



TO: Denver City Council Community Planning and Housing Committee
FROM: Tony Lechuga, Senior City Planner
DATE: March 19, 2026
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application 2025-REZONE-0000033

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends **approval** for Application 2025-REZONE-0000033.

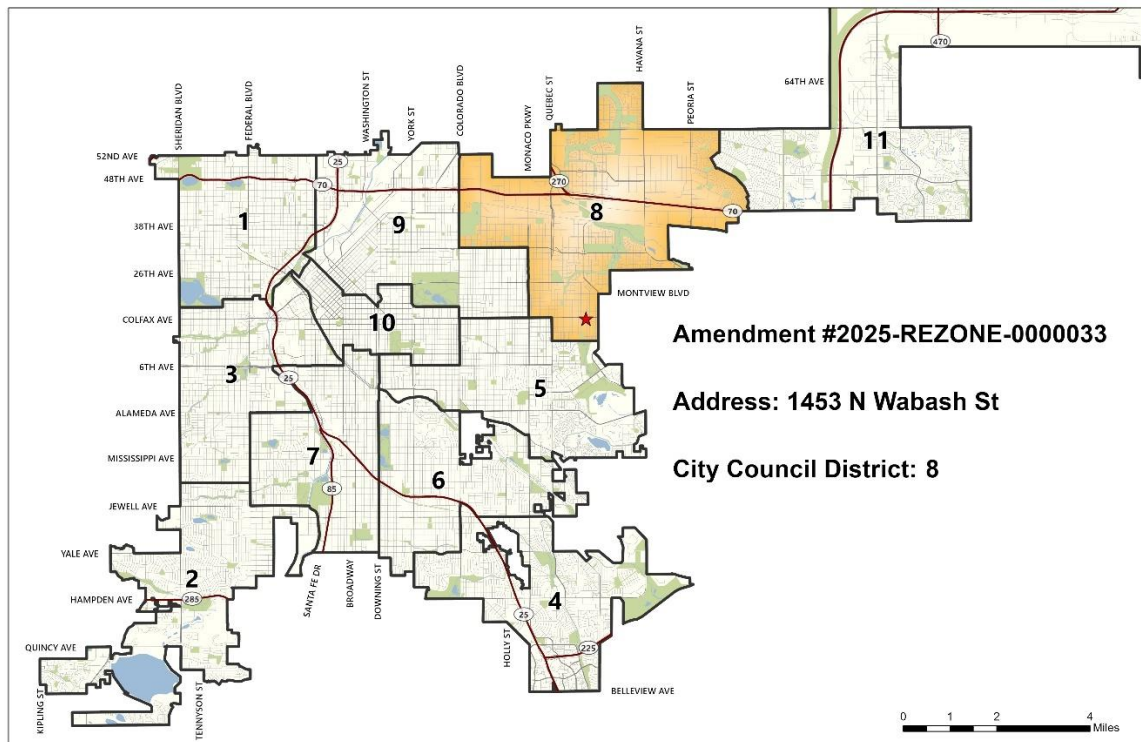
Request for Rezoning

Address: 1453 North Wabash Street
Neighborhood/Council District and CM: East Colfax / Council District 8, Councilmember Lewis
RNOs: East Colfax Neighborhood Association; Opportunity Corridor Coalition of United Residents; Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
Area of Property: ~6,000 square feet or 0.14 acres
Current Zoning: E-TU-B
Proposed Zoning: E-MS-3
Property Owner(s): MPJ Enterprises LLC
Owner Representative: Jeremy Robideau

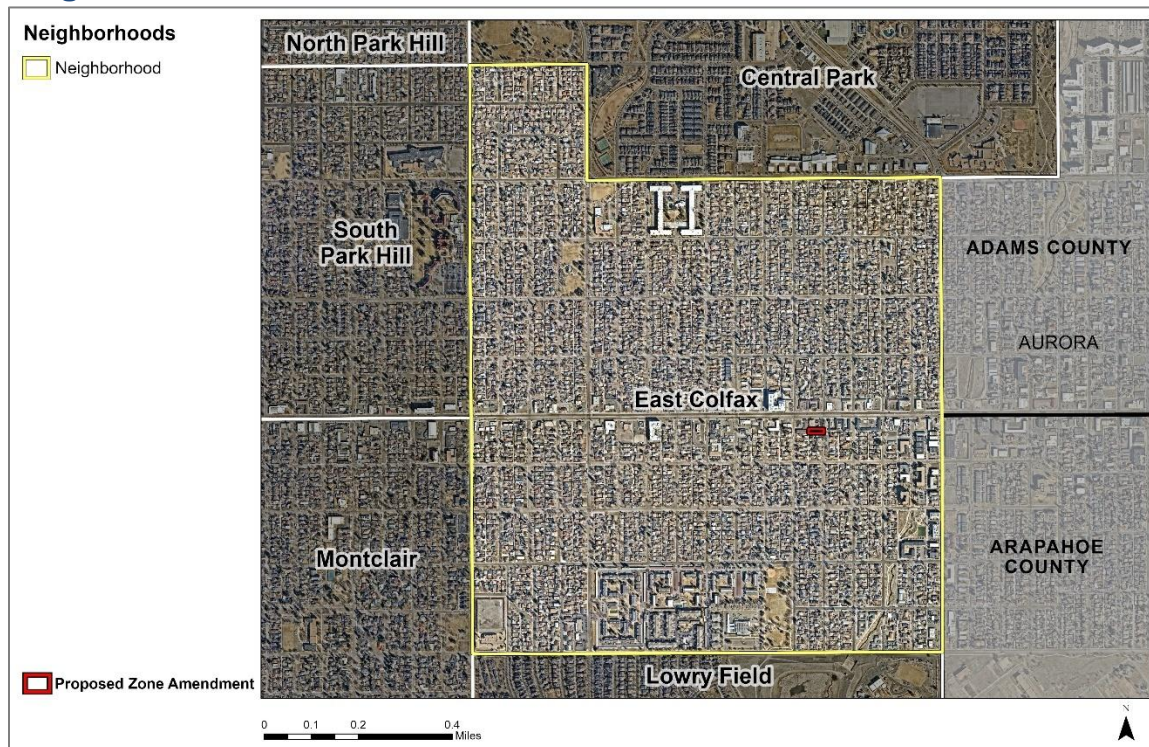
Summary of Rezoning Request

- The property is in the East Colfax neighborhood just south of the intersection of North Wabash Street and East Colfax Avenue.
- The property to be rezoned is part of a larger parcel that has frontage on East Colfax Avenue. The larger property is occupied by an existing auto-body shop. The larger parcel has split zoning, with the existing auto-body shop zoned E-MS-3. The portion of the property to be rezoned currently has E-TU-B zoning.
- The owner would like to create a single unified zone district across the existing parcel. The current E-TU-B zone district doesn't allow for expanded operations of the current business across the entire parcel. The owner would like to be able to utilize the entire parcel for their current business. Notably the E-MS-3 district would be adjacent to an E-TU-B district which is a protected district and would require additional setbacks adjacent to the residential district.
- The proposed E-MS-3 district (Urban Edge-Main Street-3 stories) would allow for a mixture of commercial and residential uses on the property with strong primary setback requirements and protected district standards due to the residential district along the southern boundary. Further details of the requested zone district(s) can be found in the proposed zone district section of the staff report (below) and in Article 4 of the Denver Zoning Code (DZC).

City Location



Neighborhood Location



1. Existing Context

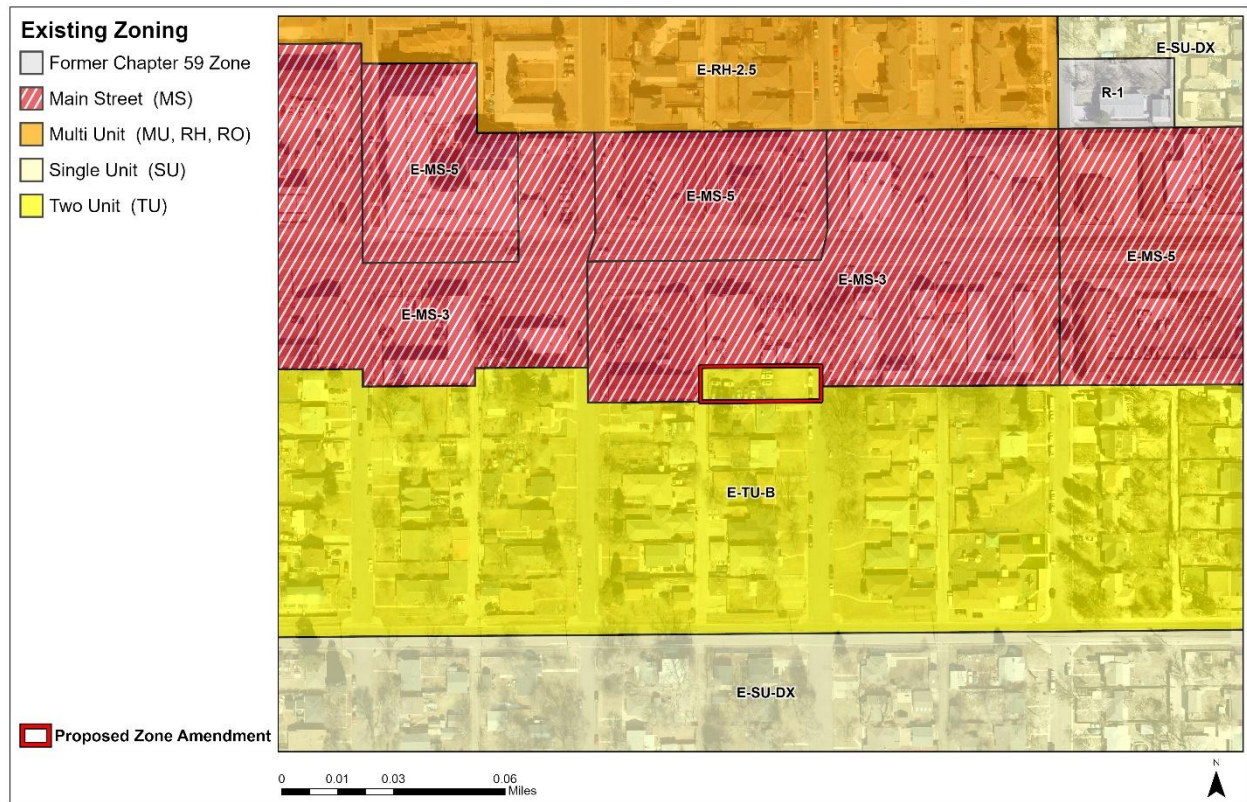


The subject property is located on North Wabash Street just south of Colfax Avenue and is part of a larger parcel that fronts on Colfax Avenue. East Colfax Avenue is characterized by a diversity of commercial and residential properties with deep lot depths, and varying heights. Off East Colfax Avenue the neighborhood is characterized by consistent block and lot sizes and generally single-unit residential properties. The property is four blocks north of Verbena Park, Kelly Open Space and the large open space in Lowry. Within two blocks of the property and along East Colfax Avenue are multiple RTD bus stops for the 15 and 15L which run between Union Station to the west and the City of Aurora to the east.

The following table summarizes the existing context proximate to the subject site:

	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use	Existing Building Form/Scale	Existing Block, Lot, Street Pattern
Site	E-TU-B	Industrial	Generally vacant with a fenced area being used for storage of vehicles	Regular grid of streets and alleys; block sizes and shapes are consistent and rectangular. Vehicle parking is largely to the rear of buildings accessed from alleys, but occasional properties have curb cuts to attached garages from the street.
North	E-MS-3	Industrial	1-story brick auto-body shop set back far from Wabash Street with abundant surface parking	
South	E-TU-B	Single-unit Residential	1-story brick home with an attached garage and vehicle access from Wabash Street	
East	E-MS-3 and E-TU-B	Commercial/Retail and Single-unit Residential	Towards Colfax Avenue – 1-story multi-room motel being converted into apartments Towards the mid-block - 1-story brick home with large setback from Wabash Street and vehicle access from the alley	
West	E-MS-3	Multi-unit Residential	Across the alley, a 2-story brick former motel that has been converted into live/work apartments for artists	

2. Existing Zoning



The current zone district is E-TU-B (Urban Edge – Two Unit – minimum lot size of 4,500 square feet). This is a residential district that allows the Urban House, Duplex, and Tandem House building forms. The only allowed uses are residential uses. The maximum height is generally 30 feet. Because these are typically smaller-than-average lots the setbacks are minimal, but bulk is controlled by bulk planes and maximum lot coverage standards. For additional details of the zone district, see DZC Division 4.2.

3. Existing Land Use Map



4. Existing Building Form and Scale



View of the subject property from North Wabash Street, facing west.



View of the property to the north at the intersection of North Wabash Street and East Colfax Avenue, facing southwest.



View of the properties to the east across North Wabash Street, facing east.



View of the property to the south along North Wabash Street, facing west.



View of the property to the west across the alley and along North Verbena Street, facing east.

Proposed Zoning

The requested E-MS-3 (Urban Edge-Main Street-3 story) zone district allows for the town house, drive thru, and shopfront building forms. The maximum height of the town house building form is 38-feet and uses are limited to residential. The maximum height of the shopfront building form is 45-feet, or 55-feet with affordable housing incentives, and allows for a diversity of residential and commercial uses. Protected District standards would apply to development on this parcel since the property immediately to the south is in a protected district. For additional details of the requested zone district, see DZC Section 4.3.3.

The primary building forms allowed in the existing zone district and the proposed zone district are summarized below.

Design Standards	E-TU-B (Existing)	E-MS-3 (Proposed)
Primary Building Forms Allowed	Urban House, Duplex, Tandem House	Town House, Drive Thru, and Shopfront
Stories/Heights (max)	2.5/30'	Town House – 3/38' Shopfront – 3/45'*
Primary Build-To Percentages (min)	N/A	Town House – 75% Shopfront – 75%
Primary Build-To Ranges	N/A	Town House - 10' to 15' Shopfront – 0'-10'**
Minimum Zone Lot Size/Width	4,500 square feet	N/A
Primary Setbacks (min)	Calculated by reference to adjacent properties	Town Hose – 10' Shopfront – 0'
Building Coverages (max)	45%	N/A

*4 stories or 55' with affordable housing incentives

**Standard varies by use

Summary of City Agency Referral Comments

Assessor: Approved – No Comments

Asset Management: Approved – No Comments

Denver Public Schools: Approved – No Comments

Department of Public Health and Environment: Approved – No Comments

Denver Parks and Recreation: Approved – No Comments

Department of Transportation and Infrastructure: Approved – No Comments

Department of Transportation and Infrastructure – R.O.W.- City Surveyor: Approved – No Comments

Development Services – Project Coordination: Approve Rezoning Only – Will require additional information at Site Plan Development.

- Project Coordination does not take exception with proposed E-MS-3 rezoning. A proposed, new construction development will likely warrant a coordinated Site Development Plan (SDP) review led by Site, Design and Neighborhood Development workgroup. The Applicant Team should recognize that E-MS-3 Building Forms require additional siting and upper story setbacks when a development site is adjacent to a Protected District and additional development processes and/or development standards may be required at the time for initial site plan review. Acceptance of a formal Site Development Plan is generally not permitted ahead of a re-zoning approval but the review process and requirements for this specific Project can be discussed with the Project Champion at the time of Concept Plan submittal review.

Development Services - Fire Protection: Approve – No Comments

Development Services – Transportation: Approved – No Comments

Development Services- Wastewater: Approve Rezoning Only – Will require additional information at Site Plan Development.

There is no objection to the rezone. Upon development applicant will need to obtain a building permit. Independent sanitary service lines may be required, historical drainage paths must be maintained. Approval of this rezone on behalf of Wastewater does not state, or imply, public storm/sanitary infrastructure can, or cannot, support the proposed zoning. Commitment to serve proposed structure will be based on permit issuance.

Public Review Process

	Date
Property legally posted for a period of 15 days within 10 days of the submission of a complete application and CPD informational notice of receipt of the rezoning application to all affected members of City Council, registered neighborhood organizations, property owners, and tenants:	1/5/26
Property legally posted for a period of 15 days and CPD written notice of the Planning Board public hearing sent to all affected members of City Council, registered neighborhood organizations, property owners, and tenants:	2/17/26
Planning Board voted unanimously to recommend approval at a public hearing	3/4/26
CPD written notice of the City Council committee meeting sent to all affected members of City Council and registered neighborhood organizations, at least ten (10) working days before the meeting:	3/10/26
Committee of the City Council:	3/24/26
Property legally posted for a period of 21 days and CPD notice of the City Council public hearing sent to all affected members of City Council and registered neighborhood organizations:	4/13/26 (tentative)
City Council Public Hearing:	5/4/26 (tentative)

- **Public Outreach and Input**

The applicant conducted engagement prior to submitting the application. The engagement is documented as part of the attached application.

- **Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)**

As of the date of this staff report, no comments from RNOs have been received.

- **General Public Comments**

As of the date of this staff report, 2 letters have been received. The letter of support came from The Fax Partnership who own the residential property across Colfax Avenue and noted the consistency with commercial context and support for local businesses. The letter of opposition came from a nearby neighbor who noted concerns about the smell of paint from the shop and their disapproval for expanding the business.

Criteria for Review / Staff Evaluation

The criteria for review of this rezoning application are found in DZC, Section 12.4.10.7, as follows:

DZC Section 12.4.10.7

1. Consistency with Adopted Plans
2. Public Interest
1. Consistency with Neighborhood Context Description, Zone District Purpose and Intent Statements

1. Consistency with Adopted Plans

The following adopted plans apply to this property:

- *Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040* (2019)
- *Blueprint Denver* (2019)
- *East Area Plan* (2020)

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040

The proposed rezoning is consistent with many of the adopted *Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040* strategies, which are organized by vision element.

The proposed rezoning would allow for additional small-scale commercial or housing options near transit within an established neighborhood, consistent with the following strategies in the Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods vision element:

- Goal 1, Strategy B – Ensure neighborhoods offer a mix of housing types and services for a diverse population (p. 34).
- Goal 1, Strategy D – Encourage quality infill development that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhood and offers opportunities for increase amenities (p. 34).
- Goal 4, Strategy A – Grow and support neighborhood-serving businesses (p. 35).

The proposed map amendment would allow for compatible infill development in an established neighborhood and near transit, consistent with the following strategies from the Environmentally Resilient vision element:

- Environmentally Resilient Goal 8, Strategy A - Promote infill development where infrastructure and services are already in place (p.54).
- Environmentally Resilient Goal 8, Strategy C – Focus growth by transit stations and along high- and medium-capacity transit corridors (p. 54).

Blueprint Denver

Blueprint Denver was adopted in 2019 as a supplement to *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and establishes an integrated framework for the city's land use and transportation decisions. *Blueprint Denver* identifies the subject property as part of a Community Corridor place within the Urban Edge Neighborhood Context and provides guidance from the future growth strategy for the city.

Blueprint Denver Future Neighborhood Context



In *Blueprint Denver*, future neighborhood contexts are used to help understand differences in things like land use and built form and mobility options at a higher scale, between neighborhoods. The subject property is shown on the context map as Urban Edge neighborhood context. The neighborhood context map and description help guide appropriate zone districts (p. 66). The Urban Edge neighborhood context is described as, “predominantly residential”, “single- and two-unit residential with some small-scale multi-unit residential”, and “commercial and mixed-use development...along the main corridors” (p. 205). The proposed E-MS-3 zone district is part of the Urban Edge context and “applies primarily to local or collector street corridors, or may be embedded within a commercial shopping center or mixed-use area” (DZC 4.2.6.2.C). Since the proposed districts creates a unified zone district across the parcel which allows a mix of uses and allowable building forms that exist along the Colfax Avenue mixed-use corridor where there are established commercial properties, the proposed rezoning to an Urban Edge context is appropriate and consistent with the plan.

Blueprint Denver Future Places



The neighborhood context of Urban Edge provides nuance to the aspirations of the individual places shown on the map. The Future Places Map shows the subject property as part of a Community Corridor. *Blueprint Denver* describes the aspirational characteristics of Community Corridor in the Urban Edge context as providing, “some mix of office, commercial, and residential” with “a wide customer draw both of local residents from surrounding neighborhoods and from other parts of the city” (p. 212). Additionally, Community Corridors have “a mix of larger and smaller scale buildings” and “heights are generally up to 5 stories” (p. 212). While North Wabash is a Local Street, the parcel is located along East Colfax Avenue which is a Main-Street Arterial which anticipates a “varied mix of uses including retail, office, residential, and restaurants” (p. 159). The proposed district of E-MS-3 provides a wide range and mix of uses consistent with the future place designation and street type. The future proposed height of up to 3 stories is appropriate for a Community Corridor in this location.

Blueprint Denver Growth Strategy



Blueprint Denver's growth strategy map is a version of the future places map, showing the aspiration for distributing future growth in Denver (p. 51). The subject property is part of Community Centers and Corridors. This growth area is anticipated to see around 25% of new housing growth and 20% of new employment growth by 2040 (p. 51). Focusing growth in centers and corridors helps to provide a variety of housing, jobs and entertainment options within a comfortable distance to all Denverites and is a key element of building complete neighborhoods throughout Denver" (p. 49). The proposed map amendment to E-MS-3 will focus mixed-use growth to a Community Centers and Corridors where it has been determined to be most appropriate. Access to jobs, housing, and services can improve in the mixed-use zone districts, and this site has access to multiple bus transit lines.

Blueprint Denver Strategies

The proposed rezoning would also align with the following *Blueprint Denver* policies and strategies:

- Policy 1, Strategy A – Use zoning and land use regulations to encourage higher-density, mixed-use development in transit-rich areas including community corridors where transit priority streets are planned (p. 72).

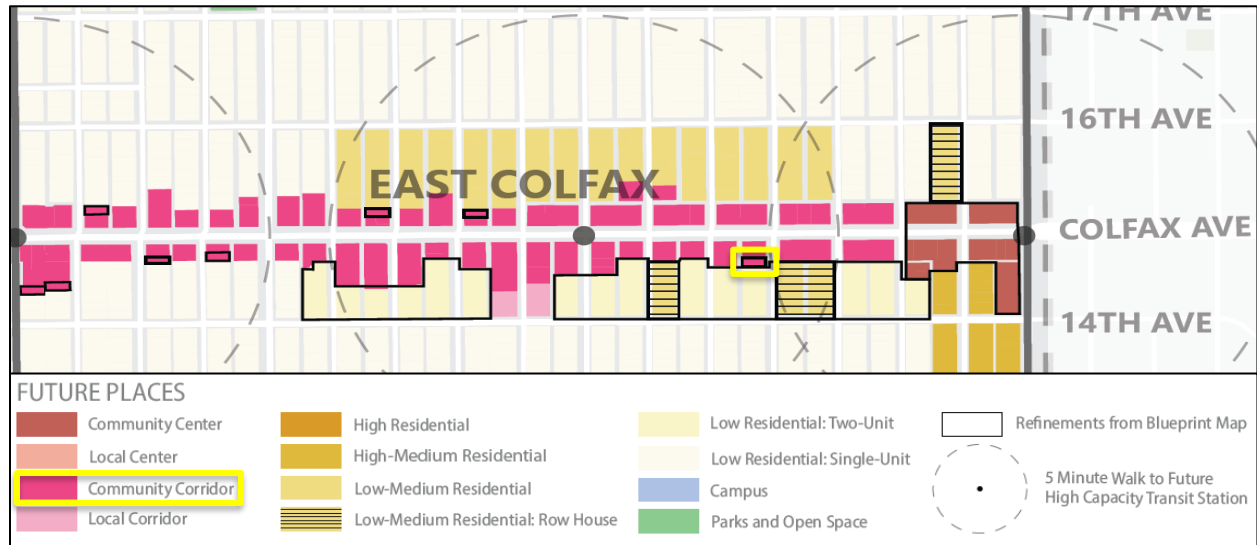
Equity

Because the data available to measure the equity concepts is not available at the parcel-level scale, and they are intended to show patterns across large areas, they cannot be effectively applied to small-scale rezonings (p. 67). However, smaller rezonings can still implement policies and strategies related to equity. For example, the applicants stated intention for the rezoning is to allow for the small-scale expansion of their business. Continued support for local businesses in transit-rich areas can improve access to jobs and amenities that improve equitable outcomes for Denverites.

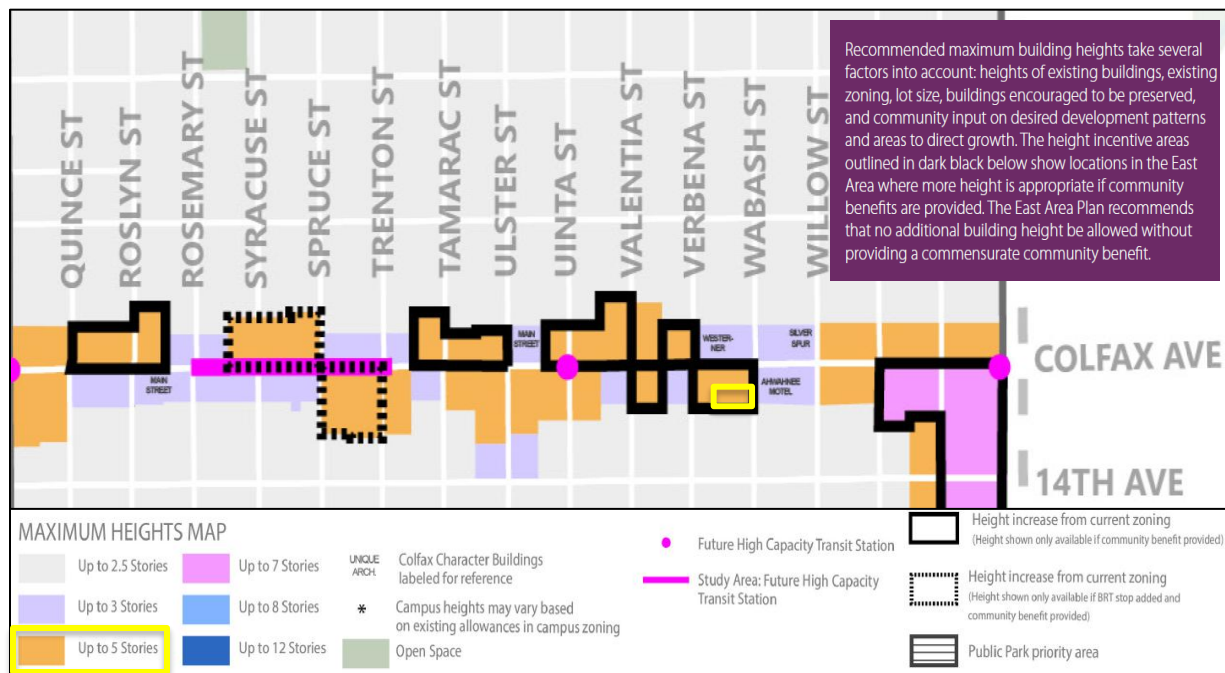
Climate

This rezoning supports the city's goals to reduce climate impacts by enabling potential future development of housing or mixed-use near the city's first bus rapid transit line. Because many transportation options are available, these areas are less auto dependent, which can reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. The proposed zoning is consistent with the city plans which call for greater allowance of density on this site which is associated with better energy efficiency.

East Area Plan



The *East Area Plan* identifies the property as part of the Community Corridor future place. These are described as areas that “typically provides some mix of office, commercial, and residential uses. Accessible to surrounding neighborhoods by a variety of transportation options. Buildings have a distinctly linear orientation along the street” (p. 28). Following the guidance of *Blueprint Denver*, the growth strategy is Community Centers and Corridors and Colfax Avenue is identified as a Main Street Arterial. The map below shows the recommended maximum height as 5 stories. As with the *Blueprint Denver* guidance, the E-MS-3 zone district is appropriate for a Community Corridor along a Main Street Arterial as it would provide a mix of residential and commercial options



2. Public Interest

The proposed official map amendment furthers the Public Interest through implementation of the city's adopted land use plan by fostering the creation of a neighborhood-scale, walkable, mixed-use area, and allowing the small-scale expansion of an existing business along an established mixed-use corridor near transit and the city's first bus rapid transit line.

3. Consistency with Neighborhood Context Description, Zone District Purpose and Intent Statements

The requested E-MS-3 zone district is within the Urban Edge neighborhood context. The neighborhood context is characterized by primarily single- and two-unit residential uses with small-scale multi-unit residential uses and commercial areas embedded in residential areas (DZC Section 4.11). The proposed E-MS-3 zone district is consistent with the neighborhood context description.

According to the Main Street district purpose statement in the Denver Zoning Code, the Main Street zone district is intended to "promote safe, active, and pedestrian scaled commercial streets" that "enhance the convenience, ease, and enjoyment of transit, walking, shopping, and public gathering" but also "contribute positively to established residential neighborhoods" (DZC Section 4.2.6). The proposed E-MS-3 zone district is consistent with these descriptions.

According to the zone district intent stated in the Denver Zoning Code, the E-MS-3 district "applies primarily to local or collector street corridors, or may be embedded within a commercial shopping center or mixed-use area, where a building scale of 1 to 3 stories is desired" (DZC Section 4.2.6.2.C). The rezoning boundary is part of a larger parcel with split zoning that fronts on Colfax Avenue, a Main-Street Arterial where mixed-use density is anticipated. The street classifications and desired building heights in this area are consistent with the zone district purpose and intent statements.

Attachments

1. Application
2. Public Comments
3. Community Engagement