



DEVELOPMENT & NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

I. Project Description:

Applicant: City of Greenacres

Request: City-initiated Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) to Chapter 16, Article III, Division 13 to update the Study Area Zone (SAZ) district framework and allow minor improvements while properties remain under the SAZ designation.

Project Manager: Gionni Gallier, Assistant Director of Development & Neighborhood Services

II. Proposed Zoning Text Amendment Overview and Language:

- **Proposed Zoning Text Amendment Language (Text shown in ~~strike through~~ is to be deleted. Text shown in underline is to be added.):**

DIVISION 13. STUDY AREA ZONE (SAZ)

Sec. 16-537. Purpose and intent.

The study area zone (SAZ) is a zoning district designed as a holding zone and to apply to lands on temporary basis awaiting a rezoning to another district provided in this chapter. This zoning designation shall be appropriate in instances when land is being studied for a proper future zoning designation or in instances when annexed lands are awaiting the application for rezoning.

Sec. 16-538. Development.

There shall be no development permitted within a study area zone except for limited minor site improvements determined to be necessary to protect public health, safety, or welfare; to prevent site degradation; or to remedy conditions that constitute a violation of applicable codes or regulations. Such minor improvements may include, but are not limited to, landscaping or fencing.

All such activities are subject to approval by the Development and Neighborhood Services Director or designee, who shall determine whether the proposed improvement qualifies as minor in nature and is consistent with the intent of this section. Development beyond such minor improvements shall only occur upon a rezoning to another district contained in this chapter. This restriction shall not apply to any improvements that are clearly depicted or contemplated as part of an approved and valid site plan, development order, or annexation agreement issued for the property.

Sec. 16-539. Application.

Study area zones shall be applied in the manner set out below.

(1)*Annexed property.* Property annexed into the city shall immediately be designated as a study area zone. During the deliberation on annexation, the city council shall make a finding that the property be declared a study area zone until a formal zoning district is approved.

(2)*Other property.* The study area zone may also be applied during a city-initiated rezoning identified as planning efforts for large-scale developments, corridor plans, or special area studies.

Sec. 16-540. Time limits.

For the purposes of this chapter, an area may not be zoned as an study area zone for a period exceeding two (2) years. In the event of such an occurrence, the city council shall initiate a ~~petition to rezone such lands~~ rezoning to an appropriate zoning district that serves the public interest.

Sec. 16-541. Reserved.

- **Proposed Zoning Text Amendment Overview:**

- **Article III, Division 13**

- This Division has been updated to allow limited site improvements while a property remains under the Study Area Zone designation. These improvements may include measures such as landscaping and fencing, provided they are determined to be necessary for public safety, site stabilization, or code compliance. The amendment also clarifies that improvements depicted on an approved and valid site plan are exempt from this restriction. These updates support proactive property maintenance without undermining the temporary nature or intent of the SAZ designation.

III. Staff Analysis:

Background:

The Study Area Zone (SAZ) district serves as a temporary holding designation for properties undergoing annexation or long-range planning evaluation. Its purpose is to allow time for the City to assign an appropriate permanent zoning district based on comprehensive planning considerations.

The existing SAZ regulations prohibits all development until rezoning occurs. There is currently no mechanism to accommodate minor site improvements such as the installation of landscaping or fencing that may be beneficial or necessary for safety, site stabilization, code compliance, or visual quality. It also does not account for development contemplated in an already approved site plan, development order, or annexation agreement.

This amendment, ZTA-25-08, allows such minor improvements for maintaining property conditions and addressing code compliance issues without undermining the intent of the SAZ district. It also provides a mechanism for approving clearly contemplated improvements tied to site plans, development orders, or annexation agreements. Consistent with the purpose of the SAZ district, the amendment further clarifies the application of the SAZ to non-annexation cases, such as long-range planning studies.

Development Review Committee Staff Comments:

The proposed Zoning Text Amendment was reviewed and recommended for approval by the Development Review Committee.

IV. Zoning Text Amendment Criteria:

A. *The need and justification for these changes:*

The proposed Zoning Text Amendment is needed to improve the functionality of the SAZ district and to provide appropriate flexibility for minor improvements on properties awaiting rezoning. Without this amendment, basic maintenance or code-related improvements may be delayed, potentially leading to site deterioration or enforcement issues. The amendment resolves these concerns by establishing a clear path for appropriate interim improvements. Consistent with the purpose of the SAZ district, the

amendment also clarifies the SAZ designation may be applied in other scenarios such as during long-range planning studies.

- B. *The relationship of the proposed amendments to the purpose and objectives of the City's Comprehensive Plan, and whether the proposed change will further the purposes of the City's Zoning Code regulations and other City codes, regulations and actions designed to implement the Comprehensive Plan.*

The proposed Zoning Text Amendment supports the Comprehensive Plan by facilitating orderly development, maintaining public safety, property standards, and ensuring compatibility during transitional phases. The amendment enhances the effectiveness of the Zoning Code while upholding the temporary and protective nature of the SAZ designation by allowing only limited improvements.

V. Staff Recommendation:

Approval of ZTA-25-08 through the adoption of Ordinance 2025-15.

PLANNING & ZONING BOARD– August 14, 2025

The Planning and Zoning Board on a motion made by Board Member Hayes and seconded by Board Member Robarts, by a vote of five (5) to zero (0) recommended approval of Zoning Text Amendment **ZTA-25-08** (*Chapter 16 Study Area Zone (SAZ) Update*) as presented by staff.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION First Reading – September 03, 2025

The City Council on a motion made by Councilmember Diaz and seconded by Councilmember Tharp, by a vote of three (3) to zero (0) recommended approval of Zoning Text Amendment **ZTA-25-08** (*Chapter 16 Study Area Zone (SAZ) Update*) through Ordinance 2025-15 on first reading as presented by staff.

CITY COUNCIL ACTION Adoption Hearing – September 17, 2025
