

Name: Land Use Plan Amendment – NE (northeast) of Fourche Dam Pike and Interstate 440 Intersection.

Location: NE (northeast) of Fourche Dam Pike and Interstate 440 Intersection.
South of E. Port Drive

Request: Commercial (C) to Industrial (I)

Source: Walthour-Flake Co., Inc.

PROPOSAL / REQUEST:

Land Use Plan amendment is in the Port Planning District from Commercial (C) to Industrial (I). The Industrial category encompasses a wide variety of manufacturing, warehousing research and development, processing, and industry related office and service activities. Industrial development typically occurs on an individual tract basis rather than according to an overall development plan.

EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING:

The area is currently zoned C-3, General Commercial and is 4 acres ± in size. Northwest of the property, either side of East Port Drive are two convenience stores with gas pumps, zoned as General Commercial District (C-3). Northeast of the property is a church and zoned C-3. East of the property is currently a semi-tractor trailer sales and service company, owned by the applicant and zoned Light Industrial District (I-2). South of the property is Interstate 440 which is zoned I-2. To the west of the property across Fourche Dam Pike are three lots zoned as C-3, the northern most lot is currently vacant, the middle lot is a fast food restaurant, and the southern lot is a motel.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND RECENT AMENDMENTS:

The property is currently shown as Commercial on the Plan, it is vacant and 4 acres ± in size. Northwest of the property, either side East Port Drive is shown as Commercial on the Plan with two convenience stores with gas pumps. Northeast of the property is a shown as Public Institution and currently a church. South of the property is Interstate-440 and across the interstate is a small area of Commercial on the Plan, with convenience stores with gas pumps. To the west of the property across Fourche Dam Pike is shown as Commercial on the Plan and it is a vacant parcel, fast food restaurant, and motel.

There have not been any recent land use amendments in the immediate vicinity.

MASTER STREET PLAN:

To the south of the area is Interstate-440, a freeway without access roads. To the west of the property is Fourche Dam Pike which is a Collector on Master Street Plan. The primary function of a Collector is to provide a connection from Local Streets to Arterials. East Port Drive is a Local Street on the Master Street Plan. The primary function of a Local Street is to provide access to adjacent properties. Local Streets that are abutted by non-residential zoning/use or more intensive zoning than duplexes are considered as "Commercial Streets". A Collector design standard is used for Commercial Streets. These streets may require dedication of right-of-way and may require street improvements for entrances and exits to the site.

BICYCLE PLAN:

There is a Class III Bike Route along Fourche Dam Pike. A Class III Bike Route is a signed route on a street shared with traffic. No additional paving or right-of-way is required. Class III bicycle route signage may be required.

PARKS:

There are no public parks shown in the immediate vicinity.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS:

There are no city recognized historic districts that would be affected by this amendment.

ANALYSIS:

The property requesting the Land Use Plan change is north of Interstate-440 and east of Fourche Dam Pike. It is currently shown as Commercial on Land Use Plan. The request is to amend 4± acres of Commercial use to Industrial use. This is the primary entrance from the freeway system to the Little Rock Port Industrial Park, which is south of the freeway at this location. Both north and south of the freeway are shown as Commercial areas on the Plan to service the Port area as well as pass through freeway traffic. This commercial intersection is the larger of the two commercial areas with both dominated by convenience retail for the traveler. Much of these two areas are developed but there are remaining tracts that could be development in each area. There is a small Commercial area at the Lindsey Road interchange with Interstate-440 at the west end of the Little Rock Port Industrial Park which is not developed.

To the north of Interstate-440, along Fourche Dam Pike there are Commercial uses on both sides of the road. To the north of East Port Drive there is a Public Institutional use and Airport Church of Christ is located on this land. North of the Church along Fourche Dam Pike is shown as Residential Low Density use on both sides of the road. Much of this land is developed as single-family homes both in subdivisions and larger lot rural style development. This continues along Fourche Dam Pike until a Park/Open Space

use area along Fourche Creek. At the intersection of Fourche Dam Pike and East Roosevelt Road (west of Fourche Creek) is another small Commercial area with little development.

To the east of the property is Industrial use on the both sides of Interstate-440. South of the freeway is the Little Rock Port Industrial Park most of which is zoned I-3, Heavy Industrial with some I-2, General Industrial. Many of the tracts are developed with light manufacturing and warehouse distribution uses. These businesses use the river port, freeway, airport and rail to move supplies and goods both to and from their facilities. North of Interstate-440 and east of the application area is shown on the Plan for Industrial and zoned I-2, General Industrial. The area is primarily undeveloped with one large-truck service and sales business.

The total Commercial use area at that intersection is approximately ± 34 acres. If the requested land use change happens, the total Commercial use will remain ± 30 acres at that intersection. The reason that the applicant wants to amend this Commercial area to Industrial use is because of their expansion plans. They currently own and operate semi-truck trailer sales and service business directly to the east of this property which is zoned I-2 and shown as Industrial on the Plan. They have acquired the land to their west for future expansion and wish it to have the same zoning classification as the property they already have developed. In order to do the re-classification from C-3 to I-2, they must also file a Land Use Plan Amendment from Commercial to Industrial.

The proposed change to the Land Use Plan does not create a new Land Use in the area but shifts a relatively small area (less than 4 acres) from one non-residential to another non-residential use. The proposal would shift the Land Use line to the west a short distance. If the owner does develop the land as suggested, the actual use of the land would be more a 'heavy commercial' rather than what most people think of as an industrial use. If developed as suggested this would neither introduce a new use nor a new user.

This commercially zoned and shown Commercial (on Future Land Use Plan) property has been vacant and undeveloped for the last 20 years. There has been no commercial demanded to develop this property in two decades, even though this Commercial intersection is the largest and primary commercial service area for the Little Rock Port Industrial Park. There will be remaining vacant commercial parcels even after this change both at this intersection and the Lindsey-Interstate 440 interchange.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

Notice was sent to the following neighborhood association: Hermitage Neighborhood Association. Staff has received no comments from area residents and neighborhood association.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff believes the change is appropriate.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

(MARCH 28, 2019)

The item was placed on the consent agenda for approval. By a vote of 9 for, 0 against, and 2 absent the consent agenda was approved.