



Staff Report

Meeting Date: December 3, 2024
Planner: Teri Whitmore, AICP, PMP - Senior Planner

APPLICATION SUMMARY:

Project Name: An Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map (FLUC – Character Map Update) at 16 W. Dry Creek Circle

Case Numbers: AMF24-0001

Application type: An Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map (FLUC – Character Map Update)

Location: 16 W. Dry Creek Circle, which is generally located south of Medium Lot Residential (MLR) zoned homes on W. Fremont Ave., north of the Highline Professional Park, bordered on the west by the Highline Canal, and near S. Broadway to the East.

Size of Property: 5.6 acres

Zoning: Corridor-Mixed (CM) Zoning District, Conditioned on the FLUC Amendment

Applicant: Tyler Erickson, Vista Residential Partners

Applicant's Representative: Diana Rael and Elyse Applegate, Norris Design

Owner(s): Joan Scott Tucker (Parcel# 2077-27-3-14-021),
Angela M. Delponte, POA (Parcel # 2077-27-3-00-005);

Applicant Request: Approval of a Future Land Use and Character Map Amendment from Suburban Commercial to Suburban Residential Multi-Family

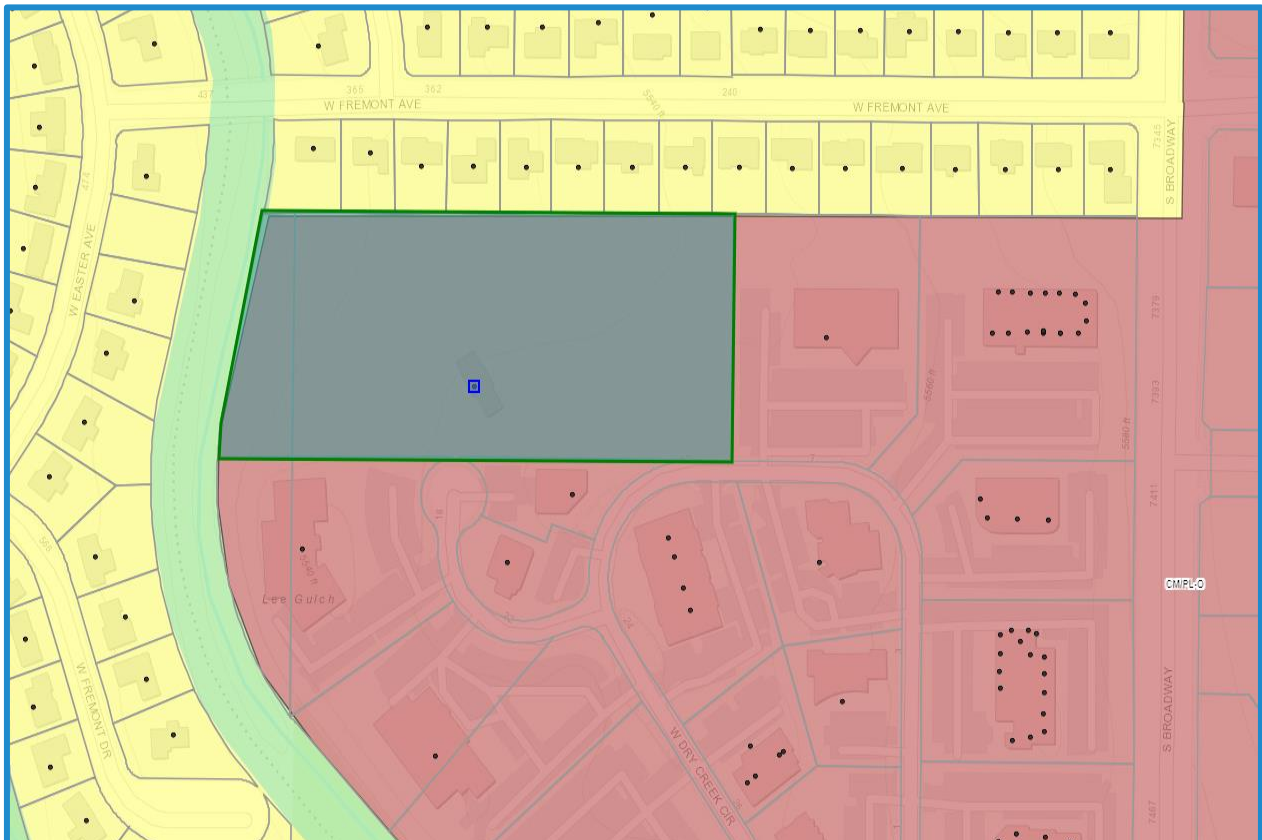
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LOCATION:

The 16 W. Dry Creek Circle site considered in this proposed future land use and character map amendment is located on a 5.6-acre site that includes two lots, with the primary lot consisting of a single-family home and an adjacent vacant triangular lot adjacent to the Highline Canal (outlined in green below).

Vicinity Map



PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS AND PROCESS:

Pursuant to Section 10-9-3.5 of the Unified Land Use Code (the “ULUC”), notice of public hearings shall be given in accordance with Table 10-9-3.9.1, which states, in part, for the relevant application before City Council:

Table 10-9-3.9.1 Development Review Summary							
Development Application	Pre-App Required	Neighborhood Meeting	Review and Decision		Public Notice	Expiration (10-9-3.8)	Applicable Standards
			Review/Recommend	Decide			
CDD = Community Development Director; PC = Planning Commission; CC = City Council; HPC = Historical Preservation Commission; AAC = Appeals and Adjustments Commission; [] = Public Hearing Required							
Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map	✓	✓	1st: CDD 2nd: PC	[CC]	M Po, and as re- quired by state law		

Pu = Published in newspaper 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5
 Po = Sign posted on property 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5
 M = Mailed notice to adjoining property owners or property owners within a specified distance of the subject property 10 days prior to public hearing in accordance with Section 10-9-3.5

Section 10-9-3.5 of the ULUC requires that any notice provided by mail, shall be provided through the United States Postal Service to all addresses, units, and property owners located within 700 feet of the property. To ensure full coverage, Littleton staff developed the notification list with a 740 foot circumference from the subject site. In addition, any homeowner’s or other owner associations within 700 feet of the property, were also notified of the public hearing.

In accordance with the ULUC provisions regarding public notice, staff notified all addresses, units, and individual property owners and residents within 700 feet of the site at least ten (10) days in advance of the December 3, 2024 hearing date. In total, staff sent 237 notification cards to property owners and residents within the notification boundary.

Notice was also posted with two (2) signs on-site, meeting the Unified Land Use Code (ULUC) provisions for visibility. The following information was included on the sign, notifying parties of the Littleton City Council Public Hearing, and was placed at least ten (10) days in advance of December 3, 2024.

1. The time and place of the public hearing;
2. A brief description of the land which is the subject of the matter of the public hearing;
3. The purpose of the public hearing;
4. A statement that the public is invited to review and comment on the matter to be heard; and,
5. Contact information for the Community Development Department.

A total of three neighborhood meetings were held on the following dates: November 2, 2023, June 18, 2024, and September 19, 2024. Comments raised at the neighborhood meetings are summarized in a separate City Council report.

BACKGROUND:

The site at 16 W. Dry Creek Circle is undeveloped, with the exception of a single-family home. An Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map (FLUC) from Suburban Commercial to Suburban Residential Multi-Family is proposed at the subject property.

Direction	Zoning	Land Use
North	MLR	Single-Family Residential
East	CM/PL-O	Suburban Commercial/Office
South	CM/PL-O	Suburban Commercial/Office
West	OS	Highline Canal

In 2017, the City of Littleton embarked on a community effort to create a 20 year vision for Littleton which was adopted in December 2018. The next milestone for long range planning under Envision Littleton 2040 came in October of 2019, when council adopted a new comprehensive plan that included a Future Land Use and Character Map and the city’s first transportation master plan. The Future Land Use and Character Map was a guiding document to determine new zoning under the Unified Land Use Code (ULUC). Following extensive public engagement, the city adopted a new zoning map under the city-initiated comprehensive rezoning process along with the Unified Land Use Code on October 19, 2021.

The city-initiated comprehensive rezoning process was adopted on September 7, 2021 after unanimous recommendation by Planning Commission. Ordinance 16-2021 created base or underlying zoning throughout the city and after the ULUC adoption on October 19, 2021, required a Master Development Plan (MDP) process to go from the planned development or PL-O zoning to the base or underlying zoning.

The Corridor-Mixed Use zoning district contains a very expansive list of possible uses though some may not be consistent with the Future Land Use and Character Map which further refines the vision of uses within this broad zoning district. Listed below are the designations. Noting the breadth of land use potentials, the suburban character uses are a better fit for this parcel. In addition, multi-family residential uses provide more of a transition from the single-family land uses to the north, than a Suburban Commercial use. In addition, the auto-oriented land uses are not a fit with the location of this site.

City of Littleton’s Comprehensive Plan land uses allowed in the Corridor-Mixed (CM) zoning district:

- Estate Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Suburban Residential Multi-Family
- Auto-oriented Residential
- Auto-oriented Residential Attached
- Auto-oriented Residential Multi-Family
- Residential Mixed
- Mixed Core Neighborhood

- Suburban Commercial

1) APPLICANT’S REQUEST FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE FUTURE LAND USE AND CHARACTER MAP:

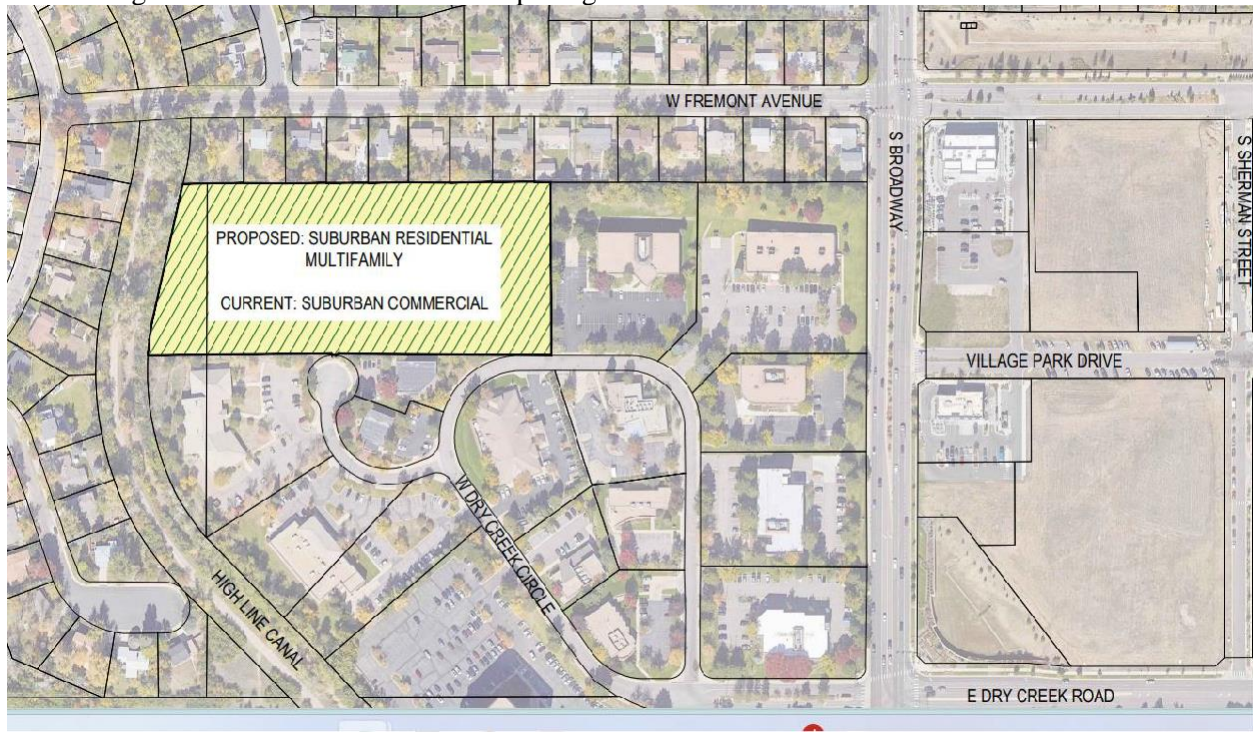
APPLICATION DETAILS:

The existing Future Land Use and Character Map designation for 16 W. Dry Creek Circle is Suburban Commercial. The applicant is proposing to amend the Future Land Use and Character Map designation to Suburban Residential Multi-Family, as reflected in the graphic below. If approved by City Council, the amendment will be reflected on the Future Land Use and Character Map. The Envision Littleton Comprehensive Plan provides a synopsis of the character designation areas and discusses the goals, policies and actions pertaining to the City along with the specific Future City focus areas.

The applicant requests City Council’s approval of the Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map from Suburban Commercial to Suburban Residential Multi-Family. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the amendment at the November 11, 2024 meeting.

Proposed Amendment to the City of Littleton Future Land Use and Character Map

The existing future land use and character map designation for the site is Suburban Commercial.



Decision Criteria and Analysis:

Pursuant to Section 10-9-4.5.D of the ULUC, Planning Commission shall recommend approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the proposed Future Land Use and Character Map amendment to City Council. The recommendation shall be based on the following Decision Criteria, as outlined within Section 10-9-4.5.C of the ULUC:

1. **Compatibility.** The land use types and characteristics of the proposed land use category will

be compatible with the properties in the immediate vicinity of the subject property;

The existing designation for the site is Suburban Commercial. The proposed amendment to the Suburban Residential Multi-Family character area is intended to allow residential developments, including varying densities that include multifamily complexes, that help provide a mix of housing options for many income levels and family circumstances, helping to build a diverse community. The proposed Suburban Residential Multi-Family designation at this location will also provide a transitional site from the single-family development to the north, and to the Suburban Commercial to the south. There has not been a viable market for Suburban Commercial office development at this site for years, only exacerbated by the COVID pandemic influence on work-from-home options. This site is also one of the few undeveloped properties in the City and is well-suited for a development that will expand housing options in the community. The project is also well situated for transit connections, noting its proximity to a number of key RTD bus lines on Broadway, with direct connections to services and employment in Denver.

2. **Impact Mitigation.** The amendment shall serve to mitigate adverse impacts of the use and development of land on the natural or built environments, including, but not limited to, mobility, air quality, water quality, noise levels, stormwater management, vegetation, or will be neutral with respect to these issues.

The applicant has proposed multi-family residential development for the site, consistent with their requested amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map. As a residential land use, it will provide efficient use of land near Broadway, a major north-south arterial road through the City of Littleton, coupled with high-frequency bus service. Any development on the site is required to mitigate potential impacts to its surrounding land uses. The ULUC contains design and transition standards for construction adjacent to various uses, especially single-family residential. The transition standards include planting new trees, preservation of trees where feasible, shrubs, buffers, bulk plane standards, increased setbacks, stormwater mitigation, and pedestrian connectivity,

3. **Comprehensive Plan.** The proposed Suburban Residential Multi-Family land use in this area supports the following **Housing and Neighborhood goals** from the Comprehensive Plan:
 - Goal H&N 1: A quantity and diversity of housing options that makes living in Littleton attainable for a wide range of age groups and income levels.
 - o Multi-family residences are often more affordable to rent than single-family homes and are a better 'fit' for smaller households. They also provide the opportunity to have more residents housed on a parcel with the allowable higher density. Also, many residents may not have the income levels or savings to purchase a home, so an apartment rental provides their best housing fit. Lastly, this type of housing also provides an option for nearby professionals.
 - Goal H&N 2: Appealing housing choices for families drawn by Littleton's educational, recreational, and other amenities.
 - o The proposed Suburban Residential Multi-Family land use in this neighborhood offers more residences within short walking distance of several schools in the Littleton School District. The site also has appeal with its proximity to the Highline Canal for recreation, the community hospital, and other commercial services. The development's design has incorporated high-quality materials that embrace the natural environment, along with it being an accessible rental option for individuals and families.

- Goal H&N 3: Neighborhoods that are safe and comfortable for all residents.
 - o The proposed Suburban Residential Multi-Family use in this area will better activate the existing office park outside of traditional work hours, providing more eyes on the street and on the Highline Canal.
- Goal H&N 4: Neighborhoods that maintain their character or are carefully managed when headed toward transition.
 - o The proposed Suburban Residential Multi-Family use enables densification within proximity of Broadway, while avoiding traffic impacts on the surrounding residential neighborhood.
- Goal H&N 5: Housing the supports choice in mobility and investments in transportation infrastructure.
 - o The Suburban Residential Multi-Family use within proximity of high-frequency transit on Broadway and Highline Canal Trail will support both transit and bicycle/pedestrian trail use among residents and visitors.

Alignment with Comprehensive Plan Guiding Principles

- **Anchored**
 - o Amending the Future Land Use and Character Map will enable a quality Suburban Residential Multi-Family development on the project site, will allow an infill housing product that fills a need in the community, while also providing a great location for the future residents near jobs, schools, lifestyle amenities, and services that is an efficient use of the land that will not over-extend resources.
- **Authentic**
 - o Amending the map to enable Suburban Residential Multi-Family development will provide additional housing options for people who appreciate Littleton's distinctive identity and wish to become or remain members in the community but are seeking right-sized living for smaller households. An example of the downsizing potential is a senior in the community who wishes to sell their home when they don't need the space and wish to have a maintenance-free living environment.
- **Connected**
 - o Amending the map to enable Suburban Residential Multi-Family development on this particular set of parcels will enable future residents of the Suburban Residential Multi-Family community to connect to the Highline Canal Trail and high-frequency transit on Broadway, within a few minutes' walk from their homes. New residents of the project will contribute to the community, its activities, and support nearby businesses.
- **Active**
 - o Amending the Future Land Use and Character Map to enable Suburban Residential Multi-Family development adjacent to the Highline canal will support future residents' use of the trail network to maintain a healthy lifestyle and make the most of the nearby natural resources. The site is also within walking distance to several commercial amenities including restaurants, the YMCA, and services.
- **Engaged**

- Amending the Future Land Use and Character Map to Suburban Residential Multi-Family will enable development at a site that has been discussed extensively with Littleton residents in proximity to the site, noting that three neighborhood meetings have been held to-date.
4. **Changing Conditions.** The amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map will allow for the multi-family residential development of 16 W. Dry Creek Circle, addressing a changing condition that was not anticipated by the Comprehensive Plan and consider the current underlying zoning.

The Future Land Use and Character Map was adopted in 2019, several years prior to the adoption of the current zoning map in 2021. This site was designated PL-O/CM in the newly adopted zoning map, recognizing the property's' future potential for mixed-use redevelopment and a higher-density potential. The Corridor Mixed zoning district is intended to "encourage good standards of site planning, sustainable design, architecture, and landscape design to maintain quality of place and a desirable community character."

Based on the analysis above, staff concludes that an amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map for the proposed development from Suburban Commercial to Suburban Residential Multi-Family is aligned with the Comprehensive Plan, including beneficial proximity to employment and transportation. The site has also remained undeveloped, noting the minimal marketability of the site for commercial/office uses.

Staff Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the requested amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map from the Suburban Commercial designation to the Suburban Residential Multi-Family character area.

Staff Recommendation: It is staff's opinion that the proposed Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map aligns with the Comprehensive Plan designation requirements and is consistent with the site's zoning.

Economic Development Department Analysis:

Economic Development staff is supportive of the proposed amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map to Suburban Residential Multi-Family, helping to add additional housing supply potential in Littleton to help with the increased demand in the vicinity. There are several large development projects in this area in various stages of development, including: Littleton Village, Advent Health Littleton Hospital, and Mineral Place, to name a few. The change in land use at this site will help enhance the potential of more availability of housing in the community. Staff's economic analysis of the site's development potential concludes that the site is better suited to multi-family residential use, due to market conditions. Whereas, office and commercial uses are not favorable in this location, evidenced by the fact that the site has never been developed, given the site's limited visibility and access from primary arterial corridors. Given these characteristics, retail and commercial uses are highly unlikely to be successful in this location and therefore, Economic Development looks favorably upon the proposed residential project.

Public Works/Traffic Department(s) Analysis:

Engineering and Traffic has accepted the preliminary information submitted for the site and the calculations that show the proposed Suburban Residential Multi-family land use will have minimal impacts on the roadway network. Additional detailed traffic analysis will be conducted

with the approval process for future developments at this site. Other detailed engineering documents will be reviewed at that time, including: Final Drainage Study, Final Sanitary Sewer Study, Final Pond Outfall Calculations, required Environmental Assessments, and any other requested detailed reports.

CITY COUNCIL OPTIONS:

1. Future Land Use and Character Map: Pursuant to Section 10-9-4.5.D, the Council shall recommend approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the proposed amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map of the City of Littleton's Comprehensive Plan for the site.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the following:

- 1) Approval of City Council Resolution 115-2024 - Recommending Approval of the Amendment to the Future Land Use and Character Map from Suburban Commercial to Suburban Residential Multi-Family.