

April 23, 2025

City of Aurora
Planning & Development Services
Brandon Cammarata, Planning Division Manager
15151 E Alameda Parkway
Aurora, CO 80211

RE: Introduction Letter – Initial Zoning Request

NE 1/4 Section 6, of Township 4 South, Range 65 West of the 6th Principal Meridian

On behalf of the owner, City of Aurora, Merrick is submitting this application for initial zoning. The property is currently known as unincorporated Arapahoe County.

The property is owned by: City of Aurora
15151 E Alameda Pkwy.
Aurora, CO 80012

The 56.508-acre property consists of four contiguous parcels:
(Rec. No. D8116334, Rec. No. E1157157, Rec. No. D6074304, & Rec. No. D8107473). It is located
in the NE 1/4 Section 6, of Township 4 South, Range 65 West of the 6th Principal Meridian.

Vicinity Map (Exhibit A)



Employee Owned



2480 W. 26th Ave., Ste. B225
Denver, CO 80211



Tel: +1 303-964-3333

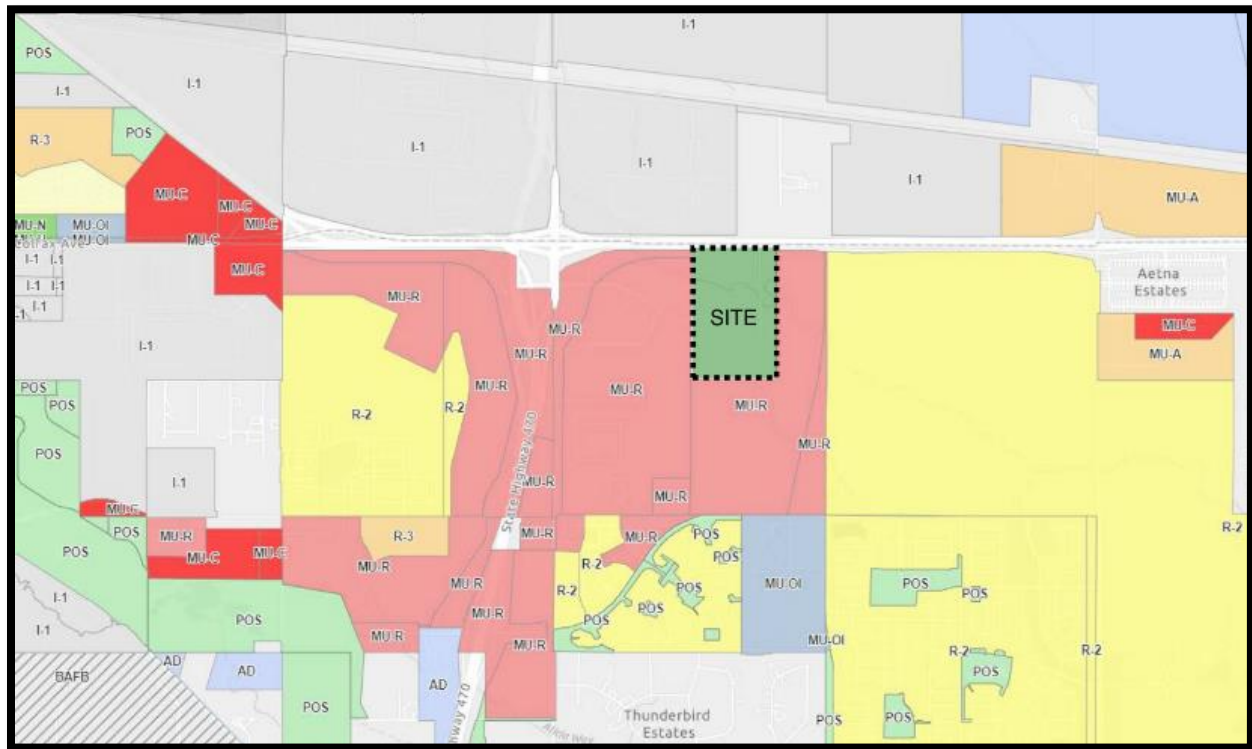


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Request

The property is currently seeking initial Zoning in the City of Aurora. The design team and Client is requesting the initial zoning of MU-R because of the allowed uses and compatibility with adjacent properties. The only development proposed is regional stormwater detention and a regional trail connection.

Arapahoe Zoning Map (Exhibit B)



The property consists of four contiguous parcels containing a total of 56.508 acres and is in the NE 1/4 of Section 6, Township 4 South, Range 65 West of the 6th Principal Meridian, County of Arapahoe, State of Colorado. The land proposed to be zoned is owned by the City of Aurora, 15151 E. Alameda Pkwy., Aurora, CO 80012.

In 2001, the City of Aurora (City) entered an Intergovernmental Agreement (Agreement No. 99-03.11) Regarding Implementation of Portions of the First Creek Watershed Master Plan. The agreement included a commitment to construct a regional stormwater detention pond, ID No. 1237, to attenuate peak runoff flows on First Creek upstream of I-70. In order to construct this stormwater detention facility, the City of Aurora has acquired the four subject parcels. These four parcels have several different Arapahoe County zoning districts including A-1, O, RR-B, F, and MU.

The only development proposed on the property is the regional stormwater detention and a regional trail connection. These can potentially offer green spaces, and pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, fostering a healthier and more active lifestyle.



The City of Aurora plans to seek an initial zoning of MU-R. The Multi-use – Regional District classification can strategically allow the detention pond, beyond its crucial stormwater management function, to serve as an attractive visual amenity and potentially a passive recreational space. Integrating into the MU-R developments nearby ensures that these public investments are readily accessible to the community, maximizing their value and promoting community engagement. The proposed zoning is inherently consistent and compatible with the surrounding planned and existing development.

Additionally, these four contiguous parcels are surrounded by Subarea C and would be included into this subarea. Subarea C generally includes rolling, semi-arid, largely undeveloped lands with large open fields of prairie grass in northeast Aurora and mostly developed newer developments in southeast Aurora. It currently includes expanding residential developments, industrial parks and areas of City-owned open spaces and parks. Development pressures within Subarea C continue to rise as the demand for more housing choices intensifies; the pressure for large industrial storage facilities increases and the need for expanded infrastructure to accommodate the demands of growth become a priority. Because these lands will develop over a long period of time, their layouts, design, and building styles need to be flexible enough to accommodate new forms of development at a variety of development densities while avoiding patterns and practices that have increased traffic congestion and/or reduced the visual appeal of the City in the past.

Finally, this area is surrounded by the Urban District Place type in the Aurora Places Comprehensive plan. The Urban Districts will be critical to the economic and fiscal health of the City because they will be the centers of employment, culture and activity. The Urban District is the City's most intensely developed area with mixed-use, entertainment, institutional, retail, restaurant and multifamily residential as defining uses. Urban parks provide green space for residents and workers and serve as locations for community activities. This mix and intensity of uses is intended to provide around-the-clock activity. Transit, pedestrian and bike connections are essential to its development and success. A Comprehensive Plan Amendment will be required to categorize the subject property place type to Urban District.



This initial zoning request meets the Approval Criteria of Section 146-5.4.1A, Section 146-5.4.1B and Section 146-5.4.1C.

It is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the purpose statement for the zone district(s) where the property is located, the use regulations in Article 146-3 for the zone district(s), and all other adopted plans and policies of the City Council.

Section 146-5.4.1A Comprehensive Plan Adoption or Amendment

The City Council shall adopt a Comprehensive Plan for the orderly development and redevelopment of the City. The Comprehensive Plan shall serve to guide the City Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission in their decisions and recommendations in all land use and land development applications. All applicable provisions of Section 146-5.3 (Common Procedures) apply unless specifically modified by the provisions of this Section 146-5.4.1.A.

Criteria for Approval.

A Comprehensive Plan, or an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, shall be recommended for approval, and shall be approved, only if it promotes the long term economic, social, and environmental health of the City and protects the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Aurora.

Re: The subject property under review promotes the long term economic, social and environmental health of the City and County and protects the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Aurora.

Section 146-5.4.1C Ordinance Text or Zoning Map Amendments

Ordinance Text or Zoning Map Amendments. All applicable provisions of Section 146-5.3 (Common Procedures) apply unless specifically modified by the provisions of this Section 146-5.4.1.C.

Applicability.

This Section [146-5.4.1.C](#) applies to:

- a. All applications for initial zoning of property into a base zone district(s), and to initial zoning into an overlay district, if any, at the time property is annexed to the City; and
- b. All applications for changes of zoning from one base zone district(s) to a different base zone district(s) following initial zoning into a base zone district; and
- c. All applications to include property in, or exclude property from, an overlay district(s), or to change the overlay district(s) that apply to a property; and
- d. All applications to change the text of this Unified Development Ordinance.



Procedure

- a. The Planning Director shall review the application and forward a recommendation to the Planning and Zoning Commission pursuant to all applicable provisions of Section 146-5.3 (Common Procedures).
- b. The Planning and Zoning Commission shall conduct a public hearing on the application and shall make a recommendation to City Council regarding the application pursuant to all applicable provisions of Section 146-5.3.
- c. The City Council shall conduct a public hearing on the application and shall make a decision on the application pursuant to all applicable provisions of Section 146-5.3.

Criteria for Approval

a. Initial Zoning and Changes to Zoning Map for Individual Parcels or Small Areas. An application for initial zoning, rezoning, and changes to the Zoning Map for individual parcels or small areas shall only be recommended if the Planning Director and the Planning and Zoning Commission finds that the following criteria have been met, and shall only be approved if City Council finds that the following criteria have been met.

i. ~~The change to the Zoning Map is needed to correct an error (change in the character of surrounding areas does not constitute an error in the map); or~~

ii. The change to the Zoning Map is required because of changed conditions or circumstances on the property or in the surrounding area and:

(a) The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed initial zoning or rezoning is consistent with the spirit and intent of the Comprehensive Plan, with other policies and plans adopted by the City Council, and with the purpose statement of the proposed new zone district(s);

Re: COA Staff is supportive of this initial zoning request.

(b) The applicant has demonstrated that the size, scale, height, density, and multi-modal traffic impacts of the proposed initial zoning or rezoning are compatible with surrounding development or can be made compatible with surrounding development through approval conditions; and

Re: The proposed initial zoning and annexation is compatible with the surrounding development and designated zoning.

(c) The application demonstrates that the change in zoning will not create significant dislocations of tenants or occupants of the property, or that any impacts are outweighed by other public benefits or progress toward other Comprehensive Plan goals that would be achieved by approval of the application.

Re: The proposed initial zoning will not create significant dislocations of tenants or occupants of the property, or outweigh other public benefits or progress toward Comprehensive Plan goals.



If you require additional information or have any questions about our submittal items, please do not hesitate to call (303)-353-3340 or e-mail mike.leuteneker@merrick.com. We look forward to working with the City in completing this process to contribute to the City of Aurora.

Sincerely,
Merrick & Company



Mike Leuteneker, PLA
Senior Landscape Architect

