



TO: Denver Planning Board
FROM: Francisca Penafiel, Associate City Planner
DATE: November 10, 2021
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application #2021I-00195

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends **approval** for Application #2021I-00195.

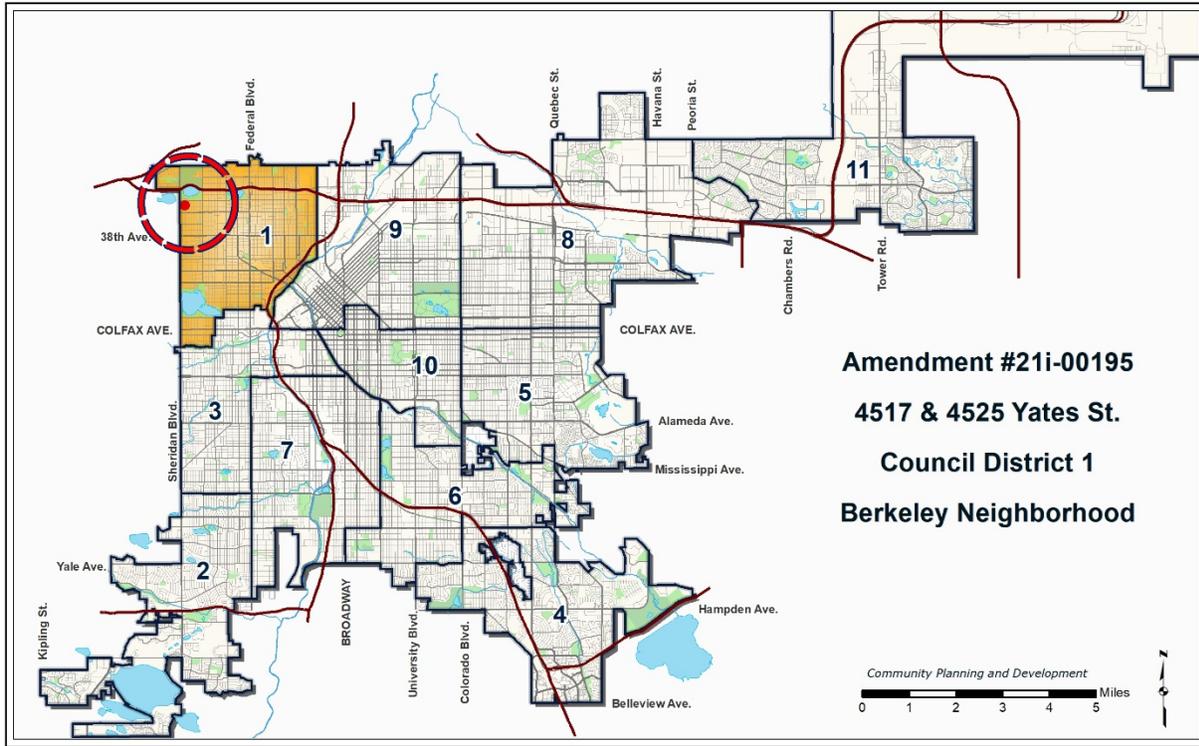
Request for Rezoning

Address: 4517 & 4525 North Yates Street
Neighborhood/Council District: Berkeley / Council District 1 – Amanda Sandoval
RNOs: Berkeley Regis United Neighbors, Unite North Metro Denver, Denver for ALL, District 1 Neighborhood Coalition, Inc., West Tennyson Founders, Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC)
Area of Properties: 4,390 + 4,390 = 8,780 square feet or 0.2 acres
Current Zoning: U-SU-C1
Proposed Zoning: U-SU-A1
Property Owner(s): Marley & Alex Withrow, Sharon Peterson & Paul Nagy
Owner Representative: Marley Withrow

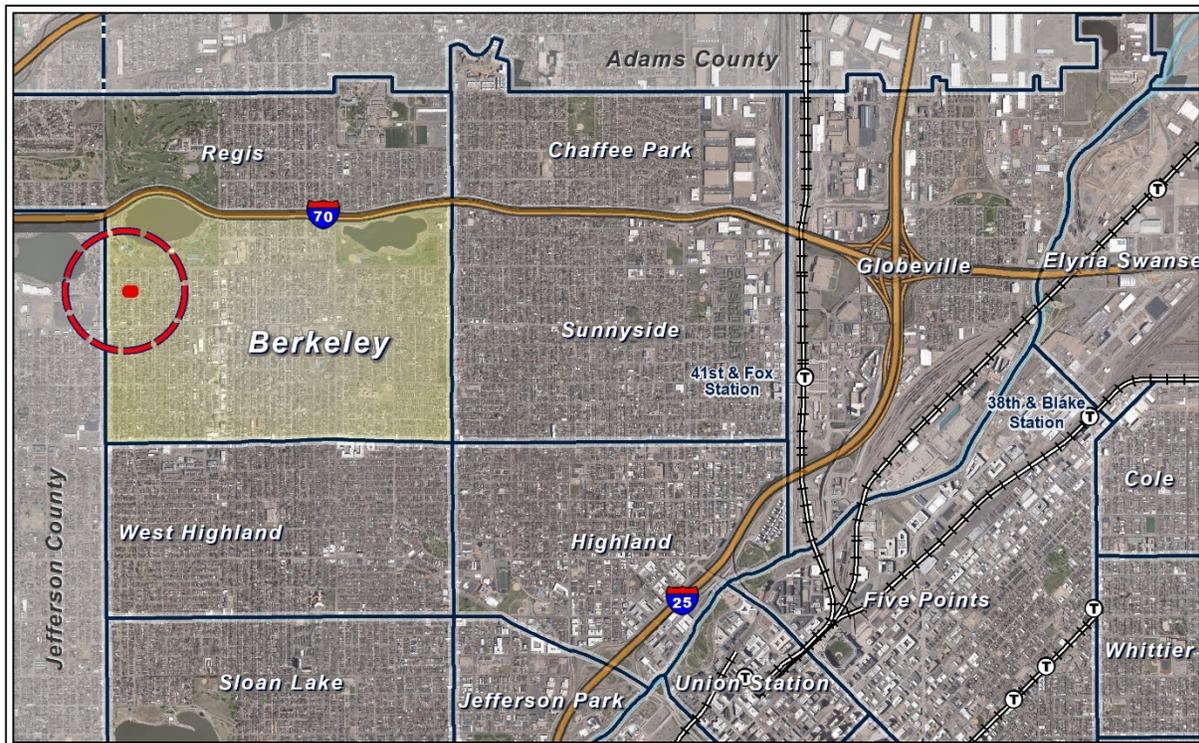
Summary of Rezoning Request

- These two properties came together for rezoning given the similarities of the sites. They abut one another on a side interior lot line, and the research shows they have very similar contexts and conditions. The applicants were made aware of the benefits and risks of bundling the sites into one application. While it will save resources, if one of the subject properties requesting to be rezoned was to be denied, the other property would also be denied.
- The property at 4525 North Yates Street was built in 1925 and the one at 4517 North Yates Street was built in 2018. The property owners are proposing to rezone their properties to a district with a smaller minimum zone lot size to build a detached accessory dwelling unit. While an attached accessory dwelling unit is allowed under the existing zoning, a detached accessory dwelling unit is not allowed in the existing zoning because the zone lots are smaller than the minimum 5,500 square feet required in the U-SU-C1 zone district.
- The proposed U-SU-A1, **Urban, Single-Unit, A1** (3,000 square feet minimum zone lot size allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs)), zone district is intended for use in the Urban Neighborhood Context which is characterized by single-unit and two-unit uses. Single-unit residential uses are typically located along local and arterial streets and structures are usually the Urban House building form. The maximum height of the Urban House building form is 30 to 35 feet for the front 65% of the zone lot and 17 to 19 feet in the rear 35% of the zone lot.

City Location



Neighborhood Location – Berkeley Neighborhood



Existing Context

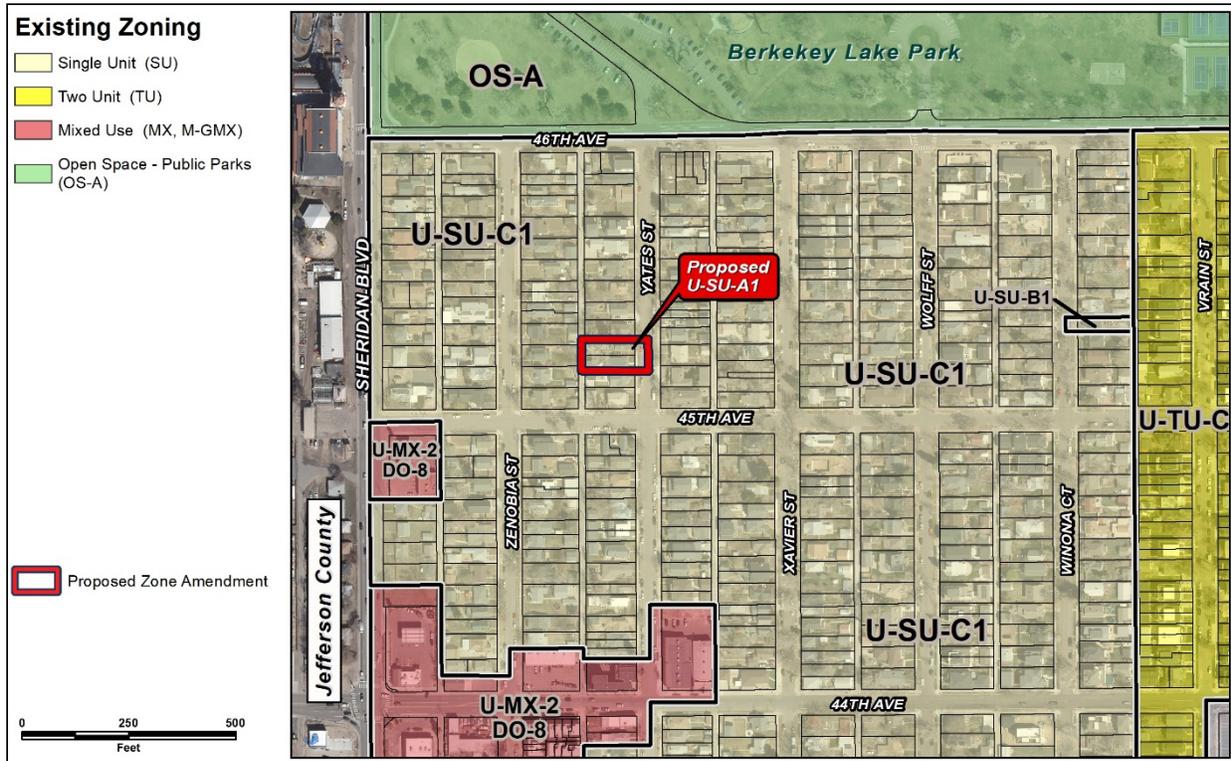


The subject property is in the Berkeley neighborhood, which is characterized primarily by single-unit and two-unit residential uses with a corridor of mixed-use and commercial uses along North Sheridan Boulevard, West 44th Avenue and North Tennyson Street. Generally, there is a pattern of rectangular blocks in a street grid pattern with alley access. The subject property is between West 46th and 45th avenues and is 0.5 miles south from I-70. It is also a block and a half north from West 44th Avenue where RTD bus route 44 travels. A buffered bike lane traverses West 46th Avenue, one half block to the north of the property.

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

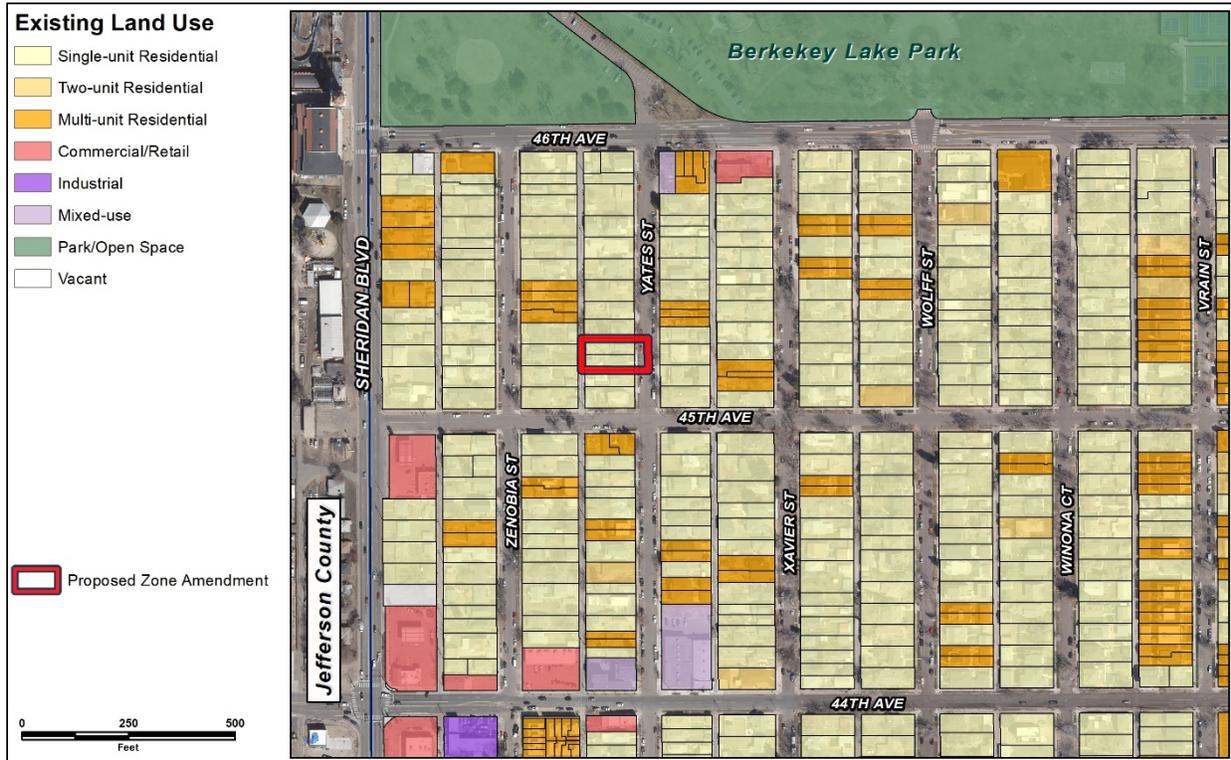
	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use	Existing Building Form/Scale	Existing Block, Lot, Street Pattern
4525 N Yates St	U-SU-C1	Single-unit Residential	1-story bungalow with detached garage and alley access	Block sizes and shapes are consistent and rectangular. Detached sidewalks with tree lawns and existing alleys. Garages and on-street vehicle parking.
4517 N Yates St	U-SU-C1	Single-unit Residential	2-story house with detached garage and alley access	
North	U-SU-C1	Single-unit Residential	1-story bungalow with driveway at the north of the property	
South	U-SU-C1	Single-unit Residential	1-story bungalow with detached garage and alley access	
East	U-SU-C1	Single-unit Residential	1-story bungalow with detached garage and alley access	
West	U-SU-B1	Single-unit Residential	1-story bungalow	

1. Existing Zoning



The U-SU-C1 zone district is a single-unit residential district with a minimum zone lot size of 5,500 square feet and allows the Urban House primary building form and the Accessory Dwelling Unit use and building form. The maximum allowed height is 2.5 stories or 30 to 35 feet in the front 65% of the zone lot, 1 story and 17 feet to 19 feet in the rear 35% of the zone lot. It allows three accessory structure forms: Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, Detached Garage, and Other Detached Accessory Structure. The maximum height for a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit is 24 feet and requires a minimum zone lot size of 5,500 square feet to be constructed. For all other permitted accessory structures, the maximum height is 17 feet and there is no zone lot size minimum. The intent of the district is to promote and protect residential neighborhoods within the character of the Urban Neighborhood Context.

2. Existing Land Use Map



3. Existing Building Form and Scale (all images from Google Maps)



Subject Sites - View of both subject properties, looking west.



North - View of the property to the north of 4525 North Yates Street, looking west.



South – View of the property to the south of 4517 North Yates Street, looking west.



East - View of the property to the east across North Yates Street, looking east.



West – View of the property to the west across the alley on North Zenobia Street, looking east.

Proposed Zoning

U-SU-A1 is a single-unit zone district with a minimum zone lot size of 3,000 square feet, allowing only the Urban House primary building form. A variety of residential and civic uses are permitted as primary uses in the U-SU-A1 district. Compared to the U-SU-C1 district, U-SU-A1 allows the Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU) building form on a smaller zone lot with a minimum of 3,000 square feet. The Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit building form has a maximum height of 1.5 stories or 24 feet. A bulk plane that raises 10 feet vertically from the side interior or side street zone lot line, then slopes 45 degrees applies to the DADU building form. This form also allows an exemption from the 37.5% building coverage standard allowing the lesser of 50% or 500 square feet. The subject site has a lot size of 4,390 square feet, allowing a maximum building footprint of 650 square feet for the DADU.

The primary building forms and relevant standards of the detached accessory dwelling unit accessory building forms allowed in the existing zone district and the proposed zone district are summarized below.

Design Standards	U-SU-C1 (Existing)	U-SU-A1 (Proposed)
Primary Building Forms Allowed	Urban House	Urban House
Maximum Height in Stories/Feet, Front 65% of Zone Lot*	2.5 stories / 30 feet	2.5 stories / 30 feet
Maximum Height in Stories/Feet, Rear 35% of Zone Lot*	1 story / 17 feet	1 story / 17 feet
DADU Maximum Heights in Stories / Feet	1.5 stories / 24 feet	1.5 stories / 24 feet
Zone Lot Size (Min.) for both Urban House and DADU	5,500 square feet	3,000 square feet
Minimum Zone Lot Width (Min.)	50 feet	25 feet
Primary Street Block Sensitive Setback Required / If not	Yes / 20 feet	Yes / 20 feet
Side Street Setback (Min.) *	5 feet	5 feet
Side Interior Setback (Min.) *	5 feet	5 feet
Rear Alley / No Alley	12 feet / 20 feet	12 feet / 20 feet
Building Coverage per Zone Lot including all accessory structures (Max.), not including exceptions	37.5 %	37.5%
Detached Accessory Building Forms Allowed	Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, Detached Garage, Other Detached Accessory Structures	Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, Detached Garage, Other Detached Accessory Structures

*Based on subject properties with width of 35 feet

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 Comments.

Public Works – R.O.W. - City Surveyor: Approved – No Comments:
Approved Legal description

4525 N Yates St
Denver, CO 80212

LOT 30 AND THE SOUTH 1/2 OF LOT 31, BLOCK 39, BLOCKS 1 to 40, BOTH INCLUSIVE, BERKELEY, CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER, STATE OF COLORADO.

4517 N Yates Street
Denver, CO 80212

LOT 29 AND THE NORTH 1/2 OF LOT 28, BLOCK 39, BLOCKS 1 to 40, BOTH INCLUSIVE, BERKELEY, CITY AND COUNTY OF DENVER, STATE OF COLORADO

Development Services - Transportation: Approved – No Response.

Development Services – Wastewater: Approved – No See Comments Below.

There is no objection to the rezone. Upon rezoning 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.

Development Services – Project Coordination: Approved – No Comments.

Development Services – Fire Prevention: Approved – No Comments.

Public Review Process

	Date
CPD informational notice of receipt of the rezoning application to all affected members of City Council, registered neighborhood organizations, and property owners:	09/23/2021
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:	11/01/2021
Planning Board Public Hearing:	11/17/2021
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:	11/09/2021
Land Use, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee of the City Council (tentative):	11/23/2021
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):	12/13/2021
City Council Public Hearing (tentative):	01/03/2022

- **Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)**
 - To date, staff has received no comment letters from Registered Neighborhood Organizations.
- **Other Public Comment**
 - To date, staff has received three public comment letters in support of the request. They all state their strong support of ADUs in general and also in this particular location to help add living space for the applicants while keeping with the neighborhood character.

Criteria for Review / Staff Evaluation

The criteria for review of this rezoning application are found in DZC, Sections 12.4.10.7 and 12.4.10.8, as follows:

DZC Section 12.4.10.7

1. Consistency with Adopted Plans
2. Uniformity of District Regulations and Restrictions
3. Public Health, Safety and General Welfare

DZC Section 12.4.10.8

1. Justifying Circumstances
2. 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 2, Strategy A – Create a greater mix of housing options in every neighborhood for all individuals and families (p. 28).

U-SU-A1 allows for an additional detached dwelling unit that is accessory to the primary single-unit dwelling use. Accessory dwelling units can provide housing for individuals or families with different incomes, ages, and needs than the single-unit homes that currently dominate the Berkeley neighborhood.

- Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods Goal 1, Strategy B – *Ensure neighborhoods offer a mix of housing types and services for a diverse population* (p. 34).

The proposed rezoning would allow infill development appropriate for the surrounding neighborhood that broadens the range of housing types available.

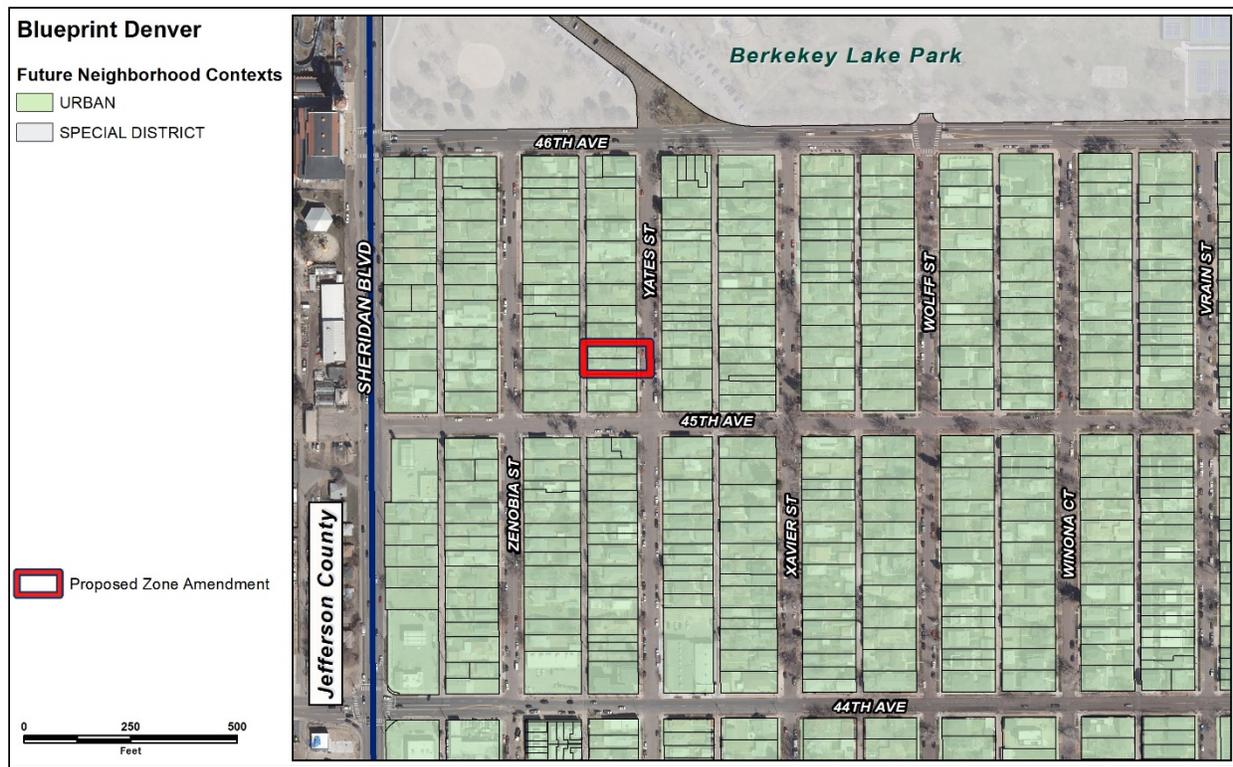
- Environmentally Resilient Goal 8, Strategy A – Promote infill development where infrastructure and services are already in place (p. 54).

The proposed map amendment will allow an additional detached housing unit on each site of the existing single-unit homes where infrastructure and services such as water, stormwater, and transit already exist. This allows Denver to grow responsibly and promotes land conservation.

Blueprint Denver

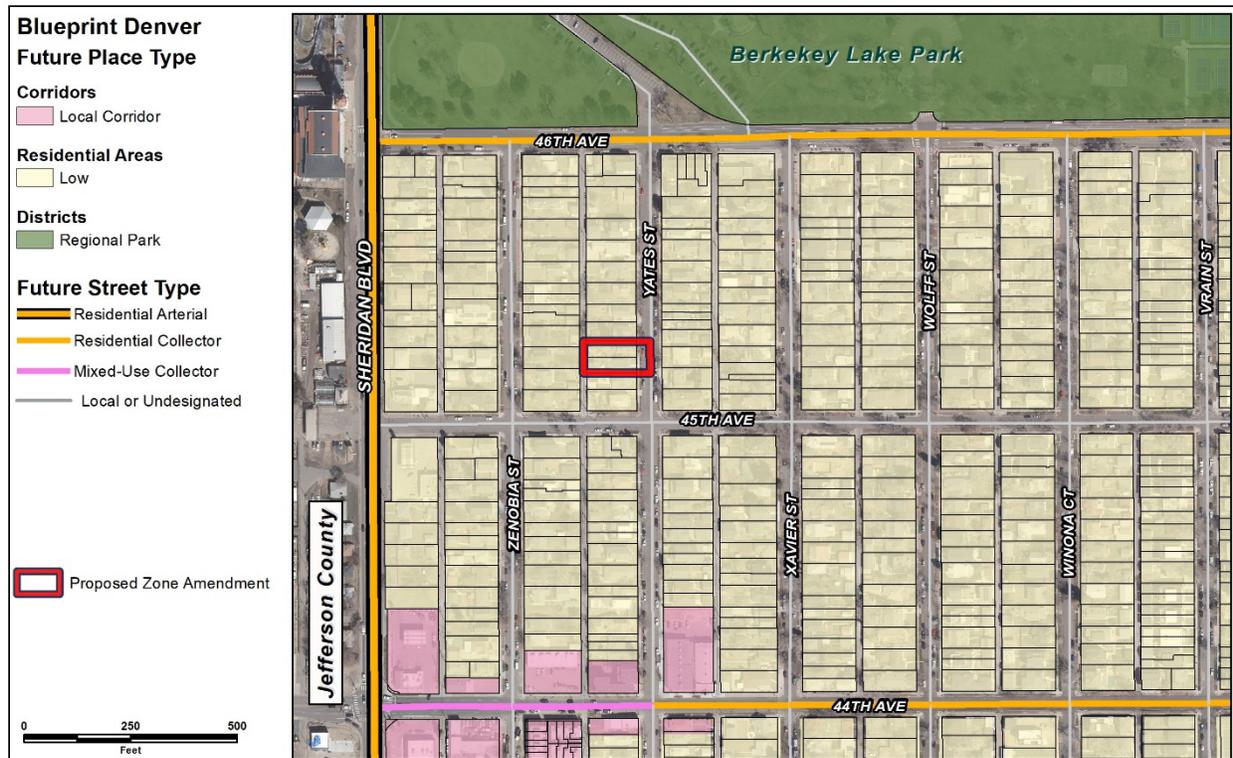
Blueprint Denver was adopted in 2019 as a supplement to *Comprehensive Plan 2040* and establishes an integrated framework for the city’s land use and transportation decisions. *Blueprint Denver* identifies the subject properties as part of a Low Residential place within the Urban Neighborhood Context and provides guidance on the future growth strategy for the city.

Blueprint Denver Future Neighborhood Context



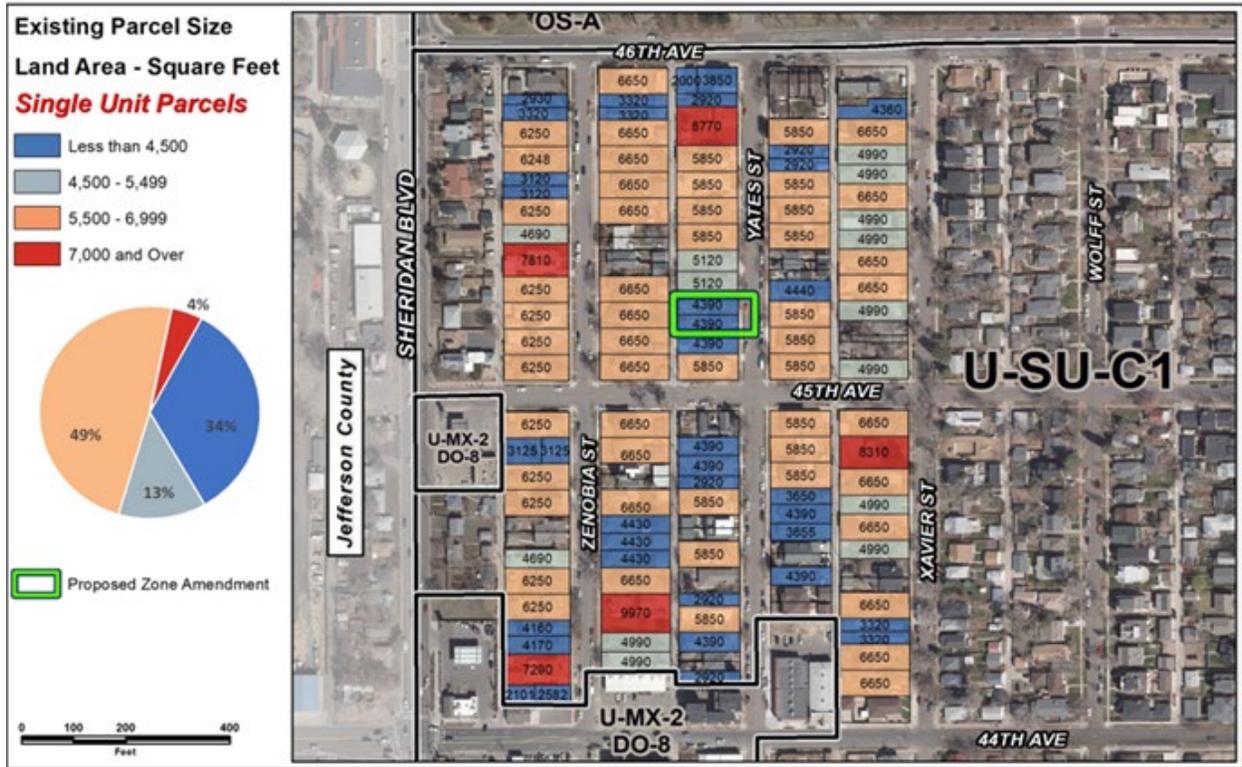
In *Blueprint Denver*, future neighborhood contexts are used to help understand differences between land use, built form, and mobility at a high scale, between neighborhoods. The subject sites are shown on the context map as Urban neighborhood context, the description of which is used to guide appropriate zone districts (p. 66). The Urban neighborhood context is described as containing “small multi-unit residential and low-intensity mixed-use buildings typically embedded in single-unit and two-unit residential areas” with grid block patterns and alley access (p. 222). U-SU-A1 is a zone district within the Urban neighborhood context and is “intended to promote and protect residential neighborhoods within the character of the Urban Neighborhood Context” and “the building form standards, design standards and uses work together to promote desirable residential areas” (DZC 5.2.2.1). U-SU-A1 is consistent with the *Blueprint Denver* future Urban neighborhood context because it will promote the residential character by allowing single-unit residential uses with a low-scale accessory dwelling unit that will be compatible with the existing residential area.

Blueprint Denver Future Places



The subject sites are designated within a Low Residential future place type on the *Blueprint Denver* Future Places map. This place type is “predominately single- and two-unit uses on smaller lots. Accessory dwelling units and duplexes are appropriate and can be thoughtfully integrated where compatible,” and “building heights are generally up to 2.5 stories in height” (p. 230). U-SU-A1 is a single-unit residential district that allows for an additional dwelling unit accessory to a primary single-unit residential use, which is consistent with the Low Residential future place type description. It allows the Urban House building form, which has a maximum height of 2.5 stories, also consistent with the future places map.

Additionally, the applicants are proposing to rezone from U-SU-C1 with a minimum zone lot size of 5,500 square feet and minimum zone lot width of 50 feet to a district with a smaller lot size, U-SU-A1, with a minimum zone lot size of 3,000 square feet and minimum zone lot width of 25 feet. *Blueprint Denver* provides guidance for these situations stating, “it is only appropriate to allow smaller lot sizes than the existing zone district if there is an established pattern in the surrounding blocks of smaller lots with similar uses that would be consistent with the zone district request” (p. 231). While 50% of the lots in the block where the subject property sites are located have a lot size consistent with the U-SU-C1 district, the other 50% of the sites are smaller. The blocks to the east, west and south show that a considerable proportion of the single-unit residential uses are located on lots that are 4,500 square feet or smaller, more consistent with the U-SU-A1 lot size, and under the 5,500 square feet minimum required by U-SU-C1. Therefore, the applicants’ proposal to rezone to a district with a smaller lot size is consistent with the future places map and *Blueprint* guidance for applying the Low Residential future place type.



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 North Yates Street as Local or Undesignated street. “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 U-SU-A1 zone district is consistent with this description because it allows for residential and some civic 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 properties are 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). These growth areas are “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 U-SU-A1 will strengthen the existing character of the residential neighborhood by allowing a zone district that is more consistent with the size of the zone lot and the average lot size of the area. It will also allow for low-intensity growth to the number of households in this area by allowing the development of a detached accessory dwelling unit on each site.

2. Uniformity of District Regulations and Restrictions

The proposed rezoning to U-SU-A1 will result in the uniform application of zone district building form, use and design regulations.

3. Public Health, Safety and General Welfare

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 plan which recommends “smaller lot sizes than the existing zone district if there is an established pattern in the surrounding blocks of smaller lots with similar uses” (p. 231). The proposed rezoning would also provide the benefit of two additional housing units that are detached from the single-unit homes and compatibly integrated into the surrounding neighborhood.

4. Justifying Circumstance

The application identifies the adoption of *Blueprint Denver* as the Justifying Circumstance under DZC Section 12.4.10.8.A.4, “Since the date of the approval of the existing Zone District, there has been a change to such as degree that the proposed rezoning is in the public interest. Such a change may include: Changed or changing conditions in a particular area, or in the city generally; or a city adopted plan; or that the city adopted the Denver Zoning Code and the property retained Former Chapter 59 zoning.”

As discussed above, according to *Blueprint Denver* it is appropriate to rezone to a district with a smaller lot size than the current district if a pattern of smaller lots with similar uses exists in the surrounding blocks. This plan was adopted after the date of approval of the existing zoning district. Therefore, this is an appropriate justifying circumstance for the proposed rezoning.

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

The requested U-SU-A1 zone district is within the Urban Neighborhood Context. The neighborhood context is “primarily characterized by single-unit and two-unit residential uses” and “single-unit residential structures are typically the Urban House building form” (DZC, Division 5.1). These areas consist of “regular pattern of block shapes” and “a consistent presence of alleys” (DZC, Division 5.1). The Berkeley neighborhood consists of mostly single and two-unit residential uses in rectangular blocks with alley access. The proposed rezoning to U-SU-A1 is consistent with the neighborhood context description.

The general purpose of residential zone districts in this context is to promote and protect residential neighborhoods within the character of the Urban Neighborhood Context (DZC Section 5.2.2.1). The building form standards, design standards, and uses work together to promote desirable residential areas. Common residential characteristics are recognized but variation is accommodated. The proposed U-SU-A1 district is consistent with the context description and the zone district general purpose because it will help preserve the existing single-unit use, form, and streetscape of the immediate area while allowing a small-scale ADU in the rear yard.

The specific intent of the U-SU-A1 zone district is “a single unit district allowing urban houses and detached accessory dwelling units with a minimum zone lot area of 3,000 square feet. Blocks typically have a consistent pattern of 25-foot-wide lots. Setbacks and lot coverage standards accommodate front and side yards similar to U-SU-A but allowing a detached accessory dwelling unit building form in the rear yard” (DZC 5.2.2.2.B.) The subject sites at 4525 & 4517 North Yates Street are 4,390 square feet each with a width of 35 feet. Therefore, rezoning this site to U-SU-A1 is consistent with the specific intent of the zone district.

Attachments

1. Application
2. Public Comment Letters