

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

--MEMORANDUM--



The City Beautiful

TO: Honorable Mayor and Commissioners and County Commission
FROM: Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson
DATE: May 26, 2026
SUBJECT: Up-Date re: FDOT Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Improvements

In follow-up to my Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Improvements Memorandum dated March 19th,¹ Senator Garcia, our City staff, The Underline representatives and I met on April 13 to discuss public safety improvements needed at dangerous intersections in our City and along The Underline. On April 22, 2026, Senator Garcia sent a letter to FDOT setting the shared goals to improve pedestrian safety. A copy of that letter is appended to this Memorandum. FDOT Secretary Daniel Iglesias immediately agreed to a joint on-site meeting on April 27, 2026.

At the April 27 on-site meeting, FDOT agreed to completely redesign the US1/27th Avenue intersection and implement or examine the requests listed in Senator Garcia's letter and my prior letters to improve pedestrian safety.

¹ The March 19, 2026 Memorandum is available on the City's website the following link: [2026-03-19 ANDERSON MEMO TRAFFIC & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY UPDATES.pdf](https://www.coralgables.com/sites/default/files/2026-03/2026-03-19%20ANDERSON%20MEMO%20TRAFFIC%20%26%20PEDESTRIAN%20SAFETY%20UPDATES.pdf). If the link does not open, copy and paste the following address into your web browser: <https://www.coralgables.com/sites/default/files/2026-03/2026-03-19%20ANDERSON%20MEMO%20TRAFFIC%20%26%20PEDESTRIAN%20SAFETY%20UPDATES.pdf>

Regarding requests for improvements adjacent to new construction, FDOT urged that development projects impacting FDOT highways should provide FDOT traffic impact studies during the approval process – not as is typically done now – after design approvals are completed. Therefore, I will be sponsoring an item on July agenda to require commercial development plans impacting FDOT streets to submit traffic impact studies to FDOT early in the process.

FDOT's May 20th letter confirmed the planned improvements include the following:

- **US 1 Intersection Safety Improvements:** Pedestrian safety features will be implemented along US 1, including the complete redesign of 27th Avenue and installation of Pedestrian Lead Interval (LPI) Signals at US 1 crossings with No Turn Blank-Out signs that light up for a specified period of time to provide pedestrians a head start before vehicles can turn. A sample “blank out” no right turn sign is shown below. See the attached FDOT Letter for a complete list of the intersections.



Where feasible, FDOT will also install Speed Feedback signs, guardrails to protect pedestrians, and examine the feasibility of

installing electronic devices to detect when pedestrians/bicyclists are approaching intersections. Additionally, FDOT will examine the need for a traffic signal at Caballero Boulevard and urge the county to approve traffic signal priority (periodization) for Police and Fire first responders and expansion of future trolley routes.

- **LeJeune Road Speed Reductions and Pedestrian Safety Improvements:** FDOT confirmed that speed limit reductions on LeJeune in Coral Gables between US 1 and SW 8th Street will be reduced to 35 mph. The first section next to Coral Gables High started construction in January 2026. The second section from Bird Road to SW 8th Street will commence in 2028. In addition, Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) and Accessible Pedestrian Signals for sight impaired individuals will be installed at Minorca, Andalusia, Valencia, Bird Road, Alhambra Circle, Miracle Mile/Coral Way and University Drive. Speed Feedback signs will also be installed along this corridor.

Working together with State and County representatives, we can improve pedestrian and traffic safety in our city and in Miami-Dade County. For instance, the Senator's correspondence together with the Resolution urging the County to expedite approval of traffic signal periodization/prioritization system will help provide relief to heavily trafficked corridors and make our city more walkable and safer for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Attachments:

- (1) April 22, 2026 letter from Senator Garcia to FDOT.
- (2) May 20, 2026 letter from FDOT to Senator Garcia.
- (3) Coral Gables Resolution No. 2026-105



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

COMMITTEES:

Appropriations Committee on Criminal and Civil Justice, *Chair*
Children, Families, and Elder Affairs, *Vice Chair*
Appropriations
Appropriations Committee on Health and Human Services
Criminal Justice
Ethics and Elections
Rules

SENATOR ILEANA GARCIA

36th District

April 22, 2026

Daniel Iglesias, PE
District Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation – District 6
1000 NW 111th Avenue
Miami, FL 33172

Dear Secretary Iglesias,

Thank you for your thorough and thoughtful response regarding our requests to enhance intersection crossings along The Underline and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. I appreciate Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 6's continued commitment to ensuring this 10-mile multimodal corridor serves as a safe and high-quality asset for residents and visitors.

The proposed redesign at SW 27th Avenue will undoubtedly save lives, and the planned improvements at Le Jeune Road represent meaningful progress. As we approach completion of The Underline, it is imperative that we prioritize the safety of our most vulnerable users -- pedestrians and cyclists. While these efforts are an important step forward, additional targeted actions are necessary to address persistent safety concerns along the corridor.

Accordingly, I request that FDOT prioritize the following:

• **Expand blank-out signage and restrict right turns on red:**

At intersections with dedicated right-turn lanes, conflicts between turning vehicles and cyclists crossing with the pedestrian signal remain a significant safety issue. Additional blank-out signage is needed to eliminate this "right-hook" condition. At a minimum, vehicular turning movements should be restricted while pedestrians and cyclists have the walk phase.

As outlined in prior correspondence from Coral Gables Vice Mayor Rhonda Anderson, recurring concerns include:

- Right turns on red occurring simultaneously with lawful pedestrian and cyclist crossings;
- Pedestrian phases that overlap with vehicular turning movements; and
- Motorists failing to yield.

REPLY TO:

- ☐ 2828 Coral Way, Suite 208, Miami, Florida 33145 (305) 442-6841
- ☐ 314 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5036

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

BEN ALBRITTON
President of the Senate

JASON BRODEUR
President Pro Tempore

Recommended solutions include exclusive pedestrian phases, prohibiting right turns on red where feasible, and implementing a 6–10 second leading pedestrian interval.

• **Install additional speed feedback signage:**

Speeding continues to present risks in key areas, particularly where southbound I-95 transitions onto U.S. 1. Expanded use of speed feedback signs will help reinforce compliance.

• **Install guardrails in critical segments:**

There have been multiple instances of vehicles leaving the roadway and entering the trail. In areas where The Underline is within close proximity to U.S. 1, guardrails are a necessary protective measure.

• **Incorporate smart detection technology:**

I encourage FDOT to explore emerging technologies such as sensor- or Bluetooth-based systems that alert motorists to the presence of pedestrians and cyclists at intersections.

• **Conduct a joint site visit:**

I welcome the opportunity to meet on-site to review key intersections and evaluate conditions firsthand:

- Le Jeune Road at University Drive
- Le Jeune Road at Minorca and Andalusia
- Le Jeune Road at Valencia Avenue and Bird Road
- Le Jeune Road at Miracle Mile
- Le Jeune Road at Alhambra Circle
- U.S. 1 at Caballero Boulevard

At U.S. 1 and Caballero Boulevard, the installation of a traffic signal is warranted to improve pedestrian safety, facilitate turning movements, and accommodate ongoing and planned development along the corridor. Coordinated signal timing will be critical to minimizing traffic impacts while enhancing safety.

In addition, advancing signal prioritization along U.S. 1 is essential to support Fire Rescue and law enforcement operations, with future scalability for transit expansion. As noted by the Coral Gables Fire Chief, emergency signal priority has remained under Miami-Dade County review for more than five years. Given the importance of this issue, I urge FDOT to work collaboratively with the County to expedite evaluation and implementation.

Signal prioritization will reduce emergency response times, improve operational efficiency, enhance safety, and support future transit connectivity between downtown Coral Gables, the University of Miami, and South Miami. Without it, efficient trolley service across this corridor will not be feasible.

Thank you for your continued partnership on this important matter. The safety of our community must remain our shared priority, and I am confident that, working together, we can advance solutions that meaningfully reduce risk and improve mobility for all users. I look forward to your

continued leadership in ensuring that FDOT roadways and The Underline set the gold standard for multimodal safety across our region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ileana Garcia". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Ileana Garcia
Florida State Senator, District 36



Florida Department of Transportation

RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

1000 N.W. 111 Avenue
Miami, Florida 33172

JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.
SECRETARY

May 20, 2026

Senator Ileana Garcia
36th District
2828 Coral Way, Suite 208
Miami, FL 33145

Dear Senator Garcia:

Thank you for your April 22 letter and for attending the May 8th field meeting with Coral Gables Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson, representatives from the Underline, and our team at the intersection of US-1 and SW 27th Avenue. We appreciate your continued partnership and interest in improving safety for all users along The Underline and the surrounding roadway network.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) shares your commitment to delivering a safe, high-quality facility, and we are actively advancing the initiatives you highlighted in your letter. Below is an update on the items mentioned and discussed in the field:

- **Proposed Improvements at the intersection of SR 9/SW 27 Avenue and US-1:**
FDOT is completing the development and advancement of long-term improvements to modify the turning radius for drivers on US-1 that are heading southbound and turning right onto northbound SW 27th Avenue. The new concept will also feature striping to help reduce the speed of turning vehicles, improve visibility for drivers and Underline users, and straighten the crosswalk across SW 27th Avenue. The project will also feature blank out signs and wayfinding signs to guide pedestrians to the pedestrian crosswalk at SW 27th Terrace. We anticipate construction to start of the project in mid-2027.
- **Expand blank-out signage and restrict right turns on red:**
Blank-out signs are being implemented at 12 intersections along US-1 from SW 88th Street to SW 22nd Avenue to help avoid conflicts between turning vehicles and Underline users. The intersecting streets are:
 - SW 88th Street
 - SW 70th Avenue
 - SW 67th Avenue
 - SW 62nd Avenue
 - SW 72nd Street
 - SW 70th Street
 - Alhambra Circle
 - SW 57th Avenue
 - Riviera Drive
 - SW 32nd Avenue
 - SW 27th Avenue
 - SW 22nd Avenue

Senator Ileana Garcia

May 20, 2026

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We are also coordinating with Miami-Dade County (County) to implement Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPI) where it is operationally feasible to further mitigate conflicts between pedestrians and turning vehicles.

- **Speed Feedback Signage at I-95 Terminus:**

We are reviewing new candidate locations for additional speed feedback signs, including the southbound I-95 to US-1 transition area noted in your correspondence.

- **Guardrails in Critical Segments:**

Our team has begun assessing segments to determine where guardrail installations would provide measurable safety benefits given that guardrails and barriers are hazards themselves and must be placed specifically in locations that meet design criteria and standards. We expect to have the results of the assessment by late Summer. It should be noted that if barriers are warranted, coordination between the Underline and the County will need to occur given that the barrier would likely need to be installed within County right of way.

- **Smart Detection Technologies:**

We will work collaboratively with the County to explore use of this technology where feasible. It is important to note that only devices and technology that the County will support and maintain can be considered.

- **Traffic Signal Request on US-1 at Caballero Boulevard:**

Staff will work with the City of Coral Gables to obtain and review the traffic impact study for the planned land development project in the area. Early involvement by FDOT via the permitting process will ensure that the proper control treatment is implemented at the intersection.

- **Signal Periodization along US-1:**

We understand the importance of signal periodization for emergency responders and future transit service reliability. We will continue to coordinate with the County as they explore this option further.

- **Upcoming improvements along SR 948/LeJeune Road:**

- Reduction of Posted Speed Limit:

- The posted speed limit will be reduced from 40 to 35 MPH along LeJeune Road from US-1 to Altara Avenue as part of Project FM 446002-1. This project started construction in January 2026.
 - The segment from SR 976/Bird Road/SW 40th Street to SR 90/Tamiami Trail/SW 8th Street will also be reduced from 40 to 35 MPH as part of an upcoming resurfacing project, FM 447829-1, currently scheduled for to be awarded for construction in September 2028.

Senator Ileana Garcia

May 20, 2026

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Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) and Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS):

- LPIs will be included as part of project FM 447829-1, currently scheduled to be awarded for construction in September 2028, along LeJeune Road at the following intersections: Menorca Avenue, Andalusia Avenue, Valencia Avenue, Bird Road, Miracle Mile/Coral Way, Alhambra Circle, and Mendoza Avenue (a new signal is also being installed at this intersection).
- APSs will be included as part of FM 447829-1 along LeJeune Road at the following intersections: Mendoza Avenue. (a new signal is also being installed at this intersection), Menorca Avenue, Andalusia Avenue, Valencia Avenue, Bird Road, Alhambra Circle, Miracle Mile/Coral Way, and University Drive, and SW 8th Street. Additional APSs will also be installed as part of project FM 446002-1 along LeJeune Road at the intersection of US-1 and Ponce de Leon Boulevard. An exclusive pedestrian phase has already been implemented at the intersection of LeJeune Road and Altara Avenue.

Speed Feedback Signs:

Speed feedback signs will be installed along LeJeune Road in the northbound direction north of Cadima Avenue and in the southbound direction south of Sarto Avenue. These plans are in design and are being coordinated with the City of Coral Gables. We expect to start construction in Fall 2026.

We appreciate your leadership regarding these initiatives for the users of these facilities and our community. If you have additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Ramon Sierra at (305) 470-5336 or email at ramon.sierra@dot.state.fl.us.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Daniel Iglesias, P.E.
District Six Secretary

cc: Omar Meitin, P.E., FDOT
Rudy Garcia, P.E., FDOT
Karina Fuentes, P.E., FDOT
Vice-Mayor Rhonda Anderson, City of Coral Gables
Patrice Gillespie Smith, The Underline

CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-105

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA, URGING MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO EXPEDITE REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF A UNIFORM TRAFFIC SIGNAL PRIORITY AND/OR PREEMPTION SYSTEM FOR USE BY MUNICIPALITIES, INCLUDING FOR FIRE RESCUE, POLICE, AND TRANSIT/TROLLEY OPERATIONS, AND TO COMPLETE SUCH APPROVAL BEFORE THE END OF 2026; PROVIDING FOR TRANSMITTAL; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, the City of Coral Gables is committed to enhancing pedestrian safety, improving emergency response, and expanding mobility options for residents, visitors, and the surrounding community; and

WHEREAS, improving the safety of intersections around the Underline for pedestrians is a priority objective of the City, particularly in areas where pedestrian activity, vehicular traffic, transit operations, and emergency response needs intersect; and

WHEREAS, traffic signal priority and/or preemption technology can assist emergency response vehicles by helping move traffic out of intersections and allowing fire rescue and police vehicles to respond more safely and efficiently; and

WHEREAS, expedited approval of a uniform system would benefit fire rescue and police operations, improve intersection safety, and support future mobility improvements; and

WHEREAS, signal prioritization may also assist future trolley service expansion, including potential connections between Coral Gables, South Miami, and the Underline at the University area, by improving the feasibility of crossing and operating near U.S. 1; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds that urging Miami-Dade County to expedite approval of such a system before the end of 2026 will advance the City's objective of making intersections around the Underline safer for pedestrians and is in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF CORAL GABLES:

SECTION 1. That the foregoing "**WHEREAS**" clauses are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Resolution upon the adoption hereof.

SECTION 2. The City Commission hereby urges Miami-Dade County to expedite its review and approval of a uniform and interoperable traffic signal priority and/or preemption system that may be used by municipalities, including the City of Coral Gables, for fire rescue, police, and transit/trolley operations.

SECTION 3. The City Commission further urges Miami-Dade County to complete such review and approval before December 31, 2026, so that municipalities may proceed with implementation, planning and coordination.

SECTION 4. The City Commission encourages Miami-Dade County to consider priority locations and corridors where such technology may enhance public safety, pedestrian safety, and mobility, including but not limited to intersections around the Underline, U.S. 1 crossings, Ponce de Leon Boulevard, and other locations identified through coordination with municipalities, fire rescue, police, transportation officials, and other relevant stakeholders.

SECTION 5. The City Clerk is hereby directed to transmit a copy of this Resolution to the Mayor of Miami-Dade County, the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, the Miami-Dade County Department of Transportation and Public Works, the Florida Department of Transportation District Six, and such other officials as may be appropriate.

SECTION 6. This Resolution shall become effective upon the date of its passage and adoption herein.

PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS FIFTH DAY OF MAY, A.D., 2026.


(Moved: Anderson / Seconded: Fernandez)

(Yeas: Castro, Fernandez, Lara, Anderson, Lago)

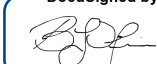
(Unanimous: 5-0 Vote)

(Agenda Item: F-6)

APPROVED:

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VINCE LAGO
MAYOR

ATTEST:

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BILLY Y. URQUIA
CITY CLERK

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND
LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:

DocuSigned by:

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CRISTINA M. SUÁREZ
CITY ATTORNEY