



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING

#20-0023

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Chris Lagerbloom, ICMA-CM, City Manager

DATE: October 20, 2020

TITLE: First Reading - Ordinance Amending City of Fort Lauderdale Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR); Amending Section 47-13.10, List of Permitted and Conditional Uses; Amending Section 47-13.20, Incorporating by Reference Chapter 4 of the Downtown Master Plan; Amending Open Space Regulations; Defining Downtown Character Areas and Transition Zones; Amending Downtown Landscape and Tree requirements; Amending Section 47-13.21, Table of Dimensional Requirements for the Downtown Regional Activity Center (DRAC) District to Provide Dimensional Requirements for the DRAC Character Areas; Amending Section 47-24, Table 1, Development Permits and Procedures; Amending Section 47-25.3, Neighborhood Compatibility Requirements; and Removing Conflicting Requirements – Case No. PLN-ULDR-20090001 (formerly Case T19013)
(Commission Districts 2, 3 and 4)

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission consider an ordinance amending the City of Fort Lauderdale Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR); Amending Section 47-13.10, List of Permitted and Conditional Uses; Amending Section 47-13.20, incorporating by reference Chapter 4 of the Downtown Master Plan (DMP); Amending Open Space Regulations; Defining Downtown Character Areas and Transition Zones; Amending Downtown Landscape and Tree requirements; Amending Section 47-13.21, Table of Dimensional Requirements for the DRAC District to provide dimensional requirements for the DRAC Character Areas; Amending Section 47-24, Table 1, Development Permits and Procedures; Amending Section 47-25.3, Neighborhood Compatibility Requirements; and removing conflicting requirements. Proposed amendments are provided as **Exhibit 1**.

An accompanying zoning map update incorporating the Downtown Master Plan Character Areas as part of the City's official Zoning Map is also scheduled on this agenda, as Commission Agenda Memorandum #20-0288.

An accompanying zoning map update incorporating the Downtown Transition Zones as part of the City's official Zoning Map is also scheduled on this agenda, as Commission Agenda Memorandum #20-0532.

Background:

The City Commission approved Resolution 03-170 adopting the Downtown Master Plan (DMP) for the Downtown Regional Activity Center (DRAC) on November 18, 2003. The City Commission approved Resolution 07-120 approving amendments to the DMP on June 19, 2007. Since adoption, the DMP has served as an effective guide for development, resulting in higher quality projects than previously achieved through existing zoning requirements.

At a special City Commission workshop on December 18, 2018, the City Commission requested that staff initiate an effort to address codification of the DMP. Following the meeting, staff prepared amendments to the City's ULDR to address key DMP design standards that will be incorporated into the City's code to promote positive redevelopment throughout the DRAC. Minutes from the December 18, 2018 City Commission Workshop are provided as **Exhibit 2**.

The proposed amendments were presented to the Planning and Zoning Board (PZB) on October 16, 2019 and the Board recommended denial 7-1. During the meeting, PZB members expressed general concerns regarding impact to property owners based on proposed changes, need to evaluate character area boundaries, and need for further discussion with the community. Minutes from the October 16, 2019 PZB Meeting are provided as **Exhibit 3**.

Since that time, staff performed additional public outreach and received a variety of comments including requests to re-evaluate the character area boundaries. Based on the stakeholder feedback, staff revised the character area boundaries, tweaked the transition area boundaries and made other corrections. If approved, the revised Downtown Character Areas and Transition Areas will be incorporated into the City's ULDR through associated amendments to the City's Official Zoning Map.

The proposed amendments with revisions were again presented to the PZB on September 16, 2020 with the Board recommending approval by a vote of 8-0, with the following recommended changes:

- Adopt a minimum 400 square-foot unit size for Downtown;
(same minimum as currently exists in the City's ULDR for multi-family units outside of Downtown)
- Adopt minimum residential parking requirement in RAC-CC zoning district;
(Downtown Civic Association recommended one space per unit)
- Adopt language that states minimum building tower separation is 60 feet;
(for development sites where an adjacent tower is closer than 30 feet to the site under consideration and applicant cannot maintain 60 feet of separation, the application would have to be approved by the City Commission)
- Adopt language that would require the transition zone to be measured from the property line within the DRAC.
(currently measured from Downtown RAC / zoning district boundary and generally falls within center line of road. Tarpon River requested to measure from property line so road will not count as part of transition depth)

PZB meeting minutes from September 16, 2020 are provided as **Exhibit 4**. In order to consider these additional recommendations, staff would need to analyze and perform additional outreach to determine potential impacts.

The DMP includes design guidelines that are both qualitative, which promote creative design solutions based on context of each development site; and quantitative, which include more definitive dimensional standards. The proposed ULDR amendments focus on the quantitative elements that guide the form of buildings and design of streets. For a detailed summary of each proposed ULDR amendment section, including intent and description of content, refer to the September 16, 2020 PZB Staff Report, provided as **Exhibit 5**.

Since the meeting, the following corrections were made to proposed ULDR amendments:

- ULDR Section 47-13.20.A.3; added back language that was erroneously struck out: “in the event compliance with the ULDR would not permit consistency with the design guidelines, the design guidelines shall govern”.
- ULDR Section 47-13.20.E; changed “landscaped, pervious surfaces” to “pervious landscape area” for clarification.
- ULDR Section 47-13.20.H.2.a.iii; added: “at installation” to clarify the requirement for minimum size trees to be provided at time of installation.
- ULDR Section 47-13.21, Table of Dimensional Requirements for the RAC District; Corrected reference from “RAC-UV” zoning district to “Urban Neighborhood Character Area” to be consistent with proposed updates to character area boundaries, as follows:

****Height:** Heights above six (6) floors and up to twelve (12) floors in the ~~RAC-UV~~ Urban Neighborhood Character Area and RAC-RPO zoning districts shall be reviewed subject to the requirements of Section 47-24.3, Conditional Use Permit, except that parcels abutting Andrews Ave. and Federal Hwy.

- ULDR Section 47-13.21, Table of Dimensional Requirements for the RAC District; Clarified language regarding Maximum Gross Square Footage of Building Tower Floor Plate Size, for purposes of clarifying how to correctly measure, as follows:

RAC Character Area	Downtown Core	Near Downtown	Urban Neighborhood
Maximum Gross Square Footage of Building Tower Floor Plate Size	Residential: 18,000 <u>for entirety of building tower up to 15 floors high / 12,500 for entirety of building tower up to 37 floors high</u> Non-residential: 32,000	Residential: 18,000 <u>for entirety of building tower up to 15 floors high / 12,500 for entirety of building tower up to 30 floors high</u> Non-residential: None <u>for entirety of building up to 9 floors high / 32,000 for entirety of building tower up to 30 floors high</u>	Residential: 10,000 Non-residential: 16,000

The DMP is designed to support the ULDR text amendments by providing illustrations for the design requirements described in the ULDR. In addition, the document functions as a “blueprint” or “roadmap” to achieving the overall master plan vision. The DMP Chapter 4 Design Guidelines are provided for reference as **Exhibit 6**.

Under the current requirements the DMP is only applicable to residential projects or projects with a residential component. The City has been successful in applying the DMP design guidelines to all types of development in the downtown area by working with individual applicants. However, proposed amendment will apply to all development, both residential and non-residential in nature, to create consistency between the requirements and is expected to result in a higher quality and more predictable development pattern.

Public Outreach:

An initial open house was held on June 5, 2019 to present the proposed codifications and obtain public input. There were 123 individuals in attendance. Comments received at the open house varied from requesting additional focus be placed on building height; separation requirements and transition zones; open space provisions as well as general agreements with proposed changes; and a need to allow a process to request deviation or flexibility from an adopted standard in specific circumstances.

In total, staff held approximately 25 public outreach meetings. To date, staff has presented the proposed amendments to various stakeholders, including the Council of Fort Lauderdale Civic Associations, the Downtown Development Authority, Downtown Civic Association, Rio Vista Civic Association Board, Victoria Park Civic Association Board, Tarpon River Civic Association Board, Sailboat Bend Civic Association Board, Flagler Village Civic Association, Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce Committees, Downtown Council, and the Broward Workshop Urban Core Committee.

In addition, staff received multiple requests to revise the Downtown Character Area Boundaries. The requests generally indicated the need to update area boundaries at multiple locations to reflect changes in development patterns and address compatibility with existing development outside of the boundary area, since the adoption of the original boundaries in 2003. The following comments were expressed about the character and transition areas and are addressed in the proposed revisions to the character area and transition zone maps:

- The Victoria Park Civic Association requested to change the “Near Downtown” character area adjacent to Victoria Park, along NE 7th Avenue, to the “Urban Neighborhood” character area;
- The Tarpon River Neighborhood Association requested to change the “Near Downtown” character area east of SW 4th Avenue to SW 3rd Avenue and from SW 5th Street to SW 7th Street along portions of the transition zone to “Urban Neighborhood”;

- Upon meeting with the property owner of the area included in the proposed transition zone, located south of E. Las Olas Boulevard and north of SE 4th Street, it was pointed out that this site currently contains surface parking lots, which abut and are under unified ownership for the blocks inside and outside the proposed transition zone. It was therefore recommended that this area be removed from the transition zone since it would result in a transition that is against the applicant's own property and since potential future development here may not have same impacts on neighboring residential properties as it already abuts a main commercial corridor which permits a certain character and intensity;
- Interests by various entities have also been expressed to change the "Near Downtown" character area to "Downtown Core" within the City's core and along the Broward Boulevard corridor.

Some feedback that requires specific policy direction is also highlighted below:

- Some industry professionals expressed that existing code language includes some confusing and potentially conflicting terminology when referencing requirements for open space, pervious area, and landscaping. After analyzing the information, staff concurs that a subsequent effort to explore the percent of open space required, and define criteria that have greater meaningful results is appropriate, with supplemental graphics that reinforce the intent of open space requirements to the public, reviewing bodies and elected officials;
- The Rio Vista Civic Association indicated general support for the Downtown Master Plan codifications and requested an analysis and implementation of a minimum residential unit size requirement for Downtown, where one currently does not exist;
- The Downtown Civic Association indicated general support for the Downtown Master Plan codifications, but voiced that residents had additional comments that were not incorporated, including exemption for parking in the RAC-CC zoning district, where the association believes a minimum of one parking space per unit should be incorporated in this zoning district. The Association also requested implementation of a minimum residential unit size requirement of 400 square feet for Downtown, consistent with the existing minimum standard for a multi-family unit;
- The Tarpon River Association also requested implementation of a minimum residential unit size requirement of 400 square feet for Downtown, consistent with the existing minimum standard for an efficiency unit.

A complete summary of public meetings and stakeholder comments received to date, are provided by stakeholder group, and attached as **Exhibit 7**.

Staff's presentation to stakeholders included PowerPoint slides illustrating the proposed DMP amendments along with supporting graphics; e.g. maps, photographs, and building renderings. Comparison slides were also included depicting existing buildings in the

downtown prior to the DMP and buildings post adoption of the DMP. The purpose of the comparison slides was to illustrate the differences in the form and scale of buildings and highlight benefits of adopting a form-based code which regulates building mass and scale. These regulations are intended to address development in relation to the public realm, adjacent neighborhoods, and results in consistency in the built form based on context and character. The most recent presentation is attached as **Exhibit 8**.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *Fiscal Year 2019 Commission Annual Action Plan* priority, included within Neighborhood Enhancement Cylinder of Excellence.

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale 2024* Strategic Plan specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- Goal 4: Build a thriving and inclusive community of neighborhoods. Be an inclusive community made up of distinct, complementary, and diverse neighborhoods.
- Objective 2: Ensure a range of affordable housing options.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035* Vision Plan: We Are Community.

Related CAMs

CAM #20-0288

CAM #20-0532

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Proposed ULDR Amendments

Exhibit 2 – December 18, 2018 City Commission Workshop Minutes

Exhibit 3 – October 16, 2019 PZB Meeting Minutes

Exhibit 4 – September 16, 2020 PZB DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Exhibit 5 – September 16, 2020 PZB Staff Report

Exhibit 6 – DMP Chapter 4 Design Guidelines

Exhibit 7 – Summary of Stakeholder Meetings and Public Comments

Exhibit 8 – Presentation

Exhibit 9 – Ordinance

Prepared by: Ella Parker, Urban Design and Planning Manager, Sustainable Development
Jim Hetzel, Principal Urban Planner, Sustainable Development

Department Director: Anthony Greg Fajardo, Sustainable Development