



CITY OF  
FORT LAUDERDALE

# CERTIFICATE OF USE

PROPOSED ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

February 17, 2026



## BACKGROUND

WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF USE AND WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR ONE?



## PROCESS OVERVIEW

IMPROVEMENTS TO EFFICIENCY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE - CURRENT AND PROPOSED PROCESS



## PROPOSED CERTIFICATE OF USE (CU)

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE



## PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

COMMUNITY INPUT



# BACKGROUND: WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF USE?

**CERTIFICATE OF USE:** Verifies business type is permitted to operate in a specific area / zoning district.

- Compliments / Prerequisite for Business Tax Receipt (BTR) to operate within the City and confirms that the appropriate local taxes have been paid.
- Provides an applicant with information on the city's regulatory review process and parking requirements.
- Common practice in other jurisdictions:

• **BROWARD COUNTY**  
• **MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**

• **BOCA RATON**  
• **DANIA BEACH**  
• **DEERFIELD BEACH**

• **DORAL**  
• **HALLANDALE BEACH**

• **MIAMI**  
• **MIAMI BEACH**  
• **MIRAMAR**

• **OAKLAND PARK**  
• **PEMBROKE PINES**  
• **WESTON**

**BROWARD COUNTY**  
PLANNING, ZONING AND OCCUPANCY DEPARTMENT  
APPROVAL OF MUNICIPAL APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF USE OR BUSINESS LICENSE

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF USE

Location type:  Commercial  Residential

Category:  New Building  Business Name Change  Owner Name Change  Use Change  Change of Use or Occupant

**BUSINESS OWNER INFORMATION**  
Business Owner/Corporation/Partnership:  
Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business and/or other phone is required:  
Business Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARCEL INFORMATION**  
Zoning District: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Permit # \_\_\_\_\_  
File number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Legal Description: \_\_\_\_\_  
Property Owner Name if Different from Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
Limitations: \_\_\_\_\_

**MIAMI-DADE COUNTY**  
APPROVAL OF MUNICIPAL APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF USE OR BUSINESS LICENSE

FOLIO: \_\_\_\_\_ CERT NO: \_\_\_\_\_  
ZONING DISTRICT: 1 DATE OF ISSUANCE: August 17, 2012  
MUNICIPAL APPLICATION NO: \_\_\_\_\_ PROCESS NO: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS APPROVAL MUST BE POSTED ON PREMISES**

CORP NAME / DBA: \_\_\_\_\_  
BUSINESS ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
BUSINESS USE: OFFICE USE ONLY  
USE SPECIFIC: FOR CONSTRUCTION CO  
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: LUSHEL/COMMERCE PARK DR 488-000 1-2828 TR A LOT 876 114150 SQ FT FAU  
GARDEN/COMMERCE PARK COND (TERMINATED) PPL \_\_\_\_\_

**CONDITIONS**

(DEC) NO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS  
(DEC) OFFICE USE ONLY  
(KER) THIS MIAMI-DADE APPROVAL OF A MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATE OF USE IS VALID FOR AN UNLIMITED TIME OR AS INDICATED BELOW PROVIDED THERE ARE NO CHANGES TO THE USE, BUSINESS NAME OR OWNERSHIP OR EXPANSIONS, ALTERATIONS OR ADDITIONS TO THE APPROVED USE. ALL CHANGES LISTED ABOVE WILL REQUIRE ISSUANCE OF A NEW CERTIFICATE OF USE.  
(KER) THIS MIAMI-DADE APPROVAL OF A MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATE OF USE DOES NOT RELIEVE THE APPLICANT FROM COMPLIANCE WITH ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL REGULATIONS.  
(KER) YOU ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO ALLOW MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INSPECTORS ACCESS AT ANY REASONABLE TIME TO CONDUCT AN INSPECTION.

**PLANNING & ZONING DEPARTMENT**  
OCCUPATIONAL LICENSE DIVISION  
CERTIFICATE OF USE AND OCCUPANCY

**APPLICATION**

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_ Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
D.B.A.: \_\_\_\_\_ F.E.I. Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Unit No.: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address (if different from Business Address):  
Unit No.: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Prior Tenant Activity:  
Type of Business (type of merchandise sold, services provided, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

Are you sharing space with another business? (If yes, attach copy of current certificate of use) Yes  No

Folio Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Square Footage: \_\_\_\_\_

**AFFIDAVIT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_  
City of \_\_\_\_\_  
County of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, (Owner, Partner, Officer, Representative or Agent)  
being duly sworn, depose and say that I/We is/are the authorized to ensure this application for the purpose of obtaining a Certificate of Use from the City of Doral.  
Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public, State of Florida  
My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



# BACKGROUND: WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR A CERTIFICATE OF USE?

## 1 CHANGE OF USE

- Permit for interior renovations
- Proposed use is Conditional
- Requires DRC review and PZB approval



## 2 NEW BUSINESS

- Applicant signed lease agreement
- New business use is different than existing use
- Use is not permitted in zoning district



## 3 INSUFFICIENT PARKING

- Permit for interior renovations
- Proposed restaurant with outdoor dining
- Parking reduction needed
- Requires DRC review and PZB approval



### ➔ IMPLICATIONS

- Additional Costs
- Requires further review/review time increased
- Uncertainty of approval

### ➔ IMPLICATIONS

- Additional Costs
- Possibility of not being able to utilize a current address for a business

### ➔ IMPLICATIONS

- Additional Costs
- Requires further review/review time increased
- Possible determination that a particular use is parking-prohibitive.

# PROCESS IMPROVEMENT: GOALS & BENEFITS

- Improve business application process and provide structure for certain application types.
- Enhance customer experience.
- Reduce denials and decrease review times.
- Identify issues upfront (before substantial fees are required, a contractor is hired, a lease signed, property purchased or avoid potential code violation).
- Reduce staff review costs and improve staff review efficiency.



 CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE 

## CERTIFICATE OF USE

This determination provides confirmation that the use(s) described below have been approved for site plan review, building permit, and/or business tax submittals.

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Record Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Business/Project Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Business/Project Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Owner/Tenant Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Zoning District \_\_\_\_\_  
Proposed/Description of Use \_\_\_\_\_  
Conditions, if applicable \_\_\_\_\_  
Approval Date \_\_\_\_\_

Regards,  
Zoning Administrator/Chief \_\_\_\_\_

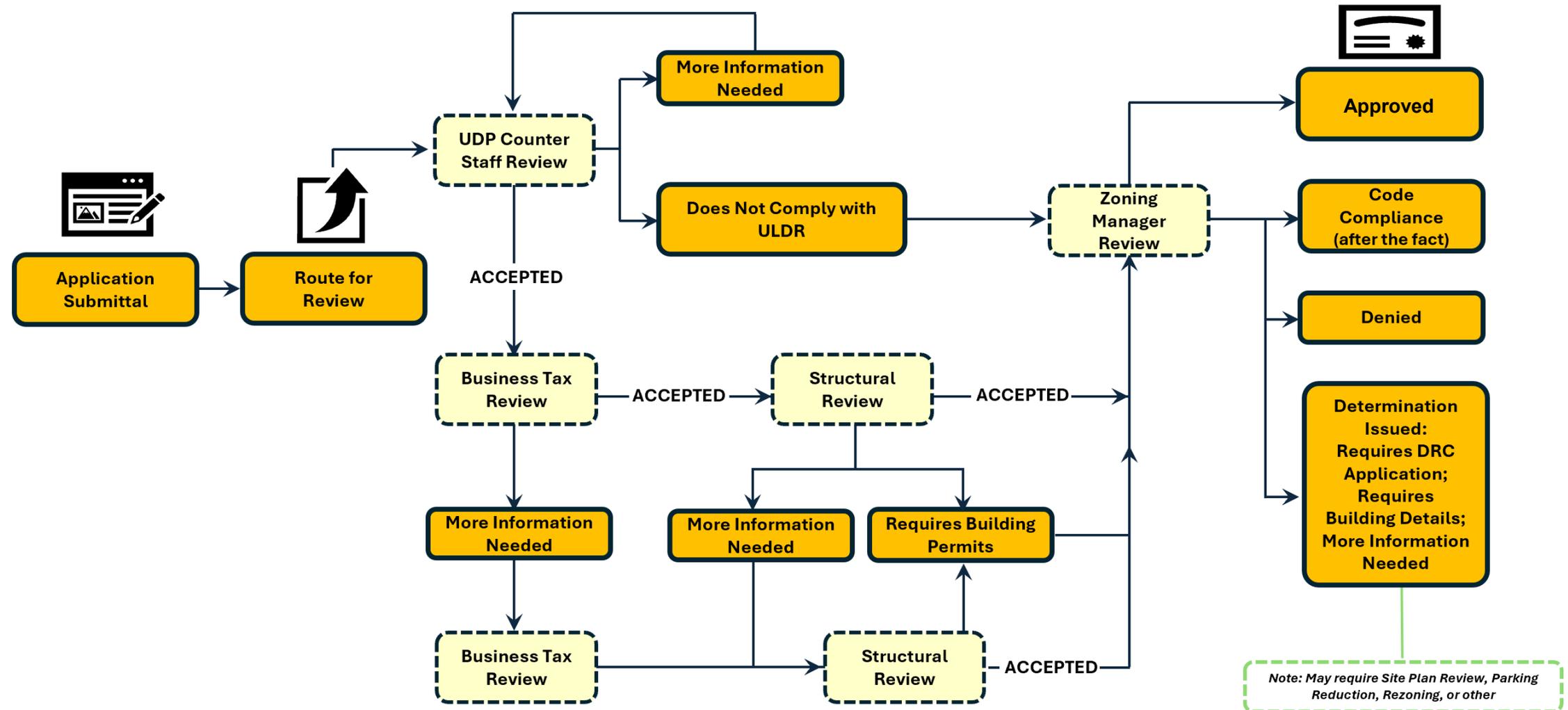
If you need more information on a particular use or any additional information, please contact the Development Services Department at 954-828-6520.

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
708 NW 10th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311 | Phone: 954-828-6520  
www.fortlauderdale.gov

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# PROCESS OVERVIEW: EXISTING

## APPLICATION EXAMPLE FLOWCHART



# PROCESS OVERVIEW: DEPARTMENT COORDINATION

**Collaboration from Business Tax, Urban Design & Planning, Zoning, and Building Divisions and the Community Services Department:**

## **Urban Design and Planning:**

Identify use is permitted and parking is adequate.

## **Building:**

Verify CU provided for permit types:

- Change of use
- New Commercial
- Commercial alterations
- Commercial Additions

## **Business Tax:**

Confirm most recent legal use, whether license is expired and whether any additional licenses will be required.

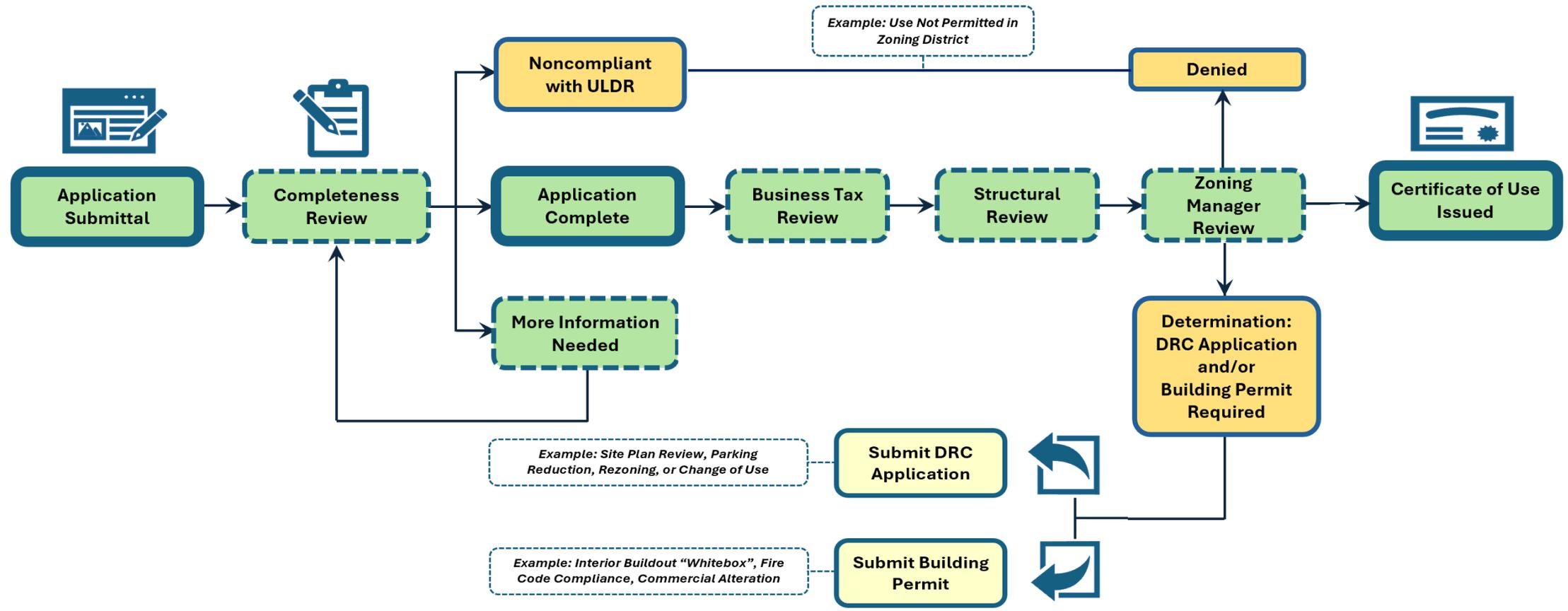
## **Zoning:**

Make final determination or request more information, i.e. Community Enhancement and Compliance issues, if existing legal-non-conforming or after-the-fact.



# PROCESS OVERVIEW: PROPOSED

## PROPOSED CERTIFICATE OF USE FLOWCHART



## AMEND CODE OF ORDINANCES, SECTION 15, BUSINESS TAX RECEIPTS AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS REGULATIONS WITH NEW SECTIONS 15-285 THROUGH 15-293

### PURPOSE

- Establish making Certificate of Use prerequisite before applying for certain application types for DSD and BTR.

### DEFINITIONS

- Provides definitions for Certificate of Use.

### APPLICATION, FEE, AND EXEMPTIONS

- Establishes the requirement for application, submittal of documentation, owner approval, etc.
- Establishes a fee of the hourly rate of \$159 with a minimum of 1.5 hours, for a minimum of \$238.50 per application (.5 hours per discipline)\*
- Identifies exemptions; e.g. new process will not apply to those businesses holding a valid Business Tax Receipt prior to the effective date of the Certificate of Use process being adopted.

### PROCESS AND ISSUANCE

- Provides for review process, inspections, and issuance of a Certificate of Use.
- Provide for denial of a Certificate of Use.

### ENFORCEMENT

- Enforcement by Community Enhancement & Compliance and/or Building Construction Enforcement Team.

\*Based on initial staff analysis, we would anticipate about 1,700 applications (based on an average of business tax and applicable building permit applications from 2022 – 2025) which would be affected by the new CU process. If the minimum amount of \$238.50 per application is charged (which accounts for 1.5 hours at the rate of \$159/hour @ UDP hourly fee) the projected revenue would be \$405,450 per year.



# COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF MUNICIPAL FEES

## Staff Analysis

- Staff reached out to seventeen (17) municipalities and gathered information on their CU process as well as current fees being assessed.
- Proposed fee: hourly rate of \$159, minimum review of .5 hours per discipline, three (3) disciplines for a total minimum fee of \$238.50.
- The proposed fees for the Fort Lauderdale CU would be in-line and/or less than the comparable fees being assessed by other municipalities.

Municipality	Fee	Notes	Population
Boca Raton	\$50.00		102,238
Broward County	\$265-\$425	Change in ownership, occupant, or name change will require new CU.	2 million
Dania Beach	\$50.00		33,000
Deerfield Beach	\$400		90,500
Doral	\$174.00 plus	Minimum: \$174 Maximum: \$1,150 plus \$0.055 per square foot	83,625
Hallandale Beach	\$100-\$500	Initial application fee of \$100. Additional fee varies depending on use.	43,000
Hollywood	\$262		159,000
Lauderhill	\$50 plus	Initial Fee: \$50 Hourly Rate: \$89 Expedited Review: \$250 plus \$89 hourly rate	76,627
Miami	Commercial: \$0.10/square feet (min \$250) Residential, per unit: \$105		487,014
Miami Beach	\$0	There is no fee at the moment.	83,251
Miami Lakes	\$108.30-\$718	\$0.034 per square foot of occupied area Inspection fee of \$36.48	33,247
Miramar	150 (renewal) \$300 (new)		143,000
North Miami	\$250		45,655
Oakland Park	\$75-\$250	New Application: \$250 Change of Owner/Business: \$75	45,000
Orlando	\$50.00-\$300.00	CU fee is tied to BTR	334,854
Pembroke Pines	Minimum of \$53, plus \$0.01 per square foot of commercial space. \$25 per dwelling unit.	Base fee of \$25 for electronic submission, plus potential additional fees based on use, like \$0.01 per square foot (minimum \$25) for commercial spaces or \$25 per dwelling unit for residential. An additional \$28 zoning review fee.	179,326
Weston	\$10-\$800.00	Commercial: \$800.00 Change of Owner / Business Name: \$35.00 Reissue Certificate Fee \$10.00	70,000



# PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLIC OUTREACH

## Presentations

- Staff have conducted presentations to the Economic Development Advisory Board (EDAB) and Budget Advisory Board (BAB).
- Both the EDAB and BAB have recommended staff move forward with the CU process, with the BAB recommending that staff begin with a one-year pilot program.

## Potential Outreach



Update Development Services Department and Business Tax Office webpages



Post flyers at the DSD building



Share with groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, etc.



Reach out to stakeholders such as: Businesses, General Contractors, Design Professionals, and permit runners.





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# QUESTIONS & COMMENTS