



City of Coral Gables
CITY COMMISSION MEETING
May 31, 2021

ITEM TITLE:

Ordinance on First Reading. An Ordinance of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida amending Chapter 62 "Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places", Article IV "Maintenance of Sidewalks and Swale Areas", Section 62-151 "Alleys, swale areas and rights-of-way to be kept clean and mowed" of the Code of Ordinances, to revise the maintenance responsibilities of property owners, providing for severability, repealer, codification, and an effective date. (Sponsored by Mayor Lago)

BRIEF HISTORY:

Recently the City has placed a renewed emphasis on improving the appearance of its commercial areas through targeted code enforcement efforts, downtown clean-up events, community education and engagement, and business incentive programs. Since August 24, 2021, the City Commission has discussed the City's downtown cleanup efforts at City Commission Meetings on at least ten separate occasions. City staff and elected officials also participated in downtown walk-throughs and a trolley tour to assess the condition of the commercial areas of the City and to brainstorm solutions to elevate the City's appearance.

The City has sponsored four downtown clean-up events through Keep Coral Gables Beautiful, collecting over 806 pounds of litter with the help of 154 volunteers, and has also supported privately-sponsored clean-up events throughout the City. As an incentive to engage the business community in the effort to see a more beautiful downtown, the City announced the Commercial Beautification Awards on April 26, 2022, to highlight businesses that have gone above and beyond in the beautification and maintenance of their storefronts and surrounding areas.

The City Code contains several sections related to property maintenance including Section 105-2, which requires that exterior building façades be clean and well maintained, including awnings, signs, windows, doors and sidewalk overhangs; Section 58-48, which requires abutting property owners to maintain sidewalks in the City as a smooth continuous surface, free from cracks and defects; Section 62-152, which requires abutting property owners or occupants to maintain unpaved areas adjacent to sidewalks in good condition, free from holes and hidden dangers; and Section 62-151, which requires owners and occupants of improved and unimproved property to maintain their property in a clean, litter-free and mowed condition, including sidewalks, grass strips, alleys, curbs, swale areas, or rights-of-way.

Acknowledging that many property owners may not be aware of their maintenance responsibilities pursuant to the City Code, the City has been engaged in an ongoing education campaign to educate and inform the business community via individual meetings, the distribution of flyers, individual mailings, announcements via the City's E-newsletter, a dedicated webpage, social media postings, and through partnership with the Coral Gables

Chamber of Commerce and Coral Gables Business Improvement District. In furtherance of the City's goal to improve the appearance of the City, particularly its commercial areas, and consistent with the City's outreach efforts thus far, the City Commission wishes to amend Coral Gables City Code Section 62-151, to provide greater clarity as to a property owner's maintenance responsibilities and to expressly require a deep cleaning of properties and their surrounding areas every six months, or more frequently as circumstances may necessitate.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- 1. Draft Ordinance**