

Statement of Principles and Policies

Heritage Annexation

July 11, 2024

Heritage Christian Academy is beginning its path towards becoming a full two-track school. As they grow to two tracks and double the size of our student body, Heritage Christian Academy must expand its facilities.

To support the growth of the school, HCA has purchased approximately 13.6 acres of property located adjacent to, and west of, the existing school site within the Industrial Business Park International PUD, currently located in unincorporated Larimer County.

On March 8, 2024, a Conceptual Review meeting was held with the City of Fort Collins and HCA was encouraged to begin with Annexation and Zoning of the property. City plans influencing the planned annexation include:

- City Plan (updated 2019)
- East Mulberry Plan (updated December 5, 2023)
- Land Use Code Phase 1 Update (effective May 17, 2024), and
- Potential Land Use Code Phase 2 Updates (in progress)

The property is within the East Mulberry Enclave, an area of unincorporated Larimer County completely surrounded by Fort Collins city limits. The East Mulberry Enclave is located within the Fort Collins Growth Management Area (GMA) which was established through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Larimer County. In establishing the boundaries of the GMA, the IGA also sets forth a general goal to annex areas within the GMA that are eligible. The Heritage Annexation would be a voluntary petition to annex into the City of Fort Collins to support the expansion of Heritage Christian Academy, a pre-K through 12 school, and/or similar uses existing within the area.

Existing Land Uses within the property include:

Public (school) and
Vacant, undeveloped properties

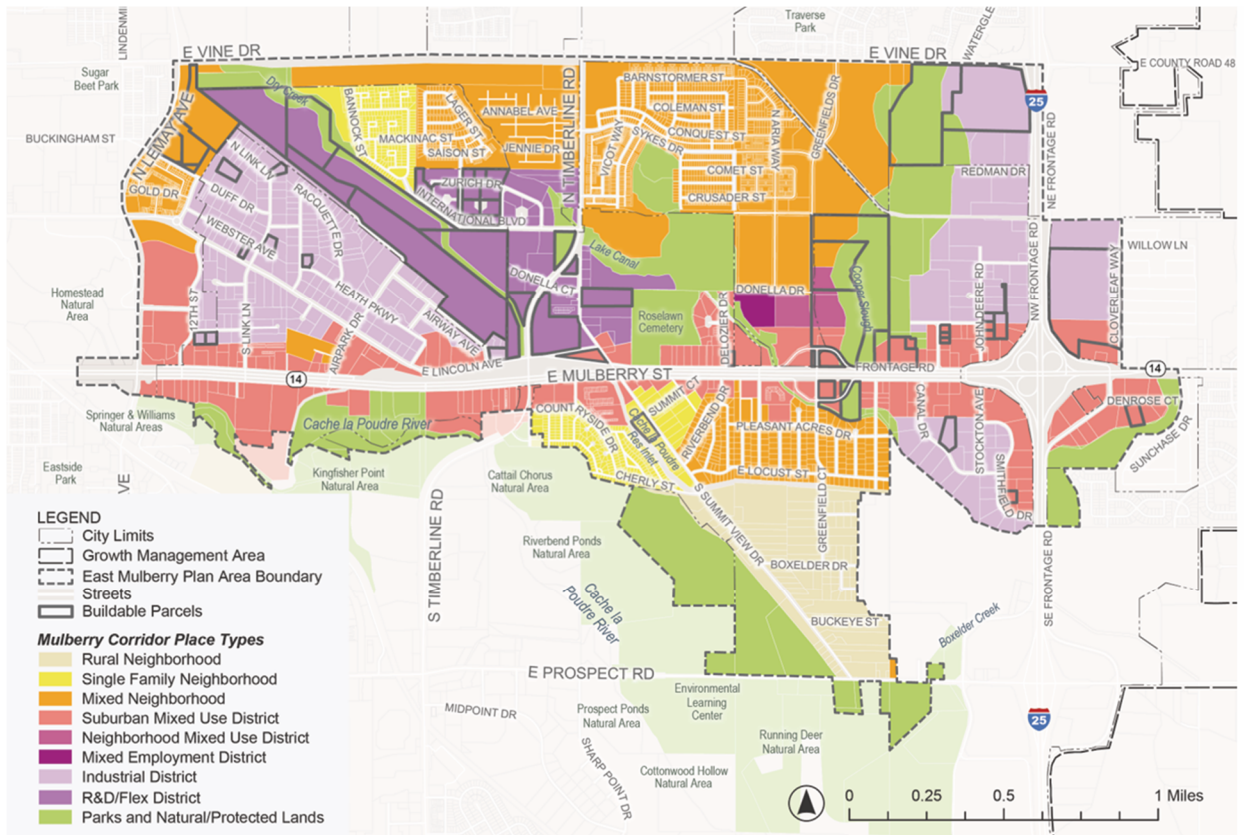
Existing adjacent land uses include:

Commercial uses – south
Residential uses – north
Industrial uses – east
Vacant, undeveloped properties - west

The City of Fort Collins **Structure Plan** (2019) identifies the annexation property as a 'Mixed Neighborhood' Place Type. Adjacent properties are designated as:

- 'Mixed Neighborhood' (north and west), and
- 'Industrial' (south and east)

However, the recently updated **East Mulberry Plan** identifies the annexation property and the adjacent properties to the east, west and south as part of the Transitional / Mixed-Use Character Area and as the '**Research and Development Flex District**' Place Type. Based on our discussions with city staff, the city's Structure Plan is anticipated to be updated to incorporate the designations within the East Mulberry Plan.



This map depicts place type designations from City Plan's Structure Plan map. The Structure Plan map illustrates how the community may grow and change over time, setting a basic framework for future land use decisions.

DEVELOPMENT & GROWTH MAP

As described in the plan, the R&D Flex District is one of the most flexible place type designations and supports a wide range of light industrial, employment, and commercial/retail land uses. Application of the R&D place type is supportive of Plan goals to remain a viable place for business and industry and promote additional neighborhood services and retail. This is particularly relevant for large portions of the Transitional / Mixed-Use Character Area which forms a bridge between established industrial development and new residential neighborhoods, which is applicable to the Heritage Annexation property. The flexibility and range of uses within this place type make it ideal to accommodate a variety of future functions and land uses serving the needs of industrial and residential users while applying more modern buffering and compatibility development standards.

The intent of this R&D Flex District Place Type and HCA's plans for the property are to allow for a mix of commercial and industrial businesses but adjacent to existing residential uses. Based on these plans and our discussions with city staff, we propose the **Employment (E) zone district** be designated for the property with the Heritage Annexation. The intent is to allow for the school and other uses within the property as are allowed within the Employment (E) zone district while considering the more industrial character of the existing neighborhood development including building character, larger building sizes, and needs for storage and equipment not always associated with traditional employment uses.

The above helps to support applicable goals of the East Mulberry Plan including:

Goal 1: **COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL HUB** by fostering a healthy and prosperous commercial and industrial hub for the City, while remaining viable for small businesses and industry, and

1.T.1 by maintaining flexibility for future land uses that act as a buffer between industrial and residential areas, thereby supporting the continued viability of industrial and commercial areas.

Appropriate **City Plan Principles and Policies** achieved by the proposed plan:

Annexations can primarily impact Principle LIV 1: Maintain a compact pattern of growth that is well served by public facilities and encourages the efficient use of land. The Heritage Annexation aligns with and helps to achieve applicable policies in this category.

Policy LIV 1.1 – GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREA (GMA)

The proposed Heritage Annexation is located within the City's GMA and is part of the East Mulberry Enclave. The Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Larimer County establishes the boundaries of the GMA and sets forth a general goal to annex areas within the GMA that are eligible.

POLICY LIV 1.2 - AMENDMENTS TO THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT AREA

The proposed Heritage Annexation maintains the GMA as currently configured.

POLICY LIV 1.5 - CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT POLICIES

The proposed Heritage Annexation allows for the use of standard City policies for public improvements to be implemented including developer participation in infrastructure upgrades.

POLICY LIV 1.6 - ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES

The proposed Heritage Annexation includes developed properties and is similar to an infill site already served by critical facilities including utilities, roads.