

At the Planning Board hearing on December 3, 2025, Community Planning and Development Staff recommended that the Board advise City Council to deny the application for Map Amendment 20231-00146, finding that it was not consistent with plan guidance.

However, the Planning Board voted 9 to 0 to recommend that City Council approve the application. Planning Board members cited a range of rationale for this recommendation, including:

- Context-based zone districts are part of the family of choices, and in this case the proposed rezoning still maintains an established single unit detached character while providing for an additional lot on which to construct a similar detached unit, introducing gentle density on the block that is still consistent with the development pattern throughout the neighborhood and on this specific block.
- The setbacks and building form requirements of the proposed zone district preserves the relationship to the public realm that exists in the current district.
- If properties are not permitted to rezone to a designation that aligns with the neighborhood context and permits a slight increase in density (in this case, the potential for a large lot to be split into two and a single unit added), the area will struggle to support Blueprint Denver's Growth Strategy, which calls for this neighborhood to absorb a portion of the city's residential growth. Specifically, the Growth Strategy aims for "all other areas of the city" to collectively accommodate 20% of new households by 2040, particularly in areas near transit and corridors as exists in this case.
- Recommendation L6 of the East Area Plan is focused on housing retention and introduction of missing middle housing but is silent on specific lot size. It also promotes future citywide efforts to address housing. A rezoning is also a future regulatory process.
- It is not entirely clear how the efforts to introduce missing middle housing would be hampered by this proposal as the resulting lot and proposed zone district allow single unit development consistent with the neighborhood and the action is not relevant nor inhibiting the city's future ability to identify missing middle housing options.
- We wouldn't need a rezoning to consolidate lots and build a larger home, and it seems the language we have in our plan and the way our zoning is formulated prevents moving toward smaller lots. In terms of pattern, in some regards, the larger parcels that exist seem to be more out of place than smaller zone lots. There is an argument that allowing smaller zone lots is more consistent with the built environment pattern.
- Some Board members also raised concerns about Blueprint Denver's guidance for applying Residential "Low" to rezonings, which relies on the "established pattern" (an undefined term) of similar lot sizes. In this case there were some that felt there was an "established pattern" of smaller lots or random lot sizes. This approach could be problematic as it may overlook historical patterns that were disregarded in the 2010 citywide rezoning, failing to reflect "authenticity" as called for in Blueprint Denver's Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods vision. Even randomness is a pattern.
- Our planning documents do not clearly define whether terms like "consistency" or "character" apply to building form, building use, or properly acknowledge historical patterns. Further, they do not define "established pattern" as noted above or use of the

term “typical”. In the vision for Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods, Goal 1, Strategy B emphasizes a mix of housing types for a diverse population, followed by Goal 1, Strategy D, which encourages quality infill development consistent with neighborhood form while increasing amenities. Some Planning Board members interpreted “consistency” in this context as relating to form. Here, the form standards for the urban house building form in E-SU-Dx and E-SU-B are identical.

- This Blueprint Denver guidance also notes the role of “significant neighborhood input” which it appears the applicant sought out. The application included a support letter from the RNO with no known opposition.
- While Blueprint Denver supports missing-middle housing through “holistic revisions to the zoning code at a citywide scale,” progress has been limited to citywide ADU goals, without addressing broader missing-middle needs. The Unlocking Housing Choices project is intended to move this forward, but the potential reforms are targeting end of 2026 and 2029. Some Planning Board members expressed concern that waiting for a citywide approach may delay opportunities to increase density, hampering more affordable and equitable housing outcomes in the interim.
- The proposed rezoning serves the public interest as it is specifically proposed by a member of the community who has been thoroughly engaged in the neighborhood planning efforts and has taken the initiative to be part of the hard work of implementation.
- Public interest is a way to think about impact, that has enough discretion, that you can support what makes sense as you do the hard work of mapping a City. The zoning system is made to keep people out and believe that the argument that only citywide approaches are the way to achieve citywide goals feels inconsistent with so much of our plan and policy direction, particularly our focus on involving the community in building solutions during neighborhood planning processes.
- City efforts should be as much a reflection of their best practices and policies as a reflection of the desires of people who live there; that takes evolution of thought beyond what is written in plans that we can’t change as frequently, requiring flexibility in our approach to growing our city. It is also important to remember that plans evolve in response to trends.