



TO: Denver City Council
FROM: Tony Lechuga, Senior City Planner
DATE: December 3, 2025
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application #2024I-00158

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends approval for Application #2024I-00158.

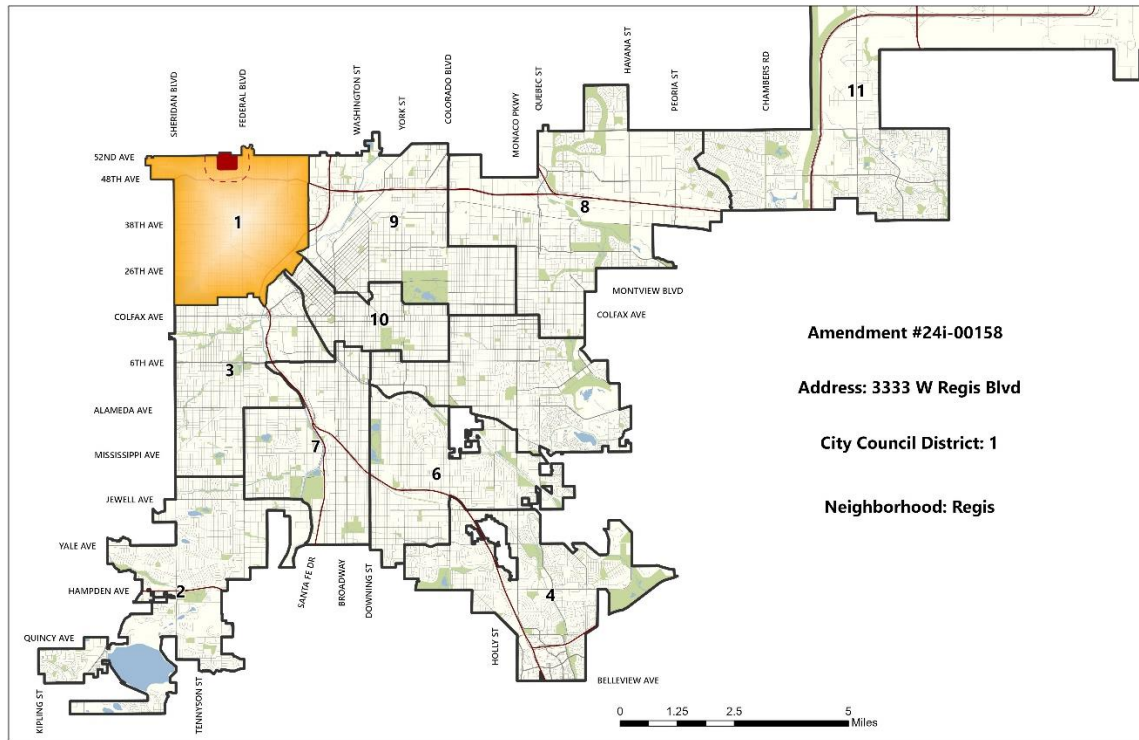
Request for Rezoning

Address: 3333 West Regis Boulevard
Neighborhood/Council District and CM: Regis / Council District 1, Council President Sandoval
RNOs: Berkeley Regis United Neighbors; Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation
Area of Property: ~ 62 acres
Current Zoning: R-5
Proposed Zoning: CMP-EI2
Property Owner(s): Regis University
Owner Representative: Cory Rutz

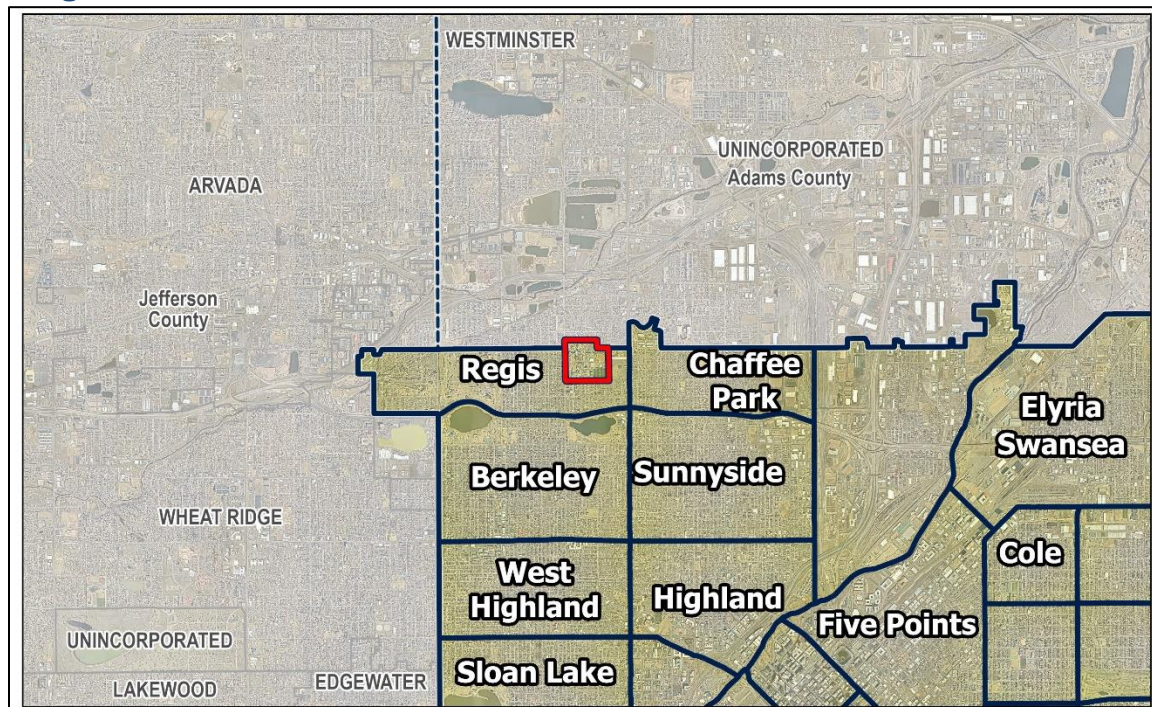
Summary of Rezoning Request

- The Regis University campus is located north of West 50th Avenue (also known as Regis Boulevard) between North Federal Boulevard and North Lowell Boulevard. The northern border of the campus is Adams County between West 52nd and 53rd Avenues. The historic core of the campus is limited to the western third of the site. The middle of the campus generally contains an athletic center, field house, and multiple sports fields. The eastern third of the campus towards North Federal Boulevard contains abundant surface parking for university events and strip-mall commercial.
- Regis University established this campus in 1887 as a boy's preparatory academy but has grown as a neighborhood anchor, providing adult education since the 1940's. Over its 138-year history the campus has grown from a single building to a robust campus containing multiple academic buildings, residence halls, and a library open to the general public.
- The proposed rezoning includes the western two thirds of the campus, with an eastern boundary that is roughly the alleyway between North Grove Street and North Hooker Street, a southern boundary of West 50th Avenue, a western boundary of North Lowell Boulevard, and a northern boundary just north of West 52nd Avenue. A concurrent rezoning to a Planned Unit Development (PUD) is proposed for the eastern third of the site.
- The existing R-5 zoning is a Former Chapter 59 institutional zone district allowing colleges, schools, churches, and other institutional uses.
- The proposed Campus-Education/Institution (CMP-EI2) zone district is intended for educational institutions that incorporate primary, intermediate, high school, college, and university uses and associated programming including student boarding facilities.

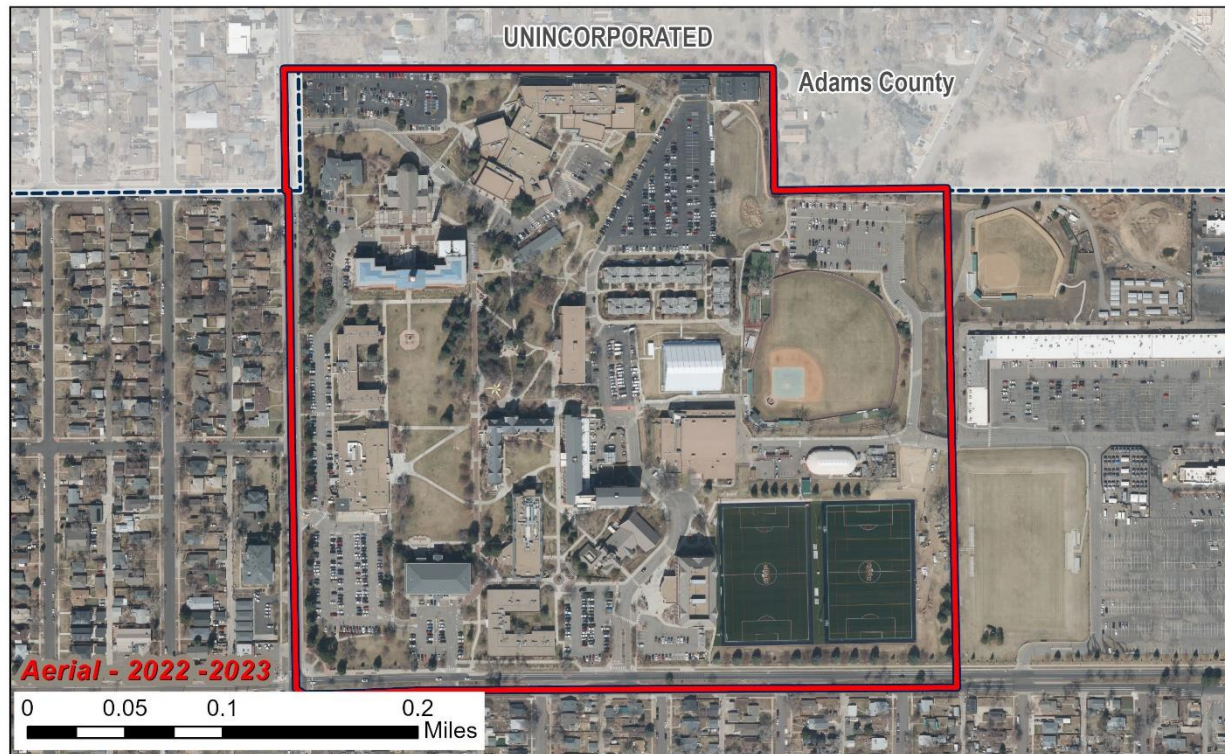
City Location



Neighborhood Location



1. Existing Context

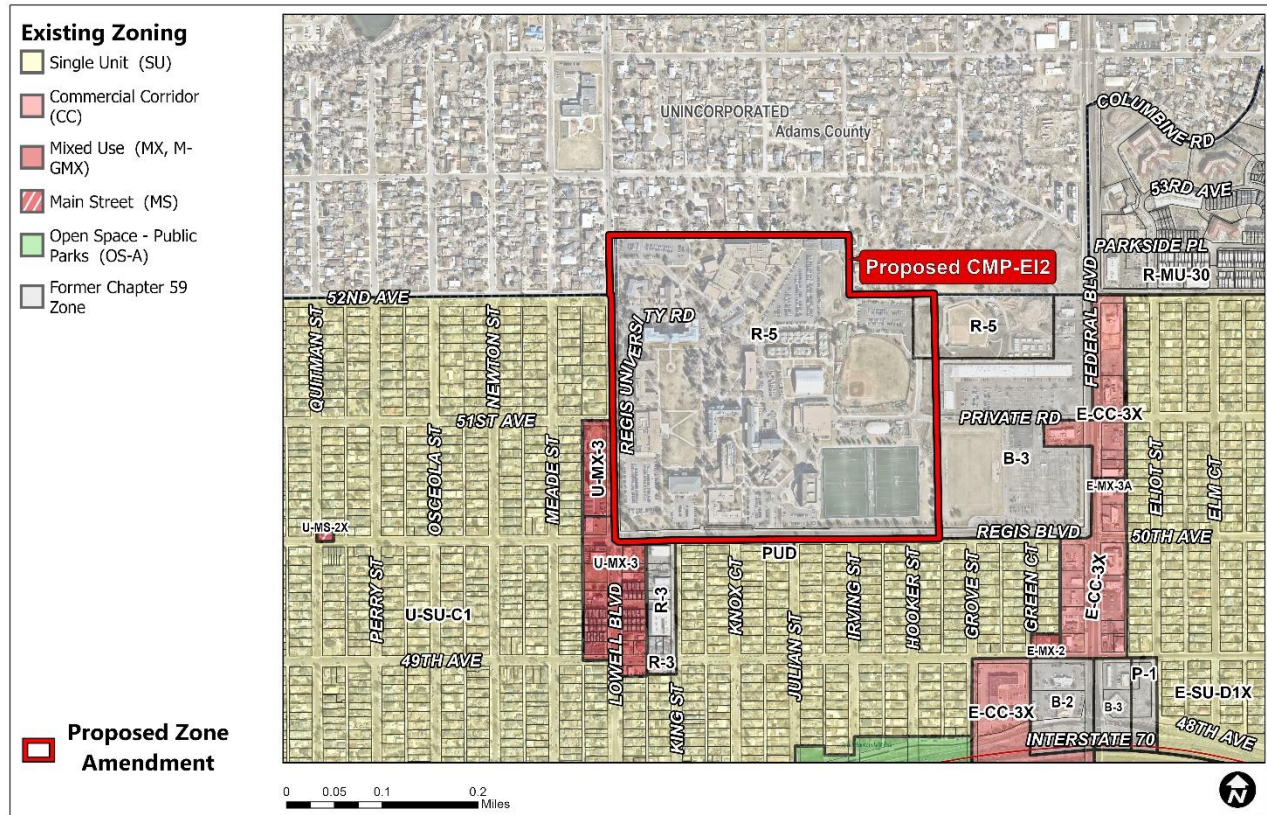


The campus is located in the northeast corner of the Regis neighborhood. The neighborhood is narrow, generally comprised of the four blocks between West 48th Avenue/Interstate 70 at the south and West 52nd Avenue at the north. The land use in the neighborhood is dominated by the presence of Regis University and the Willis Case Municipal Golf Course to the west. Aside from the commercial along North Federal Boulevard and in limited locations along North Lowell Boulevard, the neighborhood is largely comprised of low-scale single-unit residential properties. The only public park in the Regis neighborhood is Inspiration Point Park on the far western edge of the neighborhood making it difficult to access for most of the neighborhood as it is blocked by I-70 and the golf course. Rocky Mountain Lake Park and Berkeley Lake Park area accessible to the south of I-70 via North Lowell Boulevard and North Tennyson Street. There is also a recreation center located in Berkeley Lake Park. The neighborhood lacks any public schools or public libraries. The Regis University library offers free access and library cards to any Colorado resident aged 16 and older. Regis also offers paid memberships to access the Regis University Fitness Center. The campus is served by the Regional Transportation District (RTD) 52 bus route which operates services east-west through the neighborhood between Arvada and downtown Denver with multiple stops along West 50th Avenue. The campus is also served by the RTD 32 bus route which operates service north-south along Federal Boulevard from West 112th Avenue in the north to West Evans Avenue in the south. The Colorado Department of Transportation, in coordination with the Denver Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, is designing bus rapid transit along Federal Boulevard.

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	R-5	Public/Quasi-public	Multiple brick buildings with large footprints and between 2 and 4 stories. Open space and surface parking scattered throughout the site.	The campus is a single large lot without through streets. The rest of the neighborhood is characterized by an orthogonal grid of consistent streets with generally uniformly sized lots with alleys until interrupted by I-70 to the south.
North	Adams County	Adams County	1-story houses with large setbacks	
South	U-MX-3, DO-8; R-3, UO-3; and U-SU-C	Commercial/Retail; Multi-unit Residential; Single-unit Residential	Across West 50 th Avenue, 1-story buildings located at the intersection of West 50 th Avenue and North Lowell Boulevard; 3-story brick apartment building along North King Street; 1-story house with alley access and strong setbacks from local streets	
East	R-5 and B-3	Public/Quasi-public and Commercial/Retail	Athletic fields associated with Regis University; strip-mall commercial with large surface parking between North Federal Boulevard and the building	
West	U-MX-3, DO-8; U-MX-3; and U-SU-C	Commercial/Retail; Multi-unit Residential; Single-unit Residential; Two-unit Residential	Across North Lowell Boulevard, 1-story building with surface parking between the street and building; the 3-story brick Historic Landmark former Berkeley School; 1-story house with alley access and strong setbacks from North Lowell Boulevard	

2. Existing Zoning



The existing R-5 zone district is a Former Chapter 59 Institutional District that allows colleges, schools, churches, and other institutional uses. Maximum lot coverage for structures is 60% of the zone lot. Building height is controlled by bulk standards. For additional details of the zone district, see FC59 Article IV, Division 4.

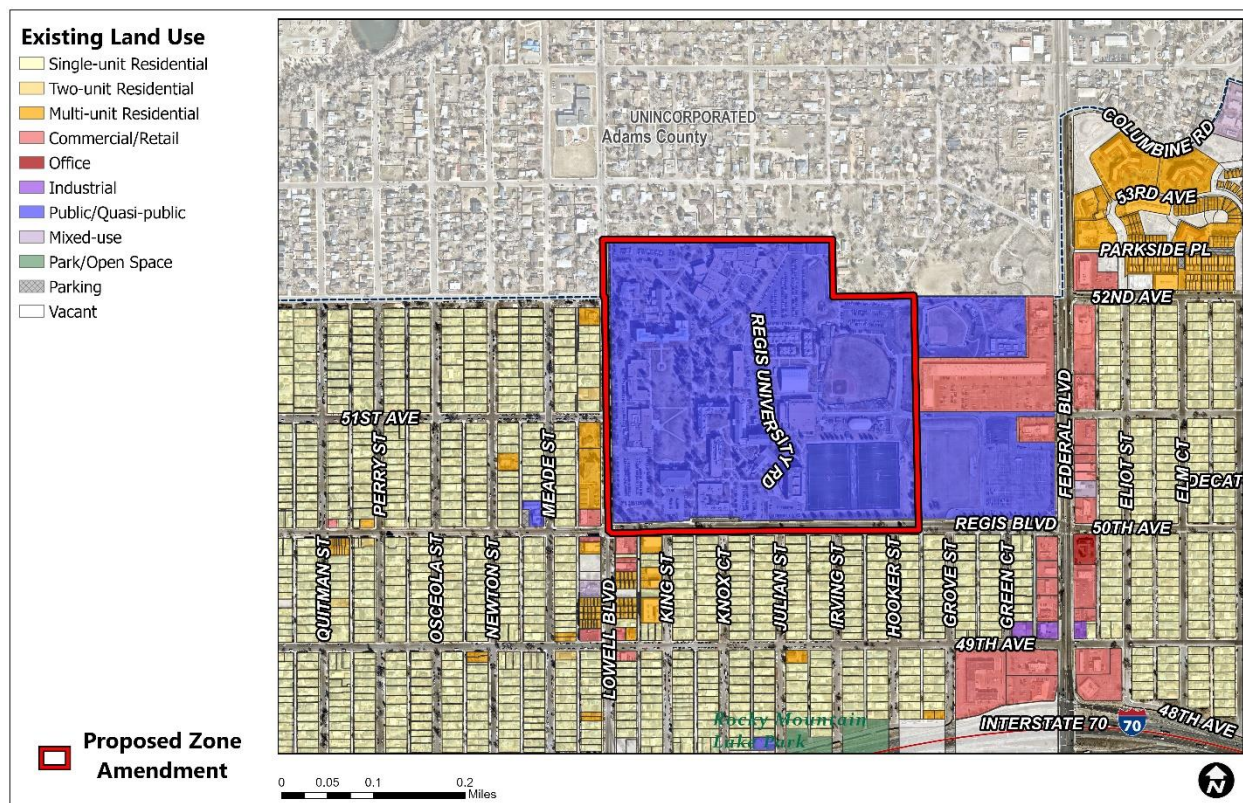
3. Large Development Review

On November 2nd, 2021, a Pre-Application meeting was held to discuss the proposal for proposed redevelopment of the eastern third of the Regis University property ownership. Because Regis is only planning new development on the eastern third of the property the Development Review Committee (DRC) determined that the LDR process was required but only for the eastern 23 acres where new infrastructure, rezoning, and an amendment to a Planned Building Group would be required. As part of that process Community Planning and Development (CPD) suggested that it is also the city's preference that private property owners choose to come out of Former Chapter 59 and so encouraged Regis to simultaneously rezone the traditional campus as well.

4. High-Impact Development Compliance Plan (HIDCP)

The Expanding Housing Affordability ordinance stipulates that a “high-impact development” requires a tailored housing outcome informed by community outreach. High-Impact Development is defined as 1) development of 10 acres or more; or 2) any development using a public financing tool. While the rezoning of the Regis University campus is larger than 10 acres, there is no proposed development associated with the rezoning. While the Department of Housing Stability (HOST) often negotiates HIDCPs for some large-scale rezonings, in this instance it was determined that the absence of proposed development coupled with the nature of the property owner as a non-profit educational institution did not warrant negotiating a HIDCP at this time. Instead, should it be warranted in the future, a HIDCP would be negotiated at the time of development as required by the rules outlined in the Denver Revised Municipal Code (DRMC).

5. Existing Land Use Map



6. Existing Building Form and Scale

All images from Google Maps Street View.



View of Regis University from the intersection of West 50th Avenue and North Lowell Boulevard, looking northeast.



View of Regis University from North Lowell Boulevard, looking East.



View of Regis University from West 50th Avenue, looking north.



View of the interior of the Regis University Campus, looking northeast.



View of the 1-story commercial and 3-story apartment south of Regis University across West 50th Avenue, from the intersection of West 50th Avenue and North Lowell Boulevard, looking southeast.



View of the 1-story commercial west of Regis University across North Lowell Boulevard, looking west.



View of the 3-story Historic Landmark former Berkeley School west of Regis University across North Lowell Boulevard, looking west.



View of 1-story residential to the west of Regis University across North Lowell Boulevard, looking west.



View of 1-story residential to the south of Regis University across West 50th Avenue, looking south.



View of the athletic fields to the east of the core campus, looking south.



View of the commercial strip-mall east of the core campus, looking north.

Proposed Zoning

The requested CMP-EI2 zone district is intended to be applied to smaller – to medium-scale campus sites generally adjacent to single-unit, two-unit, town house, or row house residential zone districts, where it is important to require more open space and more limited building height to assure adequate transitions to adjacent, lower-scale residential neighborhoods. In addition, certain land uses with the potential for off-site impacts are more strictly limited in the CMP-EI2 district. The CMP-EI2 district has a maximum height of 150 feet. Protected district standards apply to the southern and western edges of the campus that are within 175 feet of low-scale single-unit zone districts and limit height to 75 feet. The buildings are concentrated towards the center of the site through the application of 20-foot setbacks along the Primary Street. A bulk plane slope of 45 degrees also pushes the buildings towards the center of the site. The 60% building coverage matches the requirements of the existing R-5 zone district and assures ample open space on site. The CMP-EI2 district allows for a diversity of residential, civic, public, institutional, and limited commercial and industrial uses. For additional details of the requested zone district, see DZC Sections 9.2.1, 9.2.4 and 9.2.8.

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 Comments

Denver Public Schools: Approved – No Response

Department of Public Health and Environment: Approved – No Comments

Denver Parks and Recreation: Approved – No Response

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

Development Services – Project Coordination: Approved – No Response

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

Development Services – Transportation: Approved – No Response

Development Services- Wastewater: Approved – No Response

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:	5/5/25
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:	9/30/25
Planning Board Public Hearing:	10/15/25
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:	10/21/25 (tentative)
Community Planning and Housing Committee of the City Council:	11/4/25
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:	11/17/25
City Council Public Hearing:	12/8/25

- **Public Outreach and Input**

- **Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)**

- As of the date of this staff report, CPD has received no letters from RNOs.

- **General Public Comments**

- As of the date of this staff report, CPD has received no letters from the general public.

Criteria for Review / Staff Evaluation

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

DZC Section 12.4.10.7

1. Consistency with Adopted Plans
2. Public Interest
3. 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)

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 map amendment would allow for the continued operation of one of Denver's anchor institutions, consistent with the following strategies from the Equitable, Affordable, and Inclusive vision element (p. 26-31):

- Goal 9 – Improve equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning opportunities.
 - Strategy D – Partner with high-education institutions to ensure residents have access to local, quality higher-education.

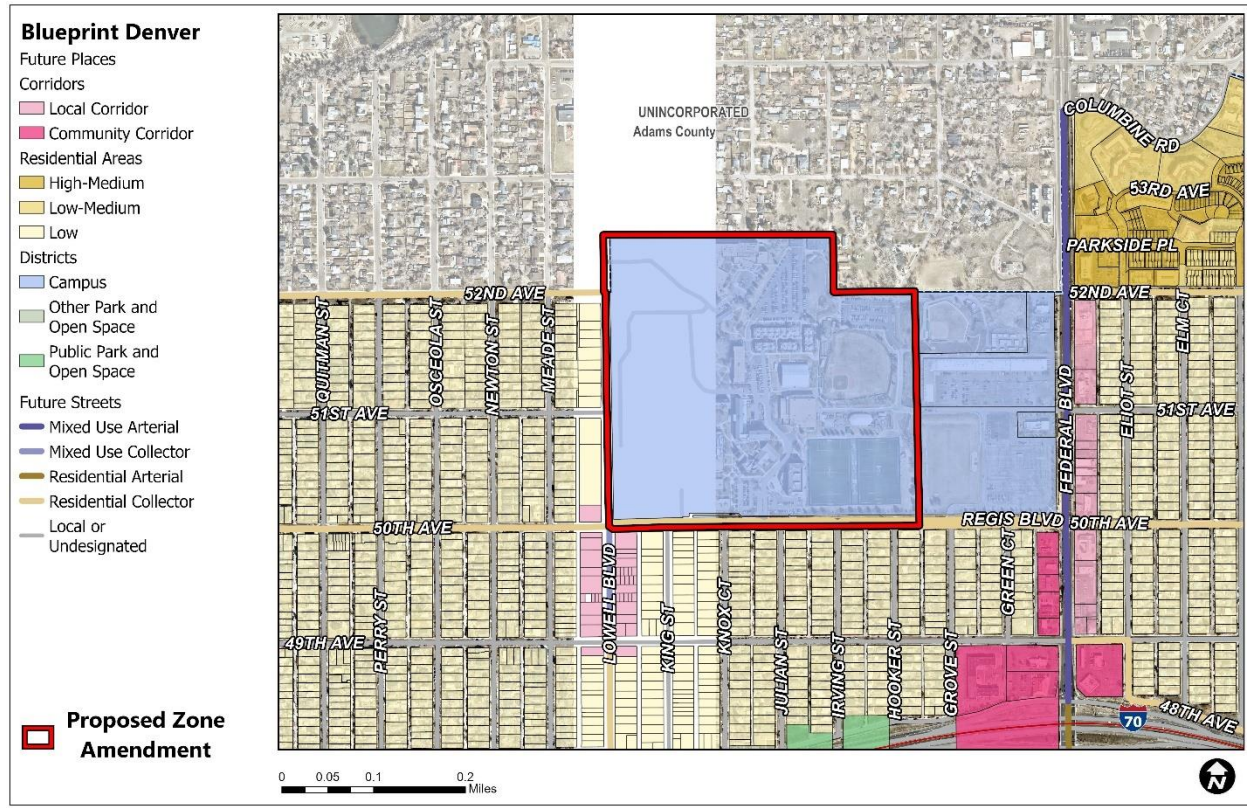
The proposed map amendment would allow to be consistent with the following strategies from the Economically Diverse vision element (p. 46-48):

- Goal 1 – Ensure economic mobility and improve access to opportunity.
 - Strategy A – Improve economic mobility through workforce training, career development, quality education, and wealth creation.
- Goal 2 – Grow a strong, diversified economy.
 - Strategy D – Ensure a broad range of jobs to align with the skills and interests of local residents.
- Goal 4 - Ensure Denver has a productive, education, competitive, and knowledgeable workforce.
 - Strategy A – Develop a highly trained local workforce with the skills and knowledge to effectively compete for a diverse range of local jobs.
 - Strategy B – Provide training and programs to connect Denverites to high quality jobs at a range of skill levels.

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 a Campus future place within a Districts neighborhood context and provides guidance from the future growth strategy for the city.

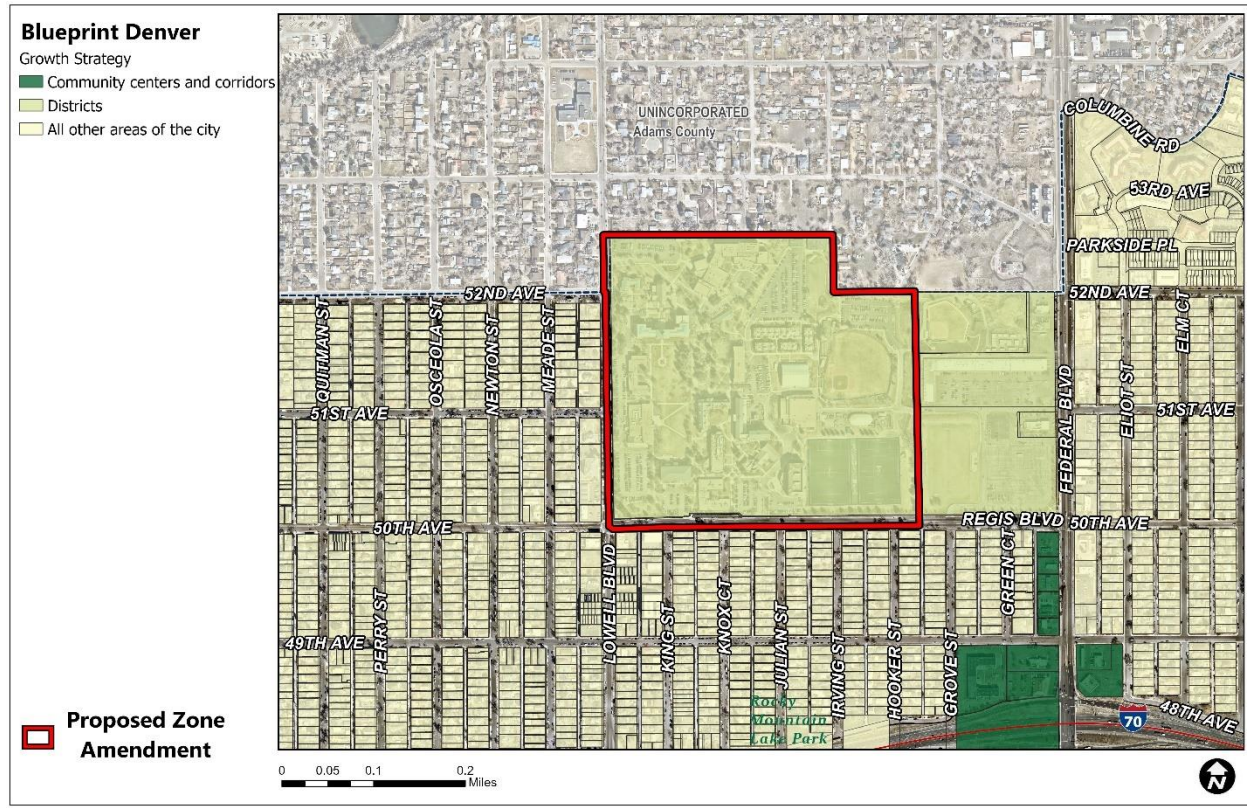
In *Blueprint Denver*, future neighborhood contexts are used to help understand differences between land use, built form, and mobility at a high scale, between neighborhoods. The subject property is shown on the context map as within the Districts context. Districts are described as, “unique contexts with an important role in how the city feels and functions” and “with a specially designed purpose, such as educational campuses” (p. 280). Furthermore, Districts are, “important job centers providing a wide variety of middle and high skill employment opportunities”, “provide large scale public open space and community gathering areas”, and often “require significant amount of land”. The existing Regis University campus reflects this character as one of the city’s few university campuses and the proposed zoning would align with this characterization.

Blueprint Denver Future Places



The Future Places Map shows the subject property as part of a Campus. *Blueprint Denver* describes the aspirational characteristics of Campus as having, “a primary purpose such as education or medical services” and providing “retail, restaurants, offices, and residential uses to support the primary use and serve the surrounding neighborhoods” (p. 291). Campuses are also noted for being typically dominated by a single, large institutional user, with internal circulation networks, and significant green infrastructure, plazas, and gathering areas. The existing Regis University campus aligns with this description and the proposed zoning would allow for that continued use.

Blueprint Denver Growth Strategy

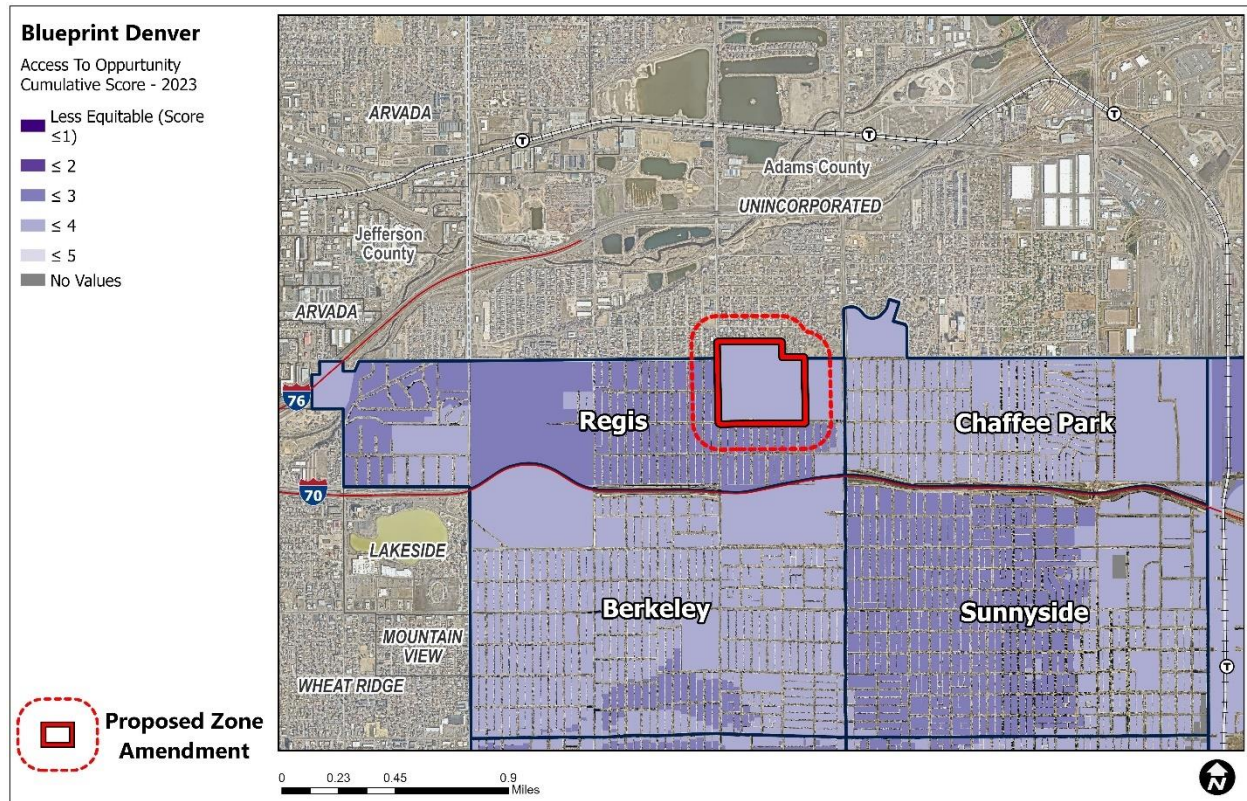


Blueprint Denver's growth strategy map is a version of the future places map, showing the aspiration for distributing future growth in Denver (p. 51). The subject property is part of a District. Districts are anticipated to see around 5% of housing growth and 15% of job growth by 2040. The proposed zoning would allow for the continued use and growth of the current Regis University campus in line with this strategy.

Blueprint Denver Equity Concepts

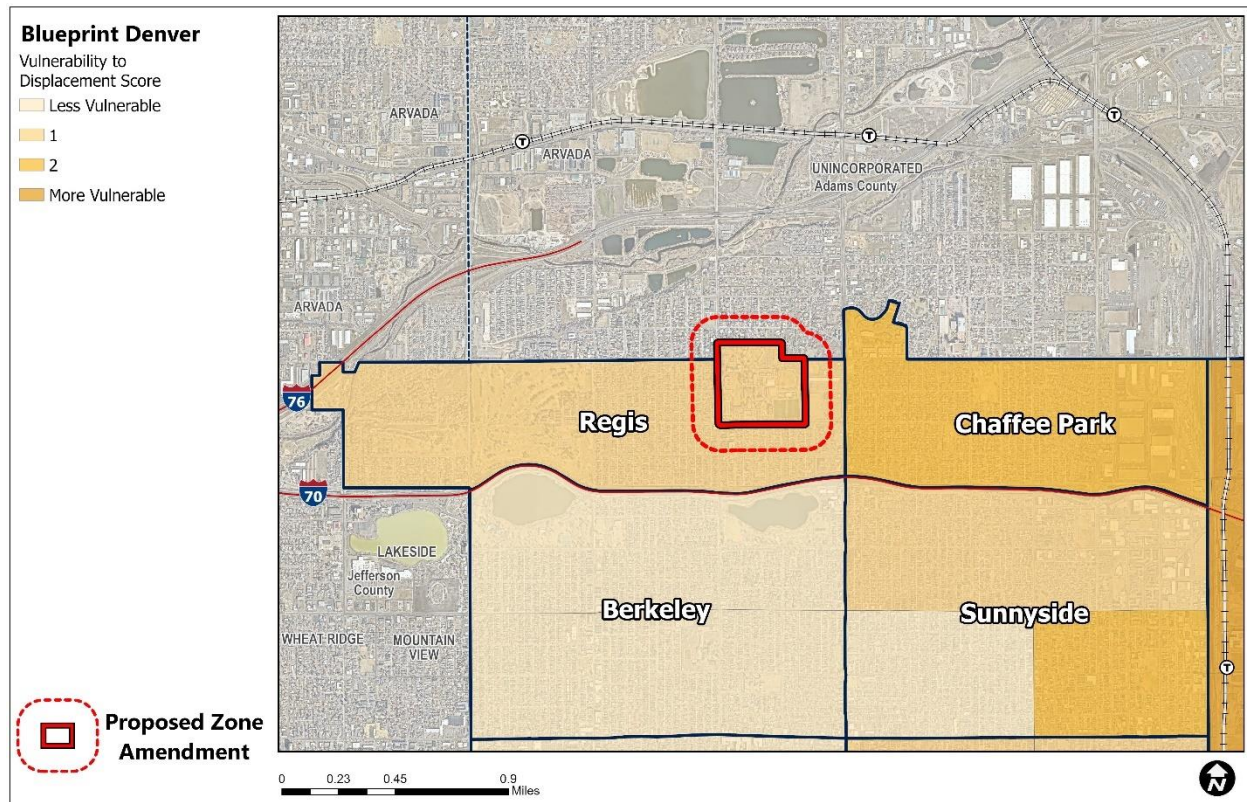
Blueprint Denver contains three equity concepts to help guide change to benefit everyone. Each equity concept has associated measurements that helps inform implementation actions through large rezonings along with other implementation actions. Although they cannot be effectively applied to small-scale rezonings, they are helpful in showing patterns across large areas, particularly in areas vulnerable to involuntary displacement.

I. Access to Opportunity



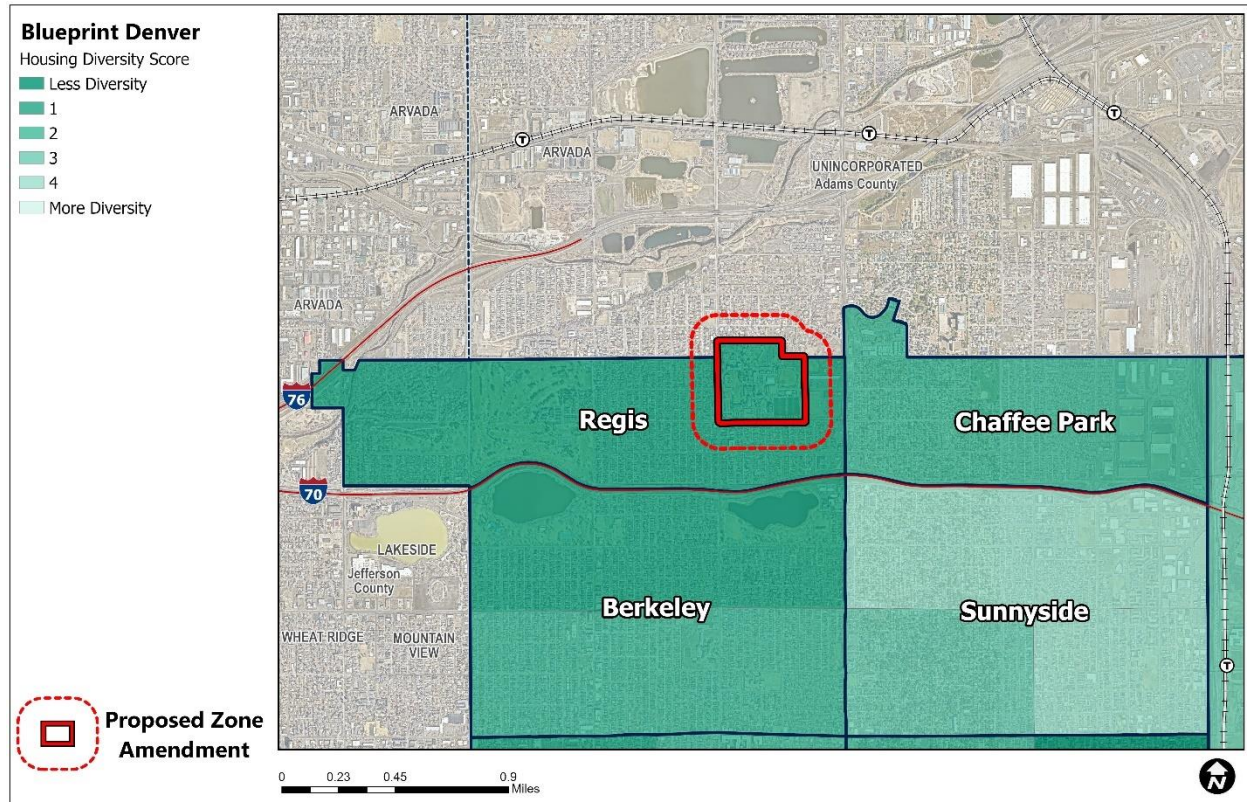
The campus, considered in the analysis as a single entity, has slightly higher-than-average access to opportunity. The campus and neighborhood at large have lower access to parks, low access to fresh food, and low access to frequent transit. While not captured in the equity analysis, the campus contains many open green spaces which are accessible to the public and while not a perfect replacement for neighborhood parks, they do serve to bolster neighborhood access to open space. University partnerships such as Regis' free access to the campus library and paid public access to the fitness center are important for increasing neighborhood access to important quality of life benefits.

II. Vulnerability to Involuntary Displacement



The area contains a score of 1 out of 3 for vulnerability to involuntary displacement, with a lower-than-average percentage of adults without a college degree (51% to the citywide average of 46%). The continued existence and growth of the university can help reduce vulnerability to displacement by providing a diversity of jobs and educational opportunities.

III. Expanding Housing Diversity



The area scored 2 out of 5 for housing diversity, signaling that there is a lack of housing diversity in the area. It scored as diverse in terms of housing cost and bedroom counts. What this area lacks in terms of diversifying housing is missing middle housing, income-restricted units, and rental units. Allowing for the continued growth of the university means they can continue to take steps to advance housing options for students on-campus, thus removing any burden a student population puts on local housing markets.

Climate

The proposed zoning would help meet numerous climate goals by, promoting infill development where infrastructure and services are already in place and encouraging growth of an existing campus which includes abundant green open space. Campuses also often function in practice as mixed-use settings where people live, work, and find entertainment all within a walkable human-scaled environment.

Other Blueprint Denver Strategies

The proposed rezoning also helps further the following *Blueprint Denver* policies:

Land Use and Built Form – General (pgs. 70-79)

- Policy 3, Strategy A – Rezone properties from the Former Chapter 59 zoning code so that the entire city is covered by the Denver Zoning Code (DZC), including continuing to incentivize owners to come out of the old code.

2. Public Interest

The proposed official map amendment furthers the Public Interest through implementation of the city's adopted land use plans by allowing for the continuation of an important educational institution while updating the design requirements to align with our modern zoning code.

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

The Campus Context description states that it, "generally consists of midsize to large medical, institutional, educational, or entertainment sites" (DZC 9.2.1). The context is meant to provide flexibility in the placement of buildings, a unified treatment of open space and other site elements reflective of a campus and its surrounding areas (DZC 9.2.1). The CMP-EI2 district will reinforce the existing context of this campus as an education/institutional site.

The CMP-EI2 intent statement describes it as, "applied to smaller- to medium-scale campus sites generally adjacent to a single unit, two-unit, town house, or row house residential zone district, where it is important to require more open space and more limited building height" (DZC 9.2.4.1). The application of the CMP-EI2 zone district is appropriate as this is an existing medium-scale campus site generally adjacent low-scale residential zone districts.

Attachments

1. Application
2. Engagement Outline
3. Equity Analysis