

City of Colorado Springs

City Planning Commission

Meeting Minutes – Excerpt

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

8.C. ZONE-24-0025 – Percheron Rezone

A zone change consisting of 156.18 acres located to the north and south of East Woodmen Road and east of Banning Lewis Parkway from PDZ/AP-O (Planned Development Zone with Airport Overlay) to MX-L/AP-O (Mixed-Use Large Scale with Airport Overlay).
(Quasi-Judicial)

8.D. PDZL-25-0004 – Percheron Land Use Plan

A Major Modification to the Percheron Land Use Plan changing the size and location of proposed land uses for 350 acres zoned PDZ/AP-O (Planned Development Zone with Airport Overlay) located north and south of East Woodmen Road and east of Banning Lewis Parkway.
(Quasi-Judicial)

Commissioner Case recused himself for these items.

Molly O'Brien, Planner II, presented the application of the site located in northeast Colorado Springs, north and south of East Woodmen Road, and east and west of Banning Lewis Parkway. The area, originally part of the Banning Lewis Ranch North Master Plan, was annexed and zoned in 2021. The proposal includes rezoning approximately 156 acres from Planned Development with Airport Overlay (PDC/AP) to Mixed-Use Large Scale with the same overlay and the Land Use Plan modification affecting about 350 acres of the 800-acre land use plan. Key changes include the elimination of 39.4 acres of residential land use south of Woodmen Road and an increase in commercial land use. Additionally, circulation changes are proposed north of Woodmen to accommodate a consolidated school site, replacing two previously planned smaller school sites with one larger campus on the eastern edge of the area. Ms. O'Brien said the overall residential land use would decrease from 438 acres previously approved to 402 acres under the amended plan, while the non-

residential area, particularly commercial, will increase from 81.9 acres to 136 acres, primarily south of Woodmen Road. She said there will also be minor adjustments to the school site, open space, trails, drainage, and parks; and internal circulation changes are being proposed. Standard notice was made; five initial comments were received with concerns about the impacts on wildlife, increased traffic volume and potential crime; additional comments were received from neighbors on the south with concerns about the potential intensity that that commercial use could bring. Agency review was conducted and comments were addressed, including Traffic Engineering's that requested and approved with suggestions a traffic impact study. The application is compliant with PlanCOS and meets the review criteria.

Applicant's presentation

Andrea Barlow, NES, said their request involves approximately 350 acres. She said the original annexation and Planned Development (PD) zoning was approved by City Council in 2021. She said in January 2022 a major modification was approved, adding 125 acres to the southeast portion of the property, introducing additional commercial uses and a regional sports complex south of Woodmen Road, along with medium- and high-density residential areas. She said additional minor and major modifications to the Master and Land Use Plans have been also approved in previous years. Ms. Barlow said as part of the annexation, one of the requirements was to continue the Golden Jubilee collector from east to west of the site. She said the Park land dedication is being reduced due to the decrease in residential area, allowing the commercial area to increase.

Ms. Barlow said commercial development typically follows residential growth, but in this case, both are progressing simultaneously, which is expected to benefit the city through increased sales tax revenue. She said the expansion is also driven by anticipated demand from the proposed sports complex. She said the proposed zoning allows a broad range of uses, including commercial, residential, religious institutions, and office space. She said while the land use plan identifies the area as commercial, the MX-L zoning provides flexibility and is not limited to high-intensity retail.

Ms. Barlow said that overall traffic would increase due to the shift from residential to commercial, however, a traffic analysis showed a reduction in morning peak-hour trips, with a slight increase in evening peak-hour traffic. She said the original traffic study anticipated necessary improvements at key intersections, including East Woodmen Road,

Mohawk, Banning Lewis Parkway, and Golden Sage. She said some improvements have been recommended due to the level of service that they are trying to provide during peak hours, which include added through-lanes, turn lanes, and deceleration lanes at various intersections within the master plan. She said future development at this scale will require further road improvements, but with the planned mitigation measures, traffic is expected to remain within acceptable operational capacity.

Ms. Barlow said the application meets the review criteria for major land use plan modifications and for a zone change, it complies with the UDC and PlanCOS; it is consistent with prior approvals, there is no adverse impact to surrounding area, it is not detrimental to public health, safety or welfare and the location is appropriate for the proposed zone. She said the proposed zoning and land use changes align with PlanCOS goals by promoting integrated mixed-use development, leveraging corridor capacity, and creating a potential focal point for the community including parks and trail access to support livability.

Ms. Barlow said the main public concerns are primarily focused on increased traffic, the proximity of commercial uses to existing residential areas and the preservation of open space adjacent to those neighborhoods. She said it is important to view traffic impacts in the context of ongoing and future regional infrastructure projects that will significantly enhance east-west and north-south connectivity in the area, which include the extension of Woodmen Road to Black Forest Road and eventually to I-25, as well as the planned extension of Banning Lewis Parkway into Barnes Road and later in the future, south to Highway 94.

Ms. Barlow stated that the proposed commercial zoning is appropriate given the site's location at the intersection of two major arterials, and the MX-L zoning allows for a range of uses, including office, retail, and institutional, with more intense commercial uses likely concentrated near major roads and less intense uses closer to residential areas to the south. She said, regarding the compatibility with adjacent residential neighborhoods, a 30-foot open space tract and a 100-foot buffer will separate the commercial development from homes to the south, with additional building setbacks due to site grading of approximately 20 feet. She said the originally proposed 10 acres of open space in the area have been increased to wrap around the western edge of the commercial area, extending along the southern boundary up to Banning Lewis Parkway, enhancing the buffer rather than reducing it.

Ms. Barlow said, in response to concerns about placing commercial uses next to medium-density residential, the commercial uses planned for this location are expected to be lower intensity, given the surrounding commercial development and evolving land use, the previously designated 6.4 acres of residential may no longer be appropriate. She said there is a utility easement in the area, an overhead electric line, which limits residential development due to building restrictions, so it will remain open and be used more efficiently for commercial purposes, such as parking.

Public Comment

Alison Colvin, Banning Lewis resident, said she is disappointed and concerned about the proposed expansion of commercial zoning adjacent to her neighborhood, because she bought her property thinking the land behind her was designated for residential use. She said additional concerns are related to increased noise, light pollution, and potential negative impacts on property values. Ms. Colvin also noted that several neighbors did not receive notice of the hearing, and the postcard she received did not clearly outline the full extent of the proposed changes, leading to confusion and limited community participation. She questioned why commercial development is concentrated directly against existing single-family homes, while there appears to be less commercial use planned for the north. She said even though the 150-foot buffer was mentioned, she felt it would not be sufficient to mitigate the visual and environmental impacts, especially given the height of nearby homes. She said she wishes the developers would work more collaboratively with residents.

Jason Bandle, Banning Lewis resident, said his concerns are about traffic congestion, home values, and inadequate community engagement related to the proposed zoning changes. He said the outreach was limited because the postcard notifications that were sent were not enough for the over 8,000 residents impacted in Banning Lewis Ranch. He said there have been past issues with traffic during events like the Fourth of July parade and warned that the addition of commercial development next to a large sports complex would worsen congestion, especially since the area has limited access points. He said during peak times, it can already take residents 45–50 minutes to exit the neighborhood. Mr. Bandle said his neighborhood contains the lowest-density and most expensive homes in Banning Lewis Ranch, and placing commercial development directly behind these homes, would significantly reduce property values and potentially make homes unsellable. He

asked the commission to refrain from voting until the developer works with residents on a compromise, probably revisiting the previous plan that preserved the utility easement area for commercial use, to use it as a buffer between homes and businesses. He said a medical plaza is being marketed within the 150-foot buffer zone, further raising concerns about the intensity of future development.

Mark Harmon, Banning Lewis resident, said he is concerned about the proximity of commercial development to residential areas, even though his property does not directly border the proposed buffer zone. He said he did not receive any notification despite living in the area and only learned about the proposal the day before. He said this lack of awareness contributed to the low community turnout. Mr. Harmon said they can probably work on a compromise that would preserve a meaningful buffer between residential and commercial zones. He said another issue is increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic, particularly regarding safety for residents crossing busy intersections. He asked whether pedestrian infrastructure, such as bridges, would be considered to ensure safe crossings considering the anticipated traffic increase.

Applicant's Rebuttal

Ms. Barlow said the area south of Golden Jubilee Drive being modified is about 10 acres, and that the open space buffer in that area is being retained and even expanded. She said because this portion is set back from major arterials like Woodmen Road and Banning Lewis Parkway, it is not expected to attract high-intensity commercial uses, but low-intensity uses instead such as offices. She said more intense commercial development is planned for other areas with better visibility, specifically, the 49 acres north of the site and an equally sized area east of Banning Lewis Ranch, as these locations are better suited for retail and high traffic uses. Ms. Barlow said the developer will continue to consider neighborhood concerns during the next phase, which includes a development plan. She said at that stage, detailed studies will address lighting, noise, and other impacts, and neighbors will again be notified and invited to comment.

She said, regarding public notification, approximately 240 postcards were sent to properties within 1,000 feet of the site, with the majority going to Banning Lewis Ranch residents to the south. She said the traffic concerns will be addressed by planned infrastructure improvements, including the extension of Banning Lewis Parkway, that will improve circulation and provide alternative access routes for the neighborhood. She said

the proposed commercial development is unlikely to generate cut-through traffic in residential areas, as more direct routes exist. Ms. Barlow said, while concerns about home values were raised, property values are not a consideration in the city's planning criteria. She said only five public comments were received in response to the 200+ notifications, which did not meet the threshold to require a neighborhood meeting.

City Staff Comments

Todd Frisbee, City Traffic Engineering, Public Works Department, said this development is part of a 20-year projection for improvements in the area, certain intersections along Woodmen Road are expected to operate at a Level of Service F, which is below the city's typical standard of Level D. He said the traffic impact study recommends mitigation measures such as additional turn lanes and free right-turn movements to address these future conditions. Mr. Frisbee said the City of Colorado Springs is preparing to launch a comprehensive Woodmen Road Corridor Study as part of a Pikes Peak Rural Transportation Authority (PPRTA) project, that will evaluate the entire corridor, including access points, development patterns, and intersection performance, to identify necessary upgrades and safety improvements. He said this broader analysis will help address not only the current development's impacts, but also similar traffic challenges expected across the corridor in the coming decades.

Ms. O'Brien said 265 postcards were mailed out within 1000 feet of the property boundary. She said there will be another opportunity for public notice prior to City Council meeting, and she will verify all properties within the boundaries are notified.

Commissioners' Questions

Chair Casey asked if Golden Jubilee is a developed road and where the less intensive use will be located. Ms. Barlow said a roadway connection from Mohawk Road was originally proposed in a concept plan dating back to the 1990s and has been carried forward through the current development plans. She said this connection is part of the approved master plan and is intended to support future development, including commercial uses. She said although the road may require improvements to accommodate commercial traffic, specifically, the road segment from the western boundary of the site to Banning Lewis Parkway. She said any future road construction to the east would follow typical development processes.

Alternate Commissioner Engel asked where Golden Jubilee is in relation to the power line on Banning Lewis running east to west. Ms. Barlow said the 300-foot utility easement containing a power line runs parallel to the road and then cross it at a point that avoids existing utility poles. She said the alignment has been reviewed and approved by Colorado Springs Utilities.

Alternate Commissioner Engel asked how much development is expected to occur around the power line. Ms. Barlow said there is an area of 8.1 acres south of Golden Jubilee Drive with the utility easement. She explained that while the power lines in this section may be located north of Golden Jubilee, the easement still limits development options. However, commercial zoning allows for more flexible use of the space, such as parking, compared to residential development, which typically requires more buildable land and is less compatible with utility easements. She said while the site may not be ideal for high-visibility commercial uses like retail or restaurants, it remains viable for lower-intensity uses permitted under the MX-L (mixed-use) zoning.

Vice Chair Hensler asked if there are specific distance requirements from the power lines or they just considered commercial to be more desirable than residential. Ms. Barlow said the 300-foot-wide easement includes an 180-foot and an additional 120-foot section, originally intended to accommodate potential underground of power lines, though this can be costly. She said while the power lines themselves occupy a narrower corridor, the full easement restricts the construction of permanent structures; however, uses such as parking and detention ponds are typically allowed, as they maintain utility access. Ms. Barlow said Colorado Springs Utilities enforces strict clearance requirements, including setbacks and grading between poles. She said utilizing the easement for parking is an efficient solution, especially in areas like the sports complex where such use aligns with the overall site plan.

Chair Casey said he agrees that high-intensity businesses would want to be closer to the main road. Ms. Barlow said there are plenty of areas of bigger size to the north to accommodate those larger scale uses.

Vice Chair Hensler said the 6.4 and the 21-acres parcels could bring around 220 houses compared to the commercial aspect and asked about a site nearby that might be of more

concern to the residents. Ms. Barlow said that site is not part of this development, however it is just open because development is not feasible there. She said to the north of that multifamily apartments are proposed as well as commercial.

Vice Chair Hensler asked about the expected timeline. Ms. Barlow said they are expecting it to advance fast, especially the area to the west of Banning Lewis Parkway and north of Golden Jubilee, as well as the northeast area.

Commissioners' Comments

Chair Casey said he thinks the application is consistent with the review criteria for the rezoning and the land use plan major modification, with enough mitigation close to the residential area, and he will be in support.

Vice Chair Hensler said she concurs and appreciates the timeline between stages and will be in support of the application.

Alternate Commissioner Engel said he also thinks it meets the criteria and will support the application and suggested looking further into the proposal of commercial uses south of the road that it is not even there yet.

ZONE-24-0025

Motion by Vice Chair Hensler, seconded by Commissioner Clements, to recommend approval to City Council the zone change of 156.18 acres from PDZ/AP-O (Planned Development Zone with Airport Overlay) to MX-L/AP-O (Mixed-Use Large Scale with Airport Overlay) based upon the findings that the request complies with the criteria for a Zoning Map Amendment as set forth in City Code Section 7.5.704.

The motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1-6.

Aye: 4 - Vice Chair Hensler, Chair Casey, Commissioner Clements and Commissioner Engel

Absent: 6 - Commissioner Cecil, Commissioner Slattery, Commissioner Robbins, Commissioner Sipilovic, Commissioner Gigiano and Commissioner Willoughby

Recused: 1 – Commissioner Case

PDZL-25-0004

Motion by Vice Chair Hensler, seconded by Commissioner Engel, to recommend approval to City Council the Major Modification of the Percheron Land Use Plan based upon the findings that the proposal complies with the review criteria for Land Use Plans as set forth in City Code Section 7.5.516.

The motion passed by a vote of 4-0-1-6.

Aye: 4 - Vice Chair Hensler, Chair Casey, Commissioner Clements and Commissioner Engel

Absent: 6 - Commissioner Cecil, Commissioner Slattery, Commissioner Robbins, Commissioner Sipilovic, Commissioner Gigiano and Commissioner Willoughby

Recused: 1 – Commissioner Case