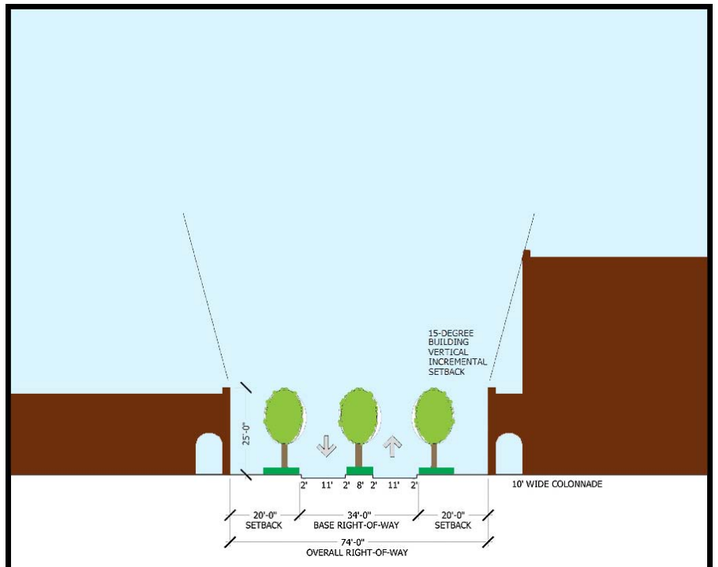


SIDE STREET SECTION

N.T.S.

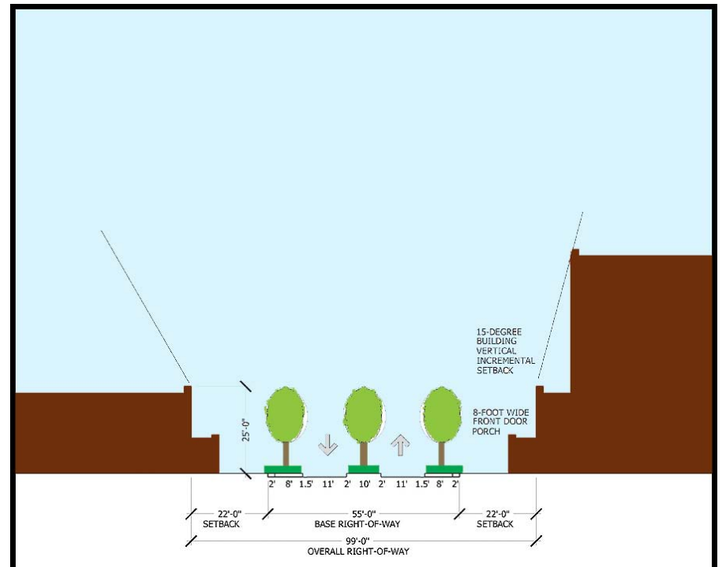
Side Street:
Characterized by a five (5') foot landscaped median and two (2) travel lanes, each eleven (11') feet in width. The total sectional width of the Side Street BROW shall be no less than thirty-three (33') feet.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



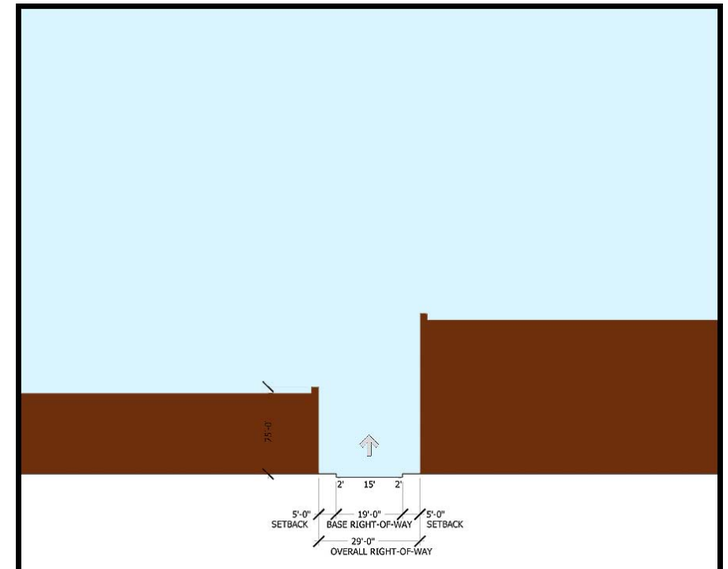
PARK LANE SECTION

N.T.S.



ESPLANADE SECTION

N.T.S.



SERVICE LANE SECTION

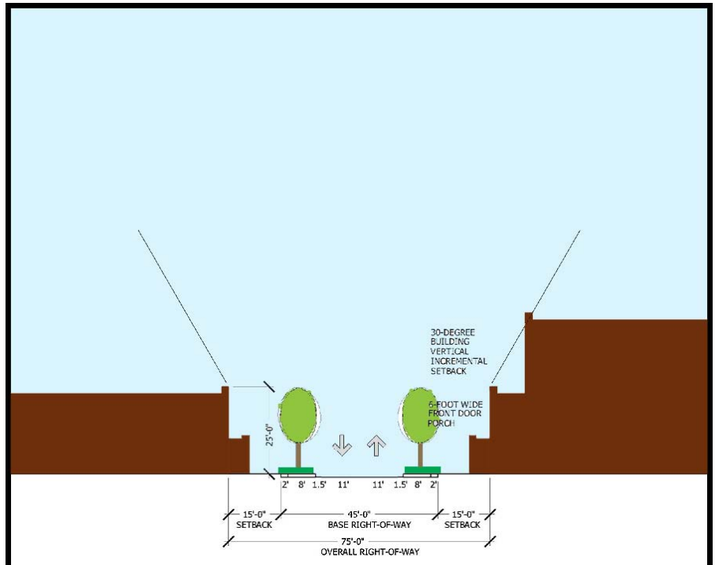
N.T.S.

Park Lane:
Characterized by and eight (8') foot landscaped median and two (2) travel lanes, each eleven (11') feet in width. The total sectional width of the Park Lane BROW shall be no less than thirty-four (34') feet.

Esplanade:
Characterized by a ten (10') foot landscaped median, two (2) travel lanes, each eleven (11') feet in width and two (2) parking lanes, each eight (8') feet wide. Parking bays shall be established so as to promote a landscaped bulbout of no less than seventy-three (73) square feet at a spacing that shall be no less than seventy-two (72) feet on center. The total sectional width of the Esplanade BROW shall be no less than fifty-five (55') feet.

Service Lane:
Characterized by a single (1) one-way travel lane, fifteen (15') feet in width. The total sectional width of the Service Lane BROW shall be no less than nineteen (19') feet.

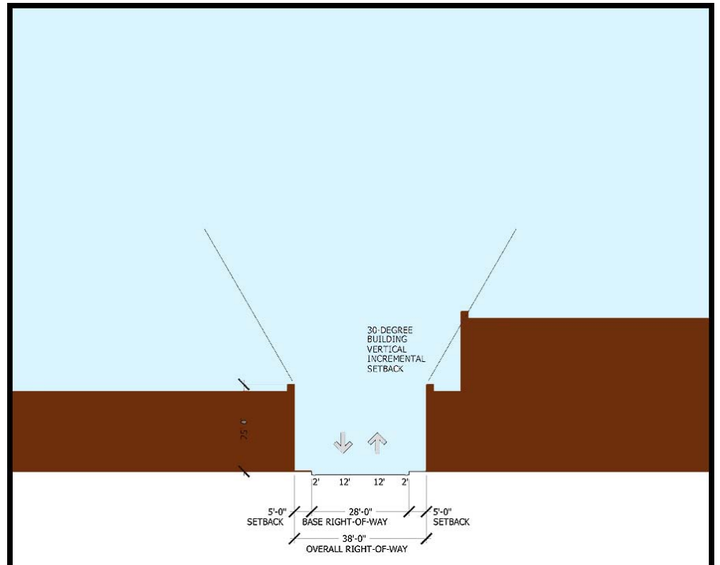
© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



RESIDENTIAL ROAD SECTION

N.T.S.

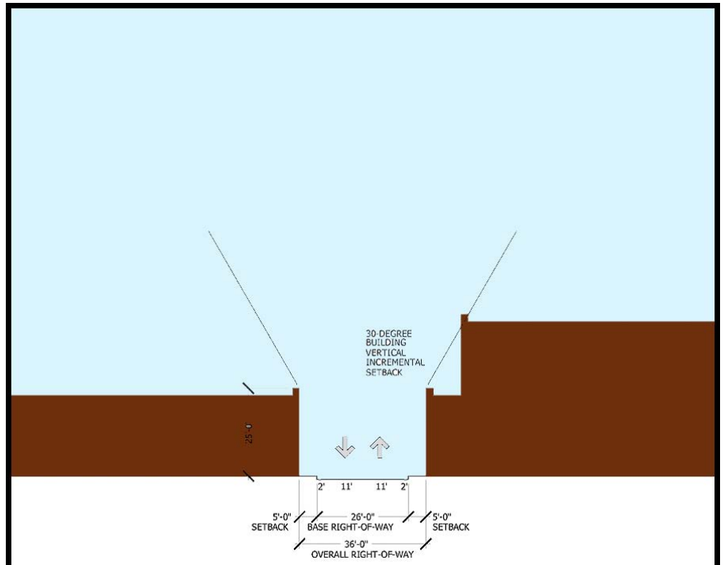
Residential Road:
Characterized by two (2) travel lanes, each eleven (11') feet in width and two (2) parking lanes, each eight (8') feet wide. Parking bays shall be established so as to promote a landscaped bulbout of no less than seventy-three (73) square feet at a spacing that shall be no less than seventy-two (72) feet on center. The total sectional width of the Residential Road BROW shall be no less than forty-five (45') feet.



RESIDENTIAL WAY SECTION

N.T.S.

Residential Way:
Characterized by two (2) travel lanes, each twelve (12') feet in width. The total sectional width of the Residential Way BROW shall be no less than fifty-five (55') feet.

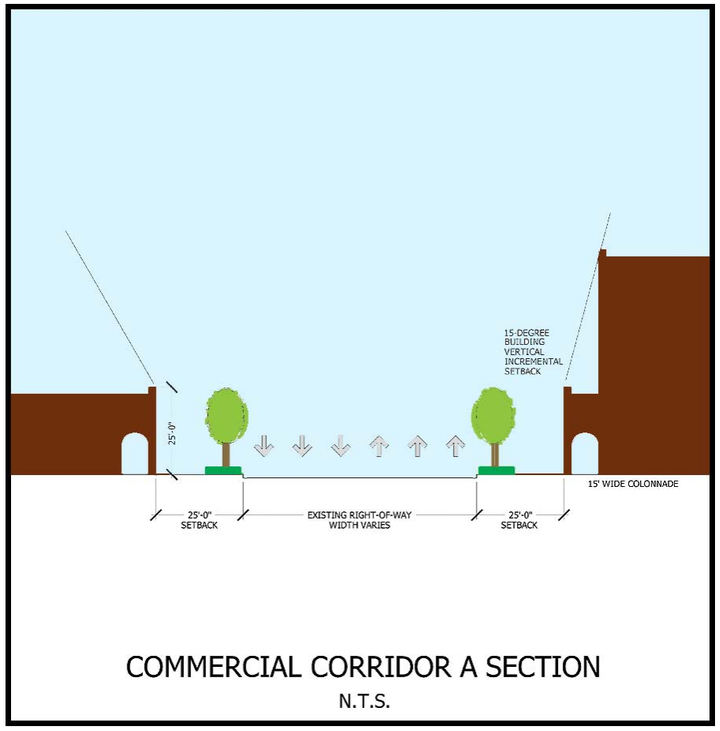


RESIDENTIAL LANE SECTION

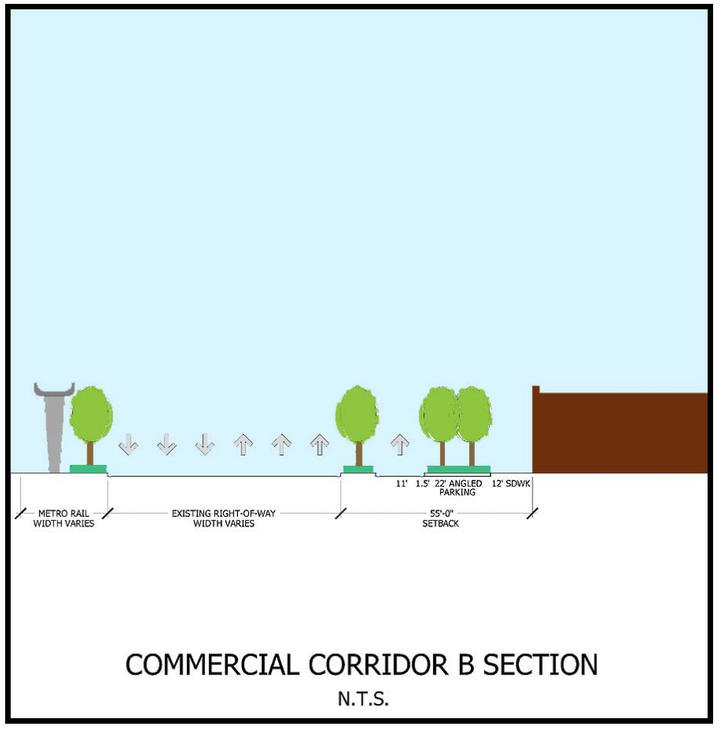
N.T.S.

Residential Lane:
Characterized by two (2) travel lanes, each twelve (11') feet in width. The total sectional width of the Residential Lane BROW shall be no less than twenty-six (26') feet.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.



COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR A SECTION
N.T.S.



COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR B SECTION
N.T.S.

Commercial Corridor A:
The total sectional width of the Commercial Corridor A BROW shall be defined by the existing boundaries of the right-of-ways corresponding to North 183rd Street, Miami Gardens Drive, and West 27th Avenue.

Commercial Corridor B: the total sectional width of the Commercial Corridor B BROW shall be defined by the existing boundaries of the right-of-ways corresponding to North 183rd Street, Miami Gardens Drive, and West 27th Avenue.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Frontage

General:
Buildings are to be used to create a visual edge along public streets. Building faces must be built to the “Build to Line”,

Architectural Features:
Architectural features shall be located as indicated in The Regulating Plan and in The Master Plan.

Encroachments:
Balconies, major and minor focal elements, cupolas, bays, stoops, fireplaces, eaves, signage, awnings, and other similar uses and structures can encroach beyond the Build-to line pursuant to acceptance by the regulating authorities.

Building Line Frontage:
Building Lines must have a minimum of 60%-90% of their frontage occupied by Building Face.

Building Lines bordering plazas must have 95% of their frontage occupied by Building Face.

Retail Use & Fenestration:
Minimum percentage of surface that is glazed is 60% of the Building Face. No reflective or tinted glass is permitted. Maximum height of sill above sidewalk is 3’-0”.

Stoops & Entries:
Apartment Buildings are encouraged to be designed in such a way that ground floor units have individual entries from the street.

Roofs

Roofs shall be constructed in accordance to the architectural references to Miami Modern. The roofs shall be fairly uniform in color – no speckled red roofs are permitted.

Covered stoops and ground level porches shall be covered by a high quality-roofing material.

Asphalt shingles are not permitted.

Utilities + Mechanical Equipment

Building and Mechanical Equipment:
HVAC equipment, utility meters, satellite dishes, permanent grills, and other mechanical equipment should be located so as not to be visible from the street. They should be located to the interior of the block or on roofs and shall not be visible from the street. Mechanical equipment should not vent to the street side of the building. Window air conditioning units are not permitted.

Site Utilities:
Site utilities structures such as transformers shall be located to the interior of the blocks (behind buildings).

Lighting:
All street lighting, parking lot lighting, and porch lights shall be incandescent, halogen, or metal halide. High pressure sodium is permitted only in parking lots.

Windows + Doors

General:
The type and proportion of windows and doors (and openings) shall be consistent with the styles contained in this document.

Windows:

Windows shall be clear glass. No reflective or tinted glass is permitted.

Window sills and lintels, when present, shall project a dimension consistent with the specified architectural style.

Glass block is not permitted.

Façade

Shutters:
If exterior shutters are used, they shall be sized to fit their window and mounted with appropriate hardware.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Walls

Materials:
Building walls shall be finished in stucco, metal, wood siding, or cementitious fiberboard siding consistent with style. No vinyl is permitted. Designs and materials must be consistent on all primary facades, or elevations visible from the street.

Ancillary Buildings shall be constructed of the same materials as approved for the principle structure.

Foundation walls of stoops and porches must be consistent with the foundation treatment of the building.

Wood elements such as trim and visible window framing must be painted and sealed With an opaque or semi-solid stain.

Colors:
Similar colors and tones are suggested on adjacent buildings.

Archways + Columns

Colonnades, Arcades & Loggias:
The vertical dimension of the openings between columns, piers, or posts on colonnades or arcades shall be at least 1.0 times the horizontal dimension of the openings.

Street Trees

General:
Every street in the Miami Gardens Town Center must have street trees planted along their length as indicated in the Street Typology Plan.

Shade Trees:
All shade tree species shall be “Large Shade Tree”. Minimum size at planting shall be at least 3 “caliper and shall meet American Nursery Standards (current edition). Shade trees shall be spaced no more than 30’ on center.

Palm Trees:
Palm Trees shall be spaced at approximately 20’ centers (but not more than 20’).

Tree Pits:
All trees shall be planted in tree pits

Walls, Hedge, Fence

General:
Garden walls, retaining walls, hedges, and fences can define the edge between the public street and the private yards. They also define the street face where buildings are absent.

Materials:
Garden walls, privacy walls, and fences shall generally be constructed of the same material as the first floor of the primary building and they shall be coordinated with the architectural detailing of the primary façade.

Walls shall be a minimum of 8” thick and have a horizontal cap.

Fences shall be made of ornamental metal and my have stucco or masonry piers. Metal Fences shall be black.

Front yard fencing shall have a consistent height between 2’-8” and 3’-6” from finished grade.

The top of fence shall remain level.

Retaining walls shall be masonry or stucco.

Hedges may be used in place of any fence, subject to the same height parameters and high maintenance standards.

No plastic or vinyl fencing is permitted.

Fences or garden walls shall have a hardy species of hedge or climbing vine planted along their length.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Paving

Materials:
All walks and crosswalks shall be some from of special paving. Special paving is here defined as scored concrete (in a decorative pattern), stone pavers, brick pavers, or concrete unit pavers.

Parking garage access points shall be composed of pavers.

Pavers selection and paving patterns shall be consistent with the overall MiMo style.

Seating

General:
Providing sufficient seating is critical in ensuring the success of public spaces. Providing moveable seating is also essential in designing successful plazas that function for both large gatherings/fairs and operate well on a daily basis.

Streets:
All streets shall have 5'-6" benches located along their length. There shall be an average of 1 bench (on each side of the street) per 100 lineal feet of street.

Plazas:
All plazas shall be provided with moveable tables and chairs. A percentage of tables shall include either permanent or removable umbrellas.

Plazas will also provide seating in the form of steps, planters, or benches. However, their location shall not obstruct temporary large gatherings or fairs.

Door-Yards

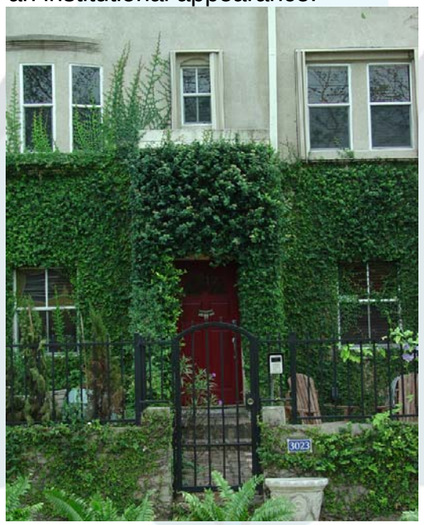
General:
Small door-yards are an inseparable part of the Miami Gardens Center streetscape. They are the public face of every apartment building and an important part of the community streetscape. Because of this, there are standards for their configuration and maintenance.

Plant Material:
Climbing vines and/or hedges are permitted along foundation walls (Where visible from the street), of all porches, stoops, and any exposed foundation walls. The use of artificial plants (silk or plastic) is prohibited.

Hedges:
Hedges or decorative fences, up to 36" high, or retaining walls, up to 18" high, are encouraged at the back of all sidewalks.

Individual Residential Entries for Apartment Buildings and Townhouses.

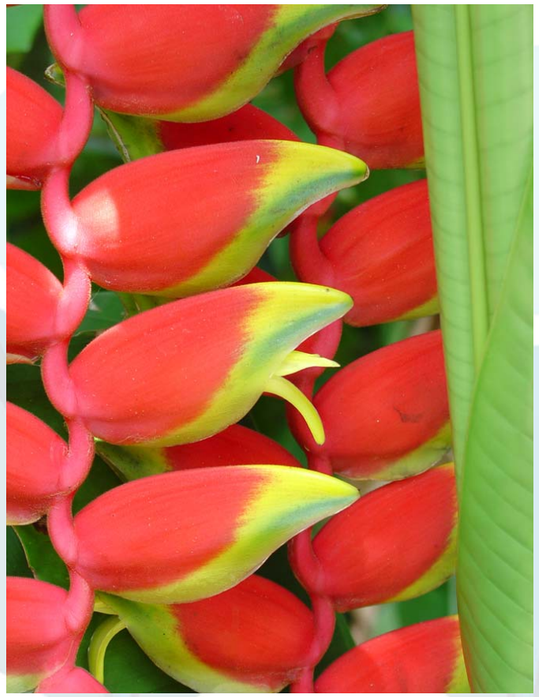
Individual and district planting schemes for each unit are encouraged in order to provide a sense of authenticity and individuality rather than an institutional appearance.



Planting Design

General Character:
The general character of the town center is to convey the sense of a lush tropical setting. Plantings are to consist of primarily shade trees accentuated by palm trees and ornamental trees. Shrubs and ground covers should be massed to further define open areas.

Streetscapes:
Streetscapes that are primarily paved shall have moveable planters. They shall contain plants with a tropical appearance. Balconies are encouraged to have planters along railings or potted plants on balconies. These planters should be planted with palms, flowering plants, and flowering hanging plants.



© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

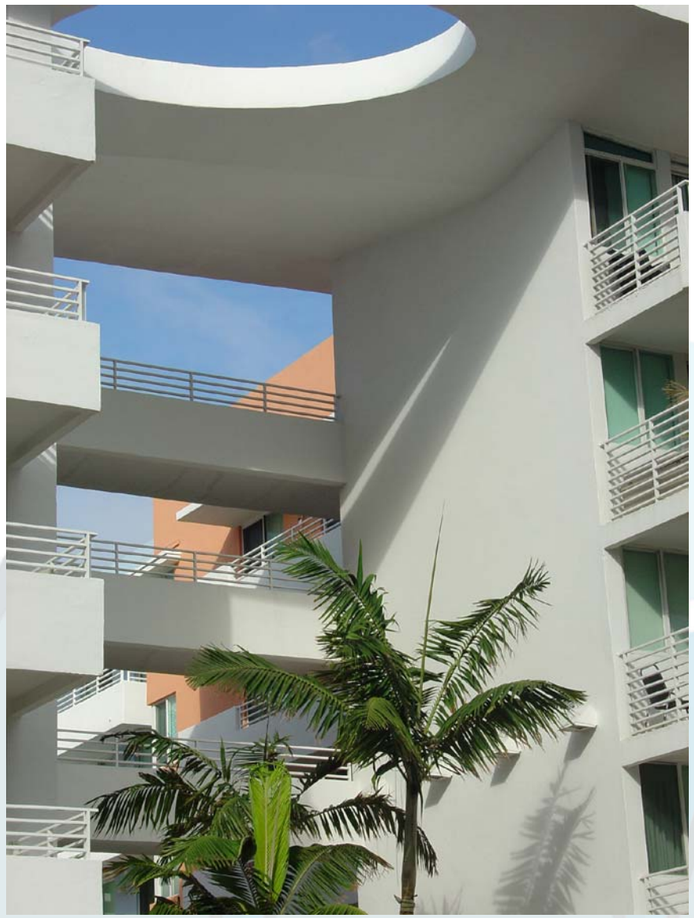
Architectural Styles

While the City of Miami Gardens encourages a mix of architectural styles, the city's intent is to create a harmonious environment where adjacent buildings speak to similar volumetrics and façade articulations so as to read in congruence to one another.

The city encourages the inclusion of Miami Modern (MiMo) architectural renditions and edifices, banking on the city stock of character MiMo buildings and features.

Miami Modern (MiMo) Architecture

Miami Modern Architecture includes essentially two major strands of Modernism: the Resort MiMo of Miami Beach and Subtropical Modernism, which is an interpretation of the International Style to local climate and culture.

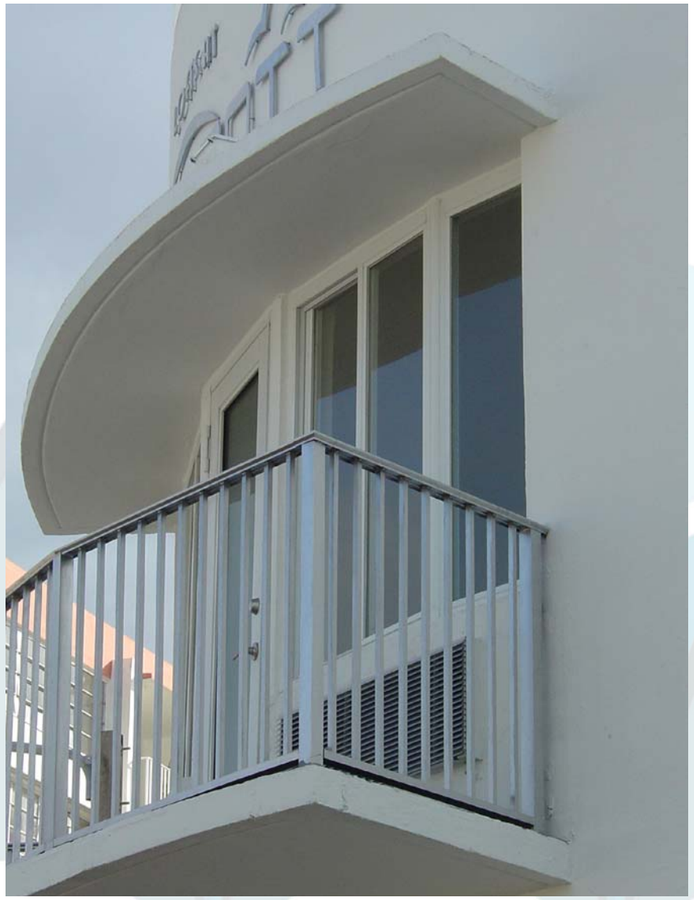


The language of Miami Modern Architecture consists of the following elements.

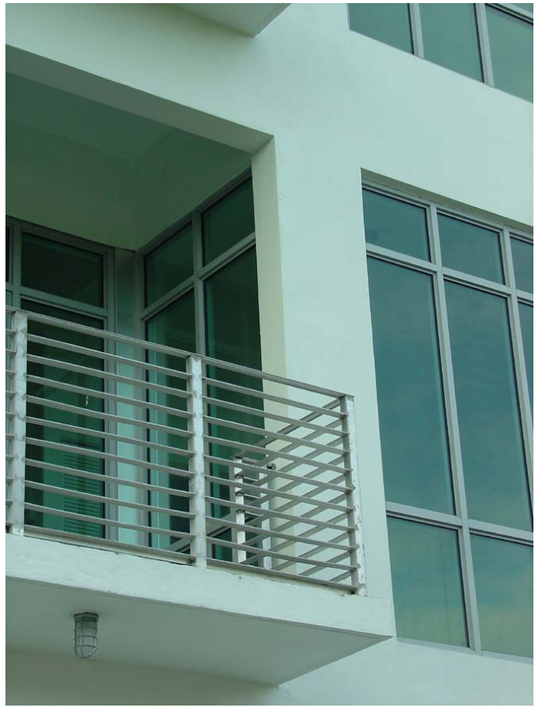
Acute Angles. Close relatives of the boomerang, acute angles were inspired by delta-winged military jets that broke speed records in the 1950s.
Aggregate. Stones, pebbles, or colored gravel in cement left untreated: for polished mirror-smooth, were used to surface the walls, floors, and paving.
Aluminum. Postwar budgets and advanced engineering and construction methods allowed for the use of this wonder material with a high strength-to-weight-ratio.
Architecture Parlante. Architecture imbued with symbolism to communicate its function. Also known as programmatic architecture.
Asymmetry. In a clean break with the past, Modernism rejected Beaux Arts ideals of balance, symmetry, arid hierarchy, which pervaded Art Deco.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Baroque. The lush ornamentation, lavish materials, and awe-inspiring interior space of late Renaissance architecture provided inspiration for architect Morris Lapidus and subsequently his colleagues in the pursuit of Miami Beach pleasure domes.
Beanpoles. Thin metal rods used as decoration and for space modulation appeared in exterior and exterior spaces.
Boomerangs. The boomerang shape, an aerodynamic curve with primitive connotations, became shorthand for speed.
Boxed Windows. After World War II, Art Deco eyebrows were elongated into both horizontal and vertical decorative elements, often framing compositions of windows and faux-brick panels.
Brise-Soleils. Fixed concrete louvers were introduced as shading devices by the architect Le Corbusier in his seminal residential towers.
Built-In Planters. Create a gradation from the architectural to the natural.



Canted Windows. To push the envelope of the Modernist use of glass, postwar architects often tilted glass walls outward from the base, typically seen in motel lobbies, storefronts, gas stations, and fast-food restaurants.
Cantilever. Shallow masonry cantilevers, a MiMo ornamental device, evolved from eyebrows typical of 1930s Tropical Art Deco.
Compressed Arches. Vertically squeezed or horizontally squashed semicircular arches forming roofs or canopies, were a popular device borrowed from Brazilian Modernism.
Concrete Block and Stucco. In MiMo architecture, stucco was molded into a myriad of abstract relief patterns to harness the abundant sunshine for ornamental effect.
Concrete Canopies. Thin concrete roofs, which often projected outward toward a driveway, street, or parking lot.
Crab Orchard Stone. This hard sandstone became a defining decorative material in MiMo from the hotels of Miami Beach to the campus of the University of Miami.
Curtain Wall Construction. A non-structural exterior wall, usually of glass, steel or aluminum that is hung on the structural frame.
Cutouts. The simple device of perforating eaves with circular square openings hinted at the structural potential of modern materials and provided visual interest. Roof cutouts were usually paired.



Decorative Railings. Railings along catwalks in motels and motel-apartments were frequently among the few opportunities for ornamentation, and appear in imaginative, abstract geometric and curvilinear compositions.
Eggcrate Facades. The square or rectangular grid created by exposed edges of concrete floors and walls projecting outward from the building wall.
Exposed Concrete. In keeping Modernist tenet of the exterior expression of structure and materials, exposed concrete was used extensively by LeCorbusier, Oscar Niemeyer and Marcel Breuer.
Eyebrows. An example of this styling in MiMo architecture, cantilevered sunshades over individual windows and doors in 1930's Tropical Art Deco evolved into continuous, horizontal cantilever sunshades over vertical elements of varying styles.
Floating Staircases. Flights of stairs without risers or sideboards; often cantilevered from a wall so that the treads seem to flat without support embodying the space-age aspirations.
Folded Planes. Inspired by the iconic roof of the U.S. Air Force Academy Chapel in Colorado Springs, concrete planes, folded into origami-like configurations, create a wealth of light and shadow effects.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.

Glass Mosaic Tile. Glass tile, primarily from Italy, ranks with crab orchard stone as a common MiMo decorative material Mosaic tile made a splashy debut in the full-height panels on the façade of the Eden Roc Hotel and was later used to give color and sparkle to the spandrels of public interior spaces, fountain basins, bathrooms, and other features.
Hyperparaboloids. Square and circular planes were warped into eye-catching topological shapes.
Interior and Exterior Blending. Continuity of interior and exterior spaces.
Interior Space Modulation. Modern construction and engineering freed architects from reliance on load-bearing walls, allowing for voluminous interiors unbound by walls and traditional room proportions.
Jalousies. Operable, narrow glass louvers were ubiquitous before air-conditioning, because of the ability to maintain ventilation during rainy weather.
Keystone. A form of oolite limestone, or oolite, quarried in Florida's Middle Keys.
Lettering. Certain typefaces on building signs, especially a round, upward-slanting script style, imparted a sense of carefree, causal 1950s living.
Louvers. Originating as sun-protection devices for windows, louvers became elaborate design elements in their own right but remained part of window compositions.

Marine Imagery. Resort MiMo continued the Tropical Art Deco tradition of depicting aquatic images but in more abstract forms like the graded shades of sea green tile representing the ocean depths on the façade of the Eden Roc.
Metal Grilles. Sometimes custom-made in an abundance of finely detailed designs, grilles were used in a similar manner as concrete brise-soleils and louvers to block sunlight.
Murals. Reflecting the popularity of the abstract, billboard-sized murals in Mexico City, large exterior murals appeared in MiMo architecture after 1960. The tile Murals of the Bacardi USA building are one of the finest examples of Latin American influence on MiMo.
Pedestal and Superstructure. Large Modernist buildings are often composed of a tower or superstructure atop a broad base.
Pilotis. Another adaptation of the International Style, cylindrical concrete support columns raised building masses above open ground levels and crated areas of shade often used for parking.
Plate Glass. Thick sheets of high-quality glass were cast in broad plates and used in storefronts and hotel and motel lobbies.
Populuxe. Refers to the flamboyant decorative style of the 1950s and 1960s, employing bright colors and futuristic contours to impart a sense of luxury.
Porte Cochere. The dramatic ornamental device of driveway drop off areas.
Pylons. Vertical masonry panels as the centerpiece of a façade of intersecting planes and volumes.

Random Ashlar Pattern. Paving and masonry consisting of stones cut into squares and rectangles of various sizes, or a faux version of the latter.
Ribbon Windows. Horizontal window bands were another earmark of the International Style, with its non-load bearing walls.
Roman Brick. Distinctively thinner and longer than conventional brick was favored by Frank Lloyd Wright for its horizontality and fine texture, popular in the 1950's.
Rounded Eaves. An easily distinguishable characteristic of MiMo apartment-motels and houses, thick, rounded eaves were used to impart a sense of fullness to otherwise spare, rectilinear structures and to emphasize a sense of shelter.
Saw Toothed Floor Plates. MiMo hotel architects often designed floor plates with rooms set on the angle of a saw tooth, so that rooms facing north and south would have ocean views.
Screen Block. Mass-produced, cast-concrete block was used in an imaginative variety of geometric and organic patterns to create stunning abstract compositions.
Shed Roofs. Sloping shed roofs, shorthand for modern American motels.
Space-Age Imagery. A number of MiMo landmarks capitalize on space imagery.
Spandrels. Panels placed between the window head of one floor and the windowsill of the floor above, usually clad in glass mosaic tile or texture, painted stucco.
Voggles. Lapidunian versions of biomorphic kidney shapes popular in postwar design.

© Calvin Giordano + Associates, Inc.