



## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council

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### STAFF

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Kai Kleer, Senior City Planner  
Ryan Mounce, City Planner

### SUBJECT

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**Public Hearing and First Reading of Ordinance No. 073, 2024, Amending the Zoning Map of the City of Fort Collins and Classifying for Zoning Purposes the Property Included in the I-25 & Mulberry Annexation to the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and Approving Corresponding Changes to the Residential Neighborhood Sign District Map and Lighting Context Area Map.**

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The purpose of this item is to zone the property included in the I-25 & Mulberry Annexation into the Industrial (I), and General Commercial (CG) zone districts and place the property into the LC2 Lighting Context Area and Non-residential Sign District.

This item is a quasi-judicial matter and if it is considered on the discussion agenda it will be considered in accordance with the procedures described in Section 1(d) of the Council's Rules of Meeting Procedures adopted in Resolution 2015-091.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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Staff recommends adoption of the Ordinance on First Reading.

### BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

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The requested zoning for this annexation is Industrial (I) and General Commercial (CG) zone districts, which is in alignment with the City of Fort Collins Structure Plan, I-25 Subarea Plan and East Mulberry Plan. The I-25 & Mulberry Annexation area is currently and has historically been used for an agricultural capacity. Directly west of the property is the Frontage Road/I-25, directly north abutting the property line is the former Heli-One building (County). The property to the east contains the Cloverleaf Manufactured Housing Community (County) which also acts as the eastern most boundary of the East Mulberry Enclave, and the south property line abuts Sunstate Rental (County).

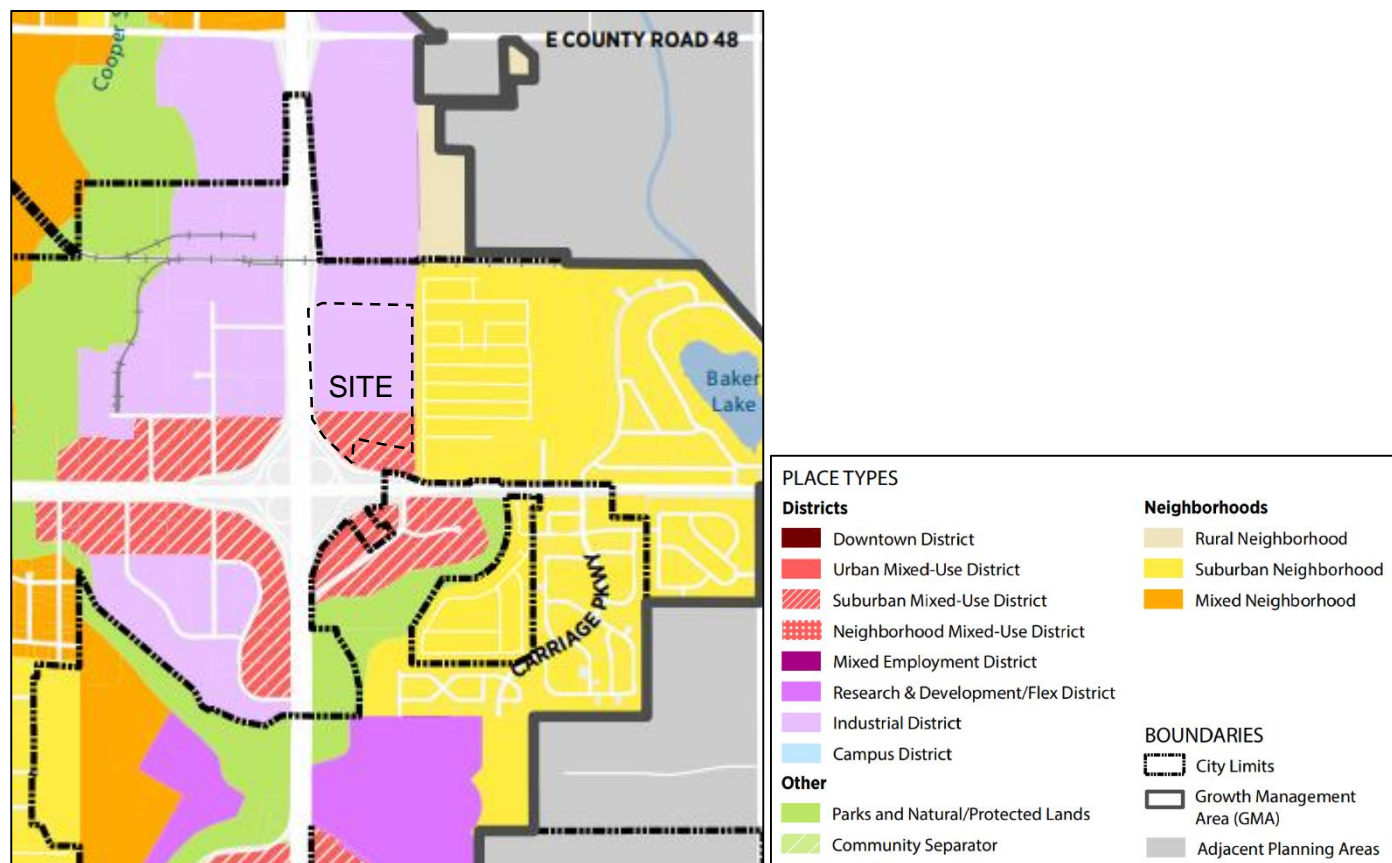
The surrounding zoning and land uses are as follows:

Direction	Zone District	Existing Land Use
N	Larimer County Light Industrial (IL)	Vehicle Services and Modification
S	General Commercial (CG)	Equipment Rental, Hotel, Fuel Sales, Emissions Testing
E	Larimer County Manufactured Home Park (MHP) and Commercial Corridor (CC)	Manufactured Housing Community
W	Larimer County Commercial Corridor (CC)	Miscellaneous retail and light industrial uses

### City of Fort Collins Structure Plan

The Structure Plan Map found in City Plan provides the broadest land use guidance applicable to the site and potential zoning via Place Type designations. Place Types describe the general land-uses, densities, and transportation characteristics for an area to help guide potential zoning when properties are annexed into the City.

The Structure Plan Map indicates opportunity for both the 'Suburban Mixed-Use' and 'Industrial' place types for the site, indicating a mix of mixed-use and industrial development potential are appropriate. This designation follows similar land use patterns nearby, including commercial uses to the south, and a mix of commercial and industrial development at the northwest and southwest corners of the interchange.



Structure Plan Map

The characteristics of these Place Types include:

**Suburban Mixed-Use:**

*Principal Land Use: Retail, restaurants, office, and other commercial services. Supporting Land Use: High-density residential, entertainment, childcare centers, and other supporting uses. Densities and building heights will vary; building heights will generally be between one and five-stories but may be higher in some locations.*

*Mixed-use districts provide opportunities for a range of retail and commercial services, office and employment, multifamily residential, civic, and other complementary uses in a compact, pedestrian and transit-supportive setting. Suburban Mixed-Use Districts help meet the needs of surrounding neighborhoods and populations beyond. Although largely auto-oriented today, the integration of higher-density residential and a broader mix of retail/ restaurants, office and entertainment uses is encouraged to help reinvigorate underutilized centers, expand housing options where transit exists or is planned, and improve access to services and amenities in both existing and new districts.*

The Suburban Mixed-Use Place Type is most commonly associated with the City’s commercial zoning districts, including the General Commercial (CG) District proposed for portions of the annexation.

**Industrial:**

*Principal Land Use: Industrial land uses such as manufacturing, assembly plants, primary metal and related industries; vehicle-related commercial uses; warehouses, outdoor storage yards and distribution facilities; and flex space for small, local startups as well as large national or regional enterprises. Supporting Land Use: Restaurants, convenience retail and other supporting services. Densities and building heights vary.*

*Employment districts encourage and support a variety of employment opportunities in Fort Collins—ranging from those oriented toward education, research, entrepreneurship, and business incubators, to those that endeavor to turn knowledge into products, processes, and services, to those oriented toward industrial, manufacturing and logistics.*

The Industrial Place Type typically corresponds to the Industrial (I) Zone District, which is proposed for the site.

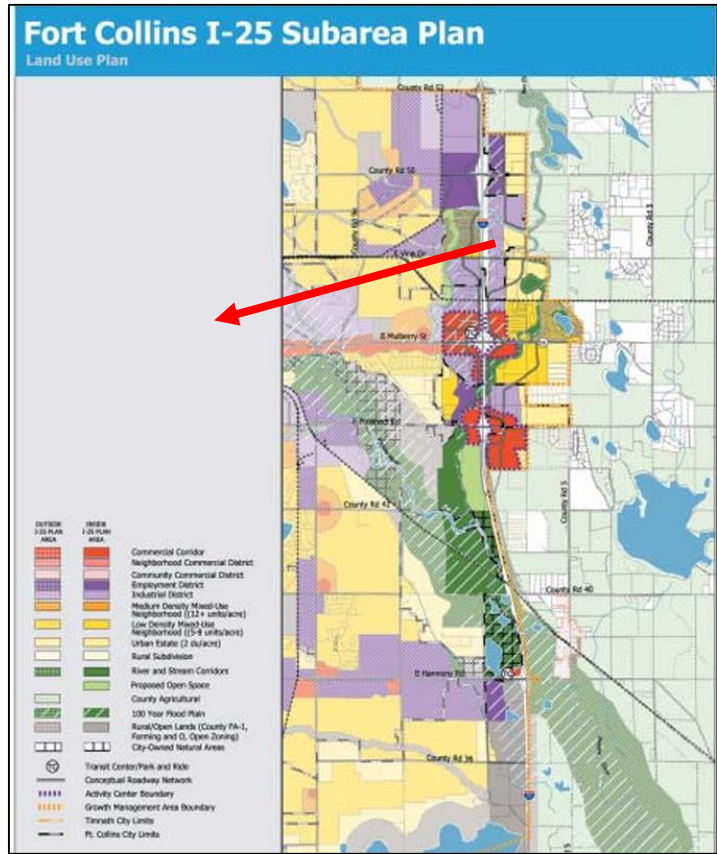
While the proposed zoning is consistent with the Structure Plan Map Place Types in composition and approximate size (acres), notably, the boundary and shape differ. This is due to CDOT’s proposed realignment of the Frontage Road which will shift the street inward into the site and parallel to the interstate versus its current position directly adjacent and parallel to the interstate. The proposed zoning boundaries follows this new alignment and staff support the new zoning boundaries which will create a more logical and orderly pattern for development versus what is illustrated on the Structure Plan Map before the CDOT roadway realignment was known.

The Structure Plan map also encourages the use of more specific land use guidance for sites when subarea and neighborhood plans have been approved. At this location, both the East Mulberry Plan and the I-25 Subarea Plan provide guidance.

**I-25 Subarea Plan**

The I-25 Subarea Plan was adopted in 2003 and establishes transportation and land-use guidance for the entire I-25 corridor through the community. The Land Use Plan identifies the site as a commercial corridor with adjacent industrial zoning to the north. The Plan also identifies the area around the I-25 and Mulberry interchange as an Activity Center, which will require enhanced design and land use

considerations during development of the site and the Land Use Code's supplemental I-25 Subarea Plan standards.

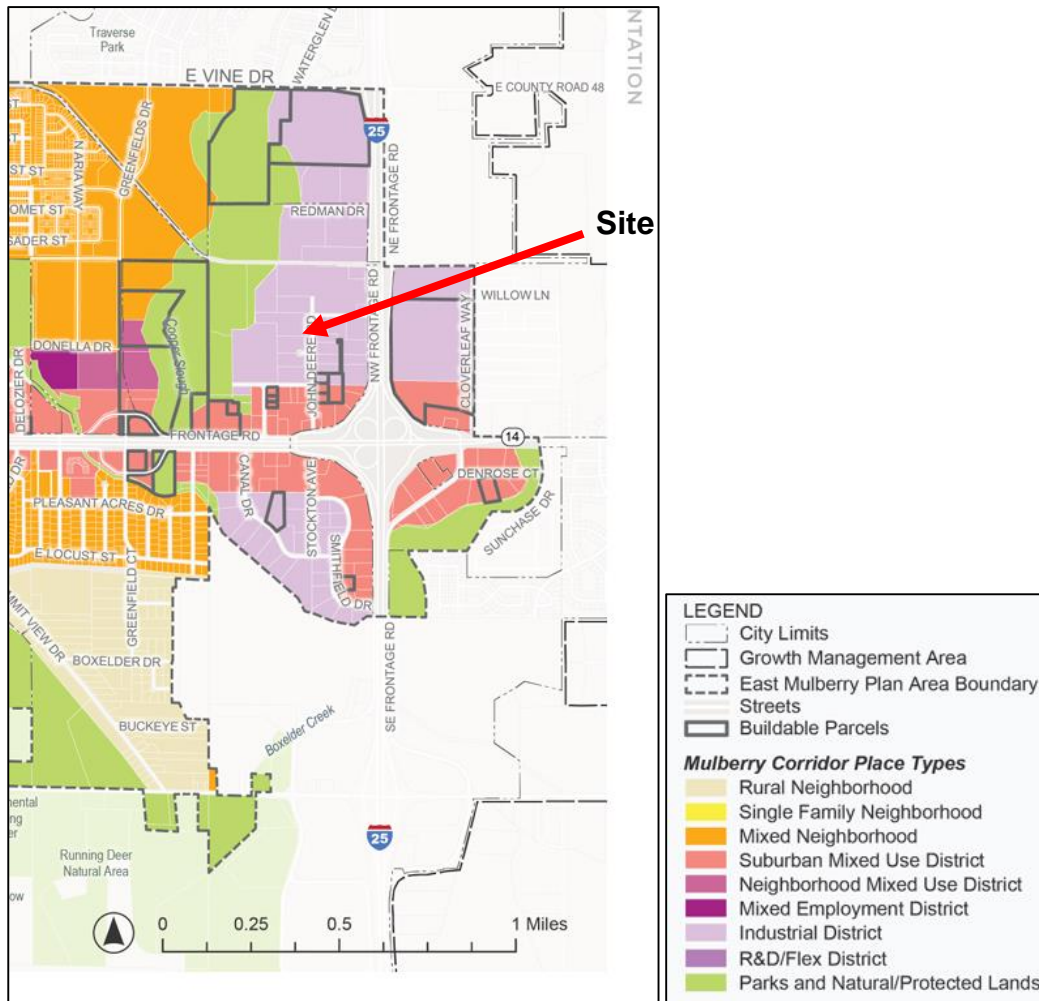


The I-25 Subarea Plan designated the total site for commercial zoning rather than a mix of commercial and industrial zoning as proposed. The commercial zoning is in part due to the possibility the area could host a regional or community shopping center. Little interest in a retail center of this scale has been discussed for the site in the 20+ years since adoption of the I-25 Subarea Plan, and internally, staff no longer feel the site is as well suited towards this goal given shifts in land use, transportation, and the commercial/retail market. Much of the potential retail activity originally envisioned for this location has shifted further west along Mulberry Street to the proposed Bloom and Peakview Developments near Mulberry Street and Greenfields Court.

The loss of a larger commercial zoning site may be appropriately backfilled by the proposed Industrial zoning, which is consistent with the Structure Plan Map and the much more recent East Mulberry Plan, as well as the consistency of other quadrants of the interchange which feature mixed commercial/industrial zoning.

### **East Mulberry Plan**

The East Mulberry Plan was adopted in December 2023 and updated the original 2002 East Mulberry Corridor Plan. The update provides renewed land use and policy guidance for the Mulberry corridor, including the subject property. The Plan's land use framework shifted from one based on zoning to place types to match the City Plan Structure Map, and the land use guidance illustrated below matches the current Structure Plan Map with indications for a mix of Suburban Mixed-Use and Industrial place types.



Similar to the Structure Plan analysis described above, the land use guidance provided by the East Mulberry Plan matches the proposed (CG) and (I) zoning in size but differs in shape due to more recent knowledge of CDOT’s plan to alter the alignment of the I-25 Frontage Road. Staff supports the requested zoning boundary changes to match this shift in roadway alignment to create a more logical and orderly pattern of development.

Further, the proposed CG and I zoning promotes policy guidance related to the I-25 Interchange Character Area, specifically:

**1.N.1** *Preserve existing agricultural and industrial businesses through land use guidance and zoning upon annexing into the City of Fort Collins. See Section 4 of the Plan for more specific recommendations related to existing agricultural and industrial businesses around the I-25 Interchange.*

**3.N.1** *Collaborate with CDOT to redesign and reconstruct the I-25 and Mulberry interchange, incorporating design enhancements that align with Fort Collins’ character.*

**7.N.3** *Enhance the safety, aesthetics, and functionality of the I-25 interchange.*

The CG and I zoning allows for a combination of commercial and industrial services and businesses to occupy the site while working with CDOT to realign the Frontage Roads in anticipation of the future redesign of the I-25 and Mulberry interchange. The altered shape of the commercial zoning adjacent to the highway mirrors existing zoning on other quadrants of the interchange and may serve to enhance the aesthetics by limiting certain lower quality industrial activities (i.e., outdoor storage) from public visibility.

## **Sign District**

Given the proposed commercial and industrial zoning, staff recommend the property be placed in the Non-Residential Sign District.

## **Lighting Context Area**

On March 26, 2021, the City of Fort Collins adopted new exterior lighting standards and established Lighting Context Areas that correspond to the City's zone districts. The corresponding districts identified by Table 3.2.4-1 of the City's lighting code is LC2 for the General Commercial and Industrial zone districts, accordingly, staff recommends placement of the property into the LC2 Lighting Context Area.

LC2 - Moderate ambient lighting. Areas of human activity where the vision of human residents and users is adapted to moderate light levels. Lighting may typically be used for safety and convenience, but it is not necessarily uniform or continuous. Typical locations include high density residential areas, shopping and commercial districts, industrial parks and districts, City playfields and major institutional uses, and mixed-use districts.

## **BOARD / COMMISSION / COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

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The Planning and Zoning Commission will vote on this annexation and zoning at its May 16, 2024, meeting.

## **CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

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None.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

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A neighborhood meeting was held September 22, 2022, to jointly share information and discuss the proposed annexation and associated Overall Development Plan for the site. All other notification requirements as required by state and local law have been met.

A majority of questions and concerns discussed at the meeting related to future transportation access and development potential of the associated Overall Development Plan which remains under review. Key topics related to annexation include:

- Zoning boundaries in relation to the proposed realignment of the Frontage Road; and
- Whether the Cloverleaf Mobile Home Park would also be annexed into the City.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

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1. Ordinance for Consideration
2. Vicinity Map
3. Petition
4. Applicant Narrative
5. Annexation Map
6. Structure Plan Map
7. East Mulberry Plan Framework Map
8. Fort Collins I-25 Subarea Plan Land Use Plan Map
9. Existing Zoning Map
10. Lighting Context Area Map
11. Lighting Context Map with Annexation
12. Zoning Plat Map
13. Residential Sign District Map