

Memorandum City of Lawrence Planning & Development Services

TO: David L. Corliss, City Manager

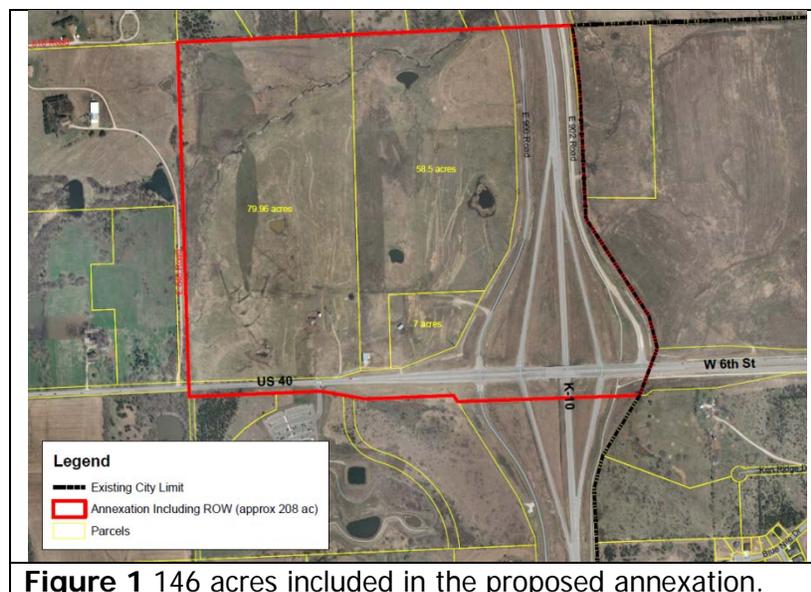
FROM: Planning Staff

Date: For April 10, 2012 City Commission Meeting

RE: Regional Recreation Facility - Initiation of Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Development Code Text Amendment, and Revised Rezoning for property located in the NW quadrant of the intersection of W 6th St./Hwy 40 and K-10 Bypass.

A request to annex approximately 146 acres plus right-of-way in the northwest quadrant of the intersection of W 6th Street/Hwy 40 and K-10 Bypass was initiated by the City Commission at their March 27, 2012 meeting. This annexation request will be considered by the Planning Commission at their April 23, 2012 meeting and a recommendation will be forwarded to the City Commission. (Figure 1)

This memo requests that the City Commission initiate amendments to appropriate plans, amendments to the Land Development Code, and initiate rezoning the subject property to a CC600 district.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The annexation and requested comprehensive plan and code amendment initiations are intended to accommodate a regional recreation facility on 50 acres of the 146 acres. The project will be a public /private partnership including the donation of 50 acres to the city to construct the facility. While many details need to be determined, the project is currently planned to include basketball courts, indoor recreation track, cardio facilities, recreation areas, an arena capable of holding sporting or entertainment events, potential uses for the University of Kansas, and other ancillary uses typical of such a facility – retail merchandise, food/drink, etc.

In addition to the 50-acre recreation facility, the remaining acreage is planned to support the facility with expansion opportunities, additional recreation uses, and commercial uses – restaurant, retail, hotel, etc. The current planning documents designate the entire property for industrial/warehouse/office uses. Commercial uses are generally viewed by the Development Code as equal to or lesser uses compared to industrial uses and so the project can feasibly be viewed as compatible with the comprehensive plan designation; however, there are specific policies and Development Code language that tie commercial zoning in the Development Code directly to the comprehensive plan and the plan and code need to be revised to accommodate the project as noted more specifically below.

COMPLIANCE WITH ADOPTED AREA PLANS

Horizon 2020, which includes the *West of K-10 Plan* and *A Nodal Plan for the Intersection of West 6th Street & Kansas Highway 10 (K-10)*, hereafter referred to as the *Nodal Plan*, recommends office/industrial/warehouse and park/open space uses for this location. When this plan was adopted, the future land use recommendations for the property were made based on existing conditions, projections based on past build-out patterns in west Lawrence, the transportation network (intersection of two state highways), and comments from stakeholders and the Planning Commission. Commercial development exceeding 400,000 sq. ft. at this location does not conform with the recommendations in the adopted plans for this area, thus triggering the need to process amendments to the adopted planning documents. Other land use designations, such as the one proposed, may also be appropriate for the area and should be considered within the context of the plan. As mentioned above, the proposed project is arguably an equal or less impactful land use than currently designated at the subject location.

Horizon 2020 sets CC200 (200,000 sq. ft. of commercial), CC400 (400,000 sq. ft. of commercial), and CR (1.5 million sq. ft. of commercial) as the parameters by which nodes of commercial development may occur. There may be good cause to create a commercial center that permits an amount of commercial between CC400 and CR given the large gap between the two. A CC600 (600,000 sq. ft. of commercial) could accommodate such nodes of commercial and may be appropriate at the subject location.

ZONING

Rezoning to an appropriate urban zoning designation is necessary when property is annexed. Rezoning applications from the current county A (Agricultural) and B-1 (Neighborhood Business) Districts to the Lawrence Zoning Districts of CC400 (Community Commercial), IL (Limited Industrial) and CN2 (Neighborhood Commercial) have been submitted to the Planning Office, but for the reasons noted in this memo, need to be revised. The rezonings are scheduled for the May Planning Commission meeting.

The development being proposed for the 50-acre property being donated to the city is a sports/recreation complex. This complex would include uses that are classified in the Development Code as *Active Recreation, Participant Sports, and Entertainment and Spectator Sports*. Commercial zoning is necessary for this development as only the CC (Community Commercial), CR (Regional Commercial), and the CS (Commercial Strip) Districts permit the mix of recreational uses being proposed. The remaining portion of the property is being proposed for uses that complement or are compatible with the sports/recreation complex. These uses have not been finalized at this time, but could include commercial, lodging, or office uses.

The subject property is currently designated by *Horizon 2020* (including the *West of K-10 Plan* and the *Nodal Plan*) as one of the corners of a CC400 development (Community Commercial with a maximum of 400,000 sq. ft. commercial space). The majority of the commercial development was recommended for the properties to the east of K-10. The Mercato Development in the northeast quadrant of the intersection currently has approval for 359,640 gross square feet of commercial development. The CC400 designation would not provide the necessary area needed for the development.

Given these facts, staff recommends the creation of the CC600 District (Community Commercial with maximum of 600,000 gross sq. ft. of commercial space), to accommodate development between the CC400 and CR (1.5 million sq. ft.) levels. As the City will be the recipient of donated land for the development of the sports/recreation complex, the City should be a party to the rezoning application. Based on the factors above, the more appropriate zoning for this property has been determined to be a CC600 District, once created, with conditions limiting uses, if necessary.

SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUESTED

In order to accommodate the proposed use of a regional recreation facility and the supporting commercial at the subject location, the following amendments will be necessary:

1. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

- a. Initiate an amendment to *Horizon 2020*, Chapter 6 Commercial, to create CC600 District policies and to Chapter 14 Specific Plans, to revise the *West of K-10 Plan* and *A Nodal Plan for the Intersection of West 6th Street & Kansas Highway 10 (K-10)* designating the node of 6th Street and K-10 as a CC600.

2. LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE AMENDMENT

- a. Initiate an amendment to the appropriate sections of Chapter 20 of the City Code to create the CC600 District.

3. REVISED ZONING APPLICATION

- a. Initiate rezoning to the CC600 district for the 146 acres. For all of the reasons stated above, the city believes this 146-acre property should be initiated for rezoning to the CC600 district. The property owner has consented to this revision and to the city joining in the application for rezoning.

The initiated amendments and rezoning will be considered by the Planning Commission at their May meeting. These initiation actions merely begin the process and the City Commission will consider them at a future meeting for final determination.