



TO: Denver Planning Board
FROM: Fran Penafiel, Principal City Planner
DATE: April 09, 2025
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application #2025I-00018

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends **approval** for Application #2025I-00018.

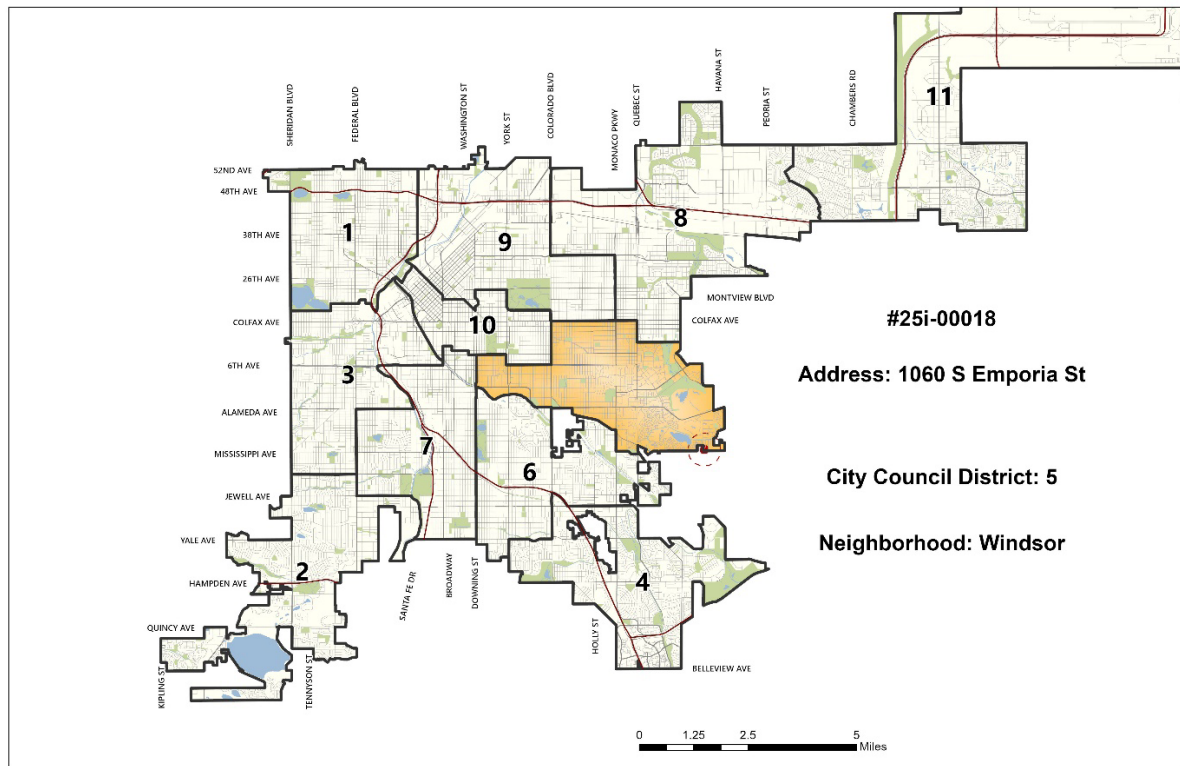
Request for Rezoning

Address:	1060 South Emporia Street
Neighborhood/Council District:	Windsor / Council District 5
RNOs:	Rangeview Neighborhood Association and Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC)
Area of Property:	84,100 square feet or 1.93 acres
Current Zoning:	OS-B
Proposed Zoning:	OS-A
Property Owner(s):	City and County of Denver
Owner Representative:	Scott Wisniewski, Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR)

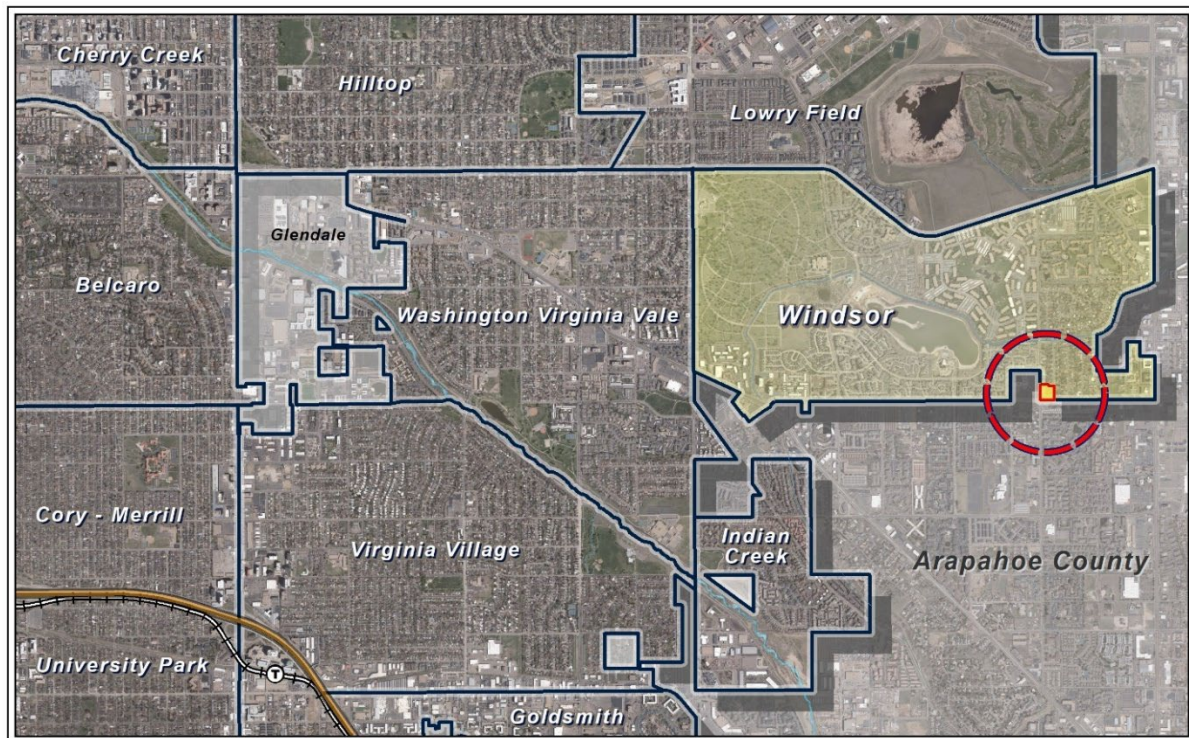
Summary of Rezoning Request

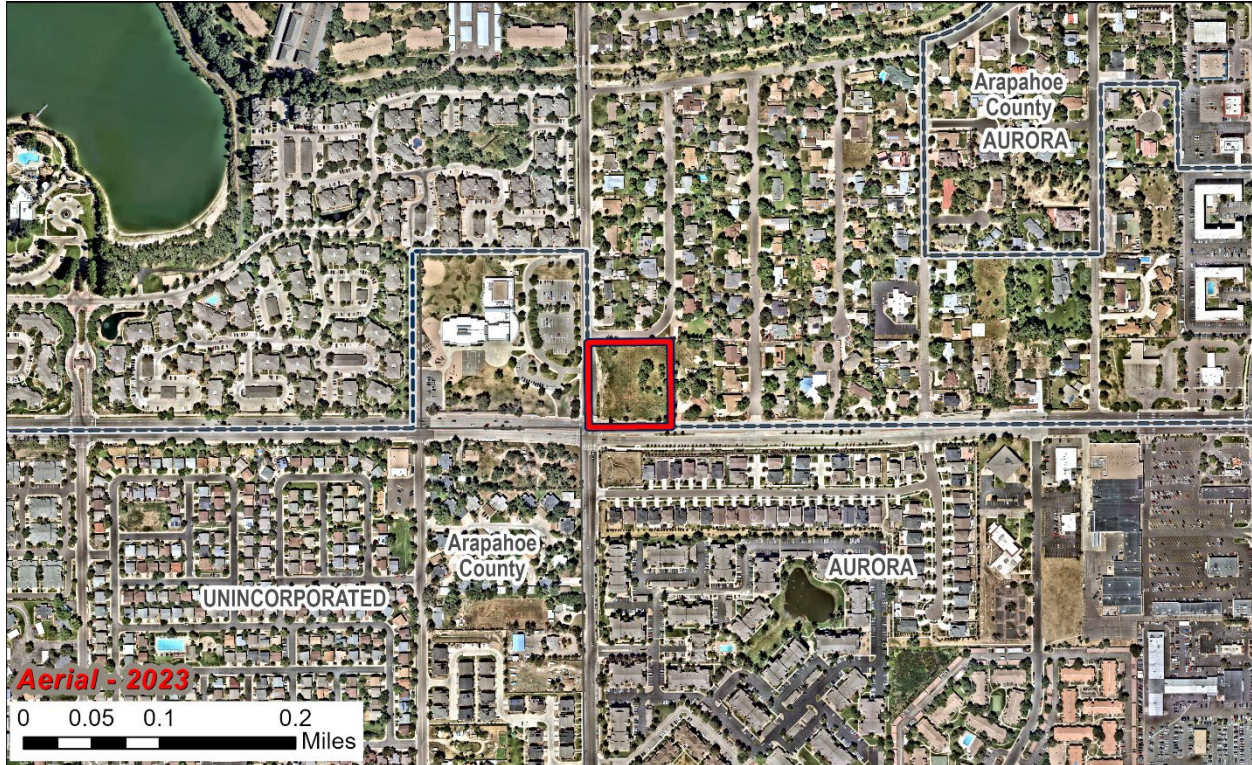
- The subject property is vacant and located at the northeast corner of East Mississippi Avenue and South Dayton Street.
- Community Planning and Development (CPD), on behalf of the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), is proposing to rezone the property to develop a public park and open space.
- The current OS-B district is intended to protect and promote open space and parks that are not owned, operated or leased by the City, and generally intended for active or passive recreation use. The proposed OS-A 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 ("DPR") for park purpose. 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



Neighborhood Location - Windsor



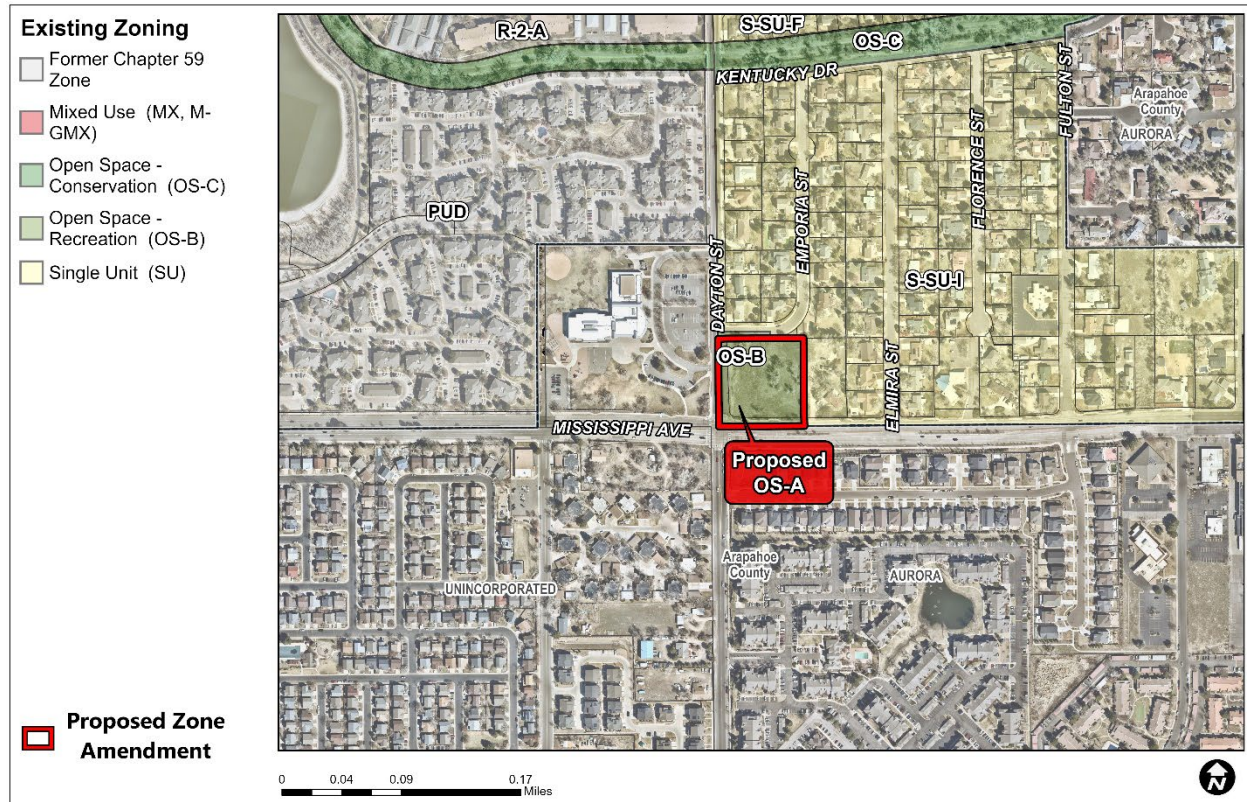


The subject property is in the Windsor statistical neighborhood, which is characterized primarily by single-unit residential uses east of South Dayton Street and multi-unit residential west of South Dayton Street. Generally, there is a pattern of irregular blocks with no alley access. The site is bounded by Arapahoe County to the west and south. Bus Route 11 runs along Mississippi Avenue, directly south of the site with a 30-minute headway.

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	OS-B	Vacant	Vacant	Block sizes and shapes are generally large with an irregular street grid.
North	S-SU-I	Single-unit Residential	2-story house with a curb cut on S. Emporia St.	
South	Arapahoe County	Single-unit Residential	2-story houses with curb cuts	
East	S-SU-I	Single-unit Residential	1-story house with curb cut onto Mississippi	
West	Arapahoe County	Public/Quasi-Public	2-story school with surface parking	

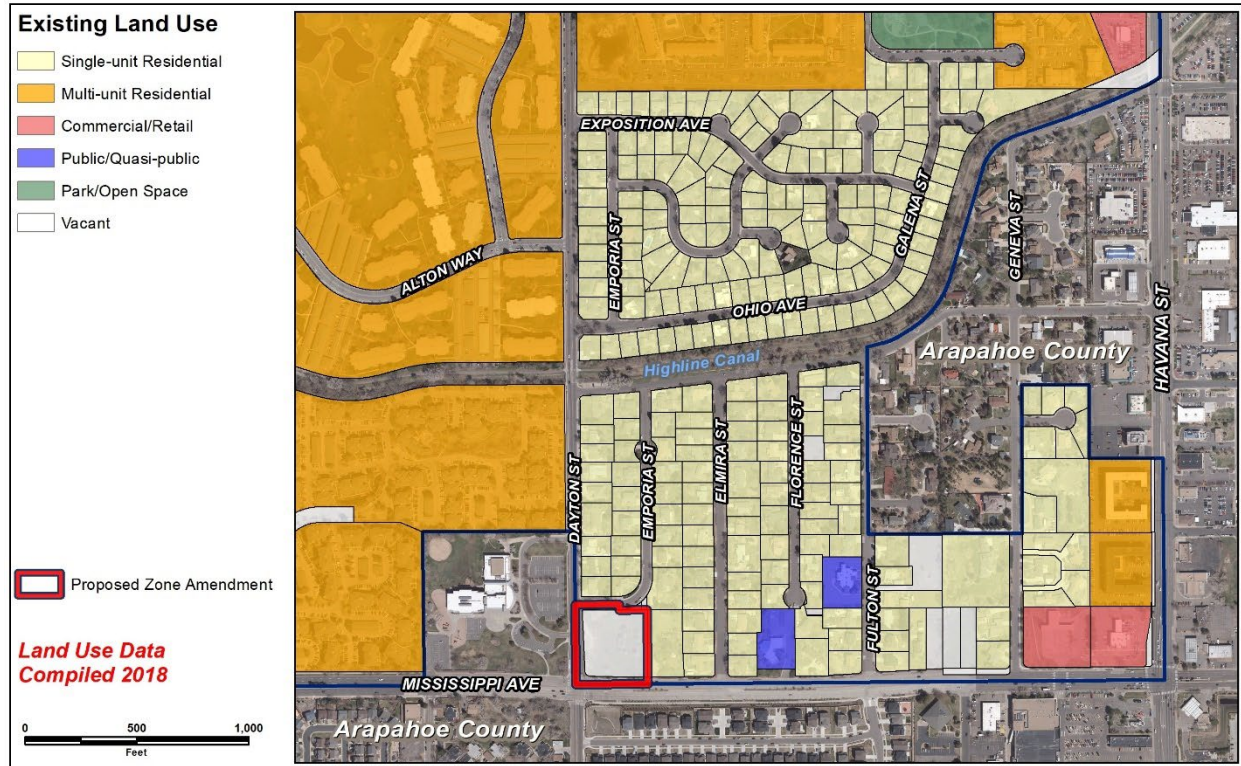
1. Existing Zoning



The subject property is currently zoned OS-B. The district mainly allows cultural, special purpose, and parks & open space uses with some educational, civic, and entertainment and recreation uses are also permitted. Compared to the OS-A zone district, the OS-B district is a district intended to protect and promote open space and parks that are not owned, operated or leased by the City, and generally intended for active or passive recreation use.

OS-B only allows for the General building form, which has a maximum height of 3 stories or 40 feet. Additionally, setbacks of 20 feet from the primary street, side street, side interior, and rear are required for any structure.

2. Existing Land Use Map



3. Existing Building Form and Scale (Source for all photos: Google Maps)





View of the properties to the south looking north on East Kansas Avenue.



View of the property to the east looking north from East Mississippi Avenue.



View of the property to the north, looking north on South Emporia Street.



View of the property to west looking west on South Dayton Street.

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 comment.

Denver Public Schools: Approved – No response.

Department of Public Health and Environment: Approved – No comments.

Denver Parks and Recreation: Approved – No comments.

Department of Transportation & Infrastructure - City Surveyor: Approved – See comments below. Recommend adding the quarter section, township, and range to the description. A revised .docx file is attached.

Development Services - Transportation: Approved – No response

Development Services – Wastewater: Approved – No response.

Development Services – Project Coordination: Approved – No response.

Development Services – Fire Prevention: Approved – No response.

Public Review Process

	Date
Receipt of Complete Application - CPD informational notice of receipt of the rezoning application to all affected members of City Council, registered neighborhood organizations, and property owners and tenants within 10 days of application deemed complete:	03/07/2025
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, and property owners:	04/01/2025
Planning Board public hearing:	04/16/2025
CPD written notice of the Land Use, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee meeting sent to all affected members of City Council and registered neighborhood organizations, at least ten working days before the meeting:	04/15/2025
Land Use, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of the City Council (tentative):	04/29/2025
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 (tentative):	05/19/2025
City Council Public Hearing (tentative):	06/09/2025

- **Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)**
 - To date, staff has not received any comments from Registered Neighborhood Organizations.
- **Other Public Comment**
 - To date, staff has not received any comments from the public.

Criteria for Review / Staff Evaluation

Staff has reviewed the proposed rezoning according to the criteria 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 application:

- 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, including:

- Equitable, Affordable and Inclusive Goal 1, Strategy A – “Improve equitable access to resources that improve quality of life, including cultural and natural amenities, health care, education, parks, recreation, nutritious food and the arts” (p. 28).

The proposed OS-A allows for park and recreation uses in an area where access to recreation opportunities are more limited. Therefore, rezoning to OS-A will improve access to resources that will improve the quality of life for neighboring residents.

- Environmentally Resilient Goal 8, Strategy A – “Promote infill development where infrastructure and services are already in place” (p. 54).

The proposed map amendment will allow active and passive recreation uses on a vacant lot in a largely developed area where services such as water, stormwater, and transit already exist. This allows Denver to grow responsibly and promotes land conservation.

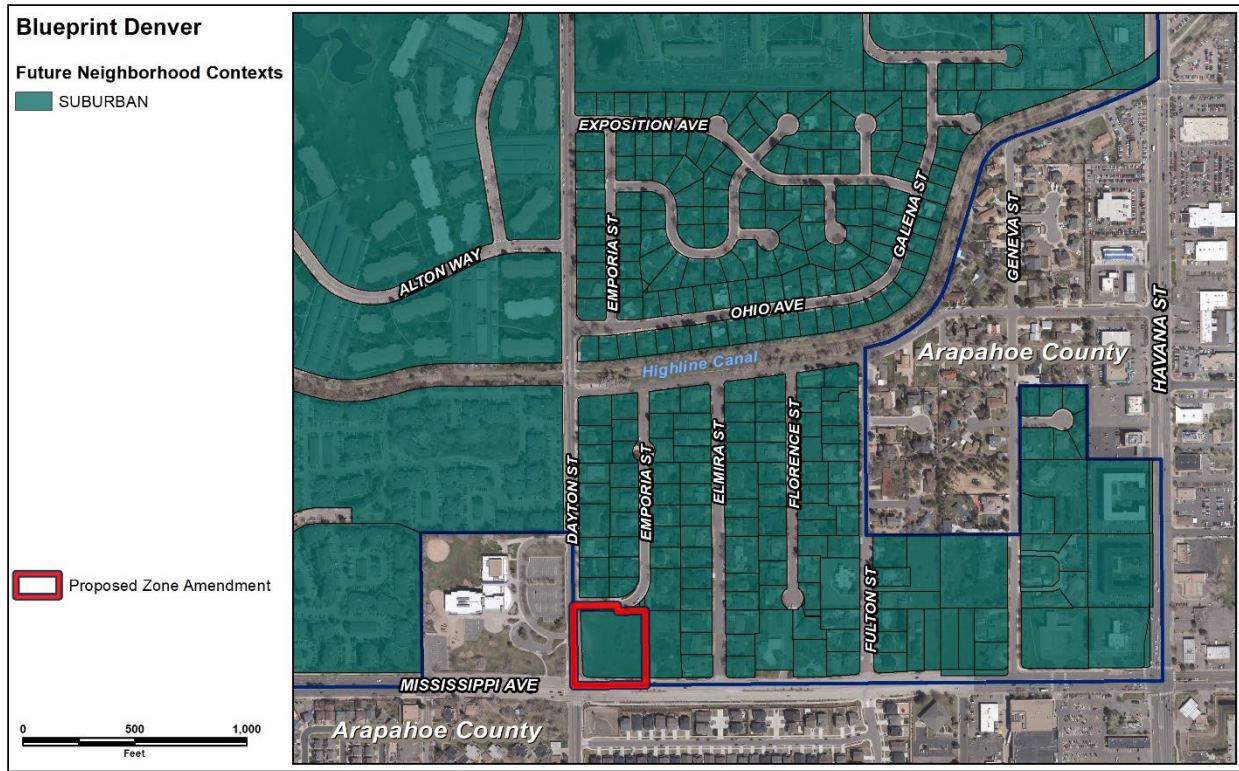
- Healthy and Active Goal 1, Strategy A – “Recognize parks, recreation and the urban forest as vital components of a complete community” (p. 58).

Rezoning to OS-A will allow more park and recreation opportunities in the Windsor neighborhood, which will lead to a more complete neighborhood.

Blueprint Denver

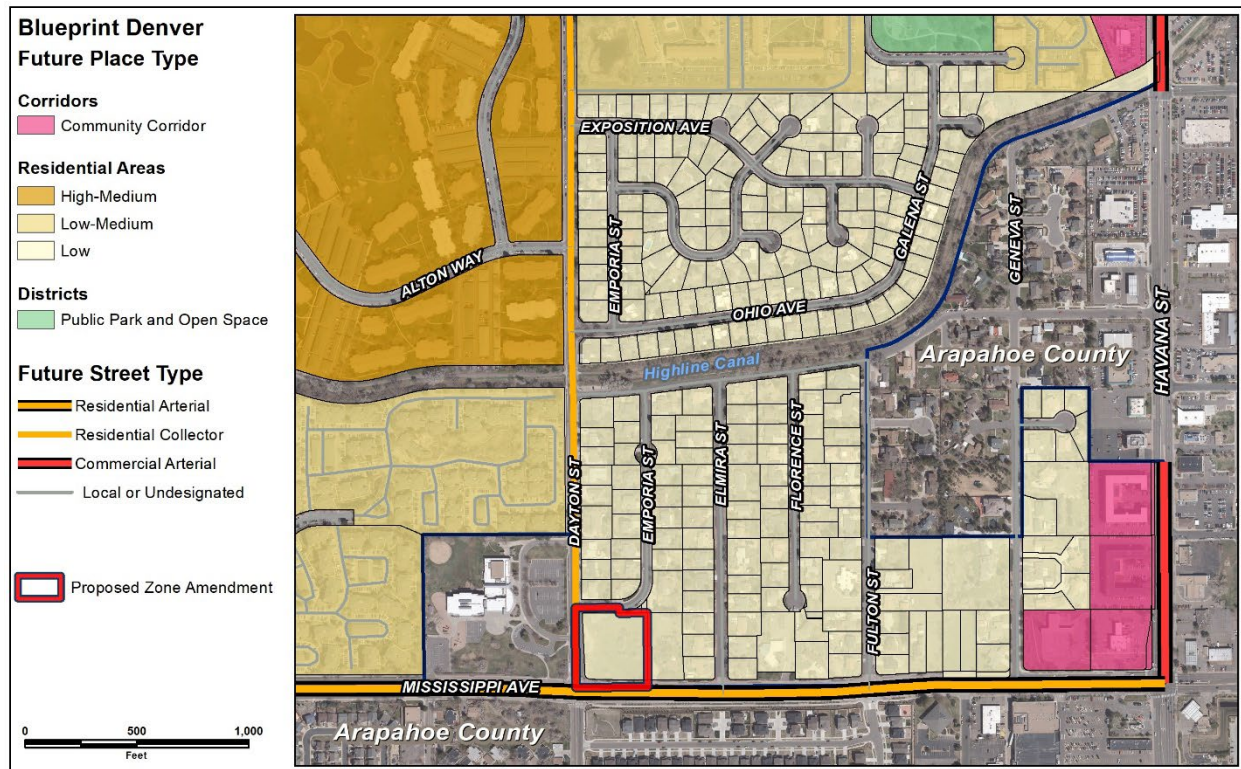
Blueprint Denver was adopted in 2019 as a supplement to *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and establishes an integrated framework for the city's land use and transportation decisions. *Blueprint Denver* identifies the subject property as part of a Low Residential place within the Suburban Neighborhood Context 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 between land use, built form, and mobility at a high scale, between neighborhoods. The subject site is shown on the context map as the Suburban neighborhood context, the description of which is used to guide appropriate zone districts (p. 66). The Suburban neighborhood context is described as a “range of uses from single-unit and multi-unit residential to commercial corridors and centers” with irregular block patterns with curvilinear streets (p. 136). Parks and Open Spaces are important and necessary land uses within all of Denver’s neighborhood contexts. 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 for park purposes. (DZC 9.3.3.1). OS-A is consistent with the future neighborhood context because parks and open spaces are important and necessary elements within a suburban neighborhood and supports the variety of land uses included in the Suburban Neighborhood Context and to make complete neighborhoods.

Blueprint Denver Future Places

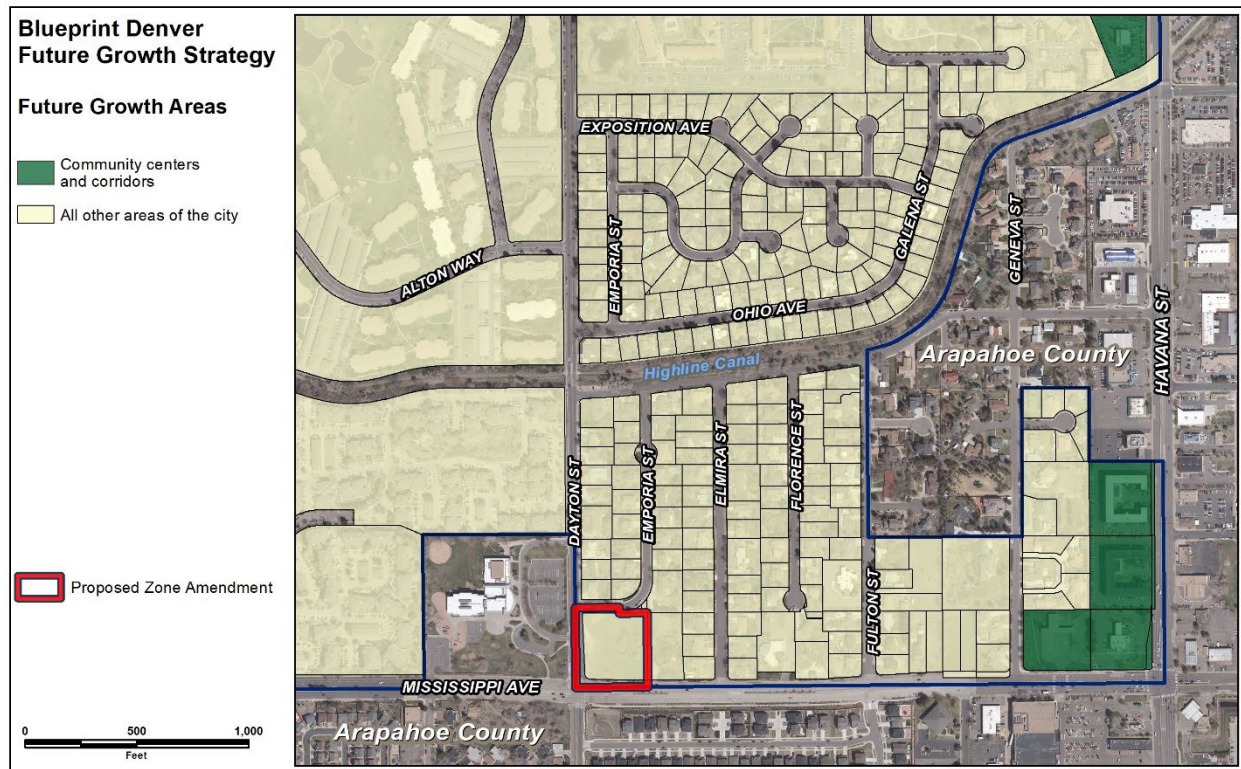


The subject site is designated within a Low Residential future place type on the *Blueprint Denver* Future Places map. This place type is defined as “areas where the predominant use is residential. Although they are primarily residential, these areas are supported by a variety of embedded uses needed for a complete neighborhood” (p. 149). Because parks are considered an essential element of a complete neighborhood, they are an appropriate use in any residential area. Therefore, the proposed rezoning is consistent with the Low Residential future place type because it will allow similar uses to that of the Suburban Single-unit districts while bringing a new park and open space to this area.

Blueprint Denver Street Types

In *Blueprint Denver*, street types work together with the future place to evaluate the appropriateness of the intensity of the adjacent development (p. 67). *Blueprint Denver* classifies E. Mississippi Ave. as a Residential Arterial, S. Dayton St. as a Residential Collector, and S. Emporia St. as a Local street. Arterial streets “are designed for the highest amount of through movement and the lowest degree of property access” (p. 154). Whereas Collector streets collect movement from local streets and move it to arterial streets. Residential streets such as E. Mississippi Ave. and S. Dayton St. are “primarily residential uses, but may also include schools, civic uses, parks, small retail nodes or other similar uses” (p. 160). “Local streets can vary in their land uses and are found in all neighborhood contexts. They are most often characterized by residential uses” (p. 155). The proposed OS-A is consistent with the Future Street Types because it will allow for park and open space uses.

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 the "All other areas of the city" growth area. These areas anticipate experiencing around 20% of new housing growth and 10% of new employment growth by 2040 (p. 51). This growth area is "mostly residential areas with embedded local centers and corridors, take a smaller amount of growth intended to strengthen the existing character of our neighborhoods" (p. 49). The proposed map amendment to OS-A will allow low-intensity growth to the number of jobs in this area by allows active and passive recreation uses. It will also support the future growth of this area by providing more opportunities for parks and open spaces.

Blueprint Denver Strategies

Equity

Blueprint Denver states "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. This rezoning will improve access to opportunity by creating more equitable access to quality-of-life amenities like it is a public park and open space in a currently vacant lot. "The proximity of an amenity (including parks), the affordability of that amenity, and the safety and ease of access to that amenity are important elements of access to opportunity. Equitable access to opportunity strengthens our collective prosperity and improves outcomes for all" (p.32).

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 a vacant site into a park. 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.

Climate

This rezoning supports the city’s goals to reduce climate impacts by enabling a public park on a vacant lot. 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 in the Windsor neighborhood, which will contribute to a complete neighborhood.

Game Plan for a Healthy City

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 public park 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.

2. Public Interest

The proposed official map amendment furthers the public health, safety, and general welfare of the city through implementation of the city's adopted land use plans and by allowing for a recreational open space use. This rezoning may facilitate the creation of a public park, and according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "having access to places for physical activity, such as parks and trails, encourages community residents to participate in physical activity and do so more often" (Parks, Trails and Health: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/parks.htm>).

The proposed official map amendment furthers the public health, safety, and general welfare of the City by enabling more recreational and park opportunities for neighboring residents will increase quality of life and health outcomes in the Windsor neighborhood. Additionally, according to the American Planning Association, an important aspect of a built environment that promotes health is having outdoor space for physical activity within a half-mile of where people live and work. This rezoning promotes a healthy environment by increasing the number of residents within a half-mile of recreational opportunities.

3. 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