

23-30AM – City-Initiated Text Amendments to the Land Development Regulations #3

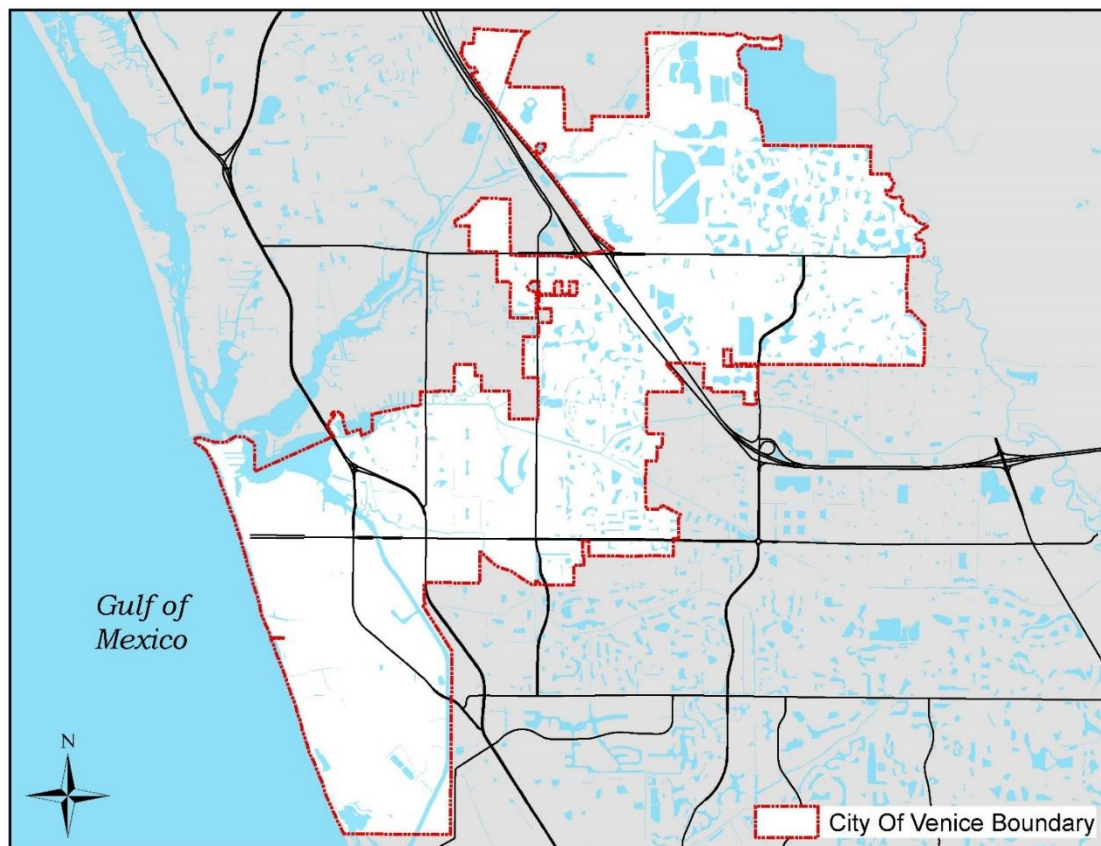
Staff Report

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

During the process of adopting the Land Development Code (Ordinance No. 2022-15), City Council directed staff to research several topics for deeper discussion and to propose some solutions to key issues in the city. Affordable housing is perhaps the largest of these issues. The amendments proposed here come as a result of two public discussions with Council, which led to new direction for both short-range and long-range solutions. These are the first group, which consists of short-range options that can be readily adopted without further coordination among agencies and with no funding needed. The intent is that these will serve as incentives for increasing the supply of affordable housing, and these incentives can benefit a variety of users, from developers to individual homeowners to tenants.

These amendments have three purposes:

1. allowing for accessory dwelling units (ADUs);
2. expanding the density bonus to Residential, Multi-Family 1 and 2 zoning districts; and
3. allowing small units (750 square feet or less) meeting affordability criteria to count as half units for density calculation purposes.



List of Changes

Section	Change	Category
Ch. 87, Sec. 1.8.4.A	Removing reference to RMF-3 and RMF-4 to make the provision inclusive to all RMF	Density Bonus Expansion
Ch. 87, Table 2.2.7	Allowing density bonus as a conditional use in RMF-1 and RMF-2	Density Bonus Expansion
Ch. 87, Sec. 2.4.3.A.1(a)	Allowing one ADU per lot	Accessory Dwelling Units
Ch. 87, Sec. 2.4.3.A.3(a)	Removing exclusion for guesthouses	Accessory Dwelling Units
Ch. 87, Sec. 2.4.3.B.2	Clarifying that ADUs are not permitted on single-family attached lots	Accessory Dwelling Units
Ch. 87, Sec. 2.4.3.D.5(c)	Allowing affordable units of 750 square feet or less to count as half units for density calculations	Half Units
Ch. 87, Sec. 2.4.3.G	Including all RMF zoning in the density bonus use definition	Density Bonus Expansion
Ch. 87, Sec. 3.1.9.C.5	Adding standards for ADUs	Accessory Dwelling Units
Ch. 87, Sec. 9.1.A	Adding a definition for ADUs	Accessory Dwelling Units

PLANNING ANALYSIS

In this section of the report, analysis of the subject text amendment petition evaluates consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

Each of the three categories of changes here relates to the Housing Element of the Plan, which has one overarching vision:

Vision HG 1 - The City will support opportunities to meet its diverse residential needs by providing a wide array of housing options.

Intent HG 1.1 – Housing Options furthers the vision by requiring the City to promote a range of housing options, allowing choices that reflect the needs of a variety of people and situations.

The amendments proposed here are guided by this vision and intent in their flexibility and encouragement of different housing types, especially accessory units and half units. The density bonus also provides an incentive for developers to provide different levels of affordability within housing developments. This amendment expands this opportunity.

Strategy HG 1.1.1 – Housing Characteristics requires the City’s Land Development Code to promote housing diversity, and these changes can be a major step in achieving consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. Some of the characteristics listed in this strategy include housing style, type, and pricing, all of which have been considered in drafting these amendments. These code changes only require a level of affordability when certain incentives are sought, namely the half unit or density bonus, but it is the intent of the changes to give a wider selection of options that would allow a developer to produce more affordably priced housing. Housing style and type, as they relate to these amendments, should be seamless

with the surroundings. For example, many half-sized units currently exist in multifamily developments around the city and are visually indistinguishable (although no affordability incentive was offered, and so these are priced above the range for many potential renters). Similarly, density bonus-eligible units in RMF-1 or RMF-2 should not be set apart from market rate units. Accessory dwelling units will be limited in size and only one ADU will be allowed per lot, with no resort dwellings permitted, consistent with the character of the single family lots on which they may exist.

Further into the Housing Element is **Intent HG 1.5- Attainable Housing**, which contains **Strategy HG 1.5.3 – Attainable Housing Density Bonus and Other Incentives**. This strategy will be expanded with the associated Comprehensive Plan Amendment Petition No. 23-31CP to include RMF-1 and RMF-2 districts, which will be scaled the same as the existing bonus rates, providing a 66% bonus for “community housing” and a 100% bonus for “affordable housing” as defined according to the US HUD categories listed in **Table HG-1**.

No intents or strategies in the Comprehensive Plan have been found to conflict with these proposed changes. Density increases may result from some of these changes, which would also strengthen the visions of the Infrastructure and Open Space elements regarding efficient and optimized use of resources.

Conclusions/Findings of Fact (Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan):

Analysis has been provided to determine consistency with all elements and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan. As indicated above, no inconsistencies have been identified. This analysis should be taken into consideration upon determining Comprehensive Plan consistency.

II. CONCLUSION

These revisions come as a result of Council direction to research and propose amendments to the Code that could help increase the supply of affordable housing in Venice. The three categories of changes here were of interest to Council and represent the first of at least two groups of housing-related amendments to come.

Planning Commission Report and Recommendation

Upon review of the petitions and associated documents, Comprehensive Plan, Land Development Code, staff report and analysis, and testimony provided during the public hearing, there is sufficient information on the record for the Planning Commission to make a recommendation to City Council on Text Amendment petition no. 23-30AM.