Community Planning and Development
Planning Services

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TO: Denver Planning Board
FROM: William Prince, Associate City Planner
DATE: May 8, 2025
RE: Official Zoning Map Amendment Application #2024i-00184

Staff Report and Recommendation

Based on the criteria for review in the Denver Zoning Code, Staff recommends that the South Platte River Committee move Application #2024i-00184 for consideration by the full City Council.

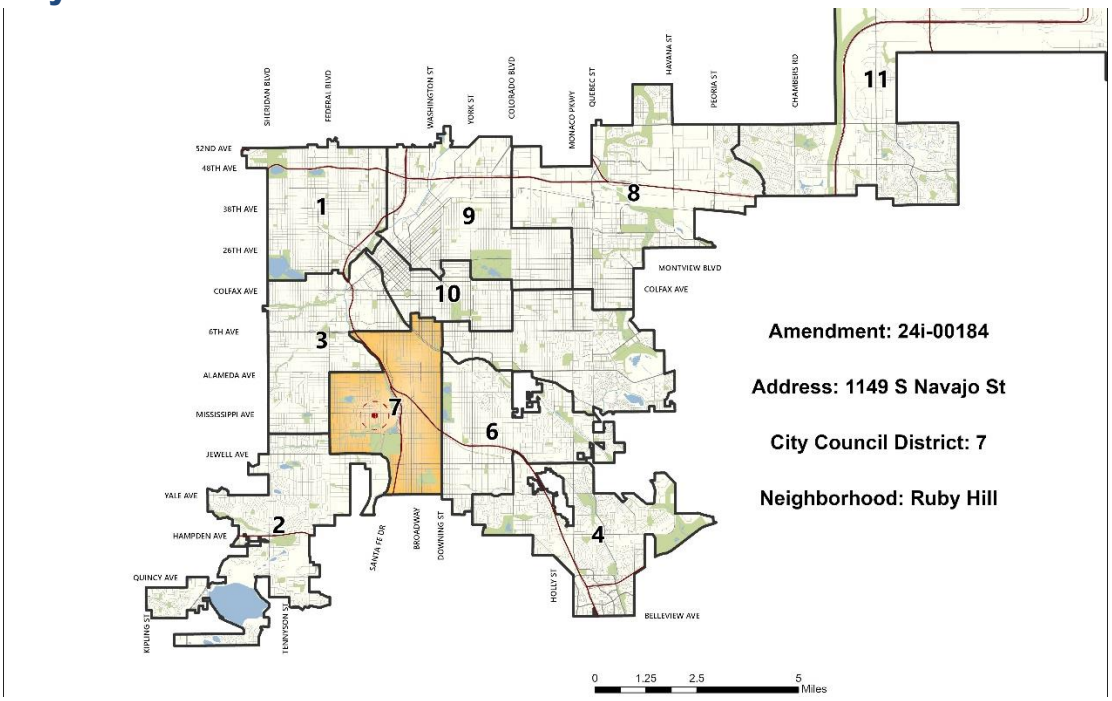
Request for Rezoning

Address:	1149 South Navajo Street
Neighborhood/Council District:	Ruby Hill/ Council District 7 – Councilmember Flor Alvidrez
RNOs:	Inter-Neighborhood Cooperation (INC), Ruby Hill Neighbors
Area of Properties:	9370 square feet or .21 acres
Current Zoning:	G-MU-5, UO-3 & E-RH-2.5
Proposed Zoning:	G-MU-5
Property Owner(s):	RSGD Group LLC
Property Representative:	Greggory Nelson

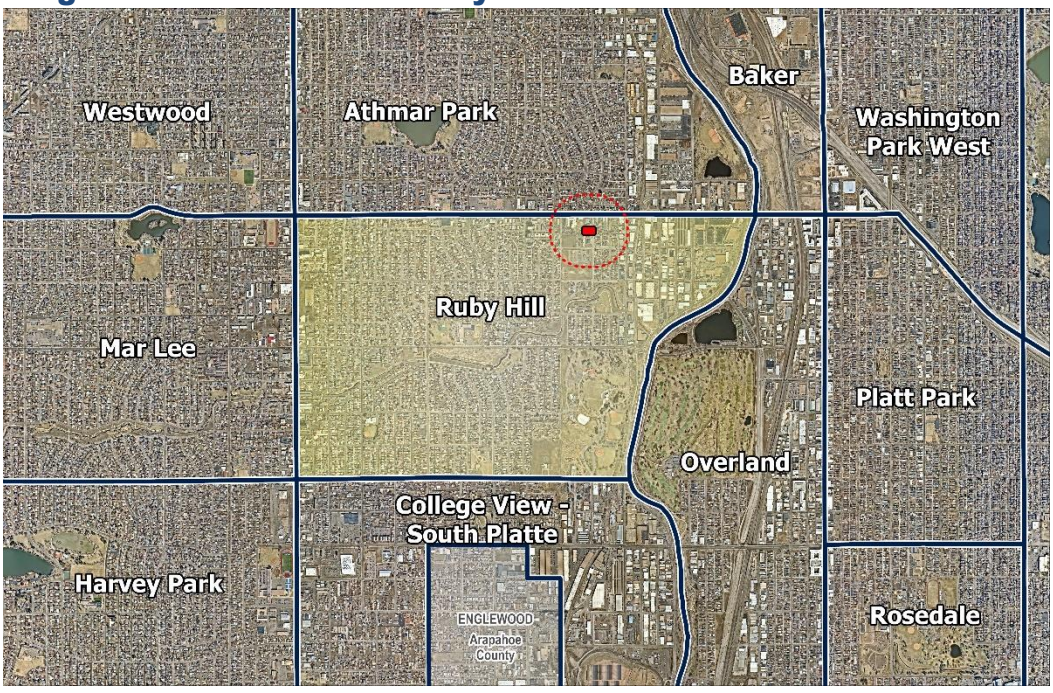
Summary of Rezoning Request

- The property owner is proposing to rezone 1149 South Navajo from **G-MU-5, UO-3 & E-RH-2.5** to **G-MU-5**.
- The subject site is located in the Ruby Hill statistical neighborhood located south of the intersection of West Mississippi Avenue and South Navajo Street.
- The property is currently vacant. The property owner is proposing to rezone the property to solely G-MU-5 to allow for multi-unit housing.
- The proposed G-MU-5, **G**eneral Urban, **M**ulti-**U**nit-**5** stories, zone district is a multi-unit district that allows urban house, duplex, row house, garden court, town house, and apartment building forms. The tallest building form has a maximum height of five stories. The maximum height varies by building form with most ranging 30-35 feet or up to 65 feet (apartment building form) or 5 stories. This district is intended for use in the General Urban Neighborhood Context, which is characterized by multi-unit residential uses in a variety of building forms. Single-unit and two-unit residential uses are also found in a mix of residential building forms. Further details of the zone district can be found in the proposed zone district in this staff report (below) and in Article 6 of the Denver Zoning Code.

City Location



Neighborhood Location – Ruby Hill



Existing Context

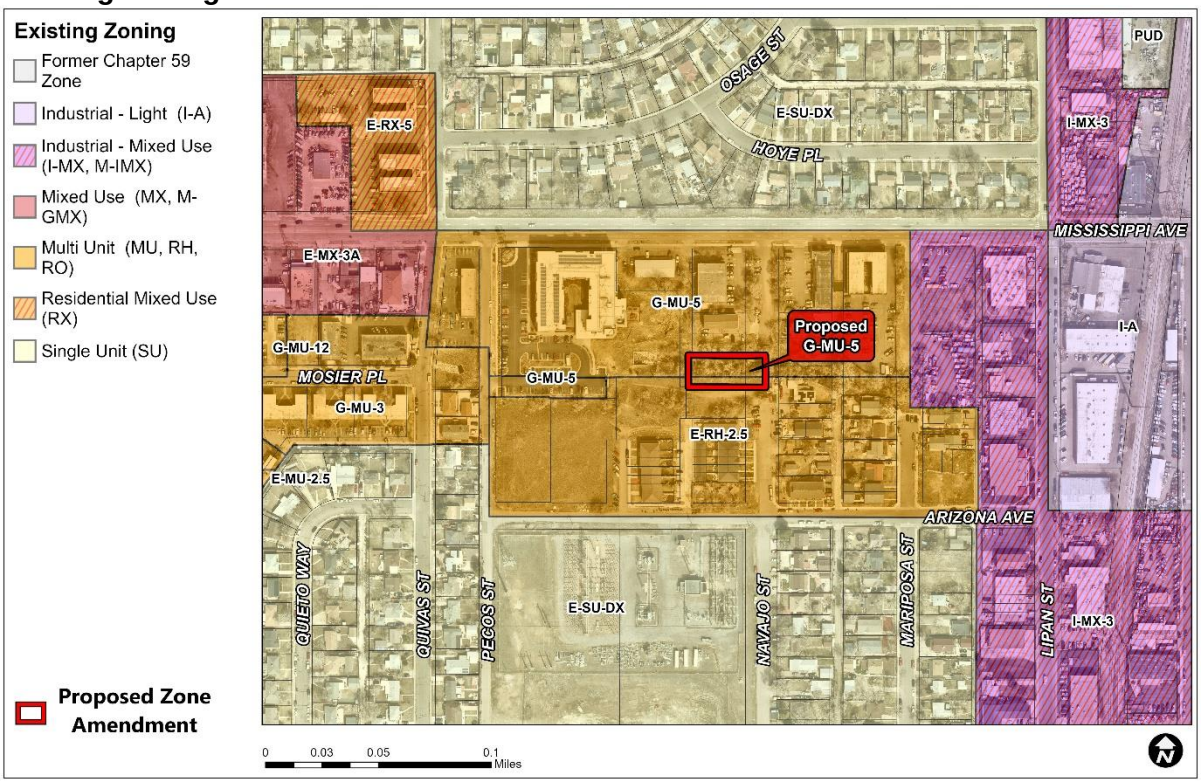
The subject property is located within the Ruby Hill neighborhood, south of the intersection of West Mississippi Avenue and South Navajo Street. South Navajo Street is disconnected within this immediate block. The area is characterized by mostly multi-unit residences and some single-unit residential. The area transitions to more commercial and industrial uses closer to major corridors. The subject property is a quarter mile to the Sanderson Gulch Trail. The subject property is served by RTD's frequent bus routes 11 and 14 along West Mississippi Avenue. The subject property is a less than mile from the I-25 & Broadway Station for RTD light rail.

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
Subject Property	G-MU-5, UO-3 & E-RH-2.5	Vacant	Vacant	The area is served by a mostly typical street grid and block pattern. Immediate streets have dead-ends. Alleys are common throughout. Just south of the subject property, is a power utility substation.
North	G-MU-5, UO-3	Parking	Parking area	
South	E-RH-2.5	Vacant	Vacant land	
East	G-MU-5,UO-3 & E-RH-2.5	Vacant	Vacant land	

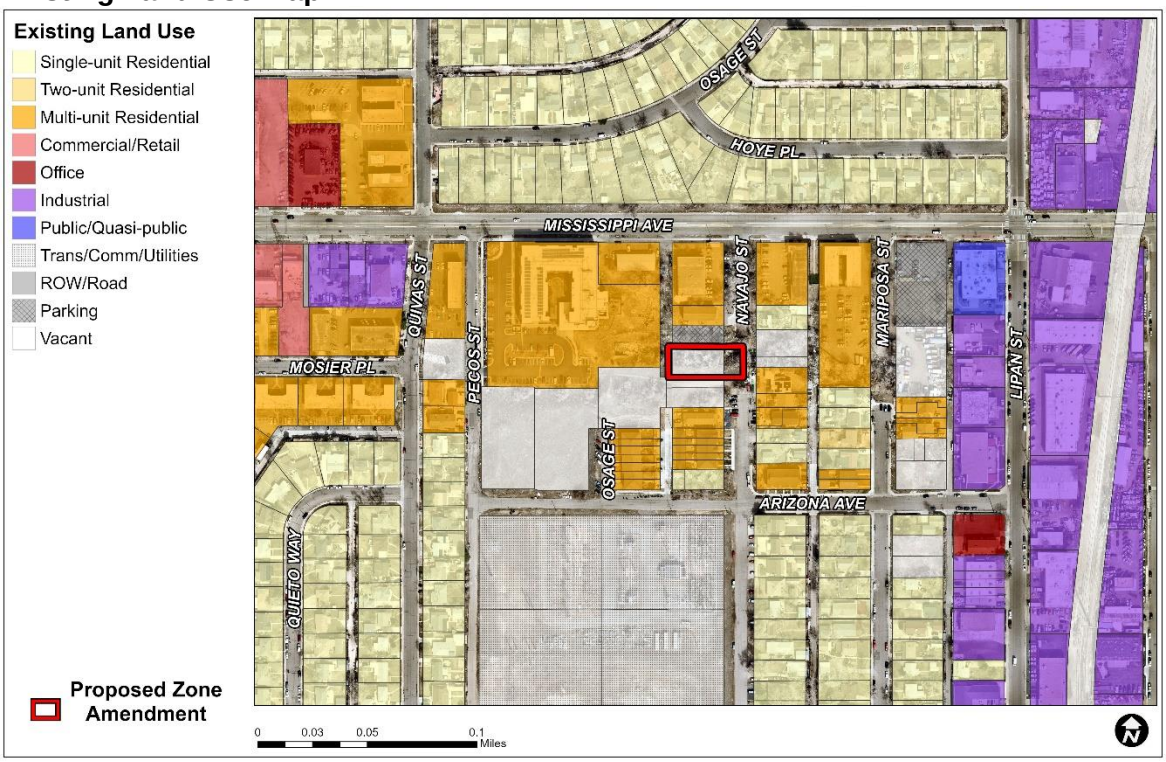
	Existing Zoning	Existing Land Use	Existing Building Form/Scale	Existing Block, Lot, Street Pattern
West	G-MU-5, UO-3 & E-RH-2.5	Multi-Unit	Modern 4-story multi-unit residential apartment	

Existing Zoning



The existing zoning on the subject property is both G-MU-5, UO-3 (approximately 67%) and E-RH-2.5 (approximately 33%). G-MU-5 is a multi-unit district that allows the urban house, duplex, garden court, town house, and apartment building forms (See DZC Section 6.2.2.2). UO-3 is the Historic Structure Use Overlay District with the intent to encourage preservation, protection, adaptive re-use, and enhancements of Historic Structures. It also allows for some commercial uses such as office (not including dental/medical office), art studio, or bed and breakfast lodging (See DZC Section 9.4.4.8). E-RH-2.5 is a multi-unit district that allows suburban house, urban house, detached accessory dwelling unit, duplex, tandem house, and row house building forms up to two and a half stories in height (See DZC Section 4.2.2.2).

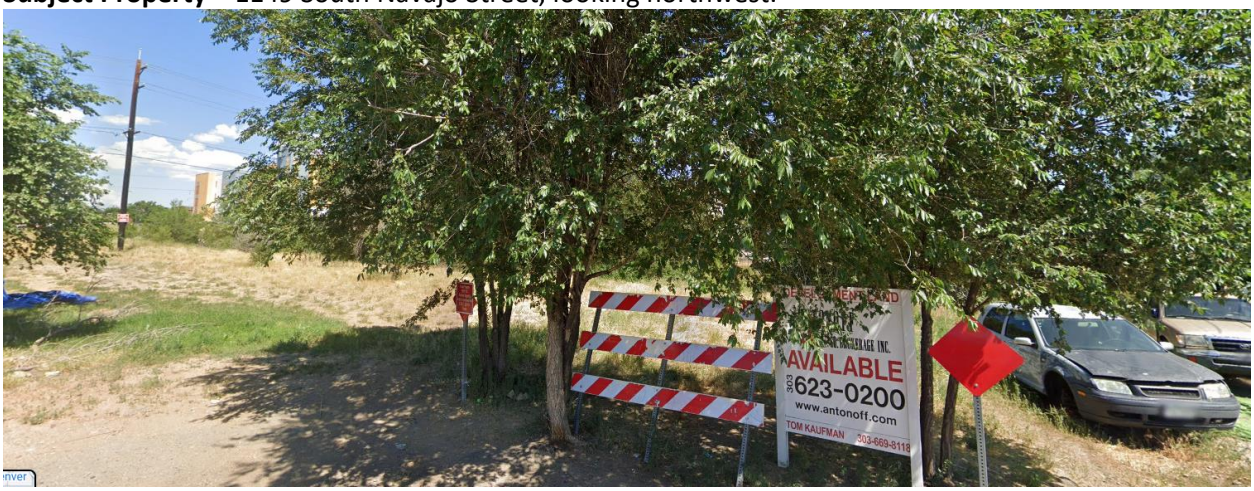
Existing Land Use Map



The subject property is vacant. Most of the abutting and nearby properties are also vacant. Surrounding properties are mostly multi-unit residences. One block south of the subject property is a full block utilities/transmission station. The remaining area to the north and south of the subject property is single-unit residential and industrial to the east around South Lipan Street.

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

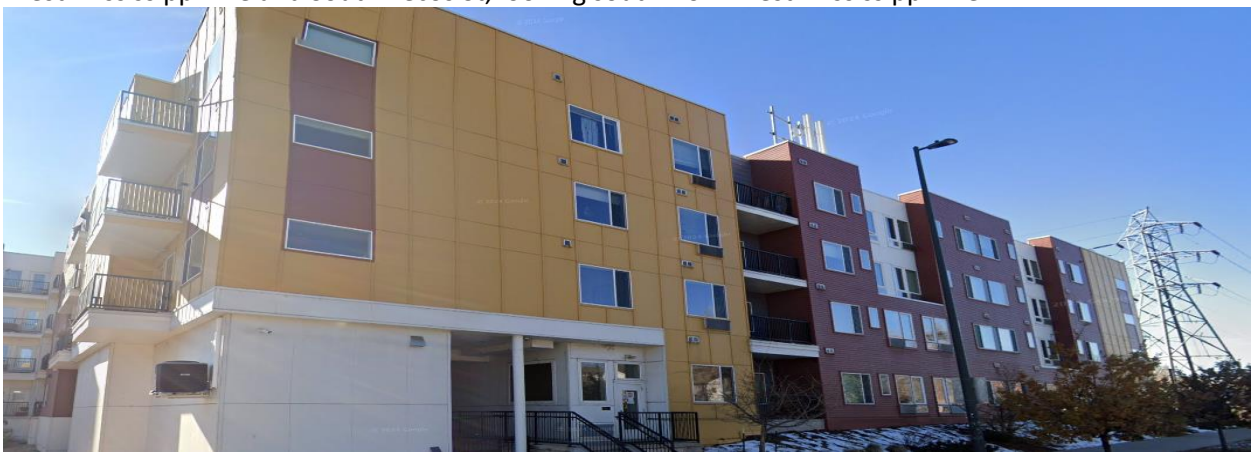
Subject Property – 1149 South Navajo Street, looking northwest.



North – View of the property to the north of subject property, looking south.

South – View of the property to the south of subject on Navajo, looking west.

West – View of the 4 story residential buildings to the northwest of the subject site, at the corner of West Mississippi Ave and South Pecos St, looking south from West Mississippi Ave.



Proposed Zoning

The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to solely **G-MU-5**, (General Urban Neighborhood Context-Multi-Unit-5 Stories) which allows the urban house, duplex, garden court, town house, and apartment building forms up to five stories in height. The intent of the Residential districts is to promote and protect higher density residential neighborhoods within the character of the General Urban Neighborhood Context. These regulations allow for multi-unit districts with a variety of residential building forms. The building form standards, design standards, and uses work together to promote safe, active, pedestrian-scaled residential areas. They provide a transition between Urban and Urban Edge Neighborhood Context (and)…reinforce desired development patterns, encourage affordable housing, and accommodate reinvestment in residential districts (DZC Section 6.2.2.1).

Further details of the proposed zone district can be found in Article 6 of the Denver Zoning Code (DZC). The primary building forms allowed and design standards in the existing zone district and the proposed zone district are summarized below:

Design Standards	E-RH-2.5	G-MU-5 (Proposed)
Primary Building Forms Allowed	Suburban House, Urban House, Duplex, Tandem Houses, Rowhouses	Urban House, Duplex, Garden Court, Town House, Apartment
Maximum Height in Stories / Feet	2.5 stories / 30-35 feet	• 3 stories/30-35 feet (Urban House, Duplex, Garden Court) • 5 stories/ Varies by building form up to 65 feet*
Maximum Height in Feet, Rear 35% of Zone Lot	17-30 feet, varies by building form	N/A
Zone Lot Size (min.)	• 4,500 sq ft (Urban House, Duplex, and Tandem) • 6,000 sq ft (Suburban House, Rowhouse)	• 3,000 sq ft (Urban House, Duplex) • 6,000 sq ft (Town House, Apartment) • 9,000 sq ft (Garden Court)
Zone Lot Width (min.)	• 35 feet (Urban House, Duplex, Tandem) • 50 feet (Suburban House, Rowhouse)	• 25 feet (Urban House and Duplex) • 50 feet (Town House and Apartment) • 75 feet (Garden Court)
Primary Street Block Sensitive Setback Required / If not	Yes / 20 feet	• Yes/ 20 feet (Urban House and Duplex) • 10 feet (Garden Court, Town House, and Apartment)
Side Street Setback (min.)	5-7.5 feet, varies by building form	• 3-5 feet (Urban House, Duplex) • 5-7 feet (Garden Court, Town House, Apartment)
Side Interior Setback (min.)	3-10 feet, varies by building form	• 3-5 feet (Urban House, Duplex • 7.5-12.5 feet (Garden Court, Town House, Apartment)

Rear Setback, Alley / No Alley	12 feet / 20 feet	• 12 feet / 20 feet (Urban House and Duplex) • 10 feet / 20 feet (Garden Court, Town House, Apartment)
Building Coverage per Zone Lot including all accessory structures (max.), not including exceptions	40-45%	• 40-45%, varies by building form • N/A (Garden Court, Town House, and Apartment)
Detached Accessory Building Forms Allowed	Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, General Detached Structure, Minor Detached Structure	Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit, General Detached Structure, Minor Detached Structure

** Apartment with incentives 7 stories, 90 ft or 75 feet next to a Protected District.

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.

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

Development Services – Project Coordination: Approve Rezoning Only - Will require additional information at Site Plan Review

The property contains split zoning (G-MU-5, UO-3 and E-RH-2.5). While both zone districts do allow a common building form (Urban House and Duplex), both building forms limit the amount of proposed residential units that could be provided on the property in relation to what could be allowed under either zone district if the property were fully within one zone district.
Proposed new development of a project with more than two residential units will require a Concept / SDP application process through the Site Design / Neighborhood Development Team. If the proposed development contains two residential units or less, the proposal will need to be reviewed with the Residential Review Team. Any new development will require zoning and building permits.

Development Services - Transportation: Approved – No Response.

Development Services – Wastewater: Approved – No Response.

Parks and Recreation: Approved – No Response.

Public Health and Environment: 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.

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:	**02/20/2024**
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, *recommended approval.*	**04/16/2025**
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 working days before the meeting:	**4/30/2025**
South Platte River Committee of the City Council:	**5/14/2025**
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:	**6/16/2025 (tentative)**
City Council Public Hearing:	**07/07/2025 (tentative)**

Registered Neighborhood Organizations (RNOs)
To date, staff has received one letter of support from Ruby Hills Neighbors RNO.

Other Public Comment
To date, staff has received no public comment letters.

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*
- *Blueprint Denver* (2019)

Denver Comprehensive Plan 2040

The following goals and strategies in the Equitable, Affordable and Inclusive vision element are relevant to this proposed rezoning:

- Equitable, Affordable, and Inclusive Goal 1: Ensure all Denver residents have safe, convenient and affordable access to basic services and a variety of amenities. (p. 28)
    - Strategy A - Increase development of housing units close to transit and mixed-use developments.
- Equitable, Affordable and Inclusive Goal 2: Build housing as a continuum to serve residents across a range of incomes, ages and needs (p. 28)
    - Strategy A - Create a greater mix of housing options in every neighborhood for all individuals and families.
    - Strategy B – Ensure city policies and regulations encourage every neighborhood to provide a complete range of housing options.

The following goal and strategies in Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods vision element is relevant to this proposed rezoning:

- Strong and Authentic Neighborhoods Goal 1: Create a city of complete neighborhoods (p. 34).
    - Strategy B – Ensure neighborhoods offer a mix of housing types and services for a diverse population.
    - Strategy D – Encourage quality infill development that is consistent with the surrounding neighborhoods and offers opportunities for increased amenities.

The following goal and strategies in Environmentally Resilient vision element are relevant to this proposed rezoning:

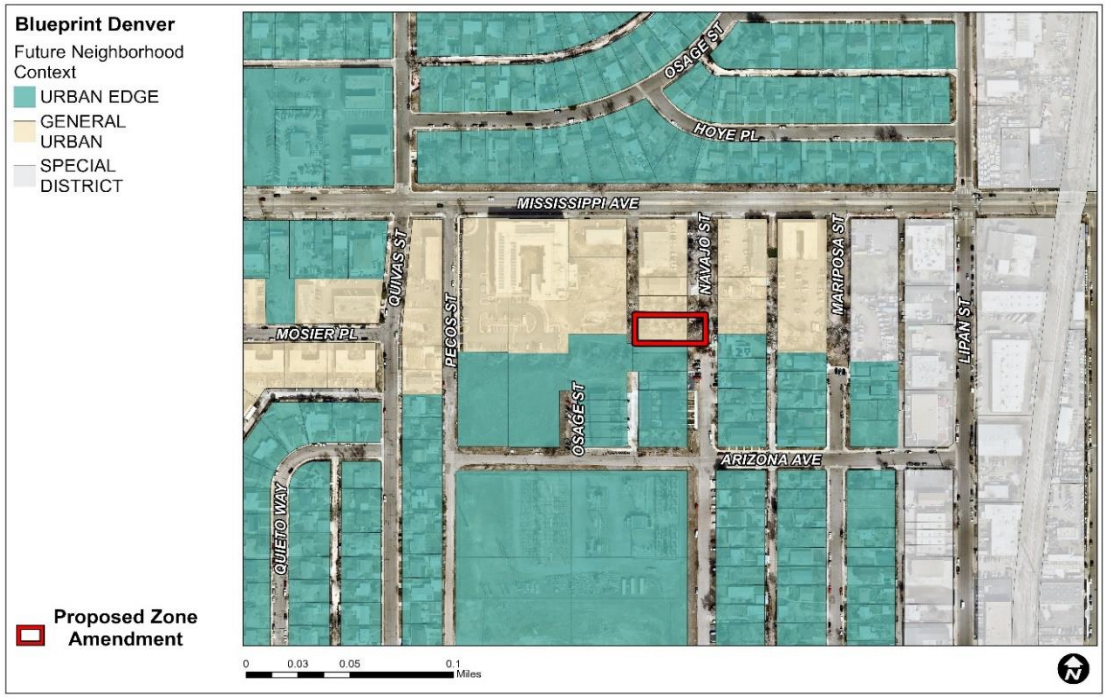
- Environmentally Resilient Goal 8: Clean our soils, conserve land and grow responsibly (p.54).
    - Strategy A - Promote infill development where infrastructure and services are already in place (p
    - Strategy B - Encourage mixed-use communities where residents can live, work, and play in their own neighborhoods

- Strategy C – Focus growth by transit stations and along high and medium-capacity transit corridors.

In summary, the proposed rezoning furthers *Comprehensive Plan 2040* polices by allowing for additional housing units, allowing more building forms at an infill location where amenities are accessible.

***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. *Blueprint Denver* identifies the subject property as part of a High Medium future place within the General Urban Context and provides guidance from the future growth strategy for the city. The proposed rezoning is consistent with much of the land use guidance in the plan.

***Blueprint Denver* Future Neighborhood Context**

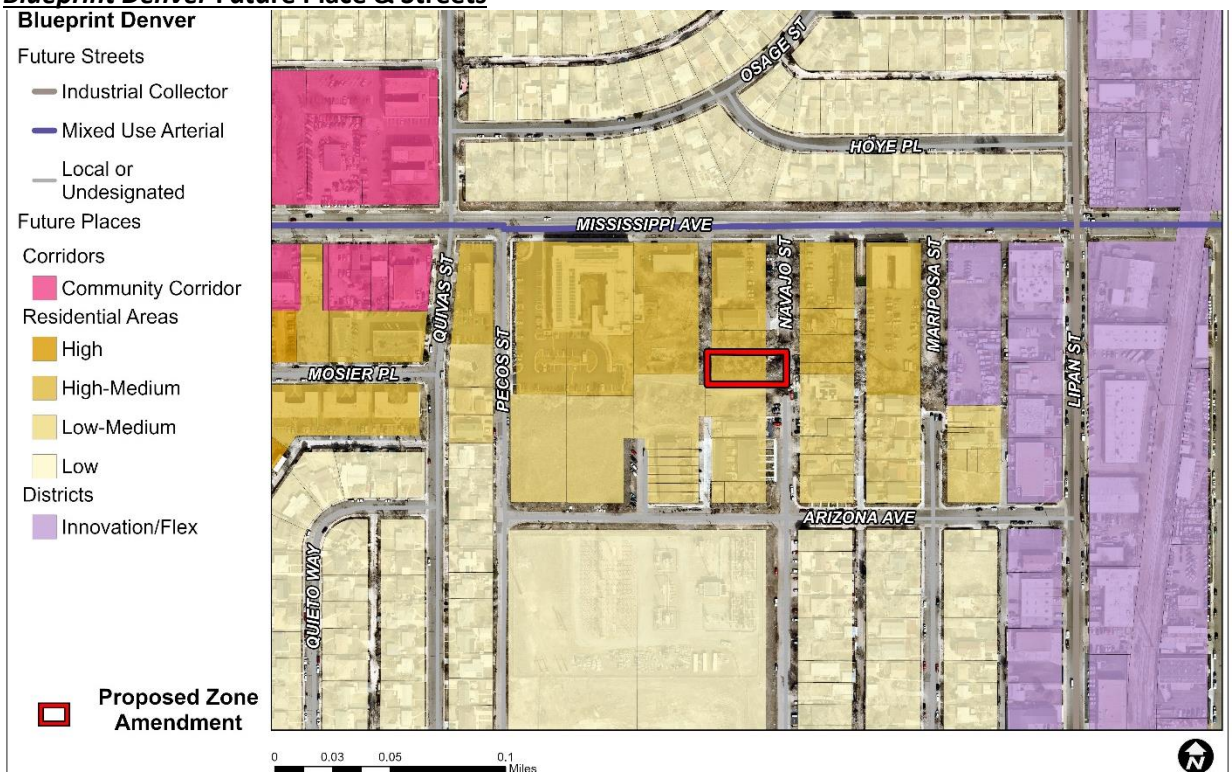


The subject property is shown on the context map as General Urban Neighborhood Context, the description of which is used to guide appropriate zone districts. "Homes in this context vary from multi-unit complexes to compact single-unit homes. Development should be sensitive to the existing neighborhood character and offer residents a mix of uses, with good street activation and connectivity. Residents living in this context are well served by transit and enjoy access to abundant amenities and entertainment options (p. 237).

The G-MU-5 zone district is intended to "promote and protect higher density residential neighborhoods within the character of the General Urban Neighborhood Context. These regulations allow for multi-unit districts with a variety of residential building forms (DZC Section 6.2.2.1). G-MU-5 is consistent with

Blueprint Denver's future neighborhood context of General Urban because it will promote the residential character of the neighborhood by allowing a mix of building forms that will be compatible with the existing residential areas.

***Blueprint Denver* Future Place & Streets**



Within the General Urban Neighborhood Context, the subject site is categorized as High-Medium Residential which is described as "a mix of low- to medium-scale multi-unit residential uses with some neighborhood-serving mixed-use distributed throughout. Buildings are generally up to 8 stories in height. Block patterns are consistent and pedestrian-scaled building forms clearly define and activate the street" (p. 246). The rezoning request is consistent with *Blueprint Denver*'s identified High-Medium Residential future place as it will allow a mix of low- to mid-scale residential buildings, forms, and uses.

***Blueprint Denver* Street Types**

Blueprint Denver classifies South Navajo Street as local or undesignated streets. Local streets "are designed for the highest degree of property access" (p. 154) and "can vary in their land uses and are found in all neighborhood contexts. They are most often characterized by residential uses" (p. 160).

The subject property is within close proximity to West Mississippi Avenue which is classified as a Mixed-Use Collector which has varied mix of uses including retail, office, residential and restaurants. Buildings are pedestrian-oriented, typically multi-story, usually with high building coverage with a shallow front setback…" (p. 159). The proposed G-MU-5 district is consistent with the above-mentioned street types because it allows for primarily residential 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 percent of new housing growth and 10 percent of new employment growth by 2040 (p. 51). This growth area contains "mostly residential areas with embedded local centers and corridors (that) take a smaller amount of growth intended to strengthen the existing character of our neighborhoods" (p. 49). The proposed G-MU-5 zone district is appropriate in this growth area as it will minimally contribute to development intensity in the neighborhood while maintaining the area's primarily residential character. Therefore, the proposed rezoning is consistent with the *Blueprint Denver* growth strategy.

***Other Blueprint Denver* Strategies**

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 small-scale rezoning supports elements of Land Use & Built Form: Housing Policy 02, "Diversify housing options by exploring opportunities to integrate missing middle housing into low and low-medium residential areas (p. 82)," by improving access to the supply of diverse housing options.

This rezoning will also advance additional *Blueprint Denver* related goals to climate. Land Use and Built Form Policy 1 states "Promote and anticipate planned growth in major centers and corridors and key residential areas connected by rail service and transit priority street" (p. 94). Rezonings consistent with

this guidance support the city's goals to reduce climate impacts by enabling additional density near transit and the Mississippi Avenue commercial area. New dwelling units in these areas tend to be less auto-dependent, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, and will benefit from energy-efficient multi-unit buildings.

2. Public Interest

The proposed official map amendment furthers the public interest through implementation of the city's adopted land use plan and allowing for additional housing options and units in an underutilized vacant lot.

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

The requested G-MU-5 zone district is within the General Urban Neighborhood Context which is primarily characterized by multi-unit residential uses in a variety of building forms. Single-unit and two-unit residential uses are also found in a mix of residential building forms. Residential uses are primarily located along local and residential arterial streets which consist of a regular pattern of block shapes surrounded by an orthogonal street grid (Denver Zoning Code Division 6.1). Within the General Urban Neighborhood Context homes vary from multi-unit development to compact single-unit homes.

The proposed G-MU-5 zone district is consistent with the neighborhood context description and appropriate for this location because it is a multi-unit district allowing a variety of building forms, compatible height and building form/design standards. The building form standards, and uses work together to promote safe, active, pedestrian-scaled residential areas. The standards accommodate the pattern of urban house, duplex, garden court, and apartment building forms.
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Attachments

1. Application