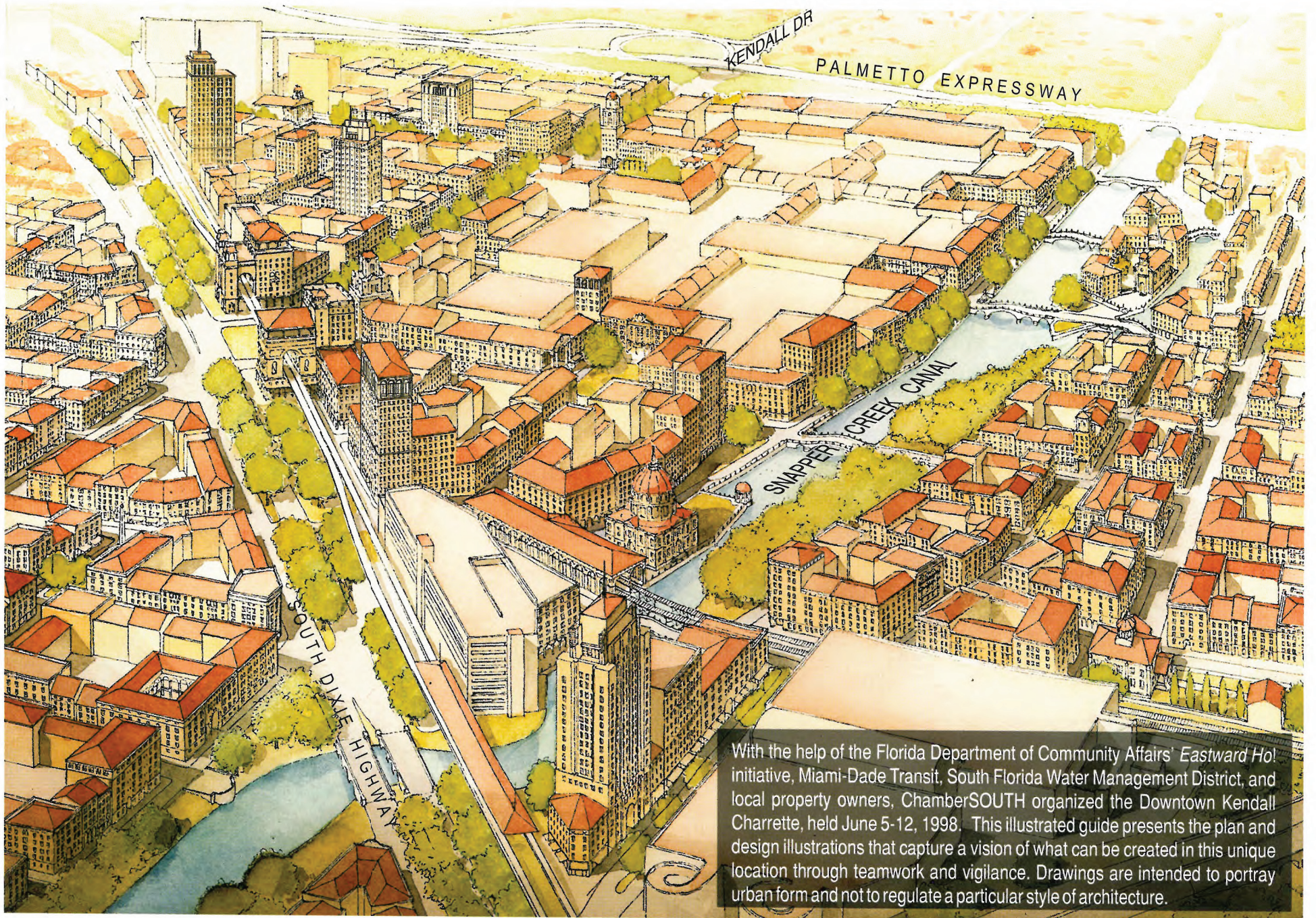


DOWNTOWN KENDALL

MASTER PLAN



With the help of the Florida Department of Community Affairs' *Eastward Ho!* initiative, Miami-Dade Transit, South Florida Water Management District, and local property owners, ChamberSOUTH organized the Downtown Kendall Charrette, held June 5-12, 1998. This illustrated guide presents the plan and design illustrations that capture a vision of what can be created in this unique location through teamwork and vigilance. Drawings are intended to portray urban form and not to regulate a particular style of architecture.

Sustainable Growth for the New Millennium

Downtown Kendall?

That's right: a *downtown* Kendall. The phrase itself turns heads. The suburban community of Kendall in south Miami-Dade County has many of the ingredients of the modern metropolis, but lacks a proud, recognizable center. That is about to change.

Long a collection of piecemeal, auto-dominated, suburban-style developments, the area around Dadeland Mall and Datan Center is ready to mature into a proper town center. It is slated for a new generation of growth and change. If the *sense of place* is kept number one on the community's agenda, it will emerge as a cosmopolitan, urbane district and a lasting economic powerhouse. The challenge is to grow in an orderly pattern that benefits everyone.

The area has long been poised for high intensity development. Since it opened in the 1960's, Dadeland has gradually become a regional destination and an international sensation. Kendall Drive swelled from a small dirt road to a major corridor. Expressways have provided even greater access to the area. Miami-

Dade Transit Authority focused the Metrorail system at Dadeland because of the area's growing regional importance. The Datan Center with its mix of office and hotel functions is a result of public policies channeling growth to specific activity centers.

Why a plan?

Property values are strong in this location today. ChamberSOUTH maintains, however, that there is much untapped potential. Most people agree that the area needs improvement, and that a firmer foundation must be laid to ensure its future competitiveness. This planning effort has allowed the community stakeholders to come together, to decide what to improve, and to figure out how to get it done. One clear conclusion: unleashing the potential will take a more coordinated and combined effort by property owners, businesses and regulators. Adjacent developments cannot afford to be isolated, designed as if they are islands unto themselves.

The heart of Kendall

A town center is the physical place where many basic needs of citizens are intensely and tightly focused: shopping, trading,

working, governance, the arts and entertainment, and dwelling are all found there. But it is also a symbol of the community, a reflection of its values and aspirations. It can capture the city's imagination and project an image of its bright future. If well designed, it is a place where fond memories form and the bonds of civil society are forged.

It is fairly obvious now that no fully detailed, areawide plan for Kendall's town center has been followed. The chaos and missing details have taken a toll on the area's image and its functionality. The blank facades of existing buildings, oversized, unsightly parking lots, lack of effective tree canopy, and unkempt vacant lots do not reflect an image worthy of the residents and visitors of this county.

Back to the future

In our generation the traditional town center form has been rediscovered as smart for business. Unlike the sprawling "noplace" developments that were the norm a couple of decades ago, today's best town centers display a great emphasis on the quality of the physical environment. In response a rush

to retool suburban "edge cities" into friendlier *places* is underway all over the nation. Competition is the driving force: the real estate industry is responding to lucrative "lifestyle" market positions, leveraging the physical environment to hold the best tenants and customers. Local governments, too, are under constant pressure from citizens to improve both efficiency and the quality of life.

That's why the physical features of engaging downtown neighborhoods, common in historic towns, are being re-introduced today. These include Main Streets with wide sidewalks, elegant squares, a rich mix of urban architecture, and tree-lined streets. Building these features today takes a concerted effort by local government and developers.

Change over time

Thirty years ago Kendall Drive was a narrow country road and Dadeland Mall's first buildings were sprouting at the rural edge of a young metropolis. Today this location is imbedded in the suburban growth that followed, closer to Downtown Miami and the coastal edge than to the western or southern reaches of

metropolitan development. The region's recent commitment of re-directing growth away from rural areas and back to the transportation corridors of the earliest settlements, is slowly taking form with the first building projects heeding the visionary call of *Eastward, Ho!*

Given its crossroads location and its vacant parcels, Downtown Kendall is well suited to lead Miami-Dade County in the forming of a new urban center vital to the region's continuing growth and prosperity.

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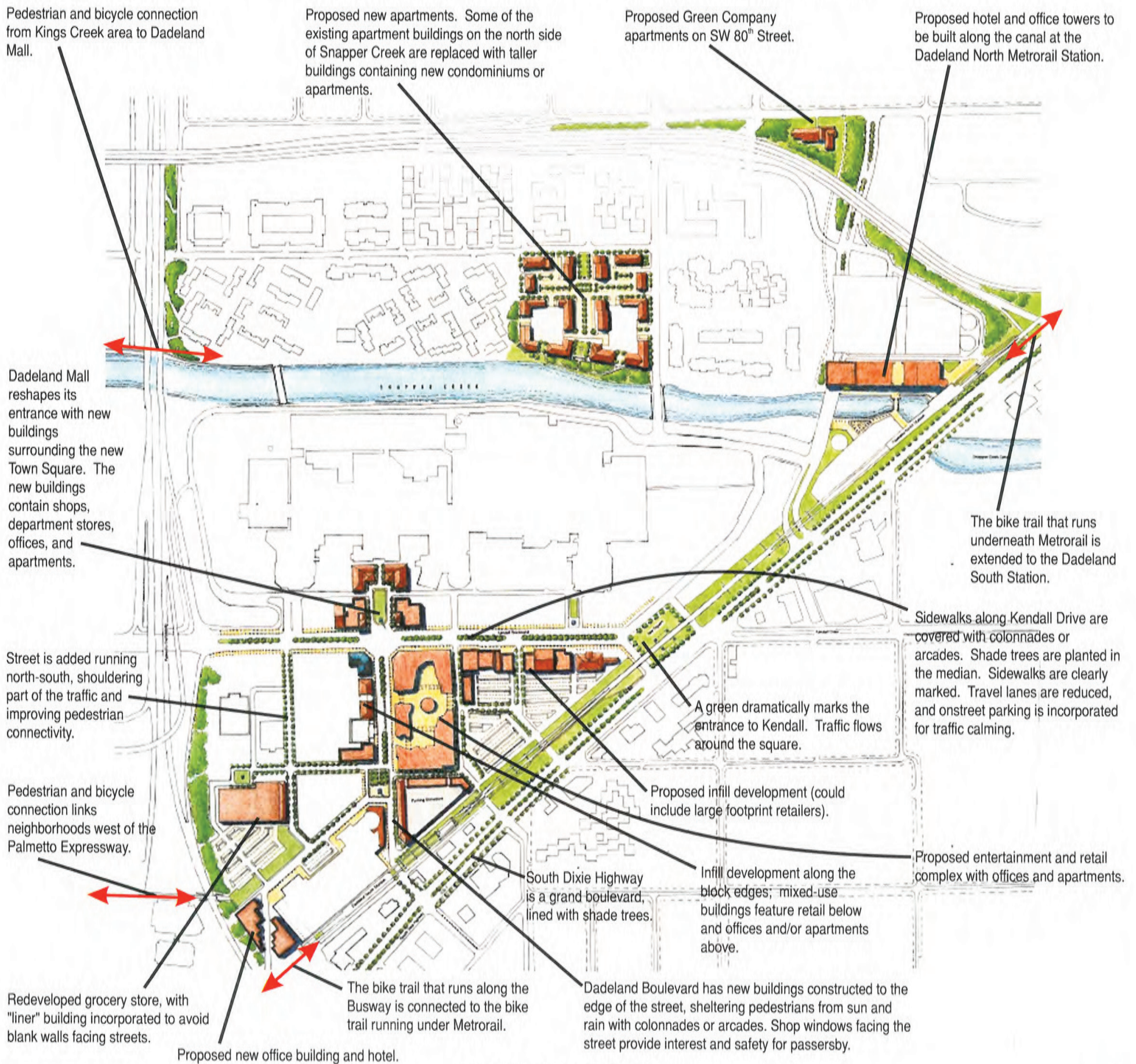
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Initial Projects: 2004

Items labeled "proposed" refer to existing plans. Other items are new suggestions of the Master Plan.



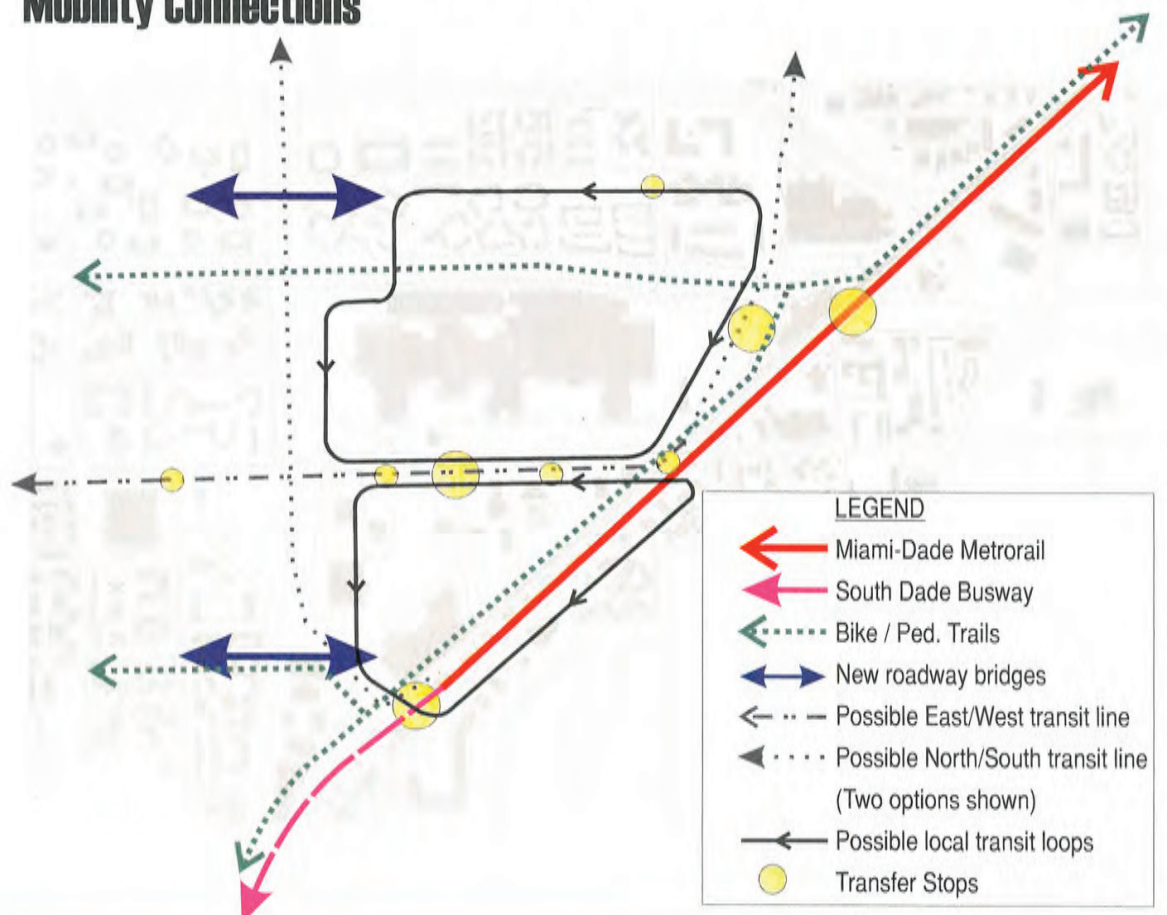
Mobility Connections

"It's a clear choice: to continue haphazard, anywhere-USA, nondescript development or to create landmarks, atmosphere and charm. Fortunately, the community prefers the latter."

-Katy Sorenson, County Commissioner, District 8



Pedestrian shelter from rain and sun is paramount. Structured colonnades and arcades over sidewalks are later incorporated into future buildings.



Long-Term Prospects: 2034

The north side of Dadeland Mall is renovated with restaurants, neighborhood serving retail, offices, and studios facing the Snapper Creek Canal.

A new canal segment adds waterfront to enhance the residential neighborhoods north of Snapper Creek.

The "island" created by the new canal is a prestigious place to live. The buildings on the edge of the island surround a hidden parking garage. The roof of the garage is a landscaped garden.

Land values have increased to the point where existing condominiums are purchased, demolished, and redeveloped.

Land underneath the Snapper Creek Expressway is utilized as playground or other active recreation such as basketball courts, handball courts, etc. Certain portions serve as overflow parking lots.

One of several neighborhood squares.



Dadeland North Metrorail Station

Transfer station for Kendall Drive's light rail system and, possibly, for a rail connection to Miami International Airport.

SW 72nd Avenue is reconnected; the street network is extended between Dadeland and the north station, with infill development on the former parking lot.

The large green at Kendall Drive and US1 is lined with mixed use buildings, typically 3 to 8 stories in height (minimum 2 stories at the street front).

Kendall Drive is lined with mixed use buildings, typically 3 to 6 stories in height (minimum 2 stories). The boulevard can accommodate trolleys, on street parking, and wider sidewalks.

Re-built buildings along South Dixie Highway are multi-story with mixed uses.

Dadeland Boulevard is lined with multi-story, mixed use buildings.

Dadeland Avenue is tunneled under the elevated expressway.

Dadeland South Metrorail Station and transfer to South Dade Busway.



The diagrams above show a hypothetical sequence of change over time (new buildings in each phase are colored red).

"By designing right and building smart, we can attain a thriving Downtown Kendall everyone can be proud of."

-Miguel Diaz de la Portilla, County Commissioner, District 11



A picture postcard view of the future: Snapper Creek Canal

Kendall Drive



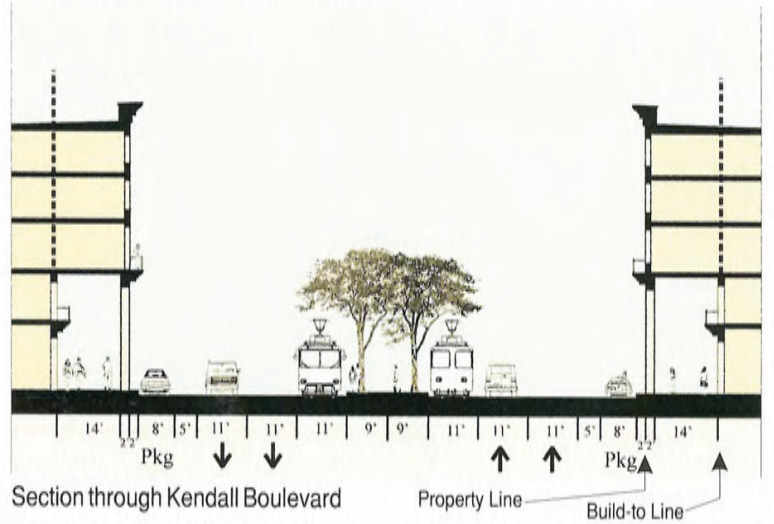
Kendall Drive is a grand boulevard with arcaded sidewalks, taller buildings built to the edge of the street, parallel on-street parking spaces, and shade trees. Transit is a part of Kendall's future.

During the public design session, every work group reinforced the concept that Kendall Drive should become the community's Main Street. To accomplish this, several changes need to occur:

- Buildings should be built along the street edge in the normal manner. "Teaser" parking spaces should be on the street, with the balance of parking located behind the buildings.
- Buildings should be tall enough to create a sense of enclosure and urban character.
- Sidewalks need to be wider,

and should be shaded with colonnades or arcades incorporated into the building designs. For the near term, a free-standing colonnade will suffice.

- Buildings should have a rich variety of architectural style and detailing, and the sidewalks should be faced by active storefronts, doors and windows.
- Buildings along the street should have a vertical mix of uses. Shops at the ground floor with offices and/or apartments above will increase the vitality of the neighborhood.



Section through Kendall Boulevard

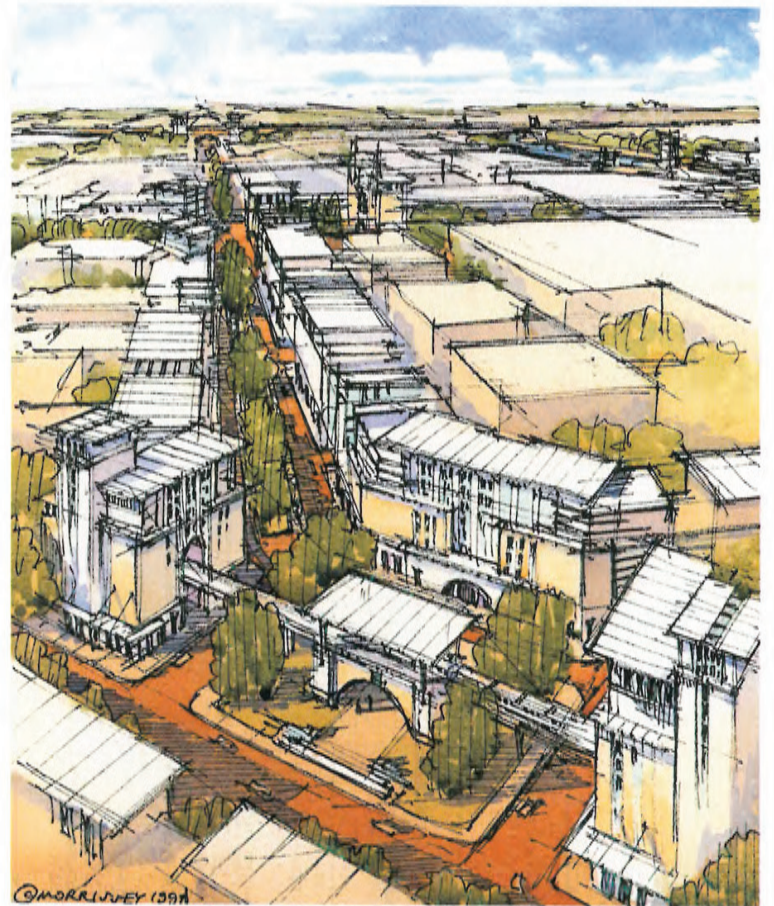
Property Line Build-to Line



Kendall Drive becomes Kendall Boulevard.



Kendall Town Square at the intersection of Kendall Boulevard and Dadeland Boulevard is the new heart of the community. Overlooking the Square are multi-story mixed-use buildings including one that will house civic functions.



Traffic flows around a large green, framed by multistory buildings, at the intersection of US1 and Kendall Drive, marking the grand entrance to Kendall. Buildings span over and around the elevated Metrorail tracks, taking advantage of air rights and making a dramatic, dynamic visual statement. Kendall Drive is renamed "Kendall Boulevard" to mark its re-creation as a prestigious address equal to any great world-class streets.



Example building elevations for Kendall Drive

Dadeland Boulevard

Like Kendall Drive, Dadeland Boulevard is to be lined with buildings that have storefronts on the ground floor. The upper floors can have more retail, offices, and/or apartments. Details such as colonnades, wide sidewalks, and shade trees are necessary to support pedestrian activity.

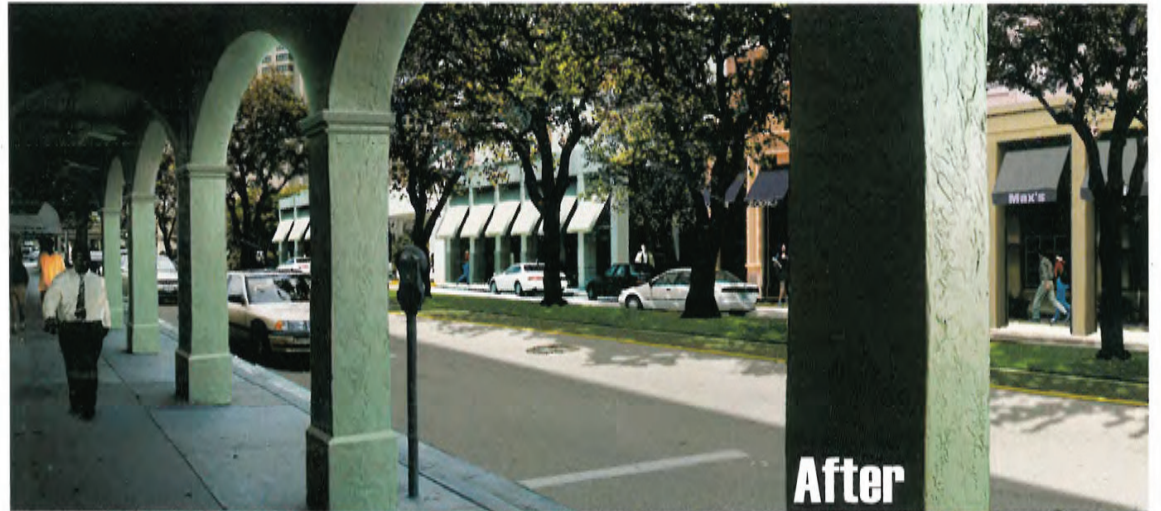
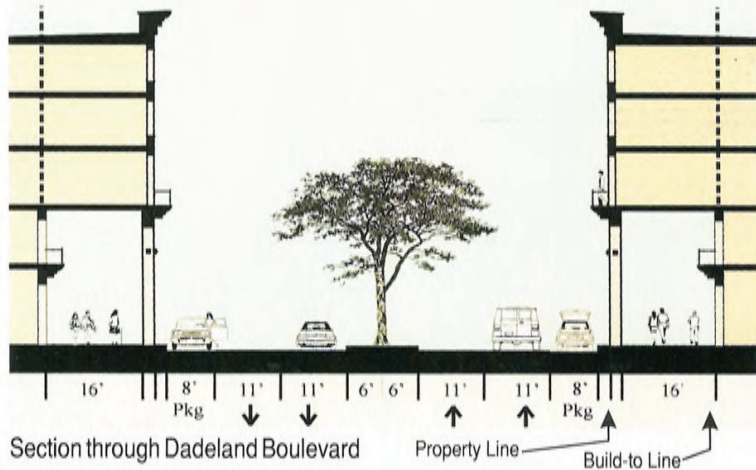
Dadeland Boulevard is the vital connection between the South Dade Busway and Dadeland Mall. Hundreds of busway riders transfer between Metrorail and

the Busway at the Dadeland South Station. Each of these riders are potential customers for businesses along Dadeland Boulevard and Kendall Drive.

During the public design session, most of the participants identified the intersection of Kendall Drive and Dadeland Boulevard as the center of Downtown Kendall. This "main & main" location is the best place for a town square. Ideally one corner should have a civic building.



Before



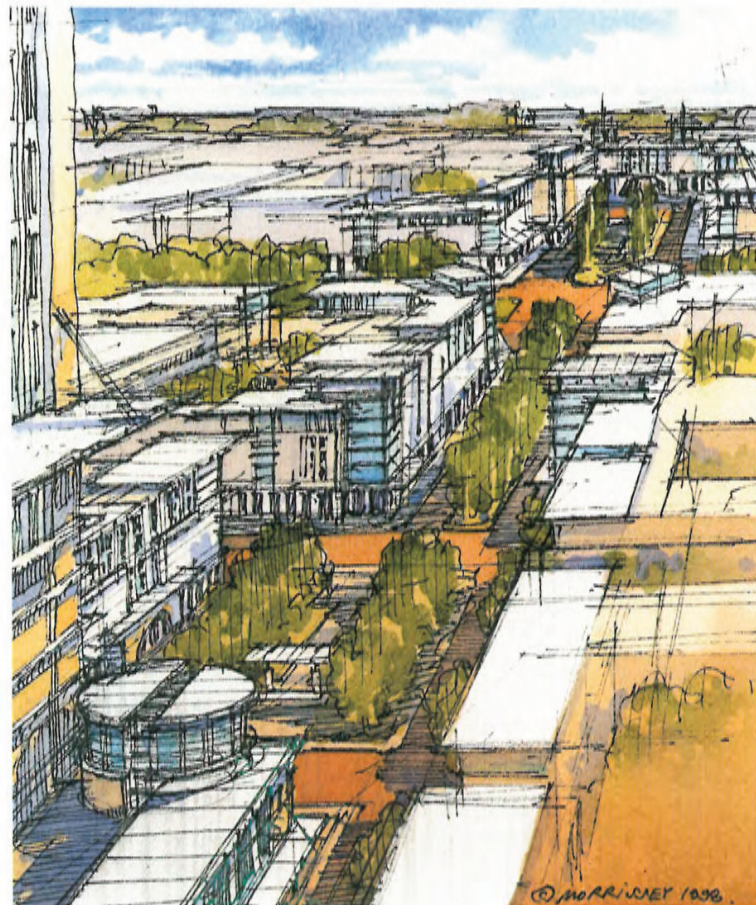
After

Dadeland Boulevard is a pedestrian-oriented boulevard like Kendall Drive. The walk from Dadeland South Metrorail station to the Mall is more interesting and comfortable.

Dadeland Boulevard becomes Pedestrian Friendly.



Busway at Dadeland South Station



The view above shows Dadeland Boulevard from above the Metrorail station (looking north towards Dadeland Mall). A small civic square is located at the intersection of South Dadeland Avenue and Dadeland Boulevard. The Marriott Hotel on the left gets a facelift with windows to present a better image to the street. The larger Town Square is visible in the background, at the "main & main" intersection with Kendall Drive.



Today, speeding cars whiz past pedestrians in the blazing sun along Dadeland Boulevard. Travel lanes are too wide. Sidewalks should be wider and shaded. Parking lanes and a wide median planted with shade trees should be added.

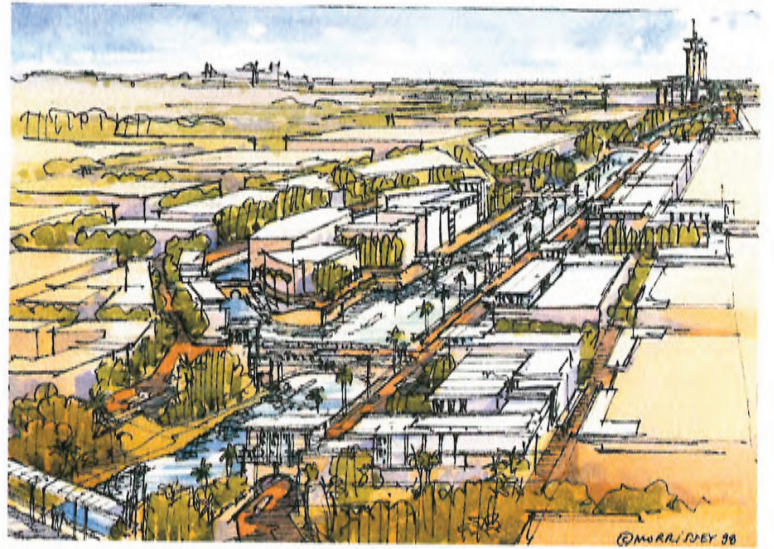


Example building elevations for Dadeland Boulevard

Snapper Creek Canal



Left: The residential neighborhood on the north side of the canal will have one or more intimate neighborhood squares. The architecture of the buildings should reflect the climate-responsive, urbane character of the best Caribbean cities.



Right: The view of Snapper Creek looking from above the Palmetto Expressway looking toward the east. The tall building in the background is the new hotel at Dadeland North station. An additional canal loops through the revitalized neighborhood north of the canal.

Snapper Creek is to be transformed from a merely functional and anonymous feature in the landscape. It should be exploited and developed as a signal amenity for the neighborhood. The wide right-of-way should be enhanced as a greenway that can be used by the neighbors as a park. The view from the condominiums and apartments along the canal will increase their value and desirability.

A formal esplanade along the southern side next to the Dadeland Mall will create a fine place for evening walks. The Mall's parking garages can be renovated or redeveloped to include shops and restaurants which will face out toward the esplanade and creek. Like Lincoln Road in Miami Beach, the restaurants will be frequented both by tourists and people who live in the neighborhood.

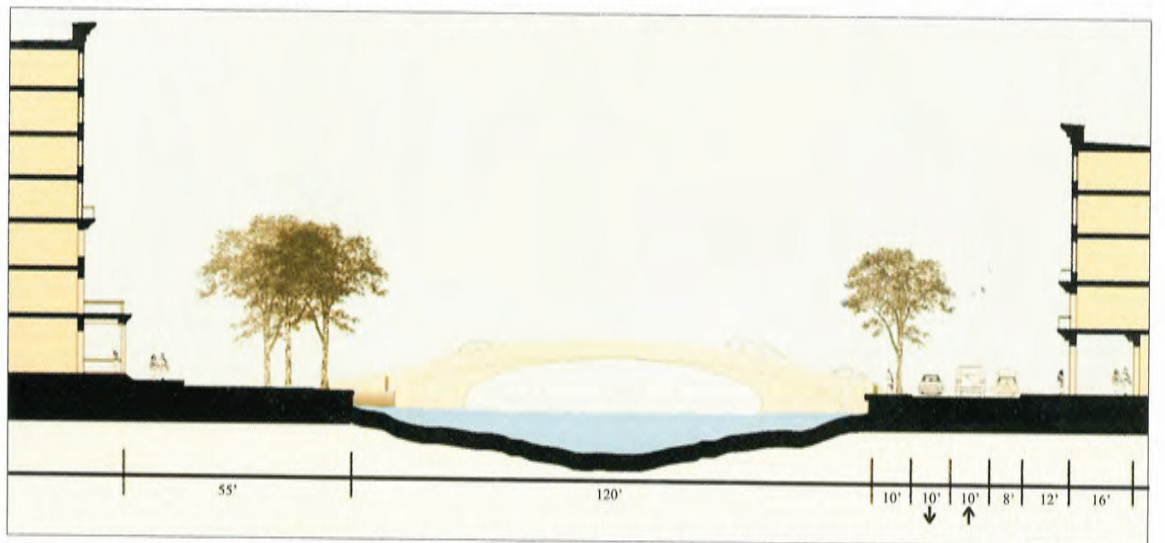
The interior spine of Dadeland Mall can eventually be connected to the esplanade by building an outdoor plaza.



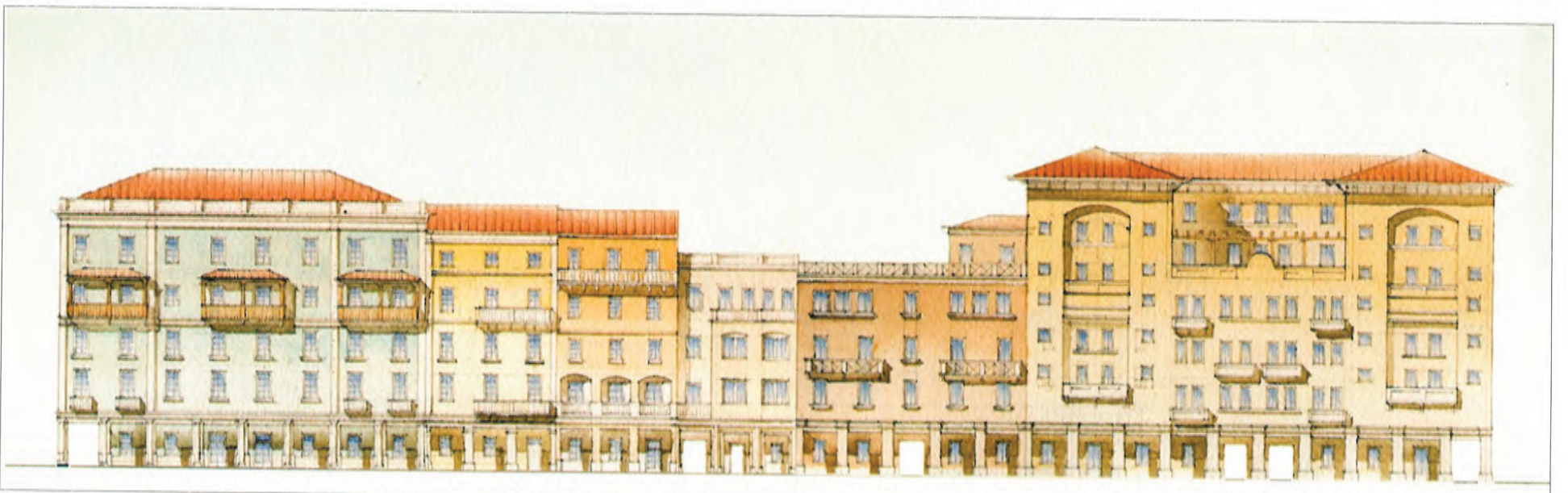
Not just a ditch any more: The canal is transformed to be a grand, premium waterfront environment. The canal's edge has a bulkhead in some places and a soft natural edge in others. The soft areas have a gentle slope down to the water. An esplanade with a wide walking area and shade trees is a valuable amenity for both residents and visitors. Outdoor dining and a "gaslight district" in this area adds an entirely new dimension to Dadeland.



Today: The canal is a mere drainage ditch, adding little aesthetic value.



The cross section above shows taller buildings on both sides of the canal. The north side (on the left) is more park like, while the south side has a street and formal esplanade.



Possible building elevations along the Snapper Creek Canal

Implementation Concepts

1.

Make pedestrians the number one priority.

- The walk between buildings is typically a long, hot, intimidating journey. **Action:** People are more likely to walk if the journey is short, shaded, comfortable, and safe. People will walk farther if there are interesting things to see along the way, such as shop fronts and lobbies. New buildings should be located close together. A long building 2 to 6 stories in height, wrapping the edges of the block, is better than one tall highrise situated within a big parking lot.
- Sidewalks are not protected from sun and rain. **Action:** Sidewalks should have colonnades or arcades. Alternatively, a continuous tree canopy planted along sidewalks provides shade from the sun and makes the street more attractive.
- Fences, hedges and "superblocks" create barriers between properties, forcing walks to be excessively long. **Action:** Create an open network of smaller blocks; foster access via new sidewalks and bicycle/pedestrian pathways.
- The expressways form barriers that isolate Downtown Kendall from the immediately adjacent neighborhoods. **Action:** Make US 1 safer to cross by re-designing several intersections with clearly marked crosswalks. For neighborhoods west of Downtown Kendall, bicycle and pedestrian connections should be built across the Palmetto Expressway.

2.

Put the motorcar in its place.

- Roads are excessively wide and "friction-free," a clear invitation to driving faster than the posted limit. **Action:** Work with FDOT to reduce the lanes, expand the median and add onstreet parking and trees as traffic calming measures.
- Oversized parking lots along streets look bad and diminish the "sense of place." **Action:** In the short term: Get property owners to plant trees and shrubs along the edges facing streets and sidewalks. For the long term: New buildings should front the property lines, with parking hidden in the rear or in parking garages with liner buildings.
- Large turning radii at intersections. This invites motorists to turn corners too quickly, creating safety hazards. **Action:** When the street is improved, reconstruct curbs with smaller radii at intersections. This will slow down motorists' turns and shorten crosswalks.
- Many adjoining parking lots do not have cross access. This adds more traffic congestion to the street because driving from one parking lot to the next interrupts the flow of through-traffic on the street. **Action:** Property owners should encourage cross access between their parking lots and that of their neighbors. **Action:** As development grows, parking capacity needs to be managed by a participant's organization.

3.

Improve the pedestrian corridors.

- The four primary corridors

(Kendall Drive, Dadeland Boulevard, US1, and Snapper Creek Canal) do not provide pedestrian comfort. **Action:** Initial investment in capital improvements to increase pedestrian comfort and safety should be focused on these corridors. Blank walls, parking structures, and surface parking lots should be replaced by pedestrian-oriented building fronts.

Action: Get FDOT to work with the county Public Works Department to plan and build pedestrian improvements within the rights-of-way. **Action:** US1 should be generously landscaped along its sides and in the median.

Action: A "memo of understanding" should be obtained from the South Florida Water Management District that states their commitment to the long-term vision outlined in this document. Also, request a list of acceptable engineering options for re-shaping the canal.

●The pedestrian network will need to be complete. **Action:** Improve the network of secondary pedestrian corridors. These corridors should be set up to extend existing patterns of movement, including additional streets within the downtown and additional crossing of the Palmetto Expressway and US1.

4.

Aggregate open space for squares and plazas.

●As Downtown Kendall increases in density, the squares and plazas become more important for residents, office workers and visitors. These open spaces become the event centers, the places to meet friends, and landmarks to orient oneself. **Action:** Promote activity and natural surveillance by making sure the plazas are open to the public and level with the grade of the sidewalk, not elevated above the ground on top of a building or parking structure.

●Logical connections are needed, creating a legible network of open spaces. **Action:** Instead of requiring simplistic percentages of open space on each lot, the open space should be aggregated into useful shapes at the right locations. Thus the obligation to provide open space need not necessarily be satisfied on every development site. Several strategies are possible to achieve the open space network. These may include the use of a regulating plan which identifies specific required open spaces, a system of credits toward open space requirements, or other options. Further study will determine the most feasible option.

5.

Extend transit, at a variety of scales and modes of travel.

●Downtown Kendall should take advantage of the many corridors which lead to it and through it. Easy access to transit is needed to reduce parking requirements. **Action:** Make sure that the concepts in this plan are prominently considered in the Kendall / Airport Major Investment study. **Action:** Add a

light rail system or trolley along Kendall Drive and connect it to the existing Metrorail and Busway. Increased transit ridership will facilitate growth and mobility without un-manageable traffic congestion.

Action: Add a rail connection to Miami International Airport (and future multi-modal transportation center) using the FEC alignment near SW 70th Avenue or using the Palmetto Expressway right-of-way.

●Reach out with transit to the neighborhoods and circulate within Downtown Kendall. **Action:** Implement a circulator system, such as a narrow-gauge trolley system (functioning like a "horizontal elevator," bringing riders to the regional system). In addition, the Busway buses can be used for local service before turning around to head south.

6.

Attack visual blight.

●Kendall Drive, US 1, and the Palmetto Interchange look barren and incomplete. **Action:** Promote infill development along the edges of blocks to define street space. **Action:** Design a simple but elegant street planting scheme. Trees are most effective when planted in aligned rows with regular spacing.

●Vacant lots are overgrown with weeds and bushes. Pavement is cracked and broken. **Action:** In the near term, property owners should be compelled to clean up and maintain their vacant parcels. Over time, these parcels should be filled in with street fronting development.

7.

Reform the local land development rules.

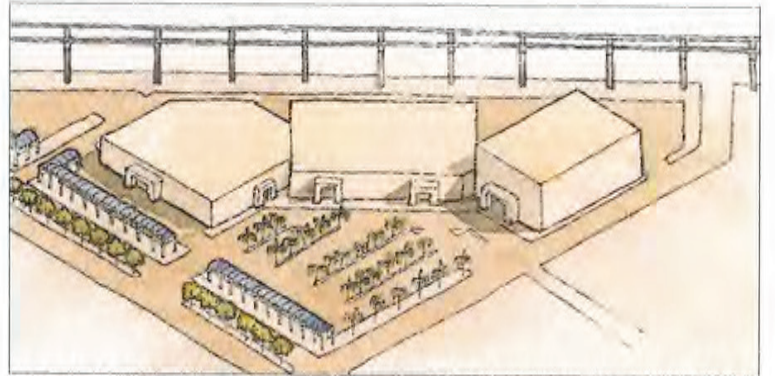
●Buildings are regulated by the wrong code criteria. Abstract tools such as "FAR" (floor area ratio), "lot coverage," "setbacks," and "density" alone do not address design and do not guarantee a coordinated build-out. **Action:** Adopt a simplified, results-oriented, crystal-clear code that regulates:

Building Position; via "Build-to-Lines", which could be drawn on an official map and be adjusted from time to time;

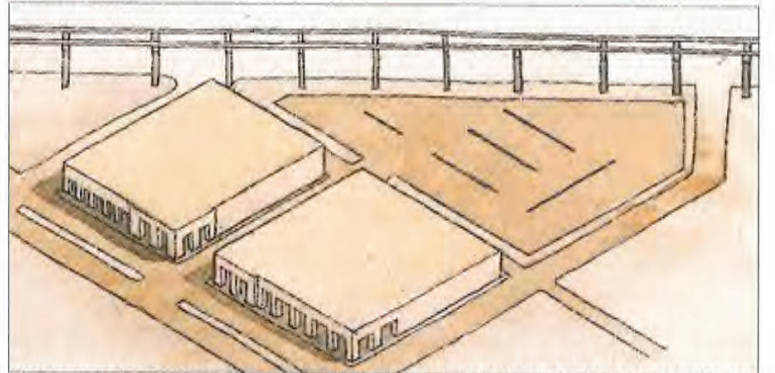
Building Height;
Parking Locations; via mid-block placement rules for lots and "liner building" requirements for parking structures; and
Building frontage requirements; via architectural standards.

●Further study is needed for determining building volume. **Action:** Use massing studies to find appropriate building volumes that also wrap the block edges. The equivalent FAR can be codified in addition to the other criteria.

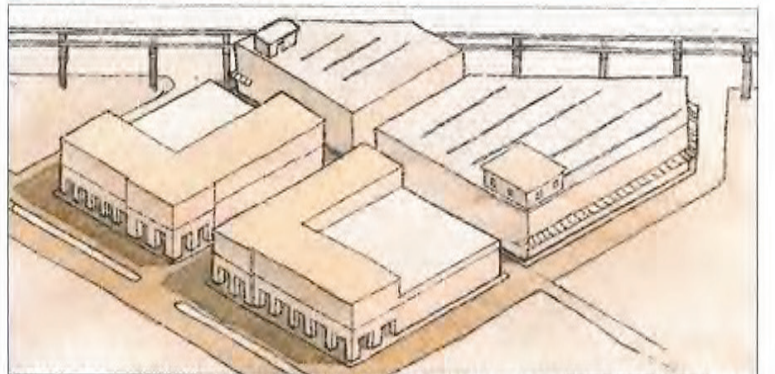
●Land uses need further mixing. The balance between shops, eating and entertainment establishments, offices, hotels, rowhouses, apartments, and government/civic uses should be allowed to flexibly adjust to an evolving marketplace. A vertical mix of uses within the same building is ideal. Apartments above shops or offices maintain street activity during the evening and weekend hours, making the streets safer. **Action:** Regulations should include incentives for the Vertical mixing of uses.



Large footprint buildings of a single use should be discouraged because they do not create a downtown character. If this arrangement is unavoidable on previously approved projects, the developer should at least provide a covered walkway over the sidewalk.



These buildings should be built up to the street, with their main entrances facing the street and parking in the rear. A colonnade over the sidewalk protects the pedestrian from the hot sun or sudden rain storms.



Mixing uses within the buildings has many benefits, including efficient shared parking, added natural surveillance, and increased pedestrian activity. Parking garages should have "liner buildings" or, at an absolute minimum, storefronts along the ground floor.



A heightened sense of identity boosts public perception and partly determines whether people will come here, invest here, or return.

●Building fronts must do their part To enhance the experience of walking down the street. **Action:** Architectural standards required by code should include:

Shade and rain protection for pedestrians. This should include colonnades, arcades, marquees, second floor balconies, or wide awnings.
Build-to lines. Buildings should be positioned along the sidewalks at a deliberate alignment, giving a designed shape to the public space.
Frequent doors and windows. Doors spaced at close intervals generate activity, direct views to merchandise, and make the walk sufficiently interesting.

Minimizing vehicular entries to parking areas. Too many curb cuts or excessively wide driveways diminish pedestrian mobility and erode the public space; these should be consolidated wherever practical.
Appropriate building heights at Street fronts. The degree of

spatial enclosure profoundly affects the quality of the environment. Building heights should be tall enough to satisfy a minimum proportion of building height to street width of 1:3.

●The application process is long and costly. **Action:** Shorten and simplify the County's application review process for applicants that follow the plan!

8.

Stay Organized.

Beginning with the current Kendall Charrette Steering Committee, a leadership taskforce should continue the work begun here, to explore implementation issues of funding, regulating, and coordinating improvements over time. This could evolve into a development authority, development review body, parking management system, or some other form of permanent arrangement.

How This Plan Was Created

In 1995, the Kendall Council of ChamberSOUTH originated the idea of working together with property owners, Dade County government, and the neighboring community to build consensus on the future of the Dadeland-Datran area. Three years of meetings, phone calls, and great effort from the Chamber staff accomplished the organization and fund-raising for a extensive week-long design "charrette."

Held in the first week of June 1998, the Downtown Kendall Charrette was the combination of a town meeting with an energetic design studio. Two local town planning firms, Dover, Kohl & Partners, and Duany Plater-Zyberk and Co., were jointly commissioned with facilitating and drawing the community's ideas from the public design sessions. Participants from the community included property owners, neighbors, business people, developers, elected officials, county planning staff, and others. Over one hundred and fifty individuals participated.

The charrette began on a Friday evening with presentations by ChamberSOUTH and the design team. The following morning, design began as 100 people from the community, armed with markers and pencils, gathered around eight tables, rolled up their sleeves, and drew their ideas on big maps of the Dadeland-Datran area. Later, a spokesperson from each table presented the main ideas from their table to the larger group.

Throughout the remainder of the week, meetings and interviews were held to gather more input. "Pin-up" reviews were held to discuss the evolving plan. The design team combined the input into a single plan. That plan was presented as a work-in-progress at the close of the charrette.



SPONSORS:

- Florida Power & Light Company
- Miami-Dade Transit Agency
- Florida Dept of Community Affairs
- So. Florida Water Mgt. District
- ChamberSOUTH
- Dadeland Mall
- Dadeland Junction
- Dadeland Marriott
- The Green Companies
- Daniel's Offset Printing
- Maury Management Group, Inc.

For further information please contact:

CHAMBER
South

Donna Masson
Or
Tom Taulbee
(305) 661-1621



DOVER, KOHL & PARTNERS
town planning

5879 Sunset Drive Suite 1
South Miami, FL 33143
(305) 666-0446
www.doverkohl.com

Duany, Plater-Zyberk & Company
Architects & Town Planners

1023 SW 25th Avenue
Miami, FL 33135
(305) 644-1023
www.dpz-architects.com



“The vision of the Downtown Kendall project is to create a thriving center of activity in Kendall with a consistent and appealing urban identity. This community will include a strong shopping presence as well as residential projects, hotel and convention facilities, community activity features and green space in a pedestrian-friendly environment. There should be a comprehensive community-based plan for this which calls for an intense use of space that serves as a model of urban infill development.”

--Mission Statement adopted by the Kendall Council of ChamberSOUTH