

## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** District of Columbia Zoning Commission

**FROM:** Michael Jurkovic, AICP, Development Review Specialist  
*JL* Joel Lawson, Associate Director Development Review

**DATE:** November 24, 2025

**SUBJECT:** ZC Case 25-10 – Hearing Report for a Proposed Zoning Text Amendment to U § 514.3, prohibited used in the Reed-Cooke Mixed-Use Zoning, 1781 Florida Ave. NW.

### **I. REQUEST**

On May 12, 2025, Alturas LLC submitted a petition to amend the use prohibitions of the Reed-Cooke Mixed-Use Zoning area, to provide the subject property 1781 Florida Ave. NW (Square 2557, Lot 800) with additional use permissions by amending the following sections of the Zoning Regulation (11 DCMR ZR16):

- **Subtitle U § 514.3(r):** Amend the Off-premises Alcoholic beverages use prohibition to exclude Square 2557, Lot 800, for both primary and secondary use.
- **Subtitle U § 514.3(u):** Remove Square 2557, Lot 800, from the restaurant and food establishment use prohibition.
- **Subtitle U § 514.3(x):** Remove Square 2557, Lot 800, from the veterinary hospital use prohibition.

The Zoning Commission, at its July 31, 2025, public meeting, set down the applicant's requested text amendment. The application was subsequently amended post-set down on September 4, 2025, to include the following:

- **Subtitle U § 514.3(t):** Remove Square 2557, Lot 800, from the parcel delivery service establishment prohibition.

### **II. RECOMMENDATION**

The Office of Planning (“OP”) recommends that the Zoning Commission **approve** the text amendment to the following section of the Zoning Regulations to amend Subtitle U § 514.3 as follows (text to be deleted is marked with **strikethrough** and new text is shown in **bold and underlined**):

514.3 In the MU-4/RC and MU-5A/RC zones, the following uses shall be prohibited:

...

(r) Off-premises alcoholic beverage sales, except that the off-premises beer and wine sales accessory use in the grocery store located in Square 2572, Lot 36, may continue as a matter of right provided that it shall not occupy more than 2,078 square feet of the store's gross floor area, **and that the off-premises beer and wine sales may be permitted as a matter of right primary or accessory use in Square 2557, Lot 800;**

...

(t) Parcel delivery service establishment other than one exclusively dedicated to serving a sound stage or a movie, video, or television production facility that existed on April 26, 1991, except that a parcel delivery service establishment may be permitted as a matter of right in Square 2557, Lot 800;

...

(u) Restaurant or fast food establishment, except that a restaurant may be permitted as a matter of right in Square 2557, Lot 800;

...

(x) Veterinary hospital, except that a veterinary hospital may be permitted as a matter of right in Square 2557, Lot 800; and

...

### III. COMMISSION COMMENTS FROM SET-DOWN

The following summarizes Zoning Commission comments and requests for additional information relating to the proposed text amendment from the set down meeting:

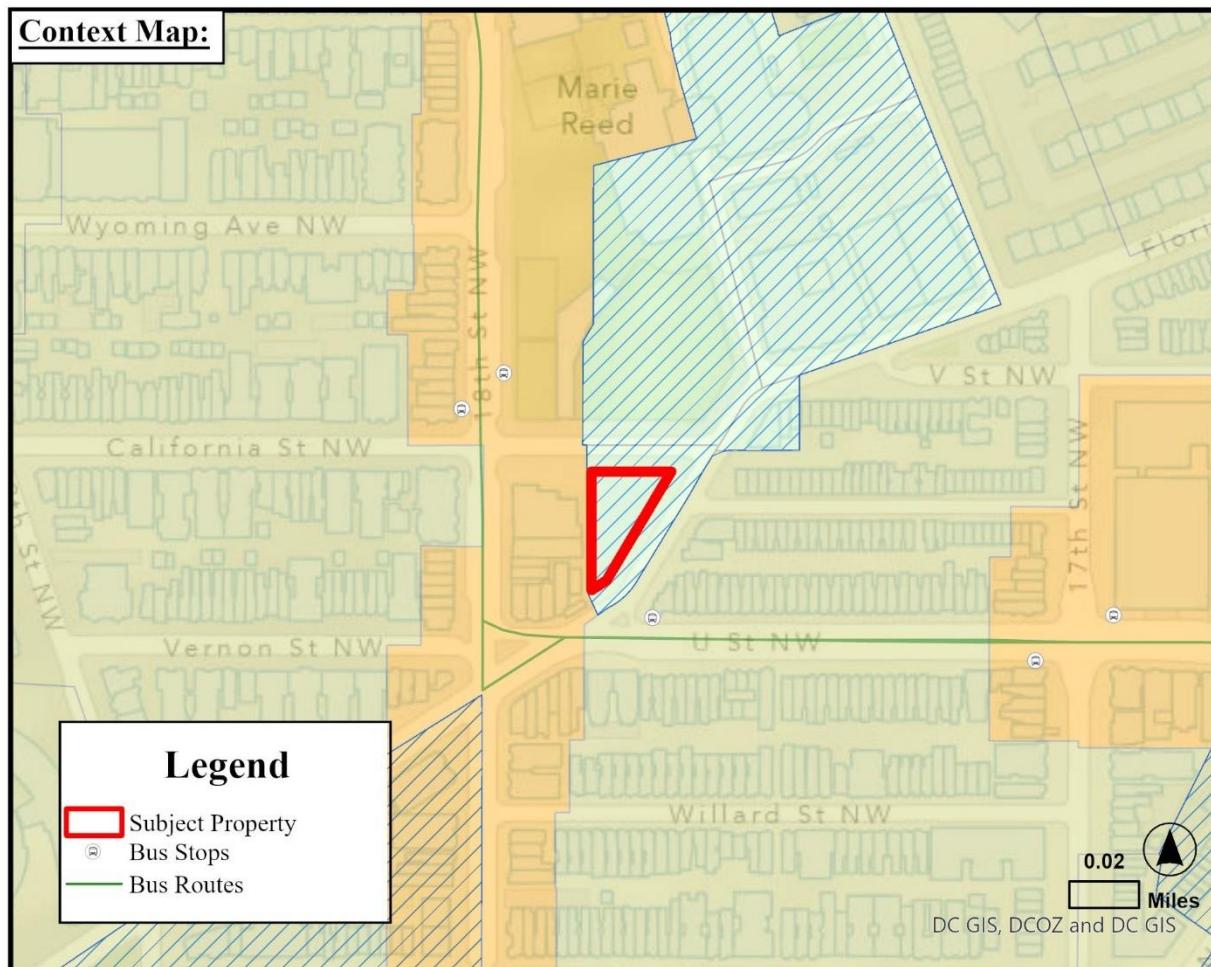
Comment	Response	OP Response
Provide background information on the prohibited uses in the Reed-Cooke Overlay, and this request's consistency.	<p>The proposed text amendment is consistent with the original purpose and intent of the Overlay to allow commercial uses while limiting impacts to residents. The text amendment would exempt the Property from only four uses that are otherwise prohibited by the Overlay. The proposed uses - off-premises alcoholic beverage sales, a restaurant, veterinary hospital and parcel delivery store (per the below revision) – are neighborhood-serving uses that can adequately coexist with residential uses. Other uses that may be more impactful, such as an assembly hall, bar or hotel, would remain prohibited at the Property. Further, the Property is uniquely positioned within the Overlay to limit adverse effects to the nearby residential community in Reed-Cooke...</p> <p>(Applicant's full response can be found at <a href="#">Exhibit #11</a>)</p>	OP agrees with the applicant's response.

## IV. BACKGROUND

The applicant has submitted this petition to amend the use prohibitions of the Reed-Cooke Mixed-Use Zoning to grant additional use flexibility to the subject property, 1781 Florida Ave. NW (Square 2557, Lot 800). The Property is located at the southern end of the MU/RC zoned area and is bound by an alley to the west, and street frontage on three sides: California Street NW to the north, U Street NW to the south, and Florida Avenue NW to east.

The applicant has owned the property since 2000 and proceeded with a complete renovation, reopening the building in 2006. Since then, the property has been home to a fitness studio on the second floor. After years of tenant turnover, the majority of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor space was reconfigured to accommodate a CVS Pharmacy in 2022. However, that tenant has since vacated the property and it is largely vacant.

## V. CONTEXT MAP



## VI. PLANNING CONTEXT

Title 11 Subtitle X § 1301.2 requires that a text amendment be not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted policies. A full description of the Comprehensive Plan, and analysis of the proposal against its maps and policies is provided in the OP set down report ([Exhibit #9](#))

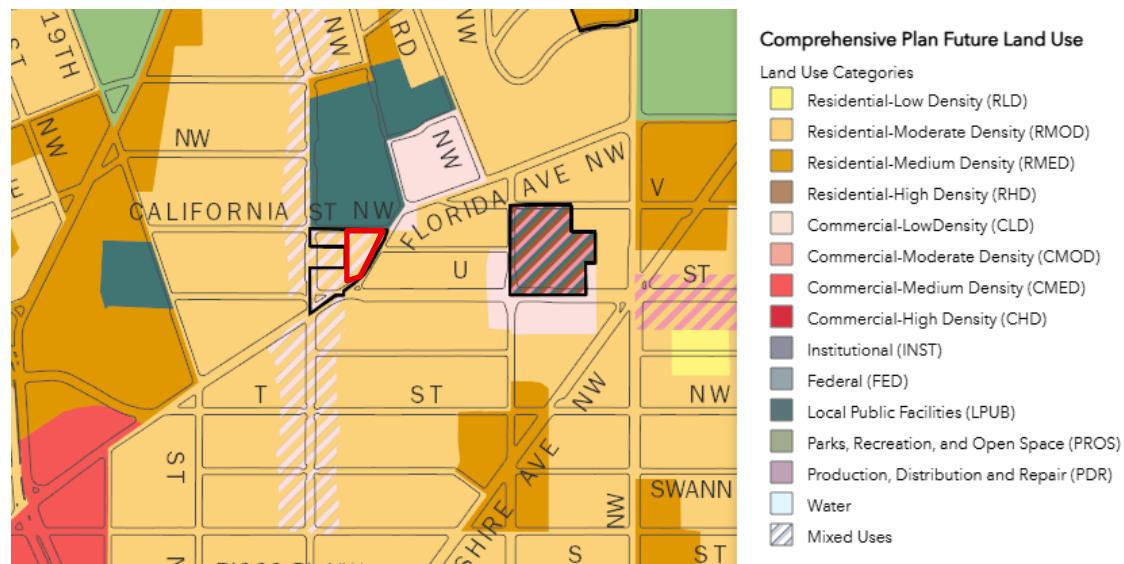
### A. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MAPS

As described in the Guidelines for Using the Generalized Policy Map and the Future Land Use Map (Chapter 2 Framework Element, Section 226, Attachment III), “Generalized Policy Map and Future Land Use Map are intended to provide generalized guidance for development and conservation decisions and are considered in concert with other Comprehensive Plan policies.” Additionally, “. . . the zoning of any given area should be guided by the Future Land Use Map, interpreted in conjunction with the text of the Comprehensive Plan, including the Citywide Elements and the Area Elements.”

As described in detailed in the OP Setdown Report at Exhibit 9 and summarized below, the proposed PUD and map amendment would not be inconsistent with the map designations.

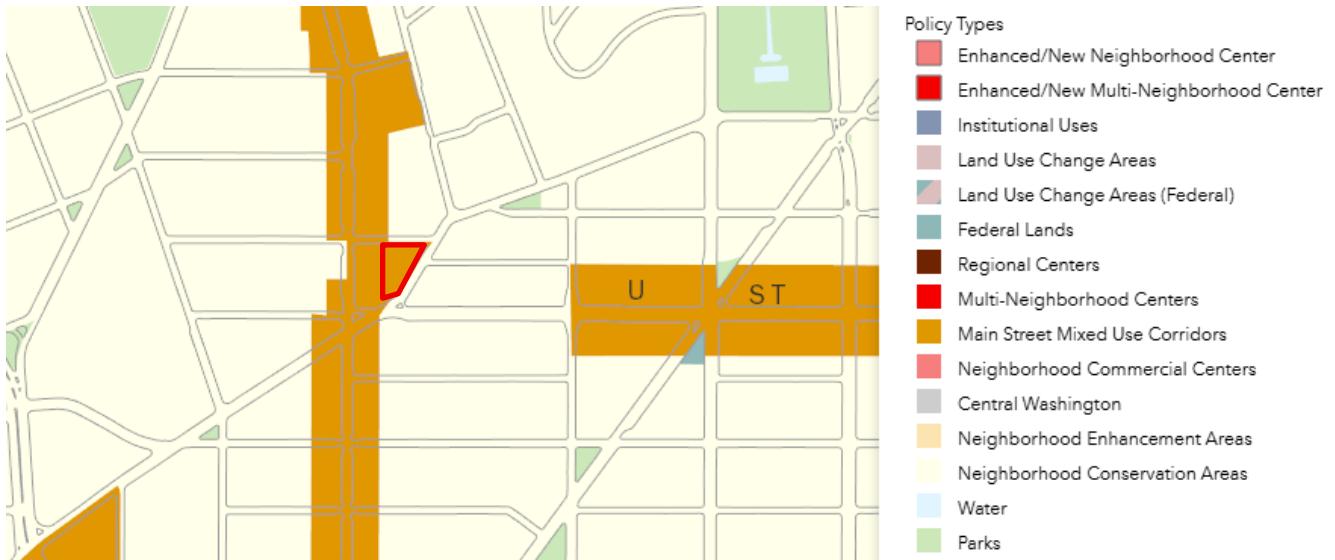
#### **Generalized Future Land Use Map (FLUM)**

The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) indicates that the site is appropriate for a mix of Moderate Density Residential and Low Density Commercial.



The proposed Zoning Text Amendment would not be inconsistent with the Mixed-Use Category FLUM land use recommendation for the site which includes Moderate Density Residential and Low Density Commercial. Specifically, the uses it permits, on balance, would be not inconsistent with the FLUM designations, would facilitate the site to fill a vacancy, and could enable the furtherance of the desired mix of uses through future development.

### **Generalized Policy Map**



The proposed text amendment would be not inconsistent with the Generalized Policy Map recommendation for the site and is the only portion of the Reed-Cooke overlay with the Main Street Mixed Use Corridor designation. The proposal would further the goals and objectives of the Corridor by introducing new use type options to facilitate finding a long-term use for a property which has struggled with finding a long-term tenant.

### **B. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICES THROUGH A RACIAL EQUITY LENS**

The Comprehensive Plan requires an examination of zoning actions through a racial equity lens. The direction to consider equity “as part of its Comprehensive Plan consistency analysis” indicates that the equity analysis is intended to be based on the policies of the Comprehensive Plan and part of the Commission’s consideration of whether a proposed zoning action is “not inconsistent” with the Comprehensive Plan.

For this, the Zoning Commission has developed a four part Racial Equity Toolkit for applicants and OP to utilize in evaluation of actions brought before the Commission. Please also refer to the OP Setdown Report at Exhibit 9, and the applicant’s Racial Equity analysis at Exhibit 2D.

#### **Part 1 – Guidance Regarding the Comprehensive Plan**

##### **Citywide Elements**

As noted above, the proposal would be not inconsistent with both Comp Plan Generalized Policy Map and Future Land Use Map. The proposed text amendment is also, on balance, not inconsistent with the Citywide and Area Elements of the Comprehensive Plan. For the full text with policy statement references, please refer to the OP Setdown Report.

##### **Land Use Element**

This proposed text amendment would aid in facilitating the occupancy of a large vacant commercial space at the intersection of the Adams Morgan and U Street commercial corridors. These uses are typically permitted in a Main Street Mixed Use Corridor, but not within the specific

zone for this site. Introducing new paths towards full occupancy of the site would contribute to making the commercial area successful and inviting place for nearby residents.

### **Economic Development Element**

### **Urban Design Element**

### **Mid-City Area Element**

The proposed text amendment should assist a location at an important retail intersection that has struggled with vacancies to find a tenant by increasing the potential uses for the site. The property is uniquely situated so that it is well buffered from residential properties in the Reed-Cook area, and the requested use provisions may introduce new uses that would serve local residents but are otherwise missing from the neighborhood, and at a location that is less likely to cause conflict the nearby residences

An expansion of permitted uses at the subject property would also further the Urban Design policy in that this effort should increase the potential mix of uses in the established commercial corridor, helping to activate the streetscape and the neighborhood.

### **Part 2 – Applicant/Petitioner Community Outreach and Engagement**

The applicant has provided details of their ongoing outreach efforts at Exhibit #2D, pgs. 8-10. Most recently at Exhibit 17, the Reed-Cooke Neighborhood Association discusses the outreach they received and voice their support of the proposal.

### **Part 3 – Disaggregated Data for the Upper Northeast Planning Area**

Part 3 of the Racial Equity Tool asks for disaggregated data to assist the Commission in its evaluation of zoning actions through a racial equity lens for the planning area.

In this case, the proposed text amendment, to allow specific additional uses on this one site, should have limited if any impact on neighborhood demographics. The proposed uses would be ones that could serve local residents, adding to the retail and service mix, and thereby adding desirability to the neighborhood. It could also add some employment opportunities for residents of the neighborhood, although the unemployment rate for the Mid-City Planning area is well below that of the District as a whole. The median income of the Mid-City Planning Area is also higher than that of the District in both the 2012-2016 and 2019-2023 time periods.

#### ***Median Income Districtwide and in the Mid-City Planning Area (2012-2016 and 2019-2023)***

Median Income	Districtwide (2012-2016)	MC (2012-2016)	Districtwide (2019-2023)	MC (2019-2023)
<b>Median Household Income</b>	\$72,935	\$87,510	\$106,287	\$131,704
<b>White alone</b>	\$119,564	\$112,717	\$166,774	\$169,741
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	\$ 40,560	\$44,178	\$60,446	\$63,175
<b>American Indian and Alaskan Native alone</b>	\$ 51,306	NA	\$63,617	\$37,782
<b>Asian alone</b>	\$ 91,453	\$100,938	\$121,619	\$120,032

Median Income	Districtwide (2012-2016)	MC (2012-2016)	Districtwide (2019-2023)	MC (2019-2023)
<b>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Some other races</b>	\$ 41,927	\$42,529	\$74,754	\$63,396
<b>Two or more races</b>	\$ 83,243	\$91,857	\$116,869	\$143,213
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	\$ 60,848	\$48,661	\$106,435	\$95,249

### General Economic Characteristics

The unemployment rate and the poverty rate improved both in the District and in the Mid-City Planning Area over this ten-year period. Additionally, the Area has held a lower unemployment and poverty rate when compared to the District as a whole.

#### *General Economic Characteristics of the Planning Area and District*

Characteristic	Districtwide (2012-2016)	MC (2012-2016)	Districtwide (2019-2023)	MC (2019-2023)
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	8.7%	6%	6.5%	3.6%
<b>Poverty Rate</b>	17.9%	13.5%	14.5%	11.2%

### Racial Equity benefits of the project

The Mid-City Planning Area is predominantly white but has a growing number of residents from other race/ethnic groups. With the exception of the Hispanic/Latino group, the minority populations in this planning area have maintained their higher household incomes than for their same cohorts in the District as a whole.

The proposal's primary goal is to provide additional matter-of-right uses for a particular property in the Reed-Cooke area. The applicant notes that the property is otherwise in good condition having experienced a series of improvements and most recently a conversion of most of the building for occupancy by a single tenant which has since left. Although, limited in scope to the addition of just three uses which are permitted in typical mixed use zones, the applicant's request should expedite the occupancy of the site and return employment opportunities to the area.

### Racial Equity Tool Part 4 – Zoning Commission Evaluation Factors

As discussed above, the proposal is not inconsistent with the Citywide Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and would further the policies of the Land Use, Economic Development, and Urban Design Elements.

Factor	Question	OP Response
<b>Direct Displacement</b>	Will the zoning action result in displacement of tenants or residents?	OP does not anticipate this text amendment would result in direct displacement of tenants or residents as the majority of the property is currently vacant. There is currently no residential use on this site, and none is proposed.
<b>Indirect Displacement</b>	What examples of indirect displacement might result from the zoning action?	OP does not anticipate significant indirect displacement to occur from this text amendment. The proposed amendment would provide for

Factor	Question	OP Response
		more options to find a tenant for a vacant commercial space.
<b>Housing</b>	Will the action result in changes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Market Rate Housing</li><li>▪ Affordable Housing</li><li>▪ Replacement Housing</li></ul>	The text amendment should not have any impact on housing, although amending the provision but keeping the subject property in the Reed-Cooke area preserves the enhanced affordability requirements should the property be redeveloped.
<b>Physical</b>	Will the action result in changes to the physical environment such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Public Space Improvements</li><li>▪ Infrastructure Improvements</li><li>▪ Arts and Culture</li><li>▪ Environmental Changes</li><li>▪ Streetscape Improvements</li></ul>	The proposed text amendment is focused on the permissible uses of the zone. Physical impacts past what may be required for the next tenant's build out are not anticipated. However, activation of currently vacant space would have a positive impact on the character of the streetscape at this important location.
<b>Access to Opportunity</b>	Is there a change in access to opportunity? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Job Training/Creation</li><li>▪ Healthcare</li><li>▪ Addition of Retail/Access to New Services</li></ul>	Given the limited scope of the amendment, OP does not anticipate the text amendment would have a significant impact on access to jobs, healthcare or retail uses. However, a new tenant for a vacant commercial space would have some direct impact on local employment opportunities.
<b>Community</b>	How did community outreach and engagement inform/change the zoning action? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ (e.g., did the architectural plans change, or were other substantive changes made to the zoning action in response to community input/priorities etc.?)</li></ul>	The Applicant outlines their community outreach and coordination at Exhibit #2D, pgs. 8-10, which includes meeting with ANC 2D.

## C. OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS

### Adam's Morgan Vision Framework

This Petition would be consistent with the goals of the Adams Morgan Vision Framework (2016) as it would allow additional opportunities to reduce its vacancy rate by increasing the number of potential tenants. (Visions Framework pg. 12) The uses proposed should fit into the overall character of the neighborhood relating to the subject property. Therefore, the proposal to expand on the limited new uses permitted is consistent with and aligns with the types of businesses that the Framework imagines in this area.

## D. SUMMARY OF PLANNING CONTEXT ANALYSIS

On balance, the proposed text amendment is not inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan when viewed through a racial equity lens, and it should further some recommendations in the Plan's Elements. It would allow the introduction of the following uses as a matter-of-right at Square 2557,

Lot 800, a property the Plan envisions as part of a main street corridor: Off premise Beer and wine Sales, Restaurant or fast-food establishment, veterinary hospital, or a parcel delivery service. **Therefore, OP recommends that the Zoning Commission approve the text amendment as amended by the applicant post set down.**

*Zoning Map: Reed-Cooke Overlay*

