



**City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
December 9, 2025**

ITEM TITLE:

Ordinance on Second Reading, Zoning Code Text Amendments.

An Ordinance of the City Commission providing for text amendments to the City of Coral Gables Official Zoning Code, amending Section 14-204, "Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)," and Article 16, "Definitions," of the City's Zoning Code to establish a Conservation TDR Program and appraisal framework; providing for definitions, procedures, appraisal standards, and conservation easement requirements; providing for a repealer provision, severability clause, codification, and providing for an effective date.

DEPARTMENT HEAD RECOMMENDATION:

Approval.

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning and Zoning Board at their 11.19.25 meeting recommended approval (vote: 4-3).

BRIEF HISTORY:

Since First Reading on October 14, 2025, the proposed text amendment was presented to the Planning and Zoning Board on November 19, 2025. The amendment, initiated at the request of a member of the City Commission, establishes a Conservation Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program to incentivize permanent preservation of native habitats, mature tree canopy, and ecologically significant areas while offering property owners a fair-market-based economic benefit through voluntary transfer of development rights.

In developing the program, staff reviewed already established Conservation TDR programs in Boulder County, Colorado, the New Jersey Pinelands, and Suffolk County, NY, to guide appraisal methodologies and long-term conservation mechanisms. The ordinance sets a standardized, appraisal-driven process requiring a minimum of two (2) USPAP compliant appraisals to determine fair market value, calculation of a TDR unit value from recent comparable transfers and application of a market-based formula to determine transferable TDRs. An Ecological Bonus of up to 15% may be awarded for sites demonstrating exceptional habitat or tree canopy value.

Planning & Zoning Board

At the November 19, 2025, Planning and Zoning Board meeting, members requested additional clarification regarding multiple components of the proposed Conservation Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program. Members inquired whether a City-wide inventory of existing hardwood hammock, mature canopy, and other ecologically significant habitats could assist in illustrating the potential extent of eligible sending areas and support long-term implementation planning. The Board

also sought further refinement of the definitions and eligibility criteria for qualifying habitats to ensure that the program is applied to areas of substantive environmental value. Board members additionally discussed the proposed methodology for calculating transferable development rights, specifically the formula: Number of TDRs = (Average Fair Market Value) ÷ TDR Unit Value (\$ per TDR).

Staff noted that this valuation framework provides a standardized, appraisal-based approach that maintains consistency across applications and aligns with accepted market driven TDR practices. Further questions focused on ensuring consistency, transparency, and clear applicability of the evaluation criteria throughout the review and approval process. Following deliberation, the Board recommended approval of the proposed amendment by a vote of (4–3).

Following review by the Planning and Zoning Board, staff revised the proposed Ordinance to clarify that Conservation TDRs apply only to the portion of property voluntarily conveyed to the City under a Grant of Conservation Easement Agreement (GOCEA), with all remaining portions of the parent property required to remain in compliance with applicable zoning regulations.

PUBLIC NOTIFICATIONS:

Date	Form of Notification
10.7.2025	City Commission meeting agenda posted on City webpage.
11.07.25	Planning and Zoning Board legal advertisement.
11.14.25	Planning and Zoning Board meeting agenda posted on City webpage.
11.26.25	City Commission legal advertisement.
12.02.25	City Commission meeting agenda posted on City webpage.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

No.	Amount	Account No.	Source of Funds
1.	\$0		
2.	\$0		
Total:	\$0		
Fiscal Impact: None			

EXHIBITS:

- A. Draft Ordinance.
- B. 11 19 25 Planning & Zoning Board Staff Report with attachments.
- C. Excerpt of 11 19 25 PZB Meeting Minutes.