

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

City Council



STAFF

Kim Meyer, Principal Planner

SUBJECT

First Reading of Ordinance No. 137, 2026, Amending the Zoning Map of the City of Fort Collins and Classifying for Zoning Purposes the Property Included in the Strauss Lakes Annexation to the City of Fort Collins, Colorado, and Approving Corresponding Changes to the Residential Neighborhood Sign District Map and the Lighting Context Area Map.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this item is to establish initial City zoning on approximately 147.499 acres of land included in the Strauss Lakes Annexation. The proposed zoning, as recommended by staff and the Planning and Zoning Commission, places approximately 7.664 acres into the Medium Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood ("MMN") zone district, and approximately 139.835 acres into the Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood ("LMN") zone district.

Staff also recommends placement of the full 147.499 acres into the Residential Neighborhood Sign District and the LC1 Lighting Context area, to support low ambient lighting standards, as described in standards in the Fort Collins Land Use Code.

The Annexation of this Strauss Lakes property appears as a separate agenda item on the Council agenda.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends adoption of the Ordinance on First Reading.

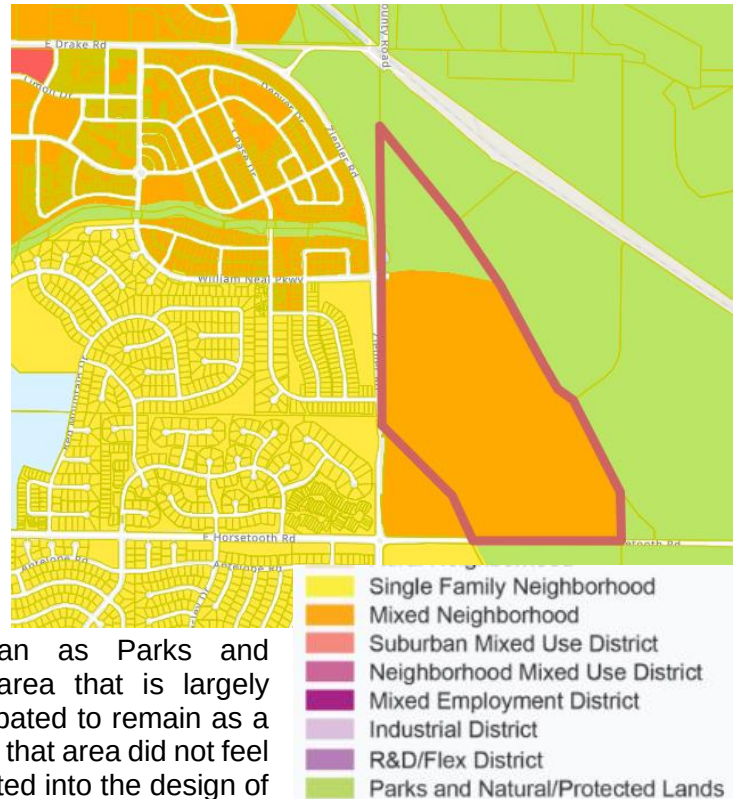
BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The proposed property to be annexed and zoned is located on the northeast corner of Ziegler and East Horsetooth Roads. Upon annexation, the applicant has proposed initial zoning consistent with the City of Fort Collins Structure Plan Map – Place Type indicated is Neighborhood Mixed-Use District (shown in orange in Figure 1). The zones requested are LMN and MMN:

LMN (139.835 acres): The Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood District is intended to be a setting for a variety of housing, providing diverse opportunities for single unit and accessory dwellings to attached units and small and medium-sized multi-unit structures. The District also encourages complementary commercial and institutional land uses and amenities that serve the everyday needs of a residential neighborhood. Parks and neighborhood centers are integrated into new and existing development and the broader community through the pattern of streets, blocks, and other linkages, providing an attractive and walkable focal point for services, open space, and recreation.

Figure 1. Structure Plan Map of Site

MMN (7.664 acres): The Medium Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood District is intended to be a setting for a diverse range of higher intensity housing and complementary services and amenities within close proximity to transit and/or commercial districts. This District is intended to function together with adjacent commercial development and/or transit to provide a transition to lower density neighborhoods. Together, the MMN district and its adjacent commercial core and low density neighborhoods are intended to form an integral, town-like pattern of development with a unifying pattern of walkable streets and blocks.



A section of the northern portion of the site is designated in green on the Structure Plan as Parks and Natural/Protected Lands, which overlays an area that is largely covered by an existing pond. The pond is anticipated to remain as a natural feature, and therefore separate zoning for that area did not feel necessary as the pond can be effectively integrated into the design of the neighborhood.

Zoning for the existing neighborhoods to the west include RL – Low Density Residential (typically used for pre-City Plan/LUC neighborhoods), and LMN – Low Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood, with areas zoned MMN – Medium Density Mixed-Use Neighborhood and NC - Neighborhood Commercial as the neighborhood nears Timberline Road. The small triangle of land directly northeast of the Ziegler/Horsetooth intersection, also owned by the Applicant, was annexed previously and zoned LMN.

Residential Neighborhood Sign District. Due to the predominant residential character of the surrounding area and intended development, staff recommends that the property be placed into the Residential Neighborhood Sign District, which regulates signs for non-residential uses in areas of the community where the predominant character of the neighborhood is residential.

Lighting Context Area. The Lighting Context Area identified by Table 5.12.1 of the City's lighting code for the LMN zone district is LC1 (Low ambient lighting). As part of this item, staff recommends placement of the property into the LC1 Lighting Context Area.

Review Criteria. Per Land Use Code (LUC), Division 6.25, the City Council has decision-making authority to establish or change zoning districts, after a recommendation from Planning & Zoning Commission, in accordance with the review criteria stated in the LUC. As a quasi-judicial matter (zoning requested for less than 640 acres), the Council may approve the zoning only if the proposed zoning is:

(a) in general alignment with the principles and policies of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and/or

(b) warranted by changed conditions in the neighborhood surrounding and including the subject property.

Meeting either of these criteria is sufficient. As noted above, staff finds that the proposed zone districts are in alignment with the Structure Plan Place Types and City Plan policies and this required criterium is met. The Commission may also consider three additional factors:

- (1) Compatibility with existing and surrounding uses, and whether the proposed district is the appropriate one for the land.
- (2) Potential adverse impacts on the natural environment;
- (3) Whether the rezoning results in a logical and orderly development pattern.

Compatibility and Environmental Considerations. The proposed zoning is in alignment with principals and policies within City Plan as well as the Structure Plan Map. The LMN and MMN districts are compatible and consistent with the residential character of the nearby Rigden Farm, Stone Ridge, and English Ranch neighborhoods. The annexation and zoning will not result in significant adverse impacts on the natural environment. And the proposed zone districts will result in a logical and orderly development pattern for this area of the City.

Additional details and analysis are included with the attached Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Report which was presented at a hearing held by the Commission on September 17, 2026. The Commission deliberated and discussed topics related to the context of the site and appropriate zoning for the site in relation to density and housing types, the guidance offered by the *City Plan* Structure Plan Map, and relevant review criteria within the Land Use Code at this stage of development.

CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS

No direct financial impacts are associated with the establishment of initial zoning. Once developed, the property will generate property tax, sales tax and use tax revenue and will require ongoing City services consistent with other similarly developed properties.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

On September 17, 2026, the Planning and Zoning Commission voted 5-0 to make a recommendation to City Council to annex and zone the subject property consistent with the requested LMN and MMN zone districts, with placement of the property into the Residential Neighborhood Sign District and LC1 Lighting District.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

A neighborhood meeting was held on May 13, 2024. Because the comments focused on the specific proposed development of the property and not on the proposed zoning more generally, and because the decision on the proposed development could be appealed to Council, those comments are not attached to this Agenda Item Summary. All other public notification requirements as required by State and local law have been met, including written notice to surrounding property owners and posting of the property.

ATTACHMENTS / LINKS

1. Vicinity Map
2. Proposed Zoning Map
3. Applicant Narrative
4. Planning and Zoning Commission Staff Report, September 17, 2026
5. Staff Presentation
6. Ordinance No. 137, 2026