

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: City Commission **DATE:** June 7, 2016
FROM: Ramon Trias, AIA AICP LEED AP **SUBJECT:** Zoning Code Landscape and
Director of Planning and Zoning Open Space Requirements

Staff has been asked to review open space requirements in the Zoning Code. In Attachment A, a table is provided that summarizes current landscape requirements. In Attachment B, another table illustrates the types of landscape that are required or optional in certain circumstances. The applicable Zoning Code excerpts are provided as Attachment C.

Open Space and Site Planning

The Zoning Code encourages careful consideration of the specific site planning of each project, in order to promote aesthetic quality and functional coordination among sidewalks, arcades, parks and related open space. The code implies that more open space is not necessarily better on its own. Thus, there is extensive information about the type of landscape, location, characteristics of materials and related issues. In addition, design quality of the space and relationship to neighboring buildings are promoted through a rigorous review process that includes staff meetings, review by the Board of Architects, public hearings at the Planning and Zoning Board and consideration by the City Commission.

Mixed Use and Mediterranean Bonus

In some Zoning designations, landscape requirements are modified by the Mediterranean Bonus program, including minimum percentages and types of landscape. Furthermore, some Zoning designations tend to be developed as mixed-use projects with Mediterranean Bonus, and those additional requirements apply. Therefore, current Zoning requirements are often tailored to specific projects, and may not be determined precisely until the project is reviewed. Although this characteristic of the Code lessens predictability, it does provide the opportunity for high quality design through the various project review processes.

Recommendation

Staff has recommended that an update of the Zoning Code be performed next year. The focus of the update should be clarification of requirements and simplification of redundancies. We look forward to suggestions from the Commission.

Attachment A: Table 1: City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Open Space Provisions

Attachment B: Table 2: City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Required Open Space Characteristics

Attachment C: Open Space Requirement Excerpts from Zoning Code

Table 1: City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Open Space Provisions

Project Type	Landscaped Open Space Percentage	On-site Landscape Requirements	Other Requirements
Multi-Family 1 (Duplex) (MF1)	40%	20% minimum front yard	Right-of-way Planting
Multi-Family 2 (MF2)	25%		Right-of-way Planting
Multi-Family Special Area (MFSA)	25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Townhouses may provide open space on the roof or in courtyards 	Right-of-way Planting
Commercial (C)	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10' minimum width • Pervious paved materials in plazas, courtyards, arcades and loggias may be considered open space up to 75% 	Right-of-way Planting
Commercial: Med Bonus (C)	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be provided at street level, within the right-of-way, on rooftops and terraces, planter boxes, etc. 	When Setback Relief Requested, publicly accessible plazas, arcades, and courtyards must be provided at the ground level
Commercial Limited (CL)	10%	5' minimum width	Right-of-way Planting
Commercial Limited: Med Bonus (CL)	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be provided at street level, within the right-of-way, on rooftops and terraces, planter boxes, etc. 	When Setback Relief Requested, publicly accessible plazas, arcades, and courtyards must be provided at the ground level
Industrial (I)	No minimum		Right-of-way Planting
Industrial: Med Bonus (I)	5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be provided at street level, within the right-of-way, on rooftops and terraces, planter boxes, etc. 	When Setback Relief Requested, publicly accessible plazas, arcades, and courtyards must be provided at the ground level
Mixed-Use District (MXD)	No minimum		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right-of-way Planting • Alley Planting
Mixed-Use District: Med Bonus (MXD)	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be provided at street level, within the right-of-way, on rooftops and terraces, planter boxes, etc. 	When Setback Relief Requested, publicly accessible plazas, arcades, and courtyards must be provided at the ground level
Planned Area Development (PAD)	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaped or urban open space on rooftops is permitted 	Right-of-way Planting

Exhibit B

Table 2: City of Coral Gables Zoning Code Required Open Space Characteristics

	MF1	MF2	MFSA	C / CL	C / CL MB*	I	I MB*	MXD*	MXD MB*	PAD*
Required Percentage of Landscaped Open Space	40%	25%	25%	10%	5%	No min.	5%	No min.	10%	20%
Landscaped Lawn										Optional
Landscaped Setback				25% - 100% of Open Space						Optional
Private Internal Courtyard		Optional for Town house	Optional for Town house							
Private Rooftop: Pavers and Landscape		Optional for Town house	Optional for Town house		Optional		Optional		Optional	Optional
Private Elevated Terrace		Optional for Town house	Optional for Town house		Optional		Optional		Optional	Optional
Planter Boxes					Optional		Optional		Optional	
Public Plaza: Pavers and Landscape				Optional	For Setback Relief		For Setback Relief		For Setback Relief	Optional
Public Courtyard: Pavers and Landscape				Optional	For Setback Relief		For Setback Relief		For Setback Relief	Optional
Public Arcade: Pavers				Optional	For Setback Relief		For Setback Relief		For Setback Relief	Optional
Street Planting: Trees and Ground Cover										
Alley Planting: Trees and Ground Cover										

* Med Bonus (MB), MXD, MXD Med Bonus, and PAD are optional zoning tools that modify the underlying Zoning District

Open Space Requirement Excerpts from Zoning Code

General Landscaping Requirements for All Types of Development

ARTICLE 5 – DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Division 11. Landscaping

Section 5-1102. Applicability.

A. Miami-Dade County Code applicability. The minimum landscape requirements for the City of Coral Gables are governed by all requirements within the following Miami-Dade County Codes as amended:

1. Chapter 18A, Landscaping Ordinance;
2. Chapter 24, Environmental Protection Ordinance;
3. Chapter 33, Zoning Code; and
4. Landscape Manual.

The provisions in this Division are supplemental to and generally more restrictive than Miami-Dade County Code provisions. As provided for in the Miami-Dade County Code provisions, if these provisions are not enforced by the City, Miami-Dade County may enforce the same. Should a conflict arise between these provisions and Miami-Dade County provisions, the most restrictive shall apply.

B. Applicability thresholds. Unless exempted as provided herein, these provisions shall be a minimum standard and shall apply to all development when a building permit is required in accordance with the applicable zoning district(s).

1. MF1, MF2, MFSA, MXD, CL, C, I, S, UCD, PAD and P zoning districts:

- a. New construction; or
- b. Redevelopment, if either of the two (2) thresholds are exceeded:

The proposed redevelopment cost exceeds fifty (50%) percent of the total property value; or
Results in a fifty (50%) percent or more increase in building square footage; or

c. Where a paving permit is required for expansion of existing vehicle use area (VUA) or new VUA.

Section 5-1105. Landscape requirements.

- A. Public rights-of way. Properties within MF1, MF2, MFSA, MXD, CL, C, I, S, UCD, PAD and P zoning districts exceeding the applicability thresholds as defined in Section 5-1102(B) shall be required to install the improvements listed below. The required improvements are based upon the properties lineal property dimension abutting the r.o.w. The requirements provided herein and any potential conflicts shall be subject to review and approval by the Public Works Department and Public Service Department.

	<i>Type</i>	<i>Minimum Requirements</i>
2.	City Streetscape Master Plan and/or Citywide Traffic Calming Plan.	a. Landscaping, landscape islands, bulbouts, curbing, pedestrian crosswalks bulbouts, drainage and other associated traffic calming improvements shall be required pursuant to the City Streetscape Master Plan and accompanying standards and/or Citywide Traffic Calming Plan. If the City Streetscape Master Plan and accompanying standards are not applicable to the area in which the proposed development is contemplated, see Section 5-1105(A)(3) below for minimum r.o.w. planting requirements.
3.	Right-of-way planting requirements not associated with the City Streetscape Master Plan.	a. Landscaping shall be installed within the City r.o.w. and shall be installed in accordance with all of the following: Large shade trees. Provide one (1) large shade tree, minimum planting height of sixteen (16) feet/three-and-a-half (3½) inch caliper per thirty-five (35) linear feet or fraction thereof of right-of-way abutting the property. Palm or medium shade tree, minimum planting height of fourteen (14) feet/two-and-a-half (2½) inch caliper may be utilized to satisfy the above large shade tree requirements at a three-to-one (3:1) ratio. A maximum of twenty-five (25%) percent of the required total may be palm varieties. i. Shrubs. Provide one (1) shrub per one (1) linear foot or fraction thereof of the right-of-way abutting the property.
4.	Medians and/or traffic calming devices required pursuant to the City Streetscape Master Plan or Citywide Traffic Calming Plan.	a. If a median exists or can be established on the abutting r.o.w., the improvements listed in above Section 5-1105(A)(3) shall be installed pursuant to the City Streetscape Master Plan and accompanying standards and/or Citywide Traffic Calming Plan. b. If a median exists or can be established on the abutting r.o.w. and is not included within the City Streetscape Master Plan, a median shall be provided subject to all of the following: i. Large shade trees. One (1) large shade tree, minimum planting height of sixteen (16) feet/three-and-a-half (3½) inch caliper per thirty-five (35) feet linear feet or fraction thereof of right-of-way abutting the property. Palm or medium shade tree, minimum planting height of fourteen (14) feet/two-and-a-half (2½) inch caliper may be utilized to satisfy the above large shade tree requirements at a three-to-one (3:1) ratio. A maximum of twenty-five (25%) percent of the required total may be palm varieties. ii. Shrubs. One (1) shrub per one (1) linear feet or fraction thereof of the right-of-way abutting the property.
5.	Lawn grass.	All unpaved surfaces on rights-of-way shall be sodded. Groundcover may be substituted in lieu of lawn grass subject to City review and approval.

C. Other properties. Properties within MF1, MF2, MFSA, MXD, CL, and C zoning districts exceeding the applicability thresholds as defined in Section 5-1102(B) shall be subject to the following:

	<i>Type</i>	<i>Minimum requirements</i>
1.	Landscape open space.	<p>a. The following zoning districts shall provide landscape open space as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. MF1 District. Forty (40%) percent of the total area. At least twenty (20%) percent of the required landscape open space shall be located in the front yard area. ii. MF2 and MFSA Districts. Twenty-five (25%) percent of the total area as landscape open space. iii. CL District. Ten (10%) percent of the area of the building site. Such landscaped area shall not be less in width or depth than five (5) feet. iv. C Districts. Ten (10%) percent of the area of the building site shall be provided. Such landscaped area shall not be less in width or depth than ten (10) feet. Plazas, courtyards, arcades and loggias paved with a pervious material may be considered open space and counted as such toward the open space requirement up to a maximum of seventy-five (75%) percent. <p>b. Townhouses as permitted in applicable districts. At least twenty-five (25%) percent of the parcel shall be maintained as landscaped or urban open space, or courtyards, elevated decks, and other amenities which are open to the sky.</p> <p>c. With the exception of Commercial District properties, the landscaped open space required by this Section shall consist of pervious landscaped area and shall not consist of any paved or otherwise impervious areas.</p>
2.	Planting requirements.	<p>a. Large shade trees. A minimum of twenty-eight (28) large shade trees per acre of lot area or fraction thereof shall be located onsite.</p> <p>b. Shrubs. A minimum of two-hundred-and-twenty-four (224) shrubs per acre or fraction thereof shall be located onsite.</p>
3.	Mixed use district alley planting requirements.	<p>If vegetation can be installed within an alley, the below listed vegetation shall be installed along alleyways (rights-of-way) whenever practicable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. One (1) palm or medium shade tree per thirty-five (35) feet linear feet or fraction thereof of alley abutting the property. A maximum of twenty-five (25%) percent of the total may be palm varieties. b. One (1) shrub per three (3) linear feet or fraction thereof of the alley abutting the property. <p>The requirements provided herein and any potential conflicts shall be subject to review and approval by the Public Works Department and Public Service Department.</p>

Special Landscape Requirements for Specific Types of Development

Planned Area Developments (PAD)

Section 3-502. Standards and criteria.

- C. Minimum development standards. Any parcel of land for which a PAD is proposed must conform to the following minimum standards:
 - 6. Landscaped open space. The minimum landscaped open space required for a PAD shall be not less than twenty (20%) percent of the PAD site. Landscaped or urban open space which is located on elevated portions of the site may count toward this requirement.

Mixed Use Developments (MXDs)

Section 4-201. Mixed Use District (MXD).

- G. Landscaping.
 - 1. Landscape open space. Landscape open space requirements are satisfied pursuant to the rights-of-way planting requirements listed in Article 5, Division 11.

Permitted Commercial Developments

Section 4-302. Commercial District (C).

- D. Performance standards.
 - 6. Nighttime uses adjacent to a residential district.
 - a. Parking lots for nighttime uses shall be screened with opaque wall, fences or hedges to a height of a minimum of four (4) feet at time of installation so that vehicle headlamps cannot illuminate land which is designated as a residential district.
 - e. A landscape buffer comprised of a continuous hedge and small trees with a height of at least fourteen (14) feet at intervals of not less than ten (10) feet on centers shall be located along any property line of a nighttime use which has a common property line with property designated as a residential district, or is separated only by an alley.

Mediterranean Bonus

Section 5-604. Coral Gables Mediterranean Style Design Standards.

B. Development bonus standards.

1. Required standards. Applications shall be required to satisfy all of the requirements in Table 1, "Required Standards" in order to secure bonuses based upon the applicable residential, nonresidential and MXD district designations.

<i>Table 1. Required standards</i>					
<i>Reference Number</i>	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Non-Residential</i>	<i>Mixed Use</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
2.		✓	✓	Architectural relief elements at street level.	On any building facades fronting streets, where an adjoining pedestrian sidewalk is located, one (1) or more of the following design features shall be included at the street level: a. Display windows or retail display area; b. Landscaping; and/or c. Architectural relief elements or ornamentation.
8.	✓	✓	✓	Landscape open space area.	Each property shall provide the following minimum landscape open area (percentage based upon total lot area): a. Five (5%) percent for nonresidential properties; b. Ten (10%) percent for mixed use properties; and c. Twenty-five (25%) percent for residential properties. The total area shall be based upon the total lot area. This landscape area can be provided at street level, within the public right-of-way, elevated areas, planter boxes, planters, etc.

- H. Option standards. Applications for bonuses may also utilize the following development options for Level 1 and/or Level 2 bonuses as is provided in Table 3:

<i>Table 3. Other development options</i>					
<i>Number</i>	<i>Residential</i>	<i>Non-Residential</i>	<i>Mixed Use</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Options</i>
1.		✓	✓	Building setback reductions.	Reduction in setbacks. Setbacks may be reduced to zero (0) foot setbacks on all property lines subject to the following standards: a. Minimum open space. A minimum of twenty-five (25%) percent of the total ground stories square footage received from the setback reduction is provided as publicly accessible street level open space and landscape area on private property. b. The minimum square footage of allowable ground stories

Table 3. Other development options

Number	Residential	Non-Residential	Mixed Use	Type	Options
					<p>open space (i.e. plazas) shall be four hundred (400) square feet.</p> <p>c. Types of open space. Types of open space shall be in the form of courtyards, plazas, arcades/loggias, and pedestrian pass-throughs adjacent/contiguous to the adjacent rights-of-way.</p> <p>d Applicants, property owners, successors or assigns desiring to develop pursuant to these regulations may not seek a variance for relief or reduction in building setbacks. Reductions in setbacks are only permitted subject to these regulations.</p>
2.		✓	✓	Encroachment or loggias and/or arcades located as a part of an adjacent building within rights-of-way.	<p>Encroachments up to a maximum of ten (10) feet into public rights-of-way (not including alleys) may be permitted for the placement of a street level pedestrian arcade/loggia as a part of an adjacent building subject shall satisfy the following regulations:</p> <p>a. Encroachment. The total amount of encroachment shall be evaluated based upon the total width of the contiguous rights-of-way. Rights-of-way less than sixty (60) feet or less may be approved for less than the maximum ten (10) feet.</p> <p>b. Minimum percentage of open space. A minimum fifty (50%) percent of the total ground stories square footage encroachment requested must be provided as publicly accessible open space and landscape area on private property. The open space is subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of open space. Types of open space shall be in the form of open arcades/loggia, courtyards, plazas, pedestrian pass-throughs or open atriums adjacent/contiguous to the adjacent rights-of-way. • Minimum area. Minimum square footage of allowable open space shall be five hundred (500) square feet. • Landscape. Include both hard and softscape landscape improvements and pedestrian amenities as defined herein. • Vertical volume. As a minimum include a vertical volume of space equal from street level to the first story's height or eighteen (18) feet, whichever is greater. Increase/decrease in height may be reviewed/approved as a part of approval. • Maximum arcade/loggia lengths. Encroachments of up to eighty (80%) percent of the entire linear length of the building are permitted. Encroachment of the entire length may be requested subject to review and approval at the time of site plan review. Limitations of encroachments on corners of buildings may be required to control view corridors and ground stories building bulk and mass. • Vertical encroachment. Structure shall be limited

Table 3. Other development options

Number	Residential	Non-Residential	Mixed Use	Type	Options
					<p>to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forty-five (45) feet on sixty (60) foot rights-of-way. • Eighteen (18) feet on rights-of-way less than thirty (30) feet. • The encroachment shall be structurally supported entirely from the adjoining private property. <p>c. All applicable costs for improvements and/or relocation to utilities, sanitary sewer, storm water, and other associated infrastructure improvements as a result of the request shall be the responsibility of the property owner.</p> <p>d. On street parking displaced as a result of the encroachment shall be provided as public parking spaces within the proposed development and compensation for the removed spaces shall be subject to the established City provisions. The building shall include City's public parking signage on the exterior portions of the building to clearly identify public parking spaces are available within the facility. The total number and location of the signage shall be determined at the time of application review.</p> <p>e. Any encroachments, construction and penetration into the rights-of-way shall be subject to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property owners shall be responsible for all maintenance of all encroachments and/or property of all surrounding public rights-of-way, including but not limited to the following: landscaping; (hard and softscape); benches; trash receptacles; irrigation; kiosks; plazas; open spaces; recreational facilities; private streets; etc. subject to all the provisions for which the development was approved as may be amended. • Responsible for liability insurance, local taxes, and the maintenance of the encroachment and/or property. • In the event that the owner or any assign and successor shall at any time after approval of the site plan fail to maintain the areas in reasonable order and condition in accordance with the approval, these regulations, City Code or other applicable local, state and federal requirements, the City shall implement appropriate measures pursuant to applicable City provisions. <p>f. Encroachments and the total amount of encroachment shall require review and approval pursuant to applicable City provisions.</p>