



CITY OF  
FORT LAUDERDALE

# CERTIFICATE OF USE

PROPOSED ORDINANCE DISCUSSION

October 8, 2025  
Economic Development Advisory Board

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# BACKGROUND: WHAT IS A CERTIFICATE OF USE?

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

- Compliments the Business Tax Receipt, which is a required document that allows a business to operate within the city and confirms that the appropriate local taxes have been paid.
- Provides applicant with information on review process and parking requirements e.g., if conditional use.
- Common best practice in other municipalities:

## DORAL



**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: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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? Yes  No   
 (If yes, attach copy of current certificate of use)

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

**AFFIDAVIT**

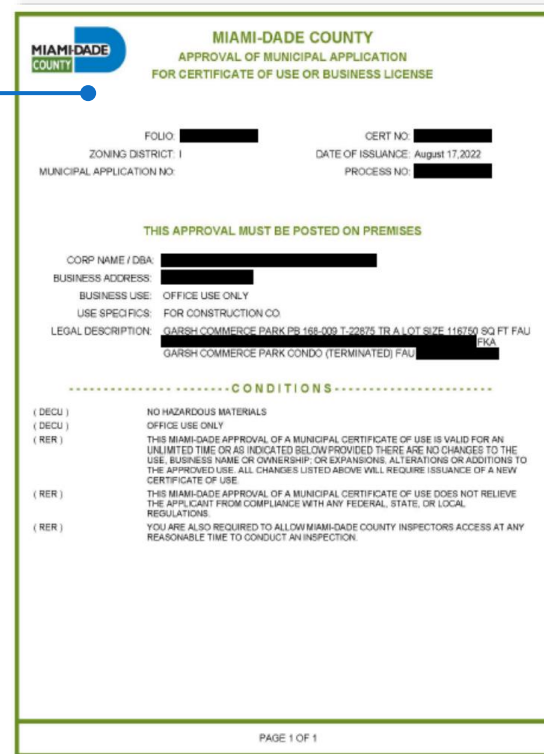
State of \_\_\_\_\_  
 County of \_\_\_\_\_, (Owner, Partner, Officer, Representative or Agent)  
 \_\_\_\_\_, being duly sworn, deposes and says that He/She is the authorized to  
 execute this application for the purposes of obtaining a Certificate of Use from the City of Doral.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name and Title \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Notary Public, State of Florida  
 My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_

8401 Northwest 53<sup>rd</sup> Terrace, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Doral, Florida 33166 – 305.593.6631 – Facsimile 305.593.6768 – www.cityofdoral.com

## MIAMI DADE



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

FOLIO: \_\_\_\_\_ CERT NO: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ZONING DISTRICT: I DATE OF ISSUANCE: August 17, 2022  
 MUNICIPAL APPLICATION NO: \_\_\_\_\_ PROCESS NO: \_\_\_\_\_

**THIS APPROVAL MUST BE POSTED ON PREMISES**

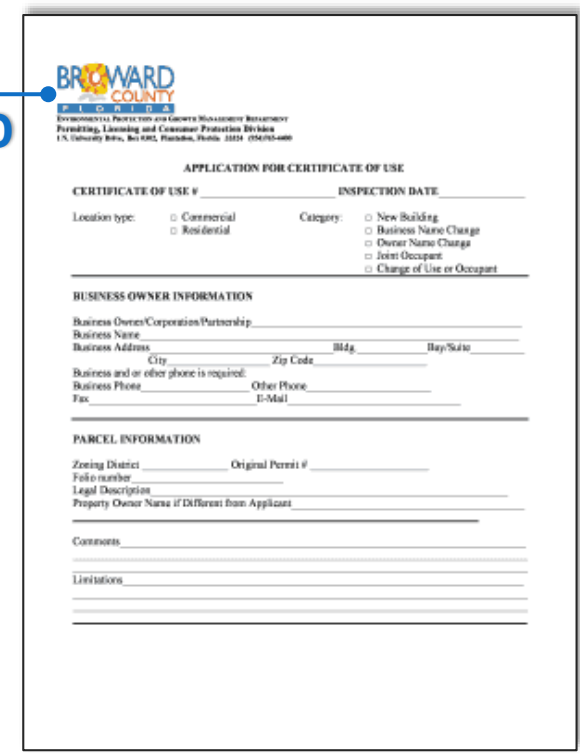
CORP NAME / DBA: \_\_\_\_\_  
 BUSINESS ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 BUSINESS USE: OFFICE USE ONLY  
 USE SPECIFICS: FOR CONSTRUCTION CO  
 LEGAL DESCRIPTION: GARSH COMMERCE PARK PB 168-009 T:22875 TR A LOT SIZE 116750 SQ FT FAU  
 GARSH COMMERCE PARK CONDO (TERMINATED) FAU \_\_\_\_\_

**CONDITIONS**

( DECU ) NO HAZARDOUS MATERIALS  
 ( DECU ) OFFICE USE ONLY  
 ( RER ) 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.  
 ( RER ) THIS MIAMI-DADE APPROVAL OF A MUNICIPAL CERTIFICATE OF USE DOES NOT RELIEVE THE APPLICANT FROM COMPLIANCE WITH ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL REGULATIONS.  
 ( RER ) YOU ARE ALSO REQUIRED TO ALLOW MIAMI-DADE COUNTY INSPECTORS ACCESS AT ANY REASONABLE TIME TO CONDUCT AN INSPECTION.

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## BROWARD



**BROWARD COUNTY**  
 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT  
 PERMITTING, LICENSING AND CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION  
 175 UNIVERSITY BLVD., SUITE 400, FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33402 (954)586-2444

**APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF USE**

**CERTIFICATE OF USE #** \_\_\_\_\_ **INSPECTION DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

Location type:  Commercial  Residential Category:  New Building  
 Business Name Change  
 Owner Name Change  
 Joint Occupant  
 Change of Use or Occupant

**BUSINESS OWNER INFORMATION**

Business Owner/Corporation/Partnership: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Bldg. \_\_\_\_\_ Hwy/State \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Business and/or other phone is required:  
 Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Fax \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**PARCEL INFORMATION**

Zoning District \_\_\_\_\_ Original Permit # \_\_\_\_\_  
 Folio number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Legal Description \_\_\_\_\_  
 Property Owner Name if Different from Applicant \_\_\_\_\_

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



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

## 1 CHANGE OF USE BUILDING PERMITS

- Permit for interior renovations
- Permit has change of occupancy from retail to indoor gun range
- Permit cannot be issued; fails permit
- Indoor gun range is a Conditional Use
- Conditional Use is reviewed by DRC and requires PZB approval

### ➔ IMPLICATIONS

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

## 2 NEW BUSINESS BUSINESS TAX RECEIPTS

- Business owner already signed a lease agreement
- New business is different than existing retail tenant space
- Use is not permitted in the zoning district

### ➔ IMPLICATIONS

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

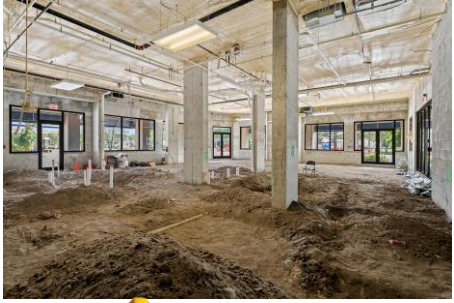
## 3 INSUFFICIENT PARKING BUILDING PERMITS

- Permit for interior renovations
- Renovations for restaurant with outdoor dining in an existing plaza
- Approved site plan for plaza was not parked to include a restaurant use
- Parking reduction is needed
- Parking reductions are reviewed by DRC and requires PZB approval

### ➔ IMPLICATIONS

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

# BACKGROUND: EXAMPLE



## IMPACTS

- Applicant is already making lease payments, but business cannot open.
- Applicant engages a land use attorney, a general contractor, and design professionals to process plan revisions and process the parking reduction.
- Requires additional time and costs to process the necessary applications and approvals.
- Potential additional cost to an owner if it takes six months to resolve = \$79,610  
*(Based on typical commercial lease space 3,800 square feet x \$41.90 average cost per square footage)*
- Applicant attempts to recover costs or breaks lease.



# PROCESS IMPROVEMENT: GOALS & BENEFITS

- Improve application process and provide structure for certain application types within the Development Services Department.
- Improve customer experience.
- Reduce denials and decrease review times.
- Reduce costs to applicants.
- 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.
- Provide peace of mind that a specific use will be permitted ahead of time.



 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 \_\_\_\_\_

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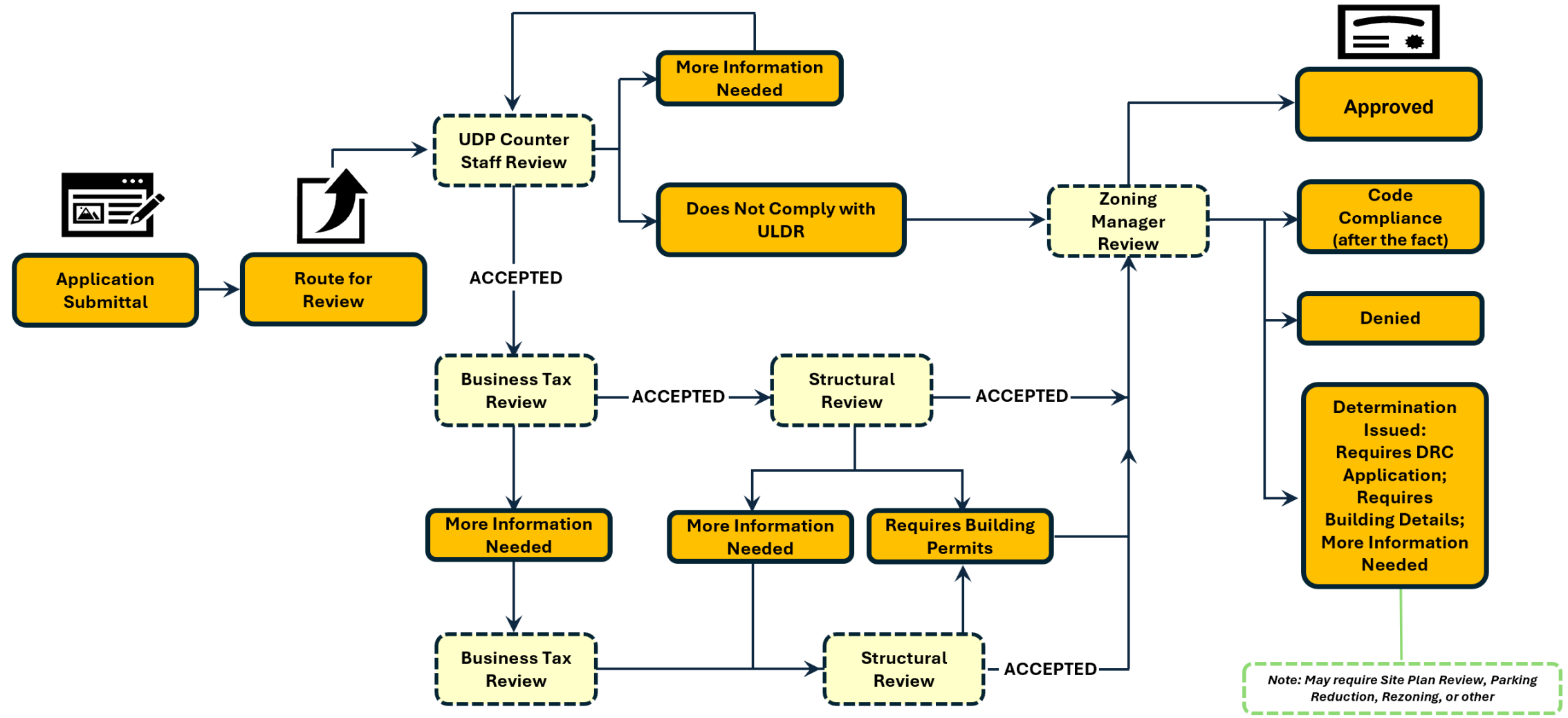
Regards,  
Zoning Administrator/Chief \_\_\_\_\_

If you need more information on a particular use or any additional information, please contact the Development Services Department at 954-628-6520.

Equal Opportunity Employer  
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
700 New 19th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311 | Phone: 954-628-6528  
www.fortlauderdale.gov  
Printed On Recycled Paper

# PROCESS OVERVIEW: EXISTING

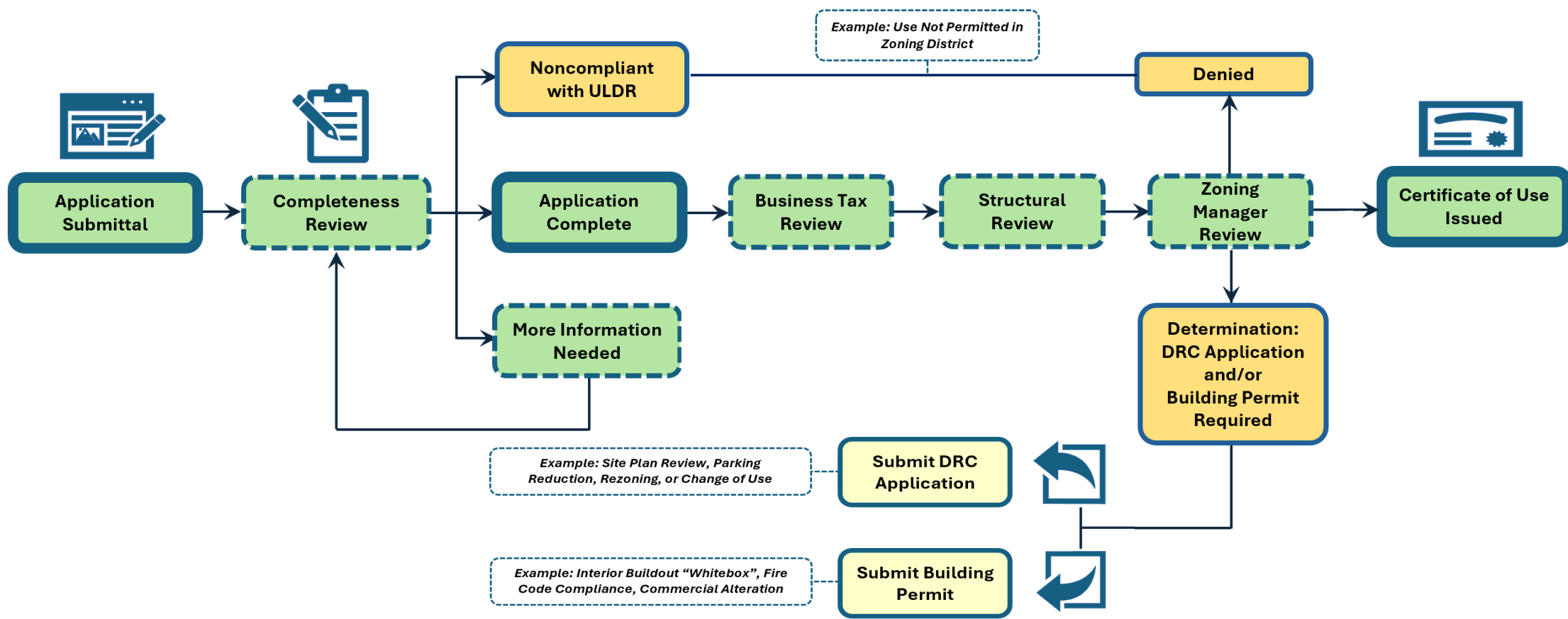
## APPLICATION EXAMPLE FLOWCHART



Note: May require Site Plan Review, Parking Reduction, Rezoning, or other

# PROCESS OVERVIEW: PROPOSED

## PROPOSED CERTIFICATE OF USE FLOWCHART



# PROCESS OVERVIEW: DEPARTMENT COORDINATION

## Collaboration from Business Tax, Urban Design & Planning, Zoning, and Building Divisions:

### **Planning Counter:**

Identify use is permitted and parking is adequate.

### **Building:**

Verify CU provided for permit types:

- Change of use
- New construction
- Commercial alterations
- Community residences
- Commercial/residential addition

### **Business Tax:**

Confirm most recent legal use, and whether license is expired.

### **Zoning:**

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



## 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 \$240 based on the full cost recovery to process the certificate. The fee is based on research conducted of other municipalities as well as the city's existing fee schedule.
- 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.



# PUBLIC OUTREACH



Update Development Services Department and Business Tax Office webpages



Post flyers at DSD building



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





CITY OF  
FORT LAUDERDALE

# QUESTIONS & COMMENTS