March 19, 2012

Ms. Lauren P. Milligan
Florida State Clearinghouse
Department of Environmental Protection
3900 Commonwealth Boulevard
Mail Station 47
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-3000

RE: Advance Notification
University City Complete Streets
Miami-Dade County, Florida

Dear Ms. Milligan:

We are sending this Advance Notification (AN) Package to your office for distribution to State agencies that conduct Federal consistency reviews (consistency reviewers) in accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act and Presidential Executive Order 12372. We are also distributing the AN Package to local and Federal agencies. Although we will request specific comments during the permitting process, we are asking that permitting and permit reviewing agencies (consistency reviewers) review the attached information and provide us with their comments.

This is a Federal-aid action and Florida International University, in consultation with the Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration, will determine what type of environmental documentation will be necessary. The determination will be based upon in-house environmental evaluations and comments from other agencies.

Please provide a consistency review for this project in accordance with the State’s Coastal Zone Management Program. In addition, please review this project’s consistency, to the maximum extent feasible, with the approved Comprehensive Plan of the local government to comply with Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes.

Consistency reviewers have 45 days from the AN to provide their comments. Once you have received their comments, please supply a summary and consistency determination for your agency within 60 days of the AN. If you need more review time, send a written request for an extension to our office within the initial 60 day comment period.

Your comments should be addressed to me at the mailing address listed below.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Kenneth A. Jessell, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President for Finance and Chief Fiscal Officer

Division of Business and Finance
University Park, 11200 SW 8 Street, PC 523, Miami, Florida 33199 • (305) 348-2101 • Fax: (305) 348-3678
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Florida Department of Transportation Central Office, Marjorie Bixby
Florida Department of Transportation Central Office, Meredith Dahlrose
Florida Department of Transportation - District 6, Carl Filer
Florida Department of Transportation - District 6, Craig James
South Florida Water Management District, Carol Ann Wehle
South Florida Water Management District, Carlos de Rojas
South Florida Water Management District, Trisha Stone
Florida Inland Navigation District, David Roach
Florida Intrastate Highway System Central Office, George Sirianni
Florida Intrastate Highway System Central Office, Tyrone Scorsone
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Scott Sanders
South Florida Regional Planning Council, Carolyn A. Dekle
South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, Manager of Planning & Capital Development, William L. Cross
South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, Joe J. Giulietti
South Florida Regional Transportation Authority, Linda Kompelien Westin, AICP
Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Ronald D. Anzalone
Miami-Dade County, Mayor Carlos Gimenez
Miami-Dade County District 11, Joe A. Martinez
Miami-Dade County District 12, Jose “Pepe” Diaz
Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX), Javier Rodriguez, P.E.
Miami-Dade Transit, Director, Ysela Llort
Miami-Dade Transit, Assistant Director, Albert Hernandez
Miami-Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization, Jose-Luis Mesa, Ph.D.
Miami-Dade Urbanized Area MPO, Tammy Vrana
Miami-Dade Department of Permitting, Environment and Regulatory Affairs, Jack Osterholt
Miami-Dade Department of Permitting, Environment and Regulatory Affairs, Lee Hefty
Miami-Dade Department of Permitting, Environment and Regulatory Affairs, Enrique A. Cuellar
Miami-Dade Department of Permitting, Environment and Regulatory Affairs, Marc C. Oaferrier
Miami-Dade County Aviation Department, Jose Abréu, P.E.
Miami-Dade County Public Works Department, Frank Aira, P.E.
Miami-Dade Public Works, Assistant Chief, Traffic Engineering Division, Jeffrey Cohen
City of Sweetwater, Manuel M. Maroño
Citizens’ Independent Transportation Trust (CITT), Charles D. Scurr
Sierra Club-Miami Group, Mark Oncavage
1. **Project Description**

As the only public research university in Florida’s most populous and diverse metropolitan area of Miami-Dade County, Florida International University (FIU) is among the top 25 largest universities in the country. FIU is experiencing rapid growth and expansion and is expected to soon exceed 50,000 student enrollments. In response, FIU has developed a sustainable prosperity plan, UniversityCity, that fosters a more seamless campus-community dynamic with enhanced public transportation and new forms of residential and neighborhood development. **Figure 1** shows the proposed project location.

FIU’s UniversityCity Advanced Transit Oriented Development (ATOD) creates a best practice model for shifting trips away from private vehicles while simultaneously supporting the economic growth related to a major public research university. By strategically weaving together vibrant and mixed-use pedestrian pathways, pedestrian bridges, quality multi-modal transit station environments, shared local feeder vehicles, bike paths, private development projects, and express bus service, the UniversityCity ATOD shifts more than 30% of trips from private vehicles to transit or other modes.

The UniversityCity Prosperity Project helps reduce congestion, accidents and travel costs, and contributes significantly to regional economic development by supporting the growth of FIU and area businesses. The proposed ATOD improvements will create extensive mode shifts to transit/biking/walking, more affordable living opportunities, greatly improved pedestrian safety and comfort, and further reduced congestion, pollution, and energy use.

The UniversityCity ATOD contains a number of innovative and traditional components woven together to address the total travel path of individual travelers. As shown in **Figure 2**, the various elements include:

- Advanced Transit Multimodal Station (ATMS) inside a new 2,000 space “Smart” Garage;
- Pedestrian bridge across US 41;
- Complete Streets improvements to travel lanes, sidewalks, medians, and intersections along a mixed-use Main Street Corridor (SW 109th Avenue between University Drive and SW 5th Street);
- New Sweetwater City Hall Plaza and Garage (SW 109th Avenue and SW 5th Street);
- Improved pedestrian safety features at the intersection of SW 109th Avenue and US 41, including narrowed travel lanes to reduce speeds, specially designated crosswalks, widened and protected medians on US 41 to allow for pedestrians to pause, improved signage to make drivers aware of pedestrians, higher lighting levels for pedestrian visibility, improved sidewalks across the canal on the north side of US 41, and “countdown” pedestrian crossing signals;
Figure 1

University City Prosperity Project
Project Location Map

Legend
- Roadway
- Highway
- Water
- County Boundary

Source: Florida Geographic Data Library

0 4 8 16 Miles

Site Location
Tamiami Trail
Krome Avenue
HEFT
US-1
Biscayne Bay
• Upgraded pedestrian pathways on the FIU campus;
• Complete street improvements on SW 5th and 6th Streets between SW 109th and 107th Avenue to include widened sidewalks, new street landscape, pedestrian lighting, and reconfigured surface parking;
• Special attention to personal security throughout the ATOD area, using environmental, program, and strategic communications improvements;
• Complete street improvements on SW 107th Avenue between US 41 and West Flagler Street;
• Upgraded Sweetwater transit vehicles, coordinated use of FIU collector bus vehicles, and expanded use of FIU motor coaches on the Miami-Dade Transit express bus routes; and
• Miami-Dade Transit Express bus improvements between the ATMS and Miami Intermodal Center.

2. Purpose and Need Data:

Most travel in the South Florida region continues to rely on single occupancy private vehicles. Extensive travel delays and high transportation costs for residents and businesses throughout South Florida can have a negative impact on economic growth, quality of life, affordable living options, environmental sustainability, and recruitment of talent and businesses. Without new ways to help residents and businesses reduce travel time and costs, economic growth and prosperity will remain a major challenge in South Florida.

FIU expects to grow enrollment by almost 40% over the next decade. With over 7,000 faculty/staff, and 130,000 alumni in the region, FIU serves as an anchor for the emerging South Florida biotech corridor, attracts over 500,000 annual visitors for cultural and sporting events, and leads the development of a billion dollar economic development cluster centered on the new school of medicine. As the only public research university serving the Miami area, FIU’s growth has enormous national and regional significance.

Traffic congestion, emerging water supply and drainage issues, parking shortages, and limited transportation choices threaten FIU’s ability to accommodate the projected growth. Currently, there are limited transit options or connections to regional rail service, too few students and staff able to comfortably walk or bike to campus, and congested major roadways acting as barriers to nearby communities.

The City of Sweetwater (Sweetwater) provides an opportunity to locate some livable, mixed-use places in an area just north of FIU, but poor mobility linkages across the eight lanes of high-speed traffic on US 41 have hindered this development. Similar conditions on SW 107th Avenue and West Flagler Street also exist. This situation is expected to worsen and become more dangerous for pedestrians after planned widening projects on SW 107th Avenue and the nearby Florida Turnpike over the next five years.

FIU has very little room on campus to expand and, therefore, needs to locate additional housing, retail, and other uses in quality, livable places near campus. A pedestrian friendly transportation network is needed in order to facilitate access to these offsite areas. The purpose of this study is to evaluate proposed transit options associated with FIU’s UniversityCity ATOD. The proposed
project is consistent with both the City of Sweetwater and FIU’s DCA-approved Local Government Comprehensive Plans in accordance with Chapter 163, F.S.

3. **Environmental Information:**

The following inventory of environmental resources is based on a preliminary Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis for a 500 foot (ft) buffer distance centered along the proposed, federally-funded, project improvements (see **Figure 2**). The data listed is the most current data available from the Florida Geographic Data Library and specific maps are included as Attachment A.

Figure 2
a. **Land Uses:** Adjacent land uses range from urban to institutional. The southern portion of the study area is characterized by the FIU Modesto A. Madique Campus. Within Sweetwater and north of the Tamiami Canal (C-4), the study area is a mix of retail/commercial facilities, single family homes, and low-rise, multiple dwelling units.

b. **Wetlands:** Wetland areas within the study area were identified by evaluating existing information such as aerial photography and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and National Wetland Inventory (NWI) land use mapping, coupled with selective groundtruthing. The majority of the proposed project improvements will remain on existing roadways and within the existing right-of-way. The Tamiami Canal (C-4) provides minimal littoral habitat because it is frequently maintained and has steep side slopes. Therefore, minimal involvement with wetlands is anticipated.

c. **Floodplains:** According to the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), the proposed project improvements involve work in areas of the 100-year floodplain. There is no involvement with regulatory floodways.

d. **Wildlife and Habitat:** The following table (see Table 1) lists threatened and/or endangered species that may be found within or in close proximity to the project corridor was prepared from various state and federally published lists. The species are listed by either the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), or Florida Department Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) as federally endangered (FE), federally threatened (FT), state endangered (SE), state threatened (ST), federally threatened due to similar appearance to another species FT(S/A) or [Florida] species of special concern (SSC), and could possibly inhabit or migrate through the subject project vicinity.

The USFWS removed the American bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants on June 28, 2007. However, the bald eagle is still federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). Likewise, FWC adopted a Bald Eagle Management Plan for Florida and removed the bald eagle from the Florida Imperiled Species List on April 9, 2008. The project will follow the FWC Eagle Management Guidelines as applicable. A GIS data search revealed no bald eagle nests within the study area.

The USFWS removed the American peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus anatum*) from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants on August 25, 1999. However, the American peregrine falcon is still federally protected by the MBTA. Likewise, FWC adopted an American Peregrine Falcon Management Plan for Florida and removed the American peregrine falcon from the Florida Imperiled Species List on July, 17 2009. The project will follow the FWC American Peregrine Falcon Management Guidelines as applicable.
Table 1: Listed Species within Project vicinity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific name</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BIRDS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseate spoonbill</td>
<td>Ajaia ajaja</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limpkin</td>
<td>Aramus guarauna</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burrowing owl</td>
<td>Athene cunicularia</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little blue heron</td>
<td>Egretta caerulea</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddish egret</td>
<td>Egretta rufescens</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowy egret</td>
<td>Egretta thula</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tricolored heron</td>
<td>Egretta tricolor</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White ibis</td>
<td>Eudocimus albus</td>
<td>SSC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeastern American kestrel</td>
<td>Falco sparverius paulus</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood stork</td>
<td>Mycteria americana</td>
<td>FE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audubon’s crested caracara</td>
<td>Polyborus plancus audubonii</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everglade snail kite</td>
<td>Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus</td>
<td>FE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MAMMALS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida mastiff bat</td>
<td>Eumops glaucinus floridanus</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everglades mink</td>
<td>Neovison vison evergladensis</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida panther</td>
<td>Puma concolor coryi</td>
<td>FE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indian manatee</td>
<td>Trichechus manatus</td>
<td>FE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida black bear</td>
<td>Ursus americanus floridanus</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REPTILES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American alligator</td>
<td>Alligator mississippiensis</td>
<td>FT(S/A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American crocodile</td>
<td>Crocodylus acutus</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern indigo snake</td>
<td>Drymarchon corais couperi</td>
<td>FT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rim rock crowned snake</td>
<td>Tantilla oolitica</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INSECTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami blue butterfly</td>
<td>Cyclargus thomasi bethunebakeri</td>
<td>ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schaus’ swallowtail butterfly</td>
<td>Heraclides aristodemus ponceanus</td>
<td>FE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Available habitat for many listed species is limited by the lack of natural vegetative communities remaining within the study area. Minimal involvement with threatened and endangered species is also anticipated because the proposed project improvements will occur on existing roadways and within developed areas. No USFWS designated Critical Habitat for protected species exists within or in close proximity to the study area. However, the study area lies within the core foraging areas (within 18.6 miles) of two active nesting colonies of the endangered Wood stork (*Mycteria americana*). Activities associated with implementing the proposed project improvements would require compensatory mitigation for any wetland impacts in core foraging areas, if determined to be the preferred approach by the appropriate regulatory agency. Furthermore, the study area lies with occupied habitat of the endangered West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*).

An Endangered Species Biological Assessment Report will be prepared, to determine the presence or absence of, and potential impacts to, the above listed species, other wildlife, and their habitat within the study area. Formal coordination with the appropriate regulatory agencies will be provided, as required.
e. **Outstanding Florida Waters**: The project will have no involvement with Outstanding Florida Waters.

f. **Aquatic Preserves**: The project will have no involvement with Aquatic Preserves.

g. **Coastal Zone Consistency Determination**: A Coastal Consistency Review will be required (per 15 CFR 930) since the project is anticipated to use federal funds.

h. **Cultural Resources**: According to a review of the Florida Master Site File (FMSF) database there are two previously recorded historic resources within the study area that are designated potentially National Register of Historic Places (NRHP)-eligible. These historic resources are the Tamiami Canal (C-4) and US 41/Tamiami Trail. In addition, there is a locally-significant, historic bridge (Sweetwater Bridge) located just east of SW 109th Avenue where it crosses the Tamiami Canal (C-4). These sites are historic or contain historic or archaeological resources that are protected by Section 4(f) as well as Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966 (Public Law 89-665, as amended) and its implementing regulations (36 CFR 800), Executive Order 11593, Chapter 267 of the Florida Statutes (FS), and Chapter 872 FS. A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey will be conducted and coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer and Sweetwater will occur as part of this project.

i. **Coastal Barrier Resources**: The project will have no involvement with Coastal Barrier Resources.

j. **Contamination**: Facilities within the study area that may present a concern of contamination include facilities permitted by Miami-Dade County Permitting, Environment and Regulatory Affairs Department to use or store small quantities of hazardous materials or waste (Industrial Facilities [IW5] Permit) and/or store petroleum in underground storage tanks (Underground Tank [UT] Permit). Typically, IW5 permits are issued to facilities such as dry cleaners, photo processing labs, and veterinarian facilities. Gas stations are the most common sites to utilize underground storage tanks. However, any facility storing fuel for an emergency generator (i.e., grocery stores, apartment buildings, shopping centers) may also hold a UT permit.

Based on a review of all registered petroleum facilities, eight contaminated facilities are located within a quarter mile of the proposed improvements. These facilities are registered with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) for the purpose of tracking on-site petroleum contamination. The potential involvement with contaminated sites during project construction will be evaluated as part of the project development process in accordance with federal, state and local laws and regulations. A Contamination Screening Evaluation Report will be prepared during project development process, if required, to assess the potential involvement with such facilities.

In addition, “Special Provisions for Unidentified Areas of Contamination” will be provided in the project’s construction contract documents. These provisions require that in the event any hazardous material or suspected contamination is encountered during construction, or if any spills caused by construction-related materials should occur, the contractor shall be instructed to stop work immediately and notify the appropriate regulatory agencies for assistance.
k. **Sole Source Aquifer:** Miami-Dade County is underlain by the Biscayne Aquifer, the sole source of potable water for most of Southeast Florida. Potable water for Miami-Dade County is supplied principally from the Northwest and West Wellfields, with other smaller wellfields in northeast Miami-Dade. The stormwater facility designs will include, at a minimum, the water quantity requirements for the water quality impacts as required by local codes such as Chapter 24, Section 24-58 of the Miami-Dade County code and State codes such as 40E-4, Florida Administrative Code (FAC). The Miami-Dade County requirements meet or exceed the State of Florida water quality and water quantity requirements. Other regulatory agencies such as the SFWMD may also require coordination. Therefore, it is anticipated that water quality within the project area will improve due to the proposed project improvements.

l. **Noise Sensitive Sites:** A preliminary assessment identified several types of noise sensitive land uses within the study area including a linear park/greenway and residential units. A noise analysis will be conducted for the proposed project and the results documented in a Noise Study Report.

m. **Essential Fish Habitat Potential:** No Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) is found within or near the study area.

n. **Farmlands:** Preliminary analysis indicates no Prime or Unique Farmlands are found within the study area.

o. **Communities:** The study area encompasses portions of Sweetwater and unincorporated Miami-Dade County. According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, the city has a population of 13,499 residents, of which a majority (96%) is classified as Hispanic/Latino origin. Presently, the vast majority of land area is developed with 4,195 households and a median household income of $32,109. Lastly, 24% of the population is considered to be below the poverty level.

Community cohesion and mobility will be considered in developing a community profile for neighborhoods in close proximity to or within the study area and the community as a whole. Issues such as the potential to bisect or divide neighborhoods, isolating ethnic groups or neighborhoods, mobility, facilitation of new development (infill), urban renewal, joint land use/transit dependent development, and others will be considered. It is anticipated that impacts may be beneficial, adverse, or a mixture of both (considering the local residents and college students in a neighborhood bisected by a major roadway [US 41], and the commuting patterns of employees residing elsewhere, but working in the same neighborhood).

The proposed project improvements are likely to enhance the opportunities for community cohesion within the community. Community social groups will be identified, including those that will benefit from the proposed project improvements and those that may be adversely impacted, particularly those that have traditionally been impacted to a greater degree than the general public (i.e., elderly, disabled, minority groups, non-drivers/transit-dependent individuals, and low-income individuals/households).

p. **Recreation Areas:** Sweetwater Linear Park/Greenway is the only recreational facility within the study area. This linear park/greenway is located along the north bank of the Tamiami
Canal (C-4) and SW 7th Terrace between the Homestead Extension of Florida’s Turnpike and SW 109th Avenue.

An assessment of potential impacts to recreation areas will be conducted during project development process. Future environmental documentation will include an evaluation of the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the project on public lands and other identified recreational features. Coordination will be provided with the appropriate agencies concerning the necessary studies, documentation, and commitments needed to adequately address the impacts to identified recreation areas.

q. *Wild and Scenic Rivers:* No Wild and Scenic Rivers are found within a quarter mile of the project.

r. *Navigable Waterway Crossing:* No navigable waterways, as defined by 33 Code of Federal Regulation, Subpart 2.05-25, are found within or in close proximity to the project.
ATTACHMENT A

Resource Maps

- a. Contamination
- b. Floodplains
- c. Hydrogeology
- d. Water Resources
- e. Species Potential
- f. Integrated Wildlife Model
- g. Vegetation
- h. Wetlands
- i. Historic Resources
- j. Recreation Areas
- k. Land Use
- l. Community Services
- m. Population Density
- n. Age Distribution
- o. Income
- p. Minority Population
University City Prosperity Project
Floodplains Map

Legend
- TIGER Grant Extents
- Roadway
- Study Area
- Water
- FEMA 100-yr Flood Zone
- Parcel Boundary

Source: Florida Geographic Data Library
University City Prosperity Project
Hydrogeology Resources Map

Legend
- TIGER Grant Extents
- Study Area
- Discharge < 1 from the Floridan Aquifer
- Roadway
- Water
- Parcel Boundary

Source: Florida Geographic Data Library
University City Prosperity Project
Water Resources Map

Legend
- TIGER Grant Extents
- Study Area
- C-4/Tamiami Drainage Basin
- C-2/Snapper Creek Drainage Basin
- Roadway
- Water
- Parcel Boundary

Source: Florida Geographic Data Library
University City Prosperity Project
Population Density Map

Legend
- TIGER Grant Extents
- Study Area
- Water
- Roadway
- Parcel Boundary

Population per acre
- 0 - 12.5
- 12.5 - 32.2
- 32.3 - 57.2
- 57.3 - 128

Source:
U.S. Census Bureau (2010)
University City Prosperity Project
Minority Population Distribution Map

Legend

- TIGER Grant Extents
- Study Area
- Water
- Roadway
- Parcel Boundary

Percent Minority Population

- 0 - 23.1
- 23.2 - 71
- 71.1 - 94
- 94.1 - 100

Source:
U.S. Census Bureau (2010)