

September 9, 2021

ITEM NO.: 6

FILE NO.: LU2021-19-03

Name: Land Use Plan Amendment – Chenal Planning District

Location: Southeast Corner of Northfield Drive and Chenal Parkway

Request: Suburban Office (SO) to Commercial (C)

Source: White-Daters & Associates, Inc., 24 Rahling Circle

PROPOSAL / REQUEST:

Applicant requests a Land Use Plan amendment from Suburban Office (SO) to Commercial (C) on an approximate 11-acre unplatted parcel located on the southeast corner of Northfield Drive and Chenal Parkway in the Chenal Planning District. The subject site is within the Chenal Overlay District about 0.25 miles from the western limits of the City of Little Rock.

The existing Suburban Office land use designation provides for low intensity development of office or office parks in close proximity to lower density residential areas to assure compatibility. A Planned Zoning District is required.

The proposed Commercial land use designation allows for a broad range of retail and wholesale sales of products, personal and professional services, and general business activities. Commercial activities vary in type and scale, depending on the trade area that they serve.

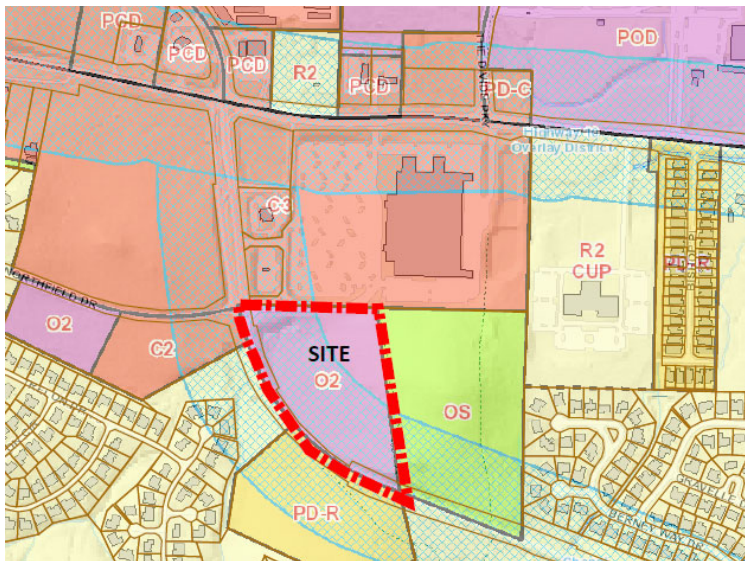
This land use amendment application is accompanied by a zoning map amendment request. It is applicant's intent to rezone the site to a General Commercial District (C-3) zoning designation (File No. Z-7096-A).

EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING:

The subject site is part of an urban node of commerce proliferating from the intersect of Chenal Parkway and Cantrell Road. The majority of lands within the northern part of this node are zoned Commercial (C-3, PCD/Planned Commercial Development & PDC/Planned Development Commercial), Multi-Family (MF-12 & 18), and Office (O-2, O-3 & POD/Planned Office Development; the POD is a large private school campus (LR Christian Academy). While several apartments have been developed, there are additional lands to accommodate more multi-family development in this area. There are also some large parcels of lands in this node zoned for General Office (O-3), these sites are generally wooded and remain vacant of development.

To the south of Cantrell Road, Commercial Zoned lands fronting Cantrell Road are bookended by a detached single family residential development to the west and a religious institution to the east. Commercial projects have not yet materialized on the west side of Chenal Parkway; however, it should be noted the majority of the Commercial zoned lands (21 acres) on the west side of Chenal are held by Baptist Health and were previously announced to be the site of an expansion of their healthcare services.

Figure 1. Zoning



The subject site is located on the east side of Chenal Parkway immediately south of a large Neighborhood Commercial (C3) development, where a hypermarket (Wal-Mart Supercenter), dominates the landscape, three smaller outparcels are situated west of the hypermarket along Cantrell.

West of the site, just across Chenal Parkway is a smaller irregular

shaped undeveloped/wooded C-2 zoned parcel with frontage along Northfield Drive, immediately adjacent to the single-family residential subdivision. Just south of this site is a strip of open space that is a part of the Chenal Valley Addition (residential), further southeast of here is a Planned Development - Residential (PD-R), the site is wooded, having not yet been developed. Immediately to the east of the site, across the 100-foot Entergy easement is a large mass of wooded lands zoned Open Space (OS).

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND RECENT AMENDMENTS:

At the time the City's Land use Plan was crafted, it envisioned Commercial Land Uses in Chenal Planning District to be concentrated at the Cantrell Road/Chenal Parkway and Rahling Road/Chenal Parkway intersections, with smaller commercial areas proposed at intersections of major roads.

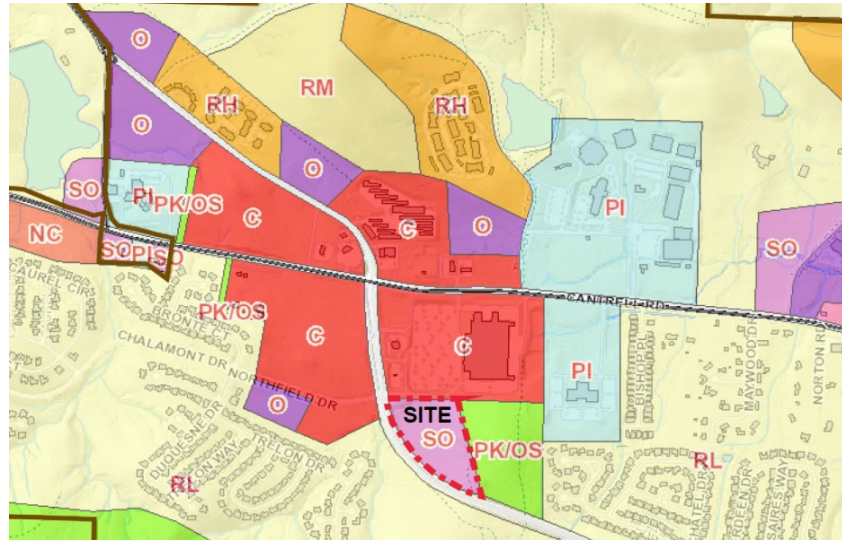
South of the site, across Chenal Parkway lands are designated Residential Low (RL), some of the lands have been developed with detached single family residential, however, there is a significant amount of land still available for residential development. West of the site, across Chenal Parkway and north of

the afore mention (RL) designated lands is a vacant/wooded irregular shaped parcel, with frontage along Northfield Drive and Chenal Parkway, designated Commercial (C). North of the application site is the large parcel designated Commercial (C), developed with a Wal-Mart Supercenter, with outparcels along Chenal Parkway (bank and gas station).

While there have been some Land Use amendments within the Chenal Planning District, they are generally in the development quadrant near Chenal Parkway and Rahling Road.

In the last ten years, there have not been Land Use Amendment applications in the immediate vicinity of the subject site.

Figure 2. Comprehensive Plan

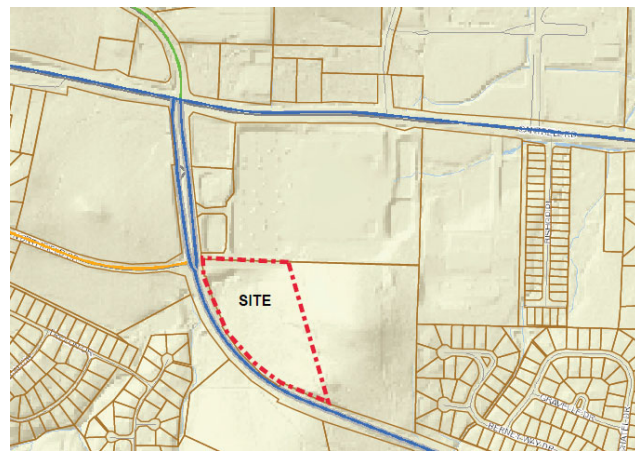


MASTER STREET PLAN:

The site is bound to the west by Chenal Parkway, a Principal Arterial. Immediately to the north of the site is a shared access easement that serves the hypermarket to the north. This access easement begins west of the site at the terminus of Northfield Drive, which immediately west of the site is identified as a Collector.

The primary function of a Principal Arterial is to serve through traffic and to connect major traffic generators or activity centers within an urbanized area. Lower design standards are required for Principal Arterials compared to Expressways. Since these roads are designed for through traffic and are generally located three or more miles apart, dedication of additional right-of-way is required to allow for future expansion to six through lanes plus left and right turn lanes.

Figure 3. Master Street Plan



Right-of-way of 110 feet is required but may vary due to topography, floodway or other constraints eliminating or reducing future adjacent development. A Collector street is the traffic connection from Local Streets to Arterials or to activity centers, with the secondary function of providing access to adjoining property. The Collector system should not be continuous but should direct traffic to Arterials. This class of road is generally at a spacing of a quarter to a half-mile.

BICYCLE PLAN:

There is no existing bicycle infrastructure in the area. A Class III Bikeway is proposed along Northfield Drive, terminating at Chenal Parkway, where a Class I Bikeway is proposed. Class III Bicycle Routes have only sharrows. These routes use the existing vehicular area with no physical separation. Generally, Class III Bicycle Routes are local streets or higher class streets when speeds are less than 30 miles per hour and volumes less than half design volume. Since there is no additional area, Class III Bicycle Routes have no additional maintenance requirements (except for sharrows). Class I bikeways or "Bike Paths" are constructed and designed for the exclusive use of bicyclists. These paths are completely separated from motor vehicle traffic. Bike Paths are the safest for prevention of accidents with motorized vehicles.

Future development at this site may require dedication of right-of-way and may require street improvements.

PARKS:

There are no city recognized parks in the immediate vicinity.

HISTORIC DISTRICTS:

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

ANALYSIS:

The subject site is in a part of the Chenal Planning District that has seen some significant developments but maintains lands for future growth. The site is the western most area of commerce in the City, at the intersection of Cantrell Road (AR-10) and Chenal Parkway, serving both the City of Little Rock and those living in unincorporated Pulaski County. Except for the site of an electrical substation (on lands zoned R2), lands at all four corners of the intersection of Chenal Parkway and Cantrell are zoned for Commercial land uses.

The northwest quadrant of this intersection has seen some smaller commercial developments, but a large 25 acre Commercial parcel - immediately west of these smaller Commercial developments - is still available for development. The northeast quadrant of the intersection has been developed with a small commercial use and a storage facility. This is the quadrant where the electrical substation is situated on Residential zoned lands. Immediately east of this site, with frontage along Cantrell Rd. are additional lands zoned for Commercial development (a carwash and oil change businesses are currently under construction). The southwest quadrant of the intersection is a large Commercial zoned tract (22 acres) owned by Baptist Health. This site was previously (2011) announced to be the site of a health facility to serve west Little Rock, the site remains vacant. At the southeast quadrant of the intersection is the hypermarket (Wal-Mart Supercenter) with a few out parcels where small standalone Commercial uses were developed. The subject site of this application is immediately south of the hypermarket and shares an access easement.

The applicant is requesting a Commercial designation on lands now designated Office. The request for a Commercial use would not preclude the site for use of Office development. Additional Office designated lands are available in this western most area of commerce, there are approximately 40 acres of undeveloped lands north of Cantrell Road available for future Office uses and there is a small 4-acre site designated for Office development on the south side of Cantrell Road. There are approximately 68-acres of lands designated for Commercial development in this quadrant that have not yet been absorbed by the market, 22 of which are assumed to be used for the development of a healthcare facility. Staff does not believe the amendment would create a glut of Commercial designated lands in the area.

The subject site is located immediately adjacent to a high intensity Commercial land use (north), a 65-acre open space (east), and a Principal Arterial - Chenal Parkway (west/south), direct impacts to residential land uses from future commercial development would be limited. Given the shared access with a busy retailer and the visibility of the site, the use of these lands for commercial operations would seem advantageous to the applicant and does not appear to have immediately negative impacts to the already established land uses.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS:

Notices were sent to the following neighborhood associations: Aberdeen Court and Duquesne Place. Staff has received no comments from area residents or from Neighborhood Associations.

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STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends approval of the applicant's request to amend the land use designation at the subject site from Suburban Office (SO) to Commercial (C).