



TO: Denver City Council
FROM: Joe Green, Associate City Planner
DATE: May 14, 2026
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application #2026-REZONE-0000007

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends **approval** for Application #2026-REZONE-0000007.

Request for Rezoning

Multiple Addresses: *44th & Pearl Unnamed Park:* Approximately, 4458 N Pearl St, 4441 N Washington St, 4431 N Washington St, and 4440 N Pearl St
Far Ne Facility: 4621 N Telluride St
Heron Pond: part of 5275 N Franklin St, part of 955 E 51st, and part of E 53rd Ave ROW

Neighborhood/Council District: Globeville / Council District 9
Green Valley Ranch / Council District 11

RNOs: Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC), Denver North Business Association, Globeville Civic Partners, United Community Action Network LLC, RiNo Art District, Montbello 2020, Opportunity Corridor Coalition of United Residents, District 11 Community Development Association

Area of Property: *44th & Pearl Unnamed Park:* 0.6 Acres
Far Ne Facility: 3.1 Acres.
Heron Pond: 21 Acres

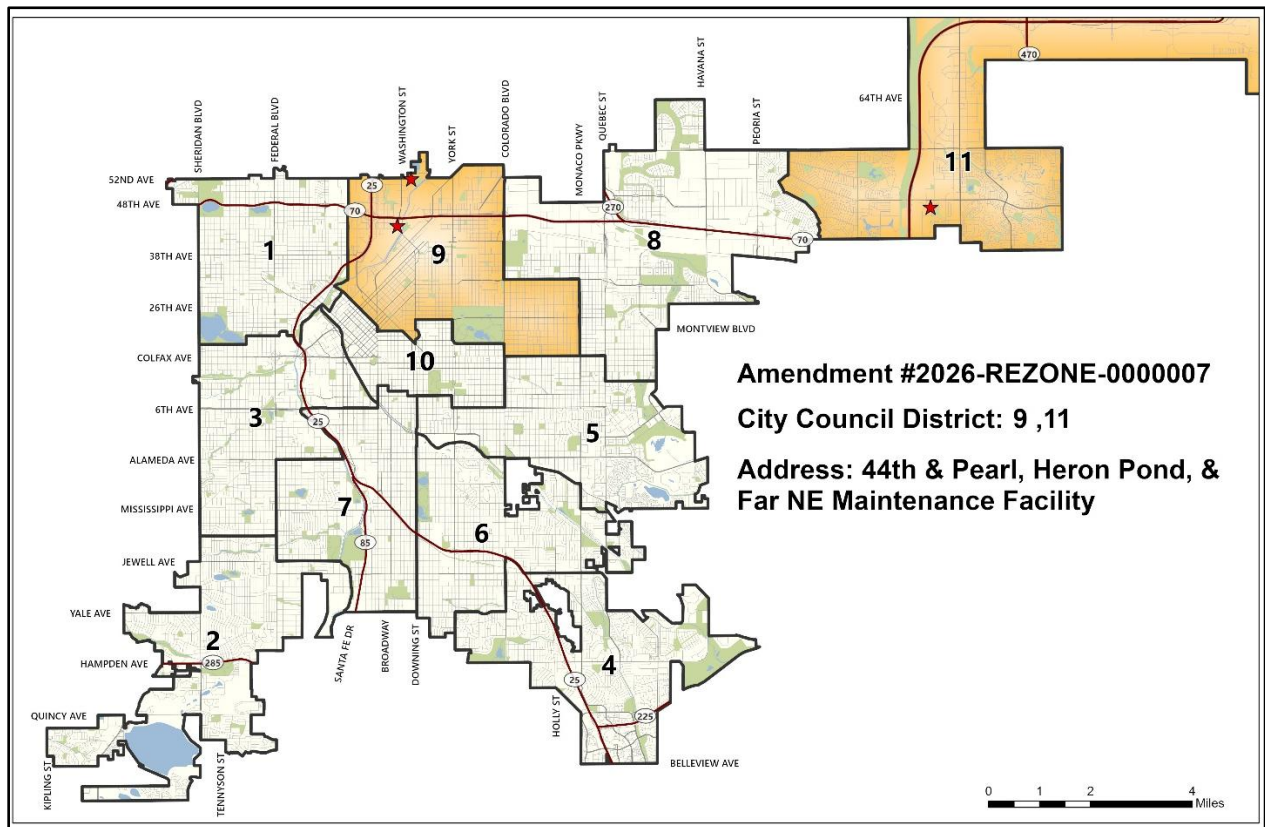
Current Zoning: *44th & Pearl Unnamed Park:* U-MX-3
Far Ne Facility: PUD 319
Heron Pond: I-B

Proposed Zoning: OS-A
Property Owner(s): City and County of Denver
Owner Representative: Scott Wisniewski, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

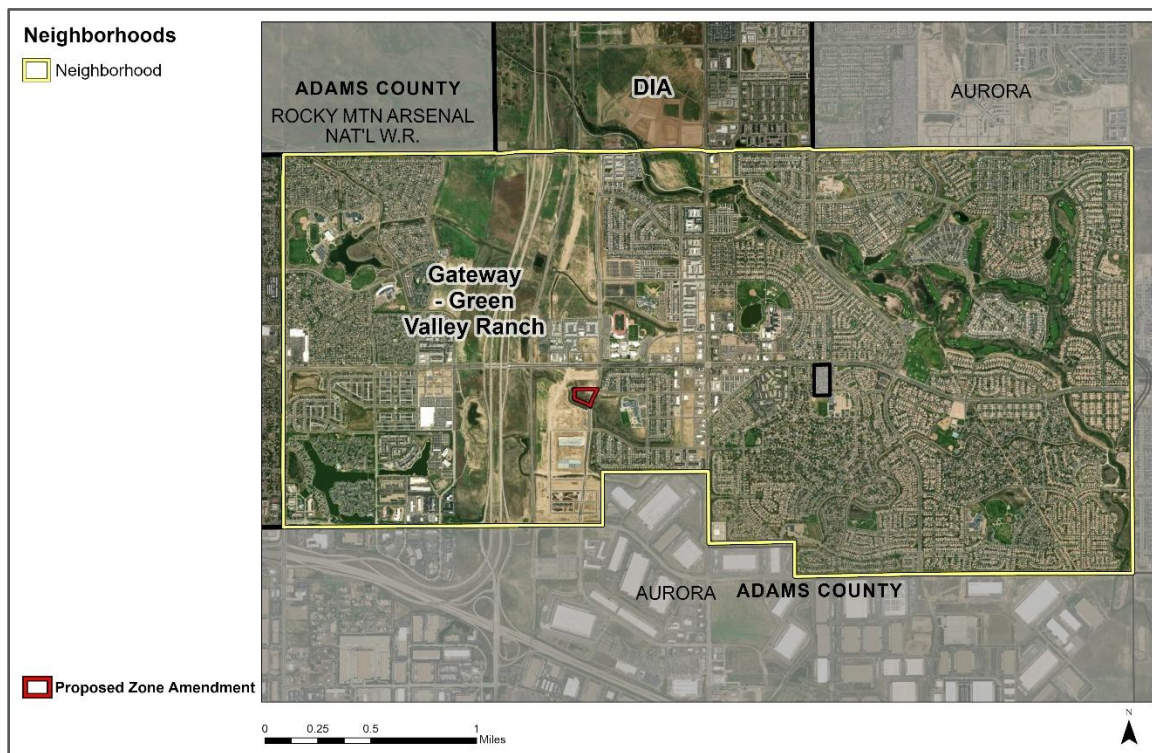
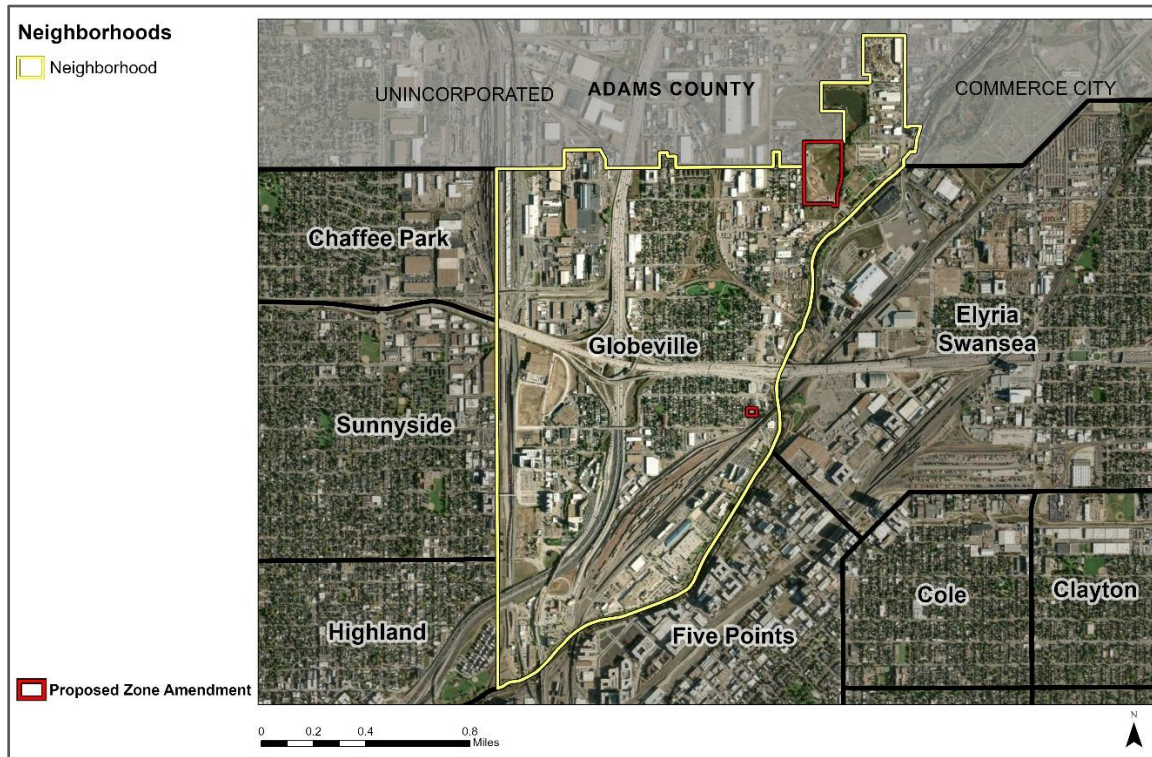
Summary of Rezoning Request

- The proposed rezoning includes two properties in Globeville and one property in Green Valley Ranch. These parcels have been acquired by the City over time for park construction and expansion. The Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) is proposing to rezone these properties into the OS-A zone district to facilitate their current or intended future use as parks.
- The current zoning on the three sites included in this rezoning are U-MX-3, PUD-19, and I-B (see Existing Zoning, below).
- The proposed Open Space Public Parks District (OS-A) is intended to protect and preserve public parks owned, operated, or leased by the City and managed by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) for park purposes. Further details of the requested zone district can be found in the proposed zone district section of the staff report (below) and in Article 9 of the Denver Zoning Code (DZC).

City Location



Neighborhoods Location – Globeville and Green Valley Ranch

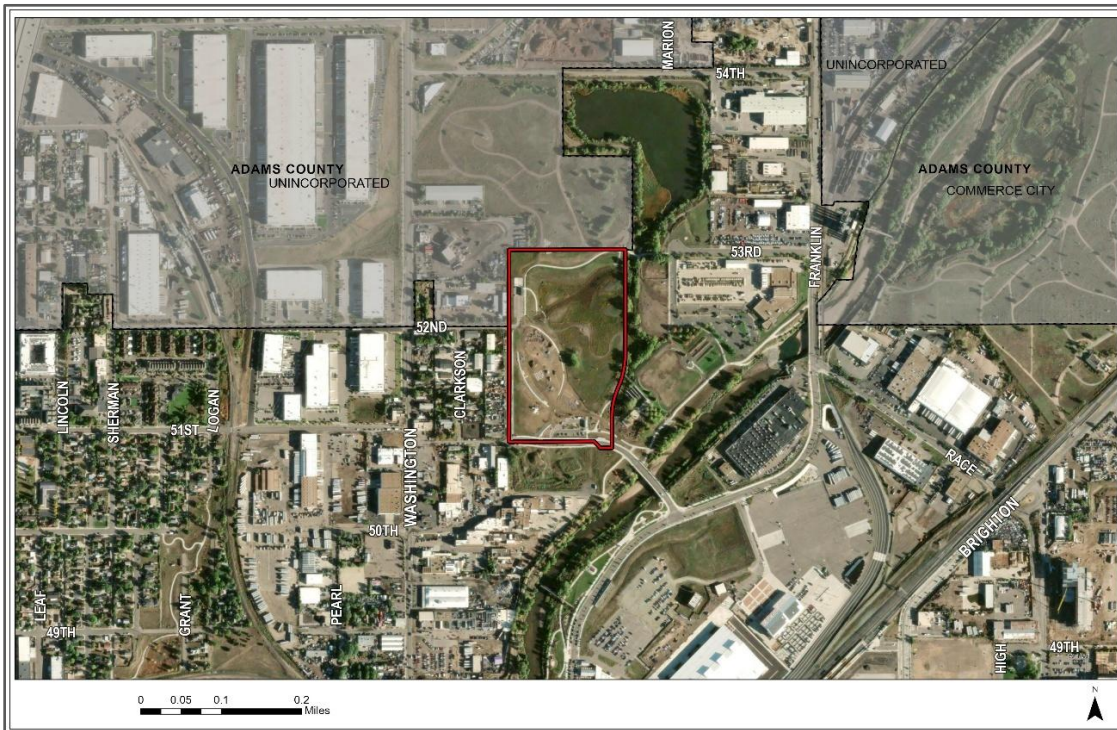


Existing Context

44th and Pearl Unnamed Park



Heron Pond



44th and Pearl Unnamed Park and Heron Pond

Two of the subject properties are in the Globeville neighborhood. The central core of the neighborhood is largely single-unit residential along with some pockets of mixed-use areas along 45th Avenue and North Washington Street. Surrounding this residential core is largely industrial uses. The neighborhood is bisected by both Interstate 25 and Interstate 70, along with major rail lines in the south. The property at 44th and Pearl is currently adjacent to OS-A and mixed-use zoning but is just blocks away from a residential neighborhood. This property is also less than a quarter of a mile away from bus stops serving the 7 and 8 RTD bus routes. The Heron Pond open space is just across the South Platte River from the National Western Complex.

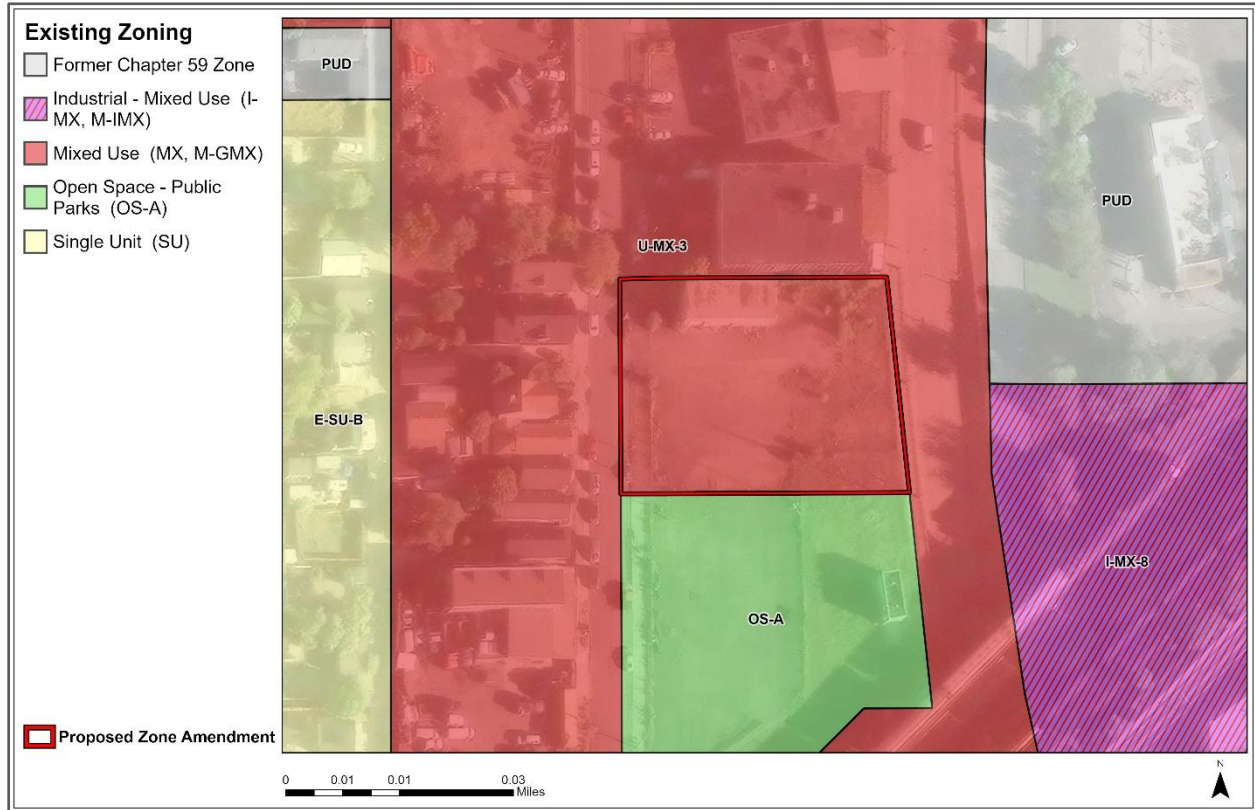
Far Northeast Maintenance Center



The Far Northeast Maintenance Center is located in the Green Valley Ranch neighborhood. The eastern part of the neighborhood is largely suburban single-unit residential with a large pocket of mixed-use at North Tower Rd and Green Valley Ranch Rd. The western edge of the neighborhood contains a large amount of multi-unit and commercial uses.

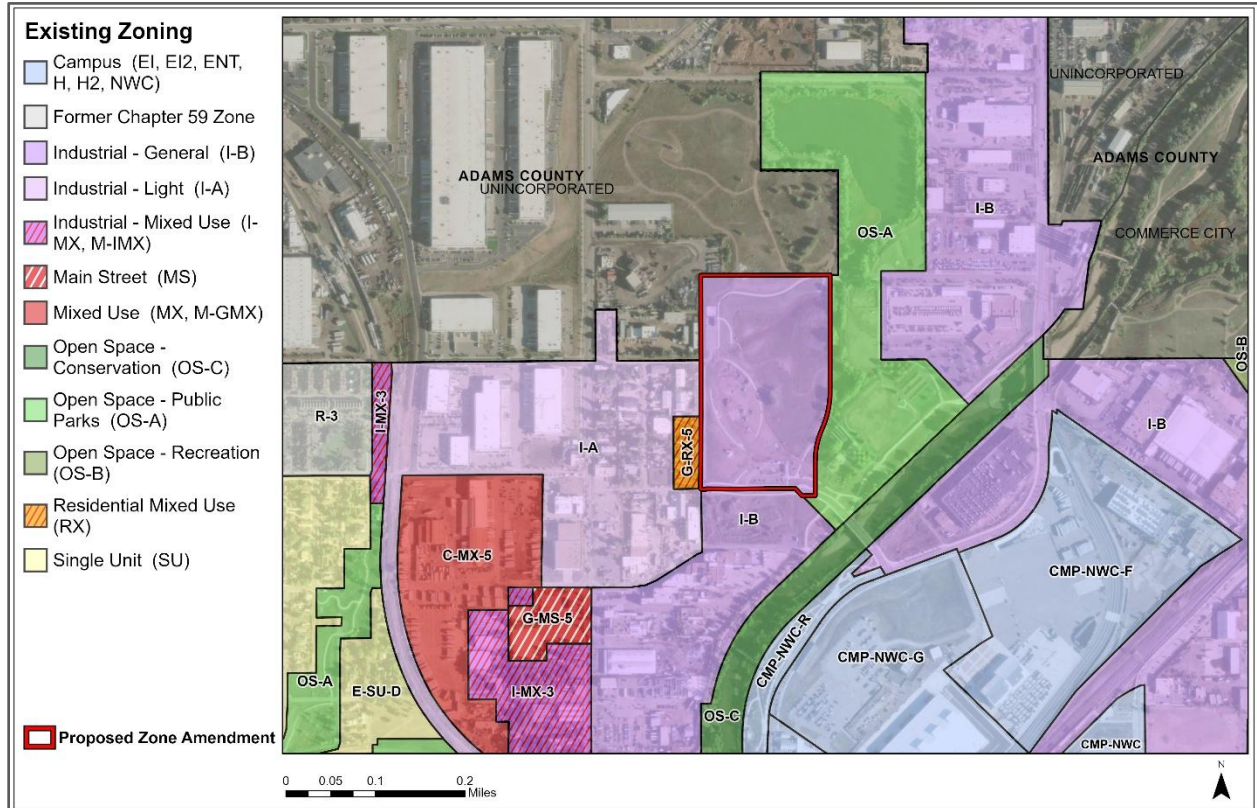
Existing Zoning

44th and Pearl Unnamed Park – U-MX-3



The U-MX-3 district is a mixed-use zone district in the urban context. U-MX-3 applies to areas or intersections served primarily by local or collector streets where a building scale of 1 to 3 stories is desired. The Mixed-Use zone districts in the Urban Neighborhood Context are intended to promote safe, active, and pedestrian-scaled, diverse areas that enhance the convenience, ease and enjoyment of transit, walking, shopping and public gathering within and around the city's neighborhoods. In the U-MX-3 zone district the Town House, General and Shopfront building forms are allowed primary building forms. Maximum height allowed is 3 stories or 45 feet with additional limitations when adjacent to protected districts. Further details of the zone district can be found in Article 5 of the Denver Zoning Code.

Heron Pond – I-B



The I-B district is intended to be an employment area containing industrial uses that are generally more intensive than uses permitted in the I-A zone district. The overall purpose of the district is to promote industrial development and economic activity. No new residential uses may be established in the I-B zone district in order to promote and continue a stable employment base for the city. The district allows the General and Industrial building forms, with no height limits unless adjacent to protected districts.

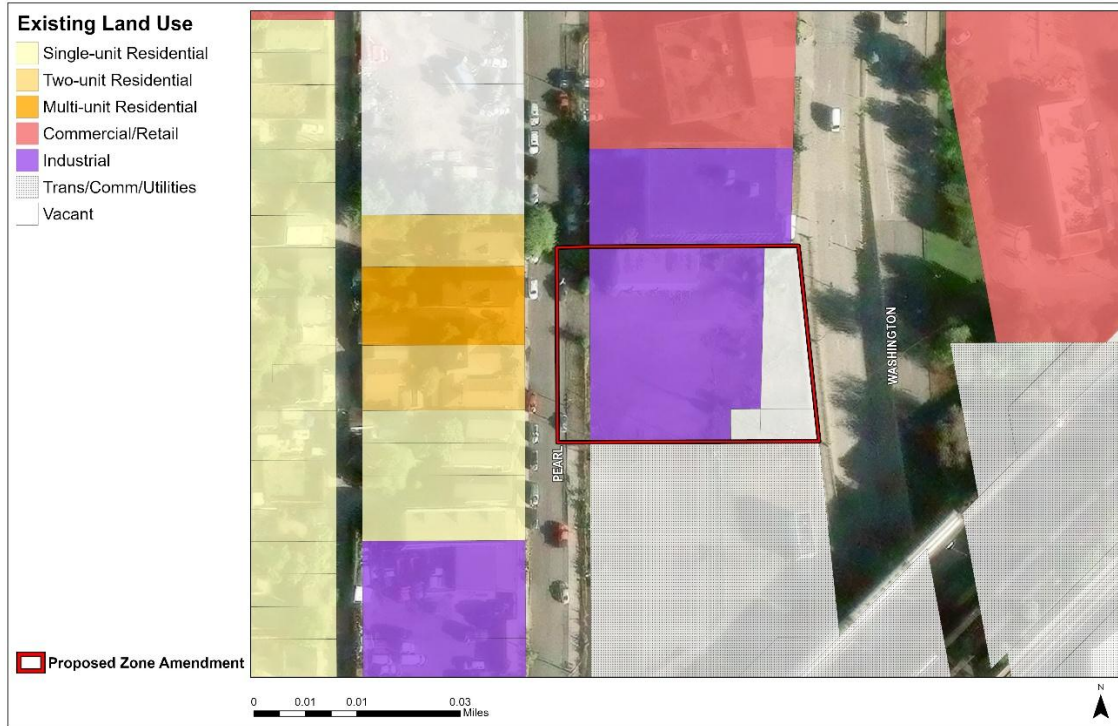
Far Northeast Maintenance Facility



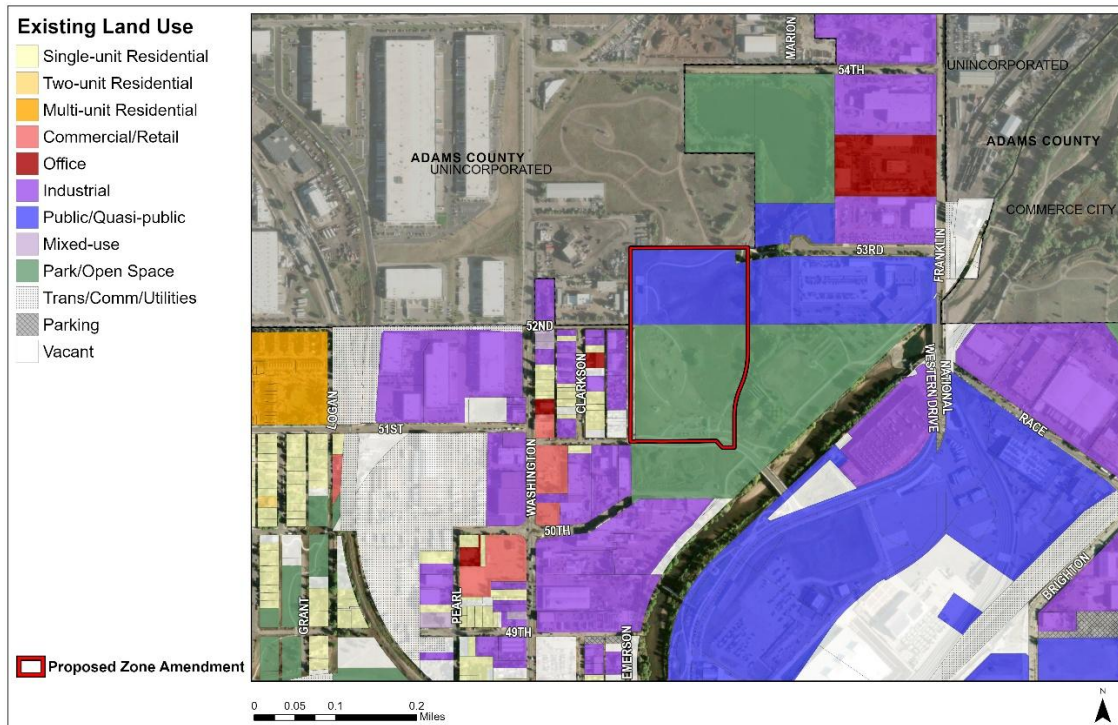
This property is in “superblock H” of PUD 319, which is a planned unit development from the Chapter 59 zoning code that allows a variety of commercial and residential uses.

Existing Land Use Map

44th and Pearl Unnamed Park



Heron Pond



Far Northeast Maintenance Center



Proposed Zoning

The requested Open Space Public Parks District (OS-A) zone district is intended to protect and preserve public parks owned, operated, or leased by the City and managed by the City's Department of Parks and Recreation for park purposes. Building form standards, design, and development standards in the OS-A zone district are determined by either the City Council or by the Manager of Parks and Recreation. Permitted uses, number of uses, and applicable use limitations are determined by the Manager of Parks and Recreation. For additional details of the zone district, see DZC Section 9.3.3.1.

Summary of City Agency Referral Comments

As part of the DZC review process, the rezoning application is referred to potentially affected city agencies and departments for comment. A summary of agency referral responses follows:

Assessor: Approved - No Response

Asset Management: Approved - No Response

Denver Public Schools: Approved – No Response.

Development Services - Fire: Approved – No Response.

Development Services – Project Coordination: Approved – No Response.

Development Services - Transportation: Approved – No Response.

Development Services – Wastewater: Approved – No Response.

Parks and Recreation: Approved – No Response.

Public Health and Environment: Approved – No Response.

Department of Transportation & Infrastructure – City Surveyor: Comments

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:	01/22/2026
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:	03/03/2026
Planning Board Public Hearing:	03/18/2026
CPD written notice of the South Platte River Committee meeting sent to all affected members of City Council and registered neighborhood organizations, at least ten (10) working days before the meeting:	03/25/2026
South Platte River Committee of the City Council moved the bill forward:	04/08/2026
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:	04/27/2026
City Council Public Hearing:	05/18/2026

Planning Board

Planning Board voted 8-0, unanimously recommending approval.

Public Outreach and Input

Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNO)

As of the date of this staff report, Staff has not received any letters of support or opposition from RNOs.

General Public Comments

As of the date of this staff report, no public comments have been received by staff.

Criteria for Review / Staff Evaluation

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

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

Consistency with Adopted Plans

The following adopted plans apply to this property:

- *Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040 (2019)*
- *Blueprint Denver (2019)*
- *Game Plan for a Healthy City (2019)*
- *Far Northeast Area Plan (2019)*
- *Globeville Neighborhood Plan (2015)*

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040 (2019)

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

The proposed map amendment would reinforce current park uses by aligning their zoning with their current use, and it would also facilitate the development of new parks by implementing the appropriate zoning for these uses. This is consistent with the following strategy from the Environmentally Resilient vision element:

- Environmentally Resilient Goal 1, Strategy D – Improve equitable access to resources that improve quality of life, including cultural and natural amenities, health care, education, parks, recreation, nutritious foods and the arts (p.28).

The preservation of existing parks and facilitation of new parks is also consistent with the following goal in the Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods vision element:

- Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods Goal 5– Create and preserve parks and public spaces that reflect the identity of Denver’s neighborhoods (p. 35).

Finally, the preservation of existing parks and facilitation of new parks will help provide critical outdoor resources to more Denverites, which is also consistent with the following goals and strategies in the Healthy and Active vision element:

- Healthy and Active Goal 1— Create and enhance environments that support physical activity and healthy living (p. 58).
- Healthy and Active Goal 1, Strategy A—Recognize parks, recreation and the urban forests as vital components of a complete community (p. 58).
- Healthy and Active Goal 2—Provide high-quality parks, recreation facilities and programs that serve all Denver residents (p. 58).
- Healthy and Active Goal 2, Strategy A—Ensure equitable access to parks and recreation amenities for all residents (p. 58).
- Healthy and Active Goal 2, Strategy B—Make Denver’s healthy outdoor lifestyle accessible to residents of all ages and backgrounds (p. 58).

Blueprint Denver (2019)

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. As stated in the plan, “Blueprint Denver’s vision and goals are realized through the planning and implementation of complete neighborhoods connected by a complete multimodal transportation network” (p. 128). One of the three elements of a complete neighborhood is Quality of Life Infrastructure, which is defined as “parks, trees, natural features, recreation opportunities and civic and social spaces” (p. 129).

Blueprint Denver also specifies that “building a more complete network of trees, parks and other green infrastructure will enhance quality-of-life for all neighborhoods. This is essential to improving health inequities between neighborhoods and advancing environmental justice” (p. 68). Considering the future growth and evolution of the city, the plan states that “as the population increases, so does the need for parks, open space and other quality-of-life amenities” (p. 68). Therefore, parks uses and the OS-A district are appropriate for all contexts and place types in Denver.

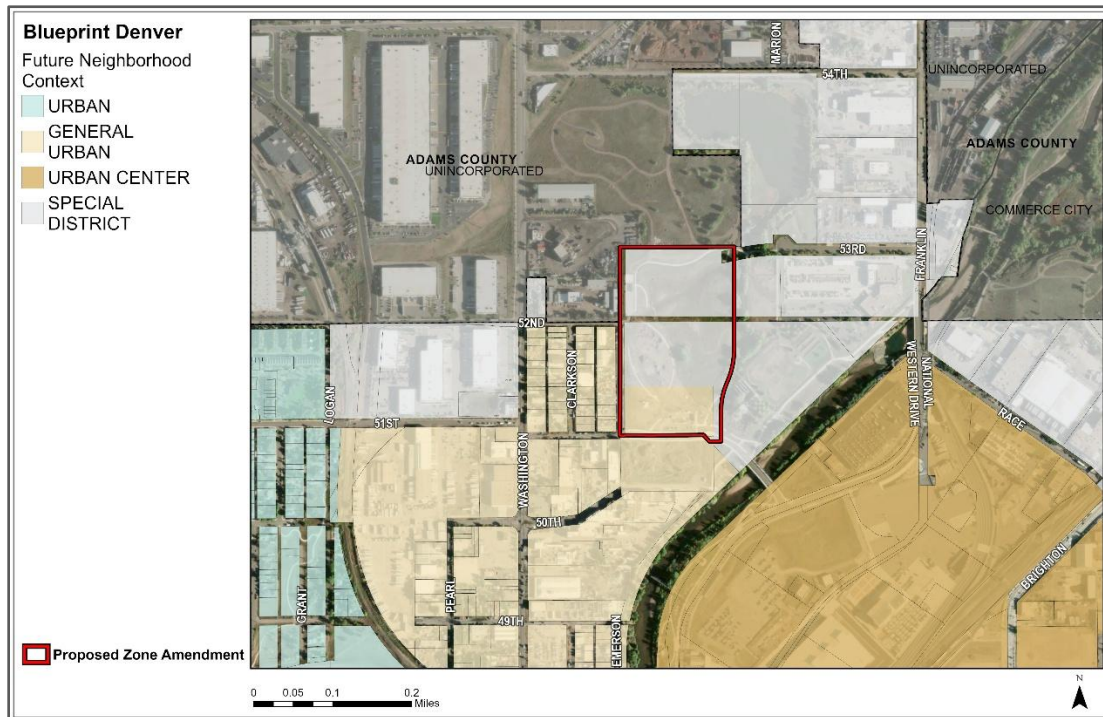
Blueprint Denver Future Neighborhood Context

As described in *Blueprint Denver*, “Neighborhood contexts help us understand the differences in the built environment between our neighborhoods. Many features —including the mix of uses, density, lot sizes, block pattern, street design, parking and the type of recreational opportunities—vary by neighborhood” (p. 185). The proposed rezoning includes properties that are within the Suburban, General Urban, and Special Districts Neighborhood Contexts. From the least dense Suburban Neighborhood Context, which should have “Parks of various sizes” (p. 191) to the most intense Special District, which could provide “large scale public open space and community gathering areas (p. 280)”, parks are not only appropriate but also aspirational in all neighborhood contexts. Therefore, the proposed rezoning is consistent with all neighborhood context designations.

44th and Pearl Unnamed Park



Heron Pond



Far Northeast Maintenance Facility



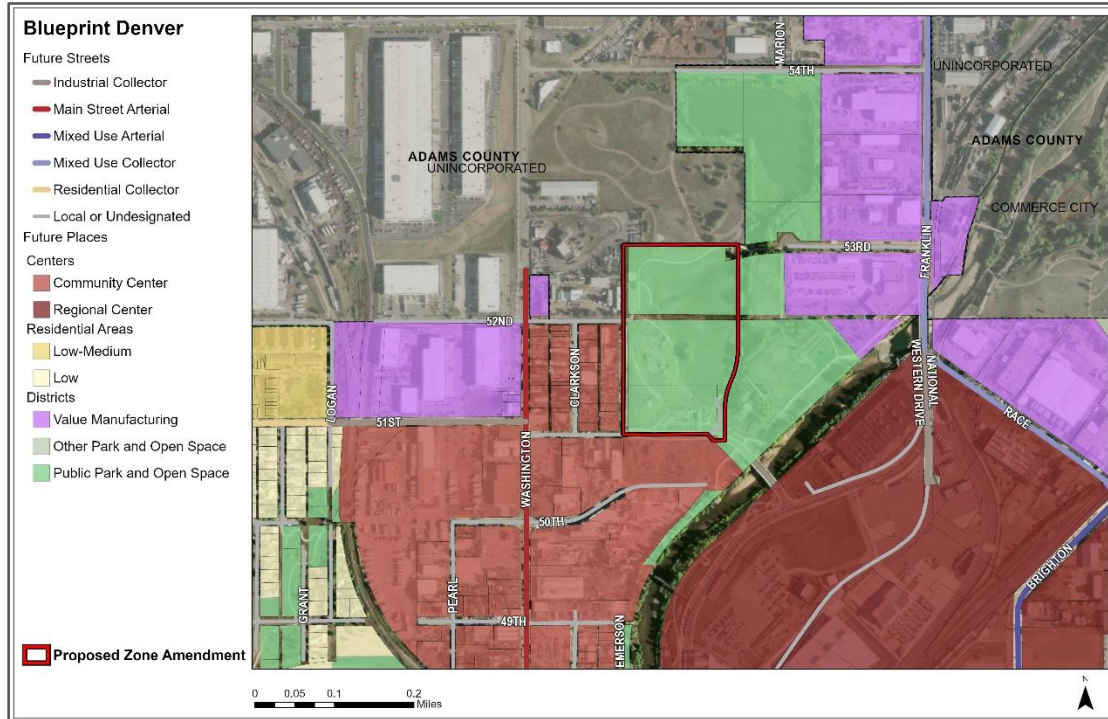
Blueprint Denver Future Places

Blueprint Denver defines the sites within the proposed rezoning as Community Center and Public Parks and Open Space. While park uses, and therefore the OS-A zone district, are appropriate in all Future Places, the following sections describe how parks are intended to fit into specific Future Place designations.

Heron Pond - Parks and Open Space

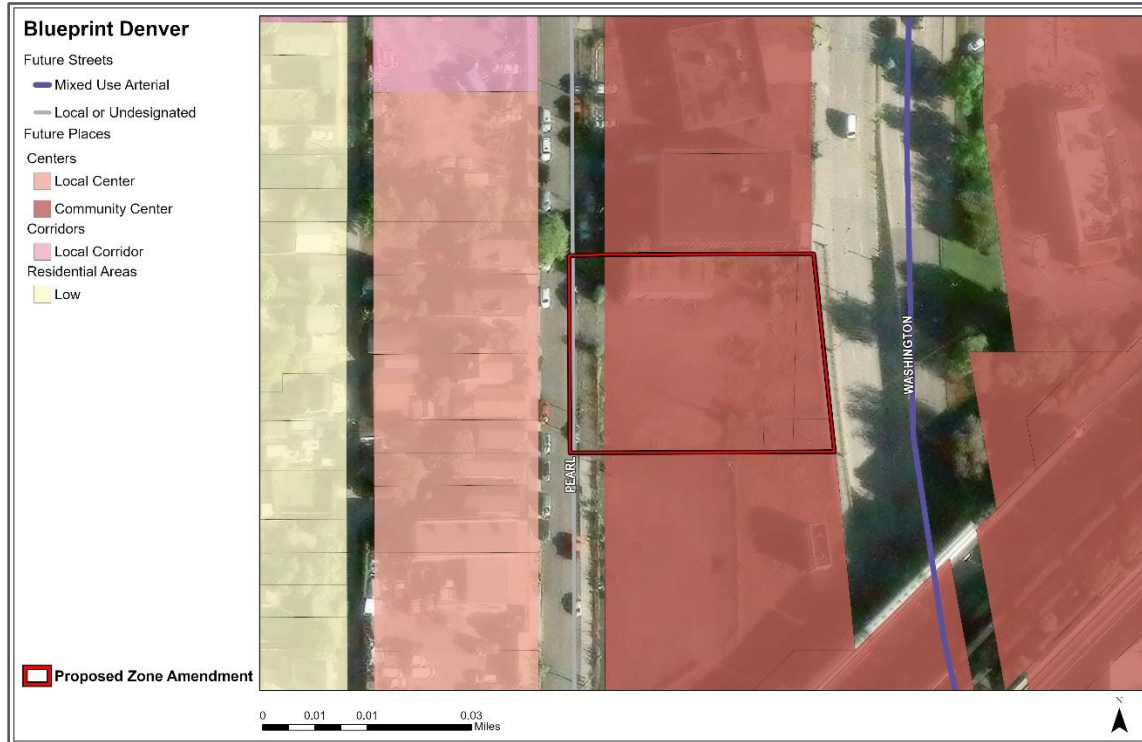
The future places map includes “public parks and open space,” which *Blueprint* defines as “city owned parks and open spaces that are planned to become or remain a park and/or open space in the future (p. 152).” Unlike regional parks, these areas are not large or distinct enough to be their own place type. Instead, they represent vital quality-of-life infrastructure that is part of a place. There are many different examples, including parks and golf courses in residential areas, or a plazas/parks in centers and corridors (p. 152).”

Heron Ponds

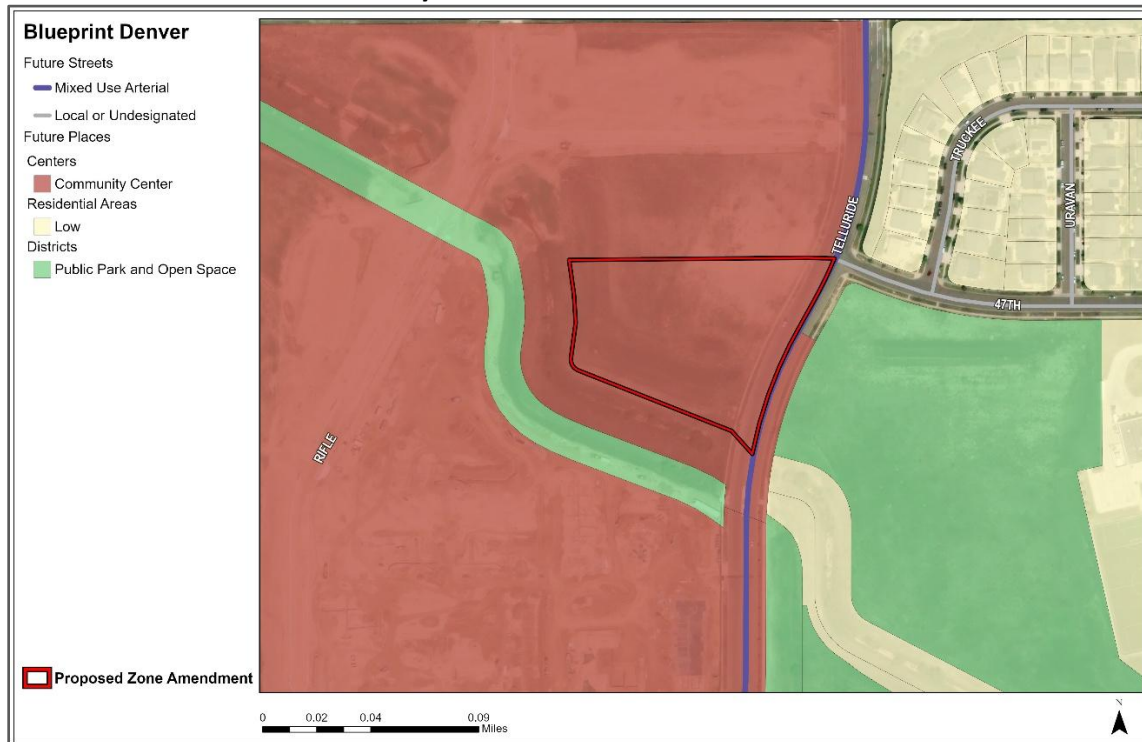


Far Northeast Maintenance Facility and 44th and Pearl Unnamed Park – Community Center
Centers are defined as “mixed-use places of varying scales. They are typically oriented around a shared space or set of spaces (p. 145).” Blueprint Denver sets expectations for parks and open spaces in areas designated as community centers, saying that “open spaces promote social interaction and respond to the distinct uses within the center. Green infrastructure serves the needs of a site or the surrounding area. Regularly spaced street trees and planters. Spaces are flexible to benefit different types of users and daily activities throughout the year (p. 194).”

44th and Pearl Unnamed Park



Far Northeast Maintenance Facility



Blueprint Denver Growth Strategy

As described in *Blueprint Denver*, the growth strategy is intended to “strengthen our existing neighborhoods through carefully planned infill development” (p. 50). As the city experiences increase in population, it will also see an increase in the need for parks and open spaces. Preserving existing parks and facilitating the development of new parks is critical to supporting Denver’s growth strategy.

Blueprint Denver Street Types

Blueprint Denver “establishes a framework for describing streets, linking their design and operation to the character and land use around them (p. 154).” Parks, and what is allowable within the OS-A zone district, vary greatly in intensity to respond to the surrounding context. They are appropriate in all future places, and therefore they are also appropriate adjacent to all street types.

Other Blueprint Denver Strategies

Blueprint Denver is structured around the concept of complete neighborhoods. One of the three elements of a complete neighborhood is Quality of Life Infrastructure, which “refers to the places, trees, plants, waterways, parks and outdoor spaces that stitch together our communities and contribute to the health, needs, comfort, environmental resilience and social connectedness of Denver (p. 116).” The first policy under Quality-of-Life Infrastructure is to “Expand tools and regulations to ensure high-quality parks and outdoor public spaces keep pace with Denver’s growth (p. 118).” The proposed rezoning aims to rezone existing park land to align with this current or future use. This not only reinforces that existing parks should remain parks in the future, but it also facilitates development of new parks in locations where city policy and community input have determined they are appropriate and needed.

Blueprint Denver’s Climate Goals

This rezoning supports the city’s goals to reduce climate impacts by enabling a public parks. This rezoning is also consistent with Quality-of-Life Infrastructure Recommendations: Policy 02, “Protect and expand Denver’s tree canopy on both public and private property. Includes recommendation to require tree planting and irrigation requirements for new development on private property” and Policy 04, “Promote environmentally friendly development strategies in the public and private realms. This includes incentives and requirements for green infrastructure and tree planting, limiting impervious surfaces, preserving existing trees in the public ROW” (p.116). Rezoning to OS-A will allow more park and recreation opportunities, which will contribute to a complete neighborhood.

Blueprint Denver Equity Concepts

Blueprint Denver contains three equity concepts to help guide change to benefit everyone. Each equity concept has associated measurements that helps inform implementation actions through large rezonings along with other implementation actions.

Access to Opportunity

Improving access to opportunity includes several metrics, including “the proximity of an amenity (including...parks...), the affordability of that amenity, and the safety and ease of access to that amenity (p. 32).” Therefore, preserving existing parks and facilitating the development of new parks supports this equity concept and may, in some cases, improve this metric for some locations.

Vulnerability to Involuntary Displacement

Reducing vulnerability to displacement focuses on “stabilizing residents and businesses who are vulnerable to involuntary displacement due to increasing property values and rents (p. 37).” Measures include characteristics of housing stock and the people living in a particular area. The rezoning is not expected to impact any of these measures; however, potential impacts will be studied and mitigated as part of citywide public investments.

Expanding Housing and Jobs Diversity

Expanding housing and jobs diversity is measured through metrics based on characteristics of housing stock and job density and types. Expanding the park system necessitates more employees for park maintenance. New properties are included in this rezoning that will be owned and maintained by Denver Parks and Recreation in the future and may create additional local job expansion for ongoing and seasonal maintenance work.

Game Plan for a Healthy City (2019)

Game Plan for a Healthy City is an adopted supplement to the Comprehensive Plan 2040 and part of the larger coordinated planning efforts that included the development of *Blueprint Denver*. *Game Plan for a Healthy City* provides both a vision and a strategic roadmap for the future of Denver’s parks, hundreds of facilities, and recreation programs, and 20,000 acres of park landscapes. Rezoning to allow for a maintenance center and more park space is consistent with the following recommendations:

- 3.1 Grow Parks: Acquire land and build facilities to keep pace with growth and meet 10-minute walk standard and service goals.
- 3.5 10-Min Walk Access: Ensure a ten-minute walk for park and open space for every neighborhood.
- 4.9 Upgrade facilities: Upgrade operation and user facilities to meet baseline standards.
- 5.9 Innovative public spaces: Expand new innovative park and recreation amenities to encourage active lifestyles and improve health.

These recommendations are essential to *Blueprint Denver’s* vision for a city where every neighborhood is complete.

Globeville Neighborhood Plan (2015)

The 44th and Pearl Unnamed Park and the Heron Ponds sites both reside within the Globeville Neighborhood. In the Strong Globeville guiding principle, the plan talks about a future where “the neighborhood has a complete and accessible system of parks that encourages physical activity, social interaction, and environmental responsibility (p. 12)”. The plan also calls for a regional open space amenity at the Heron Ponds site (p. 40), which this rezoning directly implements.

Far Northeast Area Plan (2019)

The far northeast maintenance facility falls within the boundaries of the Far Northeast Area Plan. This facility helps implement the following goals:

- “QOL-7. Grow parks and recreation access and diversify services and programs .”

- “7.1. Maintain a high level of park service and access in Far Northeast by growing the park system, including new parks, open space, and trails concurrent with new development (p. 115).”
- “QOL-8. Reinvest in Denver Parks and Recreation resources.”
 - “8.2. Invest in maintenance of existing parks and open spaces. Maintain a high level of park service and access. Establish an operations facility to support more efficient maintenance of parks and recreation facilities in the Far Northeast area (p. 117).”

Public Interest

The proposed official map amendment furthers the public interest of the city through implementation of the city’s adopted land use plans by allowing for additional recreational open space uses.

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

The requested OS-A zone district is within the Open Space Context, which “consists of all forms of public and private parks and open spaces”. The context accommodates sites ranging from very active to completely passive, and from those embedded in a neighborhood to sites that are large enough to stand alone. Active sites may include high use areas such as ball fields, while passive areas focus on resource protection, trails, walking and biking” (DZC 9.3.1). The OS-A zone district allows for active and passive recreation opportunities and is consistent with the Open Space context.

Open Space Public Park District (OS-A) “is intended to protect and preserve public parks owned, operated or leased by the City and managed by the City’s Department of Parks and Recreation (“DPR”) for park purposes” (DZC 9.3.2.1.A). The property is owned by the City and is consistent with the OS-A purpose and intent statement.

Attachments

1. Application + public outreach