

PROJECT SUMMARY:

1. Project Description: The project proposes an application for a Zone Change with Concept Statement. The zone change proposes to rezone the project site, which consists of 1249 sf, from PK/HS/SS (Public Park with Hillside and Streamside Overlays) to R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay) (**see “Zone Change” attachment**). Per City Code 7.5.501(C)(1) Exceptions, the establishment or change of zone for certain zone districts, such as Two-Family Residential (R-2), do allow the submission of a concept statement as opposed to a separate concept plan application. The concept statement describes that the rezoning was submitted in conjunction with a recently approved land exchange that occurred between the City and adjacent property owner. Should the rezone be approved, the property intends to replat the property and eventually develop it residentially.
2. Applicant’s Project Statement: (**see “Project Statement” attachment**)
3. Planning and Development Team’s Recommendation: City Planning staff recommends approval of the application on the consent of the City Planning Commission.

BACKGROUND:

1. Site Address: The project site is located south of the intersection of North 7th Street and West Espanola Street.
2. Existing Zoning/Land Use: The site is zoned PK/HS/SS (Public Park with Hillside and Streamside Overlays) and is presently part of Sondermann Park.
3. Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:
North: R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay) and is residentially developed

South: R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay) and is residentially developed

East: R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay) and is residentially developed\

West: PK/HS/SS (Public Park with Hillside Overlay and Streamside Overlays) Sondermann Park
4. PlanCOS Vision: According to the PlanCOS Vision Map (**see “PlanCOS Vision Map” attachment**), the project site is identified as a Changing Neighborhood. The site is also near the “Strong Connections” idea of “Intercity Corridors”.
5. Annexation: The property is part of the original townsite established for the Town of Colorado Springs.
6. Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use: The project site is part of the Mesa Springs Community Plan planned area.
7. Subdivision: Property is unplatted
8. Zoning Enforcement Action: None
9. Physical Characteristics: The project site is currently part of Sondermann Park and consists of primarily native vegetation and slopes down from east to west.

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT:

The public notification process consisted of providing notice to the surrounding owners within 1,000 feet of the site, which included mailing postcards to 90 property owners on two occasions; during the initial review and prior to the Planning Commission hearing. A public noticing poster was also posted during the two occasions noted above.

City Planning staff received three written comments, which expressed objection and inquiry. Those comments received in objection for the proposal raised concerns in regard to retaining park land (**See “Public Comment” attachment**). The Applicant drafted a response to public comment letter and has been distributed to the community members who commented on the project (**see “Public Comment Response” attachment**). No follow-up correspondence from the public were received.

Staff sent copies of the plan set and supporting documentation to the standard internal review agencies for comments. Commenting agencies included Colorado Springs Utilities, City Engineering, City Traffic, City SWENT, Landscaping, and Development Review Enterprises: Hillside, and Streamside Review. All comments received from the review agencies have been addressed.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA/MAJOR ISSUES/COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & MASTER PLAN CONFORMANCE:

1. Review Criteria / Design & Development Issues:

a. Application Summaries:

i. Background

The project site is currently part of an undeveloped section of Sondermann Park. This rezoning is being brought forward as a condition of a land exchange approved by City Council on April 26, 2022. More specifically, the land exchange consists of 1,249 square feet of park property swapped for 1,250 square feet of private property, which will be used as future right-of-way to service a newly created cul-de-sac on North 7th Street. The construction of the cul-de-sac is to be constructed as part of the Centennial Boulevard Extension project. The exchange of land was necessary for the property owner as the land needed by the City of Colorado Springs Public Works Engineering Department would result in the remainder of the property being under the size necessary for a legal R-2 (Two-Family Residential) lot.

j. Zone Change

The Applicant’s (Colorado Springs Public Works Engineering) requested change of zone will rezone the 1,249 square feet site from PK/HS/SS (Public Park with Hillside and Streamside Overlays) to R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay). (**See “Zone Change” attachment**) This application is necessary, as City Council has previously agreed to exchange land to provide legal access to a future cul-de-sac built on North 7th Street. The R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay) zoning will be consistent with the current zoning of the site and allow the property owner. While the property will retain the Hillside Overlay, the Streamside Overlay will not be applied to the property as it is not affected by any streams or streamside buffers. Once the zone property exchange is ratified, the property owner intends to legally plat the property to have it meet R-2 (Two-Family Residential) zoning standards. The platted property will allow for at most, under the current zoning code, a single-family residence, and the potential for an ADU.

City Planning staff finds the application to be consistent with the purpose for a zone change request, as set forth in City Code Section 7.5.601.

2. Conformance with the City Comprehensive Plan:

The project applications have been evaluated for conformance with the City’s current comprehensive plan (herein referred to as “PlanCOS”), adopted in January 2019. According to the PlanCOS, the project site is identified as a Changing Neighborhood (**see “PlanCOS Vision Map” attachment**). The Ames Land Exchange project is consistent with the intent of Policy TE-2.D of the Thriving Economy Chapter of PlanCOS which is defined as to “*Provide high-quality infrastructure and technology citywide.*” Strategy TE-2.D-2 of the Thriving Economy PlanCos Chapter would also be applicable as it encourages to “*Enhance infrastructure, transportation, and*

communications connectivity near major cultural, hospitality, and entertainment venues.” This goal is met due to this being part of the process to build the centennial extension and to improve roadways near Sondermann park

For the reasons provided in this overall staff report, City Planning staff finds that this proposal and its associated applications to be in substantially conformance with PlanCOS and its guidance.

3. Conformance with the Area's Master Plan:

The project site is part of the Mesa Springs Community Plan master plan and is identified generally for park and residential uses. Through staff's review of the project application through the lens of the applicable review criteria the overall area impacts of the project were analyzed and found to be in general conformance with the area master plan.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

ZONE-22-0020 – Zone Change

Recommend approval to City Council the zone change for 1,249 square feet of land associated with the Ames Land Exchange project from PK/HS/SS (Public Park with Hillside and Streamside Overlays) to R-2/HS (Two-Family Residential with Hillside Overlay), based upon the findings that the zone change meets the review criteria as set forth in City Code Section 7.5.603(B).