

Planning and Zoning Commission

Planning Department Staff Report

Report Date: July 30th, 2021
Case No: 2021-5-ANX
Project Planner: Cesar Acosta, Senior Planner

Item Details

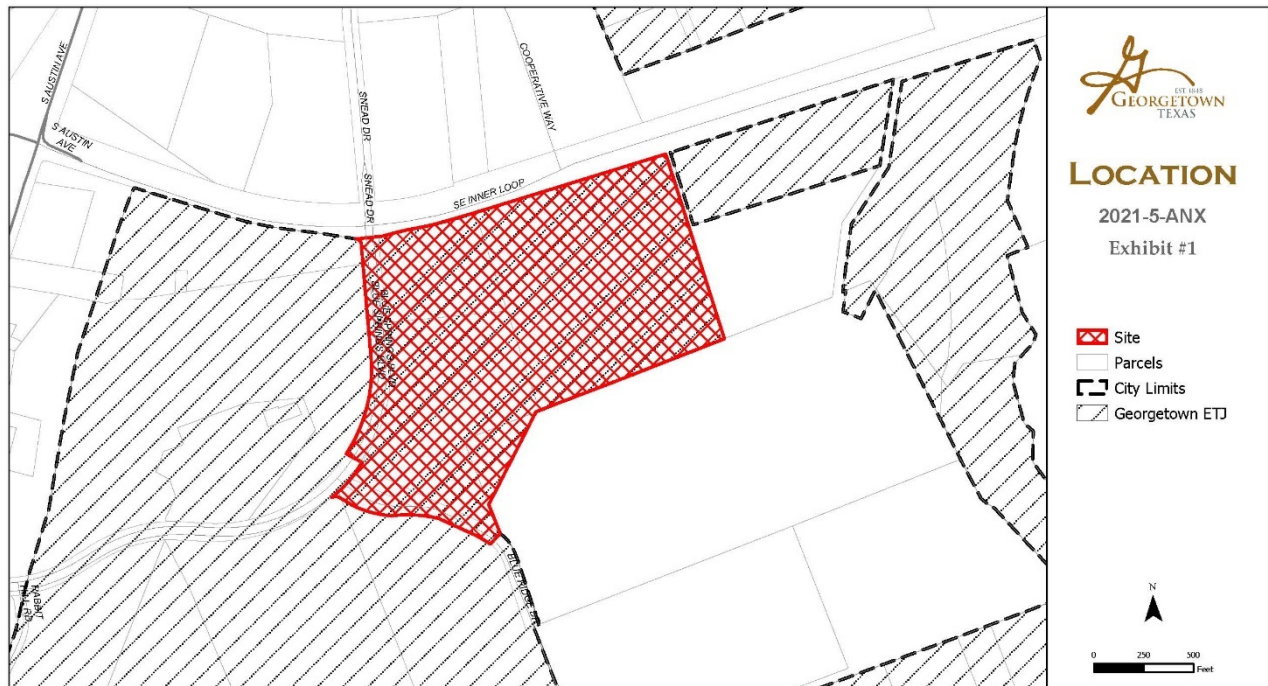
Project Name:	Molto Properties
Project Location:	600 SE Inner Loop, within City Council district No. 1.
Total Acreage:	47.828
Legal Description:	43.421 acres out of the L.J. Dyches Survey Abstract No. 180 and a 2.356 acre portion of Blue Springs Boulevard, a right-of-way of varying width described to the City of Georgetown, Texas and a 2.051-acre portion of Blue Ridge Drive, a right-of-way of varying width described to the City of Georgetown, Texas

Applicant: Molto Properties co/o Michael Powers
Representative: Langan Engineering and Environmental Services, c/o Emily Mahoney and Kyle Bogardus

Property Owner: Longhorn Junction Land and Cattle Company, LLC c/o Drew Hall

Request: Zoning Map Amendment to rezone the subject property from **Agricultural (AG)** to **Industrial (IN)**.

Case History: This is the first public hearing request.



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Overview of Applicant's Request

The applicant is requesting the annexation of the subject property along with two lengths of right-of-way currently owned by Williamson County with an initial zoning designation of Industrial (IN). The intent is to bring the property into the city limits in order to extend wastewater service to the project site which, if approved, will consist of three warehouse buildings totaling 615,900 sq. ft. based on preliminary designs.

Site Information

Location:

The subject property is located at 600 SE Inner Loop, approximately 1/3 of a mile east of I-35 and Austin Avenue and 3/4 of a mile west of the intersection of FM 1460 and SE Inner Loop. The subject property has frontage along both Blue Springs Boulevard and Blue Ridge Drive.

Physical and Natural Features:

The subject property is mostly vacant land with a cluster of trees in its southwest corner. The entire property is undeveloped except for an access road along its eastern border. The subject property is in the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone.

Future Land Use and Zoning Designations:

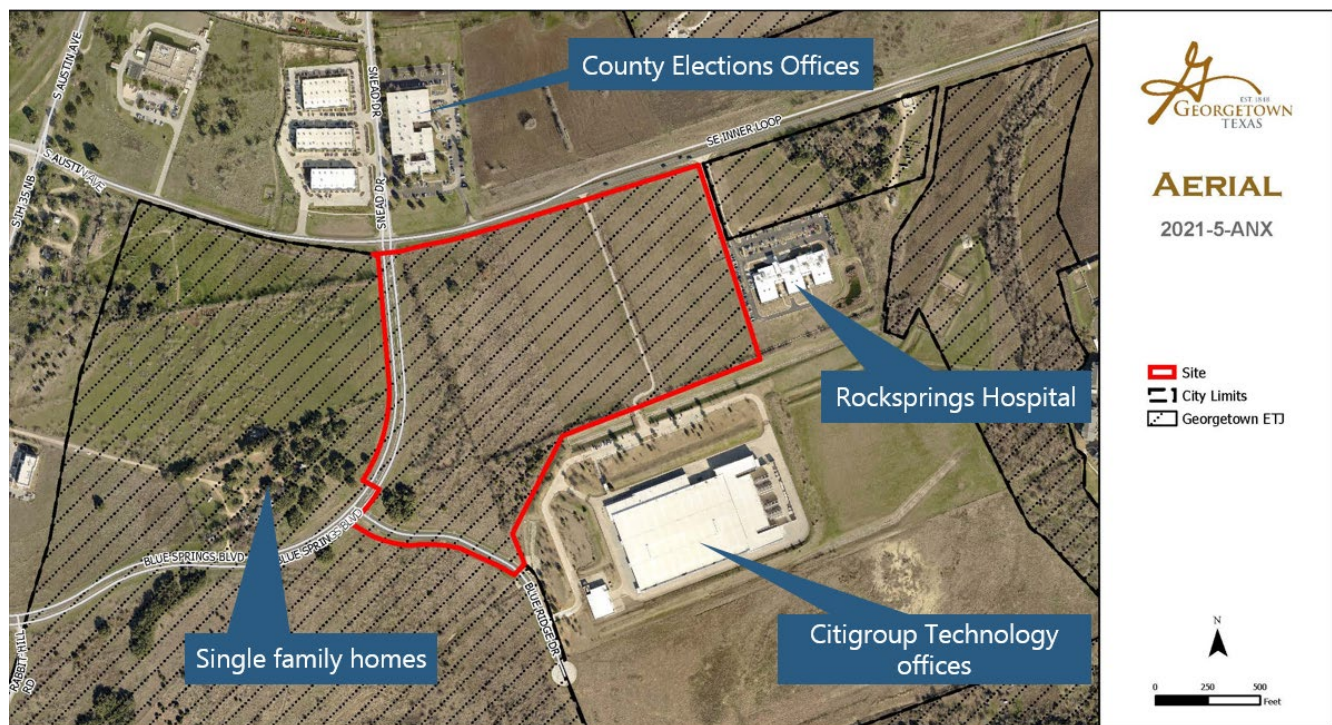
The subject property has a Future Land Use designation of Employment Center. There is no zoning designation on the subject property because it is located in the ETJ.

Surrounding Properties:

The subject property is adjacent to a data center owned by Citigroup Technology. 600 feet east of the subject property is the Rock Springs Hospital. North of the subject property on the opposite side of SE Inner Loop is the Williamson County Elections office. There are two or three residential structures on the opposite side of Blue Springs Blvd to the west of the subject property.

The current zoning, Future Land Use designation, and existing uses of the adjacent properties to the north, south, east and west are outlined in the table below:

DIRECTION	ZONING DISTRICT	FUTURE LAND USE	EXISTING USE
North	Industrial (IN)/ Agriculture (AG)	Employment Center	County offices
East	Public Facility (PF)	Employment Center/Regional Center	Hospital
South	Office (OF)	Employment Center	Office buildings
West	N/A- ETJ	Employment Center	AG/undeveloped



Property History:

This is the first development application for the subject property.

Comprehensive Plan Guidance

Future Land Use Map:

Centers with employment-generating uses support heightened economic activity through quality architectural design and well-integrated supporting uses such as retail, restaurants. The inclusion of moderate to high density residential is appropriate as a supporting use to these areas of commerce and employment. Because these areas often act as a transition between more intensely developed industrial uses and residential neighborhoods, standards should be developed to ensure that development of these activities is compatible with the character of the surrounding area. Care should be taken to protect adjacent uses from adverse impacts potentially associated with existing industrial uses (commercial traffic, outside storage, etc.), using buffering and/or performance-based development standards.

DUA: 14 or more

Target Ratio: 80% nonresidential, 20% residential

Primary Use: Advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and professional services

Secondary Uses: Flex workspace, environmentally friendly manufacturing, retail, commercial, high-density residential, mixed-use

Utilities

The subject property is located within the City's service area for water and wastewater, there are no wastewater lines that are currently built out to the subject property. A Utility Evaluation is currently under review. Both the City and Oncor are able to provide electric service to the subject property.

Transportation

SE Inner loop is a Major Arterial that runs along the north boundary of the subject property. Arterial streets provide traffic movement through and between different areas within the city and access to adjacent land uses. Access is more controllable because driveway spacing requirements are much greater and, if safety dictates, overall access can be limited to specific turning movements. Major Arterials connect major traffic generators and land use concentrations and serve much larger traffic volumes over greater distances. According to a preliminary engineering report adopted by City Council on January 13, 2015, there is a planned expansion of SE Inner Loop, converting the road first to a four-lane divided roadway, and ultimately a six-lane elevated freeway with three lane frontage roads on each side.

Blue Springs Blvd is an existing Collector which serves the western boundary of the subject property. These streets are intended to balance traffic between arterial streets and local streets. These streets tend to carry a high volume of traffic over shorter distances, providing access and movement between neighborhoods, parks, schools, retail areas and the arterial street system. Increased traffic along Blue Springs Blvd is also consistent with the intended flow of traffic that would feed into SE Inner Loop and the I 35 freeway.

Blue Ridge Drive is another existing Collector that currently ends just south of the subject property. According to the Overall Transportation Plan, Blue Ridge Drive is planned to extend south to Westinghouse Road.

A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) will be required at time of Site Development Plan for any development that generates more than two thousand (2,000) average daily trips based upon the latest edition of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual.

Proposed Zoning district

The Industrial (IN) zoning district is intended to provide a location for manufacturing and industrial activities that may generate some nuisances. Traffic generation will likely include heavy vehicles, making access to an arterial or freeway necessary. Unless separated by a major roadway, the Industrial District is not appropriate adjacent to any residential uses.

Permitted uses in this district include, but are not limited to, emergency services station, driving range, bus barn, transit passenger terminal, wholesale showrooms, manufacturing, processing and assembly, and heavy equipment and repair. Other uses such as kennels, heliport, temporary concrete products, and construction field offices are permitted subject to specific design limitations to ensure compatibility with the surrounding properties. Certain land uses including substance abuse clinic, indoor firing range, airport, and waste related uses may be permitted subject to approval of a Special Use Permit (SUP). Exhibit 4 contains a comprehensive list of IN district permitted uses and development standards.

Due to the high intensity of the Industrial (IN) zoning district, this is the only district that permits general outdoor storage, which is defined as the storage of merchandise, goods or materials that are not actively for sale. This includes but is not limited to items that are stacked on pallets and shelves, stored in shipping containers or conexes, and semi-trailers not attached to a truck. However, it is

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important to note that outdoor storage is not permitted in a front or street yard, and must be screened by a solid opaque wall or fence. These standards minimize the impact that the outdoor storage may have on the area.

Intergovernmental and Interdepartmental Review

The proposed rezoning request was reviewed by all applicable City Departments to determine the appropriateness of the requested zoning on the subject property. No comments were issued regarding the zoning request.

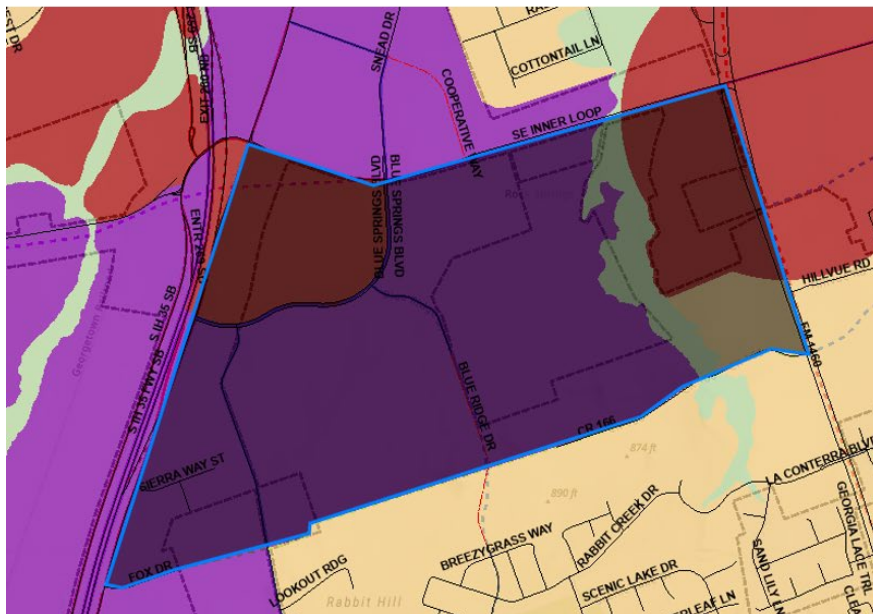
Approval Criteria

Staff has reviewed the proposed rezoning request and has found that it complies with the criteria established in UDC Section 3.06.030 for a Zoning Map Amendment, as outlined below:

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) APPROVAL CRITERIA	
1. The application is complete and the information contained within the application is sufficient and correct enough to allow adequate review and final action.	Complies
An application must provide the necessary information to review and make a knowledgeable decision in order for staff to schedule an application for consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council. This application was reviewed by staff and deemed to be complete.	
2. The zoning change is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.	Complies
The Future Land Use designation of the subject property is Employment Center, which is intended to support a high level of economic activity with the primary uses such as manufacturing, life sciences and professional services. The proposed Industrial (IN) zoning district allows for not only office and warehouse uses permitted under Business Park or Office zoning, but also a broader range of distribution and manufacturing uses that would foster a higher intensity of activity desired in the Employment Center future land use.	

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) APPROVAL CRITERIA

Employment Center Area



Total Area:
657.3 acres
100%

Area of Subject Property:
43.421 acres
6.57%

AG/Unentitled (if needed):
405.389 acres
61.7%

For the purposes of evaluating the share of residential to nonresidential uses and evaluating general development patterns, the subject property is included in an area generally consisting of 657 acres bounded by SE Inner Loop and County Road 166 to the south, FM 1460 to the east and I 35 to the west. Within this area, the subject property represents approximately 6% (43 acres) of the development pattern. The area surrounding the subject property is also predominately designated as the Employment Center future land use category however a portion of the area, which abuts the subject property is designated as part of the Regional Center future land use. The Regional Center is also intended for higher intensity non-commercial uses and where high density residential may be appropriate as secondary and supporting uses. Because of the high intensity uses allowed in the Regional Center and the separation created by Blue Spring Boulevard between the two future land use designations, the proposed Industrial zoning for the subject property would not disrupt or conflict with any of the uses intended for the adjacent area.

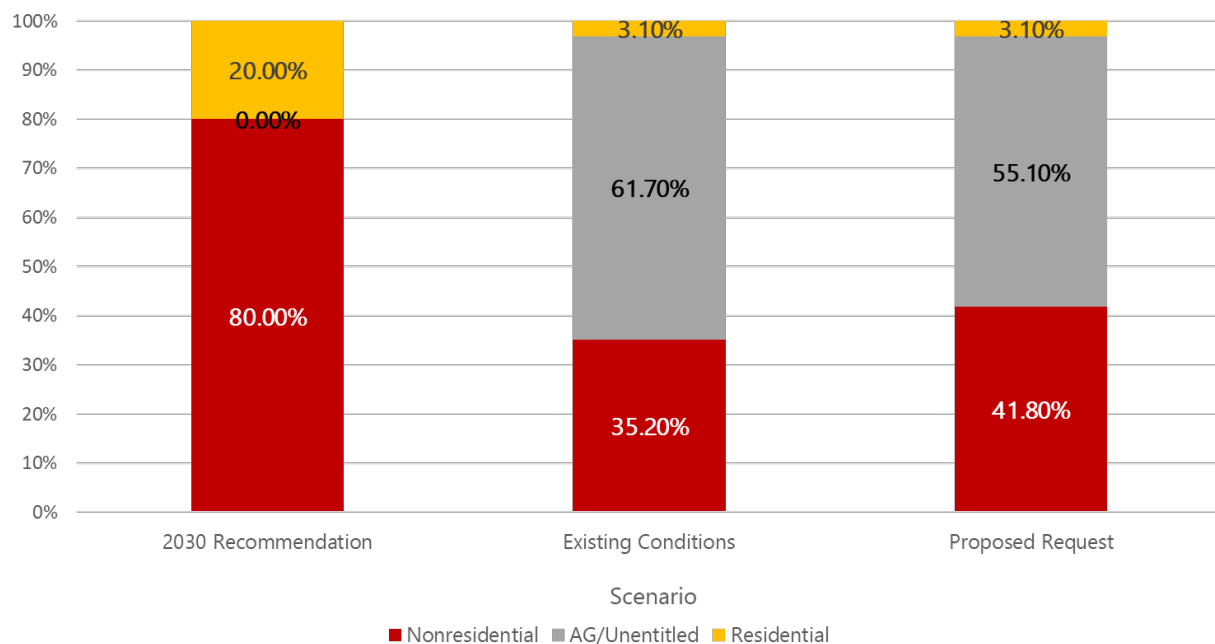
The intensity of uses allowed in the Industrial zoning district function best when they have access to major arterial roads or freeways capable of supporting a large amount of truck traffic. Major arterial roads such as SE Inner Loop which is at the northern boundary of the subject property and I 35, which is close to its western boundary can support the anticipated levels of truck traffic. I 35 and Blue Springs Blvd already support existing office and warehouse traffic from the Citigroup data center and the hospital near the subject property.

Although the end use of the property is not known at this time the Industrial zoning district allows for advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and professional services which are industries targeted in the City's economic strategic plans. The requested zoning district supports the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Policy eight (Policy LU.8), "Protect and promote land uses that support Georgetown's target industries, support diversification of the City's tax base, and enhance economic development through intentional infrastructure planning, recruitment and the land use

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) APPROVAL CRITERIA

entitlement process.”

The Employment Center Future Land Use has a proposed target ratio of 80% non-residential to 20% residential. Currently the majority of the area surrounding and including the subject property is undeveloped. The applicant’s proposed project would bring a substantial increase in non-residential uses to the area, which would continue the desired development pattern laid out in the target ratios for the area. Even with the proposed zoning amendment there is still a large amount of unentitled land that can be zoned for either residential or non-residential use without risking an imbalance of the recommended ratio for the area.



3. The zoning change promotes the health, safety or general welfare of the City and the safe orderly, and healthful development of the City.

Complies

The uses allowed for under Industrial (IN) zoning on the subject property would likely increase the amount of trucks and shipping traffic along SE Inner Loop. The planned upgrades to SE Inner Loop laid out in the 2015 preliminary engineering report adopted by City Council will be able to accommodate traffic increases brought on by the uses of the Industrial zoning district and is consistent with the planned traffic along this arterial.

The subject property’s proximity to the I 35 and SE Inner Loop, along with existing industrial uses in the area, mitigate the potential risks to public safety and health that heavy machinery, increased traffic, or emissions caused by uses in the Industrial district could present. The subject property is suitable for the uses allowed under the Industrial zoning district. Bringing the subject property into the city limits and extending wastewater service will promote the healthful development of the city and provide for higher levels of utility. The incorporation of the subject property zoned as Industrial continues the orderly development of an area of the City designated as an Employment Center by adding similar uses close to I35 and at a distance from existing residential areas.

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT (REZONING) APPROVAL CRITERIA

The proposed development will include sidewalks along all roadway frontages as required by the UDC, ensuring pedestrian circulation around the property which will eventually connect to the City as a whole. Additionally, as noted in their letter of intent, the applicants have taken existing heritage trees near the subject property into account and have planned to include stormwater ponds that ensure no impact to the grove as part of their design.

4. The zoning change is compatible with the present zoning and conforming uses of nearby property and with the character of the neighborhood.

Complies

The proposed zoning is consistent with the existing uses in the area as well as those proposed in the Future Land Use map. Industrial zoning already exists on over 68 acres of land in the surrounding area. That is in addition to 39 acres of land zoned as Business Park and over 50 acres zoned as office, which all together total more than 30 % of the total area surrounding the subject property. The land immediately west and southwest of the subject property, although undeveloped is also designated Employment Center future land use.

The Citigroup Data Center neighboring the subject property was built with a 430 ft setback from Blue Ridge Drive and a large fence around its perimeter. Similarly, the Rocksprings Hospital also has a 430 ft set back from the edge of its development to SE Inner Loop. Manufacturing complexes along Snead Drive likewise have a wide setback and fencing around their buildings. The physical development of the subject property would match these existing physical layouts in several facets.

Allowing for industrial zoning on the subject property would further solidify the planned development trend for the surrounding area in both use and character.

5. The property to be rezoned is suitable for uses permitted by the District that would be applied by the proposed amendment.

Complies

There are no substantial natural features or man-made obstacles to the development of the subject property under the proposed zoning district.

The applicant is requesting Industrial (IN) zoning, which according to their letter of intent, provides the widest range of uses for their project, from office building to warehouse and distribution. This is meant to provide substantial flexibility for potential tenants who may have a varying design for the site and thus encourage the quick development and use of the subject property. The site development will have access to existing water and electric lines, wastewater will need to be extended to service the property by the applicant.

The size of the subject property and areas of the proposed district allow any uses permitted in this district to be developed in conformance with the zoning district standards to include parking, landscaping, bufferyard, setbacks and impervious cover.

In summary the proposed request to rezone the approximately 43.421-acre tract of land to Industrial (IN) zoning district is consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and land use policies which seek to promote target industries such as those allowed in the Industrial (IN) zoning district and is consistent with the development pattern and character of the surrounding area. The uses proposed by the applicant fit with the existing uses in the area and support the Employment Center future land uses of

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the subject property. The proposed expansion of SE Inner Loop provides the direct access to other parts of the city and region and may accommodate high volumes of traffic associated with uses allowed in the Industrial (IN) zoning district.

Meetings Schedule

August 3, 2021 – Planning and Zoning Commission

August 24, 2021 – City Council First Reading of the Ordinance

September 14, 2021 – City Council Second Reading of the Ordinance

Public Notification

As required by the Unified Development Code, all property owners and registered neighborhood associations within a 300-foot radius of the subject property were notified of the Zoning Map Amendment request 10 notices, a legal notice advertising the public hearing was placed in the Sun Newspaper on Wednesday, July 14th and signs were posted on-site. To date, staff has received no written comments in favor, or in opposition to the request.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Location Map

Exhibit 2 – Future Land Use Map

Exhibit 3 – Zoning Map

Exhibit 4 – Design and development standards of the IN zoning district

Exhibit 5 – Letter of Intent