



TO: Denver Planning Board
FROM: Joe Green, Associate City Planner
DATE: January 14, 2026
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application #2025i-00091

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends **approval** for Application #2025i-00091.

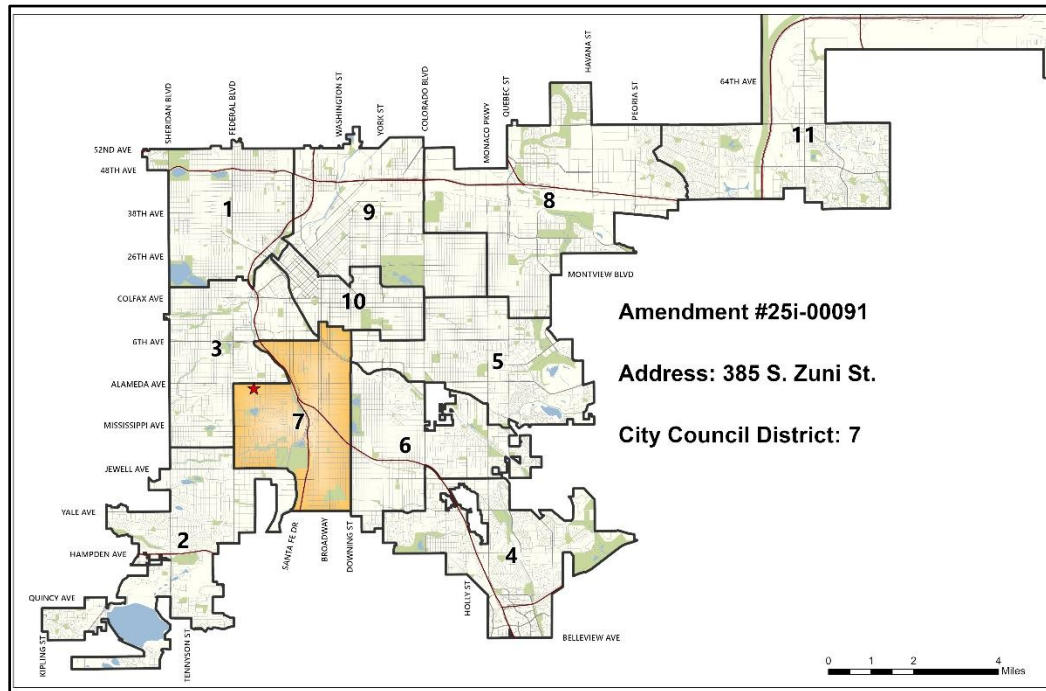
Request for Rezoning

Address: 385 S Zuni Street
Neighborhood/Council District and CM: Athmar Park / Council District 7, CM Alvidrez
RNOs: Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC), Athmar Park
Neighborhood Association, Far East Center
Area of Property: 13,260 square feet or .3 acres
Current Zoning: B-1 with Waivers
Proposed Zoning: E-MX-3
Property Owner(s): Hang Thu Thi Le & Thien Mai

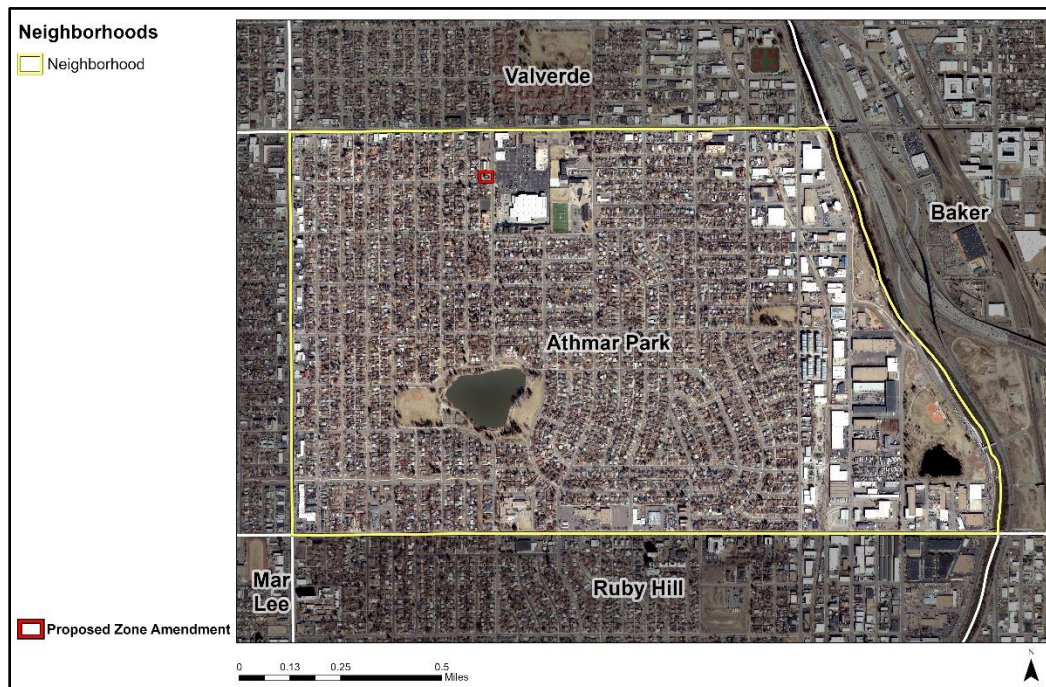
Summary of Rezoning Request

- The subject site is in the Athmar Park neighborhood on the northwest corner of South Zuni Street and West Dakota Avenue.
- The site contains a one and a half-story structure resembling a single-unit house.
- The current zoning is Former Chapter 59, B-1 with waivers. B-1 is a limited office district intended to form a transition between more intense commercial and lower intensity residential land uses. The waivers limit the height to 32 ft, the gross floor area to 4,200 sq ft, and waives the right to use the property for certain commercial uses, such as a medical clinic, gallery, and library.
- The requested zone district E-MX-3 (Urban Edge – Mixed-Use – 3 stories) allows multi-unit residential and a diversity of commercial uses up to 3 stories or 45 feet in height. Further details of the requested zone district can be found in the proposed zone district section of this staff report and in Article 4 of the Denver Zoning Code.

City Location



Neighborhood Location – Athmar Park



Existing Context



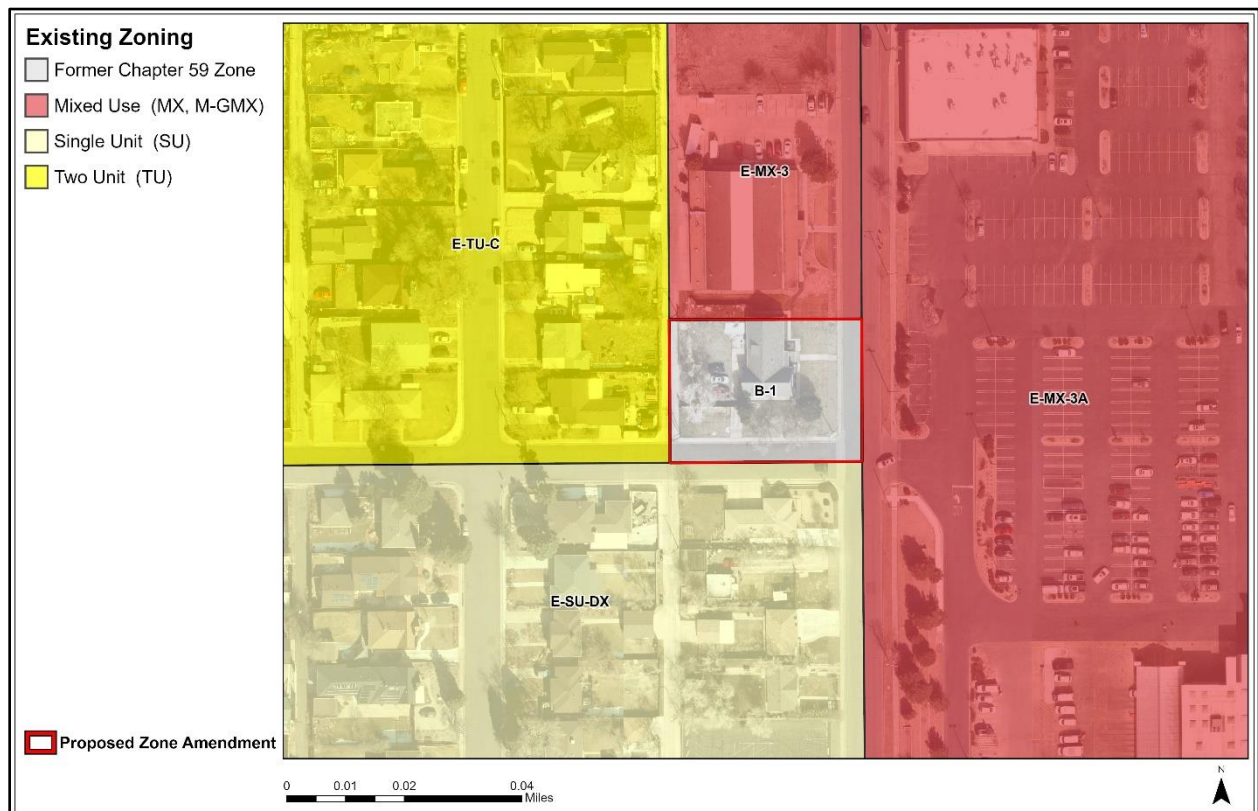
The subject property is in the Athmar Park neighborhood. The neighborhood is bounded by three commercial corridors. West Alameda Avenue is to the north, South Federal Boulevard is to the east, and West Mississippi Avenue is to the south. The eastern edge of the neighborhood contains a large pocket of industrial uses along the South Platte River. The interior of the neighborhood is largely single-unit residential housing, with alley access.

The subject property is less than a quarter mile from the 3 and 4 RTD bus lines. Route 3 runs east and west along Alameda Avenue, while Route 4 runs north and south along Morrison Road and Sheridan 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	B-1 with Waivers	Vacant	A one and a half story house with alley access.	To the west and south of subject property there is a regular grid of streets. Block sizes are consistent with alleys in the middle of blocks. 3 ft rollover sidewalks without a tree lawn. To the east of the subject property is a large format shopping center with large parking lots.
North	E-MX-3	Public/Quasi-public	A two story public building currently being used a homeless shelter.	
South	E-SU-Dx	Single-unit Residential	A one and a half story house with alley access.	
East	E-MX-3	Commercial/Retail	A Costco business center with a large parking lot.	
West	E-SU-Dx	Single-unit Residential	A one and a half story house with alley access.	

Existing Zoning



The current zoning is Former Chapter 59, B-1 with waivers. B-1 is a limited office district intended to form a transition between more intense commercial and lower intensity residential land uses. The waivers limit the height to 32 ft, the gross floor area to 4,200 sq ft, and waives the right to use the property for the following commercial uses: apothecary, bank, dental or medical clinic, computer data processing center, electric substation, fine arts gallery, fire station, gas regulator station, hearing aids store, industrial bank, dental or medical laboratory, landing take-off area for police rotocraft, library, museum, newspaper distribution station, optician, repair or sale of orthopedics and prosthetics, parking, photographic studio, police station, post office, railway right-of-way, saving or loan associations, school, telephone exchange, terminal for intra-city public transit vehicles, utility pumping station, water reservoir.

Existing Land Use Map



Existing Building Form and Scale



View of the subject property looking west from South Zuni Street.



View of the property to the north, looking west from South Zuni Street.



View of the property to the south, looking west from South Zuni Street.



View of the property to the east, looking east from South Zuni Street.



View of the property to the west (across the alley), looking east on South Alcott Street.

Proposed Zoning

The requested E-MX-3 zone district is in the Urban Edge Neighborhood Context. The intent of the district is to “promote safe, active, and pedestrian-scaled, diverse areas and enhance the convenience and ease of walking, shopping and public gathering within and around the city’s neighborhoods (DZC, Section 4.2.4).” The town house, drive thru, general, and shopfront building forms are allowed in this zone district. A wide range of residential, quasi-public, and commercial uses are permitted (with and without limitations) in E-MX-3. For additional details of the requested zone district, see DZC Sections 4.2.4, 4.3 and 4.4.

Design Standards	B-1 with Waivers	E-MX-3 (Proposed)
Primary Building Forms Allowed	N/A	Town House; Drive Thru Services, Drive Thru Restaurant, General; Shopfront
Stories/Heights (max)	32'	3 stories/45'
Primary Build-To Percentages (min)	N/A	70%
Primary Setbacks (min)	10'	0' to 10'

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 Comment.
- Development Services – Project Coordination: Approve Rezoning Only - Will require additional information at Site Plan Review.
- Department of Transportation & Infrastructure - Transportation: Approved – See Comments Below.
 - DES Transportation approves the subject zoning change. The applicant should note that redevelopment of this site may require additional engineering, ROW dedication to the City, access changes, traffic studies and/or right of way improvements. The extent of the required design and improvements will be determined once this property begins the redevelopment process. The results of any traffic studies may require the construction of off-site mitigation or may limit the proposed density of the project.
- Department of Transportation & Infrastructure – Wastewater: Approved – No Response.
- Parks and Recreation: Approved – No Response.
- Public Health and Environment: Approved – No Response
- Department of Transportation & Infrastructure – City Surveyor: Approved - No 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:	11/19/2025
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:	01/05/2026
Planning Board Public Hearing:	01/21/2026
CPD written notice of the Community Planning and Housing Committee meeting sent to all affected members of City Council and registered neighborhood organizations, at least ten (10) working days before the meeting:	01/20/2026 (tentative)
Community Planning and Housing Committee of the City Council moved the bill forward:	02/03/2026 (tentative)
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:	02/23/2026 (tentative)
City Council Public Hearing:	03/16/2026 (tentative)

Public Outreach and Input

Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)

As of the date of this report, staff has received no letters of support or opposition for this application.

Public Comments

As of the date of this staff report, no comment letters 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 currently apply to this property:

- *Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040* (2019)
- *Blueprint Denver* (2019)
- *Athmar Park Neighborhood Perimeter Plan* (2000)

If the proposed map amendment is approved by City Council after the adoption of the Southwest Area Plan (anticipated March 3, 2026), the following plans would apply instead:

- *Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040* (2019)
- *Blueprint Denver* (2019)
- *Southwest Area Plan* (2026)

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 requested map amendment will enable mixed-use development at an infill location where current zoning includes a waiver that limits many neighborhood serving uses, which is consistent with the following strategies in the Strong and Authentic vision element:

- Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods Goal 1, Strategy A – *Build a network of well connected, vibrant, mixed-use centers and corridors* (p. 34).
- Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods Goal 1, Strategy D – *Encourage quality infill development that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods and offers opportunities for increased amenities* (p. 34).

Furthermore, the site is an infill location where infrastructure is already in place and provides services in proximity to residential neighborhoods, which is consistent with the following strategies in 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 B – *Encourage mixed-use communities where residents can live, work and play in their own neighborhoods* (p. 54).

The requested E-MX-3 zone district broadens the variety of uses allowing residents to live, work and play in the area, therefore the rezoning is consistent with *Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040* recommendations.

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 Center future place within the Urban Edge future neighborhood context and provides guidance on 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 containing “...elements of the suburban and urban contexts. Small multi-unit residential and commercial areas are typically embedded in 1-unit and 2-unit residential areas (p. 136)”.

The intent of the proposed E-MX-3 district is to “promote safe, active, and pedestrian-scaled, diverse areas and enhance the convenience and ease of walking, shopping and public gathering within and around the city's neighborhoods (DZC, Section 4.2.4).” The proposed rezoning to E-MX-3 is consistent

with the Urban Edge neighborhood context. It will allow for development of an appropriately scaled mixed use node embedded near a single unit residential area.

Blueprint Denver Future Places



Blueprint Denver designates the subject property as Community Center future place, which is described as providing a mix of office, commercial, and residential uses with heights up to five stories (p. 210). The future streets are designated Local, which “can vary in their land uses and are found in all neighborhood contexts (pg. 161).” The proposed zone district is a mixed-use district that allows a mix of civic, residential, and commercial uses in buildings up to three stories. Therefore, the proposed E-MX-3 zone district is consistent with the Community Corridor Blueprint Denver Future Places and Future Streets plan direction.

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 designated as community centers and corridors, which are anticipated to account for 20 percent of jobs and 25 percent of new households in the city by 2040. "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-MX-3 will focus an appropriate intensity of mixed-use growth to a Community Corridor where it has been determined to be most appropriate and therefore is consistent with the *Blueprint Denver Future Growth Areas* plan direction.

Additional *Blueprint Denver* Strategies

Blueprint Denver provides recommendations related to rezoning. Because this site currently has a Former Chapter 59 zone district with custom zoning in the form of waivers, two strategies from the Land Use & Built Form: General section, Policy 3 are relevant for this proposed rezoning:

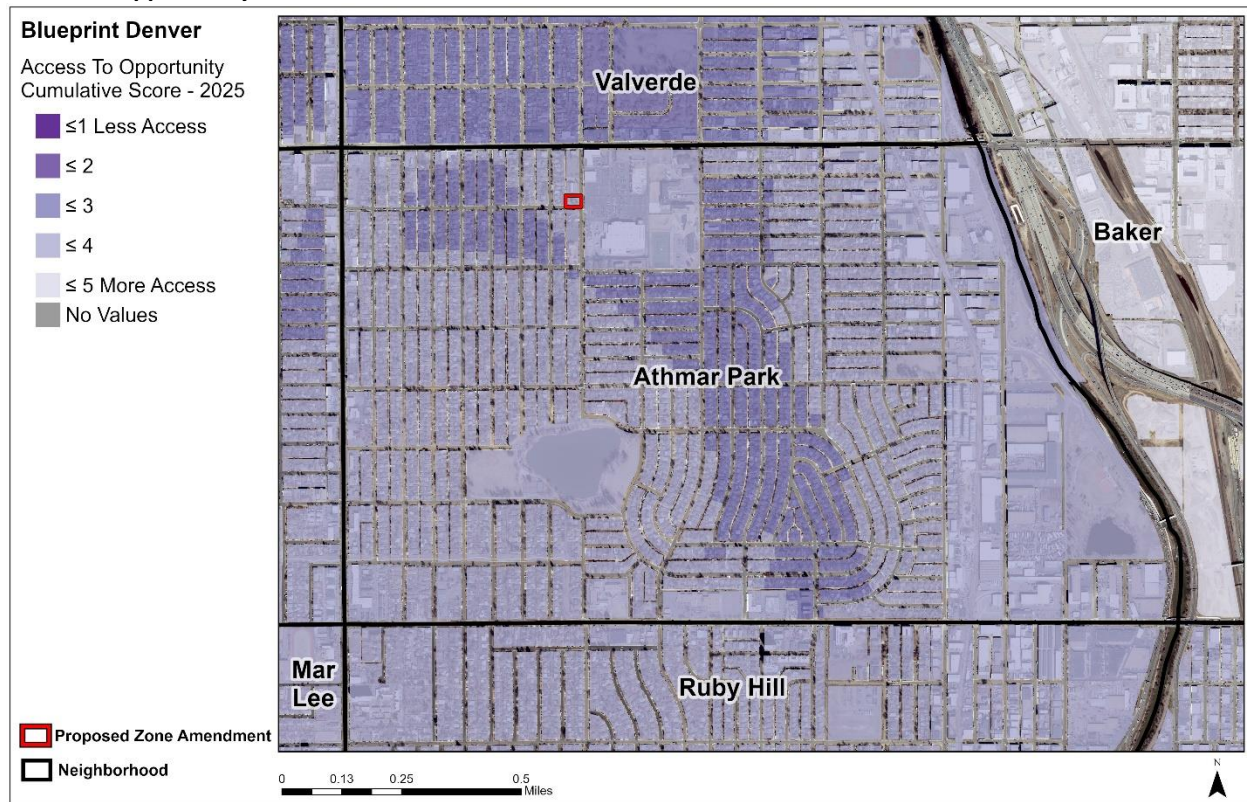
- Strategy A states, "Rezone properties from the Former Chapter 59 zoning code so that the entire city is covered by the DZC, including continuing to incentivize owners to come out of the old code (p. 73)."
- Strategy B states, "Limit the use of site-specific, customized zoning tools—such as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and waivers/conditions—to unique and extraordinary circumstances. The

zoning code offers a wide variety of zone districts that cover the diverse contexts and places of Denver. Custom zoning tools are most effective when a standard zone district does not exist to implement the adopted plans for an area (p.73).”

Blueprint Denver Equity Concepts

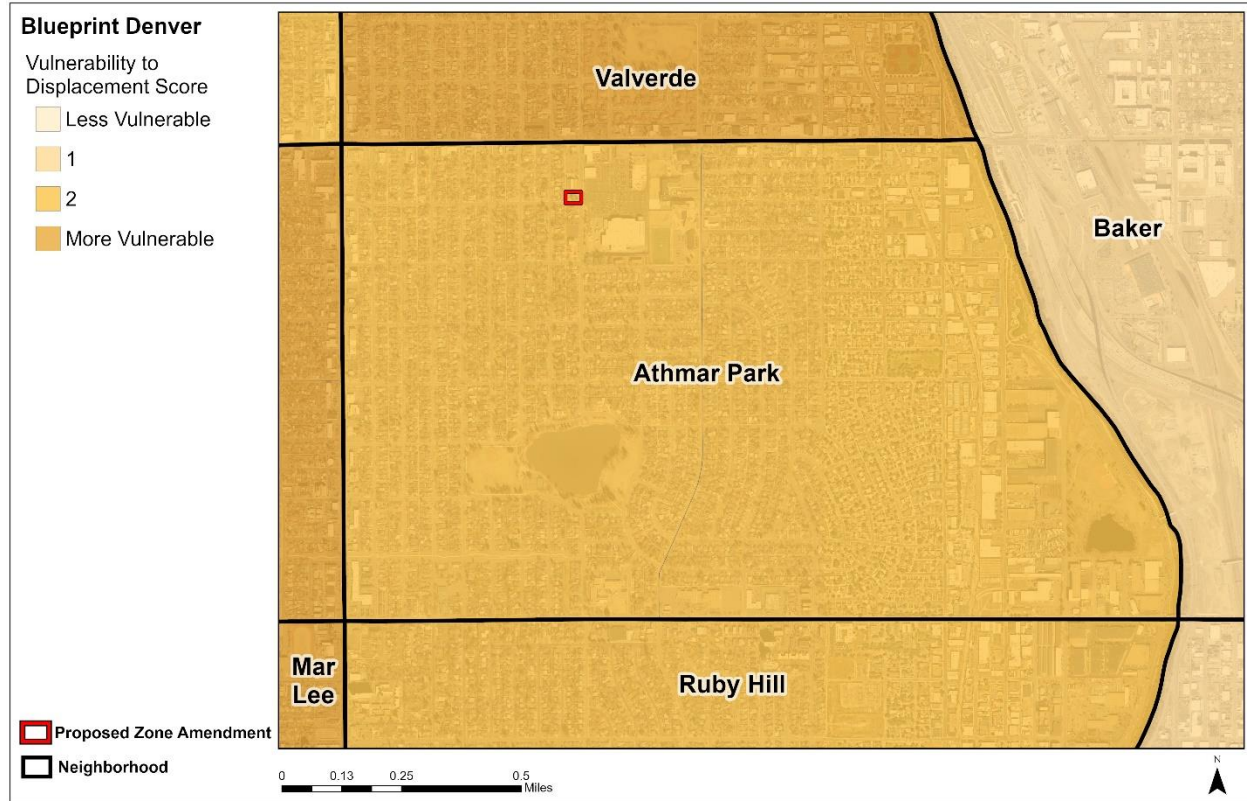
Blueprint Denver contains three equity concepts to help guide change to benefit everyone. Each equity concept has associated measurements that helps inform implementation actions through large rezonings along with other implementation actions. Given the location of this site in one of Denver’s Neighborhood Equity and Stabilization (NEST) neighborhoods, an equity analysis was completed to help align project outcomes with equity considerations.

Access to Opportunity



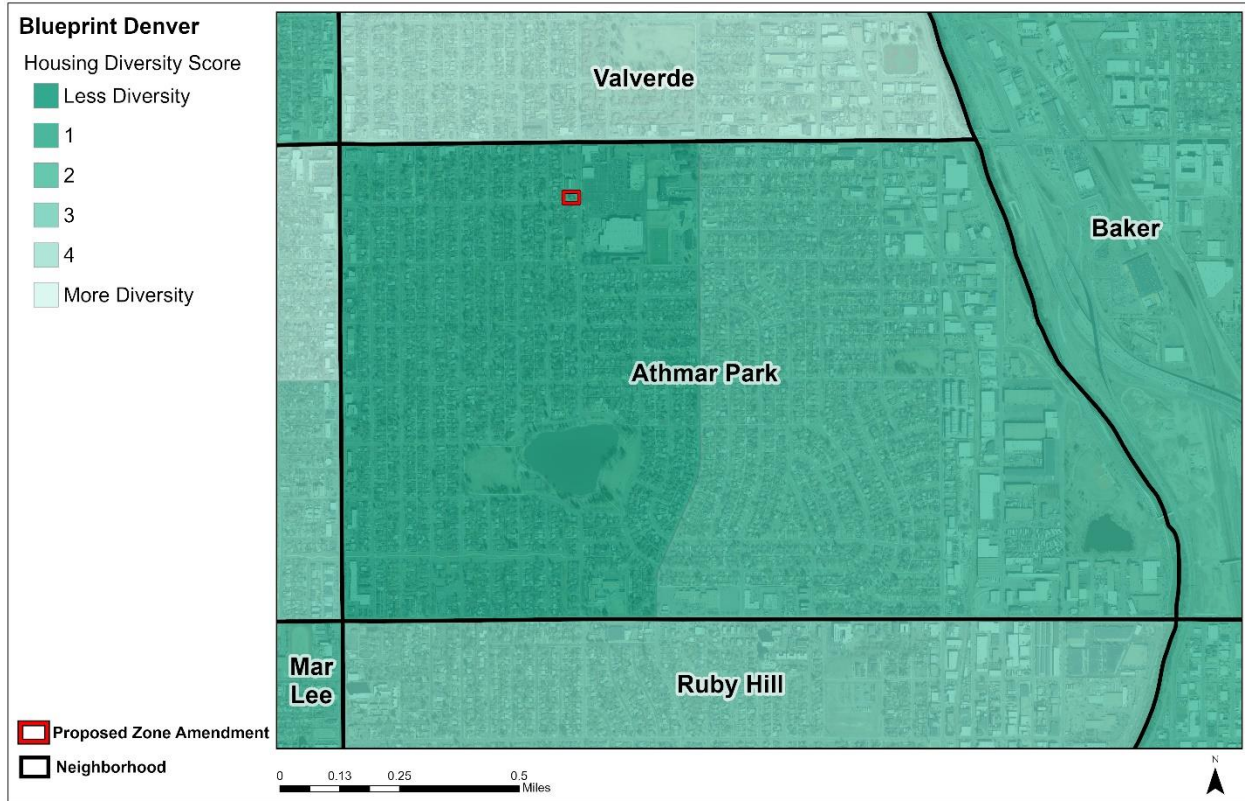
The subject property scored high on the access to opportunity measurement. It is near RTD bus lines, a commercial node, and the amenities along South Federal Boulevard.

Vulnerability to Involuntary Displacement



Vulnerability to involuntary displacement is measured by three data points: median household income, the percent of the population with less than a college degree, and the percentage of renters. The subject property scored as vulnerable on the first two metrics. As the proposed zone district allows for very similar development, the new zone district would not displace current residents or businesses and could create opportunities for new housing and employment.

Housing Diversity



The subject property scored very low on housing diversity, a measure of five indicators including the percent of middle-density housing (housing with 2-19 units), bedroom count diversity, ownership vs. rental properties, housing costs, and amount of income-restricted affordable units. The subject property scored as diverse on only one metric, diversity of bedroom count. The proposed zone district could allow for a diversity of new housing options which could improve the housing diversity score.

Athmar Park Neighborhood Perimeter Plan (2000)

The *Athmar Park Neighborhood Perimeter Plan* has the following goals relevant to the Alameda Square focus area:

- “Encourage business growth, revitalization, and development in the commercial areas along the Athmar Park neighborhood edges and in the industrial area (pg. 61).”
- “Encourage businesses to remain in Athmar Park or to expand operations in appropriately zoned areas (pg. 61).”
- “Encourage infill development and/or creative use of existing buildings including mixed-use zoning on identified transit corridors (pg. 61).”

The proposed E-MX-3 would allow a mix of civic, residential, and commercial uses that could result in business growth and infill development near transit corridors. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the *Athmar Park Neighborhood Perimeter Plan*.

Southwest Area Plan (2026)

Although not yet adopted by City Council, the *Southwest Area Plan* is anticipated to be adopted by City Council by the time this map amendment will be at council for public hearing, therefore it is relevant to this request. The proposed rezoning was reviewed for consistency with the (insert date) public review draft of the *Southwest Area Plan* (2026).

Southwest Area Plan Future Place

The *Southwest Area Plan* retains *Blueprint Denver's* neighborhood context, future street type, and future place designation of Community Center. As stated above, this rezoning application is consistent with that guidance.

Southwest Area Plan Goals and Policies

The *Southwest Area Plan* identifies the Alameda Square shopping center as a focus area for the plan, listing the following policies:

Policy AL-L2 - The Alameda Square shopping center should be a vibrant, safe, and accessible mixed use shopping destination (pg. 165).

- “A. This area will continue to have small and large cultural businesses that serve the community as well as large anchor tenant (pg. 165).”
- “B. Encourage new business as infill development or on vacant parcels or underused areas (pg. 165).”
- “D. If development takes place, it should be in the form of infill development on underutilized parking lots, vacant properties, city owned property or build upon existing buildings and structures (pg. 165).”

This rezoning application is consistent with these policies because it would create a new business on an underutilized lot.

Public Interest

The proposed official map amendment would further Public Interest through implementation of adopted plans. A mixed-use district such as E-MX-3 facilitates many of the goals and policies found in *Blueprint Denver*, the *Athmar Park Neighborhood Perimeter Plan*, and the in-progress *Southwest Area Plan*.

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

The requested E-MX-3 zone district is within the Urban Edge Neighborhood Context. This neighborhood context generally consists of single-unit and two-unit residential uses, with small-scale multi-unit residential uses and commercial areas typically embedded in residential areas (DZC, Division 4.1). Further, “Multi-unit residential and commercial uses are located along local streets, arterials, and main streets.”

The general purpose for the mixed-use zone districts stated in the Denver Zoning Code is to “promote safe, active, and pedestrian-scaled diverse areas through the use of building forms that clearly define

and activate the public street edge” and “ensure new development contributes positively to established residential neighborhoods and character, and improves the transition between commercial development and adjacent residential neighborhoods” (DZC Section 4.2.4.1).

The proposed E-MX-3 zone district would facilitate appropriately scaled mixed-use development with protected district standards that effectively improve the transition to the adjacent residential neighborhood, consistent with the stated purpose.

Attachments

1. Application + public outreach documentation