



**City of Coral Gables
Planning Department Staff Recommendation**

Applicant:	City of Coral Gables
Application:	Zoning Code Text Amendment - Article 4, Division 2, Section 4-201 "Mixed Use District (MXD)"
City Public Hearing Dates/Times	Planning and Zoning Board October 19, 2011, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m. City Commission, November 8, 2011, 9:00 a.m.
Location	City Commission Chambers, City Hall, 405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida, 33134

Application Request.

The City of Coral Gables is requesting review and consideration of the following:

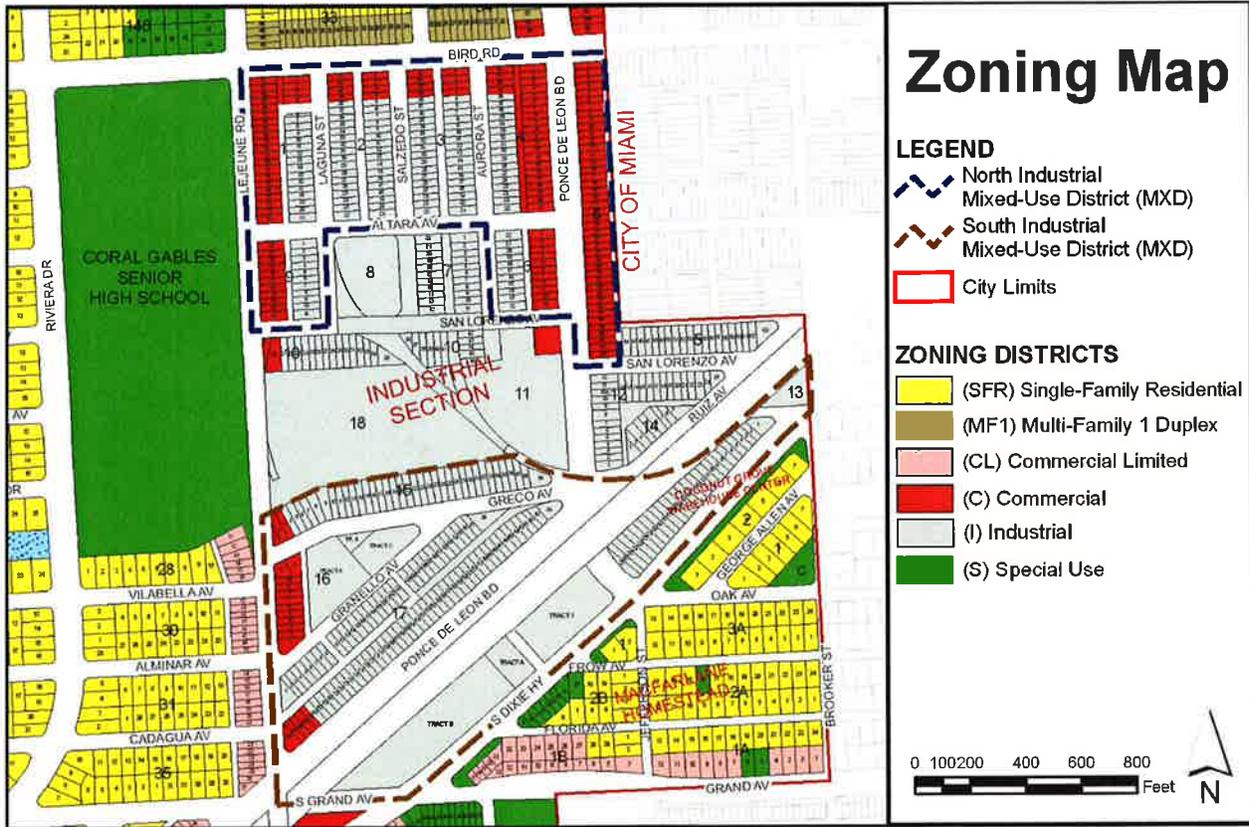
An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 4, "Zoning Districts", Division 2, "Overlay and Special Purpose Districts", Section 4-201, "Mixed Use District (MXD)", amending the residential unit density for MXD projects; and providing for severability, repealer, codification, and an effective date.

Background Information.

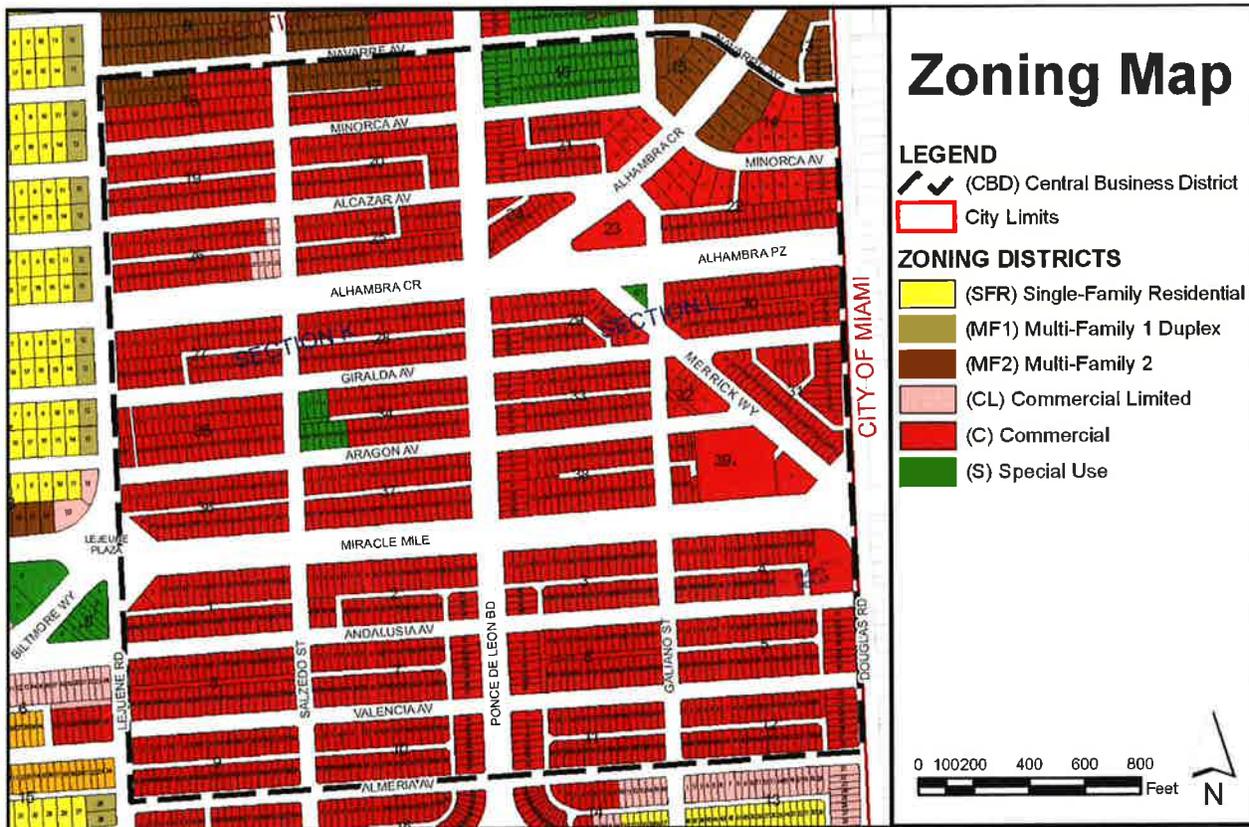
This request is to amend the text of Zoning Code Article 4, "Zoning Districts", Division 2, "Overlay and Special Purpose Districts", Section 4-201, "Mixed Use District (MXD)". The amendment would remove the residential density limitation in the North and South Industrial Mixed Use Districts (MXD) and Central Business District (CBD). See the maps on the next page.

Mixed-use projects are only permitted in Commercial (C) and Industrial (I) zoning districts. Currently, two (2) MXDs exist in the City, which are the North and South Industrial MXD Districts. A 125 unit per acre density limitation was included in the MXD provisions during the drafting of the initial provisions in 2004 and 2006. This amendment proposes to remove the residential density limitation in the North and South Industrial Mixed Use Districts (MXD) and Central Business District (CBD). This amendment does not propose any other changes to the performance standards, bulk/mass, floor area ratio (FAR), permitted building height, setbacks, etc. Redevelopment of parcels would continue to be regulated by FAR, height (feet) and parking.

North and South MXD Districts



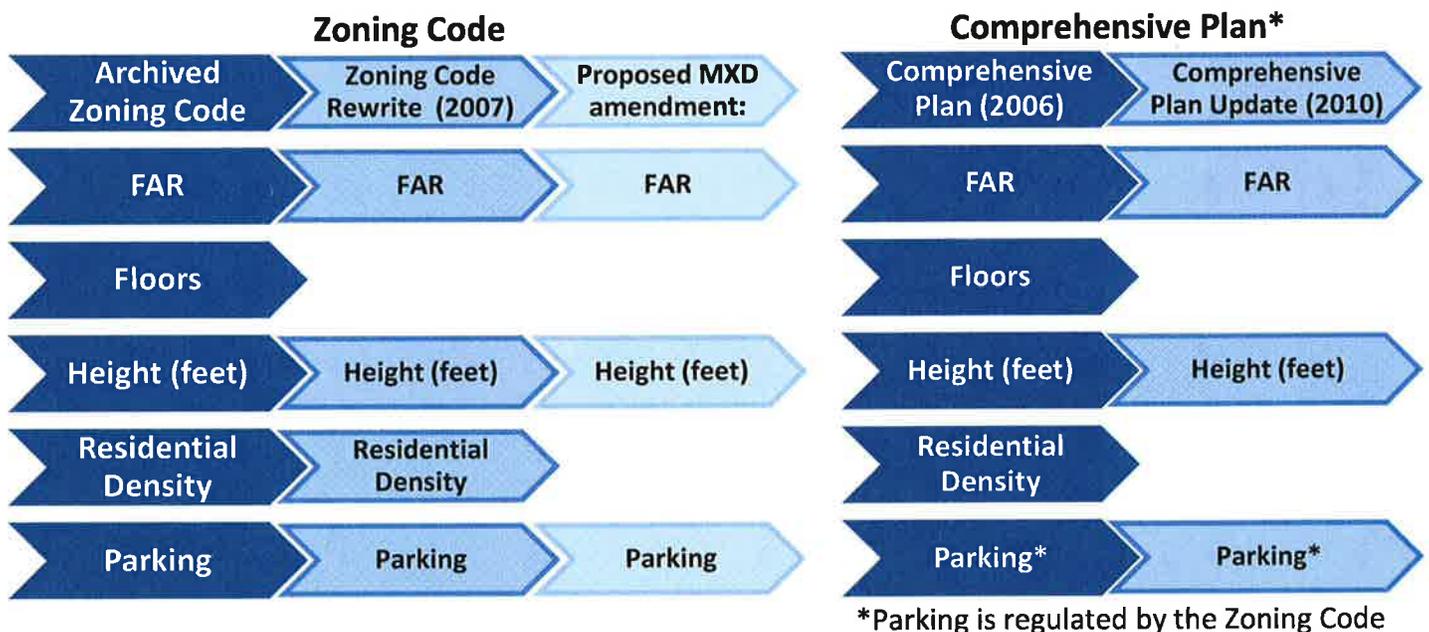
Central Business District



The Planning Department, since the start of the of the Zoning Code re-write in 2004, has refined the Zoning Code to provide progressive performance standards and innovative regulations for building design, bulk/mass, etc. More specifically, this was completed through the adoption of the Mixed-Use Districts (MXD) (2004 and 2006), Zoning Code re-write (2007), and the recent Comprehensive Plan update (2010).

All of these Code updates provided additional flexibility for development of properties. The chart below trades those changes. Future MXD developments would continue to be regulated by FAR, height (feet) and parking.

Code updates providing additional flexibility for development of properties



Planning Staff conducted research and found that many local governments in recent years have removed residential density limitations in their urban core areas or infill areas. These local governments, listed below, provided for regulation of bulk and mass via the building’s floor are ratio (FAR), permitted building height and established performance standards (i.e., setbacks, lot coverage, open space, etc.). Copies of those provisions shall be available for review at the meetings.

1. Everett, WA
2. Mesa, AZ
3. Phoenix, AZ
4. Redwood, CA
5. San Francisco, CA
6. Tampa, FL
7. Seattle, WA
8. Vancouver, CA
9. Vancouver, WA

This “form based” approach to regulating residential density is intended to encourage additional residential density in defined urban downtown areas, and result in public realm improvements and pedestrian amenities that would otherwise not be provided. This amendment pertains only to mixed use projects which are required to secure both site plan and conditional use public hearing review and approval. This would allow City Staff, the Planning and Zoning Board and the City Commission to provide specific conditions of approval if necessary.

Staff would also note that the Code already has in place a minimum residential unit size of 575 square feet. No change is necessary to these provisions.

The removal of the residential density limitation in the North and South Industrial Mixed Use Districts (MXD) and Central Business District (CBD) in the opinion of Staff shall promote additional opportunities for residential development in the downtown and areas that have easily accessible transit opportunities. Both geographic areas are served by the Coral Gables trolley as well as Miami-Dade County Metrorail transportation systems. This text amendment strongly supports numerous Comprehensive Plan Goals Objectives and Policies to provide a supply of housing that addresses the City’s needs that shall include a variety of housing opportunities for all income ranges, provide housing diversity to enhance the City’s social and economic growth and continue to be a distinctive, diverse, attractive and desirable place to live.

This amendment was envisioned as a part of the update of the Comprehensive Plan which began in 2007. This amendment specifically supports the following 2010 updated Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies as follows:

Objective HOU-1.5. Support the infill of housing in association with mixed use development.

Policy HOU-1.5.1. Encourage the development of diverse housing types such as smaller, more affordable units within the downtown area and mixed use development overlay area.

Policy HOU-1.5.2. Encourage residential mixed use as a means of increasing housing supply within the Downtown/Central Business District/Mixed Use Development Overlay Area, thereby promoting increase in commercial and retail activity, increased use of transit, reduction of auto dependency, in association with minimizing visual and physical impacts of nearby lower density areas.

City Staff will present the proposed amendment to the Board at the meeting and will secure input and testimony from the Board and public.

Proposed Zoning Code Text Amendment.

The proposed Zoning Code text amendment is provided in ~~strike~~/underline format in Attachment A. A draft Ordinance has been prepared and is provided as Attachment B.

Public Hearing Timeline.

The proposed text amendment is tentatively scheduled for 1st Reading before the City Commission on November 8, 2011.

Public Notification.

The following has been completed to provide notice of the request:

Public Notice

Type	Date
Legal advertisement	10.07.11
Posted agenda on City web page/City Hall	10.14.11
Posted Staff report on City web page	10.14.11

Staff Recommendation.

City Staff recommends approval of the following;

An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida providing for a text amendment to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, Article 4, “Zoning Districts”, Division 2, “Overlay and Special Purpose Districts”, Section 4-201, “Mixed Use District (MXD)”, amending the residential unit density for MXD projects; and providing for severability, repealer, codification, and an effective date.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric Riel, Jr.
 Planning Director
 City of Coral Gables, Florida

Attachments.

- A. Zoning Code text amendments in ~~striketrough~~ / underline format.
- B. Draft Ordinance.